A STUDY OF SHELLEY'S 'A DEFENCE OF POETRY'

FANNY DELISLE

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A STUDY OF SHELLEY'S A DEFENCE OF POETRY

by

FANNY DELISLE

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References to and quotations from A Defence of Poetry from the 1852 edition of Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments, edited by Mary Shelley, are given with the permission of The Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation, Inc. I am indeed grateful to them, and to the Carl H. Pforzheimer Library, for supplying me with the text of the 1852 edition, and for permitting me to quote material from it in the Textual Notes of this Study.
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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF SHELLEY'S A DEFENCE OF POETRY

by

FANNY DELISLE

In A Defence of Poetry, Percy Bysshe Shelley has produced one of English literature's major assessments of poetry as a creative art and a central nineteenth-century critical statement. It offers a rich field in which to trace the many influences which have combined to produce Shelley's essay. In presenting both a detailed textual and critical examination of the Defence, it is the intent of this study to bring about a deeper understanding of Shelley's work.

While many critical statements touch upon various facets of the Defence, this study presents for the first time a comprehensive survey of its text, its sources, and the major critical views concerning it, together with suggested new sources, meanings, and relationships to Shelley's other works. Both the textual and critical material utilize the variorum form.

A new edition of the Defence text, and complete notes on all changes found in the various sources and major
editions, have resulted from the textual examination. The transcription Shelley sent for publication, called MS D, forms the basis of the new text. This represents a change for previous editions have followed either the Mary Shelley edition text, based on MS D but incorporating many changes made by her, or MS B, Shelley's incomplete copy, which also shows a number of differences from MS D. The textual study has further resulted in the conclusion that MS B preceded MS D, as seen in the sequence of the changes which occur in certain passages of the two texts. Thus MS D, probably Shelley's last approved text, assumes new importance as the definitive basic textual source. The textual notes also reveal distinctive patterns in Shelley's writing practices, and in later editors' choices.

The critical study incorporates the important assessments of all major annotated Defence editions, selected opinions of general criticism, and suggested new sources and views of this study. It also shows the numerous relationships found in the Defence by critics. While Sidney and Plato have long been accepted as important sources, recent critics suggest many more, ranging from Aristotle to Wordsworth and Coleridge. Moreover, this study itself indicates that new importance should be given to Hume and to Monboddo as influences, as well as to Volney, Drummond, Bacon, and Lucretius in lesser degree. This study also strongly emphasizes the close ties of the Defence to Shelley's other prose, and to his poetry, especially that of 1818 to 1821. Thus, the art of Shelley
is as clearly defined as is the art of poetry in general.

Shelley, with his broad grasp of classical thought, his unbounded poetic vision, and his real interest in his own time, presents a complex set of ideas. The very fact that his critics react so diversely indicates the value of reviewing these judgments. From this broader view, a better critical perspective becomes possible. To call, then, the Defence a "Platonic" or other kind of document is not to observe fully the facts which critics have already established. This in-depth study of the Defence reveals that Shelley is not an avowed follower of any single influence. Rather, he embraces ideas from many sources and joins them to his own original thought and feeling. What results in the Defence is Shelley's broad definition of poetry as the innovative, epic, and moral force which moves man forward.

A Defence of Poetry is as rich in source and ideas as it is in beauty. Whatever deepens understanding of the Defence also deepens an understanding of the true poetry which Shelley is really defending, the progress being made in the heart and spirit of man.
INTRODUCTION

In A Defence of Poetry, Percy Bysshe Shelley has produced one of English literature's major assessments of poetry as a creative art. Coming as it does at the apex of the Romantic movement, it presents a central nineteenth-century critical statement. In addition, it conveys broad insights about the universality of poetry and the scope of poetic evolution. It offers a rich field in which to trace the many influences which have combined to produce Shelley's poetic manifesto.

While numbers of critical works touch upon some facets of the Defence, no study has been produced which presents a general view of the many strands that have blended to form Shelley's concept of poetry. To reach a comprehensive understanding of the Defence, this study examines its text, its sources, and the major critical views concerning it. This study also suggests new sources, meanings, and relationships to Shelley's other works. Both the critical and the textual material are presented in variorum form; the study thus includes both the important matter which has been published on the Defence, and new matter which seems of significance.

To arrive at a full understanding of what the textual and critical chapters encompass, it is necessary to consider three aspects of Shelley's essay. First, the evolution of the text of the Defence, and conclusions concerning it, must
be examined. Second, this work must be seen in its historical perspective as a defence of poetry. Third, both the sources which appear most relevant to the Defence, and the critical patterns and reactions to it, must be assessed. Thus, the scope and value of the Defence may be revealed and evaluated more definitively.

BACKGROUND OF THE TEXT AND TEXTUAL NOTES

A Defence of Poetry came about spontaneously in reaction to the clever, rational, and not entirely serious polemic against poetry by Shelley's friend, Thomas Love Peacock. This essay, The Four Ages of Poetry, was published anonymously in the first issue of Charles Ollier's Literary Miscellany. At first Shelley responded to it in a light vein, as can be seen by three early and very rough drafts of a letter he thought to send in reply (see Appendix E for reproductions of these). He quickly discarded the letter idea and turned to the essay form. His intentions were to produce a magazine article in response to that of Peacock, to be written in three parts. The first part, the present Defence, was sent to Ollier on March 20, 1821, for publication in the second issue of the Miscellany, which was expected to appear shortly. Shelley intended to write the other two parts as soon as they might be required for publication. He felt he was doing an artistic service, for he asked no recompense for the Defence, as his letter of February 22, 1821 to Ollier
shows (see Appendix E). The letters he wrote from November, 1820 to March, 1822, in which mention is made of The Four Ages of Poetry and the Defence clearly indicate the progress of the Defence from idea to completion, the transmittal of the first part, and then a long delay on the part of Ollier either in publishing or returning the manuscript.

Since the Miscellany failed after its first issue, the Defence was not published by Ollier at all, nor was it published during Shelley's lifetime. After some efforts, Mrs. Shelley managed in November, 1822 to get the transcription originally sent to Ollier transferred to John Hunt, editor of The Liberal, for possible publication. Accepted opinion is that he is the editor who deleted the Peacock references from the Defence. In her later editions Mrs. Shelley did not restore these excisions. The Liberal, however, ceased publication in 1823, and the unpublished transcription was at last returned to Mrs. Shelley. Not until 1840 was the Defence finally published. It then appeared as the first selection in Mrs. Shelley's two-volume collection of Shelley's prose, entitled Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments. These volumes were published three more times, in 1845, 1847, and 1852.

Among the many publications of the Defence since 1852 there have been nine major annotated editions, ranging in time from 1880 to 1965 (see the Explanatory Notes below for a complete listing of these major editions). Six of these editions have made textual as well as critical
annotations, those of H. B. Forman, A. H. Koszul, H. F. B.
Brett-Smith, R. Ingpen and W. E. Peck, D. L. Clark, and J.
E. Jordan. The remaining three editions concentrate on
critical appraisals of sources and meanings, those of A. S.
Cook, L. Winstanley, and L. Verkoren.

The text which Shelley himself intended for publica-
tion and sent to Ollier on March 20, 1821, is that which is
called MS D in this study. There are six known drafts,
fragments, or transcripts, which are basic parts of the
evolution of the Defence (see the Explanatory Notes below for
the full listing and explanation of these texts). No text
of Shelley's Defence has been completely accepted as authori-
tative by all editors.

The two texts which are in most general use are those
of the Mary Shelley editions of 1840-1852 (MS E, which is
based on MS D), or that of the Julian edition, in which Roger
Ingpen has used Shelley's transcription in MS B, supplemented
by Mary Shelley's edition where MS B is lacking pages. The
editors of major Defence editions since those of Mary Shelley
have followed either of these two sources almost entirely.
Forman, Winstanley, Brett-Smith, and Verkoren have used the
Mary Shelley editions. Jordan has based his edition on that
of Ingpen, with some small variations. Clark stated that his
text collated all available manuscripts and first editions,
modernized punctuation, and Americanized spelling.

The first task of this study has been to find the
proper text on which to base a critical evaluation. Although
Brett-Smith, in his 1921 edition, declared that "A Variorum edition of the Defence, containing the many differences of reading, mostly trivial, between the various authoritative sources would be a very laborious and not very useful undertaking" (p. xxx), he spoke before MS B had been used as the basis for a Defence edition by Ingpen a few years later. This edition reveals some material changes from the Mary Shelley editions. To decide which available text seems the closest to Shelley's intent is an impossibility if a variorum textual study has not been carried out. Thus, the first part of this study does just that, making a complete survey of all the extant manuscripts and fragments, and of all the major printed editions from those of Mary Shelley to that of Jordan in 1965.

The text which this study presents is the result of the consideration of all changes which have occurred, in manuscript materials or printed editions. It incorporates a change in the choice of the basic text, for it is not based, as previous editions have been, on either Mary Shelley's version or on that of Ingpen in the Julian edition, the MS B fragment. It returns instead to the MS D text, transcribed by Mary Shelley, corrected by Shelley, and forwarded by him to Ollier for publication. This basic text has resulted in what is believed to be a definitive text on which to base a critical assessment of the Defence.

Brett-Smith was incorrect in his assumption that a textual study would not be very useful. First of all, this
study reveals the evolution of Shelley's thought from his draft to his final known copy. Some of these changes are not only indicative of his techniques of writing but are of great use in understanding the meaning which he had intended or had excluded. Second, the presumption has been that MS B, which the Julian edition uses as its basic text, was a later edition than MS D, the copy sent by Shelley to his printer. In several places, this study shows most clearly that MS B preceded rather than followed MS D (see 11. 830, 834-835, 1108, and 1236 below for examples). This indicates that MS D is of greater importance since it can be presumed to be Shelley's last copy, and therefore the one which had his final approval. The third point, and one of some importance also, is that Mary Shelley generally based her 1840 edition upon MS D, except for the deletions of all references to Peacock and The Four Ages of Poetry. The problem with the 1840 edition is that Mary Shelley's editing has caused a considerable number of changes in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar, most of which are minor, but which are still changes. Added to that, a certain number of errors appears in the 1840 edition, most of which are corrected in later editions, but not all. The deletions of the Peacock references made necessary the rewriting of five passages in the Defence, with the result that it became, as Peacock rather pointedly commented, a paper which stands "as a defence without an attack" (Memoirs of Shelley, Halliford, p. 500). Occasionally, in her editions subsequent to 1840, Mrs. Shelley had second thoughts and, as the Textual Notes
show, returned to the original version in MS D.

In addition to indicating the proper text for the Defence, the Textual Study, by its comparison of the basic texts of the Defence, MSS A, B, D, and Mary Shelley's 1840 edition, clearly shows certain habits of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling, which mark Shelley's work as distinctively his. A comparison also indicates the full extent of the changes made by Mrs. Shelley in her 1840 edition. Since she has used much more punctuation, has modernized spellings, and has lowered many capitalizations, it appears that her own practice is considerably different from that of Shelley, and thus her transcription of MS D very probably reflects Shelley's practices quite consistently.

A study of Shelley's punctuation shows that he follows individual and almost invariable patterns, based not so much on rule as on a particular pace which he wishes maintained. He habitually punctuates a number of connected words or phrases by leaving off one or more commas where ordinary practice would place them. Mary Shelley regularly replaces such commas in her edition. An example of this usage is seen in ll. 487-488, where Shelley writes: "But it is Poetry alone, in form, in action or in language which . . . ." Mrs. Shelley's edition contains: "But it is Poetry alone, in form, in action, or in language, which . . . ." Shelley also occasionally places a comma in the middle of a simple sentence, dividing the subject from the predicate. This can be seen in ll. 1163-64: "The pleasure that is in sorrow, is
sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself." All editors from Mrs. Shelley on have removed this comma. Yet reading it as Shelley wrote it, with the pause, adds a subtlety of meaning to the sentence. These comma uses are representative ones, and indicate that Shelley works with reading rhythms to create fine kinds of emphasis of word or thought.

Shelley's use of colons and semicolons, as seen in MSS A and D, again shows his individual pattern, one later editors have often changed. Shelley has used a colon in the following passage, ll. 146-151, which all but one editor thereafter replace with a semicolon: "But poets, or those who imagine and express this indestructible order, are not only the authors of language and of music, of the dance and architecture and statuary and painting: they are the insti­tutors of law, and the founders of civil society . . . ." The colon implies the continuation of laws and other affairs of civil society directly out of the poetic artistry in man. The semicolon, when it is placed after "painting," indicates a pause, and instead of any direct continuation being evi­denced, a later, parallel kind of development seems suggested. Another instance is seen in ll. 799-803, where Shelley again uses a colon, and later editors a semicolon. This kind of colon usage is definitely a pattern in Shelley's work. On other occasions, however, later editors have not changed colon usages. Shelley is fond also of the compound sentence, with the main clauses joined by semicolons, and he uses it
often. The following passage indicates this common type of expression in the _Defence_, in ll. 435-441: "A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause." Shelley, too, likes long sentences, using a lengthy series of thoughts separated by semicolons. Such a lengthy passage can be seen in ll. 591-604. He also chooses colons instead of semicolons to punctuate long passages containing a series of thoughts. Such a passage can be seen in ll. 657-668, punctuated in two key places with colons. In the first instance, later editors have replaced the colon with a period, and in the second instance, the colon with a semicolon. Such changes take away the central, highlighted significance Shelley seems to have intended for that passage between his two colons: "and it is indisputable that the highest perfection of human society has ever corresponded with the highest dramatic excellence." A colon-punctuated series follows shortly also in ll. 672-677. It is very evident in close observation of Shelley's colon and semicolon usage that he uses them very carefully for timing, emphasis, and clarity.

Shelley also uses the hyphen for emphasis. He has in several instances used a hyphen which Mrs. Shelley and later editors have taken out. Although Shelley and almost all the editors agree on "ever-living," Mrs. Shelley and
later editors remove Shelley's hyphens in "co-exist," "re-
iterate," and "re-produce." In each instance it can be seen 
that the hyphen has achieved an effect of stressed emphasis 
in its context.

Other forms which Shelley habitually uses are single 
quotation marks, and "&c." instead of "etc." He is also fond 
of the dash, and these dashes are frequently deleted by edi-
tors.

With regard to spelling, a number of variations 
appear between MS D and the 1840 edition. One group of words 
involves the use of "s" or "z." In all of the following 
words from MS D, in which Shelley uses a "z," Mrs. Shelley 
in the 1840 edition changes the "z" to an "s": civilized; 
civilization; disorganized; drowse; harmonizing; organi-
zation; organized; paralyzing; recognize; recognized; rouze; 
sympathizes. Two exceptions to this are the words "charac-
terised" and "idealised" in which the "s" is used by both 
MS D and the 1840 edition. The "ei" and "ie" words are 
difficult for Shelley to spell correctly, and sometimes the 
incorrect use is corrected in MS D. Once all three MSS, A, 
B, and D, remain uncorrected in the case of "conceive." 
Words in this group which appear correctly in 1840 but in-
correctly in one or more of Shelley's manuscripts are: con-
ceive; conceived; deceive; perceiving; received; their. 
Other misspellings in MS D which the 1840 edition corrects 
are: accomodate to accommodate; fortell to foretell; in-
separable to inseparable; and unforseen to unforeseen. Both "unforeseen" and "foretell" appeared correctly in MS A. A larger group of words represents acceptable variants in spelling, but shows the extent to which Mrs. Shelley has changed the spelling of MS D. It is obvious that sometimes she is modernizing a use of an older spelling as in "antient." Two words on which Shelley has made no settled decision in spelling are "connection" and "Shakespeare," for he uses them in several spellings. The variant list is as follows, the MS D words appearing first: alleged-alleged; antient-ancient; connexion, connection-connexion; control-control; dependance-dependence; develope, develops, development-develop, develops, development; enquiry-inquiry; ethereal-ethereal; extacy-ecstacy; fulness-fulness; impanelled-impanneled; indispensible-indispensable; judgement-judgment; oeconomical, oeconomist, oeconomy-economical, economist, economy; preceed, preceeded-precede, preceded; Shakspear, Shakespeare, Shakespeare-Shakspeare; shewn, shews-shown, shows; stript-stripped; synonime-synonym, whilst-while. The word "practise" appears in MS D and "practice" in 1840, but the word "practised" appears in both. One other change should be noted, and that is the word "digress" which appears in both MS D and 1840, but which in MS B is spelled "disgress." Since this may represent a change in meaning it is commented upon in the Critical Notes below.

With regard to capitalization, again Mary Shelley's
edition makes a number of changes in MS D. While the largest number of changes is reflected in these two sources, observation of the Textual Notes reveals that later editors too have made a number of capitalization changes, some reflecting MS B changes and others giving no reason. Mrs. Shelley's practice is invariably to lower the capitalizations of abstract words in MS D. The largest number of changes occurs with the words "Poets," "Poem," and "Poetry." Other words which are capitalized in MS D, in certain passages, but not in the 1840 edition are: Chivalric; Chivalry; Creator; Drama; Friendship; God over his Devil; Heaven; Imagination; Love; Mammon; Posterity; Power; Empire; Self; South; Time; Universe; Utility; Virtue; World. All the above do not always appear capitalized, for words such as "poets" and "poetry" are also frequently used in lower case by Shelley. In some instances in later editions, capitalizations are added which did not appear either in MS D or in the Mary Shelley editions. Among these words are: one; love; universe; poet; poets; muse; universe.

While Shelley capitalizes in the normal way the titles of literary works which he uses in a number of places in the Defence, with the occasional lack of some capitalization in the Peacock title, The Four Ages of Poetry, he does not indicate any special punctuation of titles, in the way of quotation marks or italicizing. Thus King Lear or the Paradiso become in Shelley's version simply King Lear or the
Paradiso. Modern editors, with the exception of Clark, have followed Shelley's original usage.

Mary Shelley's later editions continue to reflect changes in the text. Her second edition, in 1845, includes correction of a number of typographical errors, as well as many small changes of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. It is interesting to note that of the ninety-four changes, most represent a return to the form of MS D. The 1847 edition simply is a reissue of the 1845 edition, and uses its plates, in Edward Moxon's publication of The Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley. The 1852 edition again reveals twenty-three minor changes of spelling and punctuation, and many of these changes represent a return to the MS D form.

The major annotated editions which have appeared since 1852 indicate both the texts the editors have chosen to use, and the changes which they have felt it necessary to make. (These editions are fully listed in the Explanatory Notes below.) The first influential edition after Mrs. Shelley's is that of H. B. Forman appearing in The Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley in Verse and Prose, in 1880. He based his text on the 1840 text, and collated this with the 1852 text, and with Claire Clairmont's transcription of the Defence. Concerning the Clairmont text, he noted that there are some variations but that it "would seem to be copied, not from the original but from the rifacciamento" (Vol. 7, p. 98). Forman also included in his edition a hitherto unpublished fragment on utility which was contained in a Shelley notebook
In 1891, A. S. Cook brought out a fully annotated critical edition entitled *A Defence of Poetry*. This edition followed his publication in the previous year of an annotated edition of Sir Philip Sidney's *The Defense of Poesy*. Cook's text is based generally on the Forman text.

A. H. Koszul, in 1910, published an important annotated edition of the basic manuscript texts of the *Defence*, MSS A and D, in his book, *Shelley's Prose in the Bodleian Manuscripts*. (See Explanatory Notes below, "The Basic Defence Drafts . . ." for full description). This edition indicates the changes between the two manuscripts, and also describes the deletions made in darker ink appearing in the MS, probably made by Hunt.

Lilian Winstanley, in 1911, also published an annotated critical edition, *Shelley's Defence of Poetry; Browning's Essay on Shelley*, but no textual study. Her text is based on the 1845 edition.

The next important annotated edition appeared in 1921, entitled *Peacock's Four Ages of Poetry; Shelley's Defence of Poetry; Browning's Essay on Shelley*, edited by H. F. B. Brett-Smith. It contains both textual and critical notes. His text is based on the 1840 edition, with some minor corrections noted from the 1845 and 1852 editions. He also corrects one error of fact concerning "Quintus Calaber." He states that four printed editions of the *Defence* deserve mention, these being Mary Shelley's editions of 1840 and

The influential Julian edition of the Defence appeared in 1930 in The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, and was edited by Roger Ingpen. This edition has textual notes and some critical notes. As the standard edition, this text is the one often referred to by critical commentators. This edition draws upon MS B for its basic text. (See the Explanatory Notes below, "The Basic Defence Drafts . . ." for full description). Ingpen has compared this text with Mrs. Shelley's editions, and has occasionally noted comparisons with MSS A and D.

In 1954 a further important annotated edition was published in Shelley's Prose, edited by D. L. Clark. In his "Preface" Clark has noted that his edition is "not a study in textual criticism," and that "the spelling and punctuation have been modernized and Americanized in the interest of consistency and intelligibility" (p. vii). The notes are largely critical ones, although a few are textual. As he also indicated, his text is collated with all available manuscripts and first editions.

The most recent important annotated text of the Defence to appear was edited by John E. Jordan, A Defence of Poetry: The Four Ages of Poetry, published in 1965. The text of this edition was developed, as Jordan indicated, "by following Ingpen in using Shelley's fair copy (MS B) as the
basic text," supplemented by the 1845 edition where MS B was deficient, and comparing with other manuscripts and editions. The Jordan edition, then, follows the new pattern set by the Julian edition.

There have, of course, been numerous other printings of the Defence in general critical works and editions of Shelley's prose and poetry. There is, however, no settled trend among modern editors or among critics as to which text should be used. The present study, which includes an edited text, still reflects the division of choice by electing to use as the basic text MS D, the copy which Shelley himself sent to his publisher.

Turning from the background to the Textual Notes themselves, these Notes record all the changes which have occurred in the text of the Defence from its early full draft in MS A through to the last major published edition by Jordan. In order to keep the notes as clear and concise as possible, abbreviations have been used to identify all drafts, fragments, and published editions of the text. These abbreviations are listed and explained in the Explanatory Notes below under the title of "Key to Abbreviations Used for Manuscripts, Fragments, and Editions in the Textual Notes." Shelley's manuscripts and fragments are identified by letter. The printed editions of Mary Shelley, as is customary, are identified by date. All editions subsequent to those of Mary Shelley are identified by the initial or short form of the editor's last name, or of the edition itself in the case
of the Julian edition. Additional information from the manuscripts, either in verification of a word usage, or in presenting additional draft material, appears after the designation of "MS" together with the appropriate manuscript letter. All notes appear in the following form: first, identification by line number of the text, which appears at the top of the page; second, notation of the word or words under discussion; and third, identification by letters, dates, and edition abbreviations, placed in chronological order, of where the word as shown has been used. The word, as it appears in the study's text, always is listed first, followed by changes as they appear in other manuscripts or editions. In the case of the Mary Shelley editions, the identification "1840" indicates this and all her subsequent editions unless otherwise noted. The same applies to MSS A and D. "MS D" implies both MSS A and D unless otherwise noted. Where all editions following the 1840 edition show no change this is indicated by the notation "1840-Jo," which means that from Mary Shelley's 1840 edition through Jordan's 1965 edition all editors have agreed upon the usage. Where all but one or two agree, this is indicated by brackets, so that "1840-Jo[Cl]" means that all editions but Clark's agree on the reading. The form Clark uses would then be listed separately, in the following part of the particular note. Where a note appears with but a single identification this means that all sources agree with the text of the study with this single exception.
In his *Defence*, Shelley has followed a long literary-philosophical tradition. From Homer's time on, poets and philosophers have spoken about poetry and its place. Aristotle, who is called the founder of literary criticism, actually was working out of an active older tradition. Shelley, too, is doing just that, but is now working out of a much more complex background. He follows also a most ancient tradition, in that he is a poet speaking on poetry. To the strong communal aspect of Greek poetry, with its close interaction between singer and audience, has been attributed the initial encouragement of the poet to speak out about his own work and that of others. There is no question of the strong sense of community that Shelley feels with his world, both poetic and actual, in spite of his rather bitter realization that his audience might be few. The world view which he develops in the *Defence* is a culmination finally of the oldest of traditions, that of the epic.

No poet since Shelley has written so fully in the grand tradition of proclaiming poetry of supreme importance in the world. In this sense, then, his work stands as the true culmination of one aspect of poetic defence. There have been any number of works since 1821, of course, on poetry, and some by critics who were also practicing poets, such as Matthew Arnold and T. S. Eliot. They and others, however, when speaking of poetry, poets, and tradition, have a differ-
ent view. To them, and to other moderns, poetry is no more as universally important as it was to Shelley.

The writing of a defence in reply to an attack on poetry is part of a continuing tradition. That Peacock's attack in *The Four Ages of Poetry* drew Shelley's reply in *A Defence of Poetry* was an instance in this tradition. As early as the sixth century B.C. critical attacks upon poets can be found. Xenophanes castigated the poet Hesiod, while Heraclitus criticized not only poets such as Hesiod, Homer, and Archilochus, but Xenophanes too. Later, Plato was ambiguous in his approach to poetry, both attacking it strongly and defending it occasionally in various dialogues. Aristotle, not agreeing with Plato's literary ideas, wrote a defence, the *Poetics*, which became the first fully analytical work of literary criticism. The long line of attacks, defences, and discourses on the art of poetry has continued steadily since classical times. Included in this long line have been such writers as Horace, Longinus, Dante, Boccaccio, Cinthio, and Tasso. Boccaccio, in the early Renaissance, inveighed at length against the "enemies of the name of Poetry" in his *Genealogy of the Gentile Gods* (Books XIV and XV). In Renaissance England, Puritanism produced still further attacks of poetry, the most famous of which was Gosson's in *The School of Abuse*, which was answered in Sir Philip Sidney's *The Defence of Poesie*, of much influence on Shelley later. Since Renaissance times many have written for or against poetry. The Peacock-Shelley essays are but another
manifestation of a long and very lively tradition.

In a specific literary sense, Shelley continues discussions which have been part of the criticism of poetry across many centuries. It is interesting to compare the matter of his *Defence* with that of a representative group of other writers on the subject of the poet and poetry, both ancient and modern. Taking as typical examples the *Ion*, *Republic*, and *Laws* of Plato, the *Poetics* of Aristotle, the *Art of Poetry* of Horace, *On the Sublime* of Longinus, the *Genealogy of the Gentile Gods* of Boccaccio, the *Discourses* and other writings of Cinthio, *The Art of English Poesy* of Puttenham, and *Discourses on the Heroic Poem* of Tasso, a cross-section of the subjects these works have covered reveals that their subject matter is that of Shelley also. These works discuss the proper subject-matter of poetry, the use of language, especially metaphor, sound, and meter, the relationship of poetry and prose, the subject of love in poetry, poetic immorality, and the moral function of the poet. Also considered are the uses of imagination and reason, of originality and imitation, the source of inspiration, the causes of art in man, the development of taste, and the influences of beauty, truth, and love in poetry. The kinds of poetry, especially the epic and the tragic drama, and their ranking, are considered, as well as the relationship of comedy and tragedy, and the use of pity and fear in the drama. Poetry's place in relationship to history, philosophy, science, and religion is also considered as well as an evaluation of poets
as prophets, *vates*, priests, legislators, or politicians. The further relationship of the great writers such as Homer or Plato to other writers and times is also considered, as well as the matter of the excellence of poetry. Other issues such as those of pleasure and pain, utility, and poetry as an agency in the regeneration of the state are also covered. In a rather astonishing degree, then, it can be seen that Shelley, who has covered every one of the above topics either directly or indirectly, has written a classic defence of poetry, while at the same time producing something freshly applicable to his own time.

The place of the poet is of central importance in any discussion of poetry as a historic form. While the ancient Heraclitus could ask that Homer be expelled, as could the later Plato, the nineteenth-century Peacock could say that "A poet in our times is a semi-barbarian in a civilized community" (Halliford, p. 20). Conversely, the fourteenth-century Boccaccio could say that "This poetry, which ignorant triflers cast aside, is a sort of fervid and exquisite invention, with fervid expression, in speech or writing; of that which the mind has invented. It proceeds from the bosom of God, and few, I find, are the souls in whom this gift is born; indeed so wonderful a gift it is that true poets have always been the rarest of men. This fervor of poesy is sublime in its effects" (Genealogy, XIV.7). For Shelley, too, poetry is all-inclusive, indeed divine, and poets are
the "unacknowledged legislators of the World." He can see seeds of greatness in a time in which Peacock denies that such poetry can be present.

For Shelley, poets are not only "legislators" through the medium of literary form, but they also move through various kinds of time. Where Peacock's attack has suggested a double cycle of four ages of literary rise and fall, leading deliberately to his own century's fall, Shelley has used time in a cyclic form of rise and fall and rise again. But with Shelley, each fall is not so far back as the previous one, and each rise is progressively higher as he considers the broad relationship of poetic and general culture. Shelley has concerned himself with a different concept of the "golden age" than has Peacock, and has seen epic minds linked in a continuing chain which culminates in a periodic new "golden age," the latest of which he sees now beginning in his own time.

In Shelley's view, a new age of progress comes about through the actions of the poets, for it is they who lead the way. His definition of the "poet" is both a very broad one in the sense that the poet may be any real mover of mankind, and a very narrow one in the sense that he must be a genuinely innovative thinker, and act from the highest of motives. He may be a poet in the literary sense, or he may be an artist, a general, a philosopher, a scientist, a historian, or a religious figure. The poetry which he produces may be a work of literature, a human action, or an idea
which raises man to a new level of development. Shelley sees true poets and true poetry in epic terms, for they are dealing with events of historical or legendary importance, and on the grand scale of man's whole forward development. Thus, Shelley says that the true poet uses the "elements of human nature" and arranges them "according to the laws of epic truth," laws "by which a series of actions of the external universe and of intelligent and ethical beings is calculated to excite the sympathy of succeeding generations of mankind" (11. 1012-1019). True poetry has a utility which is "durable, universal, and permanent" for it "strengthens and purifies the affections, enlarges the imagination, and adds spirit to sense" (11. 1108-14). While Peacock has said that in modern times "intellectual power and intellectual acquisition have turned themselves into other and better channels, and have abandoned the cultivation and the fate of poetry" (Halliford, p. 24), Shelley says that poetry is the "centre and circumference of all knowledge," that which "comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred," for it is the "root" of "all other systems of thought" (11. 1255-59).

It is on this universal basis that Shelley has developed his Defence, by recording the poetic actions of man, actions which consistently over the cycles of time have moved him forward. These actions, whether in the form of an epic work, of a moment of courageous self-denial, or of a moving emotion of life, show to man not only what he has done, but what he is capable of doing. These actions become, more
importantly, the basis for his new, future course.

Shelley's essay, as a defence of poetry, reveals his central artistic convictions about the true place of poetry. In addition, however, the Defence is, for the student of poetry, and certainly for the student of Shelley, a storehouse of traditional and modern ideas about poetry. Critics have often commented upon the vast range of Shelley's interests, as shown, for example, by his reading as well as by his poetry, by his other prose, and by his letters. His tastes were proverbially catholic, ranging widely through philosophy, politics, science, religion, and literature, and his reading and learning encompassed at least five languages with facility. Although he had an intense interest in everything concerning the ancient world, especially that of the Greeks, he also had an equally intense interest in his own time, and in the conditions existing in the immediate world around him. To cast him as a "Platonist" or as a "necessitarian" or any other type is to underrate the erudition and the imagination of which this nineteenth-century poet was master.

Because of the complexity and variety of Shelley's ideas, the criticism of the Defence covers many aspects of his thought and its relationship to other poetic influences, and offers insight into both the poet and his achievement. This study treats the Defence both in relation to the development of its text, therefore, and in relation to the various influences and effects which the critics have seen
this text revealing.

BACKGROUND TO THE CRITICAL NOTES

Critics in general have responded favorably to the Defence. Not only is it accepted as Shelley's most important prose work, it is also accepted as one of the important critical essays in English on the art of poetry. Critics see it as a central document in understanding both Shelley's life and his work, and many refer to it in their discussions of his poetry. Mary Shelley, the one closest to the Defence, saw it as teaching the young poet to regard both his pursuit and himself with respect.

The Defence is often quoted but genuine criticism of the whole work is surprising by its sparsity rather than by its abundance. This does not mean, however, that critics have failed to provide interesting insights on the Defence, as the chapter of Critical Notes well illustrates. Critical comments on the Defence are important, for this study shows most clearly the centrality of the Defence to all the thinking expressed in the other works of Shelley. He has synthesized a whole lifetime's views, for the Defence again and again directly reflects attitudes, ideas, phrases, or sources seen all through his letters, essays, prefaces, conversations, and especially his poetry. The art of Shelley is as clearly defined as is the art of poetry in general.
Since there has been no one source which has contained an overview of the criticism which various editors and critics have suggested with regard to the *Defence*, its sources and meanings, taken together with new assessments of the *Defence*, it is the aim of this study to produce such a work.

To achieve this aim, the variorum form has again seemed well suited for the task. It permits the various insights of editors of the major annotated editions to be reviewed as a chronological whole. These nine editions range from 1880 to 1965. (They are fully listed in the Explanatory Notes below.) In addition, the variorum form gathers together the many, and often quite diverse, opinions of critics in an orderly and consecutive manner. Also, such an approach makes possible the incorporation of the new commentary which this study proposes concerning sources and meanings. These three sets of views appear in the Critical Notes below under the headings of "Editions," "Criticism," and "Study."

The study reveals that certain trends in *Defence* criticism appeared quite early. One such emphasis is on the strong connection between Shelley's *Defence* and that of Sir Philip Sidney. A. S. Cook was the first to point out these parallels, and later editors have added others, most notably Verkoren, who publishes many parallel passages from the two works. Both Cook and Brett-Smith pointed out the relationships which seemed evident between the *Defence* and various works of Plato. It has remained for later editors of the group to
turn more strongly to other sources such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Paine, Hume, and Godwin, and to suggest as well connections between the Defence and Shelley's other works. The more general critics also have commented upon the close connections between the works of Shelley and those of Sidney and Plato, but they suggest many other sources as well. Stronger connections with the works of Coleridge and Wordsworth are identified. Studies have noted the influences of Aristotle, Lucretius, Bacon, Samuel Johnson, Drummond, Berkeley, Hume, Milton, Shakespeare, Erasmus Darwin, the Neoplatonists, Newton, and others as well.

This study, through the new critical notes it offers, shows that Hume is a strong and evident source for the Defence, as is Monboddo, and to a lesser extent, Volney, Drummond, Bacon, and Lucretius. Perhaps the most striking result of the attentive critical observation which this study has undertaken is the discovery of the extent and the closeness of the relationship of the Defence to all the other writings of Shelley. Not only does he repeat ideas, lines, and even whole passages from his other essays constantly in the Defence, but as frequently he uses imagery and ideas which are directly related to his poetry. The influence particularly of certain poems written from 1818 to 1821 is very apparent. His letters also throw light on meanings and ideas which he again expresses in the Defence. It becomes clearly evident that the Defence is Shelley's definitive statement of his
whole personal and poetic outlook. All the diverse strands of influence appear, and all his attitudes are clearly summarized. He started off early as a Necessitarian, and he remains one, in part at least, to the end. His Platonism becomes mingled with Neoplatonism as his beliefs evolve. His religious, scientific, political, and moral beliefs are all clearly defined again in the Defence. His own view of history becomes even more apparent as he develops his ideas on the poet and poetry. His view is clearly a cyclic one of rises and falls, but the path leads forward to a distant but golden age when true benevolence, the real morality of love, will have established itself. His Godwinian dislike of established institutions, religious and political, is clearly revealed. His view of the poet and the place of poetry is a truly epic one in every sense of the word. The epic leader is a mover of the world in which he lives. The poet is that man who innovates, who sees beyond his time, who bridges eras of history, who shows the perfection of action or thought of which certain ages are capable. It is no accident, then, that the three innovators and leaders Shelley most praised in the Defence are also the poets who have produced great epic works—Homer, Dante, and Milton—for they are poets in every sense, in writing, in action, and in innovative leadership.

As a defence written in response to an attack on poetry, the essay has surprisingly little connection with Peacock's The Four Ages of Poetry. Critics, almost without
exception, see relatively little to comment upon. Shelley himself explains this in the *Defence* when he says near the close of the essay that he "thought it most favourable to the cause of truth to set down these remarks according to the order in which they were suggested to my mind, by a consideration of the subject itself, instead of following that of the treatise that excited me to make them public." But he points out that his own views "will be found to involve a refutation of the doctrine of the Four Ages of Poetry" at least in the "first division of the subject" (ll. 1465-75). Then, too, Peacock was not serious in his intent in the *Four Ages*. In his reply Shelley meant to be serious in every respect.

The Critical Notes make evident that Shelley is not simply an avowed follower of any one source, but that he embraces many ideas which he has gathered from lifelong reading, and has joined them to his own original thought and feeling. These ideas are not simply repetitive for he uses them freshly to create new meanings. His retentive memory is demonstrated by his use of quotations, which are never quite exact since he seems to use them spontaneously, not only in the *Defence* but all through his works. As with his other ideas garnered from Plato, Bacon, and elsewhere, the quotations are aptly used to make anew a point fitted to his own thought.

The fact that the *Defence* is written in a very poetic prose has been commented on with sufficient frequency
to make mention redundant. But it should be remarked that often what seem passages of pure fancy are indeed based on a hard core of source and poetic thought. It is the conclusion of this study that there is little if any so-called flight of fancy in the Defence at all. It should also be remarked, and the notes comment upon this in several places, that Shelley is capable of a quite subtle irony as well as a more open and obvious satirical turn of thought. It is well to point out, too, that the many listings of persons or events in the Defence are not only powerfully allusive but are carefully ordered in sequence. In some ways, in addition, the Defence is a highly personal document, as the passages on the critics reveal.

This study obviously does not attempt nor intend to incorporate every critical comment available on the Defence. What is attempted is an apt choice. It is noticeable that critical comment tends to cluster at certain key points of the Defence. The opening passage on "reason" and "imagination" is one such point, as is the "story" and "poem" passage somewhat later. It is also noticeable that critical views on many passages such as those above are widely divergent. Shelley, with his broad grasp of classical thought and his unbounded poetic vision, presents a complex set of ideas. The very fact that so many critics react in so many different ways, simply on source alone, indicates the value of presenting a concise review of these diverse judgments. A better critical perspective becomes possible from the broader view.
To call the *Defence* simply a "Platonic" or some other kind of document, for example, is not to observe fully the facts which critics have already established.

It is necessary before concluding to consider briefly the form of the Critical Notes. All notes are keyed to the text by line number and by important words from the passage referred to. The critical views are then presented in the order of those from "Editions" first, those from general "Criticism" second, and those of the "Study" third. To simplify acknowledgment of sources abbreviated forms have been used wherever feasible. Since all quotations in the "Editions" commentary come from a select group of nine editors who are fully identified in the Explanatory Notes below under the heading, "The Major Editions of *A Defence of Poetry* since 1852 Used in this Study," the identification used here is that of the editor's last name only, together with the page number upon which his notation appeared. To maintain both clarity and conciseness, the sources in all three sections are identified immediately following the quoted material. In the sections "Criticism," and "Study," if the author's name has been mentioned in the note, then only the title and page number follow. When a work is cited more than once, the title, provided it is easily identifiable, is shortened wherever it is possible to do so and remain clear. All critical sources are fully identified in the Bibliography below. Certain general works which are referred to many times in the Critical Notes, such as the editions of
Shelley's poetry, prose, and letters, are identified by brief standardized references. Such abbreviations are listed in the Explanatory Notes below, under the title of "Key to Abbreviations Used for Frequently Cited General Works."

With the exception of Mary Shelley's prefatory comments on the Defence in her 1840 edition, all critical opinion has been confined to the Critical Notes. Mrs. Shelley's comments are contained in the Appendices. All other material appearing in the Appendices has direct reference to the text and its publication. Whenever something of importance in the Textual Notes has relevance to the Critical Notes, such passages are cross-referenced to the proper lines of the Textual Notes. Cross-references also appear in both the Textual and the Critical Notes to the materials contained in the Appendices, wherever applicable.

It is hoped that by the presentation of a new text together with complete Textual Notes, to which are added a concise and informative survey of critical opinion derived from the important annotated editions, and from general critical sources, as well as the new ideas presented by this study, a definitive overview of the total Defence may be attained, and its true value rightfully assessed. A Defence of Poetry is as rich in source and idea as it is in beauty. It is, in Shelley's sense of the word, true poetry, and he is a true poet. Whatever deepens understanding of the Defence
also deepens an understanding of the true poetry which Shelley is really defending, the progress being made in the heart and spirit of man.
EXPLANATORY NOTES

THE BASIC DEFENCE DRAFTS, FRAGMENTS, AND TRANSCRIPTS

There are six known drafts, fragments, or transcripts of Shelley's A Defence of Poetry. These (using the Ingpen designations in MSS A to F) are as follows:

Manuscript A. This is the earliest holograph draft of the Defence existent. It is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and is identified as MS. Shelley d. 1. This draft differs from the final version in a number of ways. A. H. Koszul has compared this draft with MS. Shelley e. 6 (Manuscript D) in Shelley's Prose in the Bodleian Manuscripts (1910).

Manuscript B. This is the second holograph manuscript, a nearly complete fair copy of the Defence, in the collection of Sir John C. E. Shelley-Rolls. This manuscript, which is in two parts, is very close to the final version. The first part was contained in a notebook salvaged from Shelley's boat, the Ariel. This part, which Richard Garnett noted as being prepared for the printer, is incomplete, the first three paragraphs and a part of the fourth being missing, as is a very brief portion later. The second part, containing fifty-eight pages, begins at the point where the first leaves off, and includes the remainder of the essay. This copy also includes the draft of a covering letter to Ollier. This manuscript was described by Dr. Garnett in Relics of Shelley.
(1862). Roger Ingpen published the first part in *Shelley in England* (1917), and the whole in his Julian text of the *Defence* (1928).

**Manuscript C.** This is a holograph fragment of the *Defence* which Harry Buxton Forman first mentioned, and printed in full in a note to the *Defence* in Volume 7 of his edition of *Shelley's Prose Works* (1880). This fragment was found in a notebook of Shelley's along with his "Notes on Sculpture, &c." The fragment has one of the canceled references to *The Four Ages of Poetry*.

**Manuscript D.** This is a transcript of the *Defence* in Mary Shelley's hand, and is in the Bodleian Library. It is identified as MS. Shelley e. 6. This is considered to be the copy which was forwarded by Shelley to Ollier on March 21, 1821. This copy, written in brown ink, has all references to *The Four Ages* but one canceled in black ink. This cancellation was probably done by John Hunt in preparing the *Defence* for publication in the *Liberal*. There are other alterations also in this copy. Koszul has published this transcript in *Shelley's Prose in the Bodleian Manuscripts* (1910), and has noted the variants between this manuscript and MS. Shelley d. 1.

**Manuscript E.** This is the transcript of Mary Shelley which was written in the volume containing her transcripts also of Shelley's translation of *The Banquet* and of the essay *On Love*. In this copy the references to *The Four Ages* have
been deleted. This transcript was removed from the binding of the volume, and sent to the printer as the copy to appear in *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments* (1840). This is in the Shelley-Rolls Collection.

**Manuscript F.** This is the transcript in Claire Clairmont's hand of the *Defence*, very probably copied from Mary Shelley's transcript (Manuscript D). Harry Buxton Forman, who owned this transcript, has noted that it presents "some variations from the printed text." He collated this transcript and the editions of 1840 and 1852, silently adopting the best reading, and found the variations usually "of too slight and accidental a character" to record.

**Manuscript G.** This is a group of three fragments first published by Richard Garnett from a notebook in the possession of Sir Percy Shelley. These fragments appeared in the *Relics of Shelley* (1862), with Dr. Garnett's notation that "These sentences seem to have formed part of the original exordium of the 'Defence of Poetry,' the composition of which was interrupted by an attack of ophthalmia."
THE MAJOR EDITIONS OF A DEFENCE OF POETRY
SINCE 1852 USED IN THIS STUDY

Since the last printed edition issued by Mary Shelley in 1852 of A Defence of Poetry, nine major annotated editions of the Defence have been published. Seven have included a Defence text and extensive notes. Two studies have been more specialized, that of A. H. Koszul giving the text of MS D, and notes on both MSS A and D, from the Bodleian manuscripts, and that of Lucas Verkoren printing no text, but using the 1840 text on which to base extensive notes on the Defence. All of these works have contributed to the textual and critical notes of the present study. They are listed below in chronological order.


KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR
FREQUENTLY CITED GENERAL WORKS

For certain works, other than editions of *A Defence of Poetry*, which are frequently cited in this study, brief standardized references are used. These abbreviations are as follows:

A reissue of the first publication in 1912. 
"The Defence of Poesie" appears in Vol. III. 
The initial "F." is used in page identifications after quoted lines.


KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR MANUSCRIPTS,
FRAGMENTS, AND EDITIONS IN THE TEXTUAL NOTES

The following abbreviations have been used for identification of all sources in the Textual Notes. The designations of "MS A" through "MS F" follow the form established by Ingpen.

A  Bodleian MS. Shelley d. 1, Shelley's draft in the Koszul transcription.

B  Shelley-Rolls MS fragment. Where there is a variation between the MS readings of Ingpen in Shelley in England and the Julian edition these are noted as B(I) and B(J).

C  Fragment of a text which gives a variant reading on utility, as published by H. B. Forman (1880).

D  Bodleian MS. Shelley e. 6, Mary Shelley's transcription sent to Ollier, in the Koszul edition. Where only "D" is used it is understood to mean that this reading also appeared in "A." Any differences between the two are recorded separately as "A" and "D."

E  Mary Shelley's transcription of MS D, with the Peacock references deleted, sent to the printer as copy for the 1840 edition.

F  Claire Clairmont's transcription, as recorded by H. B. Forman in his edition (1880).

G  Three fragments, perhaps of the original exordium, as published by Richard Garnett in Relics of Shelley (1862).
1840 The first printed edition, edited by Mary Shelley. Subsequent editions appeared in 1845, 1847, and 1852. If there are no changes in Mrs. Shelley's editions, the notation of "1840" indicates the editions of 1840 through 1852. Any change is identified by year, and is considered to indicate that change through subsequent editions.

Fo Harry Buxton Forman edition (1880).

K A. H. Koszul edition of the Bodleian MSS d. 1 and e. 6 (1910). These are called MS A and D in this Study.

BS H. F. B. Brett-Smith edition (1921).


TEXT OF A DEFENCE OF POETRY,

WITH VARIANT READING AND TEXTUAL NOTES
A DEFENCE OF POETRY

PART I

According to one mode of regarding those two classes of mental action, which are called reason and imagination, the former may be considered as mind contemplating the relations borne by one thought to another, however produced; and the latter, as mind acting upon those thoughts so as to colour them with its own light, and composing from them as from elements, other thoughts, each containing within itself the principle of its own integrity. The one is the \( \tau \delta \nu \rho \omicron \lambda \epsilon \gamma \nu \), or the principle of synthesis, and has for its objects those forms which are common to universal nature and existence itself; the other is the \( \tau \delta \lambda \omicron \gamma \iota \zeta \epsilon \gamma \nu \), or

Title, sub-title A DEFENCE OF POETRY PART I D J Jo
A DEFENCE OF POETRY. PART I. 1840 Fo BS A DEFENCE OF POETRY Cl MS D has a sub-title canceled in ink: or Remarks suggested by an Essay entitled 'the four Ages of Poetry' K BS
1 Under one A According to one D 1840-Jo
2 action Cl
7 color Cl
8 them D 1840 Fo BS them, 1845 J Cl Jo
11 objects D 1845 J Cl Jo object 1840 Fo BS
principle of analysis, and its action regards the
relations of things, simply as relations; consider-
ing thoughts, not in their integral unity, but
as the algebraical representations which conduct
to certain general results. Reason is the enumer-
ation of quantities already known; Imagination is
the perception of the value of those quantities,
both separately and as a whole. Reason respects
the differences, and imagination the similitudes
of things. Reason is to Imagination as the in-
strument to the agent, as the body to the spirit,
as the shadow to the substance.

15 of thoughts, A(K) of things, D 1840-Jo[Cl] of
things Cl relations Cl
16 unity Cl
19 Imagination D imagination 1840-Jo is the A 1840
In MS D: is the is accidentally dropped K
21 in their parts A(K) seperately D separately 1840
22 Imagination D imagination 1840-Jo
24 agent; Cl spirit; Cl
25 substance. In MS A, f. 85 v rev., there appears a
note: It is a remarkable fact, that Poetry, that consummate
flower of the tree of knowledge, has always unfolded itself
at periods otherwise memorable for the developement of in-
tellectual energy . . . It is not a promise, a blossom to
Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be 'the expression of the Imagination': and poetry is connate with the origin of man. Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever-changing wind over an Aeolian lyre, which move it by their motion to ever-changing melody. But there is a principle within the human being, and perhaps within all sentient beings, which acts otherwise than in the lyre, and produces not melody alone, but harmony, by
A DEFENCE OF POETRY

an internal adjustment of the sounds or motions thus excited to the impressions which excite them. It is as if the lyre could accommodate its chords to the motions of that which strikes them, in a determined proportion of sound; even as the musician can accommodate his voice to the sound of the lyre. A child at play by itself will express its delight by its voice and motions; and every inflexion of tone and every gesture will bear exact relation to a corresponding antitype in the pleasurable impressions which awakened it; it will be the reflected image of that impression; and as the lyre trembles and sounds after the wind has died away, so the child seeks, by prolonging in its voice and motions the duration of the effect, to prolong also a consciousness of the cause. In
relation to the objects which delight a child, these expressions are, what poetry is to higher objects. The savage (for the savage is to ages what the child is to years) expresses the emotions produced in him by surrounding objects in a similar manner; and language and gesture, together with plastic or pictorial imitation, become the image of the combined effect of those objects and of his apprehension of them. Man in society, with all his passions and his pleasures, next becomes the object of the passions and pleasures of man; an additional class of emotions produces an augmented treasure of expressions; and language, gesture, and the imitative arts, become at once the representation and the medium, the pencil and the picture, the chisel and the statue, the chord
A DEFENCE OF POETRY

and the harmony. The social sympathies, or those
laws from which as from its elements society
results, begin to develop themselves from the
moment that two human beings coexist; the future
is contained within the present as the plant
within the seed; and equality, diversity, unity,
contrast, mutual dependance, become the principles
alone capable of affording the motives according
to which the will of a social being is determined
to action, inasmuch as he is social; and consti-
tute pleasure in sensation, virtue in sentiment,
beauty in art, truth in reasoning, and love in the
intercourse of kind. Hence men, even in the in-
fancy of society, observe a certain order in their
words and actions, distinct from that of the ob-
jects and the impressions represented by them, all
expression being subject to the laws of that from
which it proceeds. But let us dismiss those more
general considerations which might involve an
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enquiry into the principles of society itself, and restrict our view to the manner in which the imagination is expressed upon its forms.

In the youth of the world, men dance and sing and imitate natural objects, observing in these actions, as in all others, a certain rhythm or order. And, although all men observe a similar, they observe not the same order, in the motions of the dance, in the melody of the song, in the combinations of language, in the series of their imitations of natural objects. For there is a certain order or rhythm belonging to each of these classes of mimetic representation, from which the hearer and the spectator receive an intenser and purer pleasure than from any other: the sense of
an approximation to this order has been called
taste, by modern writers. Every man in the infancy of art, observes an order which approximates more or less closely to that from which this highest delight results: but the diversity is not sufficiently marked, as that its gradations should be sensible, except in those instances where the predominance of this faculty of approximation to the beautiful (for so we may be permitted to name the relation between this highest pleasure and its cause) is very great. Those in whom it exists in excess are poets, in the most universal sense of the word; and the pleasure resulting from the manner in which they express the influence of society appearing: For there is a certain order & rhythm from which a keener & a purer delight results, & within which all the intelligent faculties of man gather into a more calm repose, (as a beast within its lair) come fiera in lustra. The quotation is from Dante's Parad. IV.) K

104 taste, D taste 1840-Jo
105 art 1852 Cl
107 results; Cl
109 sensible Cl
113 exists in D 1845 J Cl Jo exists to 1840 Fo BS
or nature upon their own minds, communicates itself to others, and gathers a sort of reduplication from that community. Their language is vitally metaphorical; that is, it marks the before unapprehended relations of things, and perpetuates their apprehension, until the words which represent them, become through time signs for portions or classes of thoughts, instead of pictures of integral thoughts; and then if no new poets should arise to

117 minds Cl
118 others Cl
119 that community. D 1845 J Cl Jo the community.
1840 Fo BS
121 things, D Fo things 1840 BS J Cl Jo
122 apprehension Cl until the words D 1845 J Jo
until words, 1840 Fo BS them 1852 Cl
123 become through time D become, through time, 1840-Jo
124 thoughts, D thought, 1840 Fo BS thoughts 1845 J Cl Jo
125 then D 1845 J Jo then, 1840 Fo BS Cl
125-134 if no ... knowledge. In MS A: this passage is missing, but a cross appears just before the passage, probably for reference K
create afresh the associations which have been thus disorganized, language will be dead to all the nobler purposes of human intercourse. These similitudes or relations are finely said by Lord Bacon to be "the same footsteps of nature impressed upon the various subjects of the world*"--and he considers the faculty which perceives them as the storehouse of axioms common to all knowledge. In the infancy of society every author is necessarily a poet, because language itself is

*De Augment. Scient., cap. 1, lib. iii.

127 disorganized D Fo Cl disorganised 1840 BS J Jo
disorganised 1840 BS J Jo

130-131 'the same . . . world'"--and D "the same . . . world""--and 1840 BS "the same . . . world;""* and 1852 "the same . . . world""--and Fo J Jo "the same . . . world," and Cl The footnote wording is used by all editions as it appears in MS D: De Augment. Scient., cap. 1, lib. iii. Forman is the first to add in addition: [Shelley's Note.] * De . . . iii. D 1840 BS 1De . . . iii. [Shelley's Note.] Fo 1De . . . iii. J 8De . . . iii. [Shelley's Note.] Cl 16De . . . iii [Shelley's note]. Jo

132 perceives D In MS D: This is Mrs. Shelley's spelling, for the passage is not in MS A. K
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poetry; and to be a poet is to apprehend the true and the beautiful, in a word the good which exists in the relation, subsisting, first between existence and perception, and secondly between perception and expression. Every original language near to its source is in itself the chaos of a cyclic poem: the copiousness of lexicography and the distinctions of grammar are the works of a later age, and are merely the catalogue and the form of the creations of Poetry.

136 poetry; In MS A: the draft goes from f. 81 v rev. to f. 77 v rev., with the intended letter to Ollier appearing in the interval K

137 beautiful—in word D word, 1840-Jo

138 relation, D 1845 BS J Jo relation; 1840 relation Fo Cl perception Cl

142 cyclic poem; Cl

144 age Cl


1840-Jo MS A, ff. 77 v and 77, adds a passage: It was reserved to the present epoch, for Philology to illustrate the most astonishing results of metaphysical enquiry. . . and that analogy & even unity in all thoughts & objects of thought, the perception of which is poetry, the expression of which is art, & the application of which to
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But Poets, or those who imagine and express this indestructible order, are not only the authors of language and of music, of the dance and architecture and statuary and painting: they are the institutors of laws, and the founders of civil society, and the inventors of the arts of life and the teachers, who draw into a certain propinquity with the beautiful and the true that par-

knowledge & use, is invention, has become recognized . . . they are all streams deriving from the same source, & meeting in the same sea, so much that even Criticism, Taste or the science of beauty in art, has been rescued by an appeal to these principles, from the indolence of scepticism. K

146 Poets D poets 1840-Jo

148-149 dance and architecture and statuary and painting: D dance, and architecture, and statuary, and painting; 1840 Fo BS dance and architecture, and statuary, and painting; J Jo dance, and architecture, and statuary and painting; C1

150 laws, D 1845 J Jo laws 1840 Fo BS C1 society D C1 society, 1840 Fo BS J Jo

151 life D C1 life, 1840-Jo [C1]

152 teachers, D-Jo [BS] teachers BS

153 true D C1 true, 1840-Jo [C1]
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tial apprehension of the agencies of the invisible world which is called religion. Hence all original religions are allegorical, or susceptible of allegory, and like Janus have a double face of false and true. Poets, according to the circumstances of the age and nation in which they appeared, were called in the earlier epochs of the world legislators or prophets: a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present as it is, and dis-

156 allegorical, D 1845 Fo J Cl Jo allegorical 1840 BS
157 and like Janus D Fo Cl and, like Janus, 1840 BS J Jo
158 true. MS A has an additional passage here: [to] those who read the Theogony of Hesiod or the fragments of Orpheus with this persuasion, it is poetry & mythology of the very higher order; to those who read it without this persuasion it is a dull catalogue of epithets & proper names. K
159 appeared D appeared, 1840-Jo
160 called D Cl called, 1840-Jo [Cl]
160-161 world legislators or prophets: D world, legislators, or prophets: 1845 J Jo world, legislators or prophets: 1840 Fo BS world legislators or prophets; Cl
163 is Cl
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covers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of latest time. Not that I assert poets to be prophets in the gross sense of the word, or that they can foretell the form as surely as they foreknow the spirit of events: such is the pretence of superstition, which would make poetry an attribute of prophecy, rather than prophecy an attribute of poetry. A Poet participates in the eternal, the infinite and the one; as far as relates to his conceptions time and place and number are not. The grammatical forms which express the moods of time, and the difference of persons, and the distinction of

165 ordered Cl
16. foretell A 1840 fortell D
171 superstition D Cl superstition, 1840-Jo [Cl]
172 prophecy Cl
174 Poet D poet 1840-Jo infinite D infinite, 1840-Jo
175 conceptions D conceptions, 1840-Jo
178 persons D persons, 1840-Jo
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place are convertible with respect to the highest poetry without injuring it as poetry and the choruses of Aeschylus, and the book of Job, and Dante's Paradise would afford more than any other writings examples of this fact, if the limits of this essay did not forbid citation. The creations of sculpture, painting, and music are illustrations still more decisive.

Language, colour, form, and religious and civil habits of action are all the instruments and materials of poetry; they may be called poetry by that figure of speech which considers the effect
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as a synonime of the cause. But poetry in a more restricted sense expresses those arrangements of language, and especially metrical language, which are created by that imperial faculty, whose throne is curtained within the invisible nature of man. And this springs from the nature itself of language, which is a more direct representation of the actions and passions of our internal being, and is susceptible of more various and delicate combinations than colour, form, or motion, and is more plastic and obedient to the controul of that faculty of which it is the creation. For

191 synonime A    synonime D    synonyme 1840 BS J Jo
synonym Cl

193 language and Cl    language which D Cl    language, which 1840-Jo [Cl]

194 faculty Cl

196 language D    language, 1840-Jo

198 being Cl

200 combinations than colour form or motion, D    combinations, than colour, form, or motion, 1840-Jo [Cl]    combinations than color, form, or motion, Cl

201 controul D Fo    control    1840-Jo [Fo]
language is arbitrarily produced by the Imagination and has relation to thoughts alone; but all other materials, instruments and conditions of art have relations among each other, which limit and interpose between conception and expression. The former is as a mirror which reflects, the latter as a cloud which enfeebles, the light of which both are mediums of communication. Hence the fame of sculptors, painters and musicians, although the intrinsic powers of the great masters of these arts may yield in no degree to that of those who have employed language as the hieroglyphic of their thoughts, has never equalled that of poets in the restricted sense of the term; as two performers of equal skill will produce unequal
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effects from a guitar and a harp. The fame of legislators and founders of religions, so long as their institutions last, alone seems to exceed that of poets in the restricted sense; but it can scarcely be a question, whether, if we deduct the celebrity which their flattery of the gross opinions of the vulgar usually conciliates, together with that which belonged to them in their higher character of poets, any excess will remain.

We have thus circumscribed the word Poetry within the limits of that art which is the most familiar and the most perfect expression of the

219 religions, B D 1845 Fo J Jo religion, 1840 BS Cl
220 last B D In MS B: remain canceled for last I J
221 poets In MS B: who canceled after poets I sense: D sense; B 1840-Jo
222 question whether D question, whether, B 1840-Jo [Cl] question whether, Cl In MS B: that canceled for whether I J
226 poets D poets, B 1840-Jo will B D In MS B: would canceled for will I J
227 the word Poetry D the word poetry 1840 Fo BS the meaning of the word Poetry B J Jo the meaning of the word poetry Cl In MS B: the meaning of added I J
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faculty itself. It is necessary, however, to make the circle still narrower, and to determine the distinction between measured and unmeasured language; for the popular division into prose and verse is inadmissible in accurate philosophy.

Sounds as well as thoughts have relation both between each other and towards that which they represent, and a perception of the order of those relations has always been found connected with a perception of the order of the relations of thoughts. Hence the language of poets has ever affected a certain uniform and harmonious recur-
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rence of sound, without which it were not poetry, and which is scarcely less indispensible to the communication of its influence, than the words themselves, without reference to that peculiar order. Hence the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed or it will bear no flower—and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel.

An observation of the regular mode of the recurrence of this harmony in the language of poetical

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243 indispensible A D  In MS D: a altered to i K indispensible 1840
244 influence, D 1840 Fo BS Jo  influence Cl actions, B  action, J  In MS B: effects canceled I J
245 themselves Fo
246 translation;  MS B has a canceled passage here: for it is not translation to create anew. I
248-249 color and odor, Cl
251 seed D  seed, 1840-Jo
255 of this harmony B D J Cl Jo  of harmony 1840 Fo BS
In MS B: this added I J
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minds, together with its relation to music, produced metre, or a certain system of traditional forms of harmony and language. Yet it is by no means essential that a poet should accommodate his language to this traditional form, so that the harmony, which is its spirit, be observed. The practise is indeed convenient and popular, and to be preferred, especially in such composition

256-257 music produced D music, produced 1840-Jo
MS A reads: music, which is as it were another language of the same faculty, produced K

258 of harmony and language D 1840-BS of harmony of language J Cl Jo MS B: and language I MS B: of language J MS A adds and cancels: But a person, who shall possess in a very limited degree the spirit of poetry, may model his language to the external form of metre; without the spir[it] . . . . K

259 accomodate D accommodate 1840
260 form Cl

261 harmony which is its spirit, D harmony, which is its spirit, B 1840-Jo

262 practise D practice B 1840 popular Cl
263 preferred Fo
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as includes much action: but every great poet must inevitably innovate upon the example of his predecessors in the exact structure of his peculiar versification. The distinction between poets and prose writers is a vulgar error. The distinction between philosophers and poets has been anticipated. Plato was essentially a poet--the truth and splendour of his imagery and the melody of his language are the most intense that it is possible to conceive. He rejected the

264 much action: D 1840 Fo BS much form and action: B J Jo much form and action; Cl MS B adds: form and I J

268 vulgar error. MS A, f. 71 rev., has the following passage: Not but that many poets (and I smile because the reader will smile:--at the apparent paradox resulting from the incommensurability of popular and philosophical language)--have written in metre. K

270-272 poet and the melody of his language is A poet--the truth and splendour of his imagery and the melody of his language is D Cl poet--... imagery, ... language, is B J Jo poet--... imagery, ... language, are 1840 Fo BS MS D gives three subjects but inadvertently retains "is" of MS A. K splendor Cl is [are] Cl

273 concieve A B D conceive 1840 In MS B the sentence runs on: concieve: he rejected I
measure of the epic, dramatic, and lyrical forms, because he sought to kindle a harmony in thoughts divested of shape and action, and he forbore to invent any regular plan of rhythm which would include under determinate forms, the varied pauses of his style. Cicero sought to imitate the cadence of his periods, but with little success.

Lord Bacon was a poet.* His language has a sweet

*See the Filum Labyrinthi, and the Essay on Death particularly.
and majestic rhythm, which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost superhuman wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect; it is a strain which distends, and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind and pours itself forth together with it into the universal element with which it has perpetual sympathy. All the authors of revolutions in opinion are not only necessarily poets as they are inventors, nor even as their words unveil the permanent analogy of things by images which participate in the life of truth; but as their periods are harmonious and rhythmical and contain in themselves the elements of verse; being the echo of the eternal music. Nor are those supreme poets, who have employed traditional
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forms of rhythm on account of the form and action of their subjects, less capable of perceiving and teaching the truth of things, than those who have omitted that form. Shakespeare, Dante and Milton (to confine ourselves to modern writers) are philosophers of the very loftiest power.

A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth. There is this difference between a story and a poem, that a story is a catalogue of detached facts, which have no other bond of connexion than time, place, circumstance, cause and effect; the other is the creation of actions according to the unchangeable forms of human nature,
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as existing in the mind of the creator, which is itself the image of all other minds. The one is partial, and applies only to a definite period of time, and a certain combination of events which can never again recur; the other is universal, and contains within itself the germ of a relation to whatever motives or actions have place in the possible varieties of human nature. Time, which destroys the beauty and the use of the story of particular facts, strips of the poetry which should invest them, augments that of Poetry, and for ever develops new and wonderful applications.
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of the eternal truth which it contains. Hence epitomes have been called the moths of just history; they eat out the poetry of it. A story of particular facts is as a mirror which obscures and distorts that which should be beautiful. Poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted.

The parts of a composition may be poetical, without the composition as a whole being a poem. A single sentence may be considered as a whole though it may be found in the midst of a series of unassimilated portions; a single word even may be a spark of inextinguishable thought. And thus all the great historians, Herodotus, Plutarch,
Livys, were poets; and although the plan of these writers, especially that of Livy, restrained them from developing this faculty in its highest degree, they made copious and ample amends for their subjection, by filling all the interstices of their subjects with living images.

Having determined what is poetry, and who are poets, let us proceed to estimate its effects upon society.

Poetry is ever accompanied with pleasure: all
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spirits on which it falls, open themselves to receive the wisdom which is mingled with its delight. In the infancy of the world, neither poets themselves nor their auditors are fully aware of the excellence of poetry; for it acts in a divine and unapprehended manner, beyond and above consciousness; and it is reserved for future generations to contemplate and measure the mighty cause and effect in all the strength and splendour of their union. Even in modern times, no living poet ever arrived at the fulness of his fame; the jury which sits in judgement upon a poet, belonging as he does to all time, must be composed of his peers; it must be impanelled by Time from the selectest of
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the wise of many generations. A Poet is a nightingale who sits in darkness, and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds; his auditors are as men entranced by the melody of an unseen musician, who feel that they are moved and softened, yet know not whence or why. The poems of Homer and his contemporaries were the delight of infant Greece; they were the elements of that social system which is the column upon which all succeeding civilization has reposed. Homer embodied the ideal perfection of his age in human character; nor can we doubt that those who read his verses were awakened to an ambition of becoming like to Achilles, Hector and Ulysses: the truth and beauty of friendship, patriotism and persevering
devotion to an object, were unveiled to the depths in these immortal creations: the sentiments of the auditors must have been refined and enlarged by a sympathy with such great and lovely impersonations, until from admiring they imitated, and from imitation they identified themselves with the objects of their admiration. Nor let it be objected, that these characters are remote from moral perfection, and that they can by no means be considered as edifying patterns for general imitation. Every epoch, under names more or less

375 objects Cl the B D 1845 J Jo their 1840 Fo BS Cl
376 creations; Cl
378 impersonations, B D In MS B: emotions canceled for impersonations J impersonations Cl
379 imitated Cl
382 objected Cl are B D In MS B: were canceled for are J
383 perfection Cl can by no means be B D 1845 J Cl Jo are by no means to be 1840 Fo BS
384 edifying A edifying B D In MS D: y seems altered to i K patterns A B 1840 patterns D
385 epoch D epoch, B 1840-Jo In MS B: age canceled for epoch J
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specious, has deified its peculiar errors; Revenge is the naked idol of the worship of a semi-barbarous age; and Self-deceit is the veiled Image of unknown evil before which luxury and satiety lie prostrate. But a poet considers the vices of his contemporaries as the temporary dress in which his creations must be arrayed, and which cover without concealing the eternal proportions of their beauty. An epic or dramatic personage is understood to wear them around his soul, as he may the

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386 specious D specious, B 1840-Jo revenge Cl
387 Idol B(J) D J Jo idol B(I) 1840 Fo BS Cl In MS B: Idol with capital J semi-barbarous B D 1845 J Cl Jo semibarbarous 1840 Fo BS
388 self- Cl Image B D J Jo image 1840 Fo BS Cl In MS B: Image with capital J
389 evil D evil, B 1840-Jo which In MS B: the canceled after which I J
391 temporary B D In MS B: peculiar canceled for temporary I J in D 1840 In MS B: in inserted and canceled I; in probably canceled in error J
392 must B D In MS B: are to canceled I arrayed Cl
394 An epic B D In MS B: A poetical epic canceled for An epic I J
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antient armour or the modern uniform around his body; whilst it is easy to conceive a dress more graceful than either. The beauty of the internal nature cannot be so far concealed by its accidental vesture, but that the spirit of its form shall communicate itself to the very disguise, and indicate the shape it hides from the manner in which it is worn. A majestic form and graceful motions will express themselves through the most barbarous and tasteless costume. Few poets of the highest class have chosen to exhibit the beauty of their conceptions in its naked truth and splendour; and it is doubtful whether the alloy of costume, habit, etc., be not necessary to temper this planetary music for mortal ears.
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The whole objection, however, of the immorality of poetry rests upon a misconception of the manner in which poetry acts to produce the moral improvement of man. Ethical science arranges the elements which poetry has created, and propounds schemes and proposes examples of civil and domestic life; nor is it for want of admirable doctrines that men hate, and despise, and censure, and deceive, and subjugate one another. But poetry acts in another and a diviner manner. It awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar; it re-produces all that it

411 objection however D objection, however, B 1840-Jo
In MS B: which inserted and canceled after however I
415 created Cl
416 life; Cl
418 deceive A deceive B D
419 poetry B(I) D 1840 Fo BS Cl Poetry J Jo
420 and a diviner D and diviner B 1840-Jo
421 rendering the Jo
424 world Cl
425 re-produces D reproduces A B 1840-Jo
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represents, and the impersonations clothed in its Elysian light stand thenceforward in the minds of those who have once contemplated them, as memorials of that gentle and exalted content which extends itself over all thoughts and actions with which it co-exists. The great secret of morals is Love; or a going out of our own nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause. Poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagination by replenishing it with thoughts of ever new delight, which

428 them Cl as memorials . . . fresh food. In MS B:
the page containing this passage is missing I J

431 coexists A 1840-Jo co-exists D

432 Love; D love; 1840-Jo[Cl] love, Cl our na-
ture, D our own nature, 1840-Jo nature Cl

435 man D man, 1840-Jo
have the power of attracting and assimilating to their own nature all other thoughts, and which form new intervals and interstices whose void forever craves fresh food. Poetry strengthens the faculty which is the organ of the moral nature of man in the same manner as exercise strengthens a limb. A poet therefore would do ill to embody his own conceptions of right and wrong, which are usually those of his place and time, in his poetical creations, which participate in neither. By this assumption of the inferior office of interpreting the effect, in which perhaps after all he might acquit himself but imperfectly, he would resign

445 thoughts Cl
446 forever Cl
447 the faculty B(I) D 1840 Fo BS that faculty J
449 man D Cl man, B 1840-Jo[C1]
450 poet B D 1840 Fo BS Cl Poet J Jo
451 right B D In MS B: moral cancelled before right
452 time D time, B 1840-Jo
453 creations Cl
455 effect Cl
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a glory in a participation in the cause. There was little danger that Homer or any of the eternal poets, should have so far misunderstood themselves as to have abdicated this throne of their widest dominion. Those in whom the poetical faculty, though great, is less intense, as Euripides, Lucan, Tasso, Spenser have frequently affected a moral aim, and the effect of their poetry is diminished in exact proportion to the degree in which they compel us to advert to this purpose.

Homer and the cyclic poets were followed at a certain interval by the dramatic and lyrical Poets of Athens, who flourished contemporaneously with

457 a glory in a participation in D 1845 a glory in the participation of 1840 Fo BS the glory of a participation in B(I) the glory in a participation in J Cl Jo

In MS B: the glory I J; of a I

458 Homer, B 1840-Jo Homer D
459 poets, D 1840 Fo BS Cl Poets, B J Jo
463 Spenser D Spenser, B 1840-Jo
465 but in exact B(I) in exact D 1840-Jo
467 cyclic poets B D In MS B: and religious canceled after cyclic I J

468 Poets B D BS J Jo poets 1840 Fo Cl
469 contemporaneo[u]sly D K
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all that is most perfect in the kindred expressions of the poetical faculty: architecture, painting, music, the dance, sculpture, philosophy, and we may add the forms of civil life. For although the scheme of Athenian society was deformed by many imperfections which the poetry existing in Chivalry and Christianity have erased from the habits and institutions of modern Europe; yet never at any other period has so much energy, beauty and virtue been developed; never was blind strength and stubborn form so disciplined.

471 faculty: Cl
472 philosophy-- Cl and, 1852
473 add D add, B 1840-Jo[Cl] add-- Cl
476 Chivalry D J Jo chivalry B 1840 Fo BS Cl have A B D J Jo has 1840 Fo BS Cl In MS B: have I J Cl
477 Europe, Cl
479 beauty D 1840 Fo BS beauty, B 1845 J Cl Jo virtue B D Cl virtue, 1840-Jo[Cl] MS A, f. 63 rev., has un-canceled here: never was such joy of life felt so intensely; never were so many individuals so free to speak or think or feel as the spirit within them dictated; K
479-484 never . . . Socrates. A B D In MS A: this appears on the opposite page, and seems an afterthought. K
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and rendered subject to the will of man, or that will less repugnant to the dictates of the beautiful and the true, as during the century which preceded the death of Socrates. Of no other epoch in the history of our species have we records and fragments stamped so visibly with the image of the divinity in man. But it is Poetry alone, in form, in action or in language which has rendered this epoch memorable above all others, and the storehouse of examples to everlasting time. For written poetry existed at that epoch simultaneously with the other arts, and it is an idle enquiry to demand which gave and which received the light.

487 man. MS A, f. 63, continues: it is as if the continent of Paradise were overwhelmed and some shattered crag remained covered with asphodel [and] amaranth which bear a golden flower. K Amaranth BS Poetry B D J Jo poetry 1840 Fo BS Cl

488 action or in language D action, or in language, B 1845 J Cl Jo action, and in language, 1840 Fo BS

489 others Cl

490 For, B(I) For D 1840-Jo

492 enquiry B D J Jo inquiry 1840 Fo BS Cl

493 received B D. recieved A light Cl
which all as from a common focus have scattered over the darkest periods of succeeding time. We know no more of cause and effect than a constant conjunction of events: Poetry is ever found to co-exist with whatever other arts contribute to the happiness and perfection of man. I appeal to what has already been established to distinguish between the cause and the effect.

It was at the period here adverted to, that the Drama has its birth; and however a succeeding writer may have equalled or surpassed those few

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494 all B D all, 1840-Jo focus D focus, B 1840-Jo
495 time. D 1840 Fo BS Cl age. B J Jo In MS B: age. I J
497 of events. B(I) of events; D 1840-Jo[Cl] of events; Cl In MS B: certain canceled before events I J
Poetry D J Jo poetry 1840 Fo BS Cl In MS B: Poetry starts a new sentence I
498 co-exist D 1840 Fo Cl coexist B J BS Jo
501 effect. In MS A: the only important gap occurs here, with f. 62 rev. going on to "Civil War . . ." K
502 to Cl
503 Drama B D J Jo drama 1840 Fo BS Cl
great specimens of the Athenian drama which have been preserved to us, it is indisputable that the art itself never was understood or practised according to the true philosophy of it, as at Athens. For the Athenians employed language, action, music, painting, the dance, and religious institutions, to produce a common effect in the representation of the highest idealisms of passion and of power; each division in the art was made perfect in its kind by artists of the most consummate skill, and was disciplined into a beautiful proportion and unity one towards the other. On the modern stage a few only of the elements capable of expressing the

507 practiced Cl
510 institutions Cl
512 highest B(I) D 1840 Fo BS loftiest B(J) J Cl Jo
In MS B: loftiest J
513 of the art B(I) in the art D 1840-Jo
514 skill Cl
516 one towards the other. B(I) D 1840 Fo BS one towards another. B(J) J Cl Jo
In MS B: among each other inserted and canceled 1; among each other canceled for one towards another J
516-517 a few only B D MS B is damaged; one or more seems canceled and is followed by illegible letters J
image of the poet's conception are employed at once. We have tragedy without music and dancing; and music and dancing without the highest impersonation of which they are the fit accompaniment, and both without religion and solemnity. Religious institution has indeed been usually banished from the stage. Our system of divesting the actor's face of a mask, on which the many expressions appropriated to his dramatic character might be moulded into one permanent and unchanging expression, is favourable only to a partial and inharmonious effect; it is fit for nothing but a monologue, where all the attention may be directed to some great master of ideal mimicry. The modern
practice of blending comedy with tragedy, though liable to great abuse in point of practice, is undoubtedly an extension of the dramatic circle; but the comedy should be as in King Lear, universal, 535 ideal and sublime. It is perhaps the intervention of this principle which determines the balance in favour of King Lear against the Oedipus Tyrannus or the Agamemnon, or, if you will, the trilogies with which they are connected; unless the intense power of the choral poetry, especially that of the latter, should be considered as restoring the equilibrium. King Lear, if it can sustain this comparison, may be judged to be the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world; 545
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in spite of the narrow conditions to which the poet was subjected by the ignorance of the philosophy of the Drama which has prevailed in modern Europe. Calderon in his religious Autos has attempted to fulfil some of the high conditions of dramatic representation neglected by Shakespeare; such as the establishing a relation between the drama and religion, and the accommodating them to music and dancing; but he omits the observation of conditions still more important, and more is lost than gained by a substitution of the rigidly-defined

548 Drama D drama B 1840-Jo In MS B: art canceled for drama I J

549 Calderon in his religious Autos D Calderon in his religious Autos Cl Calderon, in his religious Autos, B 1840-Jo[C1]

550 attempted In MS B: fulfilled in canceled before attempted I J

551 Shakespeare[e]: D Shakespeare; B(I) Fo Shakespeare, Cl Shakespeare; 1840 BS J Jo

553 religion Cl accommodating B 1840 accomodat­ing D

554 dancing, D dancing; B 1840-Jo

556 a substitution B(J) D J Cl Jo the substitution
and ever-repeated idealisms of a distorted superstition for the living impersonations of the truth of human passion.

But we digress.—The author of the Four Ages of Poetry has prudently omitted to dispute on the effect of the Drama upon life and manners. For, if I know the knight by the device of his shield, I have only to inscribe Philoctetes, or Agamemnon.

B(I) 1840 Fo BS In MS B: the canceled for a rigidly defined B(I)

559 passion. B D 1845 Fo J Jo passions. 1840 BS Cl

560-569 But we digress.—The . . . pagans. The connexion B D J Cl Jo But I digress.—The connexion 1840 Fo BS In MS D: The two sentences referring to Peacock are canceled in darker ink than that of the text. These are omitted in the 1840 edition. K

560 we B D I 1840 In MSS B, D: we I J K digress. B(I) D 1840 Fo BS Cl digress. B(J) J Jo digress. The Cl author D Cl Author B J Jo Four Ages of Poetry D J Jo 4 Ages of Poetry B Four Ages of Poetry Cl

562 Drama B D J Jo drama Cl

563 Knight B J Jo knight D Cl devise D device

B J Cl Jo

564 Philoctetes, D Philoctetes B J Cl Jo
or Othello upon mine to put to flight the giant sophisms which have enchanted him, as the mirror of intolerable light, though on the arm of one of the weakest of the Paladins, could blind and scatter whole armies of necromancers and pagans. The connexion of scenic exhibitions with the improvement or corruption of the manners of men, has been universally recognized; in other words, the presence or absence of poetry in its most perfect and universal form has been found to be connected with good or evil in conduct and habit. The corrup-
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tion which has been imputed to the drama as an effect begins, when the poetry employed in its constitution, ends: I appeal to the history of manners whether the gradations of the growth of the one and the decline of the other have not corresponded with an exactness equal to any example of moral cause and effect.

The drama at Athens, or wheresoever else it may have approached to its perfection, ever co-existed with the moral and intellectual greatness of the

577 effect D Cl effect, B 1840-Jo[Cl] begins Cl employed A B In MS D: written employ K

578 constitution, B(I) D constitution 1840-Jo ends; Cl

579 the gradations of B J Cl Jo the [ ] of D the periods of 1840 Fo BS In MS B: gradations clearly written I J In MS D: blank space left K In 1840: Mrs. Shelley fills space with periods In MS F: Miss Clairmont fills the space with the quick growth of Fo

581 any example D 1840 Fo BS any other example B J Cl Jo In MS B: any other I J

583 Athens D Athens, B 1840-Jo

584 ever B(I) D 1840 Fo BS Cl ever omitted J Jo co-existed D 1840 Fo Cl coexisted B(I) BS J Jo
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age. The tragedies of the Athenian poets are as mirrors in which the spectator beholds himself, under a thin disguise of circumstance, stript of all but that ideal perfection and energy which every one feels to be the internal type of all that he loves, admires, and would become. The imagination is enlarged by a sympathy with pains and passions so mighty that they distend in their conception the capacity of that by which they are conceived; the good affections are strengthened by pity, indignation, terror and sorrow; and an exalted calm is prolonged from the satiety of this high exercise of them into the tumult of familiar life; even crime is disarmed of half its horror and all its contagion by being represented as the fatal consequence of the unfathomable agencies of nature;

591 Loves, B(I)
593 mighty D Cl mighty, B 1840-Jo[C1]
594 conceived; D conceived, 1840 BS conceived; B 1845 Fo J Cl Jo In MS D: considered canceled for conceived K
596 terror, 1852 Cl
598 life; D Cl life: B 1840-Jo[C1]
599 disarmed In MS B: divested canceled for disarmed I J
error is thus divested of its wilfulness; men can no longer cherish it as the creation of their choice. In a drama of the highest order there is little food for censure or hatred; it teaches rather self-knowledge and self-respect. Neither the eye nor the mind can see itself, unless reflected upon that which it resembles. The drama, so long as it continues to express poetry, is as a prismatic and many-sided mirror, which collects the brightest rays of human nature and divides and reproduces them from the simplicity of these ele-

604 choice: in a B(I) choice. In a D 1845 Jo
605 choice. In the 1840 Fo BS In MS B: sentence runs on. I
606 Neither the eye or A D Neither the eye nor B 1840-Jo
607 itself Cl
608 drama D drama, B 1840-Jo
609 is as a B D 1845 J Cl Jo is a 1840 Fo BS
610 mirror Cl
611 and divides and In MS B: and divides them was canceled after nature; and divides was then written
612 of their Fo
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mentary forms, and touches them with majesty and beauty, and multiplies all that it reflects, and endows it with the power of propagating its like wherever it may fall.

But in periods of the decay of social life, the drama sympathizes with that decay. Tragedy becomes a cold imitation of the form of the great masterpieces of antiquity, divested of all harmonious accompaniment of the kindred arts; and often the very form misunderstood; or a weak attempt to teach certain doctrines, which the writer considers as moral truths; and which are usually no more than specious flatteries of some gross vice or weakness with which the author in common with
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his auditors are infected. Hence what has been called the classical and domestic drama. Addison's 'Cato' is a specimen of the one, and would it were not superfluous to cite examples of the other! To such purposes Poetry cannot be made subservient. Poetry is a sword of lightning ever unsheathed, which consumes the scabbard that would contain it. And thus we observe that all dramatic writings of this nature are unimaginative in a singular degree; they affect sentiment and passion: which divested of imagination are other names for caprice and appetite. The period in our own history of the grossest degradation of the drama is the reign of

627 auditors D auditors, B 1840-Jo are BS says: needs is; perhaps an early draft had a plural subject K says: the plural is grating

629 'Cato' D Cato B "Cato" 1840-Jo[Cl] Cato Cl one, D one; B 1840-Jo

631 Poetry D poetry B 1840-Jo

632 lightning D lightning, B 1840-Jo

636-637 passion; which divested of imagination D passion, which, divested of imagination, B 1840-Jo[Cl] passion which, divested of imagination, Cl

638 in B D In MS B: of canceled for in I
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Charles II when all forms in which poetry had been accustomed to be expressed became hymns to the triumph of kingly power over liberty and virtue. Milton stood alone illuminating an age unworthy of him. At such periods the calculating principle pervades all the forms of dramatic exhibition, and poetry ceases to be expressed upon them. Comedy loses its ideal universality; wit succeeds to humour; we laugh from self-complacency and triumph instead of pleasure; malignity, sarcasm and contempt succeed to sympathetic merriment; we hardly laugh, but we smile. Obscenity, which is ever blasphemy against the divine beauty in life becomes, from the very veil which it assumes, more active if less disgusting; it is a monster for
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which the corruption of society for ever brings forth new food, which it devours in secret.

The drama being that form under which a greater number of modes of expression of poetry are susceptible of being combined than any other, the connexion of poetry and social good is more observable in the drama than in whatever other form; and it is indisputable that the highest perfection of human society has ever corresponded with the highest dramatic excellence; and that the corruption or the extinction of the drama in a nation where it has once flourished, is a mark of a corruption of manners, and an extinction of the energies which

655 of society B D 1840 In MS B: simple canceled before society J forever C1
659 connection C1
661 form: and D form. And 1840-Jo
664 excellence: D excellence; 1840-Jo corruption D
In MS D: conception corrected to corruption K
665 nation B D In MS B: country canceled before nation J
666 corruption D In MS D: conception again corrected to corruption, in the same hand as the previous correction K
667 manners C1
sustain the soul of social life. But, as Machiavelli says of political institutions, that life may be preserved and renewed, if men should arise capable of bringing back the drama to its principles. And this is true with respect to poetry in its most extended sense: all language, institution and form require not only to be produced but to be sustained: the office and character of a poet participates in the divine nature as regards providence, no less than as regards creation.

Civil war, the spoils of Asia, and the fatal predominance first of the Macedonian, and then of

668 soul D 1840 In MS B: soul is omitted J
670 renewed Cl
672 with respect D 1840 In MS B: with respect omitted J
673 sense: D 1840 Fo BS sense: J Cl Jo
673-674 language, institution and form D language, institution and form, 1840 Fo BS language institution and form, J Jo language, institution, and form Cl
675 sustained: Cl
678 Civil war, B D In MS B: subjugation of Persia canceled after Civil war J
679 Macedonia Cl
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the Roman arms were so many symbols of the extinction or suspension of the creative faculty in Greece. The bucolic writers, who found patronage under the lettered tyrants of Sicily and Egypt, were the latest representatives of its most glorious reign. Their poetry is intensely melodious; like the odour of the tuberose, it overcomes and sickens the spirit with excess of sweetness; whilst the poetry of the preceding age was as a meadow-gale of June which mingles the fragrance of all the flowers of the field and adds a quickening and harmonizing spirit of its own which endows the sense with a power of sustaining its extreme delight. The bucolic and erotic delicacy in written poetry is correlative with that softness in statuary, music, and the kindred arts, and even in

680 arms D arms, 1840-Jo
687 sweetness, while C1
689 June D C1 June, 1840-Jo[C1]
690 field D C1 field, 1840-Jo[C1] adds a quickening
B D In MS B: an harmony is canceled after adds J
691 harmonizing D Fo C1 harmonising 1840 BS J Jo own, 1852
692 delight. B D In MS B: which it communicates canceled after delight J
695 arts C1
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manners and institutions which distinguished the epoch to which we now refer. Nor is it the poetical faculty itself, or any misapplication of it, to which this want of harmony is to be imputed. An equal sensibility to the influence of the senses and the affections is to be found in the writings of Homer and Sophocles: the former especially has clothed sensual and pathetic images with irresistible attractions. Their superiority over these succeeding writers consists in the presence of those thoughts which belong to the inner faculties of our nature, not in the absence of those which are connected with the external; their incomparable perfection consists in a harmony of the union

696 institutions D Cl institutions, 1840-Jo[G1]
697 we A B D J Cl Jo I 1840 1845 Fo BS
698 it D it, 1840-Jo
702 Sophocles; Cl form, especially D former, especially, 1840-Jo
704 Their superiority over these succeeding D 1845 Fo J
Cl Jo The superiority in these to succeeding 1840 BS
708 external; D Cl external; 1840-Jo[G1]
709 a harmony D 1840 BS Cl an harmony B Fo J Jo

In MS B: an harmony J
of all. It is not what the erotic poets have, but what they have not, in which their imperfection consists. It is not inasmuch as they were Poets, but inasmuch as they were not Poets, that they can be considered with any plausibility as connected with the corruption of their age. Had that corruption availed so as to extinguish in them the sensibility to pleasure, passion and natural scenery, which is imputed to them as an imperfection, the last triumph of evil would have been achieved. For the end of social corruption is to destroy all sensibility to pleasure; and therefore it is corruption. It begins at the imagination and the intellect as at the core, and distributes itself thence as a paralyzing venom, through the affections into the very appetites, until all become a
torpid mass in which hardly sense survives. At the approach of such a period, Poetry ever addresses itself to those faculties which are the last to be destroyed, and its voice is heard, like the footsteps of Astraea, departing from the world. Poetry ever communicates all the pleasure which men are capable of receiving: it is ever still the light of life; the source of whatever of beautiful, or generous, or true can have place in an evil time. It will readily be confessed that those among the luxurious citizens of Syracuse and Alexandria who were delighted with the poems of Theocritus.
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critus, were less cold, cruel and sensual than the remnant of their tribe. But corruption must utterly have destroyed the fabric of human society before Poetry can ever cease. The sacred links of that chain have never been entirely disjoined, which descending through the minds of many men is attached to those great minds, whence as from a magnet the invisible effluence is sent forth which at once connects, animates and sustains the life of all. It is the faculty which contains within itself the seeds at once of its own and of social renovation. And let us not circumscribe the effects of the bucolic and erotic poetry within the limits of the sensibility of those to whom it was addressed. They may have perceived the beauty of

738 cruel D cruel, 1840-Jo
739 tribe. In MS A, at the top of f. 60 rev., appear a few blank lines, and at the bottom of the page appears a note: This is the language of Plato K
740 utterly have D 1840 Fo BS Cl have utterly B J Jo
In MS B: have utterly J
741 Poetry D poetry 1840-Jo
743 men, Fo
745 forth D forth, 1840-Jo[Fo] forth; Fo
746 animates D Fo J Jo animates, 1840 BS Cl
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these immortal compositions, simply as fragments and isolated portions: those who are more finely organized, or born in a happier age, may recognize them as episodes to that great poem, which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world.

The same revolutions within a narrower sphere had place in antient Rome; but the actions and

753 these D those 1840-Jo compositions Cl
754 portions; Cl
755 organized, D Fo Cl organised, 1840 BS J Jo an happier Fo recognize D Fo Cl recognise 1840 BS J Jo
756 poem Cl
759 world. In MS A: the last two sentences of this paragraph are out of place, and appear a few pages later, on f. 55 v. rev. K In MS B: this passage does not appear, but the place is marked for an insertion by "xx" and the word "insert." J

760 The MS A, f. 59 v. rev., has a canceled passage: It is like one watching a beloved friend in pain or in decay, who murmurs half-articulate consolations; which are rather felt than heard. K revolution Fo

761 antient D J Jo ancient 1840 Fo BS Cl
forms of its social life never seem to have been perfectly saturated with the poetical element. The Romans appear to have considered the Greeks as the selectest treasuries of the selectest forms of manners and of nature and to have abstained from creating in measured language, sculpture, music or architecture anything which might bear a particular relation to their own condition, whilst it should bear a general one to the universal constitution of the world. But we judge from partial evidence; and we judge perhaps partially. Ennius, Varro, Pacuvius and Accius, all great poets, have been lost. Lucretius is in the highest, and Virgil in a very high sense, a creator. The chosen deli-

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766 nature D Cl nature, 1840-Jo[C1]
767 music D music, 1840-Jo
768 architecture D architecture, 1840-Jo anything
769 while Cl
770 should D 1840 Fo BS might B J Cl Jo In MS B: might J
772 evidence; D evidence, 1840-Jo
773 Pacuvius D Pacuvius, 1840-Jo
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cacy of the expressions of the latter, are as a
mist of light which conceal from us the intense
and exceeding truth of his conceptions of nature.
Livy is instinct with poetry. Yet Horace, Catullus,
Ovid, and generally the other great writers of the
Virgilian age, saw man and nature in the mirror of
Greece. The institutions also and the religion
of Rome were less poetical than those of Greece,
as the shadow is less vivid than the substance.
Hence Poetry in Rome seemed to follow rather

776 of the expressions B(J) D J Cl Jo of expressions
1840 Fo BS latter D Cl latter, 1840-Jo[Cl] are D
1840-Jo[Cl] are[is] Cl
777 conceal D 1840-Jo[Cl] conceal[s] Cl MS A first
read: The beauty and the chosen delicacy of the expressions
of the latter conceal. Then, are as a mist of light was
added, and beauty was canceled. However, both MS D and the
1840-1852 editions retain are and conceal. K
779 Yet Horace, D 1840-Jo Horace B(J)
782 also D also, 1840-Jo
783 Rome D 1852 Cl Rome, 1840-Jo[1852 Cl]
785 Hence Poetry . . . D 1840 In MS A, ff. 59 rev. and
58 v rev. give a different text of this passage: Yet Poetry
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than accompany the perfection of political and
domestic society. The true Poetry of Rome lived
in its institutions; for whatever of beautiful,
true and majestic they contained could have
sprung only from the faculty which creates the
order in which they consist. The life of Camillus;
lived & lived in Rome, contemporaneously with all the other
arts which add beauty & divinity to the condition of man;
except that of civil institution. But the beauty & the ex-
cellence of that system of civil society which terminated in
the overthrow of the liberties of the world and of its own;
and which is even now the basis of those systems of tyranny
to which its barbarian destroyers have conformed, can scarce-
ly be produced in competition with Poetry the source of
whatever beauty or excellence of which any [form] or insti-
tution or opinion is susceptible. But I blaspheme. K
Poetry in Rome D  poetry in Rome, 1840-Jo[C1]  poetry
in Rome C1  follow D C1  follow, 1840-Jo[C1]
786 accompany D C1  accompany, 1840-Jo[C1]
787 Poetry D  poetry 1840-Jo
788 whatsoever C1
789 true and majestic they contained D  true, and
majestic, they contained, 1840 BS J Jo  of true and majo-
tic, they contained, Fo  true, and majestic they contained C1
791 Camillus: D  Camillus, 1840-Jo
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the death of Regulus; the expectation of the senators in their godlike state of the victorious Gauls; the refusal of the republic to make peace with Hannibal after the battle of Cannae, were not the consequences of a refined calculation of the probable personal advantage to result from such a rhythm and order in the shews of life, to those who were at once the poets and the actors of these immortal dramas. The imagination beholding the beauty of this order, created it out of itself according to its own idea: the consequence was empire, and the reward ever-living fame. These things are not the less poetry, quia carent vate

792 senators D senators, 1840 Fo BS Cl Senators, J Jo

793 state D state, 1840-Jo

794 republic D 1840 Fo BS Republic J Cl Jo Gauls: 1852

795 Hannibal D Fo Cl Hannibal, 1840 BS J Cannae Cl Jo

798 shews D J Jo shows 1840 Fo BS Cl life Cl

801 order Cl

802 idea: D idea; 1840-Jo

803 ever-living D 1845 J Jo everliving Cl everlasting 1840 BS Fo

804 poetry 1852
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sacro. They are the episodes of that cyclic poem written by Time upon the memories of men. The Past, like an inspired rhapsodist, fills the theatre of everlasting generations with their harmony.

At length the antient system of religion and manners had fulfilled the circle of its revolutions. And the world would have fallen into utter anarchy and darkness, but that there were found poets among the authors of the Christian and Chivalric systems of manners and religion, who created forms of opinion and action never before conceived; which copied into the imaginations of men became as gen-

805 the cyclic Jo
807 Past Cl rhapsodist, D 1840-Jo[C1] rhapsodist C1
In MS A: rhapsodist In MS D: rhapsodist corrected to rhapsodist K
809 antient D J Jo ancient 1840 Fo BS C1
810 revolutions. D 1845 C1 revolution. J Jo evolutions. 1840 Fo BS
812 darkness C1
813 Chivalric D J Jo chivalric 1840 Fo BS C1
814 religion C1
815 conceived; D 1840-Jo[C1] conceived, C1 In MS A: imagined K which D C1 which, 1840-Jo[C1]
816 men D C1 men, 1840-Jo[C1]
erars to the bewildered armies of their thoughts. It is foreign to the present purpose to touch upon the evil produced by these systems: except that we protest, on the ground of the principles already established, that no portion of it can be attributed to the poetry they contain.

It is probable that the poetry of Moses, Job, David, Solomon and Isaiah had produced a great effect upon the mind of Jesus and his disciples. The scattered fragments preserved to us by the biographers of this extraordinary person, are all instinct with the most vivid poetry. But his doctrines seem to have been quickly distorted. At a certain period after the prevalence of a system of opinions...
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founded upon those promulgated by him, the three forms into which Plato had distributed the faculties of mind underwent a sort of apotheosis, and became the object of the worship of the civilized world. Here it is to be confessed that 'Light seems to thicken, and

The crow makes wing to the rocky wood,

Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,

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A B J C1 Jo In MS D: the prevalence of doctrines [as in MS A] was corrected to the prevalence of a system of opinions K In MS B: after of doctrines is canceled the comments of his disciples upon them J

833 apotheosis C1

834-835 the worship of the civilized world. D Fo C1 the worship of Europe. A B J Jo the worship of the civilized world. 1840 BS In MS B: The worship of Europe J In MS D, the text has: the worship of Europe corrected to the worship of the civilized world K

835-836 'Light seems to thicken, and D "Light seems to thicken," and 1840 BS J C1 Jo "Light" seems to "thicken," Fo

837 The crow D C1 Jo "The crow 1840 1845 BS J And the crow Fo wood; Fo

838 drowse, D drowse, 1840 1845 Jo[Fo] drowse; Fo
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And night's black agents to their preys do rouze."  
But mark how beautiful an order has sprung from the  
dust and blood of this fierce chaos! how the World,  
as from a resurrection, balancing itself on the  
golden wings of knowledge and of hope, has reas­ 
sumed its yet unwearied flight into the Heaven of  
time. Listen to the music, unheard by outward ears,  
which is as a ceaseless and invisible wind, nour­ 
ishing its everlasting course with strength and  
swiftness.

839 While night's Fo do rouze. D so roude." 1840  
do rouze." 1845 do rouse." BS J do rouse. Fo Cl Jo  
In 1840: so roude a misprint BS In Forman: it is noted  
that this quotation from Macbeth (Act III, Sc. 2) is not given  
correctly in former editions.

841 How Cl World, D J Jo world, 1840 Fo BS  
world Cl

844 Heaven D J Jo heaven 1840 Fo BS Cl  
846 invisible D invivisible A In MS D: the draft  
reading invivisible possibly caused the copy to first read  
invincible, which was duly corrected afterwards to invis­  
ible K wind Cl

848 swiftness. In MS A, the following notation ap­  
ppears here: But this is not argument--not illustration--
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The poetry in the doctrines of Jesus Christ, and the mythology and institutions of the Celtic conquerors of the Roman Empire, outlived the darkness and the convulsions connected with their growth and victory, and blended themselves into a new fabric of manners and opinion. It is an error to impute the ignorance of the dark ages to the Christian doctrines or the predominance of the Celtic nations. Whatever of evil their agencies may have contained sprang from the extinction of the poetical principle, connected with the progress of despotism and superstition. Men, from causes too intricate to be here discussed, had become in-

and illustration ought not to precede the thing to be illustrated. K

849 Christ Cl

851 Roman Empire, D BS Roman empire, 1840 Fo J Jo

Roman empire Cl

853 victory Cl into A B D J Cl Jo in 1840 Fo BS

855 Dark Ages Cl

856 doctrines B D In MS B: religion canceled

for doctrines J

858 sprung D sprang 1840-Jo

859 principle Cl
sensible and selfish: their own will had become
feeble, and yet they were its slaves, and thence
the slaves of the will of others: lust, fear,
avarice, cruelty and fraud characterised a race
amongst whom no one was to be found capable of
creating in form, language or institution. The
moral anomalies of such a state of society are not
justly to be charged upon any class of events im-
mediately connected with them, and those events are
most entitled to our approbation which could dis-
solve it most expeditiously. It is unfortunate for
those who cannot distinguish words from thoughts,
that many of these anomalies have been incorporated.

862 selfish: C1
864-865 others: lust, fear, avarice, D Fo J Jo others:
but fear, avarice, 1840 BS others: lust, fear, avarice,
Cl In MS B: superstition canceled before lust J
865 cruelty and fraud D cruelty, and fraud, 1840 Fo
BS J Jo cruelty, and fraud C1 characterized D 1840 BS
J Jo characterized: Fo C1
866 among C1
867 language D C1 language, 1840-Jo[C1]
873 thoughts C1
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into our popular religion.

It was not until the eleventh century that the effects of the poetry of the Christian and the Chivalric systems began to manifest themselves. The principle of equality had been discovered and applied by Plato in his Republic, as the theoretical rule of the mode in which the materials of pleasure and of power produced by the common skill and labour of human beings ought to be distributed among them. The limitations of this rule were asserted by him to be determined only by the sensibility of

875

875 religion. In MS A, written above on f. 56 v rev., appears a canceled passage: this Religion was based upon Poetry. In MS A, on ff. 54 v and recto, is continued: thus when speaking popularly [we impute] to Christianity the absurdity, [the bloodshed, the persecutions] and iniquitous effects which has [sic] rendered the name almost infamous, we mean, according to a philosophical interpretation that such are the consequences of the extinction of the poetical faculty. K

877 and the Chivalric D and chivalric 1840 Fo BS C1 and Chivalric J Jo

880 Republic as C1

882 Labor C1 power, 1852
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each, or the utility to result to all. Plato, following the doctrines of Timaeus and Pythagoras, taught also a moral and intellectual system of doctrine comprehending at once the past, the present and the future condition of man. Jesus Christ divulged the sacred and eternal truths contained in these views to mankind, and Christianity, in its abstract purity, became the exoteric expression of the esoteric doctrines of the poetry and wisdom of antiquity. The incorporation of the Celtic nations with the exhausted population of the South, impressed upon it the figure of the poetry existing in their mythology and institutions. The result was a sum of the action and reaction of all the causes included in it; for it may be assumed as a maxim that no nation or religion can supersede any

886 all. Plato B D In MS B: Jesus Christ divulged this sacred and eternal truth to mankind canceled before Plato J

889 doctrine D doctrine, 1840-Jo present D present, 1840-Jo

892 Christianity Cl

893 purity Cl

896 South, D south, 1840-Jo[Cl] south Cl
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other without incorporating into itself a portion of that which it supersedes. The abolition of personal and domestic slavery, and the emancipation of women from a great part of the degrading restraints of antiquity, were among the consequences of these events.

The abolition of personal slavery is the basis of the highest political hope that it can enter into the mind of man to conceive. The freedom of women produced the poetry of sexual love. Love became a religion, the idols of whose worship were ever present. It was as if the statues of Apollo and the Muses had been endowed with life and motion and had walked forth among their worshippers; so that earth became peopled by the inhabitants of a diviner world. The familiar appearance and proceedings of life became wonderful and heavenly,
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and a paradise was created as out of the wrecks of Eden. And as this creation itself is poetry, so its creators were poets; and language was the instrument of their art: 'Galeotto fa il libro, e chi lo scrisse.' The Provençal Trouveurs, or inventors, preceded Petrarch, whose verses are as spells which unseal the inmost enchanted fountains of the delight which is in the grief of Love. It is impossible to feel them without becoming a portion of that beauty which we contemplate: it were superfluous to explain how the gentleness and the elevation of mind connected with these sacred emotions can render men more amiable, more generous,

922-923 'Galeotto ... scrisse.' D "Galeotto ... scrisse." 1840 "Galeotto ... scrisse." 1845-Jo

In MS A: the quotation is not in the draft K

925 spells D Cl spells, 1840-Jo[Cl] enchanted Fo

926 Love. D love. 1840-Jo

928 contemplate: Cl

929 superfluous D 1845 super[]uous 1840 and the D J Cl Jo and 1840 Fo BS

931-932 more amiable, more generous, and wise, D more amiable, and generous and wise, B J Jo more amiable, more generous and wise, 1840 Fo BS more amiable, and generous, and wise, Cl In MS B: and generous J
and wise, and lift them out of the dull vapours of the little world of self. Dante understood the secret things of love even more than Petrarch. His Vita Nuova is an inexhaustible fountain of purity of sentiment and language; it is the idealized history of that period, and those intervals of his life which were dedicated to love. His apotheosis of Beatrice in Paradise and the gradations of his own love and her loveliness, by which as by steps he feigns himself to have ascended to the throne of the Supreme Cause, is the most glorious imagination of modern poetry. The acutest critics have justly reversed the judgement of the vulgar, and the order of the great acts of the 'Divine Drama' in the
measure of the admiration which they accord to the
Hell, Purgatory and Paradise. The latter is a
perpetual hymn of everlasting love. Love, which
found a worthy poet in Plato alone of all the anti-
ents, has been celebrated by a chorus of the great-
est writers of the renovated world; and the music
has penetrated the caverns of society, and its
echoes still drown the dissonance of arms and super-
stition. At successive intervals Ariosto, Tasso,
Shakspear, Spenser, Calderon, Rousseau, and the
great writers of our own age, have celebrated the
dominion of love, planting as it were trophies in
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the human mind of that sublimest victory over sensuality and force. The true relation borne to each other by the sexes into which human kind is distributed has become less misunderstood; and if the error which confounded diversity with inequality of the powers of the two sexes has been partially recognized in the opinions and institutions of modern Europe, we owe this great benefit to the worship of which Chivalry was the law, and poets the prophets.

The poetry of Dante may be considered as the bridge thrown over the stream of time, which unites the modern and antient world. The distorted no-

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961 distributed D Cl distributed, 1840-Jo[C1]
963 has been D 1840 Fo BS Cl has become B J Jo In MS B: become J
964 recognized D Fo Cl recognised 1840 BS J Jo
966 Chivalry D J Jo chivalry 1840 Fo BS Cl
969 time D time, 1840-Jo
970 antient world. D ancient world. 1840-Fo BS Cl antient World. J Jo In MS A, at the top of f. 50 v rev., appears: [If it had consisted with the plan of the present essay, we might have entered into and touched upon those monstrous conceptions which Dante & Milton have idealised]. Let us refrain from a discussion [of] the origin of those
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tions of invisible things which Dante and his rival Milton have idealised, are merely the mask and the mantle in which these great poets walk through eternity enveloped and disguised. It is a difficult question to determine how far they were conscious of the distinction which must have subsisted in their minds between their own creeds and that of the people. Dante at least appears to wish to mark the full extent of it by placing Rhapsus whom Virgil calls *justissimus unus* in Paradise, and observing a most heretical caprice in his distribution of rewards and punishments. And Milton's poem contains within itself a philosophical refutation of that system of which, by a strange and monstrous opinions which Dante & Milton idealized which involves no less than an inquiry into the origin of evil. (The draft possibly has *enquiry* rather than *inquiry.*)
natural antithesis, it has been a chief popular support. Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in Paradise Lost. It is a mistake to suppose that he could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil. Implacable hate, patient cunning, and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremest anguish on an enemy, these things are evil; and although venial in a slave are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; although redeemed by much that ennobles his defeat in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonours his conquest in the victor. Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God as one who

988 Paradise Lost. D Fo "Paradise Lost." 1840 BS J Jo

Paradise Lost. C1

991 cunning, D 1840 Fo BS C1 cunning J Jo

992 enemy-- C1

993 and D and, 1840-Jo slave D C1 slave, 1840-Jo[Cl]

996 subdued C1 dishonors C1

998 God as one D C1 God, as one 1840 Fo BS God, as One J Jo In MS B: One is specially marked for a capital J
perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments. Milton has so far violated the popular creed (if this shall be judged to be a violation) as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his God over his Devil. And this bold neglect of a direct moral purpose is the most decisive proof of the supremacy of Milton's genius. He mingled as it were the elements of human nature,
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as colours upon a single pallet, and arranged them into the composition of his great picture according to the laws of epic truth; that is, according to the laws of that principle by which a series of actions of the external universe, and of intelligent and ethical beings is calculated to excite the sympathy of succeeding generations of mankind. The Divina Commedia and Paradise Lost have conferred upon modern mythology a systematic form; and when change and time shall have added one more superstition to the mass of those which have arisen and decayed upon the earth, commentators will be learnedly employed in elucidating the religion of ancestral Europe, only not utterly forgotten because it will have been stamped with the eternity of genius.

Homer was the first, and Dante the second epic poet: that is, the second poet the series of
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whose creations bore a defined and intelligible relation to the knowledge, and sentiment, and religion, of the age in which he lived, and of the ages which followed it, developing itself in correspondence with their development. For Lucretius had limed the wings of his swift spirit in the dregs of the sensible world: and Virgil with a modesty that ill became his genius, had

1032-33 knowledge, and sentiment, and religion, D knowledge and sentiment and religion 1840-Jo

1033 of the age D 1840 Fo BS and political conditions of the age B J Cl Jo In MS B: and political conditions appears J In MS D, and 1840: and political conditions does not appear. lived Cl

1034 it, D Cl it: 1840-Jo[Cl]

1035 their D In MS D: the is corrected to thier (Shelley's spelling). This sentence is unfinished in MS A. K development D Fo development 1840

1035-37 For Lucretius . . . sensible world D 1840 In MS A: Lucretius entangled the wings of his swift spirit in atoms. K

1037 world: D world; 1840-Jo Virgil D Virgil, 1840-Jo

1038 that ill D 1840 Fo BS which ill J Cl Jo
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affected the fame of an imitator even whilst he created anew all that he copied; and none among the flock of mock-birds, though their notes were sweet, Apollonius Rhodius, Quintus Calaber Smyrnaeus, Nonnus, Lucan, Statius or Claudian have sought even to fulfil a single condition of epic truth. Milton was the third Epic Poet: for if the title of epic in its highest sense

1039 imitator D imitator, 1840-Jo
1041 mock-birds, D 1840 Fo BS Cl Mock-birds, J Jo were D J Cl Jo are 1840 Fo BS
1042-43 Quintus Calaber Smyrnaeus, A BS Cl Jo Quintus Calaber, Smyrnaeus, D 1840 Fo Quintus Calaber 1845 1847 1852 Quintus Calaber Smyrnetheus B J[with note that Smyrnetheus is a misprint in text] In MS A: Quintus Calaber Smyrnaeus appears properly, with no comma added BS In MS B: Smyrnaeus is misspelled Smyrnetheus In MS D, and 1840: The comma between Calaber and Smyrnaeus is incorrect, and attributable to Mary Shelley BS In 1845, 1847, and 1852: Smyrnaeus is left out, and only Quintus Calaber is printed, in an apparent effort to correct the title.
1043 Statius or Claudian D Statius, or Claudian, 1840-Jo[Cl] Statius, or Claudian Cl
1045 Epic Poet: for D epic poet. For 1840-Jo
be refused to the Aeneid, still less can it be conceded to the Orlando Furioso, the Gerusalemme Liberata, the Lusiad or the Fairy Queen.

Dante and Milton were both deeply penetrated with the antient religion of the civilized world; and its spirit exists in their poetry probably in the same proportion as its forms survived in the unreformed worship of modern Europe. The one preceded and the other followed the Reformation at almost equal intervals. Dante was the first reli-

1047-49 Aeneid . . . Fairy Queen Cl
1049 Lusiad D Lusiad, 1840-Jo
1051 antient D J Jo ancient 1840 Fo BS Cl civilised BS 1852 world, Cl
1054 proceeded D preceded A 1840
1056 intervals. D In MS A an uncanceled addition appears: They have presented the mythology of the new religion under a precise form; so that, by a definiteness of object & purpose, the labours of those are abridged, who as pioneers of the overgrowth of ages, devote themselves first to prune the dead branches & then to remove the sapless & rotten trunks of an outworn forest of opinions which towards the decay of a popular faith usurps the soil of a new and more beautiful birth. X
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gious reformer, and Luther surpassed him rather in the rudeness and acrimony, than in the boldness of his censures of papal usurpation. Dante was the first awakener of entranced Europe; he created a language in itself music and persuasion out of a chaos of inharmonious barbarisms. He was the congregator of those great spirits who presided over the resurrection of learning; the Lucifer of that starry flock which in the thirteenth century shone forth from republican Italy, as from a heaven, into the darkness of the benighted world. His very words are instinct with spirit; each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with the lightning which has yet found no conductor. All high poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn, which contained all oaks po-
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tentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never ex-
posed. A great Poem is a fountain for ever over-
flowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all its divine effluence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another suc-
ceeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight.

In MS A, the following passage is marked for reference here to make its position clear, but appears later, on f. 36 v rev.: After one person or one age has exhausted all the divinity which its peculiar relations with them enable it to draw forth, another and yet another succeeds & finds new relations develope [,] which forever produces new pleasure and knowledge. [They are as] torches from which a thousand lamps may be enkindled.

(Over the canceled words They are as appears A great Poem is,)

Poetry is as [the] a star
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The age immediately succeeding to that of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio was characterised by a revival of painting, sculpture, music, and architecture. Chaucer caught the sacred inspiration, and the superstructure of English literature is based upon the materials of Italian invention.

But let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the

whose light is so intense and whose height is so immeasurably great, that distance . . . at the most distant extremes of the orbit of the earth. J

1084 Petrarch D Petrarch, 1840-Jo Boccaccio D Cl Boccaccio, 1845-Jo[Cl] Boccaccio, 1840 In 1840; the spelling of Boccacio is a printer's error BS characterized A 1840 Fo J Cl Jo characterized D 1852 BS

1085 sculpture, music, and A B D J Jo sculpture, and 1840 Fo BS In MSS A, D: music K In MS B: music J

1090 poetry D 1840 Fo BS Cl Poetry J Jo

1091 society. D 1840 Fo BS Cl Society. J Jo In MS A the following is added: from a slight sketch which is soon to be forgotten to an attempt which oblivion would dishonour. K
effects of poets in the large and true sense of the word upon their own and all succeeding times and to revert to the partial instance cited as illustration of an opinion the reverse of that attempted to be established in the Four Ages of Poetry.

But poets have been challenged to resign the

1092 poets D poets, 1840-Jo In MS B: poetry J
1093 word D word, 1840-Jo
1093-98 times. But poets 1840 Fo BS times, and to . . . Four Ages of Poetry. But poets B D J Cl Jo In MS D: a period has been placed after times, and the rest of the passage is canceled in very black ink. K In 1840: Mrs. Shelley has again omitted the canceled MS D Peacock reference. In MS B: the full passage is present J
1093 times D times, J Cl Jo
1094 instance D instances J Cl Jo
1095 illustration D illustrations J Cl Jo
1096 in the Four D by the Author of the Four B J Jo by the author of The Four C1 The Four Ages of Poetry C1 1097 Poetry. In MS A: the draft goes on immediately after Four Ages of Poetry to the passage beginning The exer-
tions of Locke [which appears four paragraphs later in MS D]. K
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civic crown to reasoners and mechanists on another plea. It is admitted that the exercise of the imagination is most delightful, but it is alleged that that of reason is more useful. Let us examine as the grounds of this distinction what is here meant by Utility. Pleasure or good in a general sense, is that which the consciousness of a sensitive and intelligent being seeks, and in which when found it acquiesces. There are two kinds of pleasure, one durable, universal,
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and permanent; the other transitory and particular. Utility may either express the means of producing the former or the latter. In the former sense, whatever strengthens and purifies the affections, enlarges the imagination, and adds spirit to sense, is useful. But the meaning in which the

In MS A: and there are various gradations of pleasure, some more durable and intense than others. K In MS B: modes or degrees J MS B has a canceled passage here: there are various degrees or modes of pleasure, one more durable and intense than the other. Utility may either be employed to express a method of . . . J In MS D: two modes or signs of pleasure is canceled for two kinds of pleasure K universal, D C1 universal 1840-Jo[C1]

1112 sense C1

1114 sense C1

1114-17 But the meaning . . . Four Ages . . . banishing B D J Jo But a narrower meaning may be assigned to the word utility, confining it to express that which banishes 1840 Fo BS But the meaning . . . The Four Ages of Poetry . . . utility . . . banishing C1 In MS B: full passage is present J In MS D: the passage is neither canceled nor altered K In 1840: this is another of the passages referring to The Four Ages of Poetry which has been
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Author of the Four Ages of Poetry seems to have employed the word utility is the narrower one of banishing the importunity of the wants of our animal nature, the surrounding men with security of life, the dispersing the grosser delusions of superstition, and the conciliating such a degree of mutual forbearance among men as may consist with the motives of personal advantage.

Undoubtedly the promoters of utility in this limited sense, have their appointed office in society. They follow the footsteps of poets, and copy the sketches of their creations into the book of common life. They make space, and give time.

omitted by Mrs. Shelley in her editions. In MS G: Koszul suggests that the second and third fragments published by Garnett in the Relics of Shelley belong to this section. [See appendix A for text.]

1117 wants D In MS A: no continuation to f. 43 v rev. appears, pages being torn K

1123 utility D Cl utility, 1840-Jo[Cl]

1124 sense Cl office in society. D 1840 In MS B: after office is canceled is they have their due praise J

1125 poets Cl

1127 space Cl
Their exertions are of the highest value so long as they confine their administration of the concerns of the inferior powers of our nature within the limits due to the superior ones. But whilst the sceptic destroys gross superstitions, let him spare to deface, as some of the French writers have defaced, the eternal truths characterized upon the imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the political oeconomist combines, labour, let them beware that their speculations, for want of correspondence with those first principles which belong to the imagination, do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and want. They have

1128 value D Cl value, 1840-Jo[C1]
1131 whilst D 1845 Fo J Jo while 1840 BS C1
1133 deface C1
deface C1 oeconomist D economist 1840
combines, D 1840 BS J Jo combines 1845 Fo C1
1137 labor C1
1139 tend C1
1140 England C1
1141 of want. Fo
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exemplified the saying, 'To him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, the little that he hath shall be taken away.'—The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer; and the vessel of the state is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism. Such are the effects which must ever flow from an unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty.

It is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense; the definition involving a number of apparent paradoxes. For, from an inexplicable defect of harmony in the constitution of human nature, the pain of the inferior is frequently connected with the pleasures of the superior portions of our being. Sorrow, terror, anguish, despair itself

1142-44 "To him ... not ... away."—The 1840-Jo
1145 richer Cl
1146 poorer, Cl
1147 anarchy and despotism. B D In MS B: tyranny
canceled before despotism J
1152 sense—Cl
1157 itself D Cl itself, 1840—Jo[Cl]
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are often the chosen expressions of an approximation to the highest good. Our sympathy in tragic fiction, depends on this principle: tragedy delights by affording a shadow of the pleasure which exists in pain. This is the source also of the melancholy which is inseparable from the sweetest melody. The pleasure that is in sorrow, is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself. And hence the saying, 'It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of mirth.' Not that this highest species of pleasure is necessarily linked with pain. The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the
joy of the perception, and still more of the creation of poetry is often wholly unalloyed.

The production and assurance of pleasure in this highest sense is true utility. Those who produce and preserve this pleasure are poets or poetical philosophers.

The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau* and their disciples, in favour of op-

* I follow the classification adopted by the author of the Four Ages of Poetry. But Rousseau was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners.
pressed and deluded humanity are entitled to the
gratitude of mankind. Yet it is easy to calculate 1180
the degree of moral and intellectual improvement
which the world would have exhibited, had they

by the author of the Four Ages of Poetry. But Rousseau was
essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere
reasoners. D In MS D, the beginning of the note is can­
celed and altered, in very black ink, to the reading of the
printed editions: Although Rousseau . . . K * Although
Rousseau has been thus classed, he was essentially a poet.
The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners. 1840 BS

* Although . . . reasoners. [Shelley's Note.] Fo 1I
follow the classification adopted by the Author of the Four
Ages of Poetry; but he was essentially a Poet. The others,
even Voltaire, were mere reasoners. [Shelley's note.] J

1I follow . . . Author . . . Poet. The . . . reasoners. Jo

1I follow the classification adopted by the author of The
Four Ages of Poetry. Although Rousseau has been thus
classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Vol­
taire, were mere reasoners. [Shelley's Note.] Cl dis­
ciples, B D 1840-Jo[Cl] disciples Cl In MS B: are

entitled is canceled after disciples J favor Cl

1179 humanity D Cl humanity, 1840-Jo[Cl]

1182 exhibited Cl
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never lived. A little more nonsense would have been talked for a century or two; and perhaps a few more men, women and children burnt as heretics. We might not at this moment have been congratulating each other on the abolition of the Inquisition in Spain. But it exceeds all imagination to conceive what would have been the moral condition of the world if neither Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakspeare, Calderon, Lord Bacon, nor Milton had ever existed; if Raphael and Michael Angelo had never been born; if the Hebrew poetry had never been translated; if a revival of the study of Greek literature had never taken place; if no monuments of antient sculpture had been handed down to us; and if the poetry of the religion of the antient world had been extin-

1185 women and children D women, and children, 1840-Jo[Cl] women, and children Cl
1191 Boccaccio, D 1845 Boccacio, 1840 In 1840: The spelling of Boccacio is a printer's error. BS Shakspeare, A D 1840 BS J Jo Shakespeare, Fo Cl
1192 Milton D Cl Milton, 1840-Jo[Cl]
1196 antient D J Jo ancient 1840 Fo BS Cl
1198 antient D J Jo ancient 1840 Fo BS Cl
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gushed together with its belief. The human mind could never, except by the intervention of these excitements, have been awakened to the invention of the grosser sciences, and that application of analytical reasoning to the aberrations of society, which it is now attempted to exalt over the direct expression of the inventive and creative faculty itself.

We have more moral, political and historical wisdom than we know how to reduce into practice.

1201 excitements D excitements, 1840-Jo
1202 sciences Cl
1203 society Cl
1206 itself. D 1840 MS A, f. 46 rev., refers to Peacock again: The author of the four ages of Poetry closes his paper with an exhibition in array of all the denominations of the subordinate arts of life which are employed upon working out of the elements originally furnished by the poetical faculty, materials of knowledge and power. And he protests against an attempt to create new elements by that only process, exhorting us [at the same time to cultivate in preference] K

1207 political D 1845 J Jo political, 1840 Fo BS Cl
1208 wisdom D Cl wisdom, 1840-Jo[Cl] practice D

In MS D: practise corrected to practice K
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we have more scientific and oeconomical knowledge
than can be accommodated to the just distribution
of the produce which it multiplies. The poetry in
these systems of thought, is concealed by the
accumulation of facts and calculating processes.
There is no want of knowledge respecting what is
wisest and best in morals, government and politi-
cal oeconomy, or at least, what is wiser and better
than what men now practise and endure. But we 'let
I dare not wait upon I would, like the poor cat
in the adage'. We want the creative faculty to
imagine that which we know; we want the generous
impulse to act that which we imagine; we want the
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poetry of life: our calculations have outrun conception; we eaten more than we can digest. The cultivation of those sciences which have enlarged the limits of the empire of man over the external world has, for want of the poetical faculty, proportionally circumscribed those of the internal world, and man, having enslaved the elements, remains himself a slave. To what but a cultivation of the mechanical arts in a degree disproportioned to the presence of the creative faculty which is the basis of all knowledge is to be attributed

1222 life; Cl
1224 sciences D In MS A, f. 34 v rev. top, the following is canceled: Poetry is the representation of the benevolent principle in man, as [gold] [property] is the representation of the selfish principle: they are the God and the Mammon of the world . . . (which is rewritten on the next page) K
1226 world, has, A 1840-Jo[Cl] world has, D world has Cl In MS D: comma after world, canceled K
1228 world, D world; 1840-Jo
1231 faculty D faculty, 1840-Jo
1232 knowledge D knowledge, 1840-Jo
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the abuse of all invention for abridging and com-
bining labour, to the exasperation of the inequal-
ity of mankind? From what other cause has it aris-
en that the discoveries which should have light-
ened, have added a weight to the curse imposed on
Adam? Poetry, and the principle of Self, of
which money is the visible incarnation, are the
God and the Mammon of the world.

The functions of the poetical faculty are two-

1234 labor C1
1236 the discoveries D 1840 Fo BS C1 these inventions
B J Jo In MS A: inventions K In MS B: these inventions J In MS D: inventions corrected to discoveries K
1238 lightened C1
1239 Poetry, D 1840 Fo BS Thus Poetry, B J Jo Thus poetry C1 In MS B: Thus Poetry J Self, D 1840 BS J Jo Self Fo self, C1
1240 money D 1840 Fo BS Cl Money J Jo
1240 and the Mammon D and Mammon 1840-Jo
1241 The functions D In MS A: the order of the draft
at this point is different, f. 45 rev. opening with a con-
tinuation of f. 45 v rev. partly canceled, and the subject
being taken up again on f. 44 v rev. K two-fold: D
twofold: 1840-Jo[C1] twofold: C1
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fold; by one it creates new materials of knowledge, and power and pleasure; by the other it engenders in the mind a desire to reproduce and arrange them according to a certain rhythm and order, which may be called the beautiful and the good. The cultivation of poetry is never more to be desired than at periods when, from an excess of the selfish and calculating principle, the accumulation of the materials of external life exceed the quantity of the power of assimilating them to the internal laws of human nature. The body has then become too unwieldy for that which animates it.

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred. It is at the same time the root and the blossom of all other

1242 of knowledge, D 1840 Fo BS C1 for knowledge, B J Jo In MS B: for J
1243 power D 1845 J Jo power, 1840 Fo BS C1
1245 order, D 1840 Fo BS C1 order 1845 J Jo
1255 center C1
1256 science C1
1258 the blossom D blossom 1840-Jo
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systems of thought: it is that from which all
spring, and that which adorns all; and that which

if blighted denies the fruit and the seed, and
withholds from the barren world the nourishment
and the succession of the scions of the tree of
life. It is the perfect and consummate surface and
bloom of things; it is as the odour and the colour

of the rose to the texture of the elements which
compose it, as the form and splendour of unfaded
beauty to the secrets of anatomy and corruption.
What were Virtue, Love, Patriotism, Friendship, &c.
--what were the scenery of this beautiful universe

1259 thought; D thought; 1840-Jo
1260 spring Cl which D which, 1840-Jo
1261 blighted D blighted, 1840-Jo
1265 of things; A B D J Jo of all things; 1840 Fo BS
Cl In MS B: of things J In MSS A, D: all omitted K
odor Cl color Cl
1267 and D 1840 Fo BS and the B J Cl Jo In MS B: and the J splendor Cl
1269 Virtue, . . . Friendship, &c.-- D virtue, . . .
friendship,-- 1840 Fo BS virtue, . . . friendship-- 1845
Virtue, . . . Friendship-- J Jo virtue, . . . friendship;
Cl
1270 universe D 1840 Fo BS Cl Universe J Jo
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which we inhabit—what were our consolations on
this side of the grave—and what were our aspira-
tions beyond it—if poetry did not ascend to bring
light and fire from those eternal regions where the
owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar? Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be ex­erted according to the determination of the will.
A man cannot say, 'I will compose poetry.' The
greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in
creation is as a fading coal which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to
transitory brightness; this power arises from
within, like the colour of a flower which fades and

1271 inhabit-- D inhabit; 1840-Jo
1272 side the grave-- D side of the grave-- A 1840 Fo BS side of the grave, J Jo side of the grave Cl
In MS A: of the K
1273 it--if poetry D it, if poetry 1840 Fo BS Cl
it, if Poetry J Jo
1278 'I . . . poetry.' D "I . . . poetry." 1840-Jo
1279 it; D J Jo it; 1840 Fo BS Cl
1280 coal D Cl coal, 1840-Jo[Cl]
1282 brightness; D 1840 Fo BS Cl brightness; J Jo
1283 within Cl color Cl
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changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our natures are unprophetic either of its 1285 approach or its departure. Could this influence be durable in its original purity and force, it is impossible to predict the greatness of the results: but when composition begins inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet. I appeal to the greatest Poets of the present day, whether it be not an error to assert that the finest passages of poetry are produced by 1295 labour and study. The toil and the delay recommen-
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ded by critics can be justly interpreted to mean no more than a careful observation of the inspired moments, and an artificial connection of the spaces between their suggestions by the intertexture of conventional expressions; a necessity only imposed by a limitedness of the poetical faculty itself. For Milton conceived the Paradise Lost as a whole before he executed it in portions. We have his own authority also for the muse having 'dictated' to him 1305
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the 'unpremeditated song'. And let this be an answer to those who would allege the fifty-six various readings of the first line of the Orlando Furioso. Compositions so produced are to poetry what mosaic is to painting. This instinct and intuition of the poetical faculty is still more observable in the plastic and pictorial arts: a great statue or picture grows under the power of the artist as a child in the mother's womb, and the very mind which directs the hands in formation is incapable of accounting to itself for the origin, the gradations, or the media of the process.

Poetry is the record of the happiest and best
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moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond all expression: so that even in the desire and the regret they leave there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own, but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose

the 1840 text is followed, but with hesitation, for the change is felt to be Mary Shelley's. BS

1321 feeling D 1845 J Jo feeling, 1840 Fo BS C1 unforseen D unforeseen A 1840 In MS A: unforeseen K

1324 expression; C1

1325 leave D leave, 1840-Jo

1329 own; D own; 1840-Jo

1330 the sea, D 1840 Fo BS C1 a sea, B J Jo In MS B: a sea J coming calm A D 1845 BS J C1 Jo morning calm 1840 Fo In 1840: morning is a misprint BS
traces remain only as on the wrinkled sand which paves it. These and corresponding conditions of being are experienced principally by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination; and the state of mind produced by them is at war with every base desire. The enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship is essentially linked with such emotions; and whilst they last self appears as what it is, an atom to an Universe. Poets are not only subject to these experiences as spirits of the most refined organization, but they can colour all that they combine with the evanescent hues of this ethereal world; a
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word, a trait in the representation of a scene or a passion will touch the enchanted chord, and reanimate, in those who have ever experienced these emotions the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world; it arrests the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interlusions of life, and veiling them or in language or in form sends them forth among mankind bearing sweet news of kindred joy to those with whom their sisters abide—abide, because there is no portal of expression from the caverns of the spirit which they inhabit into the universe of things. Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the

1344 word, or a B J Cl Jo word, a D 1840 Fo BS In MS B: of altered to or J
1345 passion D passion, 1840-Jo enchanted Fo chord Cl
1346 reanimate C1
1346-47 these emotions D C1 those emotions, 1840 BS these emotions, 1845 Fo J Jo
1351 life and, Cl them D them, 1840-Jo
1352 form D form, 1840-Jo mankind D mankind, 1840-Jo
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divinity in man.

Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union under its light yoke all irreconcilable things. It transmutes all that it touches, and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes: its secret alchemy turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death through life; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty which is the spirit of its forms.
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All things exist as they are perceived: at least in relation to the percipient. 'The mind is its own place, and of itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.' But poetry defeats the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions. And whether it spreads its own figured curtain or withdraws life's dark

1373 perceived; D perceived; 1840-Jo[Cl] perceived-- Cl In MS A, f. 38 v rev., the end of the last paragraph is omitted, and a note given: [Things exist as they are perceived]: our existence becomes greater in proportion to our [creed?] the nobility of intellectual philosophy. K

1374 'The mind D "The mind 1840 BS J Cl Jo The mind Fo

1375 of itself can D 1840 BS J Jo in itself Can Fo in itself Can Cl

1375-76 heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.' D heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." 1840 BS Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n. Fo Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven." J Jo Cl In the Forman edition: the lines are printed as verse and inset, with a note that the quotation from Paradise Lost is printed in former editions as if it were prose, and that of itself is substituted for in itself.

1379 curtain D curtain, 1840-Jo
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veil from before the scene of things, it equally creates for us a being within our being. It makes us the inhabitants of a world to which the familiar world is a chaos. It reproduces the common universe of which we are portions and percipients, and it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being. It compels us to feel that which we perceive, and to imagine that which we know. It creates anew the universe after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence of impressions blunted by re-iteration. It justifies that bold and true word of Tasso—Non merita nome di creatore, se non Iddio ed il Poeta.

A Poet, as he is the author to others of the highest wisdom, pleasure, virtue and glory, so he...
ought personally to be the happiest, the best, the wisest and the most illustrious of men. As to his glory, let Time be challenged to declare whether the fame of any other institutor of human life be comparable to that of a poet. That he is the wisest, the happiest, and the best, inasmuch as he is a poet, is equally incontrovertible: the greatest poets have been men of the most spotless virtue, of the most consummate prudence, and, if we would look into the interior of their lives, the most fortunate of men: and the exceptions, as they regard those who possessed the poetic faculty in a high yet inferior degree, will be found on consideration to confine rather than destroy the
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rule. Let us for a moment stoop to the arbitration of popular breath, and usurping and uniting in our own persons the incompatible characters of accuser, witness, judge, and executioner, let us decide without trial, testimony, or form, that certain motives of those who are 'there sitting where we dare not soar' are reprehensible. Let us assume that Homer was a drunkard, that Virgil was a flatterer, that Horace was a coward, that Tasso was a madman, that Lord Bacon was a peculator, that Raphael was a libertine, that Spenser was a poet laureate. It is inconsistent with this division of our subject to cite living poets, but Posterity has done ample justice to the great names now referred to. Their errors have been weighed and

1413 judge, D Cl judge 1840-Jo[C1]
1413-14 let us decide without . . . form, that D 1840 BS Fo let us without . . . form, determine that B J Cl Jo
In MS B: let us without; determine J
1415-16 'there . . . soar' D "there . . . soar," 1840 Fo BS J Cl Jo
1420 Spenser D 1840 In MS D: Spenser seems corrected into Spencer K
1422 Posterity D J Jo posterity 1840 Fo BS Cl
found to have been dust in the balance; if their sins 'were as scarlet, they are now white as snow'; they have been washed in the blood of the mediator and redeemer Time. Observe in what a ludicrous chaos the imputations of real or fictitious crime have been confused in the contemporary calumnies against poetry and poets; consider how little is as it appears, or appears as it is; look to your own motives, and judge not, lest ye be judged.

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1426 'were . . . snow'; D "were . . . snow;" 1840 Fo BS were . . . snow; J Cl Jo In MS D, 1840: this is a paraphrase, although punctuated as a quotation

1428 redeemer Time. D redeemer, time. 1840 Fo BS redeemer, Time. 1845 the redeemer, Time. J ClJo

1432 is as it appears, or appears as D is, as it appears--or appears, as 1840 BS J Cl Jo is as it appears--or appears as Fo

1433 judged. D 1840 In MS A appears: And in judging Poets, the interpreters & creators of all religion & philosophy, look to your own hearts, & examine if as ye are ignobler, so ye are better even than the conception which you can form of the defects of the great; & then if ye would be judged, judge. K MS B has a canceled passage here:

--There is a certain plausibility in every erroneous opinion that has gained any degree of prevalence . . . notion of the
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Poetry, as has been said, differs in this respect from logic that it is not subject to the control of the active powers of the mind, and that its birth and recurrence have no necessary connection with consciousness or will. It is presumptuous to determine that these are the necessary conditions of all mental causation when mental effects are experienced insusceptible of being referred to them. The frequent recurrence of the poetical power, it is obvious to suppose, may produce in the mind an habit of order and harmony correlative immorality of poets...
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with its own nature and with its effects upon other minds. But in the intervals of inspiration, and they may be frequent without being durable, a poet becomes a man, and is abandoned to the sudden reflux of the influences under which others habitually live. But as he is more delicately organized than other men and sensible to pain and pleasure both his own and that of others in a degree unknown to them, he will avoid the one and pursue the other with an ardour proportioned to this difference. And he renders himself obnoxious to calumny, when he neglects to observe the circumstances under which these objects of universal pursuit and flight have disguised themselves in one another's garments.

But there is nothing necessarily evil in this...
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error, and thus cruelty envy, revenge, avarice, and the passions purely evil, have never formed any portion of the popular imputations on the lives of poets.

I have thought it most favourable to the cause of truth to set down these remarks according to the order in which they were suggested to my mind by a consideration of the subject itself, instead of following that of the treatise which excited me to make them public. Thus although devoid of the formality of a polemical reply, but if the view

1462 evil C1
1467 mind D mind, 1840-Jo
1468-71 instead of following . . . devoid of the formality of B D J C1 Jo instead of observing the formality of 1840 Fo BS In MS B: following . . . devoid of J In MS D: following that of the treatise which excited me to make them public. Thus although devoid of is canceled, and inserted instead is observing K In 1840: This is a further passage in which Mary Shelley has omitted a Peacock reference in the published editions.

1469 which excited D that excited J C1 Jo
1471 reply, C1
1471-72 but if the view which they D 1840 Fo BS if the
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which they contain be just, they will be found
to involve a refutation of the Four Ages of
Poetry, so far at least as regards the first di-
vision of the subject. I can readily conjecture
what should have moved the gall of the learned and
view they J Jo if the view which they Cl

1473-74 refutation of the Four Ages of Poetry, D refu-
tation of the doctrines of the Four Ages of Poetry, B J Jo
refutation of the doctrines of The Four Ages of Poetry Cl
refutation of the arguers against poetry, 1840 Fo BS In
MS B: doctrines of the Four Ages of Poetry J In MS D:
Four Ages of was canceled, and arguers against was inserted
K In 1840; this is another Peacock reference omitted by
Mary Shelley in her editions.

1476-78 gall of the learned and intelligent author of
that paper, I confess myself like him, unwilling D gall
... paper; ... myself, like him, unwilling B J Jo gall
... paper; ... myself like him unwilling Cl gall of
some learned and intelligent writers who quarrel with cer-
tain versifiers; I, like them, confess myself unwilling
1840 Fo BS gall ... versifiers; I confess myself, like
them, unwilling 1845 In MS D: the learned and intelligent
author of that paper, I confess myself like him canceled for
the gall of some learned and intelligent writers who quarrel
with certain versifiers; I confess myself, like them, K
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intelligent author of that paper; I confess myself, like him, unwilling to be stunned by the Theseids of the hoarse Codri of the day. Bavius and Maevius undoubtedly are, as they ever were, insufferable persons. But it belongs to a philosophical critic to distinguish rather than confound.

The first part of these remarks has related to poetry in its elements and principles; and it has been shewn, as well as the narrow limits assigned them would permit, that what is called poetry, in a restricted sense, has a common source with all other forms of order and of beauty according to which the materials of human life are susceptible of being arranged, and which is poetry in an universal sense.

The second part will have for its object an

In 1840: Mary Shelley also omits this Peacock reference in her editions. In MS B: gall of the learned . . . paper; . . . myself, like him, unwilling J

1484 poetry D 1840 Fo BS Cl Poetry J Jo
1485 shewn, D Fo J Jo shown, 1840 BS Cl
1486 poetry, D 1845 J Jo poetry 1840 Fo BS Cl
1488 beauty D beauty, 1840-Jo
1490 poetry D 1840 Fo BS Cl Poetry J Jo
application of these principles to the present
state of the cultivation of Poetry, and a defence
of the attempt to idealize the modern forms of man-
ers and opinion, and compel them into a subordi-
nation to the imaginative and creative faculty.
For the literature of England, an energetic devel-
opment of which has ever preceded or accompanied
a great and free development of the national will, has arisen as it were from a new birth. In spite
of the low-thoughted envy which would undervalue
contemporary merit, our own will be a memorable
age in intellectual achievements, and we live among
such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond com-
parison any who have appeared since the last na-
tional struggle for civil and religious liberty.
The most unfailing herald, companion and follower
of the awakening of a great people to work a bene-
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ficial change in opinion or institution, is Poetry. 1510
At such periods there is an accumulation of the
power of communicating and receiving intense and
impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature.
The persons in whom this power resides, may often,
as far as regards many portions of their nature 1515
have little apparent correspondence with that
spirit of good of which they are the ministers.
But even whilst they deny and abjure, they are yet
compelled to serve, the Power which is seated on
the throne of their own soul. It is impossible to 1520
read the compositions of the most celebrated writ-
ers of the present day without being startled with
the electric life which burns within their words.
They measure the circumference and sound the depths
of human nature with a comprehensive and all-pen- 1525

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trating spirit, and they are themselves perhaps the most sincerely astonished at its manifestations, for it is less their spirit than the spirit of the age. Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration, the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present, the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World.
TITLE

"A DEFENCE OF POETRY [or Remarks Suggested by an Essay entitled 'the Four Ages of Poetry'] Part I"

EDITIONS. Both Cook and Clark leave off the "Part I" in their titles.

STUDY. Shelley's letters indicate his intent to write two more parts of the Defence (see letters of March 20, 21, and September 25, 1821 in Appendix E). The ending of the Defence also outlines what he planned to discuss in the proposed Part II (see 11.1492 ff. above).

The canceled subtitle which appears in MS D, Shelley's final revised text sent to Ollier for publication, marks the first of six cancellations of references to Peacock and The Four Ages of Poetry made by either John Hunt or Mary Shelley in preparing the Defence for later publication.
According . . . reason and imagination . . . own integrity."

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith feels that Shelley at once shows the influence of The Four Ages of Poetry by attacking Peacock's closing arguments in his first paragraph (p. 86). Jordan suggests that the language of the early draft fragments of this passage, published by Garnett [see Appendix A], indicates that "Shelley began to discuss imagination in terms of the psychology of associationism, which had been popularized by David Hartley" (p. 25).

CRITICISM. Critics present a considerable variation of opinion about these opening lines. A number see Coleridge's influence, especially that of Chapters 13 and 14 of the Biographia Literaria. (See R. B. Woodings, "Introduction," Shelley: Modern Judgements, p. 24; R. J. White, Political Tracts of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley, p. 288; J. E. Baker, Shelley's Platonic Answer to a Platonic Attack on Poetry, pp. 27-28; E. J. Schulze, Shelley's Theory of Poetry, p. 70; Graham Hough, The Romantic Poets, p. 151.) W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., however, states that the "Kantian 'Reason'" which Coleridge improved to a "gnostic faculty" does not appear "in Shelley's system," but "the honor conferred upon the poetic imagination, though nebulous, is the highest possible" (Literary Criticism: A Short History, p. 423). J. Bronowski, as does Brett-Smith above, suggests that
Shelley goes at once "to the base of Peacock's charges: the scope of reason," and feels that he "understands Peacock's case very well" (The Poet's Defence, pp. 67-68). Both J. S. Flagg and A. Durand suggest an Aristotelian connection. Flagg sees Shelley's opening, though not reflecting the influence of the Poetics, as being "nevertheless, an Aristotelian way of beginning" ("Shelley and Aristotle: Elements of the Poetics in Shelley's Theory of Poetry," pp. 48-51). Durand comments that "for those who 'most properly do imitate' as Sidney says, catching the true significance of Aristotle's doctrine, 'borrow nothing of what is . . . but range only . . . into the divine consideration of what may be or should be.' This splendid statement is thoroughly supported by Shelley . . . who makes the findings of reason only the bare materials out of which the poet shall fabricate something new and better" ("Shelley on the Nature of Poetry," p. 109). Herbert Read suggests that Shelley's language, like Plato's, "can express logical distinctions (with scientific method) and of this kind is the opening discussion" ("Shelley's Philosophy," The Major English Romantic Poets, p. 211). C. Grabo also finds a Platonic connection. He sees Shelley, "as a good Platonist," giving "reason a subordinate place." He also notes that Shelley's theory of the imagination is in accord with that of the neo-Platonists, who "assign to the imagination of the One the creative power in the universe, and to the imagination of man a lesser creative power in the realm of earthly things" (The Magic Plant, pp. 352-353).
STUDY. Shelley undoubtedly was familiar with the sources suggested above. He also, no doubt, would be familiar with the outlook similar to his own expressed by Lord Monboddo in The Origin and Progress of Language, a work whose influence also appears later in the Defence. Monboddo points out that the imagination has "a creative power, which is peculiar to it and distinguishes it both from sense and memory," and that "by means of this faculty, is conversant with the future as well as the past, and paints to itself scenes that never did exist . . . for it may be said to create even the material of those scenes, being such as are not directly and immediately furnished by the sense, but are formed upon the model of objects that have been presented by the sense, and are, as it were, imitations of them. This is that great work of imagination, which is the foundation of all the fine arts, and stamps men truly poets, or makers" (Book I, Chap. XIV, p. 179). This last idea is one which Shelley next discusses. The whole idea of the poet's ability to be conversant with the future is basic to Shelley's idea of the true creative power of poetry, in its broad sense.

10 "To poiein"

EDITIONS. Cook notes, as do later editors, the similar passage in Sidney's Defence of Poesie: "But now, let us see how the Greekes have named it, and how they deemed of it. The Greekes named him 'Poet,' which name, hath as the most excellent, gone through other languages, it commeth of this
word Polein, which is to make: wherein I know not whether by luck or wisedome, we Englishmen have met with the Greekes in calling him a Maker" [P., p. 7] (p. 63). Clark comments that Shelley "probably already knew this term from his wide reading in classical literature," and suggests the works of Aristotle especially, and also Tasso and Puttenham (p. 277). CRITICISM. C. M. Woodhouse comments that Shelley from the first uses "poet" in a very large sense: "He derives the word in his first paragraph (correctly, as we must not forget) from the Greek verb meaning to make or create; and this justifies him in applying the term to every kind of creative artist" ("The Unacknowledged Legislators (Poets and Politics)," Essays by Diverse Hands, p. 52). Edwin Hatch, on the other hand, comments that "The demiurgic Nous of the Timaeus is a precise analogue to the Imagination of A Defence of Poetry. Combining Kantian Vernunft with the plastic or synthetic to poiein Shelley's Imagination creates images upon eternal patterns as Artificers shape worlds. The poet is literally a 'maker,' and his craft is defined as 'the expression of the imagination'" (The Influence of Greek Ideas on Christianity, p. 143).

18-21 "Reason . . . Imagination . . . whole."

EDITIONS. Clark notes that "This is a statement of the new philosophy of the imagination as seen in Adam Smith, David Hume, and Dugald Stewart, Coleridge and Wordsworth" (p. 277). CRITICISM. A. Clutton-Brock says that: "Here Shelley at
once hits upon the difference between poetry, and indeed all art, and the activities of the reason. Poetry, based on the perception of values, is the expression of values; whereas philosophy, even when it is concerned with values ... does not express them immediately but examines and perhaps asserts them; and, whereas the expression of values is essential to poetry, the assertion of values is not essential to philosophy or to any purely intellectual activity" (Essays on Literature and Life, p. 56). H. N. Fairchild notes here Shelley's passage in his Speculations on Metaphysics in which he says that the human being is "pre-eminently an imaginative being. His own mind is his law; his own mind is all things to him." Fairchild comments that "this perfectly accurate statement is used as evidence, not of the subrational weakness of the human mind, but of its superrational strength" (The Romantic Quest, p. 327).

21-23 "Reason respects the differences ... things."

EDITIONS. Clark notes this in an idea appearing in other places in Shelley (p. 277). Jordan calls attention to Wordsworth's similar idea that reason is a secondary power multiplying distinctions while imagination observes affinities (The Prelude, II, 216-217, 384-386). He also sees the earlier influences of Godwin, Helvetius, and Holbach as continuing on Shelley in his giving to reason "an important, if not an equal, role" (p. 26).
"as the shadow to the substance."

EDITIONS. Cook notes the later use of this idea [1. 784] (p. 63).

CRITICISM. J. Notopoulos says that this sentence "is Platonic only in the imagery used (cf. Republic, 510a)" (The Platonism of Shelley, p. 350).

EDITIONS. Clark notes his disagreement with some critics' assertions that Shelley, in earlier writings, places reason above imagination, and states "the facts do not sustain this point of view" (p. 277).

CRITICISM. N. I. White notes that Shelley has "laid a definite psychological foundation" for his inquiry into the nature of poetry, one "that is only implied in Sidney's and Wordsworth's essays." Shelley, like Sidney, "then proceeds to show the antiquity and universality of poetry, but where Sidney is most concerned to show by this means the power of poetry, Shelley's object is to suggest the nature and basis of that power" (Shelley, II, p. 272).

In a more general view, D. G. James suggests it is important to see what the Romantic writers say about the imagination against the background of the preceding centuries. To Descartes and Spinoza the imagination "is the living power and prime agent in all human error," and to come to the truth, the mind must discard "the images of sense," for "sense-perception and the images of poetry confused and deceived" ("The Thought of Coleridge," The Major English Poets, p. 103).
STUDY. One other possible influence behind Shelley's concept of the imagination and reason is David Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Imagination is considered a key word to Hume's theory of knowledge, a theory with which Shelley undoubtedly was familiar. Shelley's opening definitions show a number of similarities to Hume's. In Shelley, reason is the "mind contemplating the relations borne by one thought to another, however produced," while imagination is the mind acting "to colour" thoughts and "composing from them" other thoughts. In Hume the initial impression present to the mind is between "an impression and an idea," and is called memory, and when it becomes a perfect idea it is imagination. Memory "paints its object in more distinct colours" because its impressions are "lively" but is tied down while the imagination is not restrained to the same order and form with the original impressions, for it has "the liberty . . . to transpose and change its ideas" (I.I.III). Shelley says reason considers thoughts "as algebraical representations which conduct to certain general results." Hume says the mind may run over several ideas "to comprehend its own meaning," and what "it intends to express by the general term," and illustrates this by the example of a "figure": to "fix the meaning" of a "figure," we may resolve "the ideas of circles, squares, parallelograms, triangles," and "may not rest on one image." A particular idea becomes general by being annexed to a general term, which, from a customary conjunction, has a
relation to many other particular ideas and readily recalls them in the imagination (I.I.VII). Thus, to both Shelley and Hume, to put it in Shelley's words, "reason is the enumeration of quantities already known; imagination is the perception of the value of those quantities, both separately and as a whole."—(A Treatise of Human Nature, in The Essential David Hume, pp. 36-37, 47).

There is one other influence to be suggested, and that is Wordsworth. His definitions of Fancy and Imagination show patterns similar to those of Shelley. Wordsworth's Fancy has the reasoning ability of "evoking and combining," while Imagination has the "power of depicting," and "the processes of imagination" either confer or abstract additional properties of an object, thus "enabling it to react upon the mind which hath performed the process, like a new existence." The Imagination "also shapes and creates." While Fancy "quickens" the temporal, Imagination "incites and supports" the eternal ("Preface to Poems, 1815," Prose of the Romantic Period, pp. 75, 78, 79, 82.)
PARAGRAPH 2: LINES 26-90

28-33 "Man is an instrument . . . like . . . wind over an Aeolian lyre . . . melody."

EDITIONS. Clark suggests a comparable statement in Shelley's Essay on Christianity: "There is a Power by which we are surrounded, like the atmosphere in which some motionless lyre is suspended, which visits with its breath our silent chords at will" (p. 277). Jordan further suggests Wordsworth's "correspondent breeze" (The Prelude, I, 34-35), M. H. Abrams' discussion of the Aeolian harp in "The Correspondent Breeze," and Coleridge's "The Eolian Harp" (p. 27).

CRITICISM. Again, as with Shelley's "reason" and "imagination," critical comment ranges widely with regard to sources and meanings. O. W. Firkins notes that the Defence contains five comparisons drawn from the wind, and that its properties for Shelley were those of invisibility, caress, interpenetration, purveyance, and inspiration (Power and Elusiveness in Shelley, pp. 92-93). H. L. Hoffman comments that "with the Platonists, the soul has listened to divine harmony before descending to earth, and may remember that music," but it would be difficult to know whether Shelley knew of their remarks (An Odyssey of the Soul: Shelley's Alastor, pp. 31, 139). G. O'Malley says that "as a symbol of general human responsiveness to natural and spiritual impulses, or of sympathetic attunement to various 'harmonies,' the Aeolian harp is of course a frequent property of Shelley's writing,"
as it is of much Romantic literature." As background to this symbol, O'Malley notes the Aeolian or Memnonian harp's new significance in the eighteenth century, coming out of interest raised by Newton's *Opticks* (*Shelley and Synesthesia*, pp. 42, 46). J. Raben states that Shelley early employed central metaphors of Coleridge's poetry, and that the Aeolian harp motif is one of these. The description of "the origin of poetic inspiration" is "in Coleridge's terms" ("Coleridge as the Prototype of the Poet in Shelley's Alastor," pp. 285-286). J. A. Notopoulos sees this conception as having "certain affinities with Plato's conception of man as the instrument of divine expression in the Ion, but Shelley may only be echoing here Coleridge's lines (*The Platonism of Shelley*, p. 350). A. Gerard, however, calls this passage "somewhat sybilline," characteristic of both Shelley and "the Pythagorean element discernible in romantic poetry."

He sees Shelley as having been initiated to the Pythagorean tradition of the Renaissance through Sidney (*L'idée romantique de la poésie en Angleterre*, pp. 306-307). In M. T. Solve's view, "A reaction against the psychology of Locke appears in the comparisons between man and the lyre . . . there is a synthetic power within the mind which the lyre does not have . . . of adjustment." The result of this is "not melody merely, but harmony also. With this process reason apparently has nothing to do." He sees Shelley as inclining strongly to "the Greek idea of poetic madness," that poetry cannot be made until one is divested of reason (*Shelley: His

STUDY. There is one other influence which should be suggested. Although Shelley was long familiar with Plato's Phaedo, Notopoulos reports that he first read it in Greek in 1820. Notopoulos also reports he used "the music of the broken lyre," probably a direct echo of the Phaedo (86a) in his Essay on a Future State, which Notopoulos thus dates as 1820-21 ("The Dating of Shelley's Prose," p. 497). From this evidence it seems clear, then, that the Phaedo is very freshly in Shelley's mind. The parallel ideas of the Defence passage on the lyre to that of the Phaedo seem to prove this conclusively.

Shelley likens man to an Aeolian lyre but says also that "there is a principle within the human being, . . . perhaps within all sentient beings, which acts otherwise than the lyre" and thus produces not melody but harmony by "an internal adjustment." Plato's passage reads that the attunement of the strings of a musical instrument "is something invisible and incorporeal and splendid and divine, and located in the tuned instrument, while the instrument itself and its strings are material and corporeal and composite and earthly, and closely related to what is mortal" (86a). Socrates goes on to assert that "soul" is not an attunement composed of our physical elements (92b), that any account of attunement ought
to be harmonious (92c), and that the soul is "too divine to
rank as an attunement," which is "liable to be swayed by
physical feelings" (94b). Socrates concludes that "we seem
to have placated the Theban lady Harmonia" (95a). He has
also commented in an aside during this long conversation with
Phaedo, that "you had better call upon me to be your Iolaus"
(89c) (*The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, pp. 68-71, 74, 77).

It is possible, by adding some further evidence, to as-
certain quite certainly what Shelley means by the "principle
within the human being."

It is notable that this instance in the *Defence* is the
only time that Shelley has used the combination of "Aeolian"
with "lyre." That he had both Plato and Coleridge in mind
seems quite possible. In his poetry, he uses "Aeolian" five
times, with the closest connection to "Aeolian lyre" coming
in 1819, in the line, "Kindling within the strings of the
waved air, Aeolian modulations" (*Prometheus Unbound*, IV.188).
He uses the word "lyre" eighteen times, and the word "lute,"
which he canceled in his *Defence* draft (see Textual Notes
above) for "lyre," thirteen times (F. S. Ellis, *A Lexical
Concordance to the Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*,
pp. 6, 424, 425). In the closest approximations to the
*Defence* meaning, "lyre" and "lute" are seen to be synonymous
with "spirit" to Shelley: "the lyre on which my spirit
lingers," (*The Revolt of Islam*, Dedication, X.3); and "When
the lute is broken ... the spirit is mute" ("Lines: 'When
the lamp is shattered'," ll. 5, 12). This latter also seems
an echo of the *Phaedo* passage. The prose fragment, *Essay on Love*, describes the "soul within the soul" as "chords of two exquisite lyres" (*Prose*, p. 170). Notopoulos dates this fragment as 1818-1819 ("The Dating of Shelley's Prose," p. 492). These references in the poetry and prose, appearing from 1817 to 1822, have a definite time relationship to the *Defence*.

Considering Shelley's other uses, the *Phaedo* source, and adding one more step, the Latin *spiritus* as meaning "soul," it seems clear, then, that "the principle within the human being" to which Shelley refers may indeed be the "soul."

43-55 A child at play . . . objects.

**EDITIONS.** Koszul reports that in the notebook pages just before the draft of the *Defence*, "Shelley transcribed the delightful passage in Plato's *Leges* (ii, 653-654) which contrasts the disordinate cries and motions of children and animals with the human aspirations after rhythm and harmony, and attributes the latter to the teaching of the Muses, Apollo and Dionysos" (p. 122). Although Koszul does not suggest this source in his textual notes on MS A, it would seem that Shelley might have had this passage in mind when he started the *Defence* draft on f. 86 v rev., since this passage appeared on f. 84 rev. Clark suggests seeing here "Wordsworth's conception in *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*" (p. 278).

**CRITICISM.** R. Houston sees this passage as indebted to Hume
for the phrase "it will be the reflected image of that impression," and also feels that "Hume's presence in the rest of the passage is unmistakable." In particular, he sees a comparison in the remarks on the child at play with Hume's Treatise, Book II, section IX ("Shelley and the Principle of Association," p. 47). E. J. Schulze suggests that Shelley's tracing "the origin of poetry to the child's response to pleasurable impression" is "not too different from Aristotle's doctrine of the love of imitation inherent in man" (Shelley's Theory of Poetry, p. 107). J. S. Flagg also sees this use of imitating in childhood as Aristotelian, and states that Shelley chooses to "discuss the same topics as Aristotle at about the same point in his essay," and is elaborating "upon Aristotle's observations." He notes Aristotle's statement that "imitating is innate in men from childhood" (1448b), "an idea which Shelley analyzes," and further notes that Aristotle (in 1448b) "gives a speculative history of the primitive manifestations of the artistic impulse" as does Shelley ("Shelley and Aristotle," pp. 56-57). J. A. Notopoulos feels that this passage may be "a direct echo of a passage in Plato's Laws" and notes the Koszul quotation [see Editions above] (The Platonism of Shelley, p. 351).

46 "corresponding antitype",

STUDY. Shelley uses the word "antitype" here, not in its sense of "an opposite type," but in its other meaning, arising from the meaning of "corresponding" in the prefix
"anti," as "something represented, foreshadowed, or corresponding to an earlier type or symbol," or then, an embodiment of a type or symbol. Shelley had used "antitype" with this same meaning not too long before, in the poem, Peter Bell the Third (December, 1819): "The First Peter--he who was / Like the shadow in the glass / Of the second, yet unripe, / His substantial antitype" ("Prologue," 11. 13-16).

52-55 "In relation to the objects which delight a child . . . objects."

STUDY. Shelley's draft of this passage (see Textual Notes above) adds to the understanding of the meaning of this passage as it finally appears.

72-74 "the future is contained within the present as the plant within the seed"

EDITIONS. As Cook points out, Shelley has used this same image twice more in the Defence (p. 63). [See 11. 167 and 1257 ff.]

CRITICISM. R. J. White states that "Philosophically rendered, this faculty of the poet of beholding the future in the present, emerges in Coleridge as the apprehension of the Ideas, or Principles, of which historic events . . . are the transitory forms or modes. Thus the statement, of which Coleridge is so fond: 'Every principle contains in itself the germs of a prophecy.' This is the link between Shelley's 'poet as legislator' and Coleridge's 'philosophic statesman'" (Political Tracts, p. 289).
77 "will of a social being"

CRITICISM. G. McNiece comments that Shelley speaks of man in society "as almost a separate being from 'natural' man, possessed as a 'social being' with a distinct set of emotions and expressions from which spring the social sympathies."

McNiece sees this concept as a political doctrine having "a kinship to Tom Paine's distinction between society and government," that society is "always a blessing, since it naturally expresses our needs as social beings, while government is at best a necessary evil" (Shelley and the Revolutionary Idea, p. 95).

81-82 "in the infancy of society"

STUDY. This idea is picked up at 11. 135-136 again.

84-86 "all expression . . . laws . . . proceeds."

EDITIONS. Jordan suggests that this is Coleridge's "concept of organic unity" as seen in the Biographia Literaria, Chapter XIV" (p. 28).

88 "Inquiry into the principles of society"

STUDY. MS A (see Textual Study above) notes what Shelley had in mind about such an inquiry.

26-90 Second paragraph

EDITIONS. Clark feels that "the thought of this paragraph was probably inspired by Hume's A Treatise on Human Nature, Book III, "On Morals," (p. 278). Brett-Smith states that by the end of the second paragraph Shelley "finds that the 'gen-
eral considerations' into which he has wandered are leading him too far afield, and he returns in the third to open his defence, as Peacock had opened his attack, with an examination of the origin of poetry in the youth of the world" (p. 23).
PARAGRAPH 3: LINES 91-145

91 "In the youth of the world"

CRITICISM. J. A. Notopoulos feels that this passage too may represent a "direct echo" of a passage in Plato's Laws as did the "child at play" passage above [see 11. 43-55 above, Editions, Criticism] (The Platonism of Shelley, p. 351).

99-102 "order . . . from which . . . purer pleasure"

EDITIONS. Koszul has recorded a passage appearing in MS A (see Textual Notes above) in which Shelley indicates that not only does man get more delight from a certain order and rhythm but that these also bring a repose to the mind.

STUDY. What Aristotle has to say about imitation and the pleasure it brings is basically what Shelley is expressing in this paragraph, that "imitation is natural to man from childhood," and that it is "natural for all to delight in works of imitation." Not only imitation but also the "sense of harmony and rhythm" are "natural to us," and through "original aptitude, and by a series of improvements for the most part gradual on their first efforts, that they created poetry out of their improvisations." He also attributes another reason for delight to the fact that in viewing realistic representation one is learning, and "to be learning something is the greatest of pleasures not only to the philosopher but also the rest of mankind" (Poetics, The Basic Works of Aristotle, pp. 1457-58).
103-104 "approximation ... called taste by modern writers"

EDITIONS. Clark comments that "this long analysis of taste and the nature of art is in conformity with the new concepts of judgment awakened in the Romantic writers. Its ancestry is long and honorable" as can be seen in essays by Hume, William Duff, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Archibald Alison, and "all the works of Wordsworth and Coleridge" (p. 279). Jordan feels that "Shelley seems to accept the universal view of taste set forth by his early favorite, David Hume," and also by Burke, Gerard, Lord Kames, and Coleridge (p. 29).

CRITICISM. E. R. Wasserman, comments that "each class of expression (or mimetic representation), such as dance, music, and verbal poetry, has its own peculiar supreme order or rhythm ... Each mode aspires to a special kind of ideal configuration, the criterion of which is the degree of pure, or disinterested, pleasure imparted by that form; and the faculty which judges the degree to which the formal pleasure afforded by a work of art approximates the intuitively apprehended highest pleasure of which its mode is capable as form is called 'taste,' that is, the 'inspired' imagination operating as a critical instead of creative faculty" ("Shelley's Last Poetics," pp. 501-502).

104-128 "Every man ... intercourse."

EDITIONS. Jordan notes generally similar positions which Wordsworth has taken on the question of "What is a Poet?" in his passage in the "Preface" to the Lyrical Ballads,
and on figurative language, which Wordsworth discusses in the 1802 Appendix to the "Preface" in the passage concerning "the earliest poets of all nations" (pp. 29-30).

CRITICISM. K. N. Cameron sees a parallel to Samuel Johnson's Imlac in Rasselas here, where Imlac says of ancient poets that the first writers who "took possession of the most striking objects for description ... left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same event, and new combinations of the same images." Cameron comments that the main thought in both writers is the same, although Shelley "with typical optimism" declares "that 'new poets' can 'create afresh' the associations given by the earlier writers" ("A New Source for Shelley's A Defence of Poetry," pp. 631-632).

STUDY. Shelley, in his "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound, voices thoughts very similar to those in this passage: "As to imitation, poetry is a mimetic art. It creates, but creates by combination and representation. Poetical abstractions are beautiful and new, not because the portions of which they are composed had no previous existence in the mind of man or in nature, but because the whole produced by their combination has some intelligible and beautiful analogy with those sources of emotion and thought, and with the contemporary condition of them: one great poet is a masterpiece of nature which another not only ought to study but must study" (Prose, p. 328).
115-119 "the pleasure . . . reduplication from that community."

STUDY. A proof of exactly what Shelley is saying in this passage concerning poets in general is seen in the effect of his own work on a writer much later in his own century. Jacob Korg, in commenting on the novels and criticism of George Gissing, points out the real effect that Shelley's _Defence_ has had on Gissing. Korg, noting that there are many parallels to the _Defence_ found in Gissing's ideas, says further: "Shelley attributed the poet's great power to his ability to perceive and exploit the principles governing society: 'the pleasure resulting from the manner in which they [poets] express the influence of society or nature upon their own minds, communicates . . . and gathers a sort of reduplication.' This conception of an intimate and mutual dependence between artist and society is found in . . . speeches about art and history in _Workers in the Dawn_, and in a speech . . . in _The Unclassed_ (London, 1895), ("Division of Purpose in George Gissing," p. 327).

119-124 "Their language is vitally metaphorical . . . thoughts"

CRITICISM. E. J. Schulze comments that "Shelley's distinction between metaphor and sign has affinities with his critique of abstractions (after the manner of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume) in the 'Speculations on Metaphysics' and 'On Life'" (_Shelley's Theory of Poetry_, p. 110).
STUDY. Shelley's views on metaphor are revealed several times. In a letter to Leigh Hunt, August 15, 1819, he states: "Strong passion expresses itself in metaphor borrowed from objects alike remote and near, and casts over all the shadow of its own greatness" *(Letters, II, p. 108).* In another letter, to Thomas Medwin, written on April 16, 1820, Shelley says: "Strictly, I imagine, every expression in a poem ought to be in itself an intelligible picture. But this practise, though foreign to that of the great Poets of former times, is so highly admired by our contemporaries that I can hardly counsel you to dissent" *(Letters, II, p. 184).* In the "Preface" to *The Cenci* (1819) Shelley says much the same as he did to Hunt: "... the most remote and the most familiar imagery may alike be fit for dramatic purposes when employed in the illustration of strong feeling, which raises what is low, and levels to the apprehension that which is lofty, casting over all the shadow of its own greatness" *(Prose, p. 324).*

120-121 "unapprehended relations"

EDITIONS. Cook notes that Shelley uses "unapprehended" three other times in the essay (p. 63).

STUDY. The other three appearances of this word are at lines 351, 422, and 1529-30. In spite of its usage here, this word is not one Shelley employs in his poetry at all, other than the variant of "unapprehensive" appearing in the "Ode to Liberty."
"These similitudes . . . by Lord Bacon . . . common to all knowledge."

EDITIONS. Both Cook and Brett-Smith identify the source as the Second Book of the *Advancement of Learning*. Clark suggests that the "substance of this long paragraph may have been suggested by Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*" (p. 278).

CRITICISM: W. O. Scott notes that Shelley has made four references to Bacon in the *Defence*, and is "using him to expound poetic theory and making him a poet." Scott further notes that Shelley has loosely translated from Bacon's Latin discussion on metaphysics about "Philosophia Prima, which collects from the axioms of the various sciences the same footsteps of nature, treading or printing upon several subjects or matters," to "explain the poet's function." Shelley is "making effective use of the core of Bacon's thought" and, in developing his personal philosophy, finds "a place in it for Baconian conceptions of unity" (*Shelley's Admiration for Bacon*, pp. 231-233). D. L. Clark says that "in his critical prose Shelley refers to Bacon fourteen times," and that "Shelley knew Bacon thoroughly, studied him with diligence, and quoted him with approval" (*Shelley and Bacon*, pp. 532, 545). [Clark's detailed study of Shelley's annotations in his copy of Bacon's works amply prove his familiarity with Bacon.]

STUDY. Bacon, in the passage used from the *Advancement of Learning*, has shown the relationships of various subjects to each other, as Shelley indicates, by similes: the
musician in going from a "discord" to a "sweet accord" as being "alike true in affection"; a musical trope, which avoids closing a cadence, as being common with a rhetorical trope, in "deceiving expectation"; a musical quaver as being like the play of light upon the water; the organs of the senses as being of "one kind" with the organs of reflection; and these are not the only similitudes, as Bacon notes, but "the same footsteps of Nature" being printed upon "several subjects or matters." The key words for Shelley here seem to be "organs of reflection." Although Shelley states that Bacon "considers the faculty which perceives them as the storehouse of axioms common to all knowledge" he does not state this "faculty" directly. However, it seems apparent that what Bacon calls "reflection" here is what Shelley calls "imagination." What Shelley means by the "faculty which perceives" [underscoring mine] then becomes apparent. Going back to the Defence's opening statement, it can be seen that "imagination is the perception of the value of those quantities, both separately and as a whole," and this imagination respects "the similitudes of things." This is, of course, what Bacon himself is suggesting in the passage to which Shelley is referring. Bacon's "organs of reflection" in Shelley are "reason and imagination."

134-135 "infancy of society every author . . . poet"

EDITIONS. L. Verkoren identifies this passage with three statements of Sidney's Defence of Poesie. The first is:
"Poetrie . . . hath bene the first light giver to ignorance, and first nurse whose milke litle & litle enabled them to feed afterwards of tougher knowledges" [F., p. 4]. The second is: "Nay let any Historie bee brought, that can say any writers were there before them [Musaeus, Homer, & Hesiod]" [F., p. 4]. The third is: "Since then Poetrie is of all humane learnings the most ancient, and of the most fatherly antiquitie, as from whence other learnings have taken their beginnings: . . ." [F., p. 25]. He has also given a fourth page reference, which is this statement: "What that before time was, I think scarcely Sphinx can tell: since no memerie is so ancient, that hath not the precedens of Poetrie" [F., p. 31] (Verkoren, p. 38).

CRITICISM. A. Clutton-Brock feels that Peacock, whose real aim was to vex the Romantic poets of the Lake School, and who maintained poetry was "a mental rattle" of the "infancy of civil society," had gotten "this particular insult" from Sidney's Apology. Sidney attempted to prove in defense of poetry's usefulness what Peacock uses against it, that poetry is the "first nurse" (Essays on Literature and Life, pp. 49-50).

STUDY. The first two Sidney passages (and thus, possibly Shelley's also) above have two interesting sources for the "infancy of society." Annotators of Sidney's Defense, Gregory Smith and Allan H. Gilbert, both attribute Sidney's probable source on the antiquity of poetry, and the selection of names used in proof, to Minturno's passages in Poeticae

140-142 "Every original language ... cyclic poem"

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments that this is "finely said, and true even from the philological point of view. By a 'cyclic' poem Shelley means an epic" (p. 84).

CRITICISM. N. Frye points out that "there is an implicit historical dialectic in the argument of A Defence of Poetry. A primitive language, Shelley says, 'is in itself the chaos of a cyclic poem' and as history goes on, more and more is unrolled of 'that great poem' . . . . And as poetry thus develops, we begin to understand how to read it as a product of man's eternal imagination, and not of his temporary fears and superstitions. In time, poetry continues to 'reanimate' the 'image of the past.' Hence a renewing of human life coincides with the attaining of the power of hearing what it is that poetry is really saying. We thus arrive at conceptions corresponding to the Christian doctrine of the invasion of time, at a certain point in time, by eternity, though the point of this invasion is in the near future" (A Study of English Romanticism, p. 122). Rene Wellek takes a different view. He says of this "chaos of a cyclic poem" taken in conjunction with "episodes to that great poem"
[1. 756] and "episodes of that cyclic poem" [1. 805] that "Shelley's conception of evolution is cyclical, and for the fierce individualist that he was, surprisingly collectivist" (A History of Modern Criticism: 1750-1950, Vol. 2, p. 128).

142-144 "lexicography . . . grammar . . . later age"

EDITIONS. Koszul has recorded a fragment in MS A (see Textual Notes above) which he calls "imperfect, yet curious" (p. 68).

STUDY. The draft fragment indicates quite clearly what Shelley thinks of his own age. While, in the final version of the Defence, he says merely that developments of language are "the works of a later age," in the fragment he credits his own time, "the present epoch," as the period when "Philology" illustrates "the most astonishing results of metaphysical enquiry" and recognizes the "analogy" and "even unity" of all thought, poetry, and art, so that "even Criticism, Taste, or the science of beauty in art" are rescued from "the indolence of scepticism." By "philology" here he undoubtedly has in mind a far broader term than just "linguistics" (or the "lexicography" and "grammar" of his final text at this point); rather he seems to imply a broader scholarship in written records, literary texts, and trends, as well as development of the language. The reference to taste indicates this, both in the preceding discussion of it in the final text of the Defence, and in
the general critical attention that many eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century writers paid to this particular subject. His interest in language itself is well documented both by his comments, as on translation, and by his readings in such works as Lord Monboddo's *On The Origin and Progress of Language*. That he indeed sees his own time as an "epoch" or as the beginning of a new and important period in literary history is borne out by the Defence's conclusion, where he sees his age "as memorable in intellectual achievements," and as arising "from a new birth."

It will be noted, too, that in MS A there are notations or canceled passages written in at the end of each of the first three paragraphs. Shelley seems to have paused at these natural stopping places to consider his later text. This canceled draft material casts light on his general thinking, and, as in the above case, shows up in ideas in other parts of the Defence.
PARAGRAPH 4: LINES 146-186

146-155 "But Poets . . . religion."

EDITIONS. Cook is the first to suggest a relevant passage from Shelley's Discourse on the Manners of the Ancients: "For all the inventive arts maintain, as it were, a sympathetic connection between each other, being no more than various expressions of one internal power, modified by different circumstances, either of an individual or of society" (p. 63). Verkoren suggests a parallel passage from Sidney's Defence: "For not only in time they [i.e., Orpheus, etc.] had this prioritie, (although in it selfe antiquitie be venerable) but went before them, as causes to draw with their charming sweetnesse, the wild untamed wits to an admiration of knowledge" [F., p. 4]. Verkoren also notes a line from Wordsworth's Preface to the Lyrical Ballads: "Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge" (p. 71).

155-158 "Hence all original religions are allegorical . . . like Janus . . . true."

EDITIONS. Koszul records a canceled passage in MS A (see Textual Notes above) and points out that the final passage is "exemplified in the draft" (p. 68). Verkoren, following a notation Miss Winstanley makes about a later passage [ll. 222-224] suggests that this passage may also be due to influence of the Voltairean school of thought (p. 104). Clark suggests comparing Hume and Sidney for similar
notions (p. 279).

CRITICISM. C. Grabo calls this a "significant passage" explaining "Shelley's rationalization of myth in Prometheus Unbound and The Witch of Atlas." He also comments that in this discussion there is "implicit a Platonic concept which Shelley does not bring into the open," that he "in effect postulates a divine order, truth, and beauty, existing in the immaterial world of ideas, a world to which the creative or poetic mind has occasional access" (The Magic Plant, p. 354). R. J. White, in somewhat the same vein, comments that "It is implied that Shelley accepts the fact of the existence of an 'indestructible order' in the nature of things; an order which is apprehended in them by the poetic imagination, not an order which is imposed upon them by the classifying philosopher" (Political Tracts, p. 289).

STUDY. The canceled passage in MS A gives as examples the "Theogony of Hesiod" and the "fragments of Orpheus" to illustrate what Shelley has in mind when he states that "all original religions are allegorical" and like Janus "have a double face of false and true" as revealed by prophesying poets. Shelley goes to the Greek world, as is his habit, for the origins of things. Hesiod, a poet about the time of Homer, gives in his Theogony the first known systematic classification of the Greek Gods and of the origin of the world, using as his material ancient legends, hymns, and folklore. He was a vates, accepted by the Greeks as an authority, and has remained of interest in the study of
theology to the later world. The "fragments of Orpheus" refer to a body of poetry appearing under the name of the mythical Orpheus, and again are concerned with ancient forms of worship, and mystic and holy practices, as well as origins of the world. (See H. N. Fowler, A History of Ancient Greek Literature, pp. 53, 55, 143; Hesiod: the Works and Days; Theogony; the Shield of Herakles, translated, and with introduction, by Richmond Lattimore, pp. 4-13).

Although Janus is a figure from ancient Roman mythology, a patron of beginnings and endings, as well as a two-faced figure, which may have a meaning of "deceiving," it seems obvious here that Shelley is neatly joining two ancient sources, the Greek and Roman. It seems most probable that the source of his thought here is the proem to the Theogony in which the Muses of Olympia, who have taught Hesiod his splendid singing, say: "we know how to say many false things that seem like true sayings, but we know also how to speak the truth when we wish to" (Hesiod, p. 124).

Undoubtedly, Shelley could have had in mind the long development of the origins of world religions which C. F. Volney presented in The Ruins; or, A Survey of the Revolutions of Empires, a work with which he was quite familiar. Here, the origins are clearly shown as allegorical, as the speaker, summing up his long survey for leaders of many religions says: "You perceive what is meant by white and black angels; by the cherubs and seraphs with heads of an eagle, a lion or a bull; the Deus, devils or demons with
horns of goats and tails of snakes; the thrones and dominions, ranged in seven orders or gradations, like the seven spheres of the planets; all of them beings acting the same parts, partaking of the same attributes in the Vedas, the Bibles, or the Zendavesta; whether their chief be Ormuzd or Brama, Typhon or Chiben, Michael or Satan; whether their form be that of giants . . . Gods metamorphosed into lions, storks, bulls and cats, as . . . in the sacred tales of the Greeks and Egyptians: you perceive the successive genealogy of these ideas" (pp. 208-209).

158-161 "Poets . . . legislators or prophets"

EDITIONS. Starting with Cook, the parallel passage from Sidney's Defence has been generally noted: "Among the Romanes a Poet was called Vates, which is as much as a diviner, foreseer, or Prophet, as by his conjoined words Vaticinium, and Vaticinari, is manifest, so heavenly a title did that excellent people bestowe upon this hart-ravishing knowledge" [Ec., p. 6]. Miss Winstanley adds a comment that Sidney "appears to think that the poet is a prophet "in a literal sense" while Shelley "remarks that it is the spirit of the future which the poet foretells and not its actual events" (p. 84). Clark, however, suggests here that "this is essentially Paine's idea as expressed in The Age of Reason, Chapter 7" (p. 279).

CRITICISM. K. N. Cameron feels that although Shelley "may be indebted to Sidney" for the statement that poets were called prophets, there is "no hint in Sidney's statement
of the essential concept--'legislator'" and "no implied contrast between the two functions of the poet, interpretive and legislative." Cameron feels Shelley takes these from Johnson's implied contrast in Rasselas, Chapter X, where "the poet is not only an 'interpreter of nature'--which is what one would expect--but is also a 'legislator of mankind'--something one would not expect" ("A New Source," p. 635).

STUDY. Again, if Volney's The Ruins were in mind, both in this and in the following paragraph, Shelley could very well have gotten the thought of poets in earlier epochs being called "legislators" from this source as well, for the idea of the poet in earlier epochs of the world being called "legislators" is one which Volney uses. The Genius, or spirit, at the scene of this tale, offers to explain the ancient ruins of civilizations, to the teller of the story, and says: "I will enquire of the ashes of legislators what causes have erected and overthrown empires . . . what the maxims [are] upon which the peace of society and the happiness of man ought to be founded." Volney, too, as does Shelley, picks up again the idea of the legislator as guide to the world at the end of his work. Also of interest is the idea which Volney's narrator expresses further in the passage above for he uses an image which Shelley also uses in his following paragraph: "Let the experience of past ages become a mirror of instruction" (The Ruins, pp. 20, 26).
162-167 "For . . . future in the present . . . time."

EDITIONS. Clark suggests that this be compared with Wordsworth's "Preface" to the Lyrical Ballads [1800] (p. 279).

CRITICISM. McNiece sees the imagination as a "source of revolutionary energy" and feels that these lines are undoubtedly "central to the comprehension of Shelley's conception of the role of the poet as revolutionist. Poets are the authors of revolution in opinion" (Shelley and the Revolutionary Idea, pp. 133-134).

STUDY. Again, the proem of Hesiod's Theogony may still continue as a source behind this thought, for after the Muses speak to him, Hesiod goes on: "They breathed a voice into me, and power to sing the story of things of the future, and things past. They told me to sing the race of the blessed gods everlasting" (11. 31-33, Hesiod, p. 124).

168-169 "Not . . . prophets in the gross sense"

EDITIONS. Clark notes a similar statement in Paine's The Age of Reason, Chapter 7 (p. 279).

CRITICISM. M. Roston feels that Shelley's constant reading of the Bible appears "in his concept of the hierophantic nature of poetry" and that in the Defence, "prophecy becomes a key word for identifying the poetic genius at its best---not in the hackneyed vates equation . . . but in a more profound context . . . the conventional restriction of the term prophet to vates or foreteller of the future, had obscured the real identity of prophet and poet--their con-
cern with the eternal, unifying elements of life" (Prophet and Poet: The Bible and the Growth of Romanticism, p. 192).

173-176 "A Poet participates in the eternal, the infinite and the one . . . time and place . . . are not."

EDITIONS. Cook and Clark feel that Sidney has expressed a similar idea (Cook, p. 63; Cl, p. 279). Verkoren, on the other hand, suggests this line is "undoubtedly reminiscent of Spinoza's en xxl paen" (p. 102).

CRITICISM. Both Grabo and Notopoulos suggest the Platonic influence. Grabo states that "the language is definitely Platonistic. The implication is that the world of the actual tends to shape itself in accordance with the divine pattern," disclosed by creative minds "in touch with the divine mind, the One" (The Magic Plant, p. 355). Notopoulos feels that "Shelley is creating his poet in the image of the Platonic philosopher (cf. Symposium, 211a)" (The Platonism of Shelley, p. 351). S. F. Gingerich says that "the mighty poets are most helpless, to the degree that they become perfect instruments for the cosmic, the inevitable, the impersonal, 'the eternal, the infinite, and the one,' to have free course through their minds do they produce great poetry. This is the most characteristic contribution of The Defense of Poetry to criticism, and its philosophy is essentially in harmony with that of his poetry; nowhere in modern criticism is there such an insistence on the idea that the poet, when he writes supremely, is the passive instrument of cosmic processes, of the Absolute" ("Shelley," Essays in the Romantic Poets,
In Firkins' view, Shelley's rising to an "intellectual metaphysical elevation" where "Time and Space are shadows and unrealities" is what "we should have expected from his union of penetration and subtlety" (Power and Elusiveness in Shelley, p. 23). K. N. Cameron points out one more parallel here to Johnson's Rasselas, Chapter X, where the poet must consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations--as a being superior to time and place." Cameron comments that Shelley has taken "three consecutive ideas--the poet as a legislator, he is a guide for the future, he is 'superior to time and place'--occupying in Johnson three lines, and transformed them into some twenty-five lines of romantic prose criticism" ("A New Source," pp. 635-636).

STUDY. In Hellas, written in the fall of 1821, Shelley clearly indicates by what means the poet "participates in the eternal, the infinite and the one," and why "time and place and number are not." It is "thought" which alone transcends the changing world and joins with the unchanging "One." In Hellas, the wise Ahasuerus tells the Sultan not to talk of the "Future and the Past" but to "look on that which cannot change--the One, / The unborn and the undying." The universe, the "Whole / Of suns, and worlds, and men . . ." is "but a vision," and "Thought is its cradle and its grave." He concludes "nor less / The Future and the Past are idle shadows / Of thought's eternal flight--they have no being" (11. 766-785). He then further explains about
"thought":  

Thought

Alone, and its quick elements, Will, Passion,  
Reason, Imagination, cannot die;  
They are, what that which they regard appears,  
The stuff whence mutability can weave  
All that it hath dominion o'er, worlds, worms,  
Empires, and superstitions. What has thought  
To do with time, or place, or circumstance?

(11. 795-802).

181 "the book of Job"

EDITIONS. Verkoren notes that Shelley was always an  
"ardent reader of the Bible, so that his works teem with  
Biblical quotations and reminiscences, the Defence not  
excepted" (p. 98).

CRITICISM. B. Weaver comments on the general attraction Job  
had for Shelley as proven by Mary Shelley's notes to The  
Revolt of Islam, and by Shelley's Essay on Christianity,  
in which he states that 'the sublime dramatic poem Job had  
familiarized his [Christ's] imagination with the boldest  
imagery afforded by the human mind,' and again in his further  
comments on Job in On The Devil. Weaver also notes that  
in the Defence, he associates Job with the greatest works,  
and with the greatest personality, Jesus (Toward the Under­  
standing of Shelley, pp. 146-147).
STUDY. Shelley's essay, *A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love*, serves as an illustration of what he might have included on sculpture, painting, and music, had he not felt limited in citing examples at this point. In this essay he discusses these arts in the same order listed in the *Defence*. He says that Greek sculptures are "such as we in our presumption assume to be models of ideal truth and beauty, and to which no artist of modern times can produce forms in any degree comparable. Their paintings, according to Pliny and Pausanias, were full of delicacy and harmony; and some even were powerfully pathetic, so as to awaken like tender music or tragic poetry the most overwhelming emotions. We are accustomed to conceive the painters of the sixteenth century as those who have brought their art to the highest perfection, probably because none of the ancient paintings have been preserved. For all the inventive arts maintain, as it were, a sympathetic connection between each other, being no more than various expressions of one internal power, modified by different circumstances, either of an individual, or of society. The paintings of that period would probably bear the same relation as is confessedly borne by the sculpture to all succeeding ones. Of their music we know little; but the effects which it is said to have produced, whether they be attributed to the skill of the composer, or the sensi-
bility of his audience, are far more powerful than any . . . of our own times . . . " (Prose, p. 217).

It can be seen from the above that "time and place and number are not" and that forms are as "convertible" for artistic creativity and that they too partake of the eternal. He has further revealed this fundamental belief in a letter of January 23-24, 1819, to Peacock which outlines his own reaction to art seen in Pompeii, a bas relief of "delicate" and "perfect" workmanship of "Egyptian subjects executed by a Greek artist who has harmonized all the unnatural extravaganza of their original conception into the supernatural loveliness of his country's genius." He notes that the Greeks of Pompeii "lived in harmony with nature, & the interstices of their incomparable columns, were portals as it were to admit the spirit of beauty which animates this glorious universe to visit those whom it inspired." He concludes that "I now understand why the Greeks were such great Poets, & above all I can account, it seems to me, for the harmony the unity the perfection the uniform excellence of all their works of art. They lived in perpetual commerce with external nature and nourished themselves upon the spirit of its forms" (Letters, II, pp. 73-74).
EDITIONS. Cook suggests, as do following editors, the source as Plato's *Symposium*, which Shelley translated as follows: "Poetry; which is a general name signifying every cause whereby anything proceeds from that which is not, into that which is; so that the exercise of every inventive art is poetry, and all such artists poets. Yet they are not called poets, but distinguished by other names; and one portion or species of poetry, that which has relation to music and rhythm, is divided from all others, and known by the name belonging to all. For this is alone properly called poetry, and those who exercise the art of this species of poetry, poets" (*Essays*, 1840, Vol. 1, p. 134).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos too notes the *Symposium* source (*The Platonism*, p. 351). Grabo comments that "poetic" to Shelley is "more nearly synonymous with 'creative'" (*The Magic Plant*, p. 355). A. Gerard notes that "the romantics are profoundly conscious of the unity of culture" (*L'idée romantique*, p. 349). N. I. White says that Shelley, like Sidney, didn't hold metre as an "absolute essential." He adds: "Because language is a more flexible and durable medium than stone, paint, motion, or sound, Shelley regards poetry in this restricted sense as superior to other arts whose expression is also poetry in more elemental meaning" (*Shelley*, II, p. 473). Cameron notes that Shelley goes on to a discussion
of style after his observations on "time, place, and number" just as does Johnson in his sequence of ideas in *Rasselas*, Chapter X ("A New Source," pp. 636-637).

STUDY. Although there is no actual record of Shelley's familiarity with Plotinus, occasional similarities to Plotinus are noted. Notopoulos, for example, although stating the need for caution as to any derivative relationship, comments on Shelley's affinity to some Plotinian ideas (see *The Platonism*, p. 349). Attention may be directed to a passage in Plotinus which seems another instance, at least, of a parallel way of thinking, to this passage in the *Defence*: "But let us leave the arts and consider those works produced by nature and admitted to be naturally beautiful which the creations of art are charged with imitating, all reasoning life and unreasoning things alike, but especially the consummate among them, where the moulder and maker has subdued the material and given the form he desired. Now what is the beauty here? It has nothing to do with the blood or the menstrual process: either there is also a colour and form [italics mine] apart from all this, or there is nothing unless sheer ugliness or a bare recipient, as it were the mere matter of beauty" ("Fifth Ennead," VIII.2, *The Six Enneads, Great Books of the Western World*, Vol. 17, p. 240).
196-202 "And this . . . control of that faculty of which it is the creation."

STUDY. Shelley continues in a similar vein to that of Plotinus who, after discussing beautiful creations, asks: "In all these is it not the idea, something of that realm but communicated to the produced from within the producer just as in works of art, we held, it is communicated from the arts to their creations?" ("Fifth Ennead," VIII.2, p. 240).

202-207 "For language . . . expression."

CRITICISM. D. H. Reiman notes that both Peacock and Shelley agreed "that poetry and other products of the imagination (scientific thought, political theory) compete for the imaginative energy of the human mind" but that Shelley, wishing to justify poetry "as the most useful expression of the imagination" began to do so "by saying that language, the arbitrary product of the imagination, can give expression to it more directly and faithfully than can materials produced by nature, (the sculptor's stone, the scientist's chemicals, the economist's crops and people)" (Percy Bysshe Shelley, pp. 122-123).

208 "A mirror"

EDITIONS. Cook notes Shelley's partiality for this figure, and that it is used six times in the Defence [I. 325, 327, 587, 610, 781, and 1530] (p. 63).

CRITICISM. M. H. Abrams comments that "the analogue Shelley
employs to clarify the relation of imitation to ideal is the standard one of the mirror, conceived, as by many Renaissance Platonists, to reflect the Ideas more accurately than do the particulars of the natural world." He further notes that in the context of this line, Shelley "like many of his contemporaries, reverses the aesthetic mirror in order to make it reflect the lamp of the mind: the language of poetry 'is as a mirror which reflects,' but the materials of the other arts 'as a cloud which enfeebles'" (The Mirror and the Lamp, pp. 127, 130).

210-216 "Hence the fame of sculptors . . . term"

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments that Sidney also "sets poetry as the highest of all the arts because the most essentially creative though his comparison does not run along precisely the same lines as Shelley's; he compares the poet with the natural philosopher, moral philosopher, rhetorician, etc." (p. 85).

218-226 "The fame of legislators and founders of religions . . . remain."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley calls Shelley's opinion of religious founders "shallow" and "one ordinarily held by the Voltairean school of thought," but comments that Shelley "is not personally responsible for its inception" (p. 85).

CRITICISM. J. Baker finds Shelley "expressing the view common to Platonists who, unlike Plato himself, have glorified 'the poet.'" Shelley is carrying on "a tradition
contradictory to Plato's, for the Phaedrus assigns 'the character of a poet' to the sixth place down." Baker also notes that "Peacock and the utilitarians in general agree much more closely with Plato" (Shelley's Platonic Answer, p. 19).

STUDY. Volney's The Ruins may still be in Shelley's mind at this point too, for Volney also talks of the opinions of the vulgar with relation to the founders of religion. After relating how religions originated in mythological tales and beliefs, the narrator notes that the gross forms become purified and "a new system" comes out of this, which becomes a "mystical or moral worship, or the system of a future state." The next consequence is that "in reality, when the vulgar heard talk of a new heaven and another world, they soon gave a body to these fictions; they erected on it a solid stage and real scenes." When the final accounting of the origins of religions and their effects is made, the priests note that the people were misled because they were "superstitious" and "weak," the kings call them "servile" and "ignorant," and the legislators say, "It is yourselves that cause the evils of which you complain ... encourage tyrants by a base flattery of their power, by an absurd admiration of their pretended beneficence." The doctors, when questioned by the "plebeians" or "children of simplicity" about the Scriptures, or the purpose of it all, tell them "we understand them for you," to "render you more happy"
Shelley, in *Queen Mab*, where Volney's influence is also felt, has made a similar point about flattery and religion: "Then grave and hoary-headed hypocrites / . . . Have crept by flattery to the seats of power" by the use of "God, Hell and Heaven" (IV.203-210). In the essay *On Life*, Shelley asks a question which reveals a viewpoint basic to this whole passage, especially his final comments on whether "any excess will remain" of the fame of founders of religion. The essay passage can be seen to be directly related to Volney's *The Ruins: or, A Survey of the Revolutions of Empires*, as the title itself suggests, and this passage actually is a succinct summary of the entire theme and development of Volney's work: "What are changes of empires, the wreck of dynasties, with the opinion which supported them; what is the birth and the extinction of religious and of political systems, to life?" Towards the end of the essay he asks again, "What is the cause of life? That is, how was it produced, or what agencies distinct from life have acted or act upon life? All recorded generations of mankind have wearily busied themselves in inventing answers to this question; and the result has been--Religion" (*Prose*, pp. 172, 174). Other examples of Shelley's use of the idea of the "vulgar" in relation to beginning religion can be seen in his essays, *A Philosophical View of Reform* (*Prose*, pp. 230-231), and *On the Devil and Devils* (*Prose*, p. 265).

One further observation should also be made here. It
is obvious that in the passage, "flattery of the gross opinion of the vulgar usually conciliates," Shelley is playing on the various meanings of the words, something which he does at other places in the Defence, and something to be expected of a practicing poet. "Flattery" may mean: to give encouragement, especially falsely, exaggerated attention, or blandishment; or to make to feel pleased or honored. "Gross" may mean: vulgar; lack of refinement or perception; very bad; or (in an archaic sense), evident or obvious. "Vulgar" may mean: the common people or mass; lack of culture or refinement; coarse; or popular. "Conciliate" may mean: to bring together; or, to gain. By putting these varieties of meaning together, one may produce a clear enough picture of Shelley's opinion of how the mass opinion has been brought about by "founders of religion," and why these "founders" have been able to do so. Shelley's attitude is very parallel to that of Volney as seen in The Ruins. It perhaps might be further noted that Volney may be placed in the group of French materialists which includes Holbach, La Mettrie, Condorcet, and Cabanis, and that his principal work, The Ruins, which popularized religious skepticism, went through many editions and translations. If, as seems possible, Shelley is in part thinking of Volneyan ideas, it indicates that he has not entirely left behind the materialistic influences of his earlier days.
PARAGRAPH 6: LINES 227-234

233-234 "division into prose and verse is inadmissible"

EDITIONS. Clark notes that the idea of this paragraph is in "perfect accord with the philosophy of Wordsworth and Coleridge which identifies poetry with order and harmony" (p. 280).

CRITICISM. C. M. Woodhouse agrees with Shelley's view, saying: "It is not hard to think of writers whose inspiration was poetic, but who happened to find their medium in prose . . . . What he really means by poets in almost every case are creative artists in any medium. The great majority of his examples are chosen from the specific mediums of writing in prose or verse, and most of them in fact from versified poetry in the strict sense. But I have no doubt that Shelley is right to allow a wide definition and to admit many kinds of writing that most people would not have called poetic" (The Unacknowledged Legislators," Essays by Divers Hands, pp. 53-54).

STUDY. When Shelley says that the "popular division into prose and verse is inadmissible in accurate philosophy" his thought very probably has a source in the passage of Monboddo's On the Origin and Progress of Language, where he traces the development of rhythm in ancient prose as recorded by such critics as Aristotle, Cicero, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. He points out that ancient verse was "formed by rhythm not accent," and "as their prose was composed in the same
language as their verse," it is "impossible to deny their ears must have perceived the quantity of the syllables in one as well as the other." The only question, therefore, is "whether rhythm of prose can be reduced to art as well as the rhythm of verse." He notes that this was done by both Aristotle and the Halicarnassian. The latter "took examples from the best prose writers" and scanned them, measuring by feet "as carefully as we do Greek or Latin verse." Monboddo notes further that Cicero speaks in the Orator of composing without numbers as "loose and dissolute," and that "such a thing as rhythm in prose he affirms." Cicero also said that "feet constitute rhythm" the same as "those of verse," and that "poetical feet are proper for the rhythm of prose" [Cap. 56 and 57]. The distinction between verse and prose is only one of degree and not of kinds, for Monboddo quotes the Halicarnassian on how to distinguish verse from prose. Verse is "exactly measured," with the "same rhythm returning at exact intervals," while prose is not restricted to certain measure or certain intervals. Rhythm in prose is "diffused through the whole composition" and is used in a manner "most agreeable to the subject" which is treated [Cap. 21] (Vol. IV, Bk. II, pp. 258-261).

It is interesting to note that Monboddo also considers Plato as a poet, an idea which Shelley expresses very shortly at 1. 270 below. Monboddo comments that Plato's Dialogues "are truly poetical pieces, and very fine ones too; the style much ornamented, and as much varied, particularly by
diversity of arrangement, as I think it is possible."
Plato "made a style which as his scholar Aristotle said,
was neither verse nor prose, but hobbling betwixt the two"
"Sounds . . . relations . . . thoughts."

STUDY. Monboddo again appears to be a source for Shelley's thought here. He opens his discussion on language in the same context as Shelley does here, the relations of sound and thought. The sense he gives to "language" is that "of the Greek word topos, as denoting both the ideas, and the sounds used to express them." Language "consists of two things: namely, sounds, and the conception of the mind signified by those sounds." The voice makes "the material part of language," and what it has in common to other things is "the music, or inarticulate cries." In the formal consideration, what is peculiar to language is "the significancy of ideas." What is called "word," though having "matter, voice, yet, if it signified nothing, would not deserve that name." This latter consideration is the more important for "the thing signified is more excellent than the sign, and the mind than the body: for this part of language belongs altogether to the mind; whereas the other is no more than the operation of certain organs of the body" (*Of the Origin and Progress of Language*, I, pp. 7-9).

"Hence the language . . . sound . . . order."

EDITIONS. Both Cook and Verkoren suggest parallel passages in Sidney's *Defence*. The first is: "for that same exquisite observing of number and measure in the words, and that high flying libertie of conceit propper to the Poet" [*P.*, p. 6].
The second is: "Although indeed the Senate of Poets hath chosen verse as their fittest rainment: meaning as in matter, they passed all in all, so in maner, to go beyond them: not speaking table talke fashion, or like men in a dreame, words as they chanceably fall from the mouth, but peasing each sillable of each word by just proportion, according to the dignitie of the subject" [F., p. 11].

The third is: "which considereth each word not onely as a man may say by his forcible qualitie, but by his best measured quantity: carrying even in themselves a Harmonie, without perchance number, measure, order, proportion, be in our time growne odious" [F., p. 27], (Cook, p. 63; Verkoren, p. 71). Miss Winstanley sees Shelley's views and those of Wordsworth in the preface to the second edition of the Lyrical Ballads as at "opposite poles": "Shelley does not consider metre as necessary . . . but he nevertheless regards harmonious rhythm as no less important than the sense. Wordsworth, apparently, considered metre as necessary . . . but he held that the sense is everything and the sound in comparison nothing" (p.85).

CRITICISM. In Shelley's discussion of harmony and sound in this general section, K. N. Cameron sees Shelley following further the same order as Rasselas, Chapter X, which concludes "with a brief dictum on 'delicacy of speech, and grace of harmony'" ("A New Source," p. 637).

STUDY. Earlier in the Defence Shelley states that "in the infancy of society every author is necessarily a poet,
because language itself is poetry." Now he states that "language of poets has ever affected . . . harmonious recurrence of sound." This general view was held, too, by Monboddo, who notes his own agreement with the Abbé de Condillac's thoughts in "An Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge," that language was invented, and that "before men used language, they conversed together by signs and inarticulate cries"; and after language was formed, that "the first language had a great deal of prosody, or musical tones, which he [Condillac] seems to think as natural to man as articulation" (Of the Origin and Progress of Language, I, p. ix-x).

246-253 "Hence the vanity of translation . . . Babel."

EDITIONS. In MS B there appears a cancellation after "translation" which reads, "for it is not translation to create anew" (see Textual Notes above). Verkoren lists the Bible source of the "curse of Babel," Genesis XI.6-7, and suggests a parallel passage in Sidney's Defence: " . . . which I thinke was a piece of the Tower of Babilons curse, that a man should be put to schoole to learn his mother tongue" (pp. 98, 72).

CRITICISM. The fact that Shelley himself was a fine translator often shapes critical comment on this passage. J. Raben says that "no aspect of Shelley's evolution into a major poet reveals his self-discipline as an artist more clearly" than his "efforts at translation," and that "his close analysis of masterpieces in every language he read"
was "an apprenticeship in which he sought to gain experience for his independent accomplishment." Raben notes further that "one measure of the importance of translation in Shelley's general theory of poetry can be conceived in his attempts to explain it" ("Shelley as Translator," Shelley: Modern Judgements, pp. 196-197). R. B. Woodings notes the fineness of Shelley's translations of Goethe and Calderon, and his concern not just for "verbal equivalents" but for expressing the works "as he understood them." Thus "a critic can justifiably talk about these translations as original works, since they form a part of Shelley's general development" ("Editor's Note," Shelley: Modern Judgements, p. 196). [Perhaps Shelley had such a thought on originality when he wrote the sentence later canceled in MS B which is mentioned above in Editions.]

E. J. Schulze sees Shelley as sharing with Coleridge the doctrine that the "specific language and rhythm of a poem" are "intrinsic to its formal purpose," as an idea which is part of a general insistence on organic form" (Shelley's Theory, pp. 229-230). R. Wellek comments that Shelley's sense of the specificity of language is so strong that he denies the possibility of translation, though he himself was a very successful translator" (A History of Modern Criticism, II, p. 126).

STUDY. This view of translation is not a new one with Shelley. For example, in a letter to Leigh Hunt, November 14-18, 1819, he writes: "I am sorry to hear that you have employed yourself in translating the 'Aminta' [of Tasso],
though I doubt not it will be a just and beautiful translation. You ought to write Amintas. You ought to exercise your fancy in the perpetual creation of new forms of gentleness and beauty. You are formed to be a living fountain and not a canal however clear."

Later in the same letter, he says: "With respect to translation, even I will not be seduced by it; although the Greek plays, and some of the ideal dramas of Calderon . . . are perpetually tempting me to throw over their perfect and glowing forms the grey veil of my own words" (Letters, II, pp. 152-153).

What is expressed here is a dual view that Shelley firmly holds to throughout the Defence, which is that the real poet, one with great gifts, must not imitate but must originate (as his criticism of Virgil later shows). The letter above indicates that translation, no matter its beauty, is imitation not creation, and is taking the artist from his real mission. The other view is that the original can never be "transfused" properly into another language, for "the plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower," as he continues in the Defence. On this latter point he makes his strongest statement in a letter to an unnamed lady in the spring of 1821. In this letter he advises learning the original languages in order to enjoy "the beauties of eloquence and poetry." It is not "facts" that we want to know in poetry, history, and other writings, for "they are mere divisions, the arbitrary points on which we hang, and to which we refer those delicate and evanescent
hues of mind, which language delights and instructs us in precise proportion as it expresses. What is a translation of Homer into English? A person who is ignorant of Greek need only look at 'Paradise Lost,' or the tragedy of 'Lear' translated into French, to obtain an analogical conception of its worthless and miserable inadequacy. Tacitus, or Livius, or Herodotus, are equally undelightful and un instruc tive in translation" (Letters, II, pp. 277-278).

The imagery of this section has also been used by Shelley in other works. The "Babel" image repeats an idea which he expressed previously in 1821, in an early draft of the "Advertisement" to Epipsychidion: "He had framed to himself certain opinions, founded no doubt upon the truth of things, but built up to a Babel height; they fell by their own weight, & the thoughts that were his architects, became unintelligible one to the other, as men upon whom confusion of tongues has fallen" ("Preface 1," Poetry, p. 425). This idea vanishes from the remaining drafts, and appears in the final version in essence, but reworded, so that the poem "must ever remain incomprehensible, from a defect of a common organ of perception for the ideas of which it treats." However, the original idea and phrasing clearly return to his mind in this passage of the Defence, and the final thought, "a defect of a common organ of perception" applies equally to the deficiencies Shelley sees in the language of translation.

Shelley has also used the image of the violet before to emphasize, as he does here in the Defence, the unique inner
individuality which various aspects of life contain, in language, thought, or form, and which are really unchangeable by external circumstances. In the section of his essay, *Speculations on Metaphysics and Morals*, entitled "Moral Science Consists in Considering the Difference, Not the Resemblance, of Persons," Shelley indicates that the "vitality" of actions in man's thought "derives its color from what is no wise contributed to from any external source." It is like the plant which "derives the accident of its size and shape from the soil in which it springs" but "retains those qualities which essentially divide it from all others." Thus, "the violet does not cease to emit its odor in whatever soil it may grow" (*Prose*, pp. 192-193). The very uniqueness, then, of an original poetic thought, as with a violet, lies in its own internal constitution. External change in either would not produce the same thought or violet, which are unchangeable in their true nature, but would produce something necessarily different. Translation then is really an impossibility.
PARAGRAPH 8: LINES 254-302

258-268 "harmony . . . prose writers"

EDITIONS. MS A has two canceled notations concerning the use of metre (see Textual Notes above).

258-261 "Yet . . . harmony . . . observed."

EDITIONS. Cook calls attention to critical comments by Hazlitt and Sidney which bear similar views to those expressed by Shelley at this point. Hazlitt remarks in Lectures on the English Poets: "I will mention three works which come as near to poetry as possible . . . Pilgrim's Progress, Robinson Crusoe, and the Tales of Boccaccio. Chaucer and Dryden have translated some of the last into English rime, but the essence and the power of poetry was there before . . . If it is of the essence of poetry to . . . fix the imagination . . . John Bunyan and Daniel Defoe may be permitted to pass for poets in their way." Sidney, in his Defence, says: "... I speake to shew, that it is not ryming and versing that maketh a Poet, (no more than a long gown maketh an Advocate, who though he pleaded in Armour, should be an Advocat and no souldier)" [F., pp. 10-11], (Cook, p. 64). Verkoren also notes this and one other parallel passage in Sidney: "It is alreadie said (and as I thinke truly said) it is not ryming and versing that maketh Poesie: One may be a Poet without versing, and a versifier without Poetrie" [F., p. 27], (Verkoren, p. 72).
"every . . . innovate . . . versification."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments that this is a remark "applicable to Shelley himself who invents no new metres but produces wholly fresh effects in some of those best known," and she notes especially Shelley's use of "Spenserian stanza and the ordinary iambic line of ten syllables" (p. 85). Clark comments that "both Coleridge and Wordsworth maintained this idea" (p. 280).

CRITICISM. E. Nitchie comments on modern criticism of Romantic poetry: its formlessness, or too great concern for form, its conventional verse forms, metrical rhythms for their own sake, language beautiful only by reason of sounds, trite association, and failure in structure. She then comments: "If these things are so, the poets are untrue to their own critical theory. They furnish rebuttal in their statements on prosody, diction, imagery, and the organic structure of a poem. Writing of prosody in his Defence of Poetry Shelley said that 'every great Poet must inevitably innovate upon the example of his predecessors in the exact structure of his peculiar versification'" ("Form in Romantic Poetry," The Major English Romantic Poets, p. 7).

STUDY. Shelley comments on this same idea in his "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam (1817), saying that he has sought "to enlist the harmony of metrical language" and "to avoid the imitation of any style of language or versification peculiar to the original minds of which it is the character--designing
that, even if what I have produced be worthless, it should still be properly my own." He makes the point later that even when avoiding the imitation of contemporary style "there must be a resemblance, which does not depend upon their own will, between all the writers of any particular age. They cannot escape from subjection to a common influence which arises out of . . . the times in which they live though each is in a degree the author of the very influence by which his being is thus pervaded." In the "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound he again suggests that "every great poet" must "inevitably innovate" on his predecessors when he says that "one great poet is a masterpiece of nature which another not only ought to study but must study" (Prose, pp. 315, 317, 318, 328).

267-270 "The distinction between poets and prose writers is a vulgar error . . . anticipated."

EDITIONS. The references in the similar earlier passage above to Sidney's Defence are again suggested here. Jordan notes Wordsworth's footnote to his "Preface" that "much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science" (p. 34).

CRITICISM. Again, as in other passages of the Defence, critics are at wide variance in their assessment of this particular Defence thought and its influences. R. B. McElderry, Jr. says it is the "emphasis on feeling" which leads both Wordsworth and Shelley "to reject the conventional distinction between
poetry and prose." He notes Wordsworth's statement in his "Preface" that "there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition," and his "more general conclusion" that the "same human blood circulates through the veins of them both."

McElderry concludes that "there are small differences of phrasing, but both writers are agreed in preferring the spirit to the form as the essential basis of distinction. Reason or science is the real antithesis to the poetic spirit. Meter they both commend, not as an end in itself, but as a means to heightened pleasure" ("Common Elements in Wordsworth's 'Preface' and Shelley's Defence of Poetry," pp. 178-179). M. T. Solve sees Shelley as following Sidney in the distinction between poets and prose writers and in declaring that certain philosophers and prose writers are poets (Shelley: His Theory of Poetry, p. 131). J. Flagg sees the general idea of vulgar error as "strikingly anticipated in an early passage of the Poetics where Aristotle, himself noting the fallacy of the common distinction between poetry and prose on the basis of their metrical and non-metrical language, observes that: 'Men connect the making of poems with the use of meter and call men elegaic poets and epic poets not by virtue of their producing an imitation, but by virtue of their common use of meter. For even if a man brings out a medical or other treatise in meter they are accustomed to calling the man a poet . . . (1447b)'. Flagg continues that "Shelley differs from Aristotle . . . in his emphasis on meter as only one (though the most widespread
and traditional) of the forms that harmony in language may take, while for Aristotle the main point is that poetry should be considered poetry because it is mimetic, rather than because it is in metrical language" ("Shelley and Aristotle," p. 54). John Bayley, in commenting on the Romantic refusal to distinguish between poetry and prose, notes Coleridge's distinction that "prose is words in the best order, poetry the best words in the best order." He further comments that Shelley's choice of Plato and Bacon as examples is significant because they are "two philosophers who are famous for their hostile or contemptuous attitude towards poetry, yet they were involuntary poets; they were actually doing what they patronised or condemned" (The Romantic Survival: A Study in Poetic Evolution, pp. 17-20). C. Grabo comments that Shelley uses "poet" in two senses: "in the larger sense of creative mind; and in the narrower sense of master of measured language" (The Magic Plant, pp. 355-356).

STUDY. Undoubtedly Shelley would be aware of other writers' thinking about the relative values of prose and poetry as to form, as the critics above suggest, and such comment would naturally form a background to his thinking. His word choice indicates, however, that his view is a broad one here, not so much concerned with poetic form as with poetic content. The whole theme of the Defence revolves around the idea of poetry as a distinctive creative force which shows itself in many forms, and not in just one form, one group, one place, one time, or in one style or arrangement of words. To differentiate
poetry as to its poetic or prose form is far too narrow a concept. Thus, it is a "vulgar error." The key lies in the word "vulgar," which means the error is a common or popular one, but more importantly, that it arises from a lack of culture, taste, sensitivity, or, as Shelley obviously sees it, a mistaken comprehension of what the true form is which is really involved in poetry. The proof of the genuineness of poetic form rising above so narrow a distinction as that of word arrangement or metric form is seen in the highest of examples, that of philosophic thought. Here again a key word is used, "anticipated." Shelley has a number of times used multiple meanings in what appear his simplest statements in the Defence, and this is one more instance. While "anticipated" means "expected," it also means, more importantly here, that the distinction was made to happen earlier, that it was ahead of later times in doing or achieving an action, and that it forestalled by its advance action. It becomes clear that Shelley is saying that from the classic times on, with Plato becoming his first example, great poetry, or great and moving thought or action, has utilized a convenient form. Whether that form is in meter or prose in the narrow sense is immaterial beside the broad concept that true poetry rises above mere form as substance rises above its shadow.

270 "Plato was essentially a poet"

EDITIONS. General reference is made here to Shelley's On the Symposium, or Preface to the Banquet of Plato: "Plato
exhibits the rare union of close and subtle logic, with the Pythian enthusiasm of poetry, melted by the splendour and harmony of his periods into one irresistible stream of musical impressions, which hurry the persuasions onward, as in a breathless career. His language is that of an immortal spirit, rather than a man. Lord Bacon is, perhaps, the only writer, who, in these particulars, can be compared with him; his imitator, Cicero, sinks in the comparison into an ape mocking the gestures of a man" (Julian, VII, p. 161). Cook, as do later commentators, also suggests a passage in Sidney's Defence: "And truly even Plato who so ever well considereth, shall finde that in the body of his works though the inside & strength were Philosophie, the skin as it were and beautie, depended most of Poetrie" [F., p. 5], (p. 64). Brett-Smith suggests an additional Sidney passage: "of all Philosophers hee [Plato] is the most Poeticall" [F., p. 33], (p. 89). Verkoren adds another passage from Sidney: "which Plato & Boetius well knew; and therefore made mistresse Philosophie verie often borrow the masking raiment of Poesie" [F., p. 20], (p. 72). Clark also suggests this is "fully discussed in Wordsworth's Preface (1800)" (p. 280). Jordan notes that "Sidney had said as much, and had gone on to undermine Plato's famous banishing of poets from his Republic: 'So as Plato, banishing the abuse, not the thing, not banishing it, but giving due honour unto it, shall be our Patron, and not our adversarie' [F., p. 34], (pp. 34-35).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos comments: "This appraisal of Plato
as a poet is a variant expression of... Shelley's Preface... Shelley shares with Sidney the belief that the distinction between poetry and prose is only nominal, and both cite Plato to prove this point. It is possible that Shelley also met with the same conception in Aristotle's Poetics, 1451b."

He notes further that "the reference to Plato's rejection of poetic forms probably refers to Plato's burning of his youthful poetical compositions after hearing Socrates. This incident is mentioned in Diogenes Laertius's Life of Plato, III, 5, which Shelley had read" (The Platonism, pp. 351-352). Paul Shorey says: "That Plato was himself a poet is apparent to every reader who does not require poetry to be tagged and labeled with rhyme. It is a commonplace of literature from the earliest Christian Fathers to the latest romantic critics, whether used in Milton's way to refute, or in Shelley's to exalt, Plato. He is quite literally a poet as the author of the most exquisite of Greek epigrams... by virtue of the incredible constructive imagination... in the... figurative, imaginative quality of his diction... He has the larger invention of the poet" (Platonism Ancient and Modern, p. 144).

STUDY. Shelley in another comment on Plato wrote to Peacock on August 16, 1818: "What a wonderful passage there is in Phaedrus [245a]--the beginning, I think, of one of the speeches of Socrates--in praise of poetic madness, and in definition of what poetry is, and how a man becomes a poet" (Letters, II, p. 29).
STUDY. Shelley early started reading Cicero's works, and admired them. In a letter to Thomas Jefferson Hogg, on November 26, 1813, he said that he has read "many of Cicero's philosophical works (who is, in my estimation, one of the most admirable characters the world ever produced . . . ." (Letters, I, p. 380). However, his letter of August, 1815 to Hogg says that "I have read some of the Orations of Cicero. That against Verres contains some passages of wonderful power, although on the whole I consider them inferior to the interest they produced to those of his metaphysical essays which I have read. This must surely spring from their intrinsic inferiority: for it is unusual that an address to the passions should awaken less interest than an appeal to reason" (Letters, I, p. 429).

EDITIONS. Clark comments that "Bacon's almost superhuman knowledge and his sympathy with the idea of progress are quite compatible with Shelley's philosophy" (p. 280).

CRITICISM. W. O. Scott says that "Shelley's praise of Bacon as a poet . . . is worth special notice. It is the highest praise he can give anyone; it connects Bacon with Plato as Shelley's maturer thought characteristically does." Scott feels that to understand Shelley's appraisal, it should be asked in what sense he is a Shelleyan "poet." The first thing to notice is that, as in the preface to Shelley's translation
of the Symposium, "thought is an important part of poetry; Bacon's philosophy has an 'almost superhuman wisdom.'"

Scott also notes that "about 1818, evidently stimulated by his work with Plato, Shelley begins associating Plato and Bacon, and in assertions of Bacon's ultimate value Plato's name is almost invariably nearby. They are great idealistic reformers in the Preface to Prometheus, and they know the limits of earthly knowledge in the conversation with Tre-launey. In the Symposium preface and the Defence they are the two great 'prose poets' of the world" ("Shelley's Admiration for Bacon," pp. 232-233, 235-236). Notopoulos notes that "Shelley, who was well read in English philosophy, can be expected to have been influenced by the Platonic tradition in it. At the head of the list stands Bacon, whom Shelley read with care . . . . Though Shelley couples Lord Bacon with Plato, Bacon is in no way a Platonist in temperament or thought. He quotes and alludes to essential features in Plato's thought, sometimes by way of criticism, at other times by way of illustration or information. On the whole Shelley was subjected to a presentation of many essential features of Platonism in his study of Bacon" (The Platonism, pp. 114-115). D. L. Clark says: "An examination of Shelley's literary development will show that the consideration of form was to him of secondary importance while substance or idea was the prime essential. Thus in Shelley's mind Plato and Bacon were, by virtue of the poetry of their ideas, by the power of their language, by their clear-cut imagery, and by the moral in-
sight of their writings, poets of the first order" ("Introduction," Prose, p. 28).

288-290 "All the authors of revolutions in opinion . . . poets"

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley feels "it would be interesting to know of what particular authors Shelley was thinking—probably of Rousseau among others" (p. 86).

300-302 "Shakespeare, Dante, and Milton . . . power."

EDITIONS. MS A here indicates that Shelley intended to add "Aeschylus" to the list (see Textual Notes above). In Miss Winstanley's opinion, this is "true in every sense of Dante, but scarcely true in the technical sense of Shakespeare, and not true of Milton" (p. 86).

CRITICISM. R. J. White notes that this paragraph "can be paralleled by many almost identical passages in Coleridge," as for example: 'No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher' (re Shakespeare), [Chapter XV, Biographia Literaria]. He also notes that "Coleridge's works are likewise strewn with references to poetic-philosophic-Platonism of Milton, Bacon, etc.,," and that to Wordsworth he once wrote that "you were . . . a thinking feeling philosopher habitually" (Political Tracts, p. 289).

STUDY. Shelley, in A Philosophical View of Reform, has expressed this same general thought on the power of such poets, using as an example the Elizabethan age, in which there was
"an extraordinary exertion of the energies of intellectual power. Shakespeare and Lord Bacon and the great writers . . . were at once the effects of the new spirit in men's minds and the causes of its more complete development" (Prose, p. 231).
303-304 "A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth."

EDITIONS. Clark comments that this should be compared with similar statements in Wordsworth and Coleridge" (p. 281). Jordan notes that "Wordsworth defined poetry as 'the image of man and nature' in his 'Preface'" (p. 35).

CRITICISM. A. T. Strong notes that "Plato had described the poet as an imitator in the third degree from ideal truth and beauty. To Shelley, on the other hand, he was not so removed, but was at their very heart. He partook of that ideal genius of which virtue, truth, and beauty were the indissociable kinds" (Three Studies in Shelley, p. 36).

304-317 "There ... story and a poem ... nature."

EDITIONS. Cook, as do later editors, suggests the famous passage from Aristotle's Poetics 9.1-3 at this point: "The real distinction between the poet and the historian is not found in the employment of verse by the former, and of prose by the latter, for, if we suppose the history of Herodotus to be versified, it would be nothing but history still, only now in a metrical form. The true ground of difference is that the historian relates what has taken place, the poet how certain things might have taken place. Hence poetry is of a more philosophical and serious character than history; it is, we might say, more universal and more ideal. Poetry deals with the general, history with the particular ... ."
Cook suggests also Sidney's *Defence* passage: "Truly Aristotle himselfe in his discourse of Poesie, plainly determineth this question, saying, that *Poetrie* is . . . more Philosophicall and more then History. His reason is, because *Poesie* dealeth with . . . the universall consideration, and the Historie with . . . the particular" [£., p. 16], (p. 65). Miss Winstanley notes that "Shelley explains this by the theory of ideas which he borrows from Plato, but the contrast is essentially the same as that made by Aristotle in his *Poetics*" (p. 86). Brett-Smith suggests a further Sidney passage: "The Philosopher therefore, and the Historian, are they which would win the goale, the one by precept, the other by example: but both, not having both, doo both halt . . . . On the other side, the Historian wanting the precept, is so tied, not to what should be, but to what is, to the particular truth of things, and not to the general reason of things, that his example draweth no necessarie consequence, and therefore a lesse fruitfull doctrine" [£., pp. 13-14]. Brett-Smith also sees both Shelley and Sidney basing their arguments on Aristotle (pp. 89-90). Jordan notes a similar comment in Wordsworth: "Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so; its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative" ["Preface"] (p. 36). Clark, on the other hand, comments that "Hume touches briefly on this point in his *An Enquiry Concerning the Human Understanding*, Sections 3 and 4" (p. 281).
CRITICISM. A. Durand comments that "Aristotle's remark that 'poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history,' was translated by Wordsworth, who apparently had not himself read the Poetics, into the claim that 'Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing,' and this typically Romantic exaggeration is perpetuated when Shelley declares that 'A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth.' But Aristotle, as usual, must be taken as meaning precisely what he says, and he here offers no grounds for supposing that, because poetry is superior to history in universality, it therefore reaches the highest universality possible" ("Shelley on the Nature of Poetry," pp. 185-186). Other critics also suggest the connection with Aristotle's distinction. (See Schulz, Shelley's Theory of Poetry, p. 193; D. Perkins, English Romantic Writers, p. 1075; J. Baker, Shelley's Platonic Answer, p. 34; D. Daiches, Critical Approaches to Literature, p. 117).

STUDY. Plotinus has also spoken in the vein of what Aristotle says about history describing what has been, while poetry describes what will probably be, the idea which Shelley uses here. In the Fifth Ennead, VIII.1, he says: "Still the arts are not to be slighted on the ground that they create by imitation of natural objects; for, to begin with, these natural objects are themselves imitations; then, we must recognise that they give no bare reproduction of the thing seen but go back to the Ideas from which Nature itself derives, and, furthermore, that much of their work is all their
own; they are holders of beauty and add where nature is lacking. Thus Pheidias wrought the Zeus upon no model among things of sense but by apprehending what form Zeus must take if he chose to become manifest to light (Plotinus: The Six Enneads, pp. 239-240). It may be noted that neither Aristotle nor Plotinus are listed in any place as having been read by Shelley. That does not mean, however, that Shelley had no knowledge of them. His classical reading was so broad that the expectation would be that he had, rather than had not, an acquaintance with such works as these.

315-317 "contains ... germ ... actions ... nature."

CRITICISM. J. Bronowski says: "Again we have the image of the seed, and again we are told that the poet knows laws to shape the present and the future. And now we learn what these laws are. They ... rule 'whatever motives or actions have place in the possible varieties of human nature'. What poetry offers is a formula, wider in time and place than others, for the ... actions of men. Thus does it find the shape of present and future. This is the field which it holds among Peacock's sciences. Shelley is staking one of poetry's earliest claims in the new field of psychology" (The Poet's Defence, p. 74).

322-324 "Hence epitomes ... history ... poetry ... it."

EDITIONS. Koszul reports this figure is not in the draft (see Textual Notes above). Cook is the first who identifies
the Bacon source in the *Advancement of Learning*, II,ii.4:
"As for the corruptions and moths of history, which are epitomes, the use of them deserveth to be banished, as all men of sound judgment have confessed, as those that have fretted and corroded the sound bodies of many excellent histories, and wrought them into base and unprofitable dregs"
(p. 65).

CRITICISM. W. O. Scott notes that Shelley had marked this passage in his copy of Bacon's works ("Shelley's Admiration for Bacon," p. 229). D. L. Clark also notes Shelley's marking of the passage and comments that "Shelley's well-known opinion of history found substantial confirmation in this passage" and that "this passage expresses Shelley's distaste for history." He suggests then as an example of this, Shelley's *Essay on the Literature of the Athenians* ("Shelley and Bacon," p. 539). [Although Clark does not suggest the lines of the *Defence* as an example, his comment applies equally well to them.]

327-328 "Poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted."

EDITIONS. Clark suggests that "Shelley may have had this idea from Aristotle, or from Sidney, who borrowed from Aristotle" (p. 281).
PARAGRAPH 10: LINES 329-341

329-330 "The parts . . . may be poetical . . . poem."
EDITIONS. Jordan notes that "Coleridge looked at the other side of the coin: 'a poem of any length neither can be, or ought to be all poetry' (Biographia Literaria, Chap. XIV)" (p. 36).

331 "A single sentence may be considered as a whole"
EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley says that this is "the doctrine of the 'poetic moment' in its strongest form. In this and similar utterances Shelley definitely ranges himself with the modern and romantic as against the classical criticism which maintains that the subject is all, or almost all" (p. 86).

333-334 "a single word . . . spark . . . thought."
EDITIONS. Cook notes the further use of this thought in the Defence [11. 1068-69] (p. 65).

334-341 "all great historians . . . poets . . . images."
EDITIONS. Cook refers to Sidney's Defence passage here: "And even Historiographers, although their lippes sound of things done, and veritie be written in their foreheads, have bene glad to borrow both fashion and perchance weight of the Poets. So Herodotus entituled his Historie, by the name of the nine Muses, and both he and all the rest that followed him either stale, or usurped of Poetrie, their passionate describing of passions, the many particularities of battels which no man
could affirm, or if that be denied me, long Orations put in the mouthes of great Kings and Captains, which it is certaine they never pronounced" [F., p. 5] (p. 65). Miss Winstanley feels that "Shelley is here directly opposed to Aristotle, who states expressly that Herodotus would not be a poet even if his history were versified, since both his subject and his manner of treatment are essentially different from the subject and treatment of poetry" (p. 86). Brett-Smith notes this same Sidney passage is also reflected in Peacock's passage in The Four Ages of Poetry, "the history of Herodotus is half a poem," and suggests that Peacock was also familiar with these Sidney sentences (pp. 85-86). Clark points out that Aristotle's De Poetica "exalts poetry above history, as more philosophical and serious" (p. 281).

STUDY. As is usual with Shelley when he presents a list of writers, he represents them in a particular order of time and place. He starts with Herodotus (c. 484-425 B.C.), the Greek historian who is called the "father of history." He continues with Plutarch (c. A.D. 46-120), another Greek writer, and then turns to the Roman historian, Livy (59 B.C.-A.D. 17). The history of Herodotus, although about the Greek-Persian conflict, was broadly inclusive of customs, manners, arts, struggles, and tenets of many countries, and is always commented upon for the beauty of its composition and content. Plutarch, too, showed much learning and research in many works, such as the Parallel Lives, on Greek and Roman figures, and in many essays on physical, religious, moral,
historical, and political matters. Livy, in his life work, *The History of Rome*, presented in 142 books Rome's history from its beginning to A.D. 9. He wrote, as he says in his "Preface" to Book I, to preserve the memory of great deeds and to teach by worthy examples. All are noted for gifts of style, and for copious and interesting illustration of their subject, or, as Shelley says, for filling their "interstices" with "living images."

337 "Livy"

EDITIONS. Koszul notes that instances from Livy are given in Shelley's draft (see Textual Notes above).

340 "fill all the interstices"

EDITIONS. Cook points out three other uses of this idea in the *Defence* [11. 446, 1299, 1350-51]. Jordan says that "This figure is curiously reminiscent of Keats's advice in his letter of August, 1820 to Shelley to 'load every rift' of his subject with ore" (p. 37).

STUDY. The idea Shelley expresses here is one that he has used several times in previous works. In *A Treatise on Morals* in the discussion on "The Mind," (probably dated 1816), he says: "For if the inequalities produced by what has been termed the operations of the external universe were levelled by the perception of our being uniting and filling up their interstices, motion, and mensuration, and time, and space; the elements of the human mind being thus abstracted, sensation and imagination cease. Mind cannot be considered
pure" (Prose, p. 184). Again, in A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love (dated 1818), he says: "This object or its archetype forever exists in the mind which selects among those who resemble it that which most resembles it and instinctively fills up the interstices of the imperfect image in the same manner as the imagination moulds and completes the shapes in clouds, or in the fire, into the resemblances of whatever form, animal, building, &c., happens to be present to it" (Prose, p. 220). His letter to Peacock, January 23-24, 1819, talks of Pompeii's ruins and how "the interstices of their incomparable columns, were portals as it were to admit the spirit of beauty" (Letters, II, p. 73). Again, in Epipsychidion (1821) Shelley talks of an "atom of th' Eternal" filling the "bare and void interstices" of the wilderness (ll. 479-482).
PARAGRAPH 11: LINES 342-344

342-344 "Having determined . . . society."

EDITIONS. Koszul notes a draft addition here (see Textual Notes above).

CRITICISM. N. I. White comments that "having defined poetry in a more social sense and far more basically than either Sidney or Wordsworth Shelley proceeds to examine its effects upon society. This is the main purpose of his essay; it occupies two-thirds of its bulk . . . and involves a disproportionately long historical view of poetry as an enlightening agent" (Shelley, II, p. 273). Grabo, taking a somewhat different view of Shelley's use of continuity, says that "in the definition of the poet and the poet's function" Shelley "draws upon a sentence in The Banquet which defines poetry in its broadest sense: 'Poetry, which is a general name signifying every cause whereby anything proceeds from that which is not, into that which is; so that the exercise of every inventive art is poetry, and all such artists poets'" (The Magic Plant, p. 244).

STUDY. Indirectly, however, Shelley has from the beginning been showing the effects of poetry on society. His development of its role has shown it to be the catalyst acting to bring about the civilizing and refining of early society, and working through the agents most sensible to its force, the poets.
PARAGRAPH 12: LINES 345-410

345-347 "Poetry is every accompanied . . . delight."

EDITIONS. Cook is the first to suggest two parallel passages from Sidney's *Defence*, one being: "Now therein of all Sciences . . . is our Poet the Monarch. For hee doth not onely shew the way, but giveth so sweete a prospect into the way, as will entice anie man to enter into it . . . . Hee beginneth not with obscure definitions, which must blurre the margent with interpretations, and loade the memorie with doubtfulness: but hee commeth to you with words set in delightfull proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for the well enchanting skill of *Musicke*, and with a tale forsooth he commeth unto you, with a tale, which holdeth children from play, and olde men from the chimney corner; and pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the minde from wickednes to vertue" [F., pp. 19-20]. The second is: "I must confess mine owne barbarousnesse, I never heard the old Song of *Percy* and *Duglas*, that I founde not my heart mooved more then with a Trumpet" [F., p. 24] (p. 65). Miss Winstanley turns to a comparison to Wordsworth's "Preface" to the *Lyric Ballads* instead, and notes this parallel thought: "Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere, because not formal but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love; further, it
is a homage paid to the naked and native dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows and feels and lives and moves" (pp. 86-87). Verkoren makes several suggestions. He points out that "Horace insists on the mingled instructiveness and pleasurableness of poetry," its value as "a civilizing factor in history," that early poets are "sages and prophets, and the inventors of arts and sciences," a conception shared by Shelley in the Defence. Verkoren comments also that it is not easy to determine "whether Shelley derived this maxim directly from Horace or from other sources." Since the doctrine that poetry gives pleasurable instruction, traceable to Strabo and Horace, was a Renaissance tenet, Verkoren feels Shelley may have come across it is Sidney's Defence of Poesie. Verkoren also points to a parallel in Sidney: "[Poesie is] a speaking Picture, with this end to teach and delight" [F., p. 9]. From Coleridge's Biographia Literaria, Chapter XIV, Verkoren also suggests the parallel definition of a poem: "A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its immediate object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species—(having this object in common with it)—it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the whole, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component part" (pp. 82, 92-93).

CRITICISM. B. R. McElderry comments, as did Miss Winstanley, on "the pleasure, philosophically conceived," that "both Wordsworth and Shelley regard as the true end of poetry."
He notes Wordsworth's comment that the poet "writes under one restriction only, namely the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected of him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man," which "he goes on to defend as far from degrading to poetry" ("Common Elements," p. 179). W. E. Peck also suggests it is obvious that "Shelley owed something to Coleridge's doctrine, enunciated in the Biographia Literaria, that poetry must produce pleasure to the reader; and to Wordsworth's insistence that the primitive language of the plain people is the very stuff of which poetry is made" (Shelley: His Life and Work, Vol. II, p. 203). A different view is taken by A. C. Bradley, who, in a general comment on influences, says that Shelley's view "appears to owe very little either to Wordsworth's Prefaces or to Coleridge's Biographia Literaria; but there are a few reminiscences of Sidney's Apology, which Shelley had read just before he wrote his own Defence" ("Shelley's View of Poetry," Oxford Lectures on Poetry, p. 152). Another critic, Miss M. R. Thayer, considers the Horatian influence on Shelley. She says: "That he knew Horace well there is abundant evidence; and we also learn that his acquaintance with the Roman poet was not confined to his school-days." He does place Horace "among the greatest men in literature." She feels that Shelley almost always regards Horace "in the capacity of lyric poet" and "disregards Horace as a literary critic, although on occasion he quotes the Ars Poetica."
Most of his citations, however are from the *Odes*; and in nearly every echo of Horace other than quotation which we find in Shelley's work the influence comes from the lyric poetry. Of the echoes, however, she notes that when "one poet incorporates the thoughts or expressions of another into his own work . . . we may be sure that the two possess some bond of fellowship" and this "Shelley does, to a limited extent" (*The Influence of Horace on the Chief English Poets of the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 40-42).

STUDY. Two other references in the *Defence* to this idea of poetry's connection with pleasure are at 11. 98-119, and 731-732. This same relationship of poetry and pleasure is stated in Shelley's "Preface" to the *Revolt of Islam*, where he says that "It is the business of the Poet to communicate to others the pleasure and the enthusiasm arising out of those images and feelings in the vivid presence of which within his own mind consists at once his inspiration and his reward" (*Poetry*, p. 33). In his poem entitled "The Birth of Pleasure," written in 1819, Shelley clearly shows the connection his mind makes between pleasure and poetry:

At the creation of the Earth
Pleasure, that divinest birth,
From the soil of Heaven did rise,
Wrapped in sweet wild melodies--
Like an exhalation wreathing
To the sound of air low-breathing
Through Aeolian pines, which make
A shade and shelter to the lake
Whence it rises soft and slow;
Her life-breathing [limbs] did flow
In the harmony divine
Of an ever-lengthening line
Which enwrapped her perfect form
With a beauty clear and warm.

348-352 "In the infancy of the world . . . consciousness"

CRITICISM. J. E. Baker suggests that Shelley started out "to counteract Peacock by offering a rival interpretation of the history of poetry in different ages," which is shown by passages such as this one on "the infancy of the world," and the earlier one on "the nature of language [1. 149 ff]. He adds: "Thus the first part of the 'Defence' is a reply to the first of the 'positions' of Peacock as Shelley read 'The Four Ages of Poetry.' In the fragment found with the Bodleian MS sources of 'A Defence of Poetry' we read Shelley's own summary of Peacock's opinion, [see first letter draft, Appendix E below, "at first poetry . . . destruction"]" (Shelley's Platonic Answer, pp. 4-5). K. N. Cameron suggests a parallel of this passage on poets in the "infancy of the world" to Johnson's passage in Rasselas which states that "in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best; whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty . . . ." Cameron
also notes that Johnson too suggests here the "divine" nature of poetry ("A New Source," p. 631).

STUDY. Shelley is indicating here a position which may also be found in Monboddo's Of the Origin and Progress of Language, where Monboddo speaks of the effects of instinct or art on man's subsistence. Instinct helps in preservation but does so without knowledge of how "means conduce to the end," and so is without "will, which can never be but where there is an end in view. Art, on the other hand, acts with knowledge of the end, and of means by which it is attained" and consequently, its operations proceed "from motives influencing the will." Art is founded "upon experience and observation, so it is improved by them; and it is by gradual improvements in that way that arts are perfected" (Book II, Chap. IX, pp. 408-411). Man, in the infancy of society, acts mostly by instinct, but gradually, through studying, comparing, and concluding, has seen that pleasure is an end to be achieved by striving for development (which is the true poetic impulse). He thus "opens" to the wisdom which mingles with this pleasure. In Monboddo's words, he "wills" to receive this combined force and thus man advances. The gradual improvements thus effected by the art of poetry are shown in the later generations. Poetry working in its "unapprehended manner" on man's will thus refines art and man gradually.

350-351 "It acts in a divine and unapprehended manner"

EDITIONS. Cook, in comparing the principal views of Shelley and Sidney, says "they agree that there is something prophetic
about poetry; the poet has the ‘vision and the faculty divine,’ and that "the insight of the true seer cannot be acquired through scholarly discipline; there is a sense in which the poet must be born to his lofty mission" (pp. xvii-xviii).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos says that "This is Plato’s doctrine in the Ion." He also comments that "Plato no less than Peacock had attacked poetry, and the defence of poetry in Shelley's essay must be interpreted as an answer to both. But Shelley rejects Plato’s attack on art in the tenth book of the Republic, only to accept Plato’s view of poetry in the Ion and the Phaedrus. Plato offered Shelley two contradictory views of poetry: in the Republic Plato attacks not only bad poets but poetry itself, yet in the Ion and Phaedrus he states that poetry is an emanation of divinity. Shelley’s defence makes use of the latter thesis to attack the former (The Platonism, pp. 352, 346).

355-360 "Even in modern . . . jury . . . generations."

EDITIONS. Cook sees Shelley’s historical perspective as "larger and juster than Sidney's; he sees the ages unroll the panoramic destinies of the race, and marks the elements of renewal and decay. He gazes critically at the past, and hopefully at the future. Sidney could not see a decade in advance, could not even discern the youthful Shakespeare; Shelley virtually foresaw the whole transcendental movement in England and America" (p. xx). Jordan notes that in
June 1821 Shelley pictures "Keats as so hailed by a jury of his peers, among whom is Sidney (Adonais, 401)" (p. 38).

CRITICISM. Cameron sees a further parallel to Rasselas, where Imlac argues that the poet "must, therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name; condemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity" ("A New Source," pp. 634-635).

STUDY. Shelley has expressed the viewpoint of this passage several other times. In the "Review of Thomas Jefferson Hogg's Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff" he speaks at greater length on this subject: "Is the suffrage of mankind the legitimate criterion of intellectual energy? Are complaints of the aspirants to literary fame to be considered as the honorable disappointment of neglected genius, or the sickly impatience of a dreamer miserably self-deceived? The most illustrious ornaments of the annals of the human race have been stigmatized by the contempt and abhorrence of entire communities of man; but this injustice arose out of some temporary superstition, some partial interest, some national doctrine. A glorious redemption awaited their remembrance . . . . Circumstances the least connected with intellectual nature have contributed for a certain period to retain in obscurity the most memorable specimens of human genius . . . . It is evidently not difficult to imagine an instance in which the most elevated genius shall be recompensed with neglect. Mediocrity alone seems unvaryingly to escape rebuke and obloquy; it accommodates its attempts to the spirit of the
Shelley is expressing further an idea which David Hume suggested very clearly in his essay, "Of the Standard of Taste." Hume, in talking about the critic of a work of art has shown the prejudices which may prevail in an age: "If the work be addressed to persons of a different age or nation, he makes no allowance for their peculiar views and preju-

age which has produced it and adopts with mimic effrontery the cant of the day and hour for which alone it lives" (Prose, p. 303). In the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam he applies this idea to himself directly: "But in this as in every other respect I have written fearlessly. It is the misfortune of this age that its writers, too thoughtless of immortality, are exquisitely sensible to the temporary praise or blame . . . . Poetry and the art which professes to regu-
late and limit its powers cannot subsist together" (Prose, p. 318). Again, in 1817, his "Review of William Godwin's Mandeville," shows this same idea: "It may be said with truth that Godwin has been treated unjustly by those of his countrymen upon whose favor temporary distinction depends. If he had devoted his high accomplishments to flatter . . . he might have been more fortunate . . . . But the difference would still have been as wide as that which must forever di-
vide notoriety from fame . . . . It is singular that the other nations of Europe should have anticipated . . . the judgment of posterity and that the name of Godwin, and of his . . . wife, should be pronounced . . . with reverence" (Prose, p. 309).
dices, but, full of the manners of his own age and country, rashly condemns what seemed admirable in the eyes of those for whom alone the discourse was calculated. If the work be executed for the public, he never sufficiently enlarges his comprehension or forgets his interest as a friend or enemy, as a rival or commentator. By this means, his sentiments are perverted . . . his taste evidently departs from the true standard . . . ." Hume continues, however, that while theories of philosophy or theology may prevail and then in a successive period be exploded, with other theories then taking their place, "the case is not the same with the beauties of eloquence and poetry. Just expressions of passion and nature are sure, after a little time, to gain public applause, which they maintain forever. Aristotle and Plato and Epicurus and Descartes may successively yield to each other, but Terence and Virgil maintain a universal, un-disputed empire over the mind of men." Hume further states, "And though prejudices may prevail for a time, they never unite in celebrating any rival to the true genius, but yield at last to the force of nature and just sentiment. Thus, though a civilized nation may easily be mistaken in the choice of their admired philosopher, they never have been found long to err in their affection for a favorite epic or tragic author." Hume further suggests that "the poets' monument more durable than brass must fall to the ground like common brick or clay were men to make no allowance for the continual revolutions of manners and customs and would admit of nothing but what was suitable
to the prevailing fashion." In talking of works which have survived "all the caprices of mode and fashion, all the mistakes of ignorance and envy," Hume notes that the same Homer who pleased the ancients still is admired, and "all the changes of climate, government, religion, and language have not been able to obscure his glory. Authority or prejudice may give a temporary vogue to a bad poet or orator, but his reputation will never be durable or general." But, "a real genius, the longer his works endure and the more wide they are spread, the more sincere is the admiration which he meets with. Envy and jealousy have too much place in a narrow circle, and even familiar acquaintance with his person may diminish the applause due to his performances. But when these obstructions are removed, the beauties which are naturally fitted to excite agreeable sentiments immediately display their energy, and while the world endures, they maintain their authority over the minds of men" (The Essential David Hume, pp. 371-381). The parallel in Shelley's thinking to that of Hume is thus quite apparent. Shelley returns to this idea of judgment and jury for poetry at ll. 1410-33 below.

360-365 "A Poet is a nightingale ... why."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley feels that this is "probably in reference to the neglect and obscurity suffered by such poets as himself and Keats" (p. 87). Jordan suggests here Shelley's lines "To a Skylark," ll. 36-40, about the "Poet hidden ... / Singing hymns unbidden" (p. 38).

CRITICISM. To E. J. Schulze, the dual descriptions of the
poet as a "nightingale" and as a legislator and prophet
"interestingly enough, are of the Orphic poet, a figure fas-
cinating to Shelley; but from that common center the defini-
tions face in opposite directions" (Shelley's Theory, p. 33).
M. T. Solve remarks about Shelley himself that "as persecu-
tion had driven him into exile, so the abuse of the critics
and the neglect of the reading public forced him to retire
more and more into himself. In his Defence he is surely de-
scribing his own isolated position when he says that 'A poet
is a nightingale' singing 'to cheer its own solitude'"
(Shelley: His Theory of Poetry, p. 19).
STUDY. The nightingale reference here may very likely be
to Keats. Adonais drafts appear side by side with Defence
notes in his notebooks of 1821. The mourning remembrance
of Keats is put in a nightingale figure in Stanza XVII:
"Thy spirit's sitter, the lorn nightingale / Mourns not her
mate with such melodious pain (ll. 145-146)." Shelley's
central use of the nightingale figure, in the poem "The
Woodman and the Nightingale," has been called by Neville
Rogers "certainly a Keats allegory," and he places its com-
position in 1821, since it is drafted in the same notebook
as is much of the Defence. Although Mary Shelley places this
poem in 1818, Rogers calls this an "odd ascription" (Shelley
at Work; pp. 260-263). In "The Woodman and the Nightingale"
the bird's song touched with love all but the woodman, who
comes to destroy this bird's tree world. This "One nightin-
gale in an interfluous wood / Satiate the hungry dark with
melody," (11. 4-5) and by its singing all through the night
every form
That worshipped in the temple of the night
Was awed into delight, and by the charm
Girt as with an interminable zone,
Whilst that sweet bird, whose music was a storm
Of sound, shook forth the dull oblivion
Out of their dreams; harmony became love
In every soul but one.
(11. 32-39)
What he is doing in the Defence lines is to synopsize the thought of the whole first section of this poem: the darkness, the sweet sound, the entranced auditors, and their being moved unknowingly. The cause, which "moves" and "softens" we know now to be "harmony" which becomes "love."
365-369 "The poems of Homer . . . reposed."
EDITIONS. Cook again, as do later editors, suggests a Sidney parallel: "Let learned Greece in any of his manifold Sciences, be able to shew me one booke before Musaeus, Homer, & Hesiod, all three nothing else but Poets" [F., p. 4] (p. 65).
CRITICISM. G. Hough states that now "succeeds a long panoramic survey of poetry from Homer onwards, which occupies the bulk of the essay. Historical surveys of this kind are apt to date. Shelley's is remarkably fresh; and the whole passage is a testimony to the extent and sensitiveness of
his reading. Its purpose is to show the effect of poetry on society" (The Romantic Poets, p. 152). J. Baker notes that Peacock's second age of Homer, the golden age, "is one both Peacock and Shelley admired" (Shelley's Platonic Answer, p. 5). E. J. Schulze, in commenting on the analysis of character in this passage, says that Shelley "combines his usual perspectives, the psychological and the historical" and that "the analysis refutes Peacock's claim that poetry takes its elements and significance from social customs by putting that claim to new and important use" (Shelley's Theory, pp. 125-126). G. McNiece also views Shelley's comment on character and its place, and comments that "By arousing and nourishing the passions of hope and love, poetry contributes centrally to the creation of the new world of the imagination. This highest faculty of knowledge is identified Socratically with the loftiest virtue in a nearly classic theory of imitation by Shelley. The writer embodies the 'ideal perfection of his age in human character.' His readers escape from their ordinary, earthbound selves into the enlarged knowledge and sympathies of the revolutionary hero and heroine. The movement is from admiration to imitation to identification with the presented beauty and nobility and charity of a Laon or Cythna" (Shelley and the Revolutionary Idea, p. 132).

STUDY. Shelley has admired Homer's poetic qualities similarly in On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks (1818): "But, as a poet, Homer must be acknowledged to excel Shakespeare
in the truth, the harmony, the sustained grandeur, the satisfying completeness of his images, their exact fitness to the illustration, and to that to which they belong" (Prose, p. 218). In the Defence passage, Shelley is referring to three of the chief characters of the Iliad. He shows his view of this work in his letter to John Gisborne, November 18, 1820: "You must have been astonished at the perpetually increasing magnificence of the last 7 books [of the Iliad].--Homer then truly begins to be himself--The battle at the Scamander, the funeral of Patroclus, & the high & solemn close of the whole bloody tale in tenderness & inexpiable sorrow, are wrought in a manner incomparable with any thing of the same kind--The Odyssey is sweet, but there is nothing like this.--(Letters, II, p. 250).

372-385 "an ambition . . . Achilles . . . imitation."

EDITIONS. Cook notes Sidney's similar passage in his Defence: "See whether wisdom and temperance in Uliisses and Diomedes, valure in Achilles, friendship in Nisus and Eurialus, even to an ignorant man carry not an apparent shining" [E., p. 15] (p. 66). Brett-Smith notes that "this argument is developed from Sidney," and "it would be possible to quote a good deal to the same purpose." He notes the following passage from Sidney: "So is it in men (most of which, are childish in the best things, til they be cradled in their graves) glad they will be to heare the tales of Hercules, Achilles, Cyrus, Aeneas, and hearing them, must
needs heare the right description of wisdom, value, and justice; which if they had bene barely (that is to say Philosophically) set out, they would sweare they be brought to schoole againe . . . Who readeth Aeneas carrying old Anchises on his backe, that wisheth not it were his fortune to performe so excellent an Act?" [F., p. 20] (pp. 90-91).

CRITICISM. D. Perkins suggests here with regard to Coleridge's remark (On Poesy or Art) that "we unconsciously imitate those we love" (English Romantic Writers, n. 7, p. 1075).

STUDY. The attitude of Plato concerning Homeric portrayal of character differs quite noticeably from Shelley's at this point. In the Book III of the Republic, Socrates indicts Homer on the grounds that such tales as Homer tells about the Gods, the underworld, and figures such as Achilles, must be supervised and canceled because they are "neither true nor edifying to men who are destined to be warriors" (386c) and "not suited to the ears of boys and men who are destined to be free and to be more afraid of slavery than of death" (387b). Achilles should not be shown as "drifting distraught" or "weeping and lamenting" as Homer portrays; for if young men listened and didn't laugh at such tales as "unworthy utterances," still less likely would they think such conduct unworthy of themselves (388d). The various "impertinences in prose or verse" do not inculcate "self-control" in youth (390a). In Book X Socrates asks, "Shall we, then, lay it down that all the poetic tribe, beginning with Homer, are imitators of images of excellence and of the other things
that they 'create' and do not lay hold on truth ... ?" (601). He concludes that "when you meet encomiasts of Homer who tell us that this poet has been the educator of Hellas, and that for the conduct and refinement of human life he is worthy of our study and devotion, and that we should order our entire lives by the guidance of this poet, we must love and salute them as doing the best they can, and concede to them that Homer is the most poetic of poets and the first of tragedians, but we must know the truth, that we can admit no poetry into our city save only hymns to the gods and the praises of good men" [607] (The Collected Dialogues of Plato, pp. 631-635, 825).

386-387 "Revenge is the naked Idol ... age."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley notes that "Revenge is always especially detested by Shelley, and a large part of The Revolt of Islam may be considered as a tractate against it; however brutally his revolutionists are treated they are in no case to retaliate" (p. 87).

STUDY. Shelley has expressed this same sentiment in more extended manner in his essay, On the Punishment of Death (probably dated 1816), where he calls revenge an error which grows up in a savage state, and becomes habitual: "The passion of revenge is originally nothing more than an habitual perception of the ideas of the sufferings of the person who inflicts an injury, as connected as they are in a savage state, or in such portions of society as are yet undisciplined to civili-
zation, with security that that injury will not be repeated in future. This feeling, engrafted upon superstition and confirmed by habit, at last loses sight of the only object for which it may be supposed to have been implanted and becomes a passion and a duty to be pursued and fulfilled, even to the destruction of those ends to which it originally tended. The other passions, both good and evil—avarice, remorse, love, patriotism—present a similar appearance; and to this principle of the mind overshooting the mark at which it aims, we owe all that is eminently base or excellent in human nature; in providing for the nutriment or the extinction of which consists the true art of the legislator" (Prose, p. 157). In his Essay on Christianity (also dated probably as 1816) the effects of revenge are again considered in ancient times: "The desire of revenge for the aggression of Persia outlived among the Greeks that love of liberty which had been their most glorious distinction among the nations of mankind . . . ." Later, Shelley states that "Mankind, transmitting from generation to generation the horrible legacy of accumulated vendettas and pursuing with the feelings of duty the misery of their fellow-beings, have not failed to attribute to the universal cause a character analogous with their own" (Prose, p. 206). In the "Preface" to The Cenci (1819), Shelley says: "Revenge, retaliation, atonement, are pernicious mistakes. If Beatrice had thought in this manner she would have been wiser and better" (Poetry, p. 276). In Hellas
(1821), he again echoes this idea about revenge: "Revenge and Wrong bring forth their kind, / The foul cubs like their parents are" (11. 729-730).

388-390 "Self-deceit . . . prostrate."

STUDY. Much earlier, in Queen Mab (1812), Shelley had given a concrete example of "self-deceit" which aided the hidden forces of evil, a tyranny whose tools were gold, fame, and ease (see IV.178-195). Both in this passage in the Defence and in that of Queen Mab "self-deceit" appears to have a double meaning, not only that of deception of the self but of deception which arises from the self.

390-405 "But . . . vices . . . beauty . . . epic or dramatic . . . costume."

EDITIONS. Jordan comments that "This theme of a poet's adaptability is expressed in a different context in a letter to the Gisbornes on July 13, 1821: 'Poets, the best of them--are a very camelonic race: they take the colour not only of what they feed on, but the very leaves under which they pass" (p. 39).

CRITICISM. A. Clutton-Brock comments that in these lines, and in later ones [11. 405-410] Shelley has "advanced beyond the neo-classic theory that nothing should be represented in art which is not beautiful or noble in itself according to neo-classic standards . . . but he still falls short of any theory that will justify the art which delights in the representation of character for its own sake, or will explain
why that art is beautiful" (Shelley: The Man and The Poet, p. 257). E. E. Sikes, however, sees ancient theory appearing: "It is surely the old ethical basis that leads him [Aristotle] to demand that dramatic characters should be 'good' beyond the standards of Euripides. He may be pardoned for a confusion that survived to the nineteenth century, when even Shelley (in the Defence of Poetry) was perturbed by the fact that great poets could draw the most villainous characters, with pleasure to their readers and themselves. The author of the Cenci took refuge in a kind of mystic Platonism to excuse the villainy" (The Greek View of Poetry, pp. 115-116). Notopoulos identifies the phrase "accidental vesture" as "a variant of Shakespeare's 'muddy vesture of decay' (Merchant of Venice, IV.ii.64), which expresses the status of the body in comparison with the soul in Plato's philosophy [see Phaedo, 65-67, 81]" (The Platonism, p. 352). STUDY. Two examples of the "epic or dramatic" personages which Shelley very probably had in mind at this point are Achilles in the Iliad, and Beatrice Cenci in The Cenci, who both illustrate exactly what he states here. He expresses very much the same thought, not surprisingly, in the "Preface" to The Cenci, where he says that the story of the Cenci family had been an actual tragedy which had the capacity "of awakening and sustaining the sympathy of men," and was a story "eminently fearful and monstrous." To treat such a subject the writer "must increase the ideal, and diminish the actual horror of the events, so that the pleasure which arises
from the poetry which exists in these tempestuous sufferings and crimes may mitigate the pain of the contemplation of the moral deformity from which they spring." Concerning Beatrice herself, Shelley says, "The crimes and miseries in which she was an actor and a sufferer are as the mask and the mantle in which circumstances clothed her for her impersonation on the scene of the world" (Poetry, pp. 276, 278).

A few lines earlier in the Defence (11. 269-273) Shelley points to Achilles as one of the characters embodying "the ideal perfection of his age." A letter indicating his attitude toward all the action centering around Achilles is that of July 6, 1817 to Hogg in which he says, "Indeed this part of the Iliad, the Patrocleiad, seems to me to surpass all other portions of the Iliad, as that production considered as a whole surpasses any other single production of the human mind" (Letters, I, p. 545). As his later letter of November 18, 1820 to Gisborne (quoted at 11. 365-369 above) indicates, he sees the whole ending of the Iliad as "bloody" but attaining as well a "high" and "solemn" ending. The blood, battles, and grief are at the same time producing an elevating effect of tenderness and true sorrow (Letters, II, p. 250). The Achilles who is capable in these books of great love, sorrow, and self-sacrifice for his friend, then, is also cruel and bloody in deed, dragging the body of Hector, killing live captives on the funeral pyre, and showing both arrogance and greed in his actions. Thus, both he and Beatrice are clothed in contemporary "vices," but these do
not conceal the enduring beauties, of the true poetry of
action and virtue their lives reveal.

405-410 "Few poets of the highest class . . . ears."

CRITICISM. Notopoulos says that "Shelley is applying to
poetry the Platonic conception of Beauty. Intellectual
Beauty is so intensely bright that she must be seen through
a veil (cf. Prometheus Unbound, II.v.55; Epipsychidion, ll.
31-32). . . . Similarly, the beauty of Poetry is so insupportable
in its pristine purity that it needs the alloy of
costume or habit to temper it for mortal eyes. The alloy of
costume or habit here is of course the body, the 'mortal
vesture' of the Phaedo . . . which is synonymous with Shelley's
use of the veil" (The Platonism, pp. 352-353).

409-410 "to temper this planetary music . . . ears."

EDITIONS. Cook is first to suggest the similar passage in
Sidney's Defence: "But if . . . you bee borne so neare the
dull-making Cataract of Nilus, that you cannot heare the
Planet-like Musicke of Poetrie" (p. 66). Ingpen, in the
Julian edition, first notes this phrase in Epipsychidion 86:
"of planetary music heard in trance" (p. 353). Clark feels
that "because of its highly wrought imagery, beauty of
phrase, and penetrating thought this passage is the essence
of poetry" and suggests comparing it to "Prometheus Unbound,
Act I" (p. 282).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos remarks that "though Shelley could
find the notion of the heavenly music produced by the spheres
in *Republic*, 616d-617c, it is probable that this notion reached him through the Platonic tradition, where it figures prominently" (*The Platonism*, p. 173).

**STUDY.** If Shelley had the passage from Shakespeare's *Merchant in Venice*, V.i.60-65, in mind at line 398 above, it is equally possible that the same passage is still present in his mind for it is concerned as well with planetary music, and leads into the phrase suggested at line 398:

> There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins.
> Such harmony is in immortal souls,
> But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Shelley also could have had Milton's poem, "At a Solemn Music," in mind in which the heavenly "Sirens" are asked to "pierce" our imagination with pure harmony:

> Sphere-born harmonious Sisters, Voice and Verse,
> Wed your divine sounds, and mixt power employ
> Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce,
> And to our high-rais'd fantasy present
> That undisturbed Song of pure concem.

(11. 2-6).
PARAGRAPH 13: LINES 411-466

411-414 "The whole objection . . . immorality of poetry . . . man."

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith comments that this is "an objection to which Sidney had been forced to reply by the attacks of Gosson, who had called the sayings of poets 'the Curses of Circes, that turn reasonable Creatures into brute Beastes,' and much else to the same effect" (p. 91). Clark, however, feels that this is "Shelley's answer to Plato's criticism of the poet, and more specifically to Peacock's half-humorous, half-serious attack on poetry. Here Shelley repeats what he has frequently said, that the function of poetry is to elevate by awakening the sympathy and arousing the mind to great moral courage" (p. 282).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos, too, feels that Shelley is referring to Plato's charges of immorality in poetry, as made in the Republic, 379 ff. (The Platonism, p. 353). N. I. White points out further that "Sidney argued against the moral objection to poetry expressed in Plato's Republic, asserting that though individual poets might be open to this criticism, poetry itself was not; the good in poetry far outweighed the evil; that Plato's praise of poetry in the Ion as something divine proved that the passage in his Republic was not aimed at poetry but at bad poets." White continues that "Shelley meets the same argument on other and unique grounds. The criticism, he says, is based on a misunderstanding of the way
in which poetry produces the moral improvement of humanity. Unlike ethical science, which acts didactically, poetry acts in 'another and diviner manner' by enlarging the mind itself" (Shelley, II, p. 273). J. Baker notes that just before the third point in the fragmentary outline Shelley started [see letter draft one, Appendix E], that "he does mention the hostile view that 'The character and personal conduct of the poets themselves . . . was then deserving of contempt.' This explains why he breaks into his historical survey to argue again the . . . immorality of poetry." Baker notes that this is inserted into the middle of Shelley's treatment of Homer, although he is reserving his most enthusiastic praise until after he has disposed of Peacock's four points and "is ready to turn to the Ion for positive doctrine" (Shelley's Platonic Answer, pp. 5-6).

STUDY. Shelley is touching here upon a criticism of poetry which has been present since ancient times. As Grube points out, "all Greek critics were concerned with the influence of literature on the morals and education of the community" since poetry held a vital place in a society where education consisted largely of poetry and music, and the poet thus became a teacher, naturally held responsible for the "social and moral effect of his work." He notes that the critics, Heraclitus and Xenophanes, criticized Homer and Hesiod for their portrayals of immorality, Xenophanes saying that "men of sense" should tell tales "of good omen" using "words that are pure," but that Homer and Hesiod "attributed to the gods
all things that bring shame and censure to men: theft, adultery and deception." Heraclitus echoed these sentiments in his work (The Greek and Roman Critics, pp. 8-9). Plato's criticism on this point of immorality can be seen in the Republic, Books III and X, most directly. Many Italian and English Renaissance critics have touched upon this question. That Shelley follows his paragraph in which Homer has been a central figure by this paragraph on immorality strongly implies that he had the ancient criticisms leveled against Homer's immorality particularly in mind. It seems probable that he was thinking particularly of Plato's various charges against Homer upon this count, since he had been reading the Republic again only six months earlier.

414-422 "Ethical science . . . thought."

EDITIONS. Verkoren suggests the following parallel passage in Sidney's Defence: "... so no doubt the Philosopher with his learned definitions, be it of vertues or vices, matters of publike policy or privat government, replenisheth the memorie with many infallible grounds of wisdom, which notwithstanding lie darke before the imaginative and judging power, if they bee not illuminated or figured forth by the speaking picture of Poesie" [Fig., p. 16] (p. 75). Jordan feels that Shelley took "essentially this position in the Preface to Prometheus Unbound" concerning didactic poetry. Jordan notes that "Earlier Shelley had been frankly didactic: he wrote Elizabeth Hitchener on June 5, 1811, that he
thought 'all poetical beauty ought to be subordinate to the inculcated moral.' In the Dedication to The Cenci (1819) he told Leigh Hunt, 'I lay aside the presumptuous attitude of an instructor' (p. 40).

417-419 "nor . . . doctrines . . . another."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments that "We may compare this with Sidney, who also yields the palm to the poet as compared with the Philosopher because the poet 'yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the Philosopher bestoweth but a woordish description, which doth neyther strike, pierce, nor possesse the sight of the soule so much as that other dooth' [F., p. 14] (p. 87).

CRITICISM. E. Barnard calls it characteristic here that Shelley "rejected the notion, so popular in his and in our time, that human ills can be removed or greatly alleviated by a mere increase in knowledge, the mere progress of 'science.' In Shelley's mature view, Barnard sees "the great problem of 'political justice' and human happiness" as 'not primarily to give men knowledge of what is right and good, but to arouse in them the will to do that right and act that good which they already know. Here Shelley parts company even with Plato, and practically aligns himself with Christianity, holding that evil exists not through man's ignorance but through his perversity (Shelley's Religion, pp. 249-250).

419-422 "But poetry . . . diviner manner . . . thought."

CRITICISM. Concerning the Platonism of these lines, Notopoulos
Poetry has for Shelley the same function as Eros in the Symposium: it is an intermediary daemon between man and the divine; like Love it leads us from the earthly to the divine; it strips the world of the veil of unreality and enables us to see the Ideal Beauty" (The Platonism, pp. 347-348).

STUDY. The Defence lines from this point to line 435 are a prose echo of the thoughts which Shelley has expressed in Prometheus Unbound in the speech of Prometheus after his unbinding, Act III.iii.7-63, about the ideas of poetry acting in a diviner manner of awakening, and rendering unapprehended combinations. Prometheus there says:

And lovely apparitions,—dim at first,
Then radiant, as the mind, arising bright
From the embrace of beauty (whence the forms
Of which these are the phantoms) casts on them
The gathered rays which are reality—
Shall visit us, the progeny immortal
Of Painting, Sculpture, and rapt Poesy,
And arts, though unimagined, yet to be.

(11. 49-56).

423-425 "Poetry lifts the veil . . . familiar;"

EDITIONS. Cook notes that "the image of concealment and disclosure is a favorite with Shelley," and that he has used seventeen such images in the Defence (p. 68). Jordan says that "This veil imagery is Platonic, and Shelley--like Sidney--was using The Symposium, The Ion, and The Phaedrus
to refute Plato's attack on poetry in The Republic" (p. 40).

CRITICISM. B. R. McElderry, Jr. comments that "the enrich­
ment of pleasure through new imaginative combinations is the
special achievement of poetry." He notes that Wordsworth,
in describing situations of common life, has said he tried
"to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, where­
by ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an
unalusual aspect." McElderry feels that Shelley uses "very
similar terms" to describe the imaginative method of poetry

STUDY. Shelley has used this same image of the lifting of
the veil of familiar objects much earlier, in On the Punish­
ment of Death (1814-1816). "Any one who has stript from the
doctrines of this person the veil of familiarity will perceive
how adverse their spirit is to feelings of this nature"
(Prose, p. 158). This image also appears a half-dozen times
in poems in the 1818-1822 period (see Concordance, pp. 755-
756). The thoughts expressed in the passage in Prometheus
Unbound, III.iii.30-36, continue to be relevant to the
thought of this passage also:

We will entangle buds and flowers and beams
Which twinkle on the fountain's brim, and make
Strange combinations out of common things,
Like human babes in their brief innocence;
And we will search, with looks and words of love,
For hidden thoughts, each lovelier than the last,
Our unexhausted spirits; . . .
425-431 "it re-produces . . . impersonations . . . Elysian light . . . exalted content . . . co-exists."

EDITIONS. Cook suggests here another parallel passage from Sidney's *Defence*: "Who if the saying of Plato and Tully bee true, that who could see vertue, woulde bee woonderfullie ravished with the love of her bewtie. This man setteth her out to make her more lovely in her holliday apparrell, to the eye of anie that will dainet not to disdaine untill they understand" [*F.*, p. 25] (p. 68). Verkoren also suggests this passage, even "though more or less remote" (p. 75).

STUDY. The *Prometheus* passage, III.iii.36-48, also has this same idea of the "impersonations" and their "elysian" source, and the resulting "content":

... and like lutes
Touched by the skill of the enamoured wind,
Weave harmonies divine, yet ever new,
From difference sweet where discord cannot be;
And hither come, sped on the charmed winds,
Which meet from all the points of heaven, as bees
From every flower aereal Enna feeds,
At their known island-homes in Himera,
The echoes of the human world, which tell
Of the low voice of love, almost unheard,
And dove-eyed pity's murmured pain, and music,
Itself the echo of the heart, and all
That tempers or improves man's life, now free;
These "impersonations" become a "radiant" light as the
immediately following passage shows (see ll. 49-56 in Section 419-433 above). The "content," both in this Prometheus pas­sage and in the Defence passage as it reaches its climax in the next sentence, is love.

In the use of the image of "Elysian light" Shelley is reflecting several sources. Shelley had visited Naples and its general vicinity with great interest and enthusiasm as is seen in his letters of late 1818. One of the places he visited was the Elysian fields. In a letter to Peacock, December 17-18, 1818, he comments on the "Mare Morto & the Elysian fields, the spot on which Virgil places the scenery of the 6th Aeneid," calls it "extremely beautiful, as a lake and woody hills and this divine sky must make," and comments on the color of the water and the radiance of the air of the general area. While other places have more beauty, he finds the Elysian fields have "all the material for beauty" there (Letters, II, p. 61). The use of "Elysian" as a descriptive word appears with some frequency after his visit to the actual site, this in the Defence being not unusual. The word appears subsequently fourteen times in the poetry, as for example, four times in Prometheus Unbound (1819), three times in Epipsychidion (1821), as well as in "Fiordispina" (1820), the "Ode to Naples" (1820), the "Ode to Liberty" (1820), "The Sensitive Plant" (1820), and in several others from Hellas on in 1821-1822 (see Concordance, p. 198). Joining in as a source with his own actual visitation are, of course, the uses of "Elysian" which derived from ancient Greek mythology.
and from Virgil, as his letter above shows. Possibly, in addition, there is a source in Milton, directly for the Prometheus passage, and peripherally for the Defence, Paradise Lost, IV.268-271. Shelley, also, had written an essay in 1818-1820 entitled The Elysian Fields: A Lucianic Fragment, a political social commentary set in the Elysian abode of the dead (see Prose, p. 194). However, perhaps his very early use reflects what he usually meant in using "Elysian." This can be seen in his letter to Hogg of June 4, 1811, in which he comments "I pictured to myself Elysium in beholding my only perfect friend daring the vain world" (Letters, I, p. 96).

431-435 "The great secret of morals is Love . . . an identification . . . with the beautiful . . . not our own."

EDITIONS. Jordan notes that Shelley "believed deeply in the power and primacy of love, and in the need for sensitive identification with others." He also comments that Shelley's "doctrine here is related to Plato's myth of the original four-footed, four-armed creature who was divided by the gods and ever seeks to be reunited (The Symposium 190)" (p. 40).

CRITICISM. H. Read's view is that Shelley here "develops the theory of the correspondency of the beautiful and the good, of the aesthetical and the ethical, which Plato first proposed." Read also feels this passage "may be taken as the central tenet in Shelley's philosophy, and his greatest poems are illustrations of its truth—illustrations rather than demonstrations, for Shelley had a horror of didactic
McElderry notes the agreement of Wordsworth and Shelley on this point, "that in one aspect the imagination enables the poet to 'identify' himself with the world outside himself. It will be, says Wordsworth, the 'wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs.'" McElderry continues that "without the dubious qualification of 'delusion,' Shelley announces that the 'great secret of morals is love'" ("Common Elements," p. 180). Both R. Wellek and S. Wilcox comment on the parallel thought which Shelley expressed in the "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound. Wellek feels "the moral effect of poetry is conceived by Shelley in classical terms: 'beautiful idealisms of moral excellence'" (A History, Vol. 2, p. 125). Wilcox comments that "more than any poet except Blake, Shelley emphasizes the sympathetic imagination. In the Preface to Prometheus Unbound Shelley states his central belief regarding the function of poetry: '... to familiarize the highly refined imagination of the more select classes of poetical readers with beautiful idealisms of moral excellence.' Such doctrine rejects didacticism for indirect 'teaching' which inspires moral emulation" ("Present Values in Shelley's Art," The Major English Romantic Poets, p. 201). J. J. McGann considers the philosophical ramifications of
Shelley's view, commenting that "Shelley's problem is an inability to reconcile 'the ideal prototype of everything excellent or lovely that we are capable of conceiving' (i.e. the One), with 'our present gross material state' (i.e. the Many) [see On Love]. The realization and admission of this dualism within the human person is the source of the power in nearly all of Shelley's poetry." McGann also notes Shelley's letter to John Gisborne, June 18, 1822, in which Shelley talks of "at-onement": 'I think one is always in love with something or other; the error, and I confess it is not easy for spirits cased in flesh and blood to avoid it, consists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of what is perhaps eternal.'" McGann says this appears to be "a re-statement of Shelley's original dualistic position; actually, however, it denies that position . . . he is observing that man errs if he searches in the material world for something which that world, by definition, was never meant to hold. The Defence . . . contains the poet's clearest statement of this idea. There his language seems quite beyond the possibility of ambiguity in his lines on 'The great secret of morals is Love' and 'identification with the beautiful' which is 'not our own.' This is an across-the-board repudiation of the position he took in 'On Love', where he says the human personality moves into an act of love only when the object of love is seen as corresponding to the lover's own concept . . . of the Absolute." This love, McGann notes, is a "covert form of self-love," whereas the Defence's "is a love

STUDY. In this whole passage, Poetry, acting in a diviner manner, "lifts the veil" of the world's hidden beauty, and love is revealed as the "great secret of morals," a "going out" and an "identification of ourselves." The Prometheus passage, III.iii.57-63, reaches the same conclusion for after the "echoes of the human world" telling "of the low voice of love" and the "echo of the heart," divine "apparitions" visit us through immortal "Painting, Sculpture, and rapt Poesy, and arts." The end which results then appears:

The wandering voices and the shadows these
Of all that man becomes, the mediators
Of that best worship love, by him and us.
Given and returned: swift shapes and sound, which grow
More fair and soft as man grows wise and kind,
And, veil by veil, evil and error fall.

Such virtue has the cave and place around.

Shelley has also, in the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam (1818), made a direct statement of the same nature as in the Defence and in Prometheus on the relationship of love and morality: "Love is celebrated everywhere as the sole law which should govern the moral world" (Poetry, p. 37).

435-439 "A man ... must imagine ... own."

EDITIONS. Clark comments that "this is Shelley's most per-
sistent and most fundamental philosophy. It is the guiding principle of his entire life and informs all that he wrote" (p. 283).

CRITICISM. M. Wojcik also sees this passage as a cornerstone of Shelley's views. He comments that "in order that the poet may live up to his mission all his artistic endeavours have to be determined by a deep and all-pervading love of his fellow-beings. 'Those who do not love their fellow-beings,' Shelley says in the Preface to Alastor, 'live unfruitful lives, and prepare for their old age a miserable grave. . . . They are morally dead.'" Wojcik points out that in the Defence this love is defined as a "going out" and an "identification" where a man puts himself in the place of others. He continues, "Consequently the poet must identify himself with the plight . . . of the people . . . and their hope for a better world . . . the natural outflow of his love for the people will be . . . hatred of all that prevents man from being the creature he is destined to be."

Wojcik sees "this humanistic concept of love" as "the cornerstone of Shelley's moral and aesthetic views. It is the determinant factor of the essential quality of his poetry, the true secret of his artistic greatness" ("In Defence of Shelley," Shelley: Modern Judgements, p. 273). McElderry comments in a different vein, by showing the parallel in general ethical thinking between Wordsworth and Shelley at this point. He states that it is "this imaginative sympathy or insight which gives to poetry its true ethical importance."
In the lyrical ballads, Wordsworth says, 'the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.' He notes further Wordsworth's belief that "the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants" and his further belief "that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged" ("Common Elements," p. 180). A Roman idea is suggested by W. K. Wimsatt, Jr. who states that "The most definable theoretic tenet in all this looks much like a renewal of one of those practical functions defined in Ciceronian rhetoric, to 'persuade' (persuadere, flectere)" (Literary Criticism, p. 422).

STUDY. At this point, Shelley is definitely going directly counter to what Plato states in the Republic, X.606d: "And so in regard to the emotions of sex and anger, and all the appetites and pains and pleasures of the soul which we say accompany all our actions, the effect of poetic imitation is the same. For it waters and fosters these feelings when what we ought to do is to dry them up, and it establishes them as our rulers when they ought to be ruled, to the end that we may be better and happier men instead of worse and more miserable" (The Collected Dialogues, p. 832). Considering the repetition of the words "pains and pleasures" just at this point it seems very likely that Shelley is responding directly to Plato's work.
"The great instrument of moral good . . . cause."

EDITIONS. Clark comments that "in considering the imagination the civilizing force in society and the great creative faculty, Shelley is in the main current of thought of his day; indeed, he goes beyond Adam Smith, Hume, and Alison in assigning to the imagination such an exalted station." Clark suggests seeing the Prefaces to Prometheus Unbound and The Cenci in this connection (p. 283). Jordan also suggests from The Cenci Preface, the line: "Imagination is as the immortal God which should assume flesh for the redemption of mortal passion" (p. 40).

CRITICISM. Douglas Bush, commenting generally on the Romantic use of the imagination, says that if Coleridge's Biographia Literaria, Keats's letters, Wordsworth's 1800 Preface, Shelley's Defence, and Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets were put together, "we do find the common denominator of the greatest poets, that is, a new and intense faith in the imagination" (English Poetry, p. 112). E. Wasserman too comments on general Romantic usage, saying that "although Shelley's predecessors and contemporaries did customarily assign to the imagination the power to identify oneself with others, Shelley obviously did not, but made it an aspect of love." He continues that the imagination, "because it creates the beautiful" and this "awakens the observer's sympathetic love" by identifying with the beauty, attains an "ideal order" out of which "the good arises" ("Shelley's Last Poetics," p. 504). A. C. Bradley, also commenting on the
use of imagination, says that Shelley's central argument, that "as poetry itself is directly due to imaginative inspiration and not to reasoning, so its true moral effect is produced through imagination and not through doctrine" is "sound" (Oxford Lectures, p. 171). W. J. Bate, summarizing Shelley's use of the imagination, says that it "thinks in terms of totalities rather than proceeding by artificial analysis; it grasps the inner-activity animating the . . . reality outside . . . and captures the qualitative value potential in them. It is in construing this value in terms of ultimate and universal forms that Shelley reached back to the Platonic tradition and transcendentalized his romantic, organic theory of nature. Hence the remark that poetry tries to reveal 'the image [the organic concreteness] of life in its eternal truth,' and that poets, in disclosing this reality, are . . . 'unacknowledged legislators of the world.' To this aim, Shelley subjoined another classical tenet: in conveying an awareness of reality in its full value and meaning, poetry is formative and moral in the highest sense. And Shelley gave this tenet a characteristically romantic phrasing by putting it in terms of 'sympathy,' though the spirit of what he said is essentially classical. The 'great secret of morals is love'--it is a 'going out of one's own nature,' a sympathetic identification with others. Now the 'imagination' is the means by which we do this; and poetry enlarges . . . the imagination, gives it knowledge and experience, sharpens . . . and in general strengthens
and exercises this fundamental 'instrument of moral good'" (Criticism: the Major Texts, p. 428). Notopoulos also comments on the Platonic tradition here, commenting that:

"Even though Plato and Shelley do not agree as to the nature of poetry, they do agree about the use of poetry in the regeneration of man. Poetry, Shelley maintains, improves man morally and awakens the human spirit. Like Shelley, Plato recognizes the propaedeutic power of poetry in the habituation of moral feeling. 'Let our artists,' says Plato, 'rather be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of beauty and grace; then will our youth dwell in a land of health . . . and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear . . . and insensibly draw the soul from earliest years into likeness and sympathy with the beauty of reason' (Republic, 401). By supplanting reason with imagination Shelley makes poetry . . . education itself. Thus Plato and Shelley agree as to the function of poetry in education, but differ as to the primacy of reason or imagination in the educational process" (The Platonism, p. 348).

STUDY. Shelley's own views on the relationship of moral good, imagination, and man putting himself in the place of others, have been expressed in other works as well. In A Treatise on Morals, under the heading of "Benevolence," Shelley has said that "The inhabitant of a highly civilized community will more acutely sympathize with the sufferings and enjoyments of others than the inhabitant of a society of a less
degree of civilization. He who shall have cultivated his intellectual powers by familiarity with the finest specimens of poetry and philosophy will usually [sympathize more] than one engaged in the less refined functions of manual labor. The imagination thus acquires by exercise a habit as it were of perceiving and abhorring evil, however remote from the immediate sphere of sensations with which that individual mind is conversant. Imagination or mind employed in prophetically 'imaging forth its objects is that faculty of human nature on which every gradation of its progress, nay, every, the minutest, change depends. Pain or pleasure, if subtly analyzed, will be found to consist entirely in prospect. The only distinction between the selfish man and the virtuous man is that the imagination of the former is confined within a narrow limit, while that of the latter embraces a comprehensive circumference . . . disinterested benevolence is the product of a cultivated imagination and has an intimate connection with all the arts which add ornament, or dignity, or power, or stability to the social state of man." Somewhat further he says, "Love possesses so extraordinary a power over the human heart, only because disinterestedness [self-sacrifice] is united with the natural propensities" (Prose, pp. 188-189). Later, speaking in the context of voting systems, in A Philosophical View of Reform, Shelley gives a practical example of the viewpoint expressed here in the Defence: "There ought to be the common sympathy of the excitements of a popular assembly among the electors
themselves. The imagination would thus be strongly excited, and a mass of generous and enlarged and popular sentiments be awakened" (Prose, p. 255).

Again, in the "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound, morality and imagination are joined: "My purpose has hitherto been simply to familiarise the highly refined imagination of the more select classes of poetical readers with beautiful idealisms of moral excellence; aware that until the mind can love, and admire, and trust, and hope, and endure, reasoned principles of moral conduct are seeds cast upon the highway of life which the unconscious passenger tramples into dust, although they would bear the harvest of his happiness" (Poetry, p. 207).

441-450 "Poetry enlarges . . . imagination . . . limb."

EDITIONS. Cook notes there are three other parallel passages in the Defence [see 11. 284-286, 534, 591-597]. He also suggests seeing Bacon's Advancement of Learning, 1.1.3: "Nothing can fill, much less extend, the soul of man, but God and the contemplation of God" (p. 68). H. B. Forman sees a "slight laxity in the use of the word "organ" but comments that Shelley may have perceived a truth only later admitted by thinkers. He notes that "it cannot be rightly said that a faculty is the organ . . . except in a figurative sense." Forman further comments that if the word "organ" was meant that "it must have been so used because the writer perceived the moral nature to be a function; and, although this is not
proved, the tendency of physiological science is to find that organ in the great sympathetic nervous system. Had Shelley known of what organ the moral nature was a function, he would of course have turned the phrase differently" (p. 112).

CRITICISM. A. Durand, commenting on the whole passage on morality culminating here, says: "To understand what he is propounding here, it must be recalled that his reading of Godwin and other revolutionary philosophers has led him to an ethical theory resting on the belief that the innate benevolence of men was such that no person conscious of the misery of others could possibly be unwilling to relieve it. If anyone is hard and selfish it can only be because, being uninstructed and deficient in power of apprehension, he is simply unaware of the pain and injustice he is causing; he lacks that power of imagination which would enable him to feel and share the sorrow of others. . . . what is required is not the imparting of moral principles nor the exposing of . . . conduct, but simply the stimulation . . . in him of his power of imagination, which is 'the great instrument of moral good.' So it is the poet, more than anyone else, who can really work a cure. . . . The warm-hearted unrealism of this doctrine, so characteristic of Shelley, invites sympathy, if it cannot deserve much consideration from intelligence. The real difficulty of moral conduct, namely the presence or absence of good will, is simply denied by the romantic belief in the native goodness of man; it is no longer the power of
choice, but the mere power of knowing and feeling, which becomes the determining influence in a man's acts, so that a persuasive presentation of noble ideals is all that is needed" ("Shelley on the Nature of Poetry," p. 198). It is not a Godwinian but a Neoplatonic view which Notopoulos suggests. He comments that the affinities of Shelley's view of poetry here "with Plotinus rather than Plato are marked, though in the absence of proof we must be cautious about deducing any derivative relation." Notopoulos sees as Plotinian Shelley's concept of poetry "as a portion of the Eternal which flows and returns," and as well, his view of art wherein he "restates Plato's theory of Ideas and their relation to particulars in terms of imagination rather than reason" (The Platonism, p. 349).

STUDY. There are certain key words in this whole passage which appear a number of times in poems which Shelley wrote in the same general period as the Defence. The repeated uses of these words show that the echoes of his poetic composition have remained in his consciousness. These words are: "circumference," "delight," "interstices," "void," "food," and "limb." The closest work in time is Adonais, the drafts of which are intermixed with Defence drafts in his notebooks. All of the above words appear in this poem with the exception of "interstices," and too, "delight" and "limbs" each appear three times. One line carries a combination of the words found in the Defence passage: "until its spacious might / Satiate the void circumference" (XLVII.419-420). Epipsychi-
dion, written in February, 1821, contains four of the six words: "circumference," "limbs" (appearing twice), "void," and "interstices." Indeed, line 482, "Filling their bare and void interstices" is close to the Defence lines. The "Ode to Liberty," 1820, carries two of the words, "delight," and "food," but also shows another word which Shelley had very recently used, "Elysian," in the combination of Elysian food" (VII.94). (See Concordance, pp. 105, 157, 257, 359, 402, 763-764). In the Essay on Christianity, which some critics date as late as 1819, appears a passage which shows the same general use of imagery as appears in the Defence lines: "The mighty frame of the wonderful and lovely world is the food of your contemplation, and living beings who resemble your own nature and are bound to you by similarity of sensations are destined to be the nutriment of your affections" (Prose, p. 210).

450-453 "A poet ... right and wrong ... neither."

EDITIONS. Clark suggests that similar ideas are found in the Prefaces to The Revolt of Islam, and Prometheus Unbound (p. 283). Jordan comments that "Shelley had not himself always practiced this gospel, for many of his poems certainly 'embody his own conceptions of right and wrong.' Jordan also notes Shelley's comments in the Preface to The Revolt of Islam (p. 41).

CRITICISM. K. N. Cameron notes a further parallel here to Johnson's Rasselas, as seen in the following passage: "He
must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same." Cameron comments that "It is from Johnson and not from Sidney" that Shelley "takes the theory that the poet must discard contemporary prejudices," and his phrase, "conceptions of right or wrong," is "close to Johnson's." Cameron further notes that immediately afterwards Johnson also uses the phrase "right and wrong" ("A New Source," pp. 633-634). N. I. White sees Shelley as furnishing the reason for his "repeated statements about didactic poetry," in that the poet as a man is bound by his environment, but as "a mouthpiece of imagination" he is above this, and so "if he attempted to prescribe too specifically for his generation" he is "liable to error." Imagination taught "how" not "what" to feel (Shelley, II, p. 432). Wimsatt, in a quite different vein, makes a comparison of the outlook of Sidney and Shelley. He suggests that while there are many parallels between their Defences, the differences "could scarcely be more profound." He notes that Sidney "in all his talking about the teaching and persuading power of poetry would never dream that poetry was teaching or persuading any doctrine which it did not discover in some legislatively competent authority outside itself, either scriptural revelation or ethical philosophy. With Shelley just the opposite is true." Wimsatt continues that when he talks about such
things as good action, or enkindling the imagination, the words are "part of an appeal for a vastly creative and autonomous power. There is no appeal to any other authority. The limits of the power come not from outside it but from within. Or, there are no limits. There is no specifically doctrinal commitment and thus a 'poet would do ill to embody his own conceptions'" (Literary Criticism, pp. 422-423).

A. C. Bradley comments that Shelley both in his Prefaces and in the Defence "takes up most decidedly the position that the poet ought not to affect a moral aim nor to express his own conceptions of right and wrong." He states further that Shelley was not condemning the writing of a poem for a particular moral effect, nor was he referring to the portraying of moral ideals "for that he regarded as one of the main functions of poetry." He concludes that it appears that what Shelley is really attacking "is the attempt to give, in the strict sense, moral instruction" and that he says to the poet, "your proper way . . . is not by reasoning and preaching" (Oxford Lectures, pp. 168-169).

462-463 "Euripides, Lucan, Tasso, Spenser"

STUDY. It should be noted that whenever Shelley lists several poets by name, as he does here, he almost invariably does so in a meticulous order. In this case it is an order of time and literary age: ancient Greek tragedian, a later Roman epic poet, a Renaissance Italian epic poet, and a Renaissance English epic poet. Two of these poets, Euripides and Tasso, Shelley had been reading or thinking about during the same
period in 1818. In a letter of April 20 to Peacock, Shelley notes that "I have devoted this summer & indeed the next year to the composition of a tragedy on the subject of Tasso's madness, which . . . is if properly treated, admirably dramatic & poetical." On April 30 he has written to Hogg that he has been reading "two or three plays of Euripides" and at the same time is reading Italian books to learn the language, and "studying the history of Tasso's life, with some idea of making a drama of his adventures and misfortunes" (Letters, II, pp. 8, 15). Shelley directly comments on the degree of Tasso's "poetical faculty" in his letter to the Gisbornes of July 10, 1818 where he mentions "the delicate moral sensibility of Tasso" (Letters, II, p. 20).

464-466 "effect . . . diminished . . . purpose."

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith notes that Peacock, in The Four Ages, has mentioned "the limited range of ethical and didactic poetry." He points out that "with Peacock's distaste for poetry of this class, and with his opinion that 'pure reason and dispassionate truth would be perfectly ridiculous in verse,' Shelley would have been in complete accord." In the "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound Brett-Smith notes Shelley's statement that "Didactic poetry is my abhorrence" (p. 86, 91). Clark suggests the Prometheus and Cenci Prefaces "for an apparent divergent view" (p. 283).

CRITICISM. Shelley himself had referred to views on didacticism in poetry expressed by George Enssor in his work entitled
On National Education, in a letter in 1811 to Elizabeth Hitchiner [Study, see below]. N. I. White, in his discussion of Shelley and Ensor, quoted the following passages relating to the teaching value of poetry. The first is "Poetry seems to me the most powerful means of instructing youth, which, as Plato says of Music, penetrates the recesses of the soul." In the second, Ensor says: "It was under the impression of the power of song that legislators have used poetry to subdue the savage nature of the people" (Shelley, I, pp. 624-626; see also Letters, I, n. 3, p. 81).

STUDY. In surveying the development of Shelley's views regarding didacticism in poetry, it can be seen that he has shown varying attitudes. His firmest expressions against didacticism come in his later works. As early as 1811 he expressed his opinion on the subject in a letter of June 5 to Elizabeth Hitchiner, where, in commenting on Walter Scott, he says: "the aristocratical tone which his writings assume does not prepossess me in his favor, since my opinion is that all poetical beauty ought to be subordinate to the inculcated moral--that metaphorical language ought to be a pleasing vehicle for useful & momentous instruction. But see Ensor on the subject of Poetry [see Criticism above]" (Letters, I, p. 98). In 1815, in the "Preface" to Alastor, Shelley indicates what he is attempting to achieve through the role of the Poet: "The intellectual faculties, the imagination, the functions of sense, have their respective requisitions on the sympathy of corresponding powers in other human beings. The
Poet is represented as uniting these requisitions, and attaching them to a single image. . . . The picture is not barren of instruction to actual men" (Poetry, pp. 14-15).

In 1817 he makes a stronger qualification, however, between what is poetic and what is didactic presentation. In the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam, he says that this poem "is an experiment on the temper of the public mind, as to how far a thirst for a happier condition of moral and political society survives, among the enlightened and refined, the tempests which have shaken the age in which we live. I have sought to enlist the harmony of metrical language, the ethereal combinations of the fancy, the rapid and subtle transitions of human passion, all those elements which essentially compose a Poem, in the cause of a liberal and comprehensive morality; and in the view of kindling within the bosoms of my readers a virtuous enthusiasm for those doctrines of liberty and justice, that faith and hope in something good, which neither violence nor misrepresentation nor prejudice can ever totally extinguish among mankind." He continues somewhat later: "I have made no attempt to recommend the motives which I would substitute for those at present governing mankind, by methodical and systematic argument. I would only awaken the feelings, so that the reader should see the beauty of true virtue, and be incited to those inquiries which have led to my moral and political creed, and that of some of the sublimest intellects in the world. The Poem therefore . . . is narrative, not didactic. It is a succession of pictures
illustrating the growth and progress of individual mind
aspiring after excellence, and devoted to the love of mankind;
... its tendency [is] ... to enlighten and improve mankind ... ." Then, very clearly, Shelley states what the
real effort of the poet should be: "And, if the lofty pas-
sions with which it has been my scope to distinguish this
story shall not excite in the reader a generous impulse, an
ardent thirst for excellence, an interest profound and strong
such as belongs to no meaner desires, let not the failure be
imputed to a natural unfitness for human sympathy in these
sublime and animating themes. It is the business of the Poet
to communicate to others the pleasure and the enthusiasm
arising out of those images and feelings in the vivid presence
of which within his own mind consists at once his inspiration
and his reward" (Poetry, pp. 32-33).

In 1818 he continues to remark strongly about didacticism.
In the "Dedication" to The Cenci he says to Leigh Hunt:
"Those writings which I have hitherto published, have been
little else than visions which impersonate my own apprehensions
of the beautiful and the just. I can also perceive in them
the literary defects incidental to youth and impatience; they
are dreams of what ought to be, or may be. The drama which
I now present to you is a sad reality. I lay aside the pre-
sumptuous attitude of an instructor, and am content to paint,
with such colours as my own heart furnished, that which has
been." From this comment it is obvious he sees this didactic
tendency as being apparent in his earlier works, an attitude
he now considers "youthful." He then continues in the "Preface" to make a further statement about the avoidance of didacticism: "The person who would treat such a subject must increase the ideal . . . so that the pleasure which arises from the poetry which exists in these tempestuous sufferings and crimes may mitigate the pain of the contemplation of the moral deformity from which they spring. There must also be nothing attempted to make the exhibition subservient to what is vulgarly termed a moral purpose. The highest moral purpose aimed at in the highest species of the drama, is the teaching the human heart, through its sympathies and antipathies, the knowledge of itself . . . . If dogmas can do more, it is well; but a drama is no fit place for the enforcement of them." He adds, somewhat later, "I have endeavoured as nearly as possible to represent the characters as they probably were, and have sought to avoid the error of making them actuated by my own conceptions of right or wrong, false or true" (Poetry, pp. 276-277). It can be seen that now to Shelley it is the "poetry" contained in the evocations of the work by which the reader is moved, and not any overt didactic statement or intent on the part of the poet.

It should be noted here that Shelley uses the phrase "right or wrong," picking it up again from earlier lines of this Defence passage [see l. 451 above]. It should also be noted that Shelley canceled the word "moral" before "right and wrong" in MS B (see Textual Notes above).
Shelley continues to express his now strong opposition to didacticism in the "Preface" to *Prometheus Unbound*, where he acknowledges his own didactic tendencies: "Let this opportunity be conceded to me of acknowledging that I have, what a Scotch philosopher characteristically terms, 'a passion for reforming the world.' . . . . But it is a mistake to suppose that I dedicate my poetical compositions solely to a direct enforcement of reform, or that I consider them in any degree as containing a reasoned system on the theory of human life. Didactic poetry is my abhorrence; nothing can be equally well expressed in prose that is not tedious and supererogatory in verse. My purpose hitherto has been simply to familiarise the highly refined imaginations of the more silent classes of political readers with beautiful idealisms of moral excellence . . . ." (*Poetry*, p. 207).

The *Defence* passage on didacticism and morality is a summary of the gradual evolution of Shelley's thinking on this important question, an evolution which has shown a changing attitude and a strengthening conviction about poetic purpose.

Shelley's own personal reaction to another great poet's didacticism gives an actual proof of exactly what he says in these three lines of the *Defence*. Peacock tells the anecdote of Shelley's reaction to the passage in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, [Book V, Canto 3] in which the Giant, who professes to weigh in his scale right and wrong, and to rectify the evils of any inequality, has an argument with Artegall. Peacock notes that Shelley pointed this passage out, observ-
ing: "Artegall argues with the Giant; the Giant has the best of the argument; Artegall's iron man knocks him over into the sea and drowns him. This is the usual way in which power deals with opinion." Peacock replied, "that was not the lesson which Spenser intended to convey." To this, Shelley responded, "Perhaps not; it is the lesson which he conveys to me. I am of the Giant's faction" (quoted in Letters, II, n. 5, p. 71).
467 "Homer and the cyclic poets"

EDITIONS. There is a cancellation here of "and religious" (see Textual Notes above).

STUDY. What Shelley undoubtedly had in mind at this point was the inclusion of Biblical along with the ancient classical poets, for he often mentions the Biblical "poets" separately. He returns to this same combination of poets later in the Defence where he turns from the epic times to the new era of Christianity and chivalry, and here he includes a separate passage on the "religious" poets, Moses, Job, David, Solomon, and Isaiah, in addition to the Cyclic poets (see 11. 823-824).

468-473 "Poets of Athens ... life."

STUDY. This passage again reflects a summation of the views which Shelley has expressed in a number of works over the years. In his essay, On the Revival of Literature (1815), Shelley called Grecian literature "the finest the world has ever produced" (Prose, p. 180). In 1818, in A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks he called the Periclean age, "in itself or with reference to the effects which it had produced upon the subsequent destinies of civilized man, the most memorable in the history of the world," producing "unparalleled" progress in the arts and literature: language, sculpture, paintings, and music. It also set a "firm basis" for metaphysics, philosophy, made advances "worthy of the
maturity of science," and as well began the "science of morals, or the voluntary conduct of men in relation to themselves or others" (Prose, pp. 217-218). Here then is the basis of the Defence's listing of the various arts, philosophy, and "forms of civil life." The "Preface" of Hellas later in 1821, goes even further by saying: "We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts have their root in Greece. . . . The human form and the human mind attained to a perfection in Greece" (Poetry, p. 447).

474-475 "scheme . . . Athenian society . . . imperfections"

STUDY. Shelley here continues in the same manner as he did in A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love where he comments that there were "many institutions and opinions which, in ancient Greece were obstacles to the improvement of the human race." He delineates this more clearly when he comments that "all the virtue and the wisdom of the Periclean age arose under other institutions in spite of the diminution which personal slavery and the inferiority of women, recognized by law and by opinion, must have produced in the delicacy, the strength, the comprehensiveness, and the accuracy of their conceptions in moral, political, and metaphysical science and perhaps in every other art and science" (Prose, pp. 218-220). This idea of slavery and the rights of women Shelley picks up in later lines of the Defence, but these are the "imperfections" which he is indicating here, for later in the Defence the alleviation of
these is the great advance made by Christianity and Chivalry.

478-479 "never... so much energy... developed"

EDITIONS. Koszul reports an uncanceled addition here which adds another dimension, that of liberty to speak, think or feel (see Textual Notes above).

479-484 "never was blind strength... Socrates."

EDITIONS. Koszul reports this passage seemed an afterthought (see Textual Notes above).

CRITICISM. E. Barnard points out that Shelley defines man's failure to use his freedom of will properly as slavery. As examples he notes Shelley's lines in The Mask of Anarchy, "Tis to be a slave in soul / And to hold no strong control / Over your own wills..." [xlvi], and in the Ode to Liberty, "Oh, vain endeavour! / If on his own high will, a willing slave, / He has enthroned... the oppressor" [11. 243-245]. Barnard further notes, that "on the other hand, all that is great and good rests upon the human will," so that the glory of Athens is "on the will / Of man, as on a mount of diamond, set" [11. 70-71], and in the Defence, "never was blind strength... so subject to the will of man" (Shelley's Religion, p. 140).

484-487 "Of no other epoch... divinity in man."

EDITIONS. Koszul reports a draft addition which uses the image of the "continent of Paradise" here (see Textual Notes above). Miss Winstanley notes Shelley's use of this idea in his "Discourse on the Manners of the Ancients" and comments
further that "he repeats this estimate in many portions of his letters and he considers that Christianity has spoiled and thwarted civilization by perverting the noble influence of Greece and Rome" (p. 87). Jordan suggests referring to 11. 32-37 of the "Prologue to Hellas" and the passage from the Preface where Shelley describes the ancient Greeks as "glorious beings whom the imagination almost refuses to figure to itself as belonging to our kind" (p. 42).

STUDY. Perhaps the letter which most clearly expresses a parallel to what Shelley indicates here is that to John Gisborne of November 16, 1819 in which he says: "Were not the Greeks a glorious people? What is there, as Job says of the Leviathan, like unto them? If the army of Nicias has not been defeated under the walls of Syracuse, if the Athenians had, acquiring Sicily held the balance between Rome & Carthage, sent garrisons to the Greek colonies in the south of Italy, Rome might have been all that its intellectual condition entitled it to be, a tributary not the conqueror of Greece; the Macedonian Power would never have attained to the dictatorship of the civilized states of the world. Who knows whether under the steady progress which philosophy & social institutions would have made (for in the age to which I refer their progress was both rapid & secure,) among a people of the most perfect physical organization, whether the Christian Religion would have arisen, or the barbarians have overwhelmed the wrecks of civilization which had survived the conquests & tyranny of the Romans.--What then should we have been?"
The phrase, "fragments stamped so visibly," echoes again Shelley's Discourse on the Manners of the Ancients, where the same image is used: "The compositions of great minds bore throughout the sustained stamp of their greatness" (Prose, p. 218).

490-495 "For . . . poetry existed . . . simultaneously with other arts . . . time."

EDITIONS. Clark notes that the theme of this paragraph is more fully developed in Shelley's "Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks" (p. 283). Jordan remarks that in "the Discourse" Shelley discusses similarly "the general high level of Greek art," holding that "all the inventive arts maintain, as it were, a sympathetic connexion between each other, being no more than various expressions of one internal power," but suggests that Greek poetry "seems to maintain a very high, though not so disproportionate a rank, in the comparison," for Shakespeare is the "greatest individual mind" and Dante perhaps "created imaginations of greater loveliness" than in any found in Greek literature. Jordan also notes that Shelley expresses "a less favorable youthful view of classical writers" in his letter of July 29, 1812 to William Godwin (pp. 42-43).

495-501 "We know . . . cause . . . effect."

EDITIONS. Verkoren suggests the critical view that "in his later writing Shelley exclusively stuck to Hume's doctrine
of cause and effect." Verkoren notes further that Hume dealt with this doctrine of causality in his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* and *Treatise of Human Nature*, and Shelley was acquainted with his *Essays* (p. 93).

CRITICISM. E. Wasserman comments that "Since Shelley, like Hume, consistently defined cause-and-effect as only 'a constant conjunction of events' it belongs with the other transient, limiting, and inorganic connectives. On the contrary, the principles creative of organic wholeness are the associative laws of 'equality, diversity, unity, contrast, mutual dependence' [see 11. 74-75]" ("Shelley's Last Poetics," p. 491).

STUDY. Shelley has given a long definition of what he means by "cause and effect" in his "Notes on Queen Mab" (VI. 198). Here he points out that "Every human being is irresistibly impelled to act precisely as he does act: in the eternity which preceded his birth a chain of causes was generated, which, operating under the name of motives, makes it impossible that any thought of his mind, or any action of his life, should be otherwise than it is. Were the doctrine of Necessity false, the human mind would no longer be a legitimate object of science; from like causes it would be in vain that we should expect like effects; the strongest motive would no longer be paramount over the conduct; all knowledge would be vague and undeterminate . . . . The contrary of this is demonstrably the fact. Similar circumstances produce the same unvariable effects . . . . Some actions may be found to
which we can attach no motives, but these are the effects of causes with which we are unacquainted. Hence the relation which motive bears to voluntary action is that of cause to effect; nor, placed in this point of view, is it, or ever has it been, the subject of popular or philosophical dispute . . . . The actions of the will have a regular conjunction with circumstances and characters; motive is to voluntary action what cause is to effect. But the only idea we can form of causation is a constant conjunction of similar objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other wherever this is the case necessity is clearly established" (Poetry, pp. 810-811). It is probable that the direct source here of not only the idea of cause and effect but of the wording of "a conjunction of similar objects" is Hume's A Treatise of Human Nature wherein he says: "In all those instances from which we learn the conjunction of particular causes and effects, both the causes and effects have been perceived by the senses and are remembered; but in all cases wherein we reason concerning them, there is only one perceived or remembered, and the other is supplied in conformity to our past experience. Thus, in advancing, we have insensibly discovered a new relation betwixt cause and effect when we least expected it and were entirely employed upon another subject. This relation is their constant conjunction." Hume concludes somewhat further, that "We have no other notion of cause and effect but that of certain objects which have been always conjoined together and which in all past instances
have been found inseparable. We cannot penetrate into the reason of the conjunction" (The Essential David Hume, I.III.VI, pp. 68-69, 73).

The close relationship of the phrasing of the "Note to Queen Mab" and that of the Defence is apparent in the Note's "The only idea we can form of causation is a constant conjunction of similar objects and the consequent inference of one from the other," and the Defence's "We know no more of cause and effect than a constant conjunction of events." The question arises, however, as to whether Shelley's late work is revealing a like concept of the doctrine of Necessity to that of his early work, or whether Shelley's idea of Necessity has changed and softened over the years. As the "Notes to Queen Mab" indicate, Shelley very early is an advocate of the French doctrine of materialism in which the senses and reason are the way to truth, and the spirit can be explained by its mechanical actions. C. F. Pulos aptly demonstrates that Shelley quite early discarded the doctrine of materialism for one of immaterialism because of the influence of the sceptical thinking of Hume, Drummond, and others that reason has its limitations and there are feelings which are innate, and are not arrived at from reason or experience. Pulos discusses the question of whether, in abandoning materialism, Shelley also was bound to discard the doctrine of Necessity, because there is perhaps a theoretical conflict between necessarianism and the Shelleyan "passion for reforming the world," since any form of determinism makes man
a passive agent. However, Pulos maintains that there is no conflict between determinism and immaterialism for the idea of Necessity is "as applicable to a universe conceived as thought as to one conceived as matter," and that Shelley's idea of Necessity is traceable to Hume's sceptical concept of it, which is "conditional, tentative, and philosophically ironical," that "all we know of causation is the constant conjunction of objects in the external world or of ideas in our own mind. If we ascribe the fiction of necessary connection to the former type of sequence, we are logically bound to ascribe it to the latter kind, thus rejecting the freedom of the will." Pulos points out that "to the mature Shelley, as to Hume, Necessity is fundamentally an unknown power." In Shelley's later work it appears as a "mysterious principle" or "Power," as in On a Future State or Mont Blanc. Pulos concludes that this scepticism leads to a kind of faith in Shelley, faith in the essential soundness of the passion for reform, and therefore, Shelley "held that necessity, though an unknown power, must operate in the favor of the perfectibilistarians." Pulos sees the fusion of Shelley's doctrine of Necessity in Demogorgon in Prometheus Unbound, where the idea of the mystery of Necessity joins to a feeling of Necessity's assuring the progress of mankind (The Deep Truth, pp. 44-50, 61-65).

Pulos's explanation, although not directed to the Defence, does apply well to this passage in which "we know no more of cause and effect than a constant conjunction of events,"
which continues immediately, however, with the idea that Poetry ever co-exists with whatever contributes to the perfecting of man. The conjunction of the doctrine of Necessity and that of Perfectibility are very apparent. Thus, Shelley's original belief in the force of Necessity remains with him, evolving and strengthening into a broader concept rather than diminishing or softening.
502-508 "It was . . . Drama . . . never . . . as at Athens."

EDITIONS. Again Shelley's Discourse is seen as a source. Brett-Smith comments that Shelley's opinion here was emphasized in the following passage of the Discourse on the Manners of the Ancients: "How superior was the spirit and system of their poetry to that of any other period! So that, had any other genius equal in other respects to the greatest that ever enlightened the world, arisen in that age, he would have been superior to all, from this circumstance alone—that his conceptions would have assumed a more harmonious and perfect form. For it is worthy of observation, that whatever the poets of that age produced is as harmonious and perfect as possible. If a drama, for instance, were the composition of a person of inferior talent, it was still homogeneous and free from inequalities; it was a whole, consistent with itself. The compositions of great minds bore throughout the sustained stamp of their greatness. In the poetry of succeeding ages the expectations are often exalted on Icarian wings, and fall, too much disappointed to give a memory and a name to the oblivious pool in which they fell" (pp. 91-92). Cook and Verkoren also quote this source (p. 68; p. 107).

CRITICISM. A. Durand, who comments on the long passage which begins here, says that "the subject of the drama seems to be taken up by Shelley at this point because of the close
relation between the theatre and social morality, but he makes little attempt to fit his remarks on this new theme into his discussion of the relation between art and morals, beginning as he does, with a confessed digression, where he contrasts the richness of the Greek dramatic medium with the poverty of our own and, even when it is a question of the tremendous power over human conduct of high tragedy, disregarding completely the problem of its possible direction towards evil as well as good. The moderns, according to his first paragraph, have made a profound error in depriving the drama of the cooperation of music, painting, the dance and religion. By a rather unusual choice of terms, he states that, in bringing about this separation, they have missed the true philosophy of the drama, so that we are led to think that for him all these secondary factors, if used in conjunction with the stage, become essential and indivisible elements of a single art. If this be his meaning, it does not seem in accord with the only critical study representative of the comprehension of their theatre enjoyed by the ancient Greeks themselves; Aristotle plainly distinguishes tragedy from the arts which accompanied it in the classical age and even appears to acknowledge that a play can be a complete entity apart from its representation on the stage [Poetics, 1450b17, 1453b1-12]" ("Shelley on the Nature of Poetry," pp. 199-200).

512 "idealisms"

EDITIONS. Cook notes that "both Shelley and Peacock employ
these abstracts in "ism" and points out line reference to such use ["idealism," l. 557, and "barbarisms," l. 1062, in Shelley; "barbarisms" and twice, "mysticisms" in Peacock's *Four Ages*] (p. 68).

STUDY. Shelley, in his poetry, has not made use particularly of the "ism" word. "Idealism" is used only once, for example, and "barbarism" not at all (see *Concordance*, pp. 345, 36). The word "barbarisms," when Shelley does use it later, very likely is an echo in his mind of the Peacock use.

515-516 "into a beautiful proportion and unity one towards the other"

CRITICISM. E. Wasserman draws together the Shelleyan concept of unity at this point. He comments that "Shelley's poetics implies that every literary genre—tragedy, epic, comedy, and lyric, each being distinguished by the kind of thoughts it employs—has its own special supreme harmony, and that they form a hierarchy of approximations to the ideal unitary order. Consequently the 'most perfect and universal form' [11. 573-574] the drama, being 'that form under which a greater number of modes of expressions of poetry are susceptible of being combined than any other' [11. 657-659], was the supreme mode when it once employed not only language and action but also music, painting, dance, and religious institutions, each of these kinds of expression being developed to its own highest order and all of them organized 'into a beautiful proportion and unity one towards another' [the idea now presented at
11. 515-516]. In brief, the highest mode was the goal Shelley set for himself in *Prometheus Unbound* and *Hellas*, the formal unity of various kinds of formal unity. Such a harmonious fusion of individual harmonies transcends the simpler order of the drama of action and language and, by permitting a more complex synthesis, approaches more closely the ideal form revealed to the imagination" (*Shelley: A Critical Reading*, pp. 219-220).

519-524 "We have tragedy without . . . stage."

**EDITIONS.** Miss Winstanley comments that "Though Shelley does not uphold the unities he is obviously greatly prejudiced in favour of the special conditions of the Greek stage; he even advocates the 'tragic mask' which would destroy acting in the modern sense of the term." She notes further that the Greeks viewed drama as religious spectacle, and all was subservient to dignity, but Shelley approving of "the mixture of comedy and tragedy" does not "perceive that it is inconsistent with the other ideal." She concludes that "he had never consistently thought out the essential distinctions between the Greek and the modern stage" (pp. 87-88). Clark, on the other hand, comments that "there is no inconsistency here in Shelley's attitude toward religion, for he always sympathized with genuine religion, but never with institutionalized worship" (p. 284).

531-532 "modern practice of blending comedy with tragedy"

**EDITIONS.** Verkoren suggests a passage here from Sidney,
though "remote": "But besides these grosse absurdities, howe all their Playes bee neither right Tragedies, nor right Comedies, mingling Kings and Clownes [F., p. 39]"
(p. 75).

STUDY. That Shelley felt this blending of comedy with tragedy to be both very commendable and to be especially associated with Shakespeare is shown by his letter to Peacock of September 21, 1819, in which he is commenting on Calderon's excellence as exceeding all modern dramatists except Shake-speare. He then says that Calderon resembles Shakespeare "however in the depth of thought & subtlety of imagination of his writings, & in the rare power of interweaving delicate & powerful comic traits with the most tragical situations without diminishing their interest" (Letters, 11. p. 120).

535-536 "but the comedy should be as in King Lear, universal, ideal and sublime."

EDITIONS. Cook calls this "one of the profoundest sentences in the essay." He also points out Sidney's long Defence passage [see 11. 531-532 above for beginning of this discussion, (F., pp. 39-40)], on comedy-tragedy. Cook notes the critical view that Greek tragedy because of its religious character became so serious that humorous scenes were hardly permitted, but that Aristotle indicated this was not originally so, since it arose from satyric representation, and the grotesque was preserved in the afterpiece when banished from serious tragedy. Cook feels that "a wise caveat" is uttered by Shelley in saying that the practice of blending comedy with tragedy
extends the form, but that this comedy should be ideal (Cook, pp. 68-69; Sidney edition, pp. 121-123).

CRITICISM. A. Durand calls this passage a "remarkable acknowledgement of the manner in which comedy can procure 'an extension of the dramatic circle.'" He notes that Shelley, who "could not endure what seemed to him the cruelty of the comedy of manners, was perhaps the better able to appreciate the sublimation which comedy should undergo before it is allowed a role in great tragedy, as well as to feel how perfectly this is realised in King Lear." He notes that in Lear, humour is not used to provide relief but "serves rather to permit a detachment and comprehension which could be attained in no other way." Durand comments that the "sense of humour is not sense at all, but the expression of intellect in its most detached attitudes." The tragic poet, then, who desires pure intellect to enter his scene, to pass a higher than human sentence on men's deeds must "use the foolish things" to "confound the wise." Durand concludes that "at this height comedy encourages meditation rather than laughter, and indeed deserves, in Shelley's words, to be considered 'universal, ideal, and sublime'" ("Shelley on the Nature of Poetry," pp. 200-201). D. Daiches, on the other hand, holds the opposite opinion about Shelley's ideas here. He comments: "That Shelley is led to this Sidneyan view that the reader imitates the virtues of the characters described in poetry is some indication of the difficulty he finds in applying concretely his Platonic view of poetry as the embodiment of
the Platonic idea. He assumes that the Platonic ideas are all ideas of virtues, so that he is denied even Sidney's defence of comedy as a holding up to scorn of human foibles so that people will not imitate them, and he is equally deprived of a satisfactory theory of tragedy. If his view of the imagination represents a more profound position than Sidney's naive didacticism, he is nevertheless helpless when he comes to apply it in particular instances." Daiches continues that it is "all very well" for Shelley to describe Greek drama as "representations of the highest idealisms" and to talk of "comic relief" in King Lear as "universal" but, he concludes, that "we want to know more about the place of evil and suffering in tragedy, about how the imagination operates, and how its production is related to the world of ideal order" (Critical Approaches to Literature, p. 119).

STUDY. The principle involved here in Shelley's passage was defined by Hume in his essay, Of Tragedy, where he talks of two different kinds of forces being combined in drama. Hume has been speaking of the tragedy as an imitation, and imitation of itself as always being agreeable. For one confirmation of his theory he provides the instance "where the subordinate movement is converted into the predominant, and gives force to it, though of a different, and even sometimes though of a contrary nature. Novelty naturally rouses the mind, and attracts our attention; and the movements which it causes are always converted into any passion belonging to the object, and join their force to it. Whether an event
excites joy or sorrow, pride or shame, anger or good-will, it is sure to produce a stronger affection, when new or unusual. And though novelty of itself be agreeable, it fortifies the painful, as well as agreeable passions" (Criticism: the Major Texts, p. 195).

536-545 "It is . . . intervention of this principle . . . King Lear . . . Oedipus . . . Agamemnon . . . world;"

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley says that "Shelley does not definitely pronounce in favour of Shakespeare. He inclines to the opinion that the choral poetry restores the balance. As a lyrical poet himself, it was perhaps natural that he should rank this form of the art very high" (p. 88).

STUDY. The reason for the choice of King Lear here as an example of sublime tragedy is readily traceable, for Mary Shelley records in her journal of February 20, 1821 that "Shelley begins 'King Lear' in the evening" (Mary Shelley's Journal, p. 148). Its impact is thus very freshly in Shelley's mind. It is, however, equally sure from the evidence of his letters that Lear is very familiar to him for he quotes from it casually, as he likes to do with favorite works, to make points about topics he is discussing with his friends. An example is in his letter to the Gisbornes of July 7, 1820 in which he is talking about some English in Italy who dislike him, to which he adds the comment "An ounce of civet good apothecary to sweeten this dunghill of a world," a slightly changed quotation from King Lear, IV.vi.131-2. (Letters, II,
p. 221; see also, II, pp. 257, 394). The Defence shows this habit of using quotations from the Bible, Tasso, Shakespeare, Milton, or Bacon simply as a part of his train of thought, a fact which the frequent inexactitude of the quotations illustrates. He is using what is stored in his memory, to suit his own needs. It seems apparent also that King Lear was firmly in his thoughts in 1820 for in the "Dedication" to The Witch of Atlas he names and uses a direct quotation from King Lear in stanza V, line 40.

Shelley has indicated the same high opinion as in the Defence about the place of King Lear and Oedipus in the "Preface" to The Cenci in 1819: "The deepest and the sublimest tragic compositions, King Lear and the two plays in which the tale of Oedipus is told, were stories which already existed in tradition, as matters of popular belief and interest, before Shakespeare and Sophocles made them familiar to the sympathy of all succeeding generations of mankind" (Poetry, p. 276).

549 "Calderon in his religious Autos"

EDITIONS. Cook, as do later editors, notes two letters of Shelley's in which he comments on the Autos, the first to Peacock of September 21, 1819, and the second to Gisborne of about November 18, 1820 (p. 69). The first says of Calderon: "I have read about 12 of his Plays; some of them certainly deserve to be ranked among the grandest & most perfect productions of the human mind. He exceeds all modern
dramatists with the exception of Shakespeare; . . . " (see
Letters, II, p. 120). The second says: "I am bathing my-
self in the light & odour of the flowery & starry Autos.
I have read them all more than once" (see Letters, II, p.
250). Jordan mentions two more letters concerning Calderon;
that to Hunt of November 14-18, 1819, expressing his "inex-
pressible wonder and delight" with the "ideal dramas of
Calderon," and the other to Peacock of November 8, 1820 in
which he wrote "Plato and Calderon are my gods." Jordan also
notes 11. 180-182 of the "Letter to Maria Gisborne" [which
contains an allusion to Calderon's language] (p. 44).
CRITICISM. W. E. Peck finds Shelley's attitude toward
Calderon somewhat surprising. He comments that "it is a very
natural cause of wonder, however, that Shelley, polemist
that he was for free thought, should have been so swept off
his feet by this admiration for Calderon's abilities as a
dramatist and a poet that he did not shrink from his benighted
metaphysics. Only a single sign of his awareness of this
greatest weakness in Calderon's 'Autos' can be found in his
writings." Peck notes this is the statement in the Defence
about "rigidly defined . . . idealisms of a distorted super-
stition" [see 11. 556-558] (Shelley: His Life and Work, II,
p. 145).
STUDY. Shelley's respect for what, in the Defence, he calls
Calderon's "dramatic representation" is proved by his practice
as he notes it in the "Preface" to The Cenci. He has been
speaking about avoiding "with great care" writing what is
"commonly called mere poetry" and then comments on a speech of Beatrice's, to which he appends a footnote that "an idea in this speech was suggested by a most sublime passage in El Purgatorio de San Patricio of Calderon; the only plagiarism which I have intentionally committed in the whole piece" (Poetry, p. 277).

550-551 "conditions . . . neglected by Shakespeare"
EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley notes that "these are the conditions of the Greek stage already referred to" (p. 88).

554-559 "observation . . . distorted superstition . . . passion."
EDITIONS. Cook commenting on word usage, says that "observance" is now appropriated to "this special sense" and also points to the other use of "observation" [see l. 254].
PARAGRAPH 16: LINES 560-582

560  "But we digress."

STUDY. Shelley probably deliberately changes his usage from "disgress" in MS B to "digress" in MS D (see Textual Notes above). While fairly often in the Defence Shelley chooses to use the older spelling of a word, as for example "antient" instead of "ancient," which is one way of indirectly linking an old and a new tradition by word use, in this case he has turned to the modern usage. The word "disgress" while also carrying the meaning of "stepping aside," or "departing," in its older meaning leads back to "disgrade" which means to move to a different and lower level--obviously not Shelley's intent at this point.

560-569  "The author. . . pagans."

EDITIONS. This is the first of the passages which refer to The Four Ages of Poetry, all of which are removed when printed in the Mary Shelley editions (see Textual Notes above).

STUDY. Shelley undoubtedly is replying here in a humorous manner directly to Peacock. The "Philoctetes, or Agamemnon or Othello" which Shelley would inscribe on his shield are, of course, all famous warriors, as are the later "Paladins": Philoctetes is the one who, in Greek legend, killed Paris; Agamemnon is the leader of the Greeks against the Trojans;
and Othello is the Venetians' general. To these are added the Paladins, the legendary twelve peers of Charlemagne. The Peacock passage (paragraph 21) to which Shelley is replying comes at the point where Peacock is showing the change from the "iron age of modern poetry" into the "golden age."

Peacock has said: "The founders of the new line of heroes took the place of the demi-gods of Grecian poetry. Charlemagne and his Paladins, Arthur and his knights of the round table, the heroes of the iron age of chivalrous poetry, were seen through the same magnifying mist of distance, and their exploits were celebrated with even more extravagant hyperbole."

Then very shortly Peacock continues, that "from these ingredients of the iron age of modern poetry . . . arose the golden age . . . Greek and Roman literature pervaded all the poetry of the golden age of modern poetry." This resulted in a "compound of all ages and notions in one picture; an infinite license, which gave to the poet the free range of the whole field of imagination and memory. This was carried . . . farthest of all by Shakespeare. . ." (Halliford, pp. 14-15).

Peacock has synopsized in a paragraph a period which Shelley now starts an extended discussion of. Shelley chooses at this point to use Peacock's own "weapons" to counteract his "sophisms." Shelley is jokingly adding the strong warriors to the weak one, as he characterizes himself. The covert reference is contained
in the "weakest of the Paladins" phrase. This, too, is a joking reference to a long-standing designation Shelley had made of himself. In October of 1816, when Shelley had sent his "Hymn of Intellectual Beauty" to Leigh Hunt he had signed it originally as "elfin Knight." In Shelley's letter to Peacock of February 15, 1820 (see Appendix E) in which he talks of Peacock's "anathemas against poetry" exciting him to "a sacred rage" he again refers to this old signature, when he says he has been too lazy to reply to Peacock's essay but that Peacock, having "unhorsed" poetry, and the "wisest in all the ages" would have had an easy conquest "in me, the knight of the shield of shadow and the lance of gossamere" (Letters, I, p. 516; II, p. 261).

569-575 "The connexion of scenic exhibitions . . . habit."

STUDY. Shelley is still replying partially to the same section of Peacock's essay (paragraphs 20 and 21). Peacock has said that "the state of society" which held the "three staple ingredients of lover, prize-fighter, and fanatic, that composed the basis of the character of every true man, were mixed up and diversified, with so many distinctive excellencies, and under such an infinite motley variety of costume, as gave the range of a most extensive and picturesque field to the two great constituents of poetry, love and battle." Peacock continues that these ingredients of modern poetry were
harmonized with Greek and Roman literature, and resulted in a "heterogeneous compound of all ages and nations in one picture." An "infinite license" was carried far by Ariosto but "farthest of all by Shakespeare and his contemporaries," and resulted in "old English drama" which was "very picturesque" and "very diversified in action and character" though "a picture of nothing that ever was seen on earth except in a Venetian carnival" (Halliford, pp. 15-16). The wording Shelley uses with his "scenic exhibitions," "the improvement or corruption of the manners of men," the universal recognition, and the connection of these to poetry and to "good or evil in conduct and habit" can be seen to have a close connection to Peacock's thought, but with a change of emphasis. While Peacock ends with the thought that all this results in a "Venetian carnival" Shelley takes a more universal view of what drama really pictures. "Scenic exhibitions" reflect the good or bad of society, and they rise or fall as society does. When society is moving forward, the drama pictures this, as it does if society is becoming corrupted. Thus, the "corruption which has been imputed to the drama as an effect" is not because of the poetry involved, but because of the poetry which now is not involved in life itself, which the drama is simply mirroring. The poetry which forms the drama is the moral makeup of society itself, as Shelley indicates by the final words of
Shelley is replying both humorously and seriously to Peacock's assertions. He obviously recognizes Peacock's lack of seriousness, and replies partly in kind. Carl Dawson suggests that such is Peacock's attitude, when he comments: "That his thesis is largely a spoof can be seen in the survey of the literature of the Renaissance" (*His Fine Wit: A Study of Thomas Love Peacock*, p. 86).
PARAGRAPH 17: LINES 583-616

583-586 "The drama at Athens . . . co-existed with . . . greatness of the age."

STUDY. Again the echo of Shelley's *A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks* is apparent. Here, in talking of the matching greatness of an age and of poetry, he says: "But, omitting the comparison of individual minds, which can afford no general inference, how superior was the spirit and system of their poetry to that of any other period! So that had any genius equal in other respects to the greatest that ever enlightened the world arisen in that age, we would have been superior to all from this circumstance alone—that his conceptions would have assumed a more harmonious and perfect form. For it is worthy of observation that whatever the poets of that age produced is as harmonious and perfect as possible. If a drama, for instance, were the composition of a person of inferior talent, it was still homogeneous and free from inequalities; it was a whole, consistent with itself. The compositions of great minds bore throughout the sustained stamp of their greatness" (*Prose*, p. 218).

It may be noted here that once more Shelley is counter in his thinking to that of Plato, as seen in the *Laws* as well as in the third and the tenth books of the *Republic*. Plato has
said there: "we are ourselves authors of a tragedy . . .
the finest and best we know how to make. In fact, our whole polity has been constructed as a dramatization of noble and perfect life; that is what we hold to be in truth the most real of tragedies. Thus you are poets, and we also are poets in the same style, rival artists and rival actors, and that is the finest of all dramas, one which indeed can be produced only by a code of true law—or at least that is our faith. So you must not expect that we shall lightheartedly permit you to pitch your booths in our market square with a troupe of actors whose melodious voices will drown our own, and . . . let you address them on the same issues as ourselves, not to the same effect, but commonly and for the most part to the very contrary" [Laws, VII.817b.c.d]," (The Collected Dialogues of Plato, p. 1387).

586-587 "The tragedies . . . mirrors . . . himself"

CRITICISM. A. Durand comments that "the comparison of the great Greek tragedies to "mirrors in which the spectator beholds himself" is a fine testimony to the necessity of the image for all forceful human communication" (Shelley on the Nature of Poetry, " p. 204).

591-596 "The imagination is enlarged . . . pains and passions . . . sorrow."
EDITIONS. Verkoren lists a parallel he calls "worthy of note" from Wordsworth's "Preface" to the Lyrical Ballads:
"... The understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified." Verkoren sees both the Wordsworth and Shelley passages as "reminiscent of Aristotle's definition of tragedy" (p. 98).

STUDY. While editors and critics generally see Aristotle as a source of this paragraph, the development in this section of the Defence parallels much of David Hume's essay, On Tragedy. Hume's essay also concerns the causes and results of the emotions which affect the art of tragedy. He points out that the mind if left "in calmness and indifference, would relish none of those beauties of imagination or expression, which, if joined to passion, give it such exquisite entertainment. The impulse or vehemence arising from sorrow, compassion, indignation, receives a new direction from the sentiments of beauty. The latter, being the predominant emotion, seize the whole mind, and convert the former into themselves, at least tincture them so strongly as totally to alter their nature. And the soul being at the same time roused by passion and charmed by eloquence, feels on the whole a strong movement, which is altogether delightful." Hume then goes on to say that the "same principle takes place in tragedy; with this addition,
that tragedy is an imitation, and imitation is always of itself agreeable. This circumstance serves still further to smooth the motions of passion, and convert the whole feeling into one uniform and strong enjoyment." Hume then points out that "objects of the greatest terror and distress please in painting," and please more than the calm and indifferent objects. He points out that a painter can represent only one instant and it may be enough, but that "nothing can furnish to the poet a variety of scenes, and incidents, and sentiments, except distress, terror, or anxiety. Complete joy and satisfaction is attended with security and leaves no further room for action." Hume continues that "it is thus the fiction of tragedy softens the passion, by an infusion of a new feeling, not merely by weakening or diminishing the sorrow." Later in the essay, Hume states that "the pleasure which poets, orators, and musicians give us, by exciting grief, sorrow, indignation, compassion, is not so extraordinary or paradoxical as it may at first sight appear. The force of the imagination, the energy of expression, the power of numbers, the charms of imitation; all these are naturally, of themselves, delightful. And when the object presented lays hold also of some affection, the pleasure still rises upon us, by the conversion of this subordinate movement into that which is predominant" (Criticism: the Major Texts, pp. 194–196, n. 4).
Shelley's development can be seen as a compact version of this same thinking; the imagination enlarges by a "sympathy with pains and passions," which distend "the capacity" by which "they are conceived." If Hume is indeed behind this passage, this "capacity" is "passion" or "feeling." Hume's "grief, sorrow, indignation, compassion" are, in Shelley, "pity, indignation, terror and sorrow." In Hume, these passions "convert" predominant pleasure. In Shelley, these passions strengthen "good affections."

596-598 "an exalted calm ... tumult of familiar life"

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith feels that Shelley "has clearly in mind Aristotle's definition of tragedy as 'through pity and fear affecting the purgation of these emotions,' [Poetics VI] and also probably the closing lines of Milton's Samson Agonistes" (p. 92). Jordan also suggests the Poetics (p. 46).

CRITICISM. Once more, Aristotle is considered as the background to this passage by J. S. Flagg, who, although noting that Shelley's "insistence on the production of social good as the end of poetry" is what most separates his theory from that of Aristotle, nevertheless feels that Shelley's ideas develop from statements in the Poetics. Flagg feels this is "particularly true of Shelley's use of the idea that tragedy effects a catharsis of pity and terror, a function which he sees as the central means by which tragedy brings about social
good." Flagg continues that this idea was "in Shelley's day a critical commonplace." He notes that Shelley does not speak of a catharsis of pity and terror but rather says that "the good affections are strengthened by pity" ("Shelley and Aristotle," p. 61).

STUDY. Hume's Of Tragedy continues in much the same manner as does Shelley here: "The passion, though perhaps naturally, and when excited by the simple appearance of a real object, it may be painful; yet it is so smoothed, and softened, and mollified, when raised by the finer arts, that it affords the highest entertainment" (Criticism, p. 196). The "real objects" become "familiar life" in Shelley, and the "smoothing" and "mollifying" become Shelley's "satiety." The "raising by the finer arts" is Shelley's "higher exercise" of the passions, which in Hume result in the "highest entertainment," and in Shelley, in "exalted calm."

599-604 "crime is disarmed of . . . choice."

EDITIONS. Cook suggests (as does Miss Winstanley) a notation from Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France: "Under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness" (p. 69; p. 88).

CRITICISM. A. Durand sees Shelley as having the tragedy of fate in mind, which "supposes in its audience a high degree
of intelligence, able to find relief in any solution, no matter how terrible." Durand notes further that it is probably "the pity of the Greek drama which stirs him" and sees the "romanticist" in Shelley overcome at goodness being driven to some foul deed. Durand comments that "All crime tends to be seen in the same way by romanticism, as error, mistake, or the result of chance rather than purpose." He notes that Shelley has presented Beatrice in The Cenci in such a way as "to compel us to consider her an object of compassion rather than of condemnation" ("Shelley on the Nature," P. 205).

STUDY. Hume, in Of Tragedy, also says this about tragedy, noting that an action "may be too bloody and atrocious" and that "even the common sentiments of compassion require to be softened by some agreeable affection." He continues, that mere suffering "under tyranny or vice" forms a disagreeable spectacle, and is carefully avoided by all masters of the drama. In order to dismiss the audience with entire satisfaction and contentment, the virtue must "either convert itself into a noble courageous despair, or the vice receive its proper punishment" (Criticism, pp. 196-197). Shelley too makes this point that "crime must be disarmed" by representation of "the fatal consequence" so that the "error" is "divested of its wilfulness."
"In a drama . . . teaches . . . self-respect."

EDITIONS. Verkoren quotes a passage from Sidney which he sees as applying not only to this thought but also to those expressed at lines 617-618, and 662-664: "So that the right use of Comoedie, will I thinke, by no bodie be blamed; and much lesse of the high and excellent Tragedie, that openeth the greatest woundes, and sheweth forth the Ulcers that are covered with Tissue, that maketh Kings feare to be Tyrants, and Tyrants manifest their tyrannicall humours, that with sturring the affects of Admiration and Comiseration, teacheth the uncertaintie of this world, and uppon how weak foundations guilden roofes are builded: that maketh us know, *Qui scoeptra soevus duro imperio regit, Timet timentes, metus in authorem redit*" [F., p. 23] (p. 76).

STUDY. Shelley at this point might well be thinking of Plato's "Chief accusation" against the poet, his power to corrupt, where he gives as an example how tragedy moves the "very best of us," when "we hear Homer or some other of the makers of tragedy imitating one of the heroes who is in grief, and is delivering a long tirade . . . feel pleasure, and abandon ourselves and accompany the representation with sympathy and eagerness, and we praise as an excellent poet the one who most strongly affects us in this way." Thus, we take pleasure in and approve characters we would be ashamed of in ourselves,
and "the best element" in our nature "relaxes its guard over the plaintive part." We may no longer let reason, which has kept us from foolish acts, continue to restrain us. But, Plato says, rather than thinking as we do that this "vicarious pleasure" with which the poets have satisfied and delighted us is "so much clear gain," we should realize there are few "capable of reflecting that what we enjoy in others will inevitably react upon ourselves. For after feeding fat the emotion of pity there, it is not easy to restrain it in our own sufferings" [Republic, X.605c,d,606a,b] (The Collected Dialogues, pp. 830-831). Shelley's view is directly opposite, for the high emotions released by tragedy contain little to "censure." Rather than teaching us lack of self-control, they teach both "self-knowledge" and "self-respect."

606-616 "Neither . . . mirror . . . fall."

EDITIONS. Cook says that "This passage, like the well-known Shakespearean parallel (Hamlet III.i.12.23), may be traced back to a saying attributed by Donatus to Cicero [8.228]: "Comedy is the semblance of life, the mirror of custom, the image of truth" (p. 69). Brett-Smith, as do later editors, quotes the same passage of Hamlet: "the purpose of Playing, whose end both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as 'twer the Mirrour up to Nature" (p. 93). Verkoren notes that Shelley had read Hamlet in April, 1818, and that the image is probably
derived from Shakespeare rather than Cicero (p. 95). Jordan points out that this figure goes back to Plato's *Republic*:

"Do you not see that there is a way in which you could make them all yourself? . . . none quicker than that of turning a mirror round and round— you would soon enough make . . . all the other things of which we were just now speaking, in the mirror [X.596]" (p. 46).

CRITICISM. J. Baker notes the objection of Plato to the artist's holding of a mirror up to nature, and creating untrue appearances [*Republic*, X.596], and then comments that "like other Platonists" Shelley "shows himself less ready than Plato to condemn the drama for its mirroring; he considered it an imitation not of transient phenomena but of Platonic 'elementary forms'" (*Shelley's Platonic Answer*, pp. 42-43). Notopoulos has a different view on the Platonism of this passage. He notes that the *Prometheus* "Preface" has "the notion of the One and the Many expressed as 'Every man's mind . . . is the mirror upon which all forms are reflected, and in which they compose one form.'" He further comments that the *Adonais* image of "Life like a dome of many-coloured glass" appears as "the prismatic and many-sided mirror" in the *Defence*. Notopoulos calls this "traditional imagery," noting that Plotinus speaks about the soul's "giving forth, without any change in itself, images and likenesses of itself like
one face caught by many mirrors [Enneads, I.i.8]" (The Platonism, p. 299). Durand looks at the last sentence as poetic prose, commenting that it is a "splendid periodic sentence" which is itself "a piece of poetry," and noting further that Shelley, "wishing to convince us of the power of dramatic art to draw the disparate elements of life towards an integral whole" chooses "not to state the truth directly, but rather to offer a splendid image of it" ("Shelley on the Nature," pp. 205-206).

STUDY. An echo of the passage quoted above [see ll. 419-422] from Prometheus Unbound, III.iii.30-63, can still be noticed. The collecting and reproducing of the rays of human nature from forms, and touching them with beauty, in this passage of the Defence, is again the thought of the Prometheus lines 49-63 (see Study, ll. 419-422 above, for quotation of this passage).

In A Philosophical View of Reform (1820), Shelley uses this same mirror image in speaking of language as "a many-sided mirror of every changing thought" (Prose, p. 237). The phrase has been retained in Shelley's memory, and re-appears in the Defence.
617-618 "But in periods of the decay of social life, the drama sympathizes with that decay."

STUDY. One sees here an evidence of Shelley's historical view of the world. It is a Volneyan view of the rise and decay of empires, both in a political and cultural sense. The whole idea of man's thought and his world going through decay is quite present in his thinking in the 1818-1921 period. In 1818, in *On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks*, he comments on the "combination of moral and political circumstances which produced so unparalleled a progress during that period in literature and the arts--why that progress, so rapid and so sustained, so soon received a check, and became retrograde--are problems left with the wonder and conjecture of posterity. The wrecks and fragments . . . like the ruins of a fine statue, obscurely suggest to us the . . . perfection of the whole." He indicates again later in the essay the tie of literature to decaying social periods when he says of ancient Greece: "Whatever the poets of that age produced is as harmonious and perfect as possible," and even drama composed by an inferior talent, was "still homogeneous and free from inequalities," but this is not true of the poetry of succeeding ages where "the expectations are often exalted on Icarian wings, and fall too much disappointed to give a memory and a
name to the oblivious pool in which they fell." Moving forward in time, he mentions here, as he does elsewhere in his prose and in the Defence, the literary decay attached to the decadent social period of Charles II (Prose, pp. 217, 218, 223). In 1820, in A Philosophical View of Reform, he notes French literature as "weak, superficial, vain," and places the blame not on their "organical differences," but on the fact that "their institutions made them what they were" (Prose, p. 236). In Adonais (1821), he notes the decay of society in the lines about Rome, "That ages, empires, and religions there / Lie buried in the ravages they have wrought" and continues by noting that Adonais "is gathered to the kings of thought / who waged contention with their time's decay / And of the past are all that cannot pass away" (XLVIII.426-427, 431-432). Hellas, which follows the Defence, has a number of references of such decay. In the "Preface" he notes that "the modern Greek is the descendant of those glorious beings whom the imagination almost refuses to figure . . . as belonging to our kind," but that now "he is degraded by moral and political slavery." He suggests we reflect "that the corruption of the best produces the worst, and that habits which subsist only in relation to a peculiar state of social institution may be expected to cease as soon as that relation is dissolved" (Poetry, p. 447). In Hellas he says that
"temples and towers," and those "Who live and die there,
were "ours, / And may be thine, and must decay" (11. 692-
695).

618-620 "Tragedy . . . imitation . . . antiquity"
CRITICISM. E. Schulze points out that there are at least
two meanings for "imitation" in Shelley's criticism. The
first, as seen in this passage, is "the deliberate copying
of other authors, as in his description of the heroic tragedy."
The second is a "kind of inevitable copying" of authors where
"writers possess the form, while they want the spirit" of
those they are imitating ["Preface" to Prometheus Unbound].
The third is a "synthesizing process involved in imaginative
form, as suggested in the image of the mind . . . as a mirror
. . . reflecting all forms." Last, there is "what might be
called the imitation of the future" where "Poets" are
"mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon
the present" [Defence, 11. 1530-31] (Shelley's Theory, n. 42,
p. 122).

625-626 "specious flatteries of some gross vice or weakness"
CRITICISM. J. Baker notes that Plato in the Republic (568b)
says "that tragic poets should not be admitted into the ideal
state because they are 'panegyrists of Tyranny.'" Baker also
notes that Peacock's comment on the origin of poetic production
in the Iron Age is that these were "Panegyrical . . . of a few pre-eminent individuals. They tell us how many battles such an one has fought . . . and how liberally and plentifully he pays, feeds, and intoxicates the divine and immortal bards . . . ." Baker comments that "Shelley's method of reply is illustrated in his bland observation that 'to such purposes [as flattery] poetry cannot be made subservient,' and where Plato had accused Euripides, he cites rather Addison's Cato" (Shelley's Platonic Answer, p.4).

STUDY. Shelley quite frequently, when using the word "flatter" in its various forms, attaches the meaning to vice or weakness as he does here. This is particularly true in works written near the time of the Defence. In The Cenci (1819) appear three such references: "who can flatter the dark spirit" (ll.ii.159); "some weak and wicked lie / To flatter their tormentors" (V.iii.23); and "Flattering their secret peace with others' pain" (l.i.80). In Prometheus Unbound (1819) he also uses two such images: "Let others flatter crime, when it sits throned" (1.401); and "flattering the thing they feared" (III.iv.188). Also in 1819, in Charles the First, he writes: "Betrays not with its flattering tears like they" (I.108). (See Concordance, p. 246).

627-629 "Hence . . . domestic drama . . . 'Cato"

EDITIONS. Jordan notes that Addison's Cato was produced in
STUDY. Shelley's familiarity with Samuel Johnson, which K. N. Cameron has indicated in his comparison of the Defence with Rasselas, no doubt included knowledge of Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare, which contains an indictment of Addison's Cato as compared to Shakespeare's work. Johnson states that "Addison speaks the language of poets, and Shakespeare, of men. We find in Cato innumerable beauties . . . but we see nothing that acquaints us with human sentiments or human action; we place it with the fairest and the noblest progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning, but Othello is the vigorous and vivacious offspring of observation impregnated by genius. Cato affords a splendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers just and noble sentiments, in diction easy, elevated and harmonious, but its hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart; the composition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of Cato, but we think on Addison" (Samuel Johnson: Rasselas, Poems, and Selected Prose, p. 282). If Shelley had this piece in mind, it might account for the appearance of "Othello" two paragraphs before this point [see l. 565]. Shelley may well have objected, in addition, on other grounds. He comments immediately after mentioning Cato that "to such purposes poetry cannot be made subservient." Cato, written in a time of
bitter party struggle, had obvious political implications, being taken as a defence of the Whigs against the Tories, with the Romans of the play presenting Whig sentiments. The aim of keeping a political party in power is not consistent with Shelley’s idea of the poetic role.

632-633 "Poetry is a sword of lightning . . . it."

EDITIONS. Verkoren quotes a parallel passage from Adonais, XX.177-179: "Shall that alone which knows / Be as a sword consumed before the sheath / By sightless lightning?" (p. 107).

CRITICISM. W. E. Peck points out a parallel passage in Byron’s poem, Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, III.xcvii: "With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword" (Shelley, His Life and Work, II, n. 81, p. 25).

STUDY. This is another instance where imagery used by Shelley in his poetry of 1819 to 1821 reappears in the Defence. While the image of lightning is frequent from Alastor on, the incidence of late use is marked. In the poems, Prometheus Unbound, "Ode to Liberty," "Ode to Naples," Adonais, Epipsychidion, Hellas and in The Cenci, the image of lightning is used forty-one times, seventeen of them being in Prometheus alone (see the Concordance, pp. 400-401). In the poems closest in time to the Defence, Adonais and Epipsychidion, the image,
as in the *Defence*, is connected with poetry. In *Adonais*, for example, appears the line: "veiling all the lightnings of his song" (XXX.267); and in *Epipsychidion* appears "even the dim words which obscure thee now / Flash, lightning-like, with unaccustomed glow" (ll. 33-34). The passage, however, which bears the closest over-all parallel to that of the *Defence* is in *Epipsychidion*. The *Defence*’s "prismatic and many-sided mirror" in the previous paragraph, and the present "sword of lightning," echo the imagery of *Epipsychidion* (written in February, 1821) appearing in following lines:

> Love is like understanding, that grows bright,  
> Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy light,  
> Imagination! which from earth and sky,  
> And from the depths of human fantasy,  
> As from a thousand prisms and mirrors, fills  
> The Universe with glorious beams, and kills  
> Error, the worm, with many a sun-like arrow  
> Of its reverberated lightning. . . .  
> (ll. 162-169)

In the "Preface" to *Prometheus Unbound* Shelley has also expressed the same general idea as here about the forms of poets reflecting their times, and has twice used the image of lightning to illustrate the idea. The first passage reads: "It is true, that, not the spirit of their genius, but the
forms in which it has manifested itself, are due less to the peculiarities of their own minds than to the peculiarity of the moral and intellectual condition of the minds among which they have been produced. Thus a number of writers possess the form, whilst they want the spirit of those whom, it is alleged, they imitate; because the former is the endowment of the age in which they live, and the latter must be the uncommunicated lightning of their own mind." Somewhat later, in commenting on the writers of his own age, he states that "the cloud of mind is discharging its collected lightning" (Poetry, p. 206).

634-642 "And thus . . . caprice and appetite . . . grossest degradation . . . Charles II . . . virtue."

STUDY. In On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks Shelley notes that the age of Charles II caused "romantic friendship" to degenerate into "licentiousness," and that "luxury" and "disease" united under Charles II to "infect literature" (Prose, p. 223). Again, in 1819-1820 Shelley voices a disparaging view, in A Philosophical View of Reform. Here he comments on the "tyranny and perfidy of the reigns of Charles the 2nd and James the 2nd." He also again brings out the idea of "social decay" in periods of life when he notes that happenings in these reigns "were less the result of the
disposition of particular men than the vices which would have been engendered in any but an extraordinary man by the natural necessities of their situation" (Prose, p. 236).

The source of both the attitudes above, and in the Defence paragraph here, very probably rests in his reading of David Hume's The History of England. Mary Shelley in her Journal records that Shelley was reading aloud from this History twenty-five days in the period from June 19 to August 15, 1818 (see Mary Shelley's Journal, pp. 100-104). The attitude which Shelley displays is clearly reminiscent of that of Hume as to the decay of social life, the weak doctrines of morality, the flatteries of vice, the resulting lack of poetic imagination which then becomes caprice and appetite, the degradation of the drama, and the presence of the calculating principle. All of these, Shelley has indicated, climax in the reign of Charles II. What Hume has to say about this period is as follows:

"By the example of Charles II. and the cavaliers, licentiousness and debauchery became prevalent in the nation," and consequently "Love was treated more as an appetite than a passion" [Shelley's point in both On the Manners and the Defence]. Hume further comments that "though Charles was a lover of the sciences," he animated them by his example alone, not by his bounty," due to "craving courtiers and mistresses" engrossing all his expense, and leaving him "neither money nor
attention for literary merit." Shelley's attention has been on the drama particularly, and Hume calls attention to this also, stating: "This age was far from being so favorable to polite literature as to the sciences. Charles, though fond of wit . . . though his taste in conversation seems to have been sound and just, served rather to corrupt than improve the poetry and eloquence of his time. When the theatres were opened at the restoration, and freedom was again given to pleasantry and ingenuity, men, after so long an abstinence, fed on these delicacies with less taste than avidity, and the coarsest and most irregular species of wit was received by the court as well as by the people. The productions represented at that time on the stage were such monsters of extravagance and folly, so utterly destitute of all reason or even common sense, that they would be the disgrace of English literature, had not the nation made atonement for its former admiration of them by the total oblivion to which they are now condemned." Hume then sums up by saying that "The reign of Charles II., which some preposterously represent as our Augustan age, retarded the progress of polite literature in this island; and it was then found, that the immeasurable licentiousness, indulged or rather applauded at court, was more destructive to the refined arts, than even the cant, nonsense, and enthusiasm of the preceding period. Most of
the celebrated writers of this age remain monuments of genius, perverted by indecency and bad taste." Hume goes on to mention Dryden, although Shelley has chosen Addison. However, the echo of this Dryden criticism may perhaps appear later in the Defence when Shelley alludes to Astraea. Hume then goes on to point out "how little endowed with liberality" was the king, in allowing deserving literary men to exist or die in want and obscurity (The History of England, VI, pp. 371-377). Shelley has in brief compass expressed attitudes very similar to those Hume has developed over a number of pages.

643-644 "Milton stood alone illuminating an age unworthy of him."

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith notes Shelley's parallel line in the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam, 1818: "Milton stands alone in the age which he illuminated" (p.93). Clark and Jordan, however, point to the more general passage about Milton in Adonais, 11. 29-35) (p. 285; p. 47).

STUDY. Shelley has expressed this general idea in his own previous work. However, he has fresh in mind also Peacock's similar assessment in The Four Ages of Poetry: "The greatest of English poets, Milton, may be said to stand alone between the ages of gold and silver, combining the excellencies
of both; for with all the energy, and power, and freshness of the first, he united all the studied and elaborate magnificence of the second" (Halliford, p. 16). In On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks (1818) Shelley points out that between the periods of James and of Charles II there was a "redeeming interval over which Milton presided" (Prose, p. 223). Again, in A Philosophical View of Reform (1820), he sees Milton as a figure standing between two periods, a forerunner of change, when he notes "the ominous comets of our republican poet perplexing great monarchs with fear of change" (Prose, p. 238). In two poems in 1820 he comments on this same quality of Milton. In the "Ode to Liberty" he sees liberty as not passing unseen before Milton from the "sad scene / Beyond whose night he saw, with a dejected mien" (ll. 147-150). In the "Fragment: Milton's Spirit" he sees the thunder of Milton's "lute" as shaking "thrones" and "altars" (ll. 1-6).

646-651 "Comedy loses its ideal universality . . . smile."

EDITIONS. Cook refers to the anecdotes told by Peacock about Shelley's aversion to comedy. The first is the one in which Peacock spoke of Shelley's prejudice against theatres, and his inducing Shelley to go to a performance of the School for Scandal. At the fourth act Shelley commented: "I see the purpose of this comedy. It is to associate virtue with
bottles and glasses, and villainy with books." Peacock also noted that Shelley often talked of the "withering and perverting spirit of comedy." Peacock further remarked, "I do not think he ever went to another." The other anecdote concerned a passage in Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, about which Shelley said, "There is comedy in its perfection. Society grinds down poor wretches into the dust of abject poverty, till they are scarcely recognizable as human beings; and then, instead of being treated as what they really are, subjects of the deepest pity, they are brought forward as grotesque monstrosities to be laughed at." When Peacock noted the "fineness of the expression," Shelley replied, "but the finer it is the worse it is, with such a perversion of sentiment " [see Halliford, VIII, pp. 81-83] (p. 70). Brett-Smith notes that "Shelley had the defects of his qualities, a limited and grotesque sense of humour, and an active dislike and distrust of the comic spirit" (pp. xvi, 93). Miss Winstanley, commenting in a different vein, says: "Shelley means that it becomes a satire on particular conditions of society" (p. 88).

CRITICISM. M. Solve sees this as "the growth of a free aesthetic attitude toward the subject matter of art" which is further noticeable in Shelley's attitude toward the comic in the Defence statements where he says that the "imperfection in poetry does not consist so much in the presence of things
connected with the eternal and the temporal as in the absence of those elements which belong to the inner faculties of our nature; that the incomparable perfection of the ancients consisted in the harmony of all elements." Solve feels that "Shelley's early condemnation of comedy was due not merely to a defective sense of humor, but to an excess of sensibility. The comic characters of the day gave him no pleasant sense of superiority; he felt, on the one hand, pity for what seemed to him to be society's unfortunates, and, on the other, responsibility for their . . . ignorance and . . . lack of dignity. The comic became, through excess of sympathy, pathetic. He thought that neither the authors nor the theater-going audience had any sympathy for the objects of their mirth, and hence humor was superseded by wit." Solve points out that superficial comedy of low moral periods Shelley "would condemn because there is in it none of the universal, and because the evil, the temporal, is not reconciled to the good and the eternal; the element of harmony is absent" (Shelley: His Theory of Poetry, pp. 50-51).

STUDY. Remembering Shelley's reaction to Peacock's reading of a passage to him of Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, by Beaumont and Fletcher, it becomes apparent that his view of comedy in drama has been unwavering. In a letter to Peacock from
Italy on September 21, 1819, he reveals his view again on this point of necessary ideality of comedy in drama. He is speaking of Calderon, and says: "He exceeds all modern dramatists with the exception of Shakespeare; whom he resembles however in the depth of thought and subtlety of imagination of his writings, and in the rare power of inter-weaving delicate and powerful comic traits with the most tragical situations without diminishing their interest. I rate him far above Beaumont and Fletcher.--" (Letters, II, p. 120).

651-656 "Obscenity . . . monster . . . secret."

CRITICISM. Schulz points out that "the figure of the 'monster,' obscenity, has neat parallels with Milton's famous figure of Death in Book II [of Paradise Lost], who, isolated from every other being, devours the brood of Sin forever (Shelley's 'corruption of society')." He further notes that Milton is a "precise model on which to base an attack on Restoration" (Shelley's Theory, n. 133, p. 165).

STUDY. Since Shelley had Spenser in mind, as can be seen by his first letter draft of the Defence (see Appendix E), the monster for which the "corruption of society ever brings forth new food" probably has its source in Spenser's Faerie Queene, I.I.XIII-XXVI, where the monster from "Errours den," half serpent and half "womans shape" exists, who when wounded
by the knight vomits forth "bookes and papers" in a flood of poison, along with a "spawne of serpents small" who then turn and devour the body of their mortally wounded mother, "making her death their life" (Complete Poetical Works of Spenser, pp. 146-148).

Shelley speaks out against obscenity a number of times both directly and indirectly in his works. In his Essay on Christianity (probably 1816), in speaking of Rome at the time of Christ, he comments: "Refinement in arts and letters, distorted from its national tendency to promote benevolence and truth, became subservient to lust and luxury. All communication among human beings was vitiated and polluted in its source." He continues that "as intellectual objects betray their presence more readily in situations of self-sacrifice, sensual pleasures occupied the interest of mankind. Hence those persons who occupied the most eminent stations . . . became habituated to the most monstrous and complicated perversities of appetite and sentiment. The national affections were first destroyed, the domestic affections now vanished away; man lived like a beast of prey among his fellowmen, uniting more than a serpent's cunning to its deadliest malignity and venom" (Prose, p. 198). His most outright statement on obscenity, along with its definition, comes in On the
Manners of the Ancient Greeks (1818): "The ideas suggested by Catullus, Martial, Juvenal, and Suetonius never occur among the Greeks; or even among those Romans who, like Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, imitated them. The Romans were brutally obscene; the Greeks seemed hardly capable of obscenity in a strict sense. How innocent is even the Lysistrata of Aristophanes compared with the infamous perversions of Catullus! The earlier dramatic English writers are often frightfully obscene, exceeding even the Romans. I should consider obscenity to consist in a capability of associating disgusting images with the act of the sexual instinct. Luxury produced for the Romans what the venereal disease did the writers of James, and after the redeeming interval over which Milton presided the effects of both were united under Charles II to infect literature" (Prose, p. 223). In Prometheus Unbound (1819), when the world is restored to its full grace, and what the Defence calls the "blasphemy against the divine beauty in life" is removed, the Spirits come with eyes which are "as love which is veiled not" and say:

We come from the mind

Of human kind

Which was late so dusk, and obscene, and blind,

Now 'tis an ocean

Of clear emotion
A heaven of serene and mighty motion.

They also come from the high temples "Of Man's ear and eye, / Roofed over Sculpture and Poesy," and now "beyond our eyes, / The human love lies / Which makes all it gazes on Paradise" (IV.91-97, 111-113, 126-128). The climax is reached, however when true pleasure and mirth join into a universal harmony, and "comedy" achieves the "ideal universality" which the Defence speaks of in the joined voices of the Spirits and Hours (IV.129-134):

Then weave the web of the mystic measure;
From the depths of the sky and the ends of the earth,
Come, swift Spirits of might and of pleasure,
Fill the dance and the music of mirth,
As the waves of a thousand streams rush by
To an ocean of splendour and harmony!
657-659 "The drama . . . greater number . . . other"
CRITICISM. J. Flagg notes that although Shelley does not share Aristotle's "view of the end or final cause of tragedy," he gives "essentially the same reason for superiority of drama as Aristotle does" when he says the drama is that form under which "a greater number of modes of expression of poetry" can be combined (Shelley's Theory," p. 61).

662-664 "indisputable . . . perfection . . . excellence"
EDITIONS. Verkoren cites here the Sidney passage on comedy [quoted at ll. 604-606 above] (p. 75).

665-668 "extinction . . . drama . . . social life."
EDITIONS. Clark calls this "a statement that needs substantiation" (p. 286).

668-672 "as Machiavelli says of political institutions . . . principles."
EDITIONS. Verkoren notes the presence of Machiavelli's works in Shelley's library in 1820 (p. 101). Jordan feels that Shelley probably refers to the doctrine in The Prince "that the strong individual preserves himself by having the flexibility to adapt to fortune" (p. 48).
CRITICISM. Schulz sees Shelley as following what "Machiavelli
says of political institutions," that social life "may be preserved and renewed if men should arise capable of bringing back the drama to its principles" (Shelley's Theory, p. 129).

STUDY. What Shelley seems to be doing in this statement about Machiavelli is to reduce the conclusion of The Prince to its essence, for it is there that Machiavelli summarizes the necessity of men arising who will preserve or renew proper principles. Machiavelli, in his concluding "Exhortation to Free Italy from the Barbarians" (Chapter XXVI), says: "Reflecting on the matters set forth above and considering within myself whether the times were propitious in Italy at present to honor a new prince and whether there is at hand the matter suitable for a prudent and virtuous leader to mold in a new form, giving honor to himself and benefit to the citizens of the country, I have arrived at the opinion that all circumstances now favor such a prince. . . . And although before now we have seen some slight thread of hope in a certain individual such as to make us believe him sent for our redemption, yet we have seen him, too, unhappily betrayed by fortune . . . . So Italy now, left almost lifeless, awaits the coming of one who will heal her wounds. . . . See how she is ready and willing to follow any banner so long as there be some one to take it." With regard to principles, Machiavelli says:
"Nothing sheds so much honor on a man newly come to power as new laws and new methods discovered by him. When these things are well founded [and he has just exhorted the new leader to "bear in mind the actions and lives of the heroes mentioned" before] and have some element of greatness in them, they make him revered . . . and in Italy the matter is not lacking to receive the impress of such forms. In this country there is great virtue in the limbs if only it can be found in the head" (The Prince, pp. 75-77).
678-682 "Civil war . . . Macedonian . . . Roman . . . Greece."

EDITIONS. Ingpen, in the Julian edition, reports the cancellation here in MS B of the "subjugation of Persia" (see Textual Notes above). Miss Winstanley comments that "owing to the inferiority of its literary genius Shelley continually underestimates Rome in comparison with Greece. He disliked history and he hated war, and he did not realize the vast civilizing power wielded by the Roman empire nor the great tradition it left as a legacy to modern Europe" (p. 88).

STUDY. Shelley has clearly outlined what his general opinion is of civil war and its results both in the "Preface" and in the development of The Revolt of Islam, as well as in "Notes on Queen Mab," IV.178,179. In Shelley's mind "the consequences of legitimate despotism" are "civil war, famine, plague, superstition, and an utter extinction of the domestic affections." But along with "the temporary triumph of oppression, and the transient nature of ignorance and error," there remains "the eternity of genius and virtue" (Poetry, p. 32). In On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks (1818) Shelley comments on the "unparalleled" progress of "literature and the arts" in the Periclean age and then says, "why that progress,
so rapid and so sustained, so soon received a check, and became retrograde— are problems left with the wonder and conjecture of posterity" (Prose, p. 217). He comes to grips again with what civil war is in A Philosophical View of Reform (1820). He calls it there "the alternative which the unprincipled cunning of the tyrant has presented." He continues, that "there is secret sympathy between destruction and power, between monarchy and war; and the long experience of the history of all recorded time teaches us with what success they have played into each other's hand. War is a kind of superstition; the pageantry of arms and badges corrupts the imagination of men." Not only is there the actual destruction of civil war but the "added disruption of the bonds of social life" (Prose, p. 260). In this essay he specifically notes the culpability of Rome by saying that "The general condition of the human race to which they have been conducted" came after the obliteration of the Greek republics by the successful external tyranny of Rome--its internal liberty having been first abolished--and by those miseries and superstitions consequent upon this event which compelled the human race to begin anew its difficult and obscure career of producing, according to the forms of society, the great portion of good" (Prose, p. 239). Shelley refers again to Rome's role
in the "Preface" to the *Revolt to Islam* when he notes that in the period "when Greece was led captive, and Asia made tributary to the Republic, fast verging itself to slavery and ruin" multitudes of Syrian captives, "unworthy successors of Socrates and Zeno" subsisted by administering "to the vices and vanities of the great" ([Poetry](#), p. 36). Shelley still had this combination of warring nations in mind in the fall of 1821, for in *Hellas* appears: "Deluge upon deluge followed, / Discord, Macedon, and Rome" (ll. 691-692).

The canceled words in Shelley's MS B, "subjugation of Persia," also reflect a thought from *A Philosophical View of Reform*, and explain further what Shelley's view is in this passage: "Of Persia we know little but that it has been the theater of sanguinary contests for power, and that it is now at peace. The Persians appear to be from organization a beautiful, refined, and impassioned people and would probably soon be infected by the contagion of good" ([Prose](#), p. 238). While Shelley is speaking in a modern context at this point, what he has expressed, but decided not to use in the *Defence*, perhaps because of the necessary modernity of his limited knowledge, still represents the general view of what he meant in the *Defence* passage. In a letter to John Gisborne November 16, 1819, Shelley also very specifically noted Roman, Greek,
and Macedonian connections: "If the army of Nicias had not been defeated under the walls of Syracuse, if the Athenians had, acquiring Sicily held the balance between Rome & Carthage, sent garrisons to the Greek colonies in the south of Italy, Rome might have been all that its intellectual condition entitled it to be, a tributary not the conqueror of Greece; the Macedonian power would never have attained to the dictatorship of the civilized states of the world. Who knows whether under the steady progress which philosophy & social institutions would have made, (for in the age to which I refer their progress was both rapid & secure,) among a people of the most perfect physical organization, whether the Christian Religion would have arisen, or the barbarians have overwhelmed the wrecks of civilization which had survived the conquests & tyranny of the Romans" (Letters, II, p. 156).

682-685 "The bucolic writers . . . reign."

EDITIONS. Cook, as do later editors, identifies these as Theocritus, Moschus, and Bion (p. 70). Jordan notes further that Shelley had translated fragments from Bion and Moschus, and had drawn on this elegiac tradition in Adonais (p. 49).

STUDY. Shelley is pointing out here that despite Greece's subjugation her poetic genius was reappearing in a new setting in the great centers of Greek learning at Alexandria in Egypt,
and at Syracuse in Sicily, in the third and second centuries, B.C., under the patronage of the kings of Egypt and the tyrants of Sicily. The pastoral tradition probably was commenced by Theocritus at Alexandria, and undoubtedly Shelley is referring to him, and to Bion and Moschus, of his school. Theocritus is thought to have lived at both the Alexandrian and Syracusan courts in the third century B.C., while Moschus was born at Syracuse in the second century B.C. and lived at Alexandria. Bion also probably lived in Sicily about the end of the second century B.C. Shelley refers directly to Theocritus later in the Defence (see ll. 737-738 below).

685-693 "Their poetry . . . tuberose . . . excess of sweetness . . . flowers of the field . . . delight."

EDITIONS. Clark notes that Shelley has used the tuberose similarly in "The Sensitive Plant," ll. 37-38: "... the sweet tuberose, / The sweetest flower for scent that blows" (p. 286).

STUDY. Shelley, by using the flowers of the field and dell, is matching his imagery to his subject, pastoral poetry. In both uses of the tuberose in his poetry, in "The Woodman and the Nightingale" (1818), and in "The Sensitive Plant" (1820), emphasis is on the great sweetness of its scent. In the "Woodman" it lies "like clouds above the flower" (1.10). He
uses images of the flowering fields and meadows a number of times in his poetry, always emphasizing the qualities of freshness, softness, and openness. This quality of softness and delicacy, which is natural and good in the meadow and field, becomes quite otherwise here. In the following line these qualities are turned against the misused bucolic scene. The harmony now turns to "erotic delicacy" and "softness."

Shelley, however, does not by any means reject the pastoral tradition, as his later line about Theocritus shows. A further indication is his use of the pastoral tradition in Adonais, also written in 1821, in which he imitates the Greek bucolic form, quotes Moschus in the epigraph, and opens the poem with the words of Bion. (See Neville Rogers' chapter on Adonais in Shelley at Work, pp. 262-263).

700-710 "An equal . . . Homer and Sophocles . . . all."

CRITICISM. D. H. Reiman comments that Shelley, in referring to the decline of the arts during the Hellenistic period, declared it was not the presence of sensual elements but the absence of imaginative power which made this literature erotic and decadent. He also notes Shelley's comments in "Notes on Sculptures in Rome and Florence" (1819) on the representation of the Dionysian revels: "This was indeed a monstrous superstition only capable of existing in Greece because there alone
capable of combining ideal beauty and poetical and abstract enthusiasm with the wild errors from which it sprung . . . the Greeks . . . turned all things . . . to Beauty" [Prose, p. 349] (Shelley's "The Triumph of Life," pp. 54-55).

STUDY. Shelley's letter to Peacock of September 9, 1819, gives a practical example of his viewpoint here, for he comments, in defending his own development in The Cenci, that "'Oedipus' is performed on the fastidious French stage, a play much more broad than this" (Letters, II, pp. 118-119).

His letter to Leigh Hunt, May 26, 1820, also reveals his viewpoint: "Bessy tells me that people reprobate the subject of my tragedy--let them abuse Sophocles, Massinger, Voltaire & Alfieri in the same sentence, & I am content.--I maintain that my scenes are as delicate & free from offence as theirs. Good Heavens what wd. they have tragedy!" (Letters, II, p. 200).

708-710 "their . . . perfection . . . union of all."

EDITIONS. Clark notes that Shelley expressed a contrary opinion in his letter to Godwin, July 29, 1812 (p. 286).

710-715 "It is not what . . . age."

CRITICISM. C. Baker points out that Shelley has been considering the question of worldly life as a corrupting force "where he contrasted the Greek erotic poets (presumably those
of the Hellenistic decadence) with Homer and Sophocles."
Baker comments further that "the true poetic principle is
at perpetual war with social corruption, and a given age can
corrupt a given poet only to the extent that the poet has cut
himself off from his greatest source of power. The shade of
Rousseau in The Triumph, a mere root or misshapen stump of a
being, serves as the exemplum: one who turned his back on
the visionary splendor and followed the millions who accompanied
the chariot of life" (Shelley's Major Poetry, p. 269).

715-722 "Had . . . destroy . . . corrupt."

EDITIONS. Koszul reports a canceled passage in MS A at this
point: "There is nothing in itself vicious or wrong in sensual
pleasure, or unworthy in passions . . ." (see Textual Notes
above).

STUDY. The key to Shelley's thinking at this point may be
seen in his Essay on Christianity, where he notes that "Your
physical wants are few, while those of your mind and heart
cannot be numbered or described from their multitude and com-
plication. To secure the gratification of the former, men
have made themselves the bond-slaves of each other. They have
cultivated these meaner wants to so great an excess as to judge
nothing valuable or desirable but what relates to their grati-
fication. Hence has arisen a system of passions which loses
sight of the end which they were originally awakened to attain. Fame, power, and gold are loved for their own sakes . . . . It is from the cultivation of the most contemptible properties of human nature that the discord and torpor . . . by which the moral universe is disordered essentially depend. So long as these are the ties by which human society is connected, let it not be admired that they are fragile. Before man can be free and equal and truly wise he must cast aside the chains of habit and superstition; he must strip sensuality of its pomp and selfishness of its excuses, and contemplate actions and objects as they really are. He will discover the wisdom of universal love. He will feel the meanness and the injustice of sacrificing the leisure and the liberty of his fellowmen to the indulgency of his physical appetites and becoming a party to their degradation by the consummation of his own"

(Prose, p. 209). In the continuation of the Defence passage Shelley also turns to the use of "chains" as he does in this Essay passage. Shelley, in the Essay, gives examples in Rousseau and in Christ. Shelley saw Rousseau as trying to persuade his compatriots to the example "of a pure and simple life, by placing in the strongest point of his conceptions the calamitous and diseased aspect which, overgrown as it is with the vices of sensuality and selfishness, is exhibited by civilized society." Christ, in Shelley's view, "exposes
with the passionate rhetoric of enthusiastic love toward all human beings the miseries and mischiefs of that system which makes all things subservient to the subsistence of the material frame of man" and warns that "it is impossible at once to be high-minded and just and wise, and comply with the accustomed forms of human society, seek honor, wealth, or empire either from the idolatry of habit or as the direct instruments of sensual gratification" (Prose, pp. 209-210).

Shelley has given further attention to eroticism, sensuality, pleasure, and passion in a number of instances, particularly in his essays, Even Love is Sold, and On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks, and in his poetry in the variations of love in Prometheus Unbound, The Cenci, and, closest to the Defence in time, Epipsychidion and the brief "To--. 'When passion's trance is overpast'."

In both the canceled draft passage about there being nothing in itself unworthy in sensual pleasure or passions, and in the line in this passage concerning whether corruption had availed "so as to extinguish . . . sensibility to pleasure, passion and natural scenery" there is a particularly direct relationship to Epipsychidion, written in February, 1821, which indeed stresses all the nuances of pleasure and sensual passion, and encases them in an Eden-like natural scene. The same can be seen in the development of the evocation of love,
wrapped in sensual terms and natural scenery, in the Earth-Moon sequence in Act IV of *Prometheus Unbound*. Shelley in actuality is his own best proof about "erotic poets." As he says, their imperfection lies in what they have not, their lack of comprehension of love itself. They lack Shelley's vision in *Prometheus* of Earth's "drinking" from "sense and sight" the "Beauty, majesty, and might" of love from the lover (VI. 481-482), or of Epipsychidion's soul piercing "Into the height of Love's rare Universe" because the fountains of our deepest life" have been "Confused in Passion's golden purity" (ll. 588-589, 570-571). Shelley is saying that true poetic use of pleasure leads upward toward Love, while poetic misuse of pleasure and passion leads downward to "social corruption," and destruction.

722-726 "It begins... venom... survives."

CRITICISM. E. Wasserman comments that "although the transcendent One is postulated in the structure of Shelley's reality, it is not, the commentators notwithstanding, an operative factor in the poetics of the *Defence*. The inconsistency charged against Shelley for constructing a poetics of creative self-expression out of a faculty psychology and yet maintaining faith in a transcendent Plotinian One that is the model for all imitations is in fact nonexistent, since he has located
the form-revealing power within the individual human spirit and at the core of its concentric faculties, the senses, appetites, affections, intellect, and imagination. Each mind is essentially an equivalent particle of the One Power, and since, Shelley holds, all minds perform according to the same laws, the mind of the 'creator'—that is, the poet—is itself the image of all other minds'" ("Shelley's Last Poetics," p. 489).

STUDY. The image of "paralyzing venom" is one which also appears in Shelley's poetry in the 1820-1821 period. In the "Ode to Naples," tyranny has been the "viper's pallsy venom" (l. 112); in Epipsychidion, the voice of a false love is "venomed melody" (l. 256); in Adonais, the critic is taunted "To spill the venom when thy fangs overflow" (l. 330); and in "Ginevra," possible earthly violences against love contain "stings and venom" (ll. 58-69). Shelley's use of "venom" implies social corruption in his poetry as well here in the Defence. Indeed, the relationship to "Ginevra" seems reinforced by the appearance of the unusual word "torpid" in both. In the Defence, the paralysis of the venom produces a "torpid mass in which hardly sense survives." In Ginevra," the loveless husband of the dead Ginevra accepts "torpidly" the consolation he doesn't want (ll. 176-177). "Ginevra," written
in 1821, actually is a poetic example of the corruption of love about which Shelley, in using the progression, which begins at the imagination and intellect, then moves to the affections, and then to the appetites, is following the Platonic division of the soul into its three parts, the "rational" or the highest thinking and knowing part; the "higher mortal soul" seated in the heart, or the higher affections; and the "appetitive soul," or the senuous soul of the body (See Republic, IV. 535, and Timaeus, 89e ff.). Shelley mentions this division directly as the "three forms into which Plato distributed the faculties of the mind" at 11. 831-833 below. It is noticeable here that Shelley does not leave reason, the highest Platonic part, as that here, but places the imagination first. He has commented directly in A Treatise on Morals on this point: "Most of the errors of philosophers have arisen from considering the human being in a point of view too detailed and circumscribed. He is not a moral and an intellectual--but also and pre-eminently an imaginative being. His own mind is his law; his own mind is all things to him. If we would arrive at any knowledge which should be serviceable from the practical conclusions to which it leads, we ought to consider the mind of man and the universe as the great whole on which to exercise our speculations"
There is possible source in Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning the Human Understanding*, for the centrality of the imagination. Hume has said here that "Nothing is more free than the imagination of man; and though it cannot exceed that original stock of ideas furnished by the internal and external senses, it has unlimited power of mixing, compounding and separating, and dividing these ideas, in all the variations of fiction and vision" [Section III, Part II] (*Hume Selections*, p. 137). Such a central power, if poisoned, would quickly affect all the other parts, as Shelley indicates here.

729-730 "Like the footsteps of Astraea"

EDITIONS. Cook notes, as do later editors, Astraea's identity as the Goddess of Justice. Ovid's description (*Metamorph.* 1,150-1) is quoted by Cook: "Piety lies vanquished, and the virgin Astraea is the last of the heavenly deities to abandon the earth, now drenched in slaughter" (p. 70). Brett-Smith, in addition, suggests the *Sixth Satire* of Juvenal, 19-20:

"Then by degrees Astraea retired to the realms above, with Chastity for her companion, and the two sisters fled together" (p. 93). Jordan notes that Astraea "lived on earth during the Age of Gold, was an occasional visitor in the Age of Silver, but in the Age of Brass fled to the skies, where she stands as..."
the constellation of Virgo" (p. 50).

CRITICISM. Schulze sees Shelley as having "described the
decay and death of the ancient poetry, the loss of harmony
and unity of form, by the image of Astraea departing from the
earth, the goddess being the last vestige of an original golden
age in an age of iron." He also notes that although Astraea was
the goddess of justice, she "serves Shelley for poetry because
her departure signaled, according to his adaptation of the
myth of the four ages, the entrance of Mammon, up from the
bowels of the earth where he has found gold." Schulze also com-
ments that the star symbolism is similar to that used in most
of the poems after 1817 (Shelley's Theory, p. 162, and n. 125).

STUDY. Shelley undoubtedly has several sources for his use
of "Astraea." His wide knowledge of Greek mythology and the
Roman writers would ensure a familiarity with the goddess. He
does not use "Astraea" in his poetry or elsewhere in his prose.
He had, however, been writing on the question of justice in
the Essay on Christianity (part of which might be dated as late
as 1819). The parallels between the passage on justice and
the development of the Defense's reasoning at this point are
considerable. In the Essay he has been speaking of the lack
of justice which perverts the physical, moral, and intellectual
nature of man. He notes that injustice can be abolished only
in proportion to the "prevalance of true virtue." He notes, as in the Defence, that "the whole frame of human things is infected by the insidious poison" of lack of virtue, and man is "blind in understanding, corrupt in his moral sense, and diseased in his physical functions." In the Essay Shelley then notes that the ancient poets saw this truth and "embodied" their conception of its value in retrospect to the earliest ages of mankind. They represented equality as the reign of Saturn and taught that mankind had gradually degenerated from the virtue which enabled them to enjoy or maintain this happy state" (Prose, p. 211). The connection of Saturn and Astraea is a step easily made.

There are possibly three sources which might now suggest themselves for Shelley's use of "Astraea." From the number of other evidences of echoes between the two works, Shelley well might have picked up the suggestion from Lord Monboddo's Of the Origin and Progress of Language. Monboddo says here that when "the true state of nature" is restored, and the "real golden age" returns, "then shall Astraea visit the earth again, whose latest footsteps are no longer to be seen; So shall the rest of the animal creation, freed from a tyrannical and capricious master, live the life which nature has destined for them, and accomplish the end of their being" (Book II,
footnote, pp. 414-416). The Golden Age is, of course, when Saturn reigned.

Shelley also had in mind at this section of the Defence the reign of Charles II and its degeneracy. There might well be an ironic allusion to "Astraea Redux," Dryden's poem "on the Happy Restoration and Return of his Sacred Majesty Charles the Second." Here Dryden chose Virgil's Eclogues IV.6 for his motto: "Now too the Virgin returns, and the reign of Saturn returns." In the poem Dryden has called Charles's age one "govern'd by the wild distemper'd rate of some black star infecting all the skies." Shelley would certainly not have agreed with Dryden's bright star which finally again guides "our eyes to find and worship" Charles [11. 112-114, 288-291], (The Poetical Works of Dryden, pp. 7-11).

A third possible source, not provable, but one which he may have known along with Peacock, is Giambattista Vico's The New Science. In this work, Vico tells of the first heaven where the gods reigned, and "in this heaven justice was dealt out on earth by Astraea, crowned with ears of grain and holding a balance." In this heaven wings were used "not for flight nor even to signify quickness of wit, but to signify heroic institutions." Of this sort, Vico continues are: the wings of Hyman (heroic Love), Astraea, and the Muses," and also "it is
in this heaven that Prometheus steals fire" (p. 270). Had Shelley been acquainted with this work, this passage would certainly have been of interest to him.

Some minor but interesting coincidences occur between both the Dryden and the Vico works and the Defence. In "Astraea Redux" Dryden uses the line [192], "the shadow serv'd the substance to invade," and Shelley twice has also used the shadow-substance idea earlier in the Defence. Vico presents an interesting tale of the ancient chain linking god and man, and the chain is one idea which Shelley now will come to in this part of the Defence.

731-735 "Poetry . . . light of life . . . evil time."

EDITIONS. Verkoren commented on this in conjunction with 1.345 above.

STUDY. The image, "light of life," is one that Shelley has made quite frequent use of in his poetry, but especially in that of 1819 to 1821. Perhaps it was his uses of the phrase in The Cenci which prompted his comment on poetry as the "light of life," the source of what is true in "time of evil." He has used it there in three instances. In Prometheus Unbound, Asia has been called "thou light of life" (III.iii.6) again in Epipsychidion "light" and "life" are connected in three occurrences. (See Concordance, p. 394-396). It is
another instance of a familiar poetic phrase which Shelley's mind has brought forth again in the Defence.

735-739 "It... luxurious citizens... Theocritus... tribe."

STUDY. The word "luxurious" here is one of intentional double meaning. In his poetry Shelley uses "luxury" quite often, and almost without exception means sensual indulgence. In Queen Mab, for example, appears "the vile joy of tainting luxury" (V.173), while in The Cenci appears "all men delight in sensual luxury" (I.1.77). Perhaps closest to Shelley's dual meaning in the Defence are the lines from Epipsychidion (also closest to the Defence in time): "Our simple life wants little, and true taste / Hires not the pale drudge Luxury, to waste / The scene it would adorn" (ll. 525-527). Sensuality is obviously meant in the Defence, since the whole paragraph is concerned with "bucolic and erotic poetry." Shelley uses "luxury" also to mean wealth, and it carries political and economic implications. It is this meaning which Shelley has employed in considering the political economist in relation to "luxury and want" at ll. 1136-1141 below in the Defence. He has defined this view in his essay, "And Statesmen Boast of Wealth": "There is no wealth but the labor of man... In consequence of our consideration for the precious metals, one man is
enabled to heap to himself luxuries at the expense of the necessaries of his neighbor." Shelley continues that "those arts which are essential to his very being are held in the greatest contempt; employments are lucrative in an inverse ratio to their usefulness; the jeweler, the toyman, the actor gains fame and wealth by the exercise of his useless and ridiculous art; while the cultivator of the earth, he without whom society must cease to subsist, struggles through contempt and penury . . ." (Prose, p. 113). When one considers that the pastoral tradition, which started with Theocritus, sings of the simple, healthy, moral country life in contrast to the luxury and corruption of the city and court, Shelley's meaning in the Defence clearly contains double implications.

Gilbert Murray calls Theocritus "perhaps the most universally attractive of all the Greek poets" and "monarch" of his own "sweet and lowly domain" of pastoral poetry. He notes the wide number of celebrated imitations of Theocritus's first idyll, among which is Shelley's Adonais (A History of Ancient Greek Literature, p. 383). Shelley's opinion of Theocritus, both that expressed in the Defence and that shown by the "flattery" of his imitation of the form in Adonais, amply indicate his own equally favorable assessment of Theocritus.
741-747 "The sacred links of that chain . . . all."

EDITIONS. Koszul reports a few blank lines in the draft, MS A, at this point and a note at the bottom of the page which says "This is the language of Plato" (see Textual Notes above). Koszul also prints two fragments of a translation by Shelley of the Ion, although he does not identify them as such, which are the basis of this passage (see Appendix F). Cook, as do later editors, quotes passages from Shelley's full translation of the Ion, as published by Mrs. Shelley in her 1840 edition (I, pp. 281-2, 286).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos has noted the following concerning the Ion translations at the base of the Defence passage here:

"This acknowledgment [recorded by Koszul, and noted above in Editions] by Shelley of the Platonic language in these lines must be connected with Fragments I and II in Koszul's Appendix . . . . which are not, as Koszul thinks, variant fragments composed by Shelley but actually Shelley's translation of Ion, 533d3-534b7, of which the above lines [Defence lines 741-747] are a summary." Notopoulos continues that "the translation of these two passages was made earlier than Shelley's translation of the Ion and was intended for use in this essay" (The Platonism, pp. 353-354). J. Baker comments that Shelley's "actual use of 'the language of Plato' here is rather to show
that poetry's 'invisible effluence' contains the seeds of 'social renovation' a task which would not by Plato be assigned to poetry. There is nothing about the fabric of society in the *Ion* passage. Shelley's use of Plato for Godwinian ends in this way represents a significant development. With the great Victorians in mind... the use of Plato as a basis for advocating social change is the most important nineteenth-century modification of the Platonic tradition in England" (*Shelley's Platonic Answer*, pp. 65-66).

STUDY. Shelley's letter of February 15, 1820 to Peacock (see Appendix E), the one which mentions his reaction to *The Four Ages*, also notes that he is "at that moment reading Plato's 'Ion', which I recommend you to reconsider" (*Letters*, II, p. 261). This date corresponds to the fragmentary translation in the *Defence* notebook as recorded by Koszul. It is not surprising to find a portion of the *Ion* appearing in some form in the *Defence*, which Shelley's letter of February 22, to Ollier (see Appendix E) indicates is already begun. It is not until October 22, 1821 that Shelley records his full translation of the *Ion*, when he writes to Hogg that "I have employed Greek in large doses, & I consider it the only sure remedy for diseases of the mind. I read the tragedians, Homer, & Plato perpetually, & have translated the *Symposium*, the *Ion*, & part of the *Phaedon*" (*Letters*, II, p. 360). This
Ion was published by Mrs. Shelley in 1840.

Shelley shows in his poetry a very early use of the kind of chain imagery which appears in this Defence passage. In fact, a passage from Queen Mab (1813) in his Godwinian days reveals both the chain image and the seed image, which the Defence also uses in its following sentence: "It is the faculty which contains within itself the seeds of its own and of social renovation":

Let heaven and earth, let Man's revolving race,
His ceaseless generations tell their tale;
Let every part depending on the chain
That links it to the whole, point to the hand
That grasps its term! let every seed that falls
In silent eloquence unfold its store
Of argument; infinity within,
Infinity without, belie creation.

(VII.15-22)

In spite of the Platonic origin of the Defence passage, it, the Queen Mab lines above, and those which appear in Prometheus Unbound, as quoted below, show Shelley's real emphasis is on the linkage of the minds of men. In Prometheus, II.iv appears:

And who made terror, madness, crime, remorse,
Which from the links of the great chain of things,
To every thought within the mind of man
Sway and drag heavily.

In Act IV, ll. 394-396, appears:

Man, oh, not men! a chain of linked thought,
Of love and might to be divided not,
Compelling the elements with adamantine stress;

Which is followed, ll. 400-402, by:

Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,
Whose nature is its own divine control
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the sea.

If Shelley had knowledge of Vico's *The New Science*, he would have seen here Vico's report on Longinus's belief that the chain fable was the "sublimest of all the Homeric fables. Concerning this chain, Jove, to prove that he is king of gods and men, asserts that if all the gods and men were to take hold of one end, he alone at the other end would be able to drag them all. The Stoics would have the chain represent the eternal series of causes by which their Fate holds the world girdled and bound..." (p. 122).

749-759 "And let... the world."

EDITIONS. There were manuscript changes in the placing of this passage (see Textual Notes above).
CRITICISM. Schulz sees the "great poem" as an elaborate metaphor which perhaps is "the most significant of his contributions to criticism." Schulz feels that "because it employs both of his major premises in arguing the nature and function of poetry, appeal to social history and appeal to mental faculties," the "great poem" may be viewed "as the center of his conception of the medium of poetry." Schulz continues that while the direct discussion of the great poem is "brief and elliptical," the account of the history of poetry implies "a kind of framework." Schulz also feels the "great poem" idea is Shelley's "most direct, and perhaps the most penetrating of his replies to Peacock's thesis of the 'four ages': Iron, Golden, Silver, and Brass," and that Shelley adapts the ancient myth "very subtly," with his chief distinction being that "between Mammon (the new industrial symbol of wealth, utility and self) and God (the symbol of poetry and the creative energy of the community)" (Shelley's Theory, p. 138, n. 68).

STUDY. While time is treated cyclically in much of the Defence, at this point the cycles may be seen to converge in
an upward movement, for the great minds of the poet-leaders have been "building up" man's understanding from the "beginning of the world." The "one great mind," which is variously expressed by Shelley, sometimes seeming the Platonic shadow of the real, and sometimes the Plotinian emanation of the One, and at other times an earthbound entity tied by the absolute necessity of the natural world, nevertheless is a growing, innovating force as man's understanding matures. This is the real point which Shelley makes over and over beneath the surface of the Defence, that the poet is the one who is able, because his mind is more responsive to the universal mind, to make the next, innovative step upward for man. No poet who looks back, and truly imitates other men's thoughts, can deserve the first rank. Shelley has rather explicitly delineated the process of man's mind working within the confines of the universal mind. It is an idea he held early and has not changed his thinking about. Three poetic examples show the dimension of his thinking in this regard.

The first passage to do so comes from The Daemon of the World, which is Shelley's rehandling of the first two sections of Queen Mab, and written in 1816. He says here:

For birth but wakes the universal mind

Whose mighty streams might else in silence flow

Thro' the vast world, to individual sense
Of outward shows, whose unexperienced shape
New modes of passion to its frame may lend;
Life is its state of action, and the store
Of all events is aggregated there
That variegate the eternal universe.

(11.539-546)
The word "aggregated" here is a pointer to the gathering
together of the new toward a whole.

The second passage comes from The Revolt of Islam in 1817:
'We live in our own world, and mine was made
From glorious fantasies of hope departed:
Aye we are darkened with their floating shade,
Or cast a lustre on them—time imparted
Such power to me—I became fearless-hearted
My eye and voice grew firm, calm was my mind,
And piercing, like the morn, now it has darted
Its lustre on all hidden things, behind
Yon dim and fading clouds which load the weary wind.

(VII,XXX.3091-99)
The "one great mind" which fathers all thoughts together is now
shown:
'My mind became the book through which I grew
Wise in all human wisdom, and its cave,
Which like a mine I rifled through and through,
To me the keeping of its secrets gave—
One mind, the type of all, the moveless wave
Whose calm reflects all moving things that are,
Necessity, and love, and life, the grave,
And sympathy, fountains of hope and fear;
Justice, and truth, and time, and the world's natural sphere.

(VII. XXXI. 3100-09)

The third passage in which Shelley presents an aspect of the forward development of man's mind appears in Prometheus Unbound in 1819, in the passage in which Asia describes what Prometheus gave man:

He gave man speech, and speech created thought,
Which is the measure of the universe;
And Science struck the thrones of earth and heaven,
Which shook, but fell not; and the harmonious mind
Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song;
And music lifted up the listening spirit
Until it walked, exempt from mortal care,
Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet sound;
And human hands first mimicked and then mocked,
With moulded limbs more lovely than its own,
The human form, till marble grew divine.

(II.iv.72-82)
These, then, are steps, or episodes, along the way in Shelley's own thinking. Man's experience, as Shelley neatly summarizes in this last segment of the paragraph, is not then "fragments and isolated portions" but "episodes" of a whole which the finer mind always recognizes as existing.
PARAGRAPH 21: LINES 760-808

760 "The same revolutions"

EDITIONS. Koszul records a canceled fragment here (see Textual Notes above).

764-771 "The Romans . . . Greeks . . . treasuries . . . world."

STUDY. This is a typical attitude which Shelley expresses, that Rome in its various arts is an imitator of Greece. In the "Preface" to *Hellas* he notes that "But for Greece—Rome, the instructor, the conqueror, or the metropolis of our ancestors, would have spread no illumination with her arms" (*Poetry*, p. 447). Cicero, in the "Preface to the Banquet of Plato," is called an imitator of Plato (*Prose*, p. 336). In *On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks* in a passing reference about Roman morality, Lucretius, Virgil, and Horace are noted as among those Romans who imitated Greece (*Prose*, p. 223). The *Defence* itself is the strongest witness to Shelley's belief in this matter of Roman imitation. Rome's ascendancy over the world was not one of the mind, in Shelley's view, but arose from other circumstances. Even though he praised the "vital spirit" of Rome his opinion probably rested on the idea expressed in his own note to the *Essay on Christianity*: "The dominion which Rome had usurped over the civilized
world was essentially iniquitous. It was procured by a series of aggressions, and preserved by sanguinary despotisms" (Prose, pp. 198, 199 n. 1).

**771-772  "partial . . . partially"**

STUDY. Shelley here, as he does occasionally, plays on words. "Partially" obviously carries two meanings, those of incompleteness and of bias.

**772-773  "Ennius, Varro, Pacuvius and Accius"**

STUDY. Shelley's list of poets here actually reveals his own tremendous knowledge of poetic antiquity. Although he has done no more than list them in a particular order, and note them as "great poets" whose works are largely lost, he implies much more. Some of his background knowledge obviously comes from his own extensive readings in Cicero and Horace.

Quintus Ennius (q. 239-170 B.C.), the first on Shelley's list, is the most ancient. Ennius has been called the father of Latin poetry and is traditionally considered the greatest early Latin poet and a civilizer of his period. He is both innovative and imitative, a consideration to be remembered, for this idea is what underlies this section of the Defence. Ennius is known to have written Greek tragedy and Roman comedy with distinction, as well as to have written tragic, narrative, and epic poetry. His influential eighteen-book epic national
history, *Annalis*, was admired and borrowed from by such famous men as Lucretius, Virgil, Cicero, and Ovid. One innovation was his germinal idea that the destiny of Rome would be a proper epic subject. Another was his adaptation of the epic Homeric hexameter so well that, as a result, the old Roman meter was dropped and the Greek became the accepted form. Cicero, especially, quotes him often, and refers to him as "our great Ennius." (See Cicero, *Pro Archia Poeta*, ed. N. H. Watts, pp. vii, ix, 17, 18, 22; and The Speeches, p. 26). Of this group, Ennius is the only one whom Sidney mentions in his survey of poets, Sidney's other choice being Livius Andronicus.

Shelley's second example, Marcus Terentius Varro (c. 116-27 B.C.), stands out as both a very learned and a very prolific man of letters, one who touched upon almost every field of contemporary learning. Cicero testifies to both the fine quality and variety of his works and to the light which was shed through them (*Acad. post.* 1.3). Varro perhaps was the greatest scholar of his time. Among his works, many of which were lost, were a number on poetic theory, drama, and language. (See Cicero, *Acad. post.* 1.3).

The third of Shelley's group, Marcus Pacuvius (c. 220-130 B.C.), was the nephew of Ennius, and a tragic poet. He is credited with being the first to raise Roman tragedy to a new place of importance. At least twelve of his plays were
on Greek subjects. Both Horace and Cicero mention Pacuvius and quote from him, with Cicero appearing to give him first rank among Roman tragic poets. Horace, in quoting conventional opinions about these old writers, calls Ennius "wise and valiant," Pacuvius a "learned old writer," and Accius a "lofty one." (See Horace, Epistles, II.1.50, 56-58; Cicero, De Finibus, I.49, II.79, V. 31, 63).

The last of Shelley's group is Lucius Accius (b. 170 B.C.), a tragic poet, translating mainly Greek plays, but also writing other poetry and some Roman drama. Cicero quotes lines from his tragedy, Atreus, noting that these lines were "written by an earnest and gifted poet, whose object in writing them was to handle the spirit of industry and ambition . . . in us and in our children." (See Cicero, Pro Cnæo Plancio, ed. N. H. Watts, pp. xxiv, 55-59, 484, n. b, 485; Horace, Epistles, ii.1.56).

Normally, when Shelley lists authors in the Defence, he follows a specific order of time and country. Here he is not using chronological order, for then Varro would be last. These Romans seem to be ranked instead by Shelley's critical judgment of their value, based upon the criteria probably of innovation and imitation which Shelley always applies to great poets. Ennius, who is first, is the most innovative and influential of this group. Varro, even though most of his works are lost, and thus he as well as the others can only be judged
partially as Shelley indicates, is given second place perhaps because of his vast erudition, but most certainly because his work "shed light." Pacuvius and Accius are much less innovative. Since Accius appears to be the most imitative, this undoubtedly accounts for his being ranked last.

774 "Lucretius . . . Virgil"

CRITICISM. P. Turner notes Shelley's long acquaintance with Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* from his schooldays in 1810 on. He also notes Medwin's comment that Shelley had "studied Lucretius deeply" and "considered him the best of the Latin poets," and Shelley's own comment to Hogg in a letter of July 6, 1817, that "I am well acquainted with Lucretius . . . . The 4th book is perhaps the finest. The whole of that passage about love is full of irresistible energy of language as well as the profoundest truth." Turner points out the numbers of Lucretian echoes in Shelley's poetry, and the connections between Shelley and Lucretius in anti-religious bias, imagery, and style ("Shelley and Lucretius," pp. 269, 282).

STUDY. Shelley very early forms his opinion about Lucretius, one which he does not change. In *A Refutation of Deism* (1812-1813) he lists Lucretius among a group noted for "dazzling talents and fallacious virtues" (*Prose*, p. 120). In 1812, before he had formed his later, favorable opinion of Greek
and Roman poets, he writes to Godwin: "And what do we learn from their poets? as you have acknowledged somewhere 'they are fit for nothing but the perpetuation of the noxious race of heroes in the world.' Lucretius forms perhaps the single exception" (Letters, I, p. 317). In 1817, in the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam he calls Lucretius "wise and lofty-minded" and characterizes De Rerum Natura as "that poem whose doctrines are yet the basis of our metaphysical knowledge, and whose eloquence has been the wonder of mankind" (Poetry, p. 36).

Shelley's opinion of Virgil is never as high as that of Lucretius, the attitude which the Defence still reveals. There is no doubt that Shelley is well acquainted with the Aeneid, the Eclogues, and the Georgics, as the record of his readings and book ordering indicates. He knows his opinion about the Aeneid is rather surprising as his comments to Hogg reveal. In August, 1815 he writes that he has begun the Pharsalia, and that his "opinion on the relative merits of Lucan and Virgil is no less unpopular than some of the others I entertain." On September 22, in another letter to Hogg, he notes that he has read the "4 first books of Lucan's Pharsalia, a poem as it appears to me of wonderful genius, & transcending Virgil" (Letters, I, pp. 429, 432).
That he thinks of Lucretius and Virgil together, as he does both at this point of the *Defence* and somewhat later, can be seen in comments he has made in two other of his essays. In the *Essay on Christianity* (1816) he speaks of the "wisest and most sublime of the ancient poets" whose "imagination" saw the sorrows but also a "happier state of human society," and were "the children of airy hope, the prophets and parents of mysterious futurity." Shelley then continues: "Man was once as a wild beast; he has become a moralist, a metaphysician, a poet, and an astronomer. Lucretius or Virgil might have referred the comparison to themselves, and, as a proof of this progress of the nature of man, challenged a comparison with the cannibals of Scythia" (*Prose*, p. 211). Again, in *On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks* (1818) he puts Lucretius and Virgil together when he notes their greater morality: "The ideas suggested by Catullus, Martial, Juvenal, and Suetonius never occur among the Greeks; or even among those Romans who, like Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, imitated them (*Prose*, p. 223).

*777 "mist of light"

STUDY. Here again is a poetic phrase which Shelley has used before. Although he makes use of the word "mist" numerous times, this image appears directly only twice, and in poetry not so near in time as is usual when a poetic phrase reappears.
in the {Defence}. The first use in 1816, is in {The Daemon of the World} "Hung like a mist of light," (l. 74), and the second in 1817, in "Marianne's Dream" in "And still the mist whose light did hang" (XI.3).

779 "Livy is instinct with poetry"

EDITIONS. See Notes, l. 337 above.

779-782 "Yet Horace, Catullus, Ovid . . . Greece."

STUDY. Modern critics agree with Shelley's opinion that these poets drew much on Greek models. Gilbert Highet points out that Ovid, like Virgil and Horace "represents a fertile synthesis of Greek and Roman culture" (The Classical Tradition, p. 59). Grube notes further that what Horace is doing, especially for dramatic and epic poetry, is to make available "in Latin, general Greek classical theories and advice" and that he "ardently believed that Roman poets should take the classical Greek poets as their models" (The Greek and Roman Critics, p. 239).

782-784 "The institutions . . . Rome . . . less poetical . . . substance."

EDITIONS. The Textual Notes above contain the additional comment Shelley made on this passage in his draft. See also l. 25 above for additional notations on "shadow" and "substance."
787-788 "The true Poetry of Rome . . . institutions."

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith thinks that "Shelley must have been influenced here . . . by those great lines of Virgil, not adequately translated, upon the destinies of Rome in Aeneid, vi.847-53" (pp. 94-95).

STUDY. Shelley recognizes the quality of Rome when he speaks in his Essay on Christianity about the "splendor of the Roman name, the vital spirit of the Roman power," which he stated had vanished at the time of the birth of Christ (Prose, p. 197). Again later in talking of Cassar he calls Rome the "most virtuous and civilized community of mankind" (Prose, p. 203).


EDITIONS. Verkoren notes the possibility of these reminiscences coming from Shelley's having read Livy (p. 84). Jordan identifies Camillus as "the famous defender of Rome from the Gauls in the fourth century B.C." He notes of Regulus that he was a "third-century B.C. Roman general who was captured by the Carthaginians and sent on parole to Rome to negotiate a peace; instead he advised the Romans to continue the war and was supposedly tortured to death on his return to Carthage" (p. 52).
STUDY. Shelley has again listed events in an order which is meaningful, and in this case, also chronological. In moving from Camillus to Regulus to the Senators and Gauls and then to Cannae he is giving, in a sequence, evidence by examples of what the true poetry of Roman life is, and in what "institutions" he sees it existing. These examples indicate a particular kind of "disinterested benevolence" in which Romans acting through unselfish motives produce evidences of true patriotism, through love of country, of liberty, and of virtue, and these come from a particular "perfection of political and domestic society." He has explained the viewpoint he expresses here in some detail in A Treatise on Morals, in the section entitled "Benevolence," in which he uses the example of Regulus. The full implication of this Defence passage becomes clear when both the Treatise and the background of his chosen examples are put together. It is interesting to note that the whole discussion in this section of A Treatise is very obviously based on Hume's "Of Self-Love" (Appendix II, of An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals), whose central ideas and words are the same as Shelley uses, "disinterested benevolence" and "self-love." The influence of Hume thus indirectly reaches the Defence.

In A Treatise Shelley says that "disinterested benevolence is the product of a cultivated imagination and has an intimate
connection with all the arts which add ornament, or dignity, or power, or stability to the social state of man. Virtue is thus entirely a refinement of civilized life, a creation of the human mind, or, rather a combination which it has made according to elementary rules contained within itself of the feelings suggested by the relations established between man and man." He goes on to state that all the theories exalting and refining humanity have been based upon "disinterestedness which we feel to constitute the majesty of our nature." He then turns directly to what is important in this Defence passage, saying: "Patriotism, as it existed in the ancient republics, was never as has been supposed a calculation of personal advantages. When Mutius Scaevola thrust his hand into the burning coals, and Regulus returned to Carthage, and Epicharis sustained the rack silently . . . rather than betray the conspirators to the tyrant; these illustrious persons certainly made small estimate of their private interest."

Shelley sees self-sacrifice as the basis of chivalry and personal love as well. His conclusion is that "man is capable of desiring and pursuing good for its own sake" (Prose, p. 189).

In turning to the Defence examples, his starting with Camillus is a just choice, for Camillus was honored by the title of second founder of Rome, and was a soldier-statesman of courage and political honor. A traditional story relates
that when the Gauls devastated Rome in 390 B.C. it was
Camillus's appearance which caused the Gauls to retreat. When Rome was completely sacked, it was he who urged re-
building rather than migration. At one point when accused
of unfair distribution of spoils he went into a voluntary
ten-year exile. Perhaps most telling, for Shelley, would
be the fact that this proud patrician was capable of a real
"disinterested benevolence," for he saw the need of greater
plebeian rights and was a key factor in getting the Licinian
laws of 367 B.C. passed. These, which set strict limits on
the amount of public lands one person might hold and use for
grazing, gave also, and importantly, political rights to the
plebeians by ordaining that one consul must be plebeian.

Regulus, on the other hand, is a prototype of the Roman
patriot-martyr, and of heroic endurance. His honor, his love
for country, and his total lack of interest in self are all
apparent. When, after five years of captivity he was sent
to Rome on parole to negotiate peace and exchange of prison-
ers (of whom he was one), he insisted that the senate refuse.
Although he was urged to break his parole, he would not and
returned to his death in Carthage in 250 B.C.

Shelley's third example, of the senators sitting in "god-
like state" awaiting the "victorious Gauls" seems a direct
reference to 225 B.C. when the Celtic tribes alarmed all of
Italy by coming south to within a three-day march of Rome. In this instance the Romans put up no act of resistance, but surprisingly something caused the Celts to retreat and Rome was saved. These tribes were defeated three years later. This example is hardly one of Roman heroism, and obviously a form of self-love on the part of the leadership.

His last example, the battle of Cannae, 216 B.C., represents the most crushing defeat the Romans ever suffered at the hands of Hannibal, a battle in which their army was almost destroyed, and with political consequences which saw most of Italy flocking to the side of Hannibal. Yet after all this the Roman force endured and finally prevailed in time, for Hannibal could not assail Rome.

The consequence of all such actions as above was, as Shelley said, "empire." But from Shelley's view, it was "empire" built largely on the true poetry of love, loyalty, courage, endurance, and submersion of self-interest in a larger cause.

Undoubtedly Shelley did turn to Livy as a source, as Verkoren suggests above, and as his own draft indicates. Since Livy, Horace, Plutarch, and Polybius all appear on reading lists and book orders, undoubtedly these served as sources for the information here. Camillus is discussed in the histories of Livy, in V.10 and VI.4, in the history of Polybius in
ii.118, and by Plutarch in "Camillus" in Parallel Lives.

Regulus is discussed by Horace in his Odes, iii.5.

Shelley mentions Camillus twice in other works. In the "Ode to Liberty" he speaks of Rome and of "many a deed of terrible uprightness" and mentions that there at liberty's side "Saintly Camillus lived" (ll. 95, 98). In a letter to Peacock of March 23, 1819, he speaks of a ruined temple in Rome which has been founded by Camillus, whom he then calls "that most perfect & virtuous of men" (Letters, II. p. 86).

Regulus is mentioned by Shelley only once, in the quotation above from A Treatise on Morals.

800-803 "The imagination . . . empire . . . fame."

STUDY. What Shelley is doing here seems an exemplification of a statement which Hume has made concerning why, in Shelley's words, we see "true poetry" in these heroic, selfless actions, which are social virtues, and why, therefore, the result of these is "empire" and "fame."

Hume, in discussing the utility of social virtues, says they have "a natural beauty" which first recommends them to mankind and engages its affections. And "as the public utility of these virtues is the chief circumstance, whence they derive their merit, it follows, that the end, which they have a tendency to promote, must be some way agreeable to us,
and take hold of some natural affection." It pleases either from "consideration of self-interest" or "more generous motives." Hume now gets to the real point, that every man "has a strong connexion with society, and perceives the impossibility of his solitary subsistence" and so is favorable to habits which "promote order in society," for "as much as we value our own happiness and welfare, as much must we applaud the practice of justice and humanity" by which "alone society is maintained and every man may reap the fruit."

Particularly appropriate to Shelley's discussion of Camillus and the others is Hume's comment that "we frequently bestow praise on virtuous actions, performed in very distant ages and remote countries; where the utmost subtilty of imagination would not discover any appearance of self-interest, or find any connection" to us with "events so widely separated from us."

This usefulness of acts in distant ages, Hume continues, is not simply out of the force of our imaginations, but "virtue" at a distance is "like a fixed star" which, when brought nearer by "eloquent recital" enlivens our sympathy and converts to friendship and regard.

In our approbation of character the "useful tendency of the social virtues" doesn't move by self-interest but has a more universal, extensive influence. Hume now gives what is perhaps the key to Shelley's thinking: "It appears that a
tendency to public good, and to the promoting of peace, harmony, and order in society, does always, by affecting the benevolent principles of our frame, engage us on the side of the social virtues." These "principles of humanity and sympathy" enter deeply into our sentiments, and have "so powerful an influence, as may enable them to excite the strongest censure and applause." We see "in numberless instances" that what promotes the "interests of society" is highly approved and "learn the forces of the benevolent principle. . ." (An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Section IV, Hume Selections, pp. 210-214, 218-219).

The actions of a Camillus, Regulus, or an undefeated Roman spirit after Cannae, win our approbation as against the censure we feel for the inaction of selfish, uncaring leadership.

804-805 "quia carent vate sacro."

EDITIONS. Cook, as do later editors, notes the source of the quotation as Horace's Odes, IV.ix.25-8: "There lived brave men in plenty before Agamemnon, but they are all, unwept and forgotten, overwhelmed by eternal night for lack of a divine bard" (p. 95).

STUDY. That Shelley is capable of very subtle irony seems evident in his using a quotation from Horace as he closes his long discussion on the true poetry he sees existing in Roman
institutions. The irony is double, for not only does he recognize writers such as Horace and Virgil (for he classes this period as the "Virgilian" age) as "great" poets, creative and lofty, but he uses them to prove his own points about Roman worth. Yet the implication is direct that these are not "sacred bards," and the development of this whole paragraph points out the reason why. The true poetry of human life is never accomplished through motives of self-interest. "Disinterested benevolence" and a "terrible uprightness" are part of the sacred bard's composition as much as that of the patriot whose true actions are their own kind of poetry. Shelley would not have overlooked what he would think of as Virgil's or Horace's failure of action in connection with the "perfection of political and domestic society." By using Horace's words he is commenting on true patriotism not being done for profit. Since there is a lack of a "sacred bard," the real failure as he seems to see it, of Roman poets of high caliber such as Horace and Virgil, is that they do not accompany the "perfection of political and domestic society." Horace, who fought at Philippi with Brutus, returned to Rome and accepted the patronage of Emperor Augustus. Virgil, too, worked under the direct patronage of the Emperor. These implications became overt in Shelley's final comment on Virgil as a "flatterer," and Horace as a "coward," near the end of
STUDY. Shelley has talked elsewhere about various episodes of time in nations' histories. In discussing modern times in various parts of the world, he notes that in Turkey an enlightened ruler is introducing European literature and arts, and "is thus beginning that change which Time, the great innovator, will accomplish in that degraded country; [and] by the same means its sublime enduring monuments may excite lofty emotions in the hearts of the posterity of those who now contemplate them without admiration." He continues somewhat later: "Such is a slight sketch of the general condition of the human race to which they have been conducted after the obliteration of the Greek republics by the successful external tyranny of Rome--its internal liberty having been first abolished--and by those miseries and superstitions consequent upon this event which compelled the human race to begin anew its difficult and obscure career of producing, according to the forms of society the great portion of good" (A Philosophical View of Reform, Prose, p. 239). As has been commented on above (See ll. 757-759), the movement is cyclic but it is also always upward. The Turks in the above essay are not starting from the bottom but from a plateau of previous
In his poetry Shelley often uses an image of time. In *Hellas*, for example, the wise old Ahaseurus is thought to have "survived / Cycles of generation and of ruin (ll. 153-154)."

The closest poetic use to this cyclic idea of time appears in *The Revolt of Islam*, (1817). It is typical in that Shelley always starts with Greece as the central "kindler" for future cycles:

'Then Greece arose, and to its bards and sages,
In dream, the golden-pinioned Genii came,
Even where they slept amid the night of ages,
Steeping their hearts in the divinest flame
Which thy breath kindled, Power of holiest name!
And oft in cycles since, when darkness gave
New weapons to thy foe, their sunlike fame
Upon the combat shone--a light to save,
Like Paradise spread forth beyond the shadowy grave.

(I.XXXII.406-414)

806-808 "The Past . . . inspired rhapsodist . . . harmony."

EDITIONS. Cook and later editors feel this is suggested by Plato's *Ion*, where Ion himself is an inspired rhapsodist, and suggest Shelley's translation of the *Ion* as the source for the figure.
CRITICISM. E. Barnard, in commenting on Shelley's cyclic view, notes that the Essay on Christianity closes with the idea that "some benefit has not failed to flow from the imperfect attempts" and "they constitute a record of those epochs at which a true sense of justice suggested itself. . . . They are so many trophies erected in the enemy's land to mark the limits of the victorious progress of truth and justice." Barnard feels that Shelley sees each succeeding age "advancing beyond the point attained by the preceding civilization, from whose ruins it took its birth" (Shelley's Religion, p. 190).

STUDY. While Shelley has not used the word "rhapsodist" at all in his poetry, he has often used the word "past" in the sense of a voice which speaks to the future. In the "Ode to Liberty" Time and the past are so joined:

Within the surface of Time's fleeting river
Its wrinkled image lies, as then it lay
Immovably unquiet, and for ever
It trembles, but it cannot pass away!
The voices of thy bards and sages thunder
With an earth-awakening blast
Through the caverns of the past.

(VI.76-82)

Time is very central to much of Hellas, written somewhat after
the **Defence** in 1821. Ahasuerus says, "The coming age is shadowed on the Past / As on a glass" (ll. 805-805).

Somewhat later he says: "... The Past / Now stands before thee like an Incarnation / Of the To-come" (ll. 852-854). Still later, Mahmud comments that "Come what may, / The Future must become the Past . . ." (l. 924). In the final Chorus, Shelley ends on a great note of future hope, because a new cycle will come and "The world's great age begins anew, / The golden years return," and later "Another Athens shall arise, / And to remoter time / Bequeath, like sunset to the skies, / The splendour of its prime." The poem ends with the thought that "The world is weary of the past" (ll. 1060-1101).

The phrase, "fills the theatre," although the connection with the Platonic rhapsodist is a natural one, probably also has an echo of a passage from Hume, which is one of the basic sources for the whole discussion of religious and chivalric values of love in this part of the **Defence**. In *The Natural History of Religion*, the opening discussion on the origin of religion expresses this thought: "We are placed in this world, as in a great theatre; where the true springs and causes of every event are entirely concealed from us" (Section III, *Hume Selections*, p. 262).
811-817 "And the world ... Christian and Chivalric. ... generals ... armies ... thoughts."

EDITIONS. Cook and Verkoren suggest that Shelley again has Plato's Ion in mind, where Socrates and Ion are discussing Ion's being the best general and best rhapsodist among them, and Socrates asks, "Are not the arts of generalship and recitation two distinct things?" Ion responds, "No, they are the same" (p. 71; p. 81). Clark suggests that the opening paragraph of the Essay on the Revival of Literature has a like idea (p. 287).

STUDY. In A Treatise on Morals, immediately following his discussion of patriotism, Shelley discusses Chivalry, and he follows the same pattern here. The points he makes are the same also, for "Chivalry was likewise founded on the theory of self-sacrifice. Love possesses so extraordinary a power over the human heart, only because disinterestedness is united with the natural propensities" (Prose, p. 189). This lack of self-interest which he attaches to Chivalry was evidenced earlier in his "Notes on Queen Mab," VIII.211,212: "The odious and disgusting aristocracy of wealth is built upon the ruins of all that is good in chivalry and republicanism" (Poetry, p. 832).

The Christian system "of manners and religion" springs from Christ, of whom Shelley speaks highly. The influences which come from Christ and from organized Christianity are not, in
Shelley's opinion, the same thing. The Defence passage here is a positive one, for in both Chivalry and in Christianity the underlying subject of disinterested self-sacrifice still stays apparent. This is the poetry which gets "copied into the imaginations of men" from them. Shelley's attitude toward Christ and the system which sprang directly from him is clearly revealed in the opening of his Essay on Christianity: "The Being who has influenced in the most memorable manner the opinions and the fortunes of the human species is Jesus Christ. At this day his name is connected with the devotional feelings of two hundred millions of the race of man. The institutions of the most civilized portion of the globe derive their authority from the sanction of his doctrines. He is the God of our popular religion. His extraordinary genius, the wide and rapid effect of his unexampled doctrines, his invincible gentleness and benignity, the devoted love borne to him by his adherents suggested a persuasion to them that he was something divine . . . . It is the profound wisdom and the comprehensive morality of his doctrines which essentially distinguished him from the crowd of martyrs and of patriots who have exulted to devote themselves for what they conceived would contribute to the benefit of their fellowmen" (Prose, p. 197).

818-822 "It . . evil produced . . contain."

EDITIONS. Jordan notes Shelley's comment in his Essay on the Revival of Literature that "To the mind both humane and
philosophical there cannot exist a greater subject of grief than the reflection of how much superstition has retarded the progress of intellect and consequently the happiness of man" [Prose, p. 179] (p. 53).

STUDY. One of Shelley's strongest denunciations of the evil produced by the system of Christianity comes in the last fragment entitled "The Moral Teaching of Jesus Christ" placed at the end of the Essay on Christianity. Having commented on the excellent moral doctrines of Christ which "strike at the root of moral evil" he continues that it is these doctrines which "in another shape, the most violent asserters of Christianity denounce . . . . This alone would be a demonstration of the falsehood of Christianity, that the religion so called is the strongest ally and bulwark of that system of successful force and fraud and of the selfish passions from which it has derived its origin and permanence, against which Jesus Christ declared the most uncompromising war, and the extinction of which appears to have been the great motive of his life" (Prose, p. 214).
PARAGRAPH 23: LINES 823-848

823-825 "It . . . Moses . . . disciples."

EDITIONS. Both Cook and Verkoren suggest a parallel passage from Sidney's Defence: "Such were David in his Psalmses, Solomon in his song of songs, in his Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs. Moses and Debora in their Hymnes, and the wryter of Jobe; Which beside other, the learned Emanuell Tremelius, and F. Junius, doo entitle the Poeticall part of the scripture: against these none will speake that hath the holie Ghost in due holie reverence" [F., p. 9] (p. 71; p. 76).

STUDY. Shelley has inserted yet another list into the Defence at this point: "Moses, Job, David, Solomon and Isaiah." Again he has scrupulously observed a historical order in addition to a "poetical" one. Moses can be placed around the 13th century B.C.; Job, although the latest date would be 600-400, B.C. is far older, arising from most ancient folklore, and certainly not misplaced in second order; David, c. 1012-972 B.C.; Solomon, his son, c. 972-932 B.C.; and Isaiah fl. 710 B.C. The "astonishing poetry" was indeed actual poetry. The Book of Job is almost entirely in poetry, David and Solomon are related to the Psalms and the Song of Solomon, and Isaiah has two sections of poetry and one of prose. The "poetry" of which Shelley speaks is contained in what they are: Moses as the prototypical prophet-lawgiver, Job as one who speaks out for oppressed mankind, David as a great national leader and hero, from whose royal line Christ comes, Solomon, a king of peace known for proverbial wisdom, and
Isaiah, a great prophet, whose record is the first of the books of the Major Prophets, containing as well some of the finest passages in the Bible.

In Shelley's other prose writings he mentions these men briefly. He speaks of Moses and Isaiah as prophets in the essay, *I Will Beget A Son*, but notes the lack of historical proof concerning their writings (*Prose*, p. 107). In *A Letter to Lord Ellenborough* Shelley states that "Jesus Christ was crucified because he attempted to supersede the ritual of Moses with regulations more moral and humane" (*Prose*, p. 77). Shelley's opinion of Job is always very high. In the *Essay on Devil and Devils* Shelley says that "the expostulations of Job with God are of the most daring character" and then goes on to comment on "the profuse and sublime strain of poetry, not to be surpassed by ancient literature, much less modern" of the book of Job (*Prose*, p. 269). Earlier in the *Defence* the book of Job has been called "the highest poetry" (ll. 136-137). Again, in a letter of November 3, 1819, to Leigh Hunt, Shelley indicates that the "book of Job & Solomons song" are "models of poetical sublimity and pathos" (*Letters*, II, p. 140).

826-829 "The . . . fragments . . . poetry . . . doctrines . . . distorted."

EDITIONS. Clark comments that "this is a fundamental belief with Shelley" (p. 288). Jordan notes a number of statements Shelley has made on this subject: his letter of May 1811 in
which he says he was "never a Christian"; his notes to Queen Mab in which he stated his disbelief in the divinity of Jesus, but admired him as a "man of pure life, who desired to rescue his country-men from a tyranny of their barbarous and degrading superstitions"; his comment in "A Philosophical View of Reform" that "Names borrowed from the life and opinions of Jesus Christ were employed as symbols of domination and imposture, and a system of liberty and equality (for such was the system preached by that great Reformer) was perverted to support oppression"; a passage from Prometheus Unbound on the distortion of Christ's doctrines, I, 546-555; and finally, the suggestion to see the "Essay on Christianity" (pp. 53-54).

STUDY. Perhaps Shelley's most precise statement of Christ's doctrines and their distortion comes in his Essay on Christianity where he says: "It cannot be precisely ascertained [in] what degree Jesus Christ accommodated his doctrines to the opinions of his auditors, or in what degree he really said all that he is related to have said. He has left no written record of himself and we are compelled to judge from the imperfect and obscure information which his biographers, persons certainly of very undisciplined and undiscriminating minds, have transmitted to posterity. These writers, our only guides, impute sentiments to Jesus Christ which flatly contradict each other. . . . They have left sufficiently clear indications of the genuine character of Jesus Christ to rescue it forever from the imputations cast upon it by their
ignorance and fanaticism." Much later he comments, "The demagogues of the infant republic of the Christian sect . . . first violated . . . the institutions established for the common and equal benefit of all" (Prose, pp. 198, 212).

829-835 "At . . . three forms into which Plato distributed the faculties of mind . . . apotheosis . . . world."

EDITIONS. Editors generally identify this idea as from Plato's Republic IV.425-444 and Timaeus 69-71, 90. As Brett-Smith notes, this passage is "where Plato recognizes a ruling immortal soul, seated in the brain; a higher mortal soul, seated in the heart; and a lower appetitive soul, also ruled by the immortal but directly commanded by the higher mortal soul" (p. 95). Jordan comments that Plato's point is that there should be harmony among the souls but that "he gives primacy to 'divine power' in the brain." Jordan suggests that "probably Shelley means the 'apotheosis' of the rational" (p. 54).

CRITICISM. C. Baker feels that Shelley's reference to the "three forms" here is "apparently to the Christian Trinity." Baker notes, however, that Shelley made over the Platonic conception for his own purposes, and suggests three equations which Shelley has evolved which lie behind his definitions, in the Epipsychidion and the Defence, of "True Love." Plato's immortal soul is Shelley's concept of the Epipsyche, the Imagination, and his Sun-symbol. The higher mortal soul is Shelley's concept of Reason, and his Moon-symbol. The appetitive soul is Shelley's concept of unruly Emotion and his
Comet-symbol. Baker also suggests Shelley's comments on the Sun and Moon in his first draft letter to the editor about the "Four Ages" [see Appendix E] (Shelley's Major Poetry, pp. 234-235). Notopoulos also comments that, in the Republic 435a ff., "the three faculties of mind are the appetitive, the spirited, and the rational." These, he notes, "constitute the Platonic soul, and their influence on subsequent thought has been profound." Notopoulos also comments that this and other references show the impression of the Republic on Shelley from his reading of it in 1820 (The Platonism, p. 354). D. Perkins also remarks on the Christian context as has Baker above. He says of Shelley's remark: "that this tripartite division has since become an object of worship suggests that he is thinking of the Christian Trinity. If so, the analogy is unapparent" (English Romantic Writers, n. 15, p. 1080).

STUDY. The word "apotheosis" is an unusual one for Shelley. He has used it once in his poetry, and unseriously, in a line of Oedipus Tyrannus. The influence of Hume's The Natural History of Religion still seems to be apparent, for he has used "apotheosis" in a passage which is generally relevant to Shelley's thinking in the development of the idea of religion's value: "Most of the divinities of the ancient world are supposed to have once been men, and to have been beholden for their apotheosis to the admiration and affection of the people. The real history of their adventures, corrupted by tradition, and elevated by the marvelous, became a
plentiful source of fable; especially in passing through the hands of poets, allegorists and priests, who successively improved upon the wonder and astonishment of the ignorant multitude" (Section V, Hume Selections, p. 268).

834-835 "civilized world"

EDITIONS. A word change has been made from "Europe" to "civilized world" in the manuscripts (see Textual notes above).

STUDY. In the essay, A Treatise on Morals, in the section which has shown a close relationship to this whole passage concerning disinterestedness, patriotism, and chivalry, the emphasis has been directed entirely toward the idea of a "civilized" world. He has stated that "the inhabitant of a highly civilized community will more acutely sympathize" and "virtue is . . . entirely a refinement of a civilized life." It seems possible that this section of the essay, "Benevolence," might have been written close to the time of Defence, since parts of the essay are found in materials as late as 1821, and have exerted some influence on the Defence.

835-839 "Here . . . 'Light seems to thicken . . . rouse.'"

EDITIONS. The various editors identify the source as Macbeth, III.ii.50-53. Forman (see the Textual Notes above) notes the inaccurate quotation by Shelley. Brett-Smith comments that "This is a reference to Peacock's claim that when the light of the Gospel began to spread over Europe 'by a
mysterious and inscrutable dispensation, the darkness thick­­ened with the progress of the light'" [see Halliford, p. 13]. Brett-Smith then states that "Shelley definitely denies Pea­­cock's implication later" in ll. 854-856 when he states: "It is an error to impute the ignorance of the dark ages to the Christian doctrines" [lines 854-856] (p. 95).

STUDY. This is one of two quotations from Macbeth used by Shelley in the Defence. Shelley has used the same quotation once in a more general fashion in his poetry, in Peter Bell the Third, III.xxii.250 ff.

840-845 "But . . . dust . . . golden wings . . . time."

Shelley had used this same imagery the year before in his poem, "The Cloud" (1820):

As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love.

(11. 35-50)

The "dust," "blood," and "chaos" also appear, but now as an echo in his poetry from the Defence, for a line in Hellas reads: "Cries like the blood of Abel from the dust" (1. 355).

845-848 "Listen to the music . . . wind . . . swiftness."

CRITICISM. Notopoulos says this is "an allusion to the Platonic music of the spheres" (The Platonism, p. 354). G. McNiece feels that "this appraisal of the new and beautiful
order emerging from the chaos of the past" recapitulates "the central theme and the imagery, especially the music imagery, of Prometheus Unbound" (Shelley and the Revolutionary Idea, p. 242).

STUDY. M. H. Abrams has noted that the wind as a symbol of inspiration serves the Romantic poet such as Shelley repeatedly. Shelley's West Wind, as Abrams points out, becomes both "his breath and his spirit, and blew, through him, the trumpet prophesying a universal resurrection" (“The Correspondent Breeze: A Romantic Metaphor,” English Romantic Poets, pp. 43-44). This use of the wind of inspiration has now appeared three times in the Defence, at ll. 30-32, and 688-693, and now at ll. 846-848. The wind here has appeared in connection with resurrection as it does in the "Ode to the West Wind." This music of the spheres which is "as a ceaseless and invisible wind, nourishing its everlasting course with strength and swiftness" is in the "Heaven of time." Shelley has used a similar wind metaphor to explain the existing power that is both source of inspiration and nourishment and is also ceaselessly, invisibly there. In the Essay on Christianity he has said: "There is a Power by which we are surrounded, like the atmosphere in which some motionless lyre is suspended, which visits with its breath our silent chord at will. Our most imperial and stupendous qualities--those on which the majesty and the power of humanity is erected--are, relatively to the inferior portion of its mechanism, indeed active and imperial; but they are the passive slaves of some
higher and more omnipresent Power. This Power is God. And those who have seen God, have, in the period of their purer and more perfect nature, been harmonized by their own will to so exquisite [a] consentaneity of powers as to give forth divinest melody when the breath of universal being sweeps over their frame" (Prose, p. 202). This idea of the unseen power, the music, the rising on wings, and Heaven's meaning, are also present in the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," as they are in this Defence passage, and here "The awful shadow of some unseen Power / Floats though unseen among us,—visiting / This various world with as inconstant wing / As summer winds . . . ." (ll. 1-4). In the whole passage of the Defence, when the active, unselfish powers generated by Chivalric and Christian love joined together, even though beset by some "black agents" of sensuality and practices of Christianity, the result of this joining of man's mind, heart, and body to this love resulted in an "apotheosis," or a glorification of both man and the thing which has been the causative love. Man now once more moves upward in his flight "into the Heaven of time" where there is a harmony which is "ceaseless," "invisible," and "nourishing." Man can hear, if he will listen, a Power which can now join the invisible by the harmony of selfless love, and make possible a "resurrection" of Perfect Love in time.

848 End of paragraph

EDITIONS. Koszul reports a comment of Shelley's in the draft
rebuking himself for this poetic flight (see Textual Notes above).
PARAGRAPH 24: LINES 849-875


STUDY. David Hume's *The Natural History of Religion* may well have been part of the evidence on which Shelley's statement rests at this point, especially since the Hume influence in this whole area of the *Defence* seems strong. Hume has suggested that believers in god of whatever age or country concur in general conceptions, and "even the particular characters and provinces, which they assign to their deities are not extremely different." He then gives the example of "Greek and Roman travellers and conquerors, without much difficulty" finding "their own deities every where" and saying "This is Mercury, that Venus . . . by whatever title the strange gods might be denominated." Hume concludes "the goddess Hertha of our Saxon ancestors seems to be no other, according to Tacitus, then the *Mater Tellus*, of the Romans; and his conjecture was evidently just" (*The Natural History of Religion*, Section V, pp. 40-41). Shelley has carried this idea forward one step by adding Christ's doctrines to those of the Celtic conquerors of the Romans, to make yet again a "new fabric" of religious belief.

850-851; 857 "Celtic conquerors"; "Celtic nations"

EDITIONS. The editors generally agree that Shelley has used this term somewhat in error. Cook says: "Here, and wherever
in the essay the word 'Celtic' occurs, we should undoubtedly substitute 'Germanic.' Shelley's inadvertence is surprising" (p. 72).

CRITICISM. R. Wellek comments that the "most remarkable feature of the essay seems to me the sketch of the general social history of literature. It is not referable to the Platonizing eloquence and has a different intellectual background." Somewhat further he notes that Shelley replies to Peacock's "semi-serious arguments" with an "eighteenth-century scheme of speculation." Wellek continues that the exact source of Shelley's conception "is difficult to determine, but it is the kind of schematic history encountered in the Scottish primitivists, in Rousseau or in Herder. Shelley's source was apparently French, as he speaks of the 'Celtic' conquerors of the Roman Empire and the predominance of the 'Celtic nations' after the fall of Rome. Such a confusion of Celtic and Teutonic occurs in Paul-Henri Mallet, the Swiss propagandist of things Nordic, and among the Celtomanes of the late eighteenth century. It could hardly have been found in Germany, and in England was early refuted by Bishop Percy, the English editor of Mallet." He further notes that "Shelley describes the origins of poetry quite in the naturalistic manner of Rousseau, Herder, Monboddo, or John Brown" (A History of Modern Criticism, II, pp. 127-128). D. Perkins suggests that "Celtic" is used "in the Roman sense of northern Europeans generally" (English Romantic Writers, p. 1080).

STUDY. It is clear that Shelley is using the word "Celtic"
in a broader sense than merely "Germanic" for he uses the words "Celtic nations" twice and "Celtic conquerors," both of which are plural terms. The likely source of this "Celtic" use by Shelley is found in his reading of Lord Monboddo's *Of the Origin and Progress of Language*, of which there are a number of echoes in the *Defence*. In his Third Book, Monboddo considers the requirements for the invention of language, and in Chapter XII considers the duration and facility of its propagation, especially of the Celtic, the great extent of country over which it spread, and its relationship to the Teutonic language. He shows a very broad concept of the word "Celtic": "The Celtic, if I can believe the accounts I have heard of it, is spread over a great part of the world, and is to be found in places so remote from one another, as shews, that there must have been a most extraordinary inter-course and communication among men in ancient times. It appears that the Celtic is not only the ancient language of France, Spain, Britain, Ireland, but spread itself over the northern parts of Europe and America . . . . Those who desire more of this very ancient language and of the many languages supposed to be derived from it, may consult M. Bullet's memoirs of the Celtic language [the *Celtic Dictionary*, published in 1759]." Monboddo continues that it is a "vulgar error" to say that the swarms of Goths, Vandals, and others who overran the Roman Empire came originally from the north when in fact they came from the east, and were one nation divided in tribes with different
names, but "all originally Goths or Getes, two names for the same people." He continues that, if it could be further proved that the Celtic and Teutonic, or its parent the Gothic, were originally the same language, which is the opinion of M. Bullet, it would "establish this proposition, that there was but one language anciently spoken all over the north, north east, and west of Europe, and the northern and western parts of Asia." He further comments that he thinks it might be discovered "with pretty great certainty whether affinity betwixt the Celtic and Teutonic" existed, which would be a great discovery, not only "in the matter of language, but with respect to the history of mankind" for if these languages were originally the same, "it would go far to prove, that the two races of people were likewise the same originally." He then traces various proofs which have appeared of the likeness of Celtic to the Phoenician and the Carthaginian languages, among others. Monboddo then concludes, "Now, as it will be shown in the sequel, that the Greek, Latin, Teutonic or Gothic, Hebrew or Phoenician, were originally the same language, if it be likewise true, that the Celtic and Phoenician are the same, it will follow of necessary consequence, that the Celtic and Teutonic were likewise originally the same" (Of the Origins and Progress of Language, III, pp. 587-595). No doubt this discussion of Monboddo's is indeed the source of, and reason for, Shelley's use of "Celtic" rather than "Teutonic" or "Germanic."
The one time Shelley uses the word "Celt" in his poetry indicates his broad acceptance of the term, as Monboddo has signified it. This line appears in *Prometheus Unbound*, (II.iv.92-94):

He taught to rule, as life directs the limbs,

The tempest-wingèd chariots of the ocean,

And the Celt knew the Indian . . . .

It is obvious in this passage that "Celt" does not mean Teutonic or Germanic, or Gallic (in the Roman historical sense). Its meaning is that of the *Defence*, an inclusive one.

854-857 "It is an error . . . Celtic nations."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments that Shelley himself often "seems to make the former imputation," and notes his letter to John Gisborne, November, 1819 in which he asks what "we would have been" had Greece not fallen, and what progress "philosophy and social institutions would have made," whether the Christian religion would have arisen, or the barbarians conquered (pp. 89-90). Clark suggests a different source, that of the fifteenth chapter of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" for the assertion which Shelley here combats." Clark notes further, "But this attitude is in no wise a reversal of Shelley's life-long antagonism to institutionalized Christianity" (p. 288).
"Whatever of evil . . . will . . . feeble . . . institution."

CRITICISM. C. Grabo feels the idea of this passage is already familiar from Julian and Maddalo, Prometheus, and elsewhere. This idea is the "insistence upon the will's decay in its surrender of its own sovereignty. Moral freedom, which lies at the root of all civilization and progress, is within the domain of the will itself to accept or decay" (The Magic Plant, p. 358).

STUDY. This seems again a parallel to Hume's thinking that "the principles of religion have a kind of flux and reflux in the human mind, and that men have a natural tendency to rise from idolatry to theism, and to sink again from theism into idolatry." Hume reaches the conclusion that "nothing can preserve untainted the genuine principles of morals in our judgement of human conduct, but the absolute necessity of these principles to the existence of society" (The Natural History of Religion, pp. 46-47, 68). Shelley's idea of the "extinction of the poetical principles," (which is, as he has shown in the Defence, the principle of moral good) by the "progress of despotism and superstition" exemplifies the Humean idea of flux and reflux. The flux is at this point when the "will is feeble," and no one is capable of "creating" because men have become "insensible and selfish." Such a time cannot preserve "untainted" principles, as Hume has indicated. Shelley shows a movement of reflux in his following paragraph when "poetry" begins again to "manifest" itself.
867-875 "The moral anomalies . . . religion."

EDITIONS. Clark comments that "this idea is a commonplace in Shelley" (p. 288).

STUDY. This same idea is expressed in explicit terms in Shelley's *A Refutation of Deism*, where he points out the oppositions between the Christian ideas of benevolence, justice, and mercy and what actually takes place in their "design of reforming the world by Christianity." He cites examples of the "sanguinary" wars, and atrocities committed by Christianity in the "spirit of the religion of Peace." He notes that the doctrine of "faith, and humility," leads to an "abjectness and credulity which priests and tyrants of all ages" have found convenient to their purposes. He then says that "it is evident that a whole nation of Christians (could such an anomaly maintain itself a day) would become, like cattle, the property of the first occupier" (*Prose*, pp. 124-125). Shelley is giving a synopsis in the *Defence* of what he explains in *A Refutation* more explicitly when he talks of becoming the "slaves of the will of others" and of cruelties which arise when institutions lose poetic creativity. Since he has also stated in the *Refutation* that "this enthusiasm of anti-social misanthropy, if it were an actual rule of conduct, and not the speculation of a few interested persons, would speedily annihilate the human race" (p. 125), then this would seem to indicate a reason for his stating in the *Defence* that the events which would receive the most "approbation" would be those that "most expeditiously"
dissolve "the moral anomalies of such a state of society."

875 End of paragraph.

EDITIONS. Koszul reports a canceled passage here concerning the iniquitous effects of Christianity as being a "philosophical consideration" of the "extinction of the poetical faculty" (see Textual Notes above).
STUDY. Here is the reflux from the low point following the fall of the Roman Empire and the barbarian invasions, when Shelley sees new moral values entering into society. As Hume has indicated (see 11. 857-867, above) and as Shelley also believes, society needs moral principles of conduct. When society can begin to utilize the true "poetry" of its institutions, in this case Christianity and Chivalry, it recognizes this need, and so new moral advances are made. These, as Shelley indicates for the later Middle Ages, are the abolition of slavery and the emancipation of women.

EDITIONS. Cook identifies this as the Republic, IV.416-417: "Then let us consider . . . their way of life . . . none of them should have any property beyond what is absolutely necessary . . ." (pp. 72-73). Miss Winstanley comments that "this was only equality, however, as applied to the ruling class--the warriors or governors" (p. 90). Brett-Smith suggests that Shelley has in mind the second book of the Republic, beginning at 369, where Socrates describes a State as arising 'out of the needs of mankind; no one is self-sufficing . . . they exchange with one another . . . under the idea that the exchange will be for their good" (pp. 95-96). Jordan notes the various passages commentators have suggested since "this view is pervasive in the Republic, the passages being
at 369, 416, 464, and 543." He also notes that Shelley "discusses Plato's doctrine in connection with Christ's teachings in 'Essay on Christianity'" (p. 56).

CRITICISM. Grabo comments that here "the word 'poetry' is clearly used, as in the first pages of the essay, to mean creative ideas which are in accord with the divine order. Chief among these was the 'principle of equality,' which, deriving from Plato, became one of the teachings of Christianity" (The Magic Plant, p. 359).

Notopoulos says this reference to equality is to the Republic, 416e, 420a, 422d, 464, and 543, and that this "doctrine was a favorite of Shelley" as may be seen from his references to it in The Essay on Christianity, The Speculation on Morals, and A Philosophical View of Reform. Notopoulos indicates, however, that this passage is specifically based on the Republic, 369, which Shelley had translated. He further remarks that "the direct relationship" of this Defence passage to Shelley's own translation shows Shelley's debt to Plato and the use which he makes of his reading, for Shelley has "carried the stage of translation over into re-creation" (The Platonism, pp. 494, 354).

886–890 "Plato . . . Timaeus and Pythagoras . . . man."

EDITIONS. Julian reports a cancellation in MS B concerning Christ (see Textual Notes above).

CRITICISM. R. Woodman indicates that Shelley's "acceptance of Orphic mythology as the visionary form of his own radical philosophy prepared him for an appreciative reading of Plato."
'Plato,' he says in his _Defence_ . . . 'following the doctrines of Timaeus [a Greek Pythagorean philosopher said to have been a teacher of Plato] and Pythagoras, taught also a . . . system of doctrine . . . .' Orphic and Pythagorean doctrines, as Guthrie points out in _Orpheus and the Study of Greek Religion_, are so similar that they may for practical purposes be considered identical. Shelley makes no distinction between them" ("Shelley's Changing Attitude to Plato," p. 502). Notopoulos notes that Shelley echoes this statement in _On the Devil and Devils_; "Plato . . . supposed the existence of a God, and accommodated a moral system of the most universal character, including the past the present and future condition of man, to the popular supposition of the moral superintendence of this one intellectual cause" (The _Platonism_, p. 355). STUDY. Again, the relationship to an idea expressed by Lord Monboddo is very close in this passage. Monboddo, in talking of genuine ideas, says it is "the opinion of the Pythagoreans, from whom Plato took almost his whole philosophy, particularly the doctrine of ideas. For in that genuine piece of Pythagorean philosophy yet preserved to us, I mean the treatise of Timaeus the Locrian, _De anima mundi_, ideas are mentioned as one of the three principle things." In a footnote, Monboddo explains the "three principles are, the _idea_, the _matter_, and the _body_, falling under the senses, which is the produce of the first two . . . _Timaeus, in initio_" (Of the _Origin_, pp. 116-117, Book I, Chap. IX).
STUDY. Shelley, in *I Will Beget A Son*, also expresses the idea of the views of Plato joining to those of Christ: "This belief [of Christ's supernaturalness], rolling through the lapse of ages, met with the reveries of Plato and the reasonings of Aristotle and acquired force and extent until the divinity of Jesus became dogma . . ." (Prose, p. 104).

This same passage, as Clark points out, appears in the "Letter to Lord Ellenborough" (Prose, n. 5, p. 104).

However, what Shelley means by the "sacred and eternal truths" which were contained in the ancient views and form the esoteric core of Christ's doctrines, as well as Christ's own contribution, he clearly outlines in the *Essay on Christianity*. He notes first that Christ's doctrines do not resemble Jewish law. He then turns to the "most eminent philosophers of Greece" and notes their long familiarity with "the boldest and most sublime speculations on God, on the visible world, and on the moral and intellectual nature of man."

The Greek contributions he sees as their assertions of "the universality and unity of God, the omnipotence of the mind of man, the equality of human beings, and the duty of internal purity" as asserted by "Pythagoras, Plato, Diogenes, Zeno, and their followers." Then in connection with them to Christ, he comments that "nothing would be gained by the establishment of the originality of Jesus Christ's doctrines but the casting a suspicion upon its practicability. Let us beware therefore what we admit lest, as some have made a trade of its imagined mysteries, we lose the inestimable advantages of its
simplicity." We must not, Shelley continues, allow established religion to return "to deathlike apathy the sublimest ebullitions of the most exalted genius and the spirit-stirring truths of a mind inflamed with the desire to benefiting mankind." He concludes by a denial that "such doctrines as Jesus Christ promulgated" will "share the extinction of a popular religion" (Prose, p. 213).

893-894 "exoteric . . . esoteric"

CRITICISM. J. Baker feels that the "esoteric doctrines" here refer to those of Plato. He points out that "more recent Platonists have agreed with Shelley" in "tracing" connections between Platonism and Christianity (Shelley's Platonic Answer, p. 22).

STUDY. The use of these two words could have come right out of Shelley's classical reading, for the words first appeared in authors with whom Shelley was familiar, Lucian and Cicero, to describe Aristotle's classification of works into "exoteric" and "esoteric," meaning works for the popular or untechnical mind as against works for an inner circle of advanced or privileged disciples. Later usage came to ascribe to "esoteric" the secret doctrines Pythagoras is supposed to have taught a select few of his disciples. (See Oxford English Dictionary, III, pp. 288, 419). As Shelley uses the terms here, Christ's teachings and Christianity are the outer teachings for the popular mind, but they contain the "esoteric" doctrines of antiquity, those inner, secret Pythagorean and other religious doctrines. Shelley ends with two
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Pythagorean teachings, sexual equality, and humane treatment of slaves, although he does not denote them as such directly.

These are not unusual words to Shelley, for he quite casually in a letter to Leigh Hunt, November 14-18, 1819 says: "You do not tell me whether you have received my lines on the Manchester affair. They are of the exoteric species, and are meant not for the Indicator, but the Examiner." (Letters, II, p. 152).

895-896 "incorporation of the Celtic nations . . . South"

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments that "Shelley again means the Germanic nations—Goths, Franks and others" (p. 90). Brett-Smith also comments that he means "Teutonic" here again (p. 95).

STUDY. Even had Shelley not had a broader concept of what "Celtic nations" included (as seen above at ll. 850 ff.) Roman histories concerning the northern invasions of the Gauls, for example, called them occasionally "Celts." In addition, the Po valley was settled by tribes of Celts who battled with the Romans as early as the third century B.C.

898-903 "The result . . . supersedes."

EDITIONS. Clark makes the comment that here Shelley "shows a deep understanding of the compromise and adjustment in the conflicting social forces which make up any society," and suggests that this idea is further discussed in Shelley's Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks (p. 289).
CRITICISM. With regard to the second part of this statement, that "no nation or religion can supersede any other without incorporating . . . a portion of that which it superseded," Schulz feels Shelley has borrowed this maxim from Machiavelli, who in his Discourses, Third Book, Chapter 1, has implied such a "maxim" in his "extrinsic means" of restoring the republic to its original principles. Schulz notes that Shelley, however, "broadens the republic to the magnitude of civilization." He also comments that "in finding Jesus implied in Plato" Shelley "cuts off the supernatural associations of the Christian religion, and is thus enabled to compare more sharply the divinity of poetry with religious and ethical institutions" (Shelley's Theory, p. 160).

STUDY. Shelley's words here, "the result was a sum of the action and reaction of all the causes included in it" have a very Humean sound. This is provable by Shelley himself, who is exemplifying here a belief which he expressed in A Refutation of Deism about cause and result which he derived from Hume: "Hume has shown to the satisfaction of all philosophers that the only idea which we can form of causation is derivable from the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other. We denominate that phenomenon the cause of another which we observe with the fewest exceptions to precede its occurrence" (Prose, p. 136).

903-907 "The abolition . . . slavery . . . woman . . . events."

STUDY. Shelley, in talking of slavery and the emancipation
of women in connection with the combined influences of the ancient Greeks, Christ, and the Celts, is summarizing ideas which he has gone into at some length in his essay, *On The Manners of the Ancient Greeks* (1818). The *Defence* passage here clearly derives from this essay, which says: "One of the chief distinctions between the manners of ancient Greece and modern Europe consisted in the regulations and the sentiments respecting sexual intercourse. Whether this difference arises from some imperfect influence of the doctrines of Jesus Christ, who alleges the absolute and unconditional equality of all human beings, or from the institutions of chivalry, or from a certain fundamental difference of physical nature existing in the Celts, or from a combination of all or any of these causes acting on each other is a question worthy of voluminous investigation. The fact is that the modern Europeans have in this circumstance and in the abolition of slavery made an improvement the most decisive in the regulation of human society; and all the virtue and the wisdom of the Periclean age arose under other institutions in spite of the diminution which personal slavery and the inferiority of women, recognized by law and by opinion, must have produced . . . in the accuracy of their conceptions in . . . every other art and science" (*Prose*, pp. 219-220).

As Shelley states at the beginning of this paragraph of the *Defence*, it is the doctrines of Pythagoras and Timaeus, reaching Plato, and thence moving onward which taught a "moral system." Part of this system stems directly from
Pythagoras in both the questions of slavery and women. Coming out of the Pythagorean belief in transmigration of souls, and an eventual freedom from the "wheel of birth" came the belief in the equality of the sexes, and in the humane treatment of slaves, and also of animals. Pythagoras, as Cheney has noted, was the first Greek teacher to admit women to higher education. Working in the Pythagorean Platonic tradition later are such men as Philo and Plotinus. Philo's _Vita Contemplativa_, for example, shows opposition to slavery and licentious living. As Cheney notes, Plotinus later accepts women as a part of his community, "as they had been by religious leaders since Pythagoras, in spite of their inferior position, socially and culturally, in all quarters of the Empire" ("The Age of Reason in Greece, Pythagoras and Plato," _Men Who Have Walked With God_, pp. 94, 120, 126).
PARAGRAPH 26: LINES 908-967

908-911 "The abolition . . . slavery . . . political . . . women . . . sexual love."

EDITIONS. Jordan notes: "Of course, Shelley's second wife was Mary Godwin, the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft, author of Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792)" (p. 57).

STUDY. In The Revolt of Islam the Defence ideas of the "abolition of human slavery" as the basis of political hope, and the freedom of women, are dramatically presented by Shelley when the maiden Cythna, who has borne the yoke of the tyrant, makes "Her sex the law of truth and freedom hear," and walks free, with women thronging after her from their "luxurious dungeons" and from the "Oppressor's wrath" and his "sated lust." She then "doth equal laws and justice teach / To woman, outraged and polluted long" (IV.1571-73, 1585-88, 1594-95). The key question of all, however, is Cythna's "Can man be free if woman be a slave?" (II.1045).

Shelley's views on the freedom of love needed between the sexes is expressed in his essay, Even Love is Sold, which is a note from Queen Mab. Here Shelley states that love's "very essence is liberty; it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear; it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve" (Prose, p. 115). Underlying man's relationship to his fellow man or woman, Shelley sees the quality of a true love which he has explained in the Essay on Love as
"that powerful attraction towards all that we conceive, or fear, or hope beyond ourselves . . . . This is the bond and the sanction which connects not only man with man but with everything which exists" (Prose, p. 170).

913-917 "It was . . . Apollo and the Muses . . . world."

EDITIONS. Jordan notes that Shelley had received by October 1820 Keats's last volume of poetry, and may have been influenced by a "rather Byronic passage in 'Lamia' I,328-33 from it saying, "There is not such a treat . . . / As a real woman, lineal indeed / From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed" (p. 57).

STUDY. The connection of Love, Apollo, and the Muses seems very probably to have come out of the translations of the Hymns of Homer which Shelley did from 1818 on. "Homer's Hymn to Mercury" seems the likely source of this passage about Apollo and the Muses walking forth: "And I, who speak this praise, am that Apollo / Whom the Olympian Muses ever follow" (LXXVI. 601-602). Apollo is really praising Mercury's minstrelsy at this point, which has moved him "to unutterable love" (LXXIII. 578). Shelley has linked Apollo and Love in Hellas in the lines: "Apollo, Pan, and Love / . . . / Grew weak" (ll. 232-234). The connection of the Muses also to minstrelsy is probably in Shelley's mind here for the Provençal Trouveurs are introduced very shortly hereafter. His translations from Homer would have reminded him of this
connection also. In "Homer's Hymn to the Moon" appears; "Muses, who know and rule all minstrelsy" (1. 2), and "Which minstrels, servants of the Muses, tell" (1.29).

917-920 "The familiar appearance . . . paradise . . . wrecks of Eden."

EDITIONS. Jordan notes that "Shelley was ever yearning for some paradise wrought by love; see, for example, Epipsychidion, 388 ff." (p. 57).

STUDY. Although the exact phrase, "wrecks of Eden," does not appear in Shelley's poetry, the words "Eden," "wreck" or "wrecks," and "paradise" appear a number of times, many of them in poems written in the years 1819 to 1821. In all of these poems "Eden" appears as a place of some particular beauty. In Epipsychidion the lover's bark has a "nest" in "far Eden of the purple East" (ll. 416-417), and this isle for which the bark is headed is "Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise" (1. 423). This, in Epipsychidion, is a haven of mortal love. The relationship of Epipsychidion and the Defence, both in time and in imagery, remains close. Adonais, also very close to the Defence, carries this same general image again, for Keats becomes a "Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise" (X. 7). The "lost Paradise" which is an "island of eternity" appears in the Ode to Liberty (ll. 204-206). Naples becomes the "Metropolis of a ruined Paradise" in the "Ode to Naples" (1. 57). The whole idea of this Defence passage appears in Prometheus Unbound where after "years" of moving through "hatreds, and hopes, and fears" now all
is calm, and "beyond our eyes, / The human love lies / Which makes all it gazes on Paradise" (IV.117-128). The relationship between the imagery of Shelley's poetry and that of the Defence, especially in the poetry of 1818 to 1821, is persistently present. It is equally noticeable that it is always a certain group of poems in which the images appear, and all of the above poems are included in this group.

922-923 "Galeotto . . . . scrisse?"

EDITIONS. Koszul indicates this is not in the draft (see Textual Notes above). Cook, and later editors, identify the quotation as from Dante's Inferno, V.137: "Galeotto was thy book and he who wrote it" (p. 73). The allusion Shelley is making here, as the editors explain in a variety of ways, is to the story of Francesca de Rimini, confined to the Second Circle of Hell, who tells Dante about her love for Paolo, and how one day they were reading the story of Lancelot, and how love enchained him. The passage which overcame them was that where Lancelot and Guinevere kissed, so that both the book and its writer were a Galleotto (Gallehault or Sir Galahad) to the lovers. The Romance of Lancelot was an intermediary to love for them as Gallehaute was between Lancelot and the Queen. (See Brett-Smith, p. 96; Julian, p. 356; Jordan, p. 57).

923-924 "The Provençal Trouveurs, or inventors"

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments that "Southern France was as famous for its lyric as Northern France for its epic poetry;
and the Provençal poets exercised considerable influence on early Italian literature" (p. 90).

STUDY. Shelley has indicated here quite simply an attribute which, to him, always deserves mention, and indeed in the case of great poetry is an absolute requirement, and that quality is inventiveness, or being the innovative artist for a new period. Here, Shelley, who is meticulous in his historical listings and in his consideration of innovation, has noted the true innovators, and has, as he does throughout the Defence, the great artist (Petrarch in this instance) arising to carry out this new poetry most fully, by firmly setting the mode for the future.

In the essay, On the Revival of Literature, he is illustrating this same idea when he says: "The writings of Dante in the thirteenth and of Petrarch in the fourteenth were the bright luminaries which had afforded glimmerings of literary knowledge to the almost benighted traveller toiling up the hill of fame" (Prose, p. 179).

Interestingly, too, Shelley is carrying out further the idea expressed in the previous paragraph, of pagan and Christian elements joining to produce a new poetry. The Provençal writers drew on not only the great medieval civilization of the South of France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries but also from the Latin heritage of forms and imagery, and from Arabic poetry on love and spiritualization, to which were added Christian beliefs. Thus a new poetic concept of an idealized love for woman came into poetry, often involving service and love
offered from afar and for no reward. Petrarch's love lyrics present exactly this changed concept of love.

924-925 "Petrarch, whose verses are as spells"

EDITIONS. Cook notes Shelley's comment in the Discourse on the Manners of the Ancients: "Perhaps nothing has been discovered in the fragments of the Greek lyric poets equivalent to the sublime and chivalric sensibility of Petrarch" (p. 73).

STUDY. Petrarch is closely associated here with the poetry of love. That Shelley sees Petrarch epitomizing the spirit of love which unseals and reveals is shown by the one direct reference to Petrarch he makes in his poetry. In "Lines Written Among the Euganean Hills" (1818) where he speaks of the graves of sacred poets, he sees "love from Petrarch's urn" still burning as "a quenchless lamp by which the heart / Sees things unearthly" (ll. 200-204). In his letter to the Gisbornes on July 10, 1818, he compares Ariosto's work unfavorably to the "tender & solemn enthusiasm of Petrarch" (Letters, II, p. 20). "Tender" is a word which in his poetry he quite frequently associates with love.

It might be expected that he would mention Dante here, whose lyrics of love fall in time between the Trouveurs and Petrarch. He often links Dante and Petrarch together as examples. Dante, however, is not mentioned until several lines below where he is then linked to Petrarch. This is undoubtedly not an accidental exclusion, since Shelley thinks of his examples of artists in chronological order throughout
the Defence. What seems implied is that Shelley, who deeply admired Dante and so would have known of his study of the Provençal poetry, chose to speak of him in relation to the pure love lyric separately below. Dantean love becomes, through his great art, not a human union but a symbolical one which converges into the divine love of God. At this point, however, Shelley is speaking of the creative force which arises from "sexual love" and makes the "familiar appearance and proceedings of life become wonderful and heavenly." His comment on the Vita Nuova distinctly shows that he had such a separation in mind.

925-926 "enchanted fountains"; "grief of Love"

STUDY. The adjective "enchanted" is another example of imagery used in Shelley's later poetry which reappears in the Defence, and again the group of poems is generally the same as previous reappearances have shown. In 1819 "enchanted air" appears in Charles the First, and "enchanted boat," "enchanted eddies," and "enchanted sleep," in Prometheus Unbound; in 1820 appear "enchanted wings" in The Witch of Atlas, "enchanted rod" in Oedipus Tyrannus, and "enchanted caves" in "Ode to Liberty"; and in 1821, "enchanted mountains" in Epipsychidion. There is a reappearance in "grief of Love" of an image which Shelley is using at the same period in Adonais in "And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue" (XXX.9), which carries an echo of the thought in Prometheus Unbound of the lines, "Turning their dear disunion to an isle / Of lovely grief, a wood of sweet sad thoughts" (IV.200-201).
926-928 "It is impossible to feel . . . contemplate"

EDITIONS. Clark notes that this is "a fundamental idea" in Shelley, and gives as examples, *Adonais*, XLII-XLIII, and *A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks* (p. 289). J. Baker says of Shelley's statement here that "This is the Platonic social psychology back of the desire to restrict the artist to fair sights and sounds" and Baker indicates "the *locus classicus* for this view is the *Republic*, book III* (Shelley's *Platonic Answer*, p. 15).

STUDY. This idea has a direct connection with ancient philosophy, both because it is related to a Platonic concept, and because Shelley has expressed such an idea, in similar words, in *Prince Athanase* (1817), in the following lines (II.137-139):

> With soul-sustaining songs, and sweet debates
> Of ancient lore, there fed his lonely being:--
> 'The mind becomes that which it contemplates,'--

Shelley's source is probably Plato's *Phaedo*, a work which he had reread in 1820, and also partially translated in that general period, as his letter to Hogg of October 22, 1821, indicates (Letters, p. 360). His letter of November 18, 1820, shows that he has sent the "Phaedon" to Gisborne (Letters, II, p. 250). It is also probably derives from the *Republic* as well.

As seen in the *Phaedo*, Idea or Form is the real or archetypal Form of the temporary reality of the physical world, a pattern from which meaning is derived. There are "absolute realities, such as beauty and goodness" and it is
"to them, as we rediscover our own former knowledge of them, that we refer, as copies to their patterns, all the objects of our physical perception" (76e-77a). The soul, investigating by itself, passes into the realm of the "pure" and "changeless," and "this condition of the soul" is called "wisdom" (79d). The "soul secures immunity from its desires by following reason" and "by contemplating the true" and drawing inspiration from it, because this is "the right way to live while life endures" (84b). The Republic also speaks of distinguishing "the aspect of reality and the intelligible, which is contemplated by the power of dialectic, as something truer and more exact than the object of the so-called arts and sciences whose assumptions are arbitrary starting points." Those who contemplate them "are compelled to use their understanding and not their senses," and the "things themselves are intelligible when apprehended in conjunction with a first principle" (511c,d). Interestingly, this passage leads to the concluding idea of Book V where Plato suggests four divisions of the soul (511e), a further idea about the three-part division Shelley had previously suggested in the Defence. (See The Collected Dialogues, pp. 60, 62-63, 67, 746-747.)

There are a surprising number of direct uses of this same idea of growing like what is contemplated, and in very similar words, in Shelley's poetry, again notably in the years 1817 to 1821. The lines from Prince Athanase are quoted above. This poem, written in December, 1817, Notopoulos has called a Platonic poem (The Platonism, p. 137). In 1818, in "Marenghi"
appears: "Till his mind grew like that it contemplated" (XXIII. 6). There are two instances in 1819, in Prometheus Unbound: "Methinks I grow like what I contemplate (I.450), and "creates / From its own wreck the thing it contemplates" (IV.573-574). In Epipsychidion (1821) Love, "like understanding," grows bright by "gazing on many truths" as is also true of Imagination. But "narrow" is the "brain that contemplates" only "one object, and one form" (11. 162-172). Also in 1821, in Hellas appears the line, "Thou art as God, whom thou contemplatest" (l. 761).

In the "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound Shelley has given further evidence of his thought about this kind of contemplation. There he notes that poetical abstractions are new, "not because the portions of which they are composed had no previous existence in the mind of man or in nature," but because the combination has "analogy" with "those sources." A poet must study the great poet for he cannot let his mind "no longer be the mirror of all that is lovely in the visible universe" nor "exclude from his contemplation the beautiful which exists in the writings of a great contemporary." Every man's mind is "the mirror upon which all forms are reflected, and in which they compose one form." A poet is a "combined product" of "internal powers" and "external influences" which "sustain these powers" (Poetry, p. 206).

932-933 "lift them . . . world of self."

EDITIONS. Jordan suggests the next-to-the-last stanza of Adonais here (p. 58).
STUDY. This passage is probably a continuation of the thought which is expressed in Plato's *Phaedo* just quoted in lines 926-928 above. When the soul, as seen above, "investigates by itself, it passes in to the realm of the pure . . . and changeless," but just before this in the *Phaedo* appears the discussion of what happens when the "soul uses the instrumentality of the body" for any inquiry "through any of its senses."

When it does this "it is drawn away by the body into the realm of the variable, and loses its way and becomes confused and dizzy, as though it were fuddled, through contact with things of a similar nature" (79c). Also implied in this passage is Shelley's repeated assertion against selfishness or self-interest, amply demonstrated in *A Treatise on Morals*, where the selfish man is shown as existing "within a narrow limit," and selfishness is the "offspring of ignorance and mistake," "unreflecting," "blunted and rendered torpid" (*Prose*, p. 189).

933-934 "Dante . . . secret things of love . . . Petrarch."

STUDY. Shelley now links Dante and Petrarch as he has done in various references to them elsewhere, as in the *Essay on the Revival of Literature*, in *On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks*, and in the "Preface" to *Prometheus Unbound*. In this last work he notes various pairs of artists, among them Dante and Petrarch, and comments that "each has a generic resemblance under which their specific distinctions are arranged" (*Poetry*, p. 207). His letters are evidence of this pairing in his mind also. In his letter to Peacock of November 9, 1818, he compares
artists, one of the examples being of "Guido & Raphael" to "Dante and Petrarch" (Letters, II, p. 53). Again, in a letter to Leigh Hunt, September 27, 1819, he makes a comparison of the works of Ariosto and Tasso with those of "Petrarch and Dante" (Letters, II, p. 122).

The echo of phrases and ideas in this paragraph to this point is found in the fragments and finished version of Epipsychidion (February, 1821). Shelley has spoken here in the Defence of Petrarch's verses which "unseal the inmost enchanted fountains," of the "delight which is in the grief of love," and of Dante understanding more than Petrarch "the secret things of love." The Epipsychidion fragment (ll. 88-92) which closely echoes these thoughts is:

A lovely soul, formed to be blessed and bless:
A well of sealed and secret happiness;
A lute which those whom Love has taught to play
Make music on to cheer the roughest day,
And enchant sadness till it sleeps? ....

The final version uses these lines in a somewhat different arrangement, with the last line above being changed to "And lull fond Grief asleep" (see ll. 58-67). In the "Advertisement" to Epipsychidion Shelley notes that the poem, "like the Vita Nuova of Dante, is sufficiently intelligible to a certain class of readers," and that the first nine lines are "almost a literal translation" of a Dante Canzone (Poetry, p. 411).

In "To a Skylark" (1820) the idea of "secret things of love" appears in the maiden "Soothing her love-laden / Soul
in secret hour / With music sweet as love . . ." (ll. 43-45).

EDITIONS. Verkoren notes that "Dante was one of Shelley's favourite poets. After his arrival in Italy Shelley occupied himself almost uninterruptedly with Dante. On the 31st of January, 1821 Mary records in her diary: 'Shelley reads the Vita Nuova aloud to me in the evening.' And we promptly find Shelley's opinions about it in the Defence" (p. 100).

STUDY. Shelley is, interestingly, carrying forward the idea of the Provençal Trouveurs by indirect means. He has indicated their innovating part in a new movement of poetry, and has shown Petrarch's connection. Now he is giving a supreme example of the Trouveur tradition by his direct reference to Dante's Vita Nuova, whose relationship to the tradition he would have known by Dante's own reference. Paget Toynbee, in his work, Dante Alighieri: His Life and Works, says of Dante's knowledge of Provençal literature that "it is probable that he was early familiar with it not only from the references in the Vita Nuova, but from the fact that the work itself was composed more less after a Provençal model" (p. 166). The work is partly prose and partly verse. In the poems, Dante is speaking in sequence of his youthful love and Beatrice's physical beauty, his praise of her spiritual beauty, her death and his lamentation, his love for the "donna gentile," and his return to his love for her, and his reverence for her memory. The work ends with Dante's resolve to say nothing more of Beatrice until he can say what was never said of any woman,
concluding with a prayer that his soul may see Beatrice's glory in the presence of God (pp. 166-172). The aptness of Shelley's comment that "it is the idealized history of that period, and those intervals of his life which were dedicated to love" is apparent. One can also see that in the line where Shelley speaks of the "grief of love" Dante's work must have been immediately in mind.

While Shelley translated several pieces from Dante's work, only a very short fragment from the Vita Nuova is among these.

938-943 "His apotheosis of Beatrice . . . loveliness . . . poetry."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley notes that "in each circle of the Paradise Dante finds Beatrice more beautiful and his own love for her proportionately increased" (p. 90).

STUDY. This sentence, of course, is a direct reference to the end of the Vita Nuova, for Dante now does say what has not been said of woman before in the "Paradise" of the Divine Comedy, where he sees her in the direct presence of God. The "gradations of his own love" are shown in the Vita Nuova, which Shelley now integrally relates to the final summation of Dante's love in the vision of Paradise.

This is the second use of "apotheosis" in the Defence. In the previous reference it was used to mean a "glorified ideal" in connection with Plato's three forms (l. 833), but here it has another meaning, that of deification of a person, who then becomes a glorified ideal.
EDITIONS. Verkoren points out that this reference may be due to Shelley's study of Spinoza's philosophy, an idea suggested by Sophie Bernthsen in *Shelley's Weltanschauung* (p. 102).

STUDY. There may well be an echo of Hume's thinking in *The Natural History of Religion*. In Chapter IV of this work Hume uses the word "supreme" with reference to the almost universal belief of mankind in an invisible power in the world. He discusses a "supreme God" and deity as "first principle" and "supreme government" and the problems involved in "admitting a supreme intelligence." He further considers man's tendency to discover a "supreme mind or original providence," with their perpetual regard fixed on "unknown causes." He continues to discuss mankind in relation to a "supreme deity." Since almost immediately following in the *Defence* there seems to be a direct reference to this same general passage it is quite possible that Shelley had recently reread this short work of Hume and that its wording is still in his mind (pp. 32-47).

942-943 "the most glorious imagination of modern poetry."

EDITIONS. Cook refers to Shelley's comment in the *Discourse on the Manners of the Ancients* that "perhaps Dante created imaginations of greater loveliness and energy than any that are to be found in the ancient literature of Greece" (p. 73).

943-947 "The acutest critics . . . reversed . . . order . . Paradise."
CRITICISM. D. King-Hele comments that "Shelley's critical history of poetry is generally in accord with modern views, and when some casual judgement seems a little off the mark, the point is usually debatable. When for example, he rates the Paradiso above the Inferno, we can find him so unlikely a brace of supporters as Carlyle and T. S. Eliot" (Shelley: His Thought and Work, pp. 264-295). G. Santayana notes that while Shelley called himself an atheist and that he was one in the sense that he denied the orthodox conception of a deity . . . a man who preferred the Paradiso of Dante to almost any other poem, and preferred it to the popular Inferno itself, could evidently be attracted by Christian ideas and sentiment the moment they were presented to him as expressions or moral truth rather than as gratuitous dogmas" (Winds of Doctrine, pp. 179-180).

STUDY. Shelley comments directly once on the basis for his preference of the Purgatorio and Paradiso over the Inferno. In On the Devil and Devils he says: "Misery and injustice contrive to produce very poetical effect, because the excellence of poetry consists in its awakening the sympathy of men which among persons influenced by an abject and gloomy superstition is much more easily done by images of horror than of beauty. It requires a higher degree of skill in a poet to make beauty, virtue, and harmony poetical, that is, to give them an idealized and rhythmical analogy with the predominating emotions of his readers than to make injustice, deformity, and discord and horror poetical. There are fewer
Raphaels than Michael Angelos. Better verses have been written on Hell than Paradise. How few read the *Purgatorio* or the *Paradiso* of Dante, in the comparison of those who know the *Inferno* well. But yet the *Purgatorio*, with the exception of two famous passages, is a finer poem than the *Inferno*. No poet develops the same power in the heat of his composition when he feels himself insecure of the emotions of his readers, as in those where he knows that he can command their sympathy* (Prose, p. 273). Other comments also indicate his preference for the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. In a letter to John Gisborne of June 18, 1822, he speaks of a young pupil's critical judgment and says, "When she becomes of her own accord full of genuine admiration of the finest scene in the *'Purgatorio',* or the opening of the *'Paradiso',* or some other neglected piece of excellence, hope great things" (*Letters*, II, p. 436). In a letter to Leigh Hunt on August 20, 1819 he speaks of Michael Angelo being compared to Dante and says, "but if we find some of the gross and strong outlines which are employed in the few distasteful passages of the *Inferno*, where shall we find your Francesca, . . . where Matilda gathering flowers, and all the exquisite tenderness and sensibility and ideal beauty, in which Dante excelled all poets except Shakespeare?" (*Letters*, II, p. 112). The Francesca of Dante indirectly referred to along with Hunt's is in the *Inferno* (see 1. 922 above). Matilda appears is to Cantos I and XXVIII of the *Purgatorio*. Shelley, in the poem "Matilda Gathering Flowers," has translated fifty-one
lines of the latter Canto.

945 "'Divine Drama'

EDITIONS. The Textual Notes record that except for the 1840 edition where "Divine Commedia" is used, all other editions use "Divine Drama."

STUDY. When Shelley speaks of Dante's Divine Comedy he usually refers to one of its parts by name. The only direct reference he makes to the full work in his letters is to Lord Byron on July 16, 1821 where he refers to it as "Divina Commedia" (Letters, II, p. 309).

948 "perpetual hymn of everlasting love."

STUDY. The poem "Orpheus" (1820) was centered around a "perpetual hymn of everlasting love." It is also celebrating by means of "poesy" the "grief of love," that of Orpheus for his lost Eurydice. He had once sung of "high and heavenly themes" but now returning from "drear Hell" he sends his song of "eternal ever-moving grief" to "Heaven."

What Shelley is saying in prose about the effects of the love poetry of Dante and Petrarch, he says poetically as well, and clearly shows what he means by a "perpetual hymn" of love:

Thus the tempestuous torrent of his grief
Is clothed in sweetest sounds and varying words
Of poesy. Unlike all human works,
It never slackens, and through every change
Wisdom and beauty and the power divine
Of mighty poesy together dwell,
Mingling in sweet accord . . . .
EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley suggests this is especially so in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus* (p. 90). Brett-Smith, as does Jordan later, also feels that Shelley has in mind the *Symposium* in his remarks on the connection of love and poetry. Brett-Smith suggests especially the "great speech of Agathon" which occupies six pages in Shelley's translation. A few lines indicate its tenor: "And who will deny that the divine poetry, by which all living things are produced upon the earth, is not harmonized by the wisdom of Love? . . . But so soon as this deity sprang forth from desire which forever tends in the universe towards that which is lovely, then all blessings descended upon all living things, human and divine. Love seems to me, O Phaedrus, a divinity the most beautiful and the best of all, and the author to all others of the excellencies with which his own nature is endowed" [*Essays, etc.*, 1840, I, pp. 115-119] (pp. 96-97).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos comments that "the reference of course is to the *Symposium* and in particular to the speeches of Agathon and Diotima and Socrates which Shelley admired and praised (*The Platonism*, p. 355). In N. Frye's opinion both Plato and Dante were for Shelley "poets of Eros, celebrating a love that turned human society into a festive symposium and raised woman to a *vita nuova* of equal dignity with man."

Frye sees Shelley as putting Eros into the "peculiarly modern
position of a revolutionary and explosive force," and in this "his Eros anticipates the Eros of Freud" (A Study of English Romanticism, p. 123).

952 "the caverns of society"

CRITICISM. As Notopoulos points out, the origin of the cave or cavern imagery may be found in Plato's myth of the Cave which appears in the Republic, 514 ff., and which reappears in Bacon's Novum Organum, Aphorism 53, and De aug. scien. Lib. V. c. 4. In Plato's Cave, the prisoners see the shadows of the passing images which are "symbolical of the realm of sense and opinion" (The Platonism, p. 327). W. B. Yeats says that a good Platonist such as Shelley could hardly have thought of a symbolic cave "without thinking of Plato's cave that was the world." He also suggests, however, that "so good a scholar may well have had Porphyry on 'the Cave of the nymphs' in his mind," and comments "I find it hard to think otherwise," for "when one turns to Shelley for an explanation of the cave and fountain one finds how close his thought was to Porphyry's." As Porphyry explained, the ancients "consecrated a cave to the world" which held the "flowing waters" and "obscurity of the cavern" as "apt symbols of what the world contains." Caves are symbols of "all invisible power" because, as they are dark and obscure "so the essence of all these powers is occult." The two gates of this Homeric cave are those "of generation" and "ascent through death to the gods." Yeats notes that Shelley "looked upon thought as a
condition of life in generation" and the "reality beyond was something other than thought," for thought cannot create, but only perceive. Thus in his prose, Yeats comments, Shelley tells how "thought can with difficulty" visit the "winding chambers which it inhabits," caverns of the mind "which are obscure and shadowy," and "not shining beyond their portals." As Yeats points out, "Again and again, one finds some passing allusion to the cave of man's mind, or the caves of his youth, as the cave of mysteries we enter at death, for to Shelley as to Porphyry it is more than an image of life in the world" ("The Philosophy of Shelley's Poetry," Essays and Introductions, pp. 81-86).

STUDY. The use of the cave or cavern by Shelley is undoubt-edly traceable to both Plato and Bacon as is often noted. Shelley here seems to be applying an idea he has gotten from Bacon. In the Essay on Christianity Shelley notes that "Every human mind has what Lord Bacon calls it idola specus, peculiar images which reside in the inner cave of thought. These constitute the essential and distinctive character of every human being, to which every action and every word bears intimate relation, and by which in depicting a character the genuineness and meaning of those words and actions are to be determined" (Prose, p. 199). Again, in A Treatise on Morals he notes that "the caverns of the mind are obscure and shadowy; or pervaded with a lustre, beautifully bright indeed, but shining not beyond their portals" (Prose, p. 186).
953-954 "dissonance of arms and superstition."

STUDY. Shelley is using directly here an idea he expressed in the "Ode to Liberty" in 1820. The ideas of the Defence passage about the art of writers of love penetrating the depths to the caverns, and drowning the dissonance of arms, are all present in the "Ode." There, when anarchy threatened society for a thousand years, love and art stepped in:

Whilst from the human spirit's deepest deep
Strange melody with love and awe struck dumb
Dissonant arms; and Art, which cannot die,
With divine wand traced on our earthly home
Fit imagery to pave Heaven's everlasting dome.

(IX.131-135)

Shelley has explained what his outlook on "superstition" is in A Refutation of Deism, where he comments that "Superstition, in a thousand shapes, is employed in brutalizing and degrading the human species and fitting it to endure without a murmur the oppression of its innumerable tyrants" (Prose, 134). In his Essay on the Revival of Literature, Shelley comments that "Superstition of whatever kind, whether earthly or divine, has hitherto been the weight which clogged man to earth and prevented his genius from soaring aloft amid its native skies." He comments further on the grief there is in reflecting how this has "retarded the progress of intellect and consequently the happiness of man" (Prose, p. 179).
954-955 "Ariosto, Tasso, Shakspear, Spenser, Calderon, Rousseau"

EDITIONS. Jordan comments that "Shelley's unfinished last poem, "The Triumph of Life," presents Rousseau as a grotesque narrator who declares, 'I was overcome / By my own heart alone' [240-41]" (p. 59).

STUDY. The list of writers here is, as is usual in the Defence, in both chronological order, and in order of country. The Italians are first, Ariosto (1474-1533) and Tasso (1544-1595); the English are next, Shakespeare (1564-1616) and Spenser (1552-1599); then the Spanish, Calderon (1600-1681); and last, the French, Rousseau (1712-1778).

Shelley seems here still to be following the ideas which he expressed in his essay On the Revival of Literature, where the fifteenth century, following the earlier awakening by Dante and Petrarch, had the benefit of "ancient learning" which was returning to Europe on the fall of Constantinople. He states that "Italy, France, and England" then "swarmed" with learned monks and the learned manuscripts they brought with them, and this helped to spark the "light of knowledge over the world." In the Defence he has just spoken of the "greatest writers of the renovated world" and they are from Italy, France and England. That Spain is not mentioned in the essay, which Notopoulos places as probably 1818 or 1819, and which Clark dates as around 1815, is not surprising, and might suggest that its date, if 1818 or 1819, is before July, 1819, the first time that Shelley mentions reading
Calderon, which he does in his letter to Hogg of that date. By 1821, when the Defence is written, Shelley has, of course, read much of Calderon's work and has been very impressed with it.

957 "dominion of love"

EDITIONS. Koszul notes that "sexual love" appears in the draft (see Textual Notes above).

STUDY. Shelley does not speak here of sexual love in particular but uses the broader term of sensuality. He obviously has in mind some comment in line with his thinking on sexual love which he has expressed in other works. References to the more specific sexual nature of love may be seen in the essays, On Marriage, On Love, On the Revival of Literature, Even Love is Sold, and A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love. In combining "sensuality and force" instead he is, however, expressing thoughts which appear in a different set of essays (see Study, l. 959 below).

Shelley's opinion of the various authors he has listed occasionally differs in some degree. While later in the Defence he will refuse to give the title of epic poet in the highest degree to Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser for their greatest epic works, which have central themes of love, here he accords them high honor for the same achievement of celebrating love. Although he makes little comment on Ariosto, in either his letters or prose, he speaks of
Tasso's "delicate moral sensibility" in a letter to the Gisbornes of July 10, 1818 (Letters, II, p. 20). He also writes a poem, "Song for 'Tasso'" which concerns the legend of Tasso's love for Leonora d'Este, and in which Tasso says: "I loved—alas! our life is love / But when we cease to breathe and move / I do suppose love ceases too" (ll.1-3).

His many comments on Shakespeare reflect great admiration. A typical comment is made in a letter to Leigh Hunt, August 20, 1819, in which he speaks of the "exquisite tenderness & sensibility & ideal beauty" of Shakespeare (Letters, II, p. 112). He lists Shakespeare and Spenser among "the mighty intellects" of English literature in the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam (p. 35).

Shelley's comments on Spenser are not many although he knows Spenser's works well (see F. L. Jones, "Shelley and Spenser").

Shelley's high opinion of Calderon can be seen in his letter to Hogg of July 25, 1819 in which Calderon is called a "great dramatic genius," whose plays are "specimens of the very highest dramatic power--approaching Shakspeare, and in his character" (Letters, II, p. 105).

The last of the list, Rousseau, has held Shelley's admiration for a long time. In a letter to Hogg of July 18, 1816, Shelley says that "Rousseau is indeed in my mind the greatest man the world has produced since Milton" (Letters, I, p. 494). In a similar vein, his letter to Peacock of July 12, 1816 speaks of the great and sacred name of Rousseau and then says...
that the contemplation of his "imperishable creations had left no vacancy in my heart for mortal things" (Letters, I, p. 488).

958-959 "sensuality and force."

STUDY. Shelley has always expressed a dislike of force. To him, force may mean actual force of arms, but more often it represents what Shelley holds to be a greater evil, tyranny. This tyranny is often that of the political leader who tramples liberty, but it can be a tyranny arising from a God, a Mammon, or an overwhelming sensuality. Shelley has just talked about the "dissonance of arms" in the Defence. In A Philosophical View of Reform he has said that when a man becomes a soldier he "becomes a slave," and is "by profession beyond abhorrence and below contempt." He has also shown the overcoming of force in the example of Spain, suffering under the tyranny of force, but producing a Calderon and Cervantes, who thus breathed "through the tumult of the despotism" the "prophecy of a glorious consummation" of some coming liberty (Prose, pp. 253, 238). This same idea is expressed in "Ode to Liberty" in Stanzas I and XIII.

Rousseau, too, is thought of in connection with the overcoming of force, or tyranny (Prose, p. 238). The connection of sensuality and force in a reign like that of Charles II is called one of "tyranny and perfidy" (Phil. View, Prose, p. 236) and a time of "licentiousness" (On the Manners, Prose, p. 223). Rousseau is also seen to speak for the "pure and
simple life" and to place in the "strongest point of view his conceptions of the calamitous and diseased aspect which, overgrown as it is with the vices of sensuality and selfishness, is exhibited by civilized society" (Essay on Christianity, Prose, p. 210). In The Triumph of Life, while Rousseau is a decaying figure whose "spark" was not purely enough nourished, he can say, "If I have been extinguished, yet there rise / A thousand beacons from the spark I bore" (ll. 200-203, 206-207). Perhaps his high placement of Rousseau can be seen best in his comment in the Essay on Christianity in which he says: "It is impossible to read those passionate words in which Jesus Christ upbraids the pusillanimity and sensuality of mankind, without being strongly reminded of the more connected and systematic enthusiasm of Rousseau" (Prose, p. 209).

Shelley also sees Tasso as presenting in his personal life a supreme example of the force of tyranny over man. He wrote Peacock of his visit to the prison where Tasso was held by a "deaf and stupid tyrant" for over seven years in an age "when the most heroic virtue would have exposed its possessor to hopeless persecution, and--such is the alliance between virtue and genius--which unoffending genius could not escape" (Letter of November 6, 1818, Letters, II, pp. 47-48).

From Spenser comes a favorite illustration of Shelley concerning the force of tyranny, that of the Giant and Artegall in the Fairy Queen, V.2 (see Letters, II, p. 71).

Shelley sees force, too, in the terms of war, an alterna-
tive presented "by the unprincipled cunning" of tyrants, for "there is secret sympathy between destruction and power, between monarchy and war." More, "war is a kind of superstition; the pageantry of arms and badges corrupts the imagination of men" (A Philosophical View of Reform, Prose, p. 260).

The condemnation of sensuality is stated often. In On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks he says that "an enlightened philosophy suggests "the propriety of habits of chastity in like manner with those of temperance. It regards the senses as but a minute and subordinate portion of our complicated nature, and it seems the pleasures to be derived from their exercise such as are rather weakened, not enhanced by repetition, especially if unassociated with some principles from which they may participate in permanency and excellence. Few characters are more degraded than that of an habitual libertine" (Prose, p. 221).

In the Essay on Christianity, the power of love over sensuality and force is also asserted, for "if there be no love among men, whatever institutions they frame must be subservient to the same purpose: to the continuance of inequality." Before man can be free, equal and wise he must "cast aside the chains of habit and superstition; he must strip sensuality of its pomp and selfishness of its excuses, and contemplate actions and objects as they really are. He will discover the wisdom of universal Love" (Prose, pp. 208-209).
When Shelley speaks of love overcoming "sensuality and force" he is voicing deeply held convictions.

959-961 "The true relation . . . sexes . . . less misunderstood"

STUDY. Shelley has clearly indicated what he means by "error" in this instance in his essay, *On Marriage*, in which he traces women's bondage to their subjection to the force of superior strength so that "in rude ages" women were considered as the property and "materials of usefulness or pleasure," and valuable in the same way as flocks or herds (*Prose*, p. 215). As man becomes more civilized, Shelley points out in *On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks*, that "gratification of the senses is no longer all that is sought" but soon becomes a small part of a "profound and complicated sentiment which we call love," and there develops a "communion" of our whole nature, "intellectual, imaginative, and sensitive." Shelley points out that this "grows more powerful in proportion to the development which our nature receives from civilization, for man never ceases to be a social being." Shelley traces the slow change. Among ancient Greeks only males received cultivation and refinement; among Romans, women "held a higher consideration in society and were esteemed almost as equal" in domestic affairs. The practices of modern Europe are "incomparably less pernicious," although still remote from what enlightened minds "desire as the future destiny of human beings." Shelley continues, "In modern
Europe the sexual and intellectual claims of love, by the more equal cultivation of the two sexes, so far converge towards one point as to produce, in the attempt to unite them, no gross violation in the established nature of man."
Shelley concludes that "this invidious distinction of human-kind as a class of being [of] intellectual nature into two sexes is a remnant of savage barbarism which we have less excuse than they [the Greeks] for not having totally abolished" (Prose, pp. 220, 221, 223).

962-965 "inequality of . . . sexes . . . partially recognized . . . modern Europe"

STUDY. Shelley illustrates this in his comment in A Philosophical View of Reform in which he notes that "Mr. Bentham and other writers have urged the admission of females to the right of suffrage; this attempt seems somewhat immature. Should my opinion be the result of despondency, the writer of these pages would be the last to withhold his vote from any system that might tend to an equal and full development of the capacities of all living beings" (Prose, p. 254).

One such modern recognition of the true relation of the sexes and inequality to which Shelley was undoubtedly referring here was that of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley's mother, in her book, Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792). This pioneer book of the feminist movement talked unequivocally about the need for the emancipation of women. Her advice was to "Strengthen then the female mind by enlarging
blind obedience is ever sought for by power." She comments too that "tyrants and sensualists are in the right when they endeavor to keep women in the dark, because the former only want slaves and the latter a plaything" ("A Vindication of the Rights of Women," Library of the World's Best Literature, p. 16129). Another modern source in which Shelley would have seen changed opinion would be that of the French philosopher and political leader, Condorcet, whose works Shelley ordered in December, 1812. In On the Progress of the Human Mind, Condorcet saw vice as the effect of ignorance which retards human progress, and traced the way to work towards perfection. Coming from his own revolutionary times were the ideas of liberty and equality which he accepted as being sign-posts of progress towards happiness and perfection. As James Frazer points out in his study of Condorcet, among the errors Condorcet saw from the past, from which "practical evils" had flowed, were the "hereditary transmission of power and the social inequality of women compared with men." Hereditary power is the "source of the slavery under which almost the whole of mankind has groaned." Condorcet held that women's social subjection rested "on no natural basis of a physical, intellectual, or moral difference between the sexes," and he declared that it was a "sheer abuse of force, which no sophism could justify," and that "in the past it had acted injuriously on the general happiness, including that of the men themselves, and that the equalization of the rights of men and
women would be one of the most important and most beneficial features of progress in the future" [*Oeuvres*, vi, pp. 364 ff.] (Condorcet on the Progress of the Human Mind, pp. 15-16).

966-967 "law . . . prophets."

STUDY. This Biblical turn of phrase appears once in Shelley's poetry, in *The Revolt of Islam*: "And scorned the sacred laws thy prophets did proclaim" (X.XXIX.4053).
968-970 "The poetry of Dante . . . world."

EDITIONS. Koszul notes that the draft has a sentence which indicates that Shelley thought to discuss the "monstrous opinions which Dante & Milton idealized" (see Textual Notes above).

CRITICISM. H. A. Beers comments upon the general non-acceptance of Dante until the nineteenth century, and notes that the Divine Comedy was "abhorrent to the clear, shallow rationalism of the eighteenth century, as well as to the religious liberalism of the seventeenth and the joyous sensuality of the sixteenth. Goethe the pagan disliked Dante, no less than Scott the Protestant. In particular, deistic France . . . felt a shiver of repulsion." The first real opportunity for the English reader to get an idea of Dante, according to Beers, was when Henry Francis Cary's translation appeared in editions of 1805 and 1814. These received little attention until brought into notice by Coleridge, who devoted a part of his 1818 lecture series to reading numerous selections from Cary's text. Coleridge emphasized the "endless, subtle beauties of Dante" and pronounced him in style superior to Milton, and in picturesqueness to surpass all other poets. Beer notes that "with characteristic penetration" Coleridge indicated the precise position of Dante in medieval literature, that his poetry is "the link between religion and philosophy," "christianized, but without the further Gothic accession
of proper chivalry," and with the "inwardness" which dis­tinquishes "all modern poetry." Beers also points out Shelley's dissatisfaction, as expressed to Medwin, with all English translations, even Cary's, and his own desire to translate the whole Divine Comedy in terza rima, of which he did two specimens, "Ugolino" [translated by Medwin, and corrected by Shelley], and "Matilda Gathering Flowers" (A History of English Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century, pp. 92, 97, 102).

STUDY. Shelley's great interest in Dante, and his high opinion of him, grew out of an attraction which began to manifest itself strongly in 1817 and continued through his last work in 1822. All evidence, from his poetry, his essays, his letters, and his reading, shows this strong interest. His use of terza rima appears in 1817, in Prince Athanase, and two fragments, "Another Fragment to Music," and "Fragment: To One Singing." In 1818, terza rima appears in "The Woodman and the Nightingale, and in the "Fragment: To Byron." In 1818 (or perhaps 1820) it is used for "From Vergil's Fourth Georgic." In 1819, in appears in "Fragment: Rome and Nature," and in 1820 in "Fragment: The Deserts of Dim Sleep," and in "The Tower of Famine." In 1821, it again appears in "Fragment: Zephyrus the Awakener," and finally in 1822 it culminates in the unfinished The Triumph of Life. The same sequence can be seen in the essays and preface in which he comments on Dante: On the Manners of the Ancient Greeks, 1818; On the Revival of Literature, 1818 or 1819.
(Notopoulos dating); "Preface" to *Prometheus Unbound*, 1819; *On the Devil and Devils*, 1819 or 1820; and *A Philosophical View of Reform*, 1820. In his letters, one to Ollier on December 7, 1817 requested that the Cary edition of the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* be sent at once, and another on December 23 to Lackington, Allen & Company, made the same request, with the added note that he had the *Inferno* already *(Letters, I, pp. 575, 585-586)*. His seventeen letters which mention Dante all date from November, 1817 on, with the exception of one of October 4, 1814 which contains a line from the *Inferno* (see *Letters, II, p. 472*). Mary Shelley's *Journal* reveals that Shelley is reading and finishing the *Purgatorio* from April 11 to 19, 1818, and reading the *Paradiso* on April 22. Both read two cantos of the *Paradiso* on December 29, 1818. The reading of the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* again appears in the period of August 5-20 and September 14-17, 1819 *(Mary Shelley's Journal, pp. 96, 97, 114, 122-124)*.

At these lines of the *Defence* Shelley is reflecting an attitude he expressed in *On the Revival of Literature*, when he said "the writings of Dante in the thirteenth and of Petrarch in the fourteenth were the bright luminaries which had afforded glimmerings of literary knowledge to the almost benighted traveller toiling up the hill of fame" *(Prose, p. 179)*.

Since Shelley has been speaking of the force of tyranny it is interesting to note that he connects Dante, Florence,
and political freedom together as helping the world to enter a new era of beauty. This is shown in 1820 in *A Philosophical View of Reform* where he notes that Florence was a citadel of freedom against tyranny and represented a balance of power. From this, Shelley feels, arose the "undisputed superiority of Italy in literature and the arts," the "union of energy and of beauty which distinguish[es] from all other poets the writings of Dante," the power also expressed in other arts, and from which, as from Athens, "its predecessor and image," the artists such as Raphael and Michel Angelo drew "the inspiration which created those forms and colors now the astonishment of the world" (*Prose*, p. 231). Once again can be seen the basic idea that the artist who is to "bridge" time must innovate and set a pattern for those following. This is what makes him deserve his premier place.

970-972 "The distorted . . . Dante . . . Milton . . . idealised"

CRITICISM. D. M. Foerster, in commenting upon Dante as a bridge figure and Milton as a synthesizer of classicism and the Renaissance, says: "Nor did all this emphasis upon idealism and intellectuality merely mean higher prestige for the modern epic. It gave greater credence to the notion, going back to the seventeenth century, that art tends to be progressive" (*The Fortunes of Epic Poetry*, p. 45).

STUDY. It should be noted here that Shelley is partially echoing a thought which Peacock expressed in *The Four Ages*
of Poetry, where he shows Milton as the bridge figure (he does not mention Dante in his essay): "Milton, may be said to stand alone between the ages of gold and silver," an idea Shelley has already used in the Defence [see 11. 643-644 above] (Halliford, p. 16).

The "distorted notions of invisible things" here obviously mean Dante's and Milton's Christian ideas.

In a note to his letter to Godwin of February 24, 1812 Shelley says, "I know that Milton believed Christianity; but I do not forget that Virgil believed ancient mythology" (Letters I, p. 260). Undoubtedly, Christianity colors his statement in On the Manners about Dante's deficiency in "conduct" and "nature," and his "dark and extravagant fiction" (p. 218).

972-973 "the mask and the mantle"

STUDY. Shelley is picking up here the imagery of a previous thought (at 11. 806-808) where the poetry of the Past "fills the theatre of everlasting generations" with harmony. Dante and Milton, masked and mantled, take up their parts as actors in this theatre of "eternity" in their particular cycles of time. Shelley is also using the same image to express again a thought similar to that he suggested concerning Beatrice Cenci in the "Preface" to The Cenci (1819): "The crimes and miseries in which she was an actor and a sufferer are as the mask and the mantle in which circumstances clothed her for her impersonation on the scene of the world"
979-980 "Ripheus . . . justissimus unus"

EDITIONS. Cook gives the quotation from Dante's Paradiso 20.67-69, to which this passage refers:

Who would believe, down in the errant world,

That e'er the Trojan Ripheus in this round

Could be the fifth one of the holy lights?

Cook also quotes from Plumptre's note concerning this: "How can the justice of God be reconciled with the condemnation of the heathen who have sought righteousness, and yet have lived . . . . in ignorance of the faith? Dante has no other solution than that of man's incapacity to measure the Divine justice . . . he at least placed the righteous heathen in a state in which there was only the pain of unsatisfied desire."

Cook, and later editors, identify "justissimus unus" as from the Aeneid 2.426: "Rhipeus also falls, who was above all others the most just among the Trojans, and the strictest observer of right" (p. 74). Miss Winstanley notes that Ripheus is the only pagan whom Dante places in Paradise (p. 91). Brett-Smith also comments on Dante's placement of Ripheus "disregarding any mere chronological objection that he could have had no mortal means of believing in Christ" (p. 97).

982-986 "And Milton's . . . refutation . . . support."

EDITIONS. Clark comments: "That is, a refutation of Christianity. Milton was perhaps at one time a Unitarian" (p. 290).
STUDY. In rather widely separated comments in two other works Shelley has shown this same attitude about Milton's poem. In the "Preface" to Prometeus Unbound (1819) he has commented that "we owe the great writers of the golden age of our literature to that fervid awakening of the public mind which shook to dust the oldest and most oppressive form of the Christian religion. We owe Milton to the progress and development of the same spirit; the sacred Milton was, let it ever be remembered, a republican and a bold inquirer into morals and religion" (Poetry, p. 206). Much earlier, 1813, in "I Will Beget A Son," from the Notes to Queen Mab, Shelley suggests that "like other systems, Christianity has arisen and augmented, so . . . it will decay and perish; that, as violence, darkness, and deceit, not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission . . . when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible controverter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete; that Milton's poem alone will give permanency to the remembrance of its absurdities" (Prose, p. 105). This is echoed again in ll. 1021-28 below. The antithesis which Shelley's mind sees is that Milton's Christian work will serve as a monument to its mortality rather than to its immortality.

Shelley indicates some doubts about Milton's Christianity. In a short passage from On the Devil and Devils which he did not use in the following lines (see 986 ff. below) he says: "It is difficult to determine, in a country where the most
enormous sanctions of opinion and law are attached to a
direct avowal of certain speculative notions, whether Milton
was a Christian or not at the period of the composition of
Paradise Lost (Prose, p. 267).

modern mythology . . . genius."

STUDY. This entire passage has been taken directly from
Shelley's essay, On the Devil and Devils (which Notopoulos
dates as 1821 and in close time relationship to the Defence
in "The Dating," pp. 483-484). It takes parts of several
paragraphs, almost word for word, with only a very few minor
changes. The one real change is the addition of the "Divina
Commedia" to the "Paradise Lost" at 1. 1020 in the Defence,
where the essay had "Paradise Lost" only.

986-988 "Nothing can exceed . . . Satan . . . Lost."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley says that "It is not likely that
Shelley ever read Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell, but
that book contains a very similar passage: 'The reason Milton
wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God and at
liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true
Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it'" (p. 91).

CRITICISM. Coleridge holds an opposite view entirely to that
expressed by Shelley as to Satan's character but agrees on
the poetic grandeur of Milton's conception. Coleridge sees
the character of Satan as one of "pride and sensual indulgence,
finding in self the sole motive of action. It is the character
so often seen in little on the political stage. It exhibits all the . . . cunning which marked the mighty hunters of mankind from Nimrod . . . . these great men, as they are called, must act from some great motive. Milton has carefully marked in his Satan the intense selfishness . . . which would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven. To place this lust of self in position to denial of self . . . to show what exertions it would make . . . . is Milton's particular object in the character of Satan. But around this character he has thrown a singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendour, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity" (Coleridge's Essays & Lectures, p. 286).

988-994 "It is a mistake . . . tyrant"

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments: "Not perhaps for the 'popular' personification of evil but certainly for a personification. The idea that the outline of his character was suggested by the figure of Strafford--the arch-apostate from Milton's side--is interesting and possible. Milton seems to have become aware, however, of the particular effect he was producing and in the later books of the poem exhibits the character of Satan as undergoing a progressive deterioration" (p. 91).

CRITICISM. C. Grabo says that here Shelley "in part declares the theme of Prometheus Unbound" (The Magic Plant, p. 359).
CRITICISM. Foerster points out the real interest in the Romantic period about the kinds of characters epics portrayed, with the "characters of Paradise Lost" no less popular than Dante's or Ariosto's. He notes that "critics frequently spoke of Satan as the most wonderful character not only in all epic poetry but in all literature." Thus, Hazlitt could call him "the most heroic subject" ever chosen by a poet and Coleridge could comment on his "ruined splendour . . . the very height of poetic sublimity" (The Fortunes of Epic Poetry, pp. 48-49).

EDITIONS. Koszul notes that in the draft the word "conceived" is missing, and the paragraph is in an "inchoate" state (see Textual Notes above).

CRITICISM. Barnard points to Shelley's argument that the only reason for the existence of Hell must be that the Creator derives a malicious pleasure from torturing the beings whom he has made. He notes Shelley's comments on God in the "Notes on Queen Mab" VI.198, where he says "God made man such as he is, and then damned him for being so . . ." and, in the Essay on Christianity, where he calls God "a Being who shall deliberately scheme to inflict on a large portion of the human race tortures indescribably intense and indefinitely protracted." Barnard comments that "against such a conception as this, Shelley never ceased to hurl the bitterest invective." In the Defence "he indignantly
characterizes the Almighty in Milton's *Paradise Lost* in such terms ([*Shelley's Religion*], pp. 37-38).

STUDY. Hume has amply provided background for the thinking which Shelley portrays here concerning a God of revenge and torment, and is undoubtedly a source for this attitude of Shelley both here and in other essays. In *The Natural History of Religion*, there is a long note in which Hume quotes Chevalier Ramsay's portrayal of the divinity in an "immoral and unamiable light." God here is represented as a "cruel, unjust, partial, and fantastical being" who condemns to "temporal misery" and "eternal pains." This God abandoned "all nations to darkness, idolatry, and superstition" except a small number. This God takes delight in all other Christians' "torments and blasphemies," and is a "hater of souls, rather than a lover of them." He is a "cruel, vindictive tyrant" rather than an "all-powerful, beneficent father." He has "secret reasons for his conduct" and what is "injustice," or "cruelty," or "malice" we must believe to be in him "justice," and "goodness." Ramsay notes this is what the "free-thinkers, the Judaizing Christians, and the fatalistic doctors" have "disfigured the holy faith" with and "thus they have confounded the nature of good and evil," and transformed "monstrous passions into divine attributes" ["Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion," Part ii, p. 401]. Both Hume and Shelley agree with what Ramsay reports and not with his final orthodox attitude about disfiguring the "holy faith." Hume sees the contrast
between the representations of both ancient and later religions and our natural ideas of "generosity," "impartiality, and justice," and concludes "in proportion to the multiplied terrors of these religions, the barbarous conceptions of the divinity are multiplied upon us . . . . The gods have maxims of justice peculiar to themselves" (pp. 67-69).

There is another point of interest also in connection with this passage, concerning dating. While at this point MS A is in a very disordered state, MS D has incorporated almost totally certain paragraphs of On The Devil and Devils, as noted above at 1. 986, which might indicate that this essay was composed in the short interim during which the Defence was being reworked to its finished form in MS D. While Notopoulos uses different evidence, that in the closing paragraph of On The Devil and Devils Shelley writes "In Egypt the Serpent was a hieroglyphic of eternity," which has a thematic cross reference to Fragment III of the Appendix to the Defence, which contains a statement on "the Serpent which clasps eternity," and the further evidence that the essay was written after Shelley read Hare's article on The German Drama, mentioned by Shelley in a letter of January 20, 1821, this manuscript change would seem to add further evidence to support Notopoulos's dating of the two as being "in close relation" (see "The Dating of Shelley's Prose," pp. 483-484).

1006-09 "Milton . . . violated . . . creed . . . Devil."

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith comments that "The Satan of Paradise Lost is indeed so splendid a heroic figure, the Jehovah so
revengeful a tyrant, that they lend some colour to the idea that their creator 'alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his god over his devil.' But to attribute such a result to the conscious intention of the poet, to the 'bold neglect of a direct moral purpose,' is to survey the theology of the Old Testament with the critical eye of Shelley, rather than with the unquestioning acquiescence of Milton. We cannot twit his zealous devotion with motives subversive of morality merely because he reproduced the deity of the earlier Scriptures with reverent faithfulness, while in the composition of his devil he felt at liberty to use a freer hand, and to bestow some of his own heroic fortitude upon his fiend" (p. xxiii). Brett-Smith also notes Shelley's comparison of Milton's Satan and Prometheus in the "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound where Shelley claims that "the only imaginary being resembling in any degree Prometheus, is Satan" but that Prometheus is more poetical, and exempt from "taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and . . . personal aggrandisement, which, in the Hero of Paradise Lost, interfere with the interest" (pp. 97-98).

1009-11 "And this bold neglect . . . moral purpose . . . genius."

EDITIONS. Cook suggests referring to Defence lines 447-457 at this point.

CRITICISM. Wimsatt comments that "it is in this spirit that Shelley writes his Preface to Prometheus," that "Didactic
poetry is my abhorrence . . . ." He continues that the "autonomously moral and religious power of poetry stands out much more prominently in Shelley's view than in that of Wordsworth or Coleridge. The Kantian 'Reason' which Coleridge, following Fichte and Shelling, improved from a hypothetically constructive to a gnostic faculty does not appear in Shelley's system. The honor conferred upon poetic imagination, though nebulous, is the highest possible. In general import . . . and doubtless not by any direct indebtedness, Shelley's poetic is closer to that of Schelling in the 'absolute' phase of his idealism and to the mythopoeia of Friedrich Schlegel" (Literar* Criticism, p. 423).

1011-12 "He mingled . . . elements of human nature" STUDY. Shelley made much this same comment in the "Preface to Frankenstein" where he notes that "most especially Milton in Paradise Lost" conforms to the rule of preserving "the truth of the elementary principles of human nature" (Prose, p. 306).

1013-1014 "as colours . . . composition . . . picture" STUDY. Shelley quite frequently uses images of the art of painting as representative of poetic inspiration and resulting pictures of truth. He does this in the poetry from 1817 on several times. In 1817, in The Revolt of Islam appears "Paintings, the poesy of mightiest thought / Which did the Spirit's history display" (ll. 600-601). In 1818, in the "Sonnet: 'Lift not the painted veil,' the "painted
"veil" is Life, and "unreal shapes" are "pictured" which mimic with "colours idly spread" (11. 1-4). Also in 1818 in "Marenghi" Florence is welcomed by the "light-invested angel Poesy" and then "in painting didst transcribe all taught / By loftiest meditations" (11. 33-36). In *Prometheus Unbound* (1819) "beams of brightest verse / Are clouds to hide, not colours to portray" (IV.534-5). In 1820 in *The Witch of Atlas* this figure is "brodering the pictured poesy / Of some high tale" which her smiles "dye / In hues outshining heaven" and ever add "some grace to the wrought poesy" (XXVI.252-256).

In 1821, in *Epipsychidion*, "In the words / Of antique verse and high romance,—in form, / Sound, colour" the Epipsyche's "Spirit was the harmony of truth" (11. 209-211, 216).

EDITIONS. Cook comments, "for these consult the *Poetics* of Aristotle" (p. 74). Verkoren adds a further note, that Aristotle defined epic poetry as "an imitation in verse of characters of a higher type." He also notes that Aristotle's name is not mentioned in the *Defence* (p. 88).

STUDY. The mythology which Shelley speaks of is, of course, Christianity. The idea of calling it a "mythology" with all that implies can be found directly in Volney's *A Survey of the Revolutions of Empires*, a volume with which Shelley is very familiar. Volney explains how the "Religion of Moses" was erected by this Hebrew "legislator," who wished to
separate his nation from all others and to form an "exclusive empire." He "conceived the design of taking for its basis religious prejudices, and of erecting around it a sacred rampart of rites and opinions. But in vain did he proscribe the worship of symbols, the reigning religion at that time in Lower Egypt and Phenicia . . . the Egyptians, Syrians and Arabs, entering this open country, introduced their tenets, and the religion of Moses thus underwent a second alteration. In like manner the priests and great men, removing to Babylon, and educated in the science of the Chaldeans, imbibed . . . every principle of their theology, and from that moment the dogmas of the evil Genius (Satan), of the archangel Michael, of the Ancient of Days (Ormudz), of the rebellious angels, the celestial combats, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection, dogmas unknown to Moses, or rejected by him, since he observes a perfect silence respecting them, became naturalized among the Jews." Thus the emigrants brought back these ideas, and the innovations occasioned disputes, but finally the "theology of Zoroaster was consecrated by the children of Moses." Volney continues that a "fortuitous analogy between two leading ideas, proved particularly favourable to this coalition and formed the basis of a last system, not less surprising in its fortune than in the causes of its formation." This analogy was the awaiting of a royal deliverer. The "Hierophants" enthusiastically looked to this figure to make the Hebrews the leaders of an empire to extend "over the whole
world." Volney continues, "the sacred and mythological traditions of precedent times had spread over all Asia a tenet perfectly analogous," that "a great mediator, a final judge," was to come who, as a "victorious legislator," was to restore the golden age upon earth, and to deliver the world from evil. Thus "this resemblance between the oracles of different nations and the prediction of the prophets, excited the attention of the Jews." The "Hierophants were interrogated, and their sacred books examined." The "great Mediator" was expected. Volney concludes that in the whole history of religion there are always systems being built to help the uncertain human mind which is placed in a world it does not comprehend, and finding one defective abandons it for another, inventing "chimeras of heterogeneous and contradictory beings, and, ever dreaming of wisdom and happiness," but losing itself "in a labyrinth of torments and illusions" (pp. 230-233, 238-239). Thus, Shelley's "modern mythology," can be seen to coincide with Volney's view that older mythologies combined to make up the new system of Christianity. Shelley states as directly as Volney that this system too will be lost, when he says that "time and change" will add this "modern mythology" as "one more superstition to the mass of those which have arisen and decayed upon the earth."
PARAGRAPH 28: LINES 1029-1049


Epic Poet"

CRITICISM. R. Wellek comments that the most original insights of the Defence are historical, and that the Platonic vision of Shelley is central to the argument. Shelley "draws from Plato, directly or indirectly, the view of poetry as the creative principle in man." To Shelley, "the historical role of poetry is exalted to that of the primary civilizing factor in the dim past, in the present age, and in the future" (A History, II, p. 124). Foerster, instead, considers the Romantic appraisals of epic poets, noting that "Dante and Milton were the central figures. Long deprecated in England because of the 'irregularities' of the Divine Comedy, Dante emerged around 1800 as one of the principal heroic poets. Now that 'the old imperial code of criticism' had been fully discredited, Boyd said that Dante's poem could be rightly called a genuine epic; and Hunt, Shelley, . . . and others proceeded to speak of it as one or at least to compare it freely with the Iliad and Paradise Lost. Milton had of course been 'discovered' long ago, but during the Romantic period he was imitated right and left, and his prestige rose to greater heights than ever" (The Fortunes of Epic Poetry, p. 42).

STUDY. Shelley has expressed the same thought again, in almost the same words of "relation to the age" in a letter
to Byron, July 16, 1821: "I still feel . . . that you will
write a great and connected poem, which shall bear the same
relation to this age as the 'Iliad', the 'Divina Commedia',
and 'Paradise Lost' did to theirs" (Letters, II, p. 309).

1031-1035 "creations bore . . . relation . . .
development."

STUDY. Shelley has said in the same vein that poets are both
the "creators" and the "creations" of their age, in the
"Preface" to Prometheus Unbound. There he has also noted
just such a relationship of Milton to his age, not only as
an "awakener" of the public mind, but as one who has contrib­
uted to the "progress and development" of it because he is
"a republican and a bold inquirer into morals and religion."
Here, too, as later in the Defence itself, he sees the poets
of his own age in the same relationship of partaker and
forerunner, for these current poets are full of "electric
life" which is "less their spirit than the spirit of the age"

In considering Shelley's general comments on the "laws
of epic truth," his high placement of the epic and its
creators, and its close relationship to present and other
ages, a parallel in his general thinking can be found in
Samuel Johnson's Life of Milton. There is no actual record
of Shelley's familiarity with Johnson but Mary Shelley, who
has demonstrated so much reading in common with Shelley,
indicates in a letter of April 3, 1835 to John Murray her
familiarity with Johnson, having read his biography "ten times" and calling him a "wise & gentle Bear" as well as a "profound philosopher" (The Letters, II, p. 93). Johnson has also considered Paradise Lost and its relationship to general epic poetry, which he also defines. Paradise Lost, to him, as a poem "with respect to design, may claim the first place, and with respect to performance the second, among the productions of the human mind," a judgment which is close to Shelley's own. Johnson, discussing epic poetry in general, says: "By the general consent of critics, the first praise of genius is due to the writer of an epic poem, as it requires an assemblage of all the powers which are singly sufficient for other compositions. Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth, by calling imagination to the help of reason. Epick poetry undertakes to teach the most important truths by the most pleasing precepts, and therefore relates some great event in the most affecting manner. History must supply the writer with the rudiments of narration, which he must improve and exalt by a nobler art; must animate by dramatick energy, and diversify by retrospection and anticipation; morality must teach him the exact bounds of vice and virtue; from policy and the practice of life he has to learn the discriminations of character and the tendency of the passions, either single or combined; and physiology must supply him with illustrations and images. To put these materials to poetical use is required an imagination capable of painting nature and
realizing fiction" (Samuel Johnson, p. 338).

1036-37 "Lucretius had limed the wings of his swift spirit in the dregs of the sensible world"

EDITIONS. Koszul reports that in the draft this reads:
"Lucretius entangled the wings of his swift spirit in atoms" (see Textual Notes above). Cook refers to Hamlet, III.iii. 68-9: "O limed soul, that, struggling to be free / Art more engaged" (p. 75). Miss Winstanley, on the other hand, feels that "Shelley is probably alluding to the atomic theory, explained at such length in the De Rerum Natura" (p. 91).

To Clark, however, "this is a statement of matter of fact, and not an outright condemnation, for Shelley always ranked Lucretius among the very great" (p. 290). Jordan also notes this high ranking, and says that "probably in this context he is thinking of the materialism and skepticism of De Rerum Natura" (p. 61).

CRITICISM. In Barnard's view Shelley "strove to free himself from the bonds of matter and time and space." Barnard sees always present in Shelley's later writings this "rebellion against the world of things," an idea most definitely expressed in the Defence. He comments that here is "the anomaly of a poet glorifying poetry as the agency by which man may free himself from that . . . natural world" whose representation is often assumed to be the "sufficient purpose of the poet's art." He then asks, "Did one poet ever before pass upon another such a judgment as that of Shelley upon
Lucretius . . . ?"

He concludes that "like Plato, and like the Master"
Shelley felt human life is but a mirror reflecting "distorted
images of a divine world beyond" (Shelley's Religion, pp.
790-791). Schulz feels that Shelley's reservations on
Lucretius, Virgil and others is based on the fact that there
is "no distinctively Roman poetry." Lucretius misses the
highest distinction "because he fails to seek the 'certain
order' which belongs to poetry and not to life. His vision
would seem distinctive had his work informed rather than been
informed by science." Schulz further suggests that "while
Shelley's philosophical premises" are not strictly idealistic,
his judgment of Lucretius suggests "an opposition to material­
ism that cannot be ignored," and that for Shelley, Lucretius
is partly "a scientist" (Shelley's Theory, p. 158).

STUDY. Hume's The Natural History of Religion may again be
one of the sources for Shelley's thought. Hume indeed sees
Lucretius as caught up by the "sensible" world, and states
why he thinks so. Hume notes that "however strong men's
propensity to believe invisible, intelligent power in nature,
their propensity is equally strong to rest their attention
on sensible, visible objects; and in order to reconcile these
opposite inclinations, they are led to unite the invisible
power with some visible object." Hume continues that "the
distribution also of distinct provinces to the several deities
is apt to cause some allegory, both physical and moral, to
enter into the vulgar systems of polytheism." When a god is
supposed to preside over any system of actions, "it is almost unavoidable to give him . . . attributes . . . suitable to his supposed powers." Hume then continues that "Lucretius was plainly seduced by the strong appearance of allegory, which is observable in the pagan fictions. He first addresses himself to Venus as to that generating power, which animates, renews, and beautifies the universe: But is soon betrayed by the mythology into incoherencies, while he prays to that allegorical personage to appease the furies of her lover Mars: An idea not drawn from allegory, but from the popular religion, and which Lucretius, as an Epicurean, could not consistently admit of" (pp. 38-39).

There are other factors which are related to Shelley's own thinking. Lucretius has written in the didactic, philosophic, epic tradition, producing in part a translation and reorganization of material directly from Epicurus, basing the atomic theory on the work of Democritus of Abdera, and in the title, De Natura, using the same title as other didactic epics. As Farrington points out, it is a general characteristic for didactic poets to use subject matter not invented by themselves ("Form and Purpose in the De Rerum Natura," Lucretius, p. 19). On two counts, then, Lucretius would fail with Shelley, didacticism and imitation, even though in other ways his place is very high.

It is also worthwhile to consider the atomic theory of Lucretius itself in relation to Shelley's outlook. The practical outcome of the atomic theory of Democritus was
"a rigid system of determinism" (Farrington, p. 20). If the cancellation which appears at this point in the draft is observed, we find that "Lucretius entangled the wings of his swift spirit in atoms," which become the "dregs of the sensible world" in the final manuscript. In the Epicurean philosophy expounded by Lucretius, man's soul is made of material atoms, and "the nature of the mind is understood to be mortal" and "body and spirit exist compacted into one whole," and so cannot survive the body. The soul resolves into primary atoms at death and it is "everlasting death" which is waiting [De Rerum Natura, III.703-1076] (Lucretius: De Rerum Natura, pp. 225, 229, 247). This negation of any immortality of the spirit runs directly counter to what Shelley has often indicated. In the Defence he states that the poet "participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one." In Lucretius's terms, at death man himself becomes the "dregs of the sensible world," particles of matter left after the spirit has departed, and the atoms have lost all distinction. Shelley writes as a poet, and his word choice here is very pointed, for if all that man ultimately is, is residue left in a sensible world, that is, a world perceptible to the senses, whether those of physical sensation or intellectual awareness, then this is ultimate negation. Shelley does not share this view. This is his true ground for rejection of Lucretius, for he has "entangled" his "swift" (ready, moving, responding) spirit (which is soul as distinguished from body). The "dregs" mean something completely
worthless, as Queen Mab's "the dregs of all that is most vile" (IV.181), [see also "England 1819," 1. 2; Faust, 11.296], or, in the sense of despair, "the bitter dregs of woe" (The Revolt of Islam, VII.xv.8) [see also "Song for Tasso" 11.3].

A reason can be shown for Shelley's changing his original wording from the entangling of "his swift spirit in atoms" to "dregs of the sensible world." The key word is "atom," and a glance at Shelley's use reveals a viewpoint which is indicative of his belief in man's eternity, and of his rejection of the absolute Lucretian mortality of man. "Atom," as Shelley's poetry reveals, has a meaning of "that which is not extinguishable," which, of course, does not contradict the Epicurean view. But what does contradict it is that Shelley's atom is attached to what is permanent beyond the simple, earthly, or bodily sense. This view changes surprisingly little from his early to his last work.

Shelley, in his poetry, sees the atom as part of the Soul which is an active and continuously living spirit in the universe. In Queen Mab (1812), this living spirit is the "moveless pillar" of the "varied and eternal world," and its "minutest atom comprehends / A world of loves and hatreds." Man is "of soul and body" and formed to "soar unwearied," and to "taste / The joys which mingled sense and spirit yield." But man is born also to face death and fears. The first state is what man "shall hereafter be," and the second is man "as vice has made him now" (IV.139-167). Later in
the poem the atom is again part of the eternal mover, the
"Soul of the Universe," and no atom fulfills an "unnecessi-
tated task" (IV.171-177).

In the "Ode to Heaven" (1819) the atom is again part of
the eternal universe, where suns are "Atoms of intensest
light" (11. 17-18). Yet there is an ambivalence here as the
Spirits argue, one for the eternal power in a Heaven of
lights, and another for a Heaven which is nothing but a
globe where millions gather and disappear. This is, in
essence, a Shelley-Lucretian argument. The same ambivalence
appears in Adonais (1821) where "the intense atom glows /
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose" (XX.177-
180). However, the "Light" that "kindles the Universe" does
not quench but "consumes the last clouds of cold mortality"
(LIV.478-486). In Epipsychidion, (1821), the Soul which
burns in the heart of love is an "atom of th' Eternal"
(11. 477-479).

Shelley has provably admired the work of Lucretius. Yet
he remains objective in his critical judgment, and typically
uses material from such reading in his own way. The Lucretian
atom is surprisingly judged and re-evaluated. Shelley's
atoms are not Lucretius's atoms, and he carefully does not
confuse them. In a very Elizabethan phrase, Lucretius, by
"liming his swift spirit" has trapped himself like a bird
in a snare by accepting only the bitter lees, or dregs, of
the visible world of the body. The atom, which is the spirit
or soul that for Shelley contains the ability to soar
invisibly beyond the finite toward and into the infinite, thus is removed from its original connection to Lucretius.

1037-40 "Virgil ... genius ... imitator ... copied"

CRITICISM. G. Cowling comments that "with the change of taste which the Romantic movement brought, the influence of Virgil waned... The poets of the nineteenth century preferred Greece to Rome, witness the works of Keats, Shelley, Landor, Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne and Arnold. Virgilian rusticity and Virgilian dignity gave way to Greek myth and to an idealized Greece." He notes that to the Renaissance, Virgil was a "creator of poetic subjects which might be plundered," and to the next two centuries, a "model of form and style." In the nineteenth century his fame "suffered eclipse" and "Virgil was regarded,—or at least there was a tendency to regard him,—as an imitator, a marvellous craftsman, but not tremendously inspired" ("Virgil in English Poetry," Shelley and Other Essays, pp. 173-174). J. Thomson notes also that in the nineteenth century Homer was "exalted over Virgil," who was considered a "court-poet," and his Aeneid a "literary epic." Greek literature was admired because it was more spontaneous in its inspiration and thus "Catullus was preferred to Horace, Lucretius to Virgil" (The Classical Background of English Literature, p. 224).

STUDY. As Shelley has indicated, genius requires the artist to innovate, and thus to lead forward. In spite of his great gifts, almost all that Virgil created was based on the great
poets of the past, such as Homer, Theocritus, Hesiod, or Apollonius Rhodius, and he did not attempt originality. Peacock's views and those of Shelley coincide here. Peacock speaks of the silver age, "or the poetry of civilized life" which is of two kinds, "imitative and original." He notes that the "imitative consists in recasting, and giving an exquisite polish, to the poetry of the age of gold: of this Virgil is the most obvious and striking example." The silver age poet "re-casts the poems of the age of gold," and Virgil "travelled out of the confines of truth and history into the old regions of poetry and fiction." Perhaps most significant, Peacock says that in such an age "poetry must either cease to be cultivated, or strike into a new path. The poets of the age of gold have been imitated and repeated till no new imitation will attract notice" (Halliford, pp. 10-13). Peacock calls this the "Virgilian" age, as Shelley has also called it earlier in the Defence. To both Shelley and Peacock, then, imitation and lack of innovation mark even the great poet such as Virgil in such an age. To both Shelley and Peacock, this period is the "Virgilian" age in more than one sense.

1041 "mock-birds"

EDITIONS. Cook suggests here "mocking birds" (p. 75).

STUDY. It seems likely that Shelley got this rather odd term, "mock-birds," directly from Monboddô, as well as the meaning it implies. It is another of a number of echoes which appear
in the Defence from Monboddo. In speaking of language, Monboddo observes that it is one of the first arts invented. Beginnings are difficult but once an art is discovered it leads to another, for, as Aristotle observed, our learning is from imitation. He continues: "In short, it appears to me, that we resemble very much an American or West-India bird that I have heard of, called the Mock-bird, which has no tune of its own, but imitates the notes of any other bird" (Of the Origin, Book II, pp. 207-208). Monboddo's definition may apply to Lucretius, already described in a bird metaphor, to Virgil, and to the "flock" of lesser poets now to follow.

1042-1043 "Apollonius Rhodius, Quintus Calaber Smyrnaeus, Nonnus, Lucan, Statius or Claudian"

STUDY. This listing of epic poets is in chronological order by country, and starts first with the Greek poets. Apollonius is the earliest, 300-250 B.C., and is an Alexandrian epic poet. Quintus and Nonnus are both of the 4th century A.D., and Greek epic poets of the post-Alexandrian school. Lucan and Statius are Roman epic poets, Lucan dating from A.D. 39-65, and Statius from A.D. 45-96. Claudian, A.D. 395, is considered the last epic poet of the ancient writers.

1042 "Apollonius Rhodius"

EDITIONS. Cook notes that he is best known for his Argo-

aeutica, a poem in four books (p. 78). Miss Winstanley adds further that "he is not counted among the great Greek poets but in his own way is of sufficient importance; he has been
described as one of the founders of romanticism in Europe, and exercised considerable influence on early European literature" (p. 91).

STUDY. Shelley is recorded by Mary Shelley as having read the Argonautica on August 1 and 25, 1820 (Journal, pp. 136-137, 144). Apollonius belongs to the golden period of the school of letters flourishing at Alexandria, the center of Greek letters and scholarship under the Ptolemies. What was being produced was imitative, learned poetry written for a cultivated audience, in a time valuing scholarship. Writing in this age tended toward shorter polished works, but Apollonius attempted a revival of the long epic in his Argonautica, based on the story of Jason, Medea, and the Golden Fleece. In it he adopted Homeric diction rather than that of his own period. He innovated by adding romantic love and an epic heroine. Book IV of Virgil's Aeneid derives from this work. He is a poet, then, who is writing in an imitative school, and producing a work deliberately removed from the people and life of his own age. Longinus, about 80 A.D., said that in the Argonautica Apollonius "appears as a faultless poet . . . yet had you not rather be Homer than Apollonius?" (On Literary Excellence, Ch. XXXII, Literary Criticism Plato to Dryden, p. 185).

"Quintus Calaber Smyrnaeus"

EDITIONS. About this name the various editors had some trouble (see Textual Notes above). Quoting from Mahaffy's History of Greek Literature Cook notes that an epic school
was founded in Upper Egypt in the fifth century, two of whose representatives are well known, Nonnus and Musaeus. Of Quintus Smyrnaeus (called Calaber from the manuscript having been found there) Mahaffy stated that he wrote "a continuation of Homer in fourteen books, thus taking up the work of the cyclic poets, who were probably lost before his time" [1.153] (p. 75). Later editors also note this same information.

STUDY. Quintus Smyrnaeus's epic, Posthomerica, picks up the Iliad at the point it ceases, carries the story through Troy's fall and the Greeks' departure, is entirely modelled on Homer, and is considered lacking in originality.

1043 "Nonnus"

EDITIONS. Cook again notes Mahaffy's remarks, that Nonnus "is an interesting figure" composing his "long epic on the adventures of Dionysus," and, on the other hand, his "paraphrase of St. John's Gospel into Homeric hexameters" [Hist. Grk Lit., 1.153] (p. 75). Miss Winstanley notes that both he and Quintus Smyrnaeus "belong to the epic school founded in Upper Egypt early in the fifth century" (p. 91). Verkoren turns to Peacock's work and comments that "the mention of the poet Nonnus by Shelley may be due to the fact that Peacock also mentioned him. Nonnus was Peacock's favourite Latin poet" (p. 78). Jordan notes that Nonnus wrote "the Dionysiaca, a 48-book epic" (p. 61).

STUDY. Shelley's first recorded interest in Nonnus is shown
in two letters, one to Ollier on December 7, 1817 ordering the 'Dionysiaca,' and the other to Lackington, Allen & Company of December 23, 1817, also ordering the "'Dionysiaca of Nonnus, a Greek Poem of the 5th Century" (Letters, I, pp. 575, 585).

The subject Nonnus chose was that of the expedition of Dionysus to India and back, a popular subject because of Alexander's expedition. The Dionysiaca's later influence is on language rather than on the epic form, for its Homeric hexameter is considered very fine though monotonous. Peacock notes that it "contains many passages of exceeding beauty in the midst of masses of amplification and repetition." He places Nonnus in the age of brass, an age which, "by rejecting the polish and the learning of the age of silver, and taking a retrograde stride to the barbarisms and crude traditions of the age of iron, professes to return to nature and revive the age of gold. This is the second childhood of poetry." Instead of Homeric simplicity Peacock notes this age's "verbose and minutely-detailed descriptions" in "loose rambling style." He consigns all poets flourishing in the "decline of the Roman Empire" to this age. Peacock calls the Dionysiaca the "best specimen" of the age, and gives the brass age the name of "Nonnic" (Halliford, p. 13). Shelley, by his listing of Nonnus here, does not disagree with Peacock's estimate.
EDITIONS. Cook and Miss Winstanley note him as the author of the *Pharsalia* (p. 75; p. 92). Jordan states that Marcus Annaeus Lucanus was "a Roman poet born in Spain, best known for his *Pharsalia* (p. 61).

CRITICISM. A. H. Gilbert points out that Dante considered Lucan one of the five great poets of antiquity into whose company he represented himself as admitted in *Inferno* IV.90 (Literary Criticism, p. 306). The other four great poets with whom Dante associates Lucan are Virgil, Homer, Ovid, and Horace. Castelvetro, the Italian critic, in *On the Poetics* (1571) excludes Lucan from "the ranks of the poets" and the "glorious title of poet" because of dealing with "matter already treated by historians" and even if not treated by them "it is enough that it had happened before and was not imagined" by authors such as Lucan (Literary Criticism, p. 306). This touches upon the Renaissance controversy on which Sidney reflects, and which indirectly appears in Shelley.

STUDY. Lucan is the other poet of this list whose work Shelley has read fairly recently. Mary Shelley reports her reading of the *Pharsalia* in August and September of 1819 and Shelley's on September 15 (Journal, pp. 122-124, 223). Notopoulos also reports Shelley's reading of Lucan in August and September of 1815 ("The Dating," p. 479).

Lucan's *De Bello Civili* or *Pharsalia* is an epic of ten
books, written about the recent Roman civil war between Caesar and Pompey. Reflecting Lucan's own changing relationship with Nero, his epic tone shifts from imperial to anti-imperial and to republican in sympathy with Pompey and the Senate. He is writing of real history, and attempting a new epic rather than an imitated ancient one. Thomson notes that Lucan is modern in discarding much epic tradition, such as divine interventions, Muses, and councils of gods, and further, even an epic hero (Classical Influences, pp. 35-37). Grube, on the other hand, comments that Lucan "does not directly concern us except as the outstanding example of a potentially great poet spoiled by an excessive love of rhetoric which often betrayed him into absurdities." Grube also notes "that Lucan shared the feeling that Rome had degenerated from its earlier glory" (The Greek and Roman Critics, p. 261).

Shelley quotes two lines from the Pharsalia, IX.587-580, in his Essay on Christianity (1816).

Of this list, Lucan is the only one mentioned by Sidney in his Defence. Interestingly, Sidney's general view of Lucretius, Virgil, and Lucan also does not place them in the first rank of poets. They are mentioned in connection with Sidney's discussion of poetry, which he divides into "three general kinds." L. Soens explains these three classes of Sidney as follows: "Divine" poetry, or that religious poetry based on the Bible, or ancient hymns of classical
or orphic poetry; philosophic poetry, that is, learned
poetry dealing with moral or natural philosophy, astronomy,
or history (Cato, Lucretius, Lucan); and "right" poetry,
that of poets who properly imitate to "teach and delight"
what "may be" or "ought to be." These last, as Soens points
out, are the "meaningful fictions" Sidney "intends to defend"
(Sir Philip Sidney's Defense of Poesy, pp. xi-xii). Lucretius,
Virgil (in his Georgics), and Lucan fit into the second, and
not Sidney's third or highest category, which Sidney explains
as follows: "The second kinde, is of them that deale with
matters Philosophicall, either morall as Tirteus, Phocilides,
Cato; or naturall, as Lucretius, and Virgil's Georgikes; or
Astronomicall as Manilius and Pontanus; or Historicall as
Lucan: which who mislike the fault, is in their judgment
quite out of tast, & not in the sweet food of sweetly
uttered knowledge. But because this second sort is wrapped
within the folde of the proposed subject, and takes not the
free course of his own invention, whether they properly bee
Poets or no, let Gramarians dispute; and goe to the third
indeed right Poets, of whom chiefly this question ariseth:
betwixt whom and these second, is such a kinde of difference,
as betwixt the meaner sort of Painters, who counterfeyt
onely such faces as are set before them, and the more
excelent, who having no law but wit, bestow that in colours
upon you, which if fittest for the eye to see . . . . For
these third be they which most properly do imitate to teach
& delight, and to imitate, borrow nothing of what is, hath
bin, or shall be, but range only reined with learned
discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be
and should be. These be they that as the first and most
noble sort, may justly be termed Vates: so these are waited
on in the excellentest languages and best understandings,
with the fore described name of Poets" (F., pp. 9-10).
Sidney's judgment and Shelley's are the same, that the best
poet must "borrow nothing" but most innovate or "range"
into "what may be and should be." None of Shelley's list
at this point of his Defence would measure up to this high
criterion in Sidney any more than they do in Shelley. Soens
points out concerning Sidney's passage that Sidney touches
upon the Renaissance argument as to whether writers such as
Lucretius and Lucan, who are deliberately didactic or factual
in expressing their philosophic or other views, are really
poets [see also B. Hathaway for a discussion at length on
this controversy in The Age of Criticism, pp. 65-80] (Sir
Philip Sidney, p. 64). Neither Sidney nor Shelley deny that
the didactic or factual is poetry, but also neither accords
this kind of poetry the highest rank, as both passages here
reveal, and as Shelley has often indicated elsewhere in his
work.

1043 "Statius"

EDITIONS. Cook identifies him as c. 61-98 A.D., and the
author of an unfinished Achilleid as well as the Thebaid
(p. 75), as does Miss Winstanley, (p. 92). Jordan notes also
that Publius Papinius Statius was a Roman poet (p. 61).

STUDY. Statius, who follows Lucan closely in time, (c. 45-96 A.D.), is a Latin poet about whom not much is known. He seems to have been a court poet under the Emperor Domitian, in the Silver Age of Latin poetry, when there is a more elaborate, extravagant writing style. In his twelve-book historical epic, the Thebaid, he turned to the ancient, famous epic theme of the "Seven against Thebes," and unlike Lucan, used the traditional form of epic writing. Thomson points out that though he professed himself a follower of Virgil his work is pedantic "versified chronicle," but was much admired in both the medieval period and eighteenth century (Classical Influence, pp. 45-47; The Classical Background, pp. 55, 206). Dante also places Statius in the Divine Comedy, in the Purgatory, however, rather than the Inferno as was Lucan.

1043 "Claudian"

EDITIONS. Cook, Winstanley, and Jordan identify him as a Roman poet, Claudius Claudianus, born in Alexandria, of the late fourth and early fifth century, and author of the epic, Rape of Proserpine (pp. 75; 92; 61).

STUDY. Claudian, the last on the list, is actually also the last epic poet of the ancient period. Born in Egypt, he came to Rome about 395 A.D., at a time when classical Latin no longer was spoken, although it was still understood. He was an accomplished poet, and wrote in classical Latin,
imitating the great classical poets. He wrote several epics on political subjects and on the war against the barbarians. In him, Latin poetry revives for a while at a late date. His most celebrated work is the heroic epic, The Rape of Proserpine, showing a style which is called one of artificial elegance and imitation, and a talent which is called rhetorical rather than creative. (See "Epic Poetry," Enc. Brit., 8, p. 647; Thomson, Classical Influences, pp. 50-52, 85).

1045 "Milton was the third Epic Poet"

EDITIONS. Verkoren and Jordan identify this idea with the line in Adonais, IV.36, in which Shelley calls Milton "the third among the sons of light" (p. 107; p. 62). STUDY. Shelley's opinion at this point coincides with that of Peacock, in The Four Ages, which calls Milton "the greatest of English poets" (Halliford, p. 16).

1048-1049 "Orlando Furioso, the Gerusalemme Liberata, the Lusiad, or the Fairy Queen."

EDITIONS. The editors generally identify the authors as Ariosto (1474-1533), Tasso (1544-1595), Camoëns (1525-1580), and Spenser (1552-1599). Jordan further comments that Shelley "did not much like Ariosto, finding him lacking in sensibility; Tasso, he thought, had more delicate sensibility but was marred by artificiality" [Letter to the Gisbornes, July 10, 1818] (p. 62). STUDY. Shelley's list of epic authors is in chronological
order, as well as order by country, Italian, Portuguese, and English. In subject matter, Ariosto and Tasso turned to the Christian-Saracen battles in their romantic epics, and neither had a new or unique subject in Carolingian, Arthurian, and Crusades matter. Ariosto picked up the tale begun by Boiardo, *Orlando Innamorato*, of a half-century earlier, and also set up imaginary heroic founders as a flattering gesture to the Estes of the Ferrara court. Tasso, on the other hand, chose to model his epic on Virgil and tried for a nobler Italian style. As Lucan did in classical epic, Tasso also turned to real events and characters from the First Crusade, and to producing a strongly Catholic work. Like Tasso, Camoëns also turned to Virgil's *Aeneid* for his model, adding some Homeric likenesses. Like Tasso he also used actual history, and like Lucan, recent national events. He also inserted Portugal's history and its projected future into his epic, thus creating a national epic. Spenser, too, in one sense wrote a national epic, and by intent was also emulating Virgil and Ariosto. In another sense he was writing a romantic epic, many of whose elements are highly imitative of older romances. In addition he turns to older subject matter with his use of knights, quests, archaicisms, and epic conventions. But, above all, he is also writing a flattering work directed to the Queen.

Judging these epics by Shelley's terms, they fail to measure up to the highest standard of "epic truth" by the imitation of other epic authors and works, the use of already
thoroughly exploited subject matter, the employment of historical events which are particularized, the lower-level adventurous episodes prominent in the romance form, the narrowing of events or of import to one nation and its glorification, the flattery of rulers, the concentration on form for its own sake, the intent of the author to ensure favor and patronage or to outdo another poet, or to develop a narrower sectarian religious view, or even to ennoble a country's literary style.
1050-1056 "Dante and Milton . . . antient religion . . . Reformation . . . intervals."

EDITIONS. Koszul reports a draft addition which explains what Dante and Milton are doing, a pruning of the dead branches and decay of outworn opinions on faith (see Textual Notes above).

STUDY. In both an early essay, An Address to the Irish People (1812), and in a later one, A Philosophical View of Reform (1820), Shelley has explored what he sees in the system of ancient religion as it developed, and in the Reformation when it came along. In both essays he traces the divisions of belief which have always badly divided men within the Christian church. The Reformation continued this by showing how little men still understood "the spirit of reform." Religion which makes men "wiser and better" is good but not that which turns men to hatred and bigotry. He sees Christ's principal insistence as an "unlimited toleration and complete charity." Again in 1820 he repeats that although the name and opinions of Christ were used as "symbols of domination and imposture," what the "great Reformer" preached was a "system of liberty and equality." Dante, citizen of a republic, Florence, stands at the beginning of the Reformation as Milton, another republican, stands at the end. The "spirit of the antient religion" in their poetry undoubtedly represents these qualities of toleration, liberty, and equality, which
came directly from Christ into the ancient Christian religion.

The Reformation, while far from perfect, had the result of allowing men to protest against false religious dogmas. It also opened a "new epoch" which commenced "deeper inquiries into the forms of human nature than are compatible with an unreserved belief in any of those popular mistakes upon which popular systems of faith with respect to the cause and agencies of the universe, with all their superstructure of political and religious tyranny, are built." This epoch then flowered in the seventeenth century, as this essay indicates, just as the Dantean century of Florence had flowered into new investigations and developments (Prose, pp. 41-44, 230-232).

1056-1059 "Dante . . . reformer . . . Luther . . . usurpation."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments that "Shelley again shows his ignorance of ecclesiastical history for there had been many reformers before Dante (p. 92).

CRITICISM. C. M. Woodhouse notes that Dante argued powerfully but unheeded for "the separation of the temporal and spiritual powers of the papacy" in the sixteenth canto of the Purgatorio, two centuries before the Protestant schism:

The church of Rome
Mixing two governments that ill assort,
Hath missed her footing, fallen into the mire,
And there herself and burden much defiled.
Woodhouse continues: "These were bold words in the fourteenth century, when heretics might be burned for less. Shelley is right to set Dante before Luther as a religious reformer; and if Dante had been heeded in the fourteenth century, Luther might have proved unnecessary in the sixteenth" ("The Unacknowledged Legislators," Essays by Divers Hands, p. 66). Schulz feels that Shelley's "calling Dante a religious reformer" should remind us "that he consistently found institutional Christianity diametrically opposed to the religious spirit of poets of the Christian era, like Dante, Milton, and himself" (Shelley's Theory, p. 162).

STUDY. The "Ode to Liberty" stands firmly in the background of this passage, for Shelley is speaking of breaking away from the tyranny of established religion as this paragraph opens. In the "Ode," Shelley traces Liberty's progress through a thousand years to the time when anarchy was sweeping around Italy and there arose from the deepest human spirit strange melody "with love and awe" to strike "dissonant arms," and Art "traced on our earthly home / Fit imagery to pave Heaven's everlasting dome" (IX.126-135). The allusion is certainly to Dante's art here. It is interesting to note that Luther and Milton are next mentioned. Luther is considered a worker for liberty from religion's tyranny both in the Defence passage and in the "Ode." Shelley's attitude toward Luther is more clearly revealed in the "Ode," however:

Luther caught thy wakening glance:
Like lightning, from his leaden lance  
Reflected, it dissolved the visions of the trance  
In which, as in a tomb, the nations lay.

(X.141-144)

Shelley, in the Defence, picks up again this "lightning" and "conductor" imagery in the last half of the paragraph. And in the same stanza, 11. 145-150, Milton is also associated with this piercing of "tempest-winged Error" by Liberty, for "England's prophets hailed" her in "songs whose music cannot pass away," and

Not unseen  
Before the spirit-signted countenance  
Of Milton didst thou pass, from the sad scene  
Beyond whose night he saw, with a dejected mien.

The star and light imagery is strongly used through the rest of the "Ode" including the same "morning-star" as now appears in the "Lucifer" image of the Defence:

Come thou, but lead out of the inmost cave  
Of man's deep spirit, as the morning-star  
Beckons the Sun from the Eoan wave,  
Wisdom . . . .

(XVIII.256-259)

1059-1062 "Dante . . . created a language . . . barbarisms."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley suggests referring to "Dante's own treatise De Vulgari Eloquentia", where he explains in detail how a literary language may be constructed from the
different dialects of Italy" (p. 92).

1062-64 "He was the congregator . . . spirits . . . learning"

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley includes here "such poets as Guittore di Arezzo, Guido Cavalcanti, Cino da Pistoia and others," and notes that Cavalcanti was a friend of the youthful Dante. She also notes that Shelley translated a sonnet in which Dante wishes for Cavalcanti's company (p. 92).

1064-1065 "the Lucifer of that starry flock"

EDITIONS. Jordan comments that Shelley is apparently using "Lucifer" in the favorable sense of "light bearer" before "he became a fallen angel" (p. 62).

CRITICISM. C. Baker notes Shelley's use of star imagery, especially in Adonais, and comments that both there and in the Defence Shelley is "preoccupied with the notion of an astronomical hierarchy of dead poets." His general conception is that "when great poets pass away they become as stars fixed in the firmament of time" whose light, their works, continues to shine upon earth. Baker also notes that the morning-star, like other Shelleyan symbols, is not new, having been used in The Revolt of Islam and in The Masque of Anarchy (Shelley's Major Poetry, pp. 247-248).

STUDY. Perhaps the most interesting, intricate, and skillful use of interlocking imagery and meaning in the Defence is achieved by Shelley's use of the "Lucifer" image in this
passage. While Shelley is amplifying on Dante's epic qualities, in the "Lucifer" image he is using a very neat allusion to Milton, whom he linked with Dante at the opening of the paragraph. This image of "Lucifer" carries the double meaning of both light and republicanism, while still retaining its original intent of the fallen angel leading hosts away from God, and also serves as a keynote to most of the imagery in the rest of the paragraph. The allusion is Shelleyan in the sense of connecting great poet to great poet, and in using the thought of one to describe the effect of the other, which, at the same time, reflects the first poet's own effect.

It is also another example of the irony of which Shelley is supremely capable. The "Lucifer of that starry flock" which "shone forth from republican Italy" has one source in Shelley's fragmentary drama, Charles the First: "Hell is the pattern of all commonwealths: / Lucifer was the first republican" (ll. 364-365). The Miltonic allusion involved here is to Paradise Lost, V.708-710:

His count'nance, as the Morning Star that guides
The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's Host.

Also involved in this Miltonic allusion is the passage in back of it from Isaiah XXXIV.12, "Lucifer, son of the morning," which Shelley very likely knew (see n. 708, John Milton, p. 319). Isaiah, as Shelley earlier pointed out in the Defence, was a light-giver too in his effect upon the minds
of Jesus and his disciples (11. 823-824). Shelley directly attaches Lucifer to Milton's "Morning Star" as can be seen in his letter to Leigh Hunt, October 6, 1821, in which he says: "I wish you could bring him [Hogg] with you—he will say I am like Lucifer who has seduced the third part of the starry flock" (Letters, II, p. 356).

Shelley has also used "Lucifer" to mean the morning star, or another name for the planet Venus, twice in his poetry. In Epipsychidion appears "Bright as that wandering Eden, Lucifer" (1. 459), and in The Triumph of Life appears "silent splendour drops from Lucifer" (1. 414).

The star can become a comet of republicanism too, and can help to identify both Milton and Dante as the republicans that Shelley thinks they are. He has called Milton one directly in A Philosophical View of Reform, where he speaks of the "ominous comets of our republican poet perplexing great monarchs with fear of change," an allusion to Paradise Lost lines 1.598-599: "with fear of change / Perplexes Monarchs" (Prose, p. 238). The connection of Dante to "republican Italy" is also made in this same essay. He notes here that the republics of Italy had opposed for some time the all-surrounding tyranny. Republican Florence, because it was a "citadel" of "freedom," was the cause of the superiority of all the arts in Italy, and one of the results was the "union of energy and of beauty which distinguish[es] from all other poets the writings of Dante" (Prose, p. 231). Lucifer, too, whom Shelley called "the first republican" in
Charles the First, is also seen as a republican in the preceding paragraph where Shelley portrays Milton's Satan as a moral fighter against a "tyrant."

The intricate and interlocking imagery and allusion which connect Dante and Milton to Lucifer as light, morning star, and fallen angel leading a host away from an established God, and joined to political and religious republicanism, lead to a conclusion full of Shelleyan irony and paradox. The devoutly Christian poets, Dante and Milton, are doubly Lucifers, spreading the light of a new morning which, at the same time, is leading Christians away from orthodox beliefs, because as republicans they are fighting a tyrant, one that is contained in their own Christian state.

1067-72 "His very words are instinct with spirit . . . spark . . . atom . . . lightning . . . conductor."

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith not only identifies a Miltonic allusion here but comments on Shelley's imagery also: "Shelley's speech is always that of a poet; it is vital with metaphor, and we may not unjustly say of him as he said of Dante, in language which itself carries an echo of the greater days of English verse, 'His very words are instinct with spirit' [Paradise Lost, VI.852: 'Itself instinct with Spirit.'] each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought'" (p. xxiv).

CRITICISM. Barnard also feels "Shelley's splendid words may be applied to his poetry," but sees the thought of this
passage as "very close to Newman's theory of development in Christian doctrine; and this is not surprising" for "no Christian ever believed more literally in the divine inspiration of scripture than Shelley in the divine origin of great poetry" (Shelley's Religion, p. 7). Foerster points out that "quite unlike the neo classicist, who held that the value of great poetry is always more or less the same for all educated persons, Shelley also thinks that different ages will continue to discover new and different facets in a poet like Dante" (The Fortunes, p. 43).

STUDY. Shelley's poetry of the 1818-1822 period shows much of the same imagery as in this passage, and carries the same general meaning. An idea which consistently stays in Shelley's mind is that liberty and the poet's words are sparks, lightnings, or inextinguishable atoms, which may lie covered but which become future fires and lights of inspiration. The image appears in his translation of "Homer's Hymn to Mercury" where "lies a spark / Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark" (XXXIX.309-310). In Prometheus Unbound, the One in the deep is "Like veiled lightning asleep, / Like the spark nursed in embers" (II.iii.84-85). Also in 1819 is the "Ode to the West Wind," where as in the Defence lines there is birth. The wind is asked to "quicken to a new birth" the poet's thoughts, and "Scatter, as from the unextinguished hearth / Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!" (11. 64, 67-68). In 1820, in the "Ode to Liberty,"
Liberty is the "lightning of the nations" scattering "contagious fire" (I.2-4). In 1821, Adonais's "sparkless ashes" are left when "spirit's self ceases to burn" but the spirit is kindled above (XL.359-360, XLII.378), and "transmitted effluence" cannot die "so long are fire outlives the parent spark" (XLVI.407-408). In Epipsychidion "even the dim words which obscure thee now / Flash lightning-like, with unaccustomed glow (11. 32-33). In Hellas, Freedom is "springing Fire" and Milan has "quenchless ashes" (11. 56, 60).

In Shelley's last work, The Triumph of Life, from the extinguished Rousseau's spark rise "a thousand beacons" (11. 204-205). Also, the "glimmerings" of Dante and Petrarch help bring a "new" light in On the Revival of Literature. Here too is a use of the atom as Shelley really sees it, and as has been discussed above at 11. 1036-37, a "burning atom" of "inextinguishable thought."

1072-1074 "All . . . Infinite . . . all oaks potentially."

STUDY. Shelley may have found a source for his thinking and his imagery here in Bacon's Advancement of Learning. Clark has reported in "Shelley and Bacon" on a number of passages which Shelley has marked in his copy of Bacon. Two of these are of interest for this idea in the Defence. The first idea, as Clark records it, is: "To inquire the form of sound, etc., is easily apprehensible; but in the same manner to inquire the form of a lion, of an oak, of gold; nay, of water, of air, is a vain pursuit." Clark comments that "this kind
of speculation immensely interested Shelley" (item 26, p. 540). The second passage immediately follows, and Clark notes: "Again Shelley is struck by the following statement: 'Insomuch as we see, in the schools both of Democritus and Pythagoras, that the one did ascribe Figure to the first seeds of things and the others did suppose Numbers to be the principles and originals of things'" (item 27, p. 540). In considering the full passages in which these are marked, one finds that Shelley has been interested in Bacon's comment in the first instance, on "physic" or the middle term between "natural history and metaphysic." Natural history describes "the variety of things; physic the causes . . . and metaphysic the fixed and constant causes." Bacon develops this by saying that "Nature is collected either into one entire total, or else into the same principles or seeds." The first doctrine touches the "configuration of things" concerning "the world" and "the universe of things." The second concerns the "principles or originals of things." The third is "the doctrine concerning all variety and particularity of things." Bacon continues that Plato did "descry that forms were the true object of knowledge; but lost the real fruit of his opinion, by considering of forms as absolutely abstracted from matter, and not confined and determined by matter; and so turning his opinion upon theology, wherewith all his natural philosophy is infected." Bacon concludes that if man keeps a watchful eye he may "take notice what are the forms, the disclosures whereof are
fruitful and important to the state of man." He notes that it is useless then to inquire the form of a "lion," "oak," and other things but to inquire the "forms of sense," or "vegetation," of which "the essences" of all "creatures do consist," the "true forms of these" being "metaphysic." Along with metaphysics he considers in next order another part of similar rank, "mathematic." He notes that "quantity indefinite" is "but a relative" but "quantity determined or proportionable" is one of the essential forms of things as that is "causative in nature of a number effects," and here follows the second passage noted above that Shelley marked. Bacon notes further that it is the nature of the mind of man "to delight" in generalities, and not "in the inclosures of particularity" (Second Book, VII.4-5., pp. 43-44; VIII.1., p. 46, Great Books edition). The imagery of seed, oak, and infinity considered in their "physical," "metaphysical" and "Mathematical" aspects of both matter and form, as Bacon suggests, seems what Shelley has done here in a very apt and concise synthesis about poetry.

1074-1082 "Veil . . . fountain . . . delight."

EDITIONS. There are two additional passages recorded in the draft text, one at 1. 1076, and the other at the end of the paragraph, at 1. 1082 (see Textual Notes above).

CRITICISM. W. O. Scott suggests that Bacon's passage from The Advancement of Learning is influential on Shelley in his use of fountains, including the one at this point of the
Defence. The passage from Bacon reads: "The knowledge of man is as the waters, some descending from above, and some springing from beneath; the one informed by the light of nature, the other inspired by divine revelation. The light of nature consisteth in the notions of the mind and the reports of the senses . . ." (VI.207). Scott also comments that "fountains and streams are legion in Shelley." He notes a further passage in Shelley's Speculations on Metaphysics where the mind "is like a river whose rapid and perpetual stream flows outwards." Scott feels that Shelley finds "highly congenial imagery in Bacon, though this imagery is not exactly integral to Bacon's most important ideas" ("Shelley's Admiration for Bacon," p. 234). Wellek, in commenting on the "great poem" as a fountain says that "Shelley finely formulates the inexhaustible potentiality of a great poet and the process of accretion and varied interpretation which he inspires" (A History, II, pp. 128-129).

STUDY. The imagery in this passage occurs frequently in Shelley's poetry. He has made innumerable uses of veils, fountains, inner beauty, and waters. Again, as in other instances in the Defence, poems in the years nearest to the Defence show the same general imagery. The double use of "veil," for example, appears in Prometheus Unbound (III.iii. 62), and in The Triumph of Life (l. 413), as "veil by veil," and in Epipsychidion (l. 472), not surprisingly, in the same form as the Defence's "veil after veil." In The Witch of
Atlas appears "The naked beauty of the soul lay bare" but here the "inner form most bright and fair could be seen" (11. 570, 572). However, Prometheus has "Asia, thou light of life / Shadow of beauty unbeknown" (III.iii.7-8). The passage in closest relation to that of the Defence occurs in The Triumph of Life line quoted above, which reads more fully: "As veil by veil the silent splendour drops / From Lucifer . . ." (11. 413-414). Perhaps, as Yeats suggested about the cave imagery, Shelley's use here of the veil and the fountain, with its waters of wisdom, is a reflection, too, of the imagery of Porphyry's "Cave of the Nymphs," where the "cave of the world" holds "flowing waters" and "intellectual fountains," which feed men, and where also the veil is a symbol of the heavens, since the heavens are the vestments of the gods (see Essays & Introductions, pp. 81-83).

1082 End of paragraph

EDITIONS. Clark says that "Shelley's evaluation of the work of Dante has never been surpassed for penetration and poetic insight" (p. 291).

CRITICISM. D. King-Hele comments that "Shelley abandons his critical history at this point, before really beginning on English poetry, and proceeds to refute Peacock's argument that poets should yield the crown to reasoners" (Shelley: His Thought and Work, p. 290).
PARAGRAPH 30: LINES 1083-1088

1083-88 "The age . . . Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio . . . Chaucer . . . Italian invention."

EDITIONS. Starting with Cook, the editors have identified the passage with one of Sidney's, in which he has written of the "Fathers in Learning" of different countries: "so in the Italian language, the first that made it aspire to be a Treasure-house of Science were the Poets Dante, Bocace, and Petrarch. So in our English, were Gower, and Chawcer, after whom, encoraged & delighted with their excellent fore­going, others have followed to bewtify our mother toong, aswel in the same kind as other arts" (F., p. 4).

STUDY. Shelley, in *A Philosophical View of Reform*, points out that from the "undisputed superiority of Italy in litera­ture and the arts" the "father of our own literature, Chaucer, wrought from the simple and powerful language of a nursling of this republic the basis of our own literature." The "sac­red inspiration" in this *Defence* passage undoubtedly refers to the following line in the essay: "And thus we owe among other causes the exact condition belonging to [our own] intel­lectual existence to the generous disdain of submission which burned in the bosoms of men who filled a distant genera­tion and inhabited another land." The quality of freedom which Florence maintained for so long is what Shelley con­siders the condition which allowed the whole of art to develop in Italy, and thus, also in England (*Prose*, p. 231).
PARAGRAPH 31: LINES 1089-97

1089-97 "But let us not . . . Four Ages of Poetry."

EDITIONS. Koszul reports a draft addition after "society" (see Textual Notes above). This paragraph also contains another reference to Peacock's essay canceled in the Mary Shelley editions (see Textual Notes above).
1098-1100 "But poets . . . challenged . . . plea."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley and Brett-Smith feel that this refers to the last four paragraphs of Peacock's *Four Ages*, where the challenge is actually made, and begins a definite reply (pp. 92, 78).

CRITICISM. N. I. White comments that Shelley, "proceeding to the second alleged fault of poetry, Peacock's argument that in the modern world it lacked utility," is analyzing "the real meaning of utility with a wisdom that is still insufficiently regarded. His doctrine had been foreshadowed, rather than anticipated, by Sir Philip Sidney's shrewd, incidental blow against the usurpation of the 'serving sciences.'" Shelley's contention that "whatever strengthens and purifies the affections" is more useful than "what ministers merely to creature comforts," in White's view, "hardly goes beyond" Sidney. But White then comments that "as Shelley had already pointed out in detail in his *Philosophical View of Reform*, a narrowing view of utility had brought England to the verge of spiritual and even physical bankruptcy" (*Shelley*, II, pp. 275-276).

1100-1107 "It is admitted . . . delightful . . . reason more useful . . . Utility . . . Pleasure . . . acquiesces."

CRITICISM. R. J. White points out that "this notion of poetry as a luxury, an agreeable diversion, something 'extra'
to the 'real' business of life, set in during the latter part of the seventeenth century. It was bound up with the advancing cult of Utility as the measure of all things by a commercial culture; the popularity of John Locke as its spokesman; the advance of technology, and the spread of the . . . sober use of words by the scientists into other spheres of experience." He continues that "It was against this usurpation . . . and the reduction of poetry and its powers of Reason, Imagination, and Insight, that Shelley is protesting—as Coleridge protests in his passages on the usurpation of the Understanding in the first Lay Sermon. The poets were upholding the charms of a higher utility than that of the 'Utilitarians'" (Political Tracts, pp. 289-290). M. Solve comments that the young Shelley had held that all "poetical beauty ought to be subordinate to the inculcated moral" but Solve says the distinction is important, that Shelley "associates virtue with joy" and not with the "gloom of the puritans." He points out that in a note to Queen Mab Shelley says that "happiness is the sole end of the science of ethics, as of all other sciences," and that "this hedonistic tenet was not expressed as a passing fancy" for in the Defence "pleasure or good" is what the "sensitive and intelligent being seeks" (Shelley His Theory, p. 14).

STUDY. Mary Shelley has indicated Shelley's own position on the "good" to be sought in her "Note on Prometheus Unbound." She comments that Shelley "believed fervently that mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there
would be none," and that "man could be so perfectionized as
to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the
greater part of creation" (Poetry, p. 271).

1107-10 "There are two kinds . . . particular."
EDITIONS. Various changes in MS wording are noted by the
editors at this point (see Textual Notes above). It is at
this point also that the long holograph fragment of an early
text on Utility published by H. B. Forman starts which con­
tinues to l. 1172 below. (See Textual Notes above, and also
see Appendix B, for the text of this fragment.)
CRITICISM. Notopoulos suggests that these two kinds of
pleasure are discussed in Plato's "Republic, 583a, 585c,
586-587" (The Platonism, p. 355).

1110-14 "Utility . . . former . . . latter . . . useful."
EDITIONS. Both Miss Winstanley and Verkoren comment that
this and the following paragraph on utility are in direct
reply to Peacock (pp. 92, 78).
CRITICISM. R. G. Woodman, in contrast to the editors, feels
that this paragraph and the following ones through l. 1206
are Shelley's answer to Plato's objections to poetry and to
his exclusion of the myth-makers in the Republic. Woodman
comments that "from Shelley's angle of vision, Plato, in his
discussion of Homer, is viewing utility in the narrow sense
and exalting analytical reasoning 'over the direct expression
of the inventive and creative faculty.' It is possible,
therefore, that he has in mind Plato's discussion of the poet
in the Republic when he says in his Preface to his translation of the Symposium that Plato's theories 'respecting the government of the world, and the elementary laws of moral action' are 'stained with puerile sophisms.' Plato's genius, he argues, 'lies . . . in intuition, and it is this faculty which raises him far above Aristotle'" (Shelley's Changing Attitude to Plato," pp. 505-506).

STUDY. The pleasure, which forms true utility, and which is durable and universal, arises, in Shelley's view, from the qualities of virtue and benevolence. In an early essay, Proposals for an Association of Philanthropists (1812), he states this as a precept, and it is not one from which he deviates in his later work: "Virtue produces pleasure; it is as the cause to the effect" (Prose, p. 61). He discusses the "Nature of Virtue" further in A Treatise on Morals (1816), where again he notes that we are "susceptible of receiving painful or pleasurable impressions," those which are good producing pleasure, and those evil producing pain. These are "general names, applicable to every class of causes," and "when a human being is the active instrument of generating or diffusing happiness, the principle through which it is most effectually instrumental to that purpose is virtue. And benevolence, or the desire to be the author of good, united with justice, or an apprehension of the manner in which good is to be done, constitutes virtue" (Prose, p. 187). Under "Benevolence" he discusses on a larger scale what he synthesizes in the Defence lines here, and that is, what streng-
thens and purifies the affections, the imagination, and the spirit, which have, as he says in the Defence, universal utility. Imagination, by exercising its perception of evil, is the force on which human nature's progress and change depends. He states that the only difference between the selfish and the virtuous man is that the selfish man's imagination is "confined within a narrow limit," and the virtuous man's "embraces a comprehensive circumference." "Disinterested benevolence" is the "product of a cultivated imagination" and intimately connected with all "ornament," or "stability" of the "social state of man," and this refinement of civilized life is a "creation of the human mind," which contains "the feelings suggested by the "relations established between man and man" (Prose, p. 189). These qualities, then, of virtue and benevolence, which expand the imagination and man's feeling for his fellow man are the cause of true pleasure, and therefore of universal utility. Shelley's ideas on benevolence and its allied utility also reflect Hume's An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, sections II and IV [2, 5] (see Hume Selections, pp. 200-203, 210-225).

1114-17 "But . . . Four Ages . . . banishing"

EDITIONS. Here is another canceled Peacock passage in the Mary Shelley editions (see Textual Notes above).
PARAGRAPH 33: LINES 1123-1150

1123-31 "Undoubtedly the promoters . . . value . . . ones."

CRITICISM. C. Grabo sees the "closely reasoned exposition of utility" in the Defence as supporting the "Platonism of Adonais," in that Shelley declares that what is most useful is the "product of the creative imagination, working at the instigation of divine intuition." Grabo says that Shelley "accepts explicitly in this argument the existence in the universe of a Creative Mind of which the minds of men are a part." In such a philosophy reason adopts a "secondary, though important role," and is the "instrument of the imagination" (The Magic Plant, p. 370).

STUDY. Shelley has shown what the "limited sense" of utility entails. In A Philosophical View of Reform he traces the development of the mechanical science to a "degree of perfection" not previously envisioned, and notes the "perpetually increasing vigor" of commerce, so that knowledge was thereby increased. But he sees the "benefit of this increase of the powers of men" become, because of the "inartificial forms into which society came to be distributed, an instrument of his additional evil." He notes in the Defence that the lesser utility of securing to men the wants of life is of value provided their administration is proper. The Philosophical View shows that this is possible but it is not what has happened, the same conclusion at which the Defence's consideration of utility finally arrives. In the essay he comments that "the
capabilities of happiness were increased" from the development of mechanical sciences and commerce, but were "applied to the augmentation of misery." The reason Shelley gives is that "modern society is thus an engine assumed to be for useful purposes, whose force is by a system of subtle mechanism augmented to the highest pitch, but which, instead of grinding corn or raising water, acts against itself and is perpetually wearing away or breaking to pieces the wheels of which it is composed. The result of the labors of the political philosophers has been the establishment of the principle of utility as the substance and liberty and equality as the forms, according to which the concerns of human life ought to be administered." As a result "many new theories, more or less perfect" have been given to the world, and are, as Shelley says, "superior to the evil which they would supplant" (Prose, pp. 233-234).

1131–35 "But . . . French writers . . . men."

CRITICISM. J. Baker sees an echo of the Platonic doctrine of Reminiscence in the phrase Shelley uses here, "the eternal truths characterized upon the imaginations of men." Baker comments that Shelley "passes from the crude doctrine of pre-existence, 'memories of an antental life,' in Prince Athanase" to this more philosophic perception of "the eternal truths" (Shelley's Platonic Answer, p. 34).

STUDY. Shelley also comments about the partial failure of the French writers in several passages of other essays, which reveal how he thinks they have "defaced" truth. He does not
deny their contributions, however, as the later lines, 1177–1180 below, reveal. However, in *An Association of Philanthropists* he calls Voltaire a "flatterer of kings," and so, "instrumental to the present slavery of his country."

Rousseau, in turn, gave "license by his writings to passions" which "incapacitate and contract the human heart" and thus he prepared his countrymen for their present servitude. Helvetius and Condorcet drew unsystematic conclusions devoid "in energy of method" and were "little understood" in the Revolution *(Prose, p. 67)*. This opinion is more generally phrased in *A Philosophical View of Reform*, where Shelley notes that "a crowd of writers in France seized upon the most popular portions of the new philosophy which conducted to inferences at war with the dreadful oppressions under which the country groaned." Shelley continues, however, that "considered as philosophers" their error was chiefly "a limitedness of view." Later in the same essay he comments that the "French were what their literature is (excluding Montaigne and Rousseau, and some few leaders . . .) weak, superficial, vain, with little imagination, and with passions as well as judgments cleaving to the external form of things" *(Prose, pp. 233, 236)*. C. E. Pulos, in his thorough study of Shelley and scepticism, concludes that Shelley's "acceptance of immaterialism on skeptical grounds" and "his rejection of materialism" involves "no rejection of the revolutionary zeal of the French materialists; it involves only a rejection of their dogmatic materialism, which contemporary
reactionaries had adapted, with great success, to their own purposes" (The Deep Truth, p. 66). The two passages of the Defence on the French skeptics, as well as those noted above in Shelley's essays, bear out the Pulos conclusion.

1135-1141 "Whilst the mechanist . . . modern England . . . exasperate . . . luxury and want."

EDITIONS. Both Cook and Miss Winstanley point out that "to exasperate" is used in the sense of "to increase" as it is in the later use of "exasperation" at 1. 1234 (pp. 76, 92). CRITICISM. G. Matthews notes that "mechanist" here means "machine maker" and "combines labour" means "organizes the specialization of labour" (Selected Prose, p. 217). R. White sees this as the transition point from the account of philosophical error to that of social evils, and comments on the similarity of thought between this and the following two paragraphs to what Coleridge, in the Lay Sermons, and Wordsworth in The Convention of Cintra, had to say about the decaying of the vital philosophy of the time. Wordsworth, in The Convention of Cintra, comments that while "mechanic arts," "commerce," and all the "products of knowledge" confined to "tangible objects" have "with the aid of Experimental Philosophy" been putting on every day "more brilliant colours," the "splendour of the Imagination has been fading," and "Sensibility" has been chased from its "domain of patriotism and religion" by the "weapons of derision" of a "shadow
calling itself Good Sense" (Political Tracts, pp. 290, 182-183).

STUDY. About this point, Shelley, from his earliest writings, has shown strong feelings. His "Notes to Queen Mab," (1812) present strong statements concerning the disparity between luxury and want. He still holds to this view in 1821. In the encroachment of machines in industrialized modern society he sees both moral and political dangers which may lead to anarchy, as he says below in the Defence. In 1812 he comments that "there is no real wealth but the labour of man. Were the mountains of gold and the valleys of silver, the world would not be one grain of corn the richer; no one comfort would be added to the human race. In consequence of our consideration for the precious metals, one man is enabled to heap to himself luxuries at the expense of the necessities of his neighbour; a system admirably fitted to produce . . . disease and crime, which never fail to characterize the two extremes of opulence and penury" (V.93, 94). Later in the "Notes" he indicates the results of commercial "speculation," in his comment that "it is the direct influence of commerce to make the interval between the richest and the poorest man wider and more unconquerable. Let it be remembered that it is a foe to everything of real worth and excellence in the human character. The odious and disgusting aristocracy of wealth is built upon the ruins of all that is good in chivalry or republicanism; and luxury is the fore­runner of a barbarism scarce capable of cure" [VIII.211,212]
Shelley sees established in England a "new aristocracy" of bankers, merchants, attorneys, stock jobbers, and others, and of them Shelley says "they think of any commerce with the species but as a means, never as an end, and as a means to the basest forms of personal advantage." One result Shelley sees is that the "double aristocracy" has doubled the work hours of the poor since the value of what they earned has been halved. The consequence of the disparity for the nation is that the "majority of the people are destitute and miserable," that "they know this" and are impatient "to procure a reform," and that the cause of this misery is the "unequal distribution" which has been made of the "products of their labor" and "of the labor of their ancestors." Thus, Shelley concludes, "reform in England is most just and necessary" (Prose, pp. 244-247). In the Defence are summarized sentiments to which Shelley, past and present, has held firmly.

1142-44 "'To him . . . away.'"

EDITIONS. Cook and other editors comment that this is an inexact quotation of Mark 4.25. Cook suggests other forms, none identical with Shelley's version, in Matthew 13.12, and 25.29, and Luke 8.18 and 19.26 (p. 76).

1147-48 "anarchy and despotism."

STUDY. Shelley's letters in the years 1819 and 1820 show that his attitude at this point expresses a current and real concern about England's condition both with regard to labor
and to money, the two topics lying behind his economic and moral discussion at this point. On August 24, 1819 his letter to Peacock uses the same phrase as does the Defence. He sees England in a very disturbed state, but when he hears of them speaking of "paying in gold" and confessing that the "sinking fund is a fraud &c." he no longer wonders. He then states, "But the change should commence among the higher orders, or anarchy will only be the last flash before despotism. I wonder and tremble" (Letters, II, p. 115).

Again, on November 3, 1819, in a letter to Leigh Hunt as Editor of the Examiner, he writes, "In the name of all we hope for in human nature what are the people of England about? Or rather, how long will they, & those whose hereditary duty it is to lead them, endure the enormous outrages of which they are one day made the victim & the next the instrument? Post succeeds post, & fresh horrors are forever detailed. First we hear that a troop of the enraged master manufacturers are let loose with sharpened swords upon a multitude of their starving dependents & . . . massacre without distinction., . . ." Shelley concludes this very long letter by calling these "awful times," and stating that the "tremendous question" is whether "military and judicial despotism" by present rulers or "some form of government less unfavourable to the real & permanent interest of all men is to arise." He asserts, "We cannot hesitate which party to embrace; . . . our party will be that of liberty & of the oppre[ss]ed" (Letters, II, pp. 136, 148). His letter to Medwin of
January 17, 1820, reflects his attitude of "horror" still (Letters, II, p. 169). In that to Peacock of May 2, 1820 he states that "a Civil war impends from the success of ministers and the exasperation of the poor" (p. 193). In his letter to the Gisbornes of June 30, 1820 he comments on how momentous public affairs are in England, and then exclaims, "And Peers and Peeresses to stalk along the streets in ermine!" (Letters, II, p. 207). Thus Shelley's source now, in the Defence, is current history, and from it he presents the antitheses of time's "true poetry." This is what he sees as the actual result in political, economic, and moral life in a country controlled by the "calculating faculty."

1148-50 "Such . . . effects . . . calculating faculty."

STUDY. Shelley offers no amelioration in this paragraph, because he sees an ascendance of the calculating faculty over that of the imagination. This reaches even into the imaginative realm for he views the "new aristocracy's" poisoning of the age's literature "by requiring either the antitype of their own mediocrity in books, or such stupid and distorted and inharmonious idealisms as alone have the power to stir their torpid imaginations" (A Philosophical View, p. 245). As Shelley has said, the imagination of the selfish man has narrow limits. He does suggest the remedy for the inequity of riches, and one which is to be hoped for at some time. The solution he suggests is "equality in possession" which he says "must be the last result of the
utmost refinements of civilization; it is one of the conditions of that system of society towards which with whatever hope of ultimate success, it is our duty to tend."

But, as in the Defence, this cannot yet be offered because of the "difficult and unbending realities of actual life" (A Philosophical View, pp. 253-254).
PARAGRAPH 34: LINES 1151-1172

1153-1165 "For . . . pain . . . pleasures . . . tragedy . . . itself."

STUDY. Here Shelley is returning to the same idea which he expressed concerning tragedy above at ll. 591 ff. Thus, the source for this passage remains Hume's Of Tragedy, to which he is now adding a Biblical flavor. Shelley again is saying essentially what Hume did about the paradox of onlookers of tragedy receiving pleasure from disagreeable emotions. The "sobs" of sorrow convert to "tenderest sympathy and compassion" as Hume points out. Shelley sees this "pain of the inferior" changing to the "superior" and pleasant parts of man's being. Art, which can convert the melancholy to the predominantly pleasurable achieves the fullest response of the feelings. Thus, Shelley can suggest that "It is better to go to the house of mourning . . . ."

1163-64 "melancholy which is inseparable from the sweetest melody."

EDITIONS. Cook, and other editors, suggest here Shelley's lines from "To a Skylark": "Our sincerest laughter / With some pain is fraught; / Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought" (p. 76). Jordan feels that Shelley's ideas "suggest the Graveyard School and Edmund Burke's theory that terror is the basis of the sublime." He also suggests similar thoughts expressed by Wordsworth in the Prelude, XIV.244-246, and Milton, Paradise Lost.
IX.490-491 (pp. 66-67).

STUDY. In two other poems of the 1820 period, besides "To a Skylark," Shelley has expressed this same thought. In The Witch of Atlas it is used as "a pleasure hid / In melancholy gloom" (XXXVIII.348-349), and in the "Fragment of the Elegy on the Death of Bion" the breath "Of melancholy sweetness on the wind" diffuses love (11. 6-8).

1166-67 "'It is better to go . . . mirth.'"

EDITIONS. The editors generally note the inexactness of the quotation from Ecclesiastes 7.2, since Shelley has substituted "mirth" for "feasting." Verkoren also notes that Shelley misquoted this passage in his "Review of William Godwin's Mandeville" (p. 99).

1171-72 "joy of the perception . . . creation of poetry"

STUDY. Shelley has indicated that in his own experience there is a perception and imagination whetted by times of anxiety and despair. In a letter to Thomas Medwin of January 17, 1820, he comments that perhaps Medwin belongs "to the tribe of the hopeless" and nothing shocks or surprises him in politics, but that he himself has enough "unrebuked hope" remaining to be horrified at events in England. He continues with a thought which relates to what he says here in the Defence: "These are not times in which one has much spirit for writing Poetry; although there is a keen air in them that sharpens the wits of men and makes them imagine vividly even in the midst of despondence--" (Letters, II. p. 169).
1173-74 "The production ... true utility."

EDITIONS. Jordan says that Shelley "seems to be anticipating John Stuart Mill's qualitative modifications of the crude quantitative pleasure principle of Jeremy Bentham and the older Utilitarians" (p. 67).
1177-80 "The exertions of Locke . . . mankind."

EDITIONS. The Textual Notes above show that Shelley, in MS B, had indicated his respect for these writers but canceled the passage. Miss Winstanley comments that it is "a little difficult to understand why Shelley groups these names together; probably because they were all in some degree opponents of Christianity, or, as Shelley puts it, 'in favour of oppressed and deluded humanity.'" Locke in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690) prepared the way for 18th century free thought, and the line of descent from him runs through Hume to Voltaire. Gibbon proves himself on the same side by his account of the origin of Christianity in the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" (p. 93).

CRITICISM. J. Baker comments that Shelley "shows how far he has come from the eighteenth-century radicalism of his Queen Mab by deprecating the importance of these men, whom Peacock had called 'deep and elaborate thinkers'" (p. 7). Cowling expresses a similar thought in his comment that these passages "show us how utterly mistaken is the theory . . . which regards Shelley as the mere sequel of Godwin, and of the other writers of the day, French and English, who strove to reduce life to a mechanical or utilitarian pattern, and cramp it in the vice of finite 'reason'." Cowling notes that Shelley pays tribute as always to the "noble moral purpose" and "iconoclastic prowess" of such men but continues with a passage
on their limitation ("The Faith of Shelley," Shelley and Other Essays, pp. 36-37). J. Laird notes Shelley's comments in A Philosophical View of Reform concerning "Bacon, Spinoza, Hobbes, Boyle, Montaigne" and their regulation of reasoning powers, exposing of past errors, and anatomizing of the "inmost nature of social man" and his further comment that they were followed "with less interval of time than of genius" by Locke and philosophers of his "exact and intelligible but superficial school." Further, Laird notes, Shelley asks where later philosophers would have been but for the "great luminaries of the preceding epoch." Laird comments that Shelley had a place "for Locke, Hume, Gibbon and others whom he regarded as minor philosophers, calculating and itemizing in the light supplied by greater philosophical luminaries. They were 'correct, popular, simple and energetic'" (Philosophical Incursions Into English Literature, pp. 119-120).

STUDY. Shelley's list again carefully differentiates its figures in order of time and of country. He starts with the earliest philosopher, and with the English group: Locke (1632-1740); Hume (1711-1776); Gibbon (1737-1794); and then turns to the French, Voltaire (1694-1778), and Rousseau (1712-1778).

CRITICISM. Various critics have shown the conflicting attitudes Shelley had toward Rousseau. A. M. D. Hughes considers Shelley as "steeped" in the genius of Rousseau, as a writer,
reasoner, reader of the heart, a kindred soul, and sees him as an elemental influence on Shelley, but he also points out that as early as 1812 there is a cross-current in Shelley's thoughts of him (The Nascent Mind, pp. 206-207). Cherubini also notes Shelley's differences of opinion on Rousseau as seen in The Triumph of Life, in the Proposal for an Association, and the Defence, giving "licence by his writing to passions that only incapacitate," but also celebrating "the dominion of love" in "sublimest victory," and finally being "praised for the keenness of his passion and damned for the corruption with which he fed it" ("Shelley's Own Symposium," p. 565). A. T. Strong thinks that in his conception "of a Golden Age of the past" Shelley was influenced not only by Greece but "by the conception, which finds its most notable expression in Rousseau," of an early world in which "innocence" prevailed, to be marred by selfish "civilized" man (Three Studies, p. 53).

STUDY. Shelley's Note states that he is following Peacock's classification. In the Four Ages Peacock is discussing the "silver age" of modern poetry, "beginning with Dryden, coming to perfection with Pope, and ending with Goldsmith, Collins, and Gray." Peacock calls it a "reign of authority" and continues, "but authority now began to be shaken, not only in poetry but in the whole sphere of its dominion. The contemporaries of Gray and Cowper were deep and elaborate thinkers. The subtle scepticism of Hume, the solemn irony of Gibbon, the daring paradoxes of Rousseau, and the biting
ridicule of Voltaire, directed the energies of four ex­tra­ordinary minds to shake every portion of the reign of authority. Enquiry was roused, the activity of intellect was excited, and poetry came in for its share of the general result" (Halliford, p. 16).

While Shelley follows the "classification," he has his own thoughts on both Voltaire and Rousseau, particularly as is shown by his amendment in the note. His combined praise and censure of French thinkers is shown as clearly in An Association of Philanthropists as in any of his writings. In a long paragraph in which he criticizes Voltaire for "flattery," Rousseau for giving license to "incapacitating passions" in his writings, and Helvetius and Condorcet for being "un­systematical" and devoid of "luminousness," he continues otherwise. Philosophers "have not developed the great principles of the human mind that conclusions from them should be unprofitable and impracticable. We are in a state of continually progressive improvement. One truth that has been discovered can never die, but will prevent the revivification of its apportioned opposite falsehood." He then goes on to praise the men of France whose "genius penetrated with a glance" the "imposture and villainy" of Church and State (Prose, pp. 67-68). Shelley's essay, On the Death of the Princess Charlotte, reveals further his judgment on Rousseau and Voltaire. Here the Athenian idea of public mourning for those who guide the republic with "valor" and "understanding" or "illustrate" it with genius is praised. Rousseau and
Voltaire he considers such, for "the French nation should have enjoined a public mourning at the deaths of Rousseau and Voltaire" (*Prose*, p. 164).

1188 "Inquisition in Spain"

EDITIONS. The editors note that the Inquisition was abolished in 1808 by Napoleon, revived by Ferdinand VII, and again suppressed in 1820.

1188-99 "But it exceeds . . . belief."

EDITIONS. Verkoren notes Shelley's letter to Byron of September 29, 1816 in which he asks, "What would the human race have been if Homer, Shakspeare, had never written?" (p. 108). Forman notes that "this classification of Michael Angelo should prevent any misconception as to the precise bearing of the depreciatory remarks on some of that great man's productions." Forman mentions Shelley's note on Bacchus, and those on the Last Judgment in his letter of February 25, 1819 (p. 134).

STUDY. The list of writers is again in chronological order, with the exception of Calderon (1600-1681), who should have followed Bacon (1561-1626). It would seem to indicate either that Calderon was an afterthought placed into the list of English writers following the Italian group, or that he simply was closely attached in Shelley's mind with Shakespeare. In his letter of August 24, 1819 to Peacock he says, "a kind of Shakespeare is this Calderon" (*Letters*, II, p. 115). In a letter of September 21 to Peacock he again makes a connection,
saying that Calderon "exceeds all modern dramatists with the exception of Shakespeare; whom he resembles however in depth . . . & subtlety . . ." (Letters, II, p. 120).

Shelley still has in mind at this point his "Introduction" to *A Philosophical View of Reform* in which he traces in part the development jointly from the inspiration of Athens and Florence of the new literature and art. He mentions the roles of Dante, Raphael, and Michel Angelo, and the effect of their new art on Chaucer, and still later on Shakespeare, Lord Bacon, and the great writers of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Calderon is seen as part of this great movement of art, all of which is based on the freedom which allows energy and beauty to come together in creation (*Prose*, pp. 231, 238).

1199-1206 "The human mind . . . itself."

**EDITIONS.** Clark remarks that "this is not a renunciation of Shelley's youthful ideas as seen in *Queen Mab, The Revolt of Islam*, and the early essays, but it is merely an extension of the meaning latent in those works" (p. 293).

**STUDY.** This passage again reflects the summary in *A Philosophical View of Reform* in which Shelley indicates concisely the place of this new movement in man's moral, political, and philosophical development. He says: "Such is a slight sketch of the general condition of the human race to which they have been conducted after the obliteratiobn of the Greek republics by the successful external tyranny of Rome . . ."
and by those miseries and superstitions consequent upon
this event which compelled the human race to begin anew its
difficult and obscure career of producing, according to the
forms of society, the great portion of good." The causes and
effects of that movement with its great poets, artists, and
philosophers have been discussed at greater length in A
Philosophical View and have been summarized in one paragraph
in the Defence. What the Defence passage now does in its
own conclusion is to show what has happened as the result of
this new movement--the development of the very sciences and
reasoning which are now attempting to devour their own mother,
the poetic faculty of creation. This is another expression
of the paradox, where the inferior is inseparable from the
superior, and where true utility, which is the whole, is made
the part, and the "grosser" utilitarianism "attempts" to be
the whole. Since the means are only partial, the consequence
must be that the results will be partial, and this is what
Shelley now turns to proving in the following paragraph.

1206 End of the paragraph.

EDITIONS. The draft has a short addition in which Shelley
intended to make a direct reference to Peacock (see Textual
Notes above).
PARAGRAPH 37: LINES 1207-1240

1207-11 "We have more . . . multiplies."

EDITIONS. Clark calls this a "profound" statement and says that "here is in a nutshell the fundamental trouble with the world today" (p. 293).

CRITICISM. N. I. White's view on the two paragraphs which begin here is that "even more significant today than in 1821 is Shelley's final pronouncement on the subject of "utility." He continues that up to this point "Shelley's argument" is both "finely idealistic" and "finely rational," and that "his contention for the paramount utility and the vital necessity of poetry in society is skilfully and reasonably deduced from his distinction between imagination and reason." He notes further that Shelley's argument "even when most rational carried also an overtone of mystical faith" (Shelley, II, pp. 276-277). H. Mills feels that Peacock, in his discussion of utility, fails in both style and examples, and that where his novels openly discuss the "nature of real intellectual power and useful knowledge," in his essay, "The Four Ages," Peacock's mind is "closed." He comments that it is Shelley's mind, and not Peacock's that plays freely on the concept of utility, and that Shelley "thought Peacock's ideas of utility and poetry were equally hollow, and that he was knocking down the ghost of one with the shadow of the other" (Peacock his Circle and his Age, p. 46).
1217-19 "'let I dare not . . . adage.'"

EDITIONS. Cook and later editors identify this as a favorite quotation from Macbeth I.vii.44. Forman comments that "this is a most curious instance of the persistency of ideas and expressions in Shelley's mind and work. He had already taken a fancy to this saying in 1810 for it appears in Chapter IX of Zastrozzi and in 1812 in "Proposals for an Association," and "here we have it still doing duty in 1821" (p. 135). Jordan refers also to Shelley's letter to Mary Godwin, November 4, 1814 (pp. 68-69).

CRITICISM. D. L. Clark notes that these "favorite lines from Macbeth" have also appeared in Shelley's Letter to Lord Ellenborough with "telling effect" ("Shelley and Shakespeare," pp. 261-262).

1219-23 "We . . . creative faculty . . . know . . . digest."

CRITICISM. R. J. White calls this the "clearest statement of Shelley's acceptance of a non-sensational theory of knowledge" (Political Tracts, p. 290). Cowling feels that this statement represents a "contribution of first importance," for Shelley is the "first to point out, that knowledge is accumulating and civilization developing in the modern world more quickly than wisdom; and unless the moral nature of man can keep pace with his intellect, misery may ensue" (Shelley, pp. 80-81).
1223-29 "The cultivation . . . slave."

EDITIONS. The draft at this point has a canceled passage which says that poetry is the benevolent principle in man while gold or property is the selfish principle (see Textual Notes above). Clark comments that "again Shelley penetrates to the heart of the world's unrest" (p. 293).

CRITICISM. R. J. White points out the similarity of Shelley's phrase of man's enslaving the elements and remaining a slave to that of Wordsworth, in The Convention of Cintra, in which he says: "Animal comforts have been rejoiced over, as if they were the end of being . . . and still the Peasant or Artisan, their master, be a slave in mind; a slave rendered even more abject by the very tenure under which these possessions are held . . ." (Political Tracts, pp. 240, 183). D. King-Hele comments that "it is hardly necessary today to do more than mention that Shelley saw the evils of the Industrial Revolution and the perils attending the march of science, that science has outrun our ability to use it logically . . . 'man remains a slave,' is now a Truism . . . what is obvious now was not so plain then, but Shelley, despite his eagerness to advance applied science, recognized the dangers" (Shelley: His Thought, p. 295).

1237-38 "the curse imposed on Adam"

EDITIONS. Verkoren suggests two sources, Genesis 3.17, and Sidney's parallel passage: "... that first accursed fall of Adam" (p. 9), (p. 77).

STUDY. The use of "Adam" carries intended connotations.
Shelley undoubtedly is thinking of "gold." The curse put upon Adam was his expulsion from Eden, symbolically man's true Golden Age somewhere deep in the past. Shelley himself explained this state, in his essay, A Vindication of Natural Diet, where he comments that "the language spoken, however, by the mythology of nearly all religions seems to prove that at some distant period man forsook the path of nature and sacrificed the purity and happiness of his being to unnatural appetites." As Clark comments in a note, the idea of the Golden Age in man's past is emphasized in nearly all religions. Shelley suggests that when he uses the "allegory of Adam and Eve" as an example (Prose, p. 82). In this essay, Shelley goes on to speak of dietary habits which cause the "depravity of the physical and moral nature of man." In the Defence, man's "unnatural appetite" for gold is having the same effect of physical and moral depravity now, and paradoxically, this appetite for gold is depriving man of a new "Golden Age." (See also Study, 11. 1247 ff. below.)


EDITIONS. Cook suggests the Biblical source, Matthew 6.24: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (p. 77).

CRITICISM. Barnard points out that in Shelley's mind "self is always associated with selfishness; and poetry is always the enemy of self" [see 11. 435-447] (Shelley's Religion, p. 266). Reiman suggests that Shelley is echoing Spenser's
Cave of Mammon in the Fairy Queen. II.vii, and points out that "for Shelley advances in material wealth or technology of any kind, though not evil, were amoral and subject to misuse" ("Shelley's 'The Triumph of Life,'" p. 54). Grabo feels that "no other single passage in Shelley's prose" equals this one in its "realistic discernment of the ills of human society--as true now as then--and their cause and cure" (The Magic Plant, p. 361).

STUDY. In Shelley's other work the image of "Mammon" occasionally appears. In his translation of "Scenes from the Faust of Goethe" Mammon appears twice, as a god of riches (II.96, 114), and in Oedipus Tyrannus, one of the characters is "Mammon, Arch-Priest of Famine," a characterization of the Prime Minister (1.1.278). In his early essay, An Address to the Irish People, he wishes the Irish people freedom from "abuse" and wishes their hearts may "become the shrines of purity and freedom, and never may smoke to the Mammon of unrighteousness ascend from the unpolluted altar of their devotion" (Prose, pp. 58-59). Shelley attaches the tyranny of church and state directly to the symbols of God and Mammon in his letter to Peacock of July 17, 1816, in which he says: "Leave Mammon and Jehovah to those who delight in wickedness and slavery--their altars are stained with blood or polluted with gold, the price of blood" (Letters, I, p. 490). In the Defence, it can be seen that he is using the image of Mammon in its fully defined sense, deriving from its root meaning of "riches," the idea of riches regarded as an object of
worship, and as a symbol of greed, and thus the riches of material gain in an evil sense. This new God of Self, whose earthly "Son" or "incarnation" is money, is really the God of Evil who is driving man farther from Eden since this is the force giving power to the modern inventions which are adding "a weight to the curse imposed on Adam." Earlier in the Defence the "wrecks of Eden" became a Paradise because true Poetry manifested itself. Here the Paradise is only sometimes possible, for Mammon is in the present "garden." Shelley has clearly stated the necessity for disinterestedness, for he states that "all the theories which have refined and exalted humanity, or those which have been devised as alleviations of its mistakes and evils," have been based upon this quality of "disinterestedness which we feel to constitute the majesty of our nature" (A Treatise on Morals, Prose, p. 189). Lying behind this idea of the wrongful worship of money is obviously another Biblical idea, the golden calf falsely worshiped by the Israelites (Exodus 32.4), a symbol of riches as an object of worship, and a "visible incarnation" of wealth.
EDITIONS. Clark says that "the reader should know by now that Shelley's conception of poetry is that it is the harmony, order, beauty, and rhythm in life" (p. 293).

CRITICISM. Laird comments here that "in its broader (which is also its deeper) sense poetry is making, poiesis, creative mind work and therefore (according to Shelley) imagination. In one sense the imagination is mimetic, for it imitates the 'universal, ideal and sublime'. In another sense it is originative" but "in either case it 'creates for us a being within our being'" (Philosophical Incursions, p. 134).

STUDY. Both here and in the following paragraph's use of "nourishment" Shelley continues to develop the organic metaphor of food as it relates to the external and internal world, one which he started in the previous paragraph with the line, "we have eaten more than we can digest." Shelley's use of this metaphor arises from his connection of Mammon and the idea of what should compose the inner and outer world. In his Essay on Christianity, Shelley pictures Christ as showing, with the "rhetoric of enthusiastic love to all human beings" the miseries arising from a system which makes "all things subservient to the subsistence of the material frame of man." Thus, Christ warns men that "no man can serve two masters, God and Mammon" and that man cannot be
"high-minded" and comply with "the accustomed forms" of society which seek "honor" or "wealth" either from "idolatry of habit or as the direct instruments of sensual gratification." He, therefore, instructs that "clothing, food, and shelter" are not the "true end of life" but only a means subservient to that end (Prose, p. 210).
1254  "Poetry is indeed something divine."

EDITIONS. Jordan suggests two parallels, one from Sidney and one from Plato. He quotes from Sidney: "For Poesie must not be drawne by the eares, it must be gently led, or rather it must lead, which is partly the cause that made the auncient learned affirme, it was a divine gift & no humane skil"

[F., p. 37]. He also quotes from Plato's Phaedrus 245:

"There is also a third kind of madness, which is a possession of the Muses; this enters into a delicate and virgin soul, and there inspiring frenzy, awakes lyric and all other numbers . . . . But he who, not being inspired and having no touch of madness in his soul, comes to the door and thinks that he will get into the temple by the help of art--he, I say, and his poetry are not admitted" (p. 70).

CRITICISM. J. Baker calls this an echo of Plato's Ion 534 as translated by Shelley himself: "poems are not human as the work of men, but divine as coming from God" (Shelley's Platonic Answer, p. 47). N. I. White also comments that Shelley's various usages of "divine" and "infinite" in connection with poetry show his sympathy with Plato's view in the Ion, and that "in the end Shelley absorbs Plato's view and makes it his own" (Shelley, II, p. 277).

STUDY. This sentence also echoes Shelley's poem, "Orpheus," written in 1820, in which he used exactly this thought, as well as the one following about poetry as the center of all
knowledge: "through every change / Wisdom and beauty and 
the power divine / Of mighty poesy together dwell" (ll. 84-
86).

1254-57 "It is . . . centre and circumference . . .
all science . . . referred."

EDITIONS. Clark suggests remarks similar to this passage in
Wordsworth's Preface to the Lyrical Ballads: "Poetry is the
breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the im­
passioned expression . . . of all science . . . the first and
last of all knowledge." He also suggests Coleridge's
Biographia Literaria, Chap. 14, in this connection (p. 293).

CRITICISM. D. Bush feels that Shelley's vision "is not
limited to the moral regeneration of man and society; it is
also Baconian. Perfected man will learn to control the forces
of nature." Bush notes that Shelley's faith in science, like
his knowledge, "goes far beyond that of other romantic poets"
(English Poetry, p. 145). McElderry comments that both
Wordsworth and Shelley "as ardent social theorists" are
interested in the "ethical effects which poetry might have
in a world whose ills they keenly felt." They see poetry
"as an end in itself." McElderry notes the similarity of
thinking between the two poets at this point on the "anti­
thesis between poetry and science." Wordsworth calls poetry
both the "finer spirit of all knowledge," and the "impassioned
expression which is in the countenance of all science." It
is the "first and last of all knowledge—it is as immortal

STUDY. This passage is related to one in Shelley's essay, On Life, probably written in 1819. Not only is some phrasing used again but he is more explicitly developing thoughts contained there. Both in that essay and in the Defence he is speaking against materialism and the popular philosophy of "mind and matter." In On Life he says that man has "high aspirations," and whatever his final destination "there is a spirit within him at enmity with nothingness and dissolution." This characterizes "all life and being. Each is at once the centre and circumference, the point to which all things are referred, and the line in which all things are contained." Now, in the Defence, Shelley identifies this spirit as poetry, which is divine, and "the centre and circumference of all knowledge."

1269 "Virtue . . . Friendship"

CRITICISM. N. I. White says that at this point it is clearly seen that poetry to Shelley is "simply the voice of of Intellectual Beauty" which is "the sum of all true Imagination."

The individual imagination "flows from this fountain and back: and is "the nearest human contact with the Divine" (Shelley, II, p. 278).

STUDY. In the poem "Mutability" (1821), Shelley speaks in a different fashion of Virtue, Love and Friendship which bring joy but which are also so very brief and so soon gone.
CRITICISM. Grabo comments that Shelley "ascribes to the poetical faculty, the imagination which enables the human mind to transcend its habitual self, a divinity like that which it reports. Poetic imagination is... the proof of and the means to man's intercourse with some larger mind than his own." Grabo notes that "the background of the thought is Platonic," for the "human mind is shut away" from reality and the "mystical apprehension" is "not due to the exercise of the will" (The Magic Plant, p. 361). J. W. Beach, on the other hand, points out that this idea of bringing fire is found in Plotinus where there are "various gradations" which "proceed from universal fire, or rather from that which is the source of this general fire" (The Concept of Nature, p. 265).

STUDY. Since the owl is a bird of prey flying in the night, Shelley implies in "owl-winged" that the faculty of calculation operates in the dark and away from the light of full poetic inspiration. Here is an echo of the Macbeth quotation used earlier where again "Light seems to thicken," the "good things of day" begin to "drowse," and "night's black agents to their preys do rouse" (see 11. 835-839).

EDITIONS. Cook, Brett-Smith, and Verkoren suggest here the Sidney passage [p., p. 37] quoted earlier by Jordan at 1. 1254. Brett-Smith also notes that the Phaedrus passage, also quoted
above at 1. 1254, was well known to both Sidney and Shelley (p. 101).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos comments that Shelley "transposes Plato's thought in Ion, 533d-535a; Apology, 22c; Phaedrus, 245a, in terms of an original and brilliant image" (The Platonism, p. 355). To Wellek the "description of the poetic act as sheer inspiration, however justified by Shelley's own experience, is made in the rapturous tones of the singer Ion, of Tasso, and Giordano Bruno. The poet's mind, according to Shelley, is completely passive" (A History, II, p. 125). Solve, however, says that Shelley "has the Plotinean notion of creation as a falling-away from the perfection of the ideal" (Shelley: His Theory, p. 43). R. Houston makes a different suggestion as to source. He feels that Shelley is using an idea from Hume, the Principle of Association. As Houston notes, this is "an empiricist commonplace," and Shelley could have been acquainted with it through other sources than Hume. He feels, however, that the "Humian attitude and terminology" is "marked" in the Defence ("Shelley and the Principle of Association," p. 48). Schulz comments that the "wind of inspiration" here is a "special refinement of that wind of impressions that strikes the lyre-mind at the opening of the Defence" (Shelley's Theory, p. 82). Gérard also comments on the wind imagery, noting that "the same internalization of universal energy" is applied "by means of the same cluster of wind-and-fire images" as in the "Ode to the West Wind" (English Romantic Poetry, p. 189).
EDITIONS. Jordan suggests that the modern poets "would have agreed in part" with Shelley's statement about poetry produced by study, and refers to such statements as Keats's about poetry coming naturally as leaves, and Wordsworth's on "the spontaneous overflow." He also notes Shelley's own lines, in the "Ode to Naples," 11. 50-51, and his "Ode to Heaven" canceled fragment, 1. 5 (p. 71). With regard to the "toil and the delay" about which Shelley comments, Cook notes that "such toil seems to be recommended by Dante in his treatise On The Vulgar Tongue, Bk. 2 ch. 4: 'But these poets differ from the great poets—that is, the regular ones,—for these last have written poetry with stately language and regular art, whereas the others, as has been said, write by chance . . . . The proper result can never be attained without strenuous efforts of genius, constant practice in the art, and fully available knowledge . . . . And here let the folly of those who stand confessed who . . . trusting to genius alone, rush forward to sing of the highest subjects" (p. 77).

STUDY. Shelley is speaking of the "finest passages" of poetry here, and of the general poetic inspiration itself. He does not mean that all poetry is composed only from the heat of an inspired moment, as his "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound indicates. For example, he states that his imagery in this work will be found, in many instances, to have been "drawn from the operations of the human mind" and he admits to a study of the Greek poets as a source of his work's
"singularity" in imagery. He also notes that the writers of the same age are modified by others around them, and that a great poet ought to be studied by other poets. However, Shelley notes that a poet is the "combined product of such internal powers as modify the nature of others; and of such external influences as excite and sustain these powers; he is not one, but both." His mind "is the mirror upon which all forms are reflected" (Poetry, pp. 205-206). Even at this point in the Defence, however, he notes there exists a "limitedness of the poetical faculty itself."

Shelley is once again indicating his own indictment of the critics and their advice. In his "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam he says very directly what he is implying here, that critics are not the best judges of how poetry should be written. Why this is so he spelled out in the "Preface," and his attitude has not changed. There he notes that writers of his age are too "sensible" to temporary criticism. The "system of criticism" itself sprang from a "torpid interval when Poetry was not."

So, "Poetry, and the art which professes to regulate and limit its powers, cannot subsist together."

He feels that "this species of criticism" has "no understanding of its own," and is no "true science" which precedes the opinion of mankind, but has "followed" it (one of his severest criticisms of anything concerned with poetry). Thus, the critics' suggestion of "toil and delay" noted in the Defence he has seen in the "Preface" as an attempt on their part to cause "our greatest Poets to impose gratuitous fetters
on their own imaginations, and become unconscious accomplices in the daily murder of all genius either not so aspiring or not so fortunate as their own" (Poetry, pp. 35-36).

1300 "intertexture"

STUDY. This word appears seldom in Shelley's work. In On the Punishment of Death (1816) he uses it in the phrase "intertexture of good and evil" (Prose, p. 156), and in The Witch of Atlas (1820) it appears in "the intertexture of the atmosphere" (LII.463).

1305-06 "muse . . . song".

EDITIONS. Cook and later editors note that Milton, in Paradise Lost 9.21-24, speaks of his "celestial Patroness," who "dictates . . . my unpremeditated Verse." Jordan points out Shelley's reference to "unpremeditated art" in "To a Skylark" (p. 72).

STUDY. The exact source of Shelley's phrase, "unpremeditated song," probably is found in his translation of "Homer's Hymn to Mercury" which he finished on July 14, 1820. In this poem, which he notes in his letter to Peacock of July 12, 1820 is not a "literal translation," Apollo asks of Mercury whether his song was "moral taught or God inspired" or what "Muse" gave him "The power of unpremeditated song?" [LXXV.587, 588, 590] (Letters, II, p. 213).
1310-14 "This . . . plastic . . . arts . . . womb"

STUDY. This passage still reflects images which have very recently appeared in Shelley's poetry. The baby Mercury in "Homer's Hymn" is repeated once more both in the image of the child and in the phrase "plastic and pictorial arts" for in the poem describing his birth he sang "in plastic verse" (X.74, 77). In another poem of 1820, "The Cloud" also appears the child image: "Like a child from the womb" (1. 83). This image also occurs in 1821 in "Fragment: Life Rounded With Sleep," in "The babe is at peace within the womb" (1. 1).
PARAGRAPH 40: LINES 1318-1358

1318-27 "Poetry . . . visitations of thought . . . object."

EDITIONS. Clark suggests comparing these lines with the Hymn to Intellectual Beauty, and the Essay on Christianity (p. 294).

STUDY. A close approximation to this thought and imagery is found in a poetic fragment Shelley wrote in 1819 entitled "Fragment: 'Ye gentle visitations of calm thought':

Ye gentle visitations of calm thought--
Moods like the memories of happier earth,
Which come arrayed in thoughts of little worth,
Like stars in clouds by the weak winds enwrought,--
But that the clouds depart and stars remain,
While they remain, and ye, alas, depart!

1327-29 "It is . . . interpenetration of a diviner nature . . . own"

EDITIONS. The editors generally suggest the direct connection of Plato's Ion 533-4 to this passage, and quote Shelley's translation in part: "For the authors of those great poems whom we admire, do not attain to excellence through the rules of any art, but they utter their beautiful melodies of verse in a state of inspiration, and, as it were, possessed by a spirit not their own" (see Cook, pp. 77-78). Brett-Smith comments that the whole paragraph recalls Plato's opinions on poetic inspiration in the Ion, and notes Shelley's
reading of this when the Four Ages of Poetry reached him. Brett-Smith also notes that it is significant that the fragments of this passage are found in the notebook (Bodleian Shelley MS. d. 1) containing the Defence rough draft (pp. 101-102). [These fragments of the Ion from Shelley's notebook are reproduced below in Appendix F.] Verkoren comments that it has already been seen that Shelley owes his doctrine of inspiration to the Ion and here is another parallel (p. 82). Jordan refers to the lines from the Essay on Christianity: "There is a Power by which we are surrounded, like the atmosphere in which some motionless lyre is suspended, which visits with its breath our silent chords at will" (pp. 72-73).

CRITICISM. Woodman comments that Shelley, "understanding Plato as an inspired poet," formulated "his own theory upon the account of the working of the Demiurge in the Timaeus and of divine inspiration in the Ion ("Shelley's Changing Attitude," p. 504). B. Weaver also speaks of the development of Shelley's theory, noting that there is a "unific principle" working with force in him, and that "he grows, as does a tree, by ring and ring, and yet his heart is the same." Weaver points out the "characteristic interweaving of essential ideas" between his prose and poetry, especially with reference to the idea of "visitings" which come from some "unseen" or "divine" power or nature. The pattern appears in the following works: The Assassins (1814); the Essay on
Christianity (1815); the Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" (1816); the "Ode to the West Wind" (1819); Prometheus Unbound (1819); "To a Skylark" (1820); Adonais (1821); and the Defence (1821). He sees the pattern reaching full expressing in Prometheus, and "in turn" being "translated back into prose in the Defence" ("Pre-Promethean Thought in Shelley," pp. 195-196).

Concerning the word "interpenetration" J. Raben points out that "not only imagery but diction as well moved freely from Coleridge's poems into Shelley's," and that Shelley, when Medwin accused him of coining "interpenetration" replied that it was "used by Coleridge--quite authority enough" ("Coleridge as the Prototype," p. 286).

STUDY. Shelley's borrowing of the word "interpenetration" from Coleridge could very well have been from Coleridge's The Statesman's Manual [A Lay Sermon], which Mary Shelley records he was reading in 1816 and in 1817. In the Manual, published in 1816, Coleridge has the phrase "not that living and generative interpenetration of both" referring to religion as penetrating by reason and understanding (The Statesman's Manual, in Political Tracts, p. 44). Shelley doesn't commence the use of, or some variation of, "interpenetrate" until 1818. He then uses it in "Lines Written among the Euganean Hills" (1. 313), in 1819 in Prometheus Unbound (IV.370), in 1820 in "A Vision of the Sea" (1. 120) and "The Sensitive Plant" (1.66), and in 1821 in the Prologue to Hellas (1. 23). In 1819 he also uses it in the "Preface" to The
CenCI in commenting that "in a dramatic composition the imagery and the passion should interpenetrate one another" (Concordance, p. 359); (Poetry, p. 277).

There is also a passage in Monboddo, relatively close to other passages with ideas parallel to those of the Defence, which reveals this same idea of the divine mind participating in other minds. Monboddo speaks of the similarity of Plato's doctrine of ideas and Aristotle's species of things held to exist in the deity's mind, and notes that "everybody who believes the universe to be production of mind and not of blind chance, must be of the same opinion. Those forms truly eternal may be said to have real existence in contradiction to corporeal forms, fleeting, perishable, and in constant vicissitude of generation and corruption. Plato went further that ideas or species of things had a real existence by themselves, not only out of any corporeal form, but out of any mind or intelligence: That they were incorporeal substances, not accidents, or qualities, of other substances: That they are mixed with every thing here below; and that it is by participation of them that every thing is denominated to be what it is." He continues that how "substance by itself should mix and incorporate with so many different masses of matter, and yet still preserve the unity and indivisibility of its nature, is one of the mysteries of the Platonic philosophy" but that Plato did "hold such opinion is evident" in his writings, and that "this doctrine of ideas runs through his whole philosophy" (Of the Origin, Book I, pp. 111-112).
"its footsteps . . . virtue . . . Universe . . .
spirits . . . world"

EDITIONS. Jordan notes a parallel in the Introduction to the Second Book of Milton's *The Reason of Church Government* where poetic abilities are called "the inspired gift of God," which "imbred and cherish" the "seeds of virtue and public civility," and "set the affections in right tune" (p. 73).

STUDY. This passage echoes, in its use of imagery and its thoughts, several of Shelley's poems of the preceding two years. The "footsteps," of which traces remain in a following calm, appear in his reference to his baby William, "To William Shelley" (1819), whose "footsteps on the sand" are on a "distant shore." The same idea is picked up with the baby Mercury in "Homer's Hymn to Mercury" translated in 1820, in which the "footsteps" of the herd led by the baby are impressing the sand "with vestiges" (XXXVIII.286-292).

*Epipsychidion* (1821) has "Storm, and Calm, pursue their flight" before touching the shore of the island "Eden" (ll. 419-434). The parallel in meaning, however, is found in *Prometheus Unbound*, for he is explaining here in the *Defence* what he actually did in that poem. In the *Defence* "the spirits of the most refined organization" (that is, poets as a class) are the ones who "colour" and "reanimate" the "cold, buried image of the past" and celebrate "virtue, love, patriotism and friendship." In *Prometheus*, the "Spirits of the human mind" come forth from all the things which go to make up true poetry --from "Thought," "Wisdom," "Sculpture and Poesy,"
liberty, and love and they too bring new life to a world recovering from tyranny." Early in *Prometheus*, a "wind swept forth wrinkling the Earth with frost" (II.1.137), but in the end the chorus of Spirits, coming with "sandals of lightning" through a "heaven of serene and mighty motion" celebrate with joy the now-released virtues of thought, wisdom, and love, and of renewed patriotism in the feelings of fellowship after "years of blood and tears" and "hatreds," and the true friendship which is revealed in a "thousand streams" finally joining in "harmony." Now their "feet" are "sandalled with calm" (IV.93-134). His intention has been, obviously, what he now explains poetry's intention to be, to make "immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world."

1344-45 "word . . . enchanted chord"

EDITIONS. Cook suggests a parallel idea in Byron's passage in *Childe Harold*, Bk. 4, stanza 23, where past things touch the heart by "striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound" (p. 78).

1349-56 "it arrests . . . apparitions . . . interlunations . . . their sisters . . . caverns of the spirit . . . things."

STUDY. This passage seems a definite reference to Porphyry's explanation of the "Cave of the nymphs," the dark caves from which the nymphs feed men from intellectual fountains and, through the gate of cold, cause life in the world. In periods of "interlunation" the world is dark and cold with no moon
and no sun. Men can go down through the north gate into
generation, but cannot use the portal of the immortals. Thus,
in the *Defence*, there is no gate from man's "cavern of the
spirit" into the "universe," as he *is* man. But, through the
nymphs' cave, or through the spirit of poetry, man has the
immortal gate open to him.

1357 "Poetry redeems from decay"

CRITICISM. Barnard comments that Shelley "did not cease to
believe (for very long, at any rate) that some benevolent
Power governed the universe" but "visitations of the divinity"
were "rare and fleeting." Barnard notes that "such is the
theme and spirit of the 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty' written
in 1816" (*Shelley's Religion*, p. 58).

STUDY. The 1818-1821 group of poems again reveals itself as
a source of idea and imagery for the *Defence*. In "Marenghi"
(1818), the banished, martyred Florentine "must have" had
burning in his breast "That fire, more warm and bright than
life and hope" which was "warring with decay" or he could not
have lived for years as he did. (Poetry as patriotism and
liberty is one of Shelley's tenets.) In *Prometheus* (1819),
Love, from its "awful throne of patient power" in the "wise
heart," finally releases man from being a "slave" and a
"decay" (IV.550-561). (Love is another evocation of Shelley's
idea of poetry). In *Epipsychidion*, when the lovers have years
"heaped" on their "decay" then "let us become the overhanging
day / The living soul of this Elysian isle / Conscious, in-
separable, one" (11. 536-540). (The Platonic concept of
the "soul within the soul" relationship of man and Universe
is also part of Shelley's poetry.) In *Adonais* (1821), 11. 430-2,
"kings of thought" contend with "time's decay" and "of the
past are all that cannot pass away." (True poets bridge time
and partake of the eternal in Shelley's conception of poetry.)
Finally, in *Hellas* (1821) while "worlds on worlds" roll from
"creation to decay," they are "still immortal" and "new
shapes they still may weave, / New Gods, new laws receive"
(11. 197-208). (Shelley's poetry is cyclic in its conception,
and from decay rebirth still arrives.) It can be seen, then,
how Shelley really defines the "Poetry" which redeems man's
"visitations of divinity" from "decay."

1358 End of paragraph.

CRITICISM. Notopoulos suggests that "in all these statements
of Shelley's Platonic view of poetry we see the immortality
of the *Phaedo*, which is always an attribute of Ideal Beauty"
(The Platonism, pp. 355, 348). Contrarily, E. Wasserman says
that Shelley, writing of the "divinity in man" attributes
the poet's "momentary intuitions of perfect form not to any
transcendent Idea (despite what the Platonizers of Shelley
may claim), but to submission to a power seated upon the
throne of the soul" and arising, as he says, "from within"
(Shelley's Prometheus Unbound, p. 147). Barnard views this
passage from a Christian standpoint, saying that it is clear
that "Shelley's kingdom of the Imagination is not of this
world" but the principle which responds to "the divinity" and
that in Shelley's religion, "Imagination corresponds to
the Christian doctrine of Grace." He also notes F. C.
Prescott's comment [Poetry and Myth, p. 185], that Shelley
gives a "new and independent revelation of religious truth"
and a "fresh imaginative apprehension of man's relation to
the world of spirit . . . the Holy Ghost . . . was to Shelley
a vivid present reality" (Shelley's Religion, pp. 262-264).
Wimsatt, in a general comment at this point, says that "what
is unique about the essay, and wherein it triumphs, is the
overall rhythm of its enthusiasm and the glowing cascade
of images which celebrate the magnificent theme" (Literary
Criticism, p. 420). N. I. White also comments in the latter
vein, that "in a dozen repeated assertions whose appeal is
more transcendental than rational Shelley continually
suggests the presence of divinity in poetry" (Shelley, II,
p. 279). A similar idea is seen, too, in A. T. Strong's
comment that the Defence "supplies the best possible illus-
tration of the growing transcendentalism of Shelley's mind"
(Three Studies, p. 37).
1359-64 "Poetry . . . irreconcilable things."

CRITICISM. N. Ford has noted, concerning the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," the oppositions with which Shelley works, also true at this point of the Defence: "Beauty may be like darkness in the sense that it is part of the vast unknowable, casting its 'awful shadow' as well as its radiance upon us. Or it may be a no-thing, not an Essence resident in the cosmos but a wishful projection of the human mind - hence not light but darkness" ("Paradox and Irony in Shelley's Poetry," p. 654). Solve comments that the "utilization of pain to produce pleasure is met with frequently in Shelley," and that "this divine gift" aids the poet to "make out of his own sufferings and the dross and error of the world something which bears the stamp of beauty." He notes that Shelley alludes to the "transmutation of error, pain, and evil by the poet's imaginative faculty" more than once, and holds suffering as "an important source of art." The magic which enables the poet to "turn poison to potable gold" is the "regulating and unifying power of poetry" (Shelley: His Theory, pp. 52-53). McElderry sees both Wordsworth and Shelley as giving a "deeper connotation" to the term "pleasure" in recognizing that "ideas of pain are frequently mingled with it." He notes that Wordsworth refers to the "complex feeling of delight" of poetry as "most important" in "tempering the painful feelings always found intermingled with powerful
descriptions of the deeper passions," while in Shelley poetry "marries exultation and horror . . . subdues . . . all irreconcilable things." McElderry concludes that "such a conception of poetic pleasure widens the poet's responsibilities and deepens his authority" ("Common Elements," p. 179).

1364-69 "It . . . incarnation . . . alchemy . . . gold"

STUDY. This is the second occurrence in the Defence of an "incarnation," and both have been connected with "gold."

At 11. 1238-39, money is the "visible incarnation" of selfishness and luxury, and is worshipped wrongfully. Now, the gold, which arises from the world's worst tyranny, that of death, is poisonous until the spirit of poetry which is now selflessness or a "wondrous sympathy" becomes its incarnation. This new force creates a "gold" which has spiritual rather than material value, and is the antithesis of the other incarnation, Mammon.

Gold is connected frequently with death in Shelley's poetry, as it is here in the rest of this passage. The images often used are those of blood, tyranny, and gold in some combination. In The Revolt of Islam the symbols of woe are "Purple, and gold, and steel" (XI.xviii.4381-82). In Prometheus Unbound "blood with gold is bought and sold" (I.1.530), and "iron and gold" are the "slaves and signs of power" (II. iv.69). In Hellas appears "Go! bid them kill, / Blood is the seed of gold" (11. 247-248). The "poisonous waters" connected
with "death" below will be seen to have direct connection to tyranny, power, and selfishness, as the allusions which the word "gold" carries in Shelley's poetry indicate.

1369-70 "poisonous waters which flow from death"

STUDY. Shelley refers here to an idea which has been reflected in several of his earlier essays. In On The Punishment of Death (probably 1816) Shelley has stated that "whether death is good or evil, a punishment or a reward, or whether it be wholly indifferent, no man can take upon himself to assert." However, he points out that the popular systems of both religion and politics force decisions about death which have evil effects. To compel a person "into the pleasure or pain" which awaits him, to "punish or reward him," or to "disrobe him at once from all that intertexture of good and evil with which Nature seems to have clothed every form of individual existence" is "to inflict on him the doom of death." He continues that nothing "confirms all the inhuman and unsocial impulses of men more than the punishment of death."

But a "more decisive argument is afforded by a consideration of the universal connection of ferocity of manners and a contempt of social ties, with the contempt of human life. Governments which derive their institutions from the existence of circumstances of barbarism and violence ... are bloody in proportion as they are despotic, and form the manners of their subjects to a sympathy with their own spirit" (Prose, pp. 156-158). In his essay, On the Death of
the Princess Charlotte (1817), Shelley again discusses this subject in connection with the execution of three men who died at the time of the Princess. He notes that "these men were presumptuously thrust into that unfathomable gulf by other men who knew as little and who reckoned not the present or future sufferings of their victims. Nothing is more horrible than that man should for any cause shed the life of man. For all other calamities there is a remedy or a consolation. When that Power through which we live ceases . . . then is grief and agony, and the burthen which must be borne; such sorrow improves the heart. But when man sheds the blood of man, revenge, and hatred, and a long train of executions, and assassinations, and proscriptions is perpetuated to remotest time" (Prose, pp. 165-166). It is quite obvious that the "poisonous waters" which "flow from death through life" arise from man's inhumanity and tyranny perpetuated through institutions of church and government which delude him or demand wrong choices of him. But normal death has not the same effect, as Shelley notes here in the Defence's union of "grief and pleasure, eternity and change," and in On the Death of the Princess Charlotte, where death is "a sorrow" which "improves the heart."

1370-72 "it strips the veil . . . naked and sleeping beauty . . . forms."

EDITIONS. Jordan notes Coleridge's comments on Wordsworth and his seeking "to excite a feeling analogous to the super-
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natural” by directing the mind "to the loveliness and the
wonders of the world" but which* because of the "film of
familiarity" we have "hearts that neither feel nor under­
stand" (Bloqraphla Literaria. Chap. XIV).

Jordan also

suggests 1!The Witch of Atlas*" Ixvi* and the "Essay on Life*"
in which appears "The mist of familiarity obscures from us
the wonder of our being" (p. 74),
CRITICISM.

There is a wide divergence of opinion as to what

source Shelley draws upon here.

M. H. Abrams comments that

this passage* taken together with that a few lines later*
where poetry "spreads its own figured curtain*" is an example
of "a combination of Platonism and psychological empiricism*
and of the mimetic and expressive point of view" which "runs
all through the Defence." Thus the greatest poems all "mirror­
ing the universal Forms* are interconvertible! yet each also
mirrors its particular author*" and the "imagination" which
is the "mental organ for intuiting" is also the "principle
of synthesis" (The Mirror and the Lamp, p. 130).

Turner*

however* suggests that Shelley's idea of stripping the "veil
of familiarity" here and elsewhere in the Defence, which
brings about a "loss of wonder at the beauty of the world*"
is Lucretian in its source, f&helley and Lucretius*1*p. 273).
Notopoulos considers that here Shelley "assigns to poetry a
function similar to that of art in Plotinus's philosophy.
For Shelley poetry lifts 'the veil of life' and enables us
to se# Intellectual Beauty (The Platonism, pp. 355-356).
Grabo* however* goes directly to Plato in commenting that this


is the idea "familiar to Platonic thought" that the "world of the actual half conceals, half reveals, the real world of which it is a shadow." Grabo comments further that "Shelley more than most men was repeatedly awakened to this invisible reality" (The Magic Plant, p. 361).

STUDY. The ideas expressed here have appeared with some frequency in Shelley's poetry of the immediately preceding years. The idea of baring beauty can be seen in 1819 in Prometheus Unbound in "Make bare the secrets of the earth's deep heart" which contains "gold" and "unfathomed fire" and "springs" (IV.279-284). In 1820 in "The Sensitive Plant," the rose "The soul of her beauty and love lay bare" (I. 32). In The Witch of Atlas (1820) the Witch sees "all the forms in which those spirits lay / Were to her sight like the diaphanous Veils, in which sweet ladies oft array" and those human figures she "Beheld as living spirits--to her eyes / The naked beauty of the soul lay bare" (I. 561-563, 569-571). In Adonais (1821), "A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight / Making earth bare and veiling heaven . . ." (XXIX. 258-259). The "image of "the spirit of its forms" appears several times in Prometheus Unbound. In Act I, for example, Earth tells of "two worlds of life and death," one seen and the other where are "The shadows of all the forms that think and live," until death unites them (I. 195-199). In Act III, "lovely apparitions" become "radiant, as the mind, arising bright / From the embrace of beauty (whence the forms / Of which these are the phantoms) casts on them / The
gathered rays which are reality" (iii.49-53). In 1821, the Prologue to Hellenes has these lines: "True greatness asks not space, true excellence / Lives in the Spirit of all things that live, / Which lends it to the worlds thou callest thine" (11. 166-168).

It is interesting to note the similarity of idea and imagery which sometimes appears between poets of a period. In The Prelude, Book IV, Wordsworth expresses an idea like that of Shelley: "Gently did my soul / Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted, stood / Naked, as in the presence of her God" (11. 150-152). E. De Selincourt suggests Biblical sources for the veil imagery here in Wordsworth's use, Exodus XXXIV.33-35 and 2 Corinthians iii.13-16 (William Wordsworth The Prelude, p. 534). Such Biblical sources are also possible in Shelley's use, considering his close knowledge and fairly constant use of Biblical thought.
PARAGRAPH 42: LINES 1373-1393

1373-74 "All things exist as they are perceived . . . percipient."

EDITIONS. The text of the draft had a somewhat different wording at this point (see Textual Notes above). Verkoren points out the two parallel passages in Shelley's On Life: "I confess that I am one of those who am unable to refuse my assent to the conclusions of those philosophers who assert that nothing exists but as it is perceived"; and "Nothing exists but as it is perceived." Verkoren also notes both that this is a Berkleyan view, and that Mary Shelley, in her Preface to the 1840 Essays, said that "Shelley was a disciple of the Immaterial Philosophy of Berkeley" (pp. 108, 90).

Clark points out that this statement is a "fundamental concept of Berkeley's philosophy" (p. 173). Jordan says that "Shelley believed, however, that the mind of the percipient made its own contributions, as shown in 'Mont Blanc' 4-6" (p. 74).

STUDY. Shelley first started studying Berkeley's philosophy in 1812, as a letter from Robert Southey to a friend on January 4, indicates: "I expect he will be a Berkleyan, for I have put him upon a course of Berkeley" (Letters, I, n. 10, p. 219). However, on July 29, 1812 Shelley wrote to Godwin that he had read Berkeley and thought the arguments on immaterialism "deriving all their predicates in non were invented by the pride of philosophers to conceal their ignorance even from themselves" (Letters, I, p. 316). Nevertheless,
he ordered Berkeley's works on December 24 of this year. He did come to accept a Berkeleyan view, as is shown by works over a span of years. F. L. Jones, for example, details the powerful influence on Shelley during 1814 and 1815 of Sir William Drummond, ("Shelley's 'On Life'," p. 779). Drummond's influence is, of course, a direct reflection of the Berkeley position. G. S. Brett calls Academical Questions, for example, "akin in spirit and style to Berkeley" ("Shelley, Berkeley and Drummond," p. 184). That Shelley himself set a high value on Drummond's "metaphysical criticism" can be seen in his statements in On Life, and in his own "Note to The Revolt of Islam."

His interest is further attested by Mary Shelley's Journal, which places his reading of Berkeley in December, 1817 (Journal, p. 87). In a letter to Leigh Hunt of September 27, 1819 Shelley mentioned seeing, in a copy of Berkeley's work lent to him by Southey, notes pencilled by Charles Lloyd, and commented: "One especially struck me as being the assertion of a doctrine of which even then I had long been persuaded, and on which I had founded much of persuasions regarding the imagined cause of the universe. "Mind cannot create; it can only perceive'" (Letters, II, pp. 122-123). His essay, On Life (probably 1819), and his mention of Berkeley in A Philosophical View of Reform (1820) show his continued interest in this philosopher, an interest which culminates now in the Defence.
While the idea Shelley presents here is obviously Berkeleyan, in origin, it probably comes to the Defence through the medium of Sir William Drummond's Academical Questions. Indeed, it seems a miniature summary of Drummond's view of the perceptions existing in the mind, as expressed in Book I, Chapter ii, of his work. He says that while everything around us "seems capable both of producing, and of receiving change," it may be that we can "only speak of changes, which have taken place in our own ideas and sensations" (p. 23). This he illustrates by example: "If I be desired to explain, what I perceive, when I examine a fine marble statue, I can only repeat the catalogue of my own feelings . . . . Thus, then, instead of describing the external statue, I am in fact expressing my own sentiments . . . and detailing perceptions, which exist only in my own mind . . . . We cannot define, nor describe, what we neither feel nor perceive" (p. 25). Shelley's quotation from Milton exactly expresses the thought with which Drummond concludes, that "Each individual easily forgets, that the busy world, of which he speaks, is perceived by him only in the mirror of his own mind. In it he only sees; beyond it he cannot look. Through sensation has all his knowledge come; and in the sentient being, and not in the external object, is the perception, as well as the existence, of change" (p. 26).

1374-76 "'The mind . . . hell of heaven.'"

EDITIONS. The editors generally identify this as a quotation
from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, 1.254-255. Miss Winstanley suggests comparing also Byron's *Manfred*, III.4 ff., where the "mind" is "its own origin of ill and end" (p. 93).

1376-78 "But poetry . . . accident . . . impressions."

STUDY. Shelley here is still working in the same context as Drummond. While Drummond does not call that quality which is present and can defeat accidental impressions "poetry," he defines what this quality is and explains why it works in the same general manner as Shelley describes. Drummond says that "If there be always a power, by which the mind perceives, power must be exercised, when the mind does perceive." And, "Provided that there be any such states of the soul as active and passive, it seems evident, that the mind must be passive, when it is percipient. There can be no doubt, indeed, that this must be the case, if the soul receive impressions from external objects. But we need only appeal to experience, in order to be convinced, that all original sensations, and all immediate perceptions exist in our minds independently of the will, without any agency of the intellect, and without the exertion of that power, which philosophers have called passive." Drummond then explains further, that the "mind must have some knowledge of that, of whose existence it is convinced. Sensations can only convince us of their own existence." As an example of "beings, of whom we can form no notion, the Deity is undoubtedly one. Nevertheless the probability of his existence cannot be easily denied, while
we admit, that there are any causes at all . . . ." Drummond now comes to what seems the explanation of Shelley's identification of the role of "poetry," that quality which allows us to defeat the "accident of surrounding impressions." Drummond says, "We cannot even account for the associations, or for the order of our own ideas, without there be in some mind an association which is always right, and an order which is always perfect. Men have notions of justice, of mercy, of truth, of fitness, of the good, and of the fair; and we may therefore infer, that in some intellect, there is a standard of all these things" (*Academical Questions*, pp. 29-37). Drummond's "some intellect" becomes Shelley's "poetry," which elsewhere exists in the "divine," in the "eternal" and in the "one."

1378-1381. "And . . . figured curtain . . . dark veil. . . creates . . . being within our being."

CRITICISM. Notopoulos asks, "What is this but the Platonic soul as described in *Epipsychidion* and the fragment *On Love*?" (*The Platonism*, p. 348). Butter also notes that Shelley's "most characteristic image in connection with love is the 'Epipsychidion,' the 'soul within our soul,'" which is fully explained in *On Love* (*Shelley's Idols of the Cave*, p. 7). Hughes, on the other hand, turns to Lucretius as a source. He says, "In the foundation of all Shelley's thinking the concept of the soul's inviolable recess, the 'soul within the soul', the 'epipsychidion', is a conflation of a well-
established tenet of religious mysticism with what he had found in Lucretius about the elements of the animus and the inmost of the four, which is the active substance and the source of all sensation [De Rerum Natura, iii. 94 ff.]."

Hughes also sees the essay On Love which propounds the "epipsychidion" theory as reminiscent of Lucretius, a mixture of both the language of materialism and of the Lucretian "animus" and "anima" (The Nascent Mind, p. 234). F. Stovall points out that "the Platonist's first criticism of Shelley is that he did not distinguish sufficiently . . . between the love of person and the love of mind. He confused the chivalric conception of love, which had no place in Greek thought with the philosophic conception." Stovall continues, however, that Shelley "was not merely a borrower from Plato. He had a definition of his own, perfectly adapted to his mind . . . which made egoistic love an exaltation of the self-ideal. . . . Love is the desire to unite ourselves with the . . . 'Soul within our soul,' and . . . if we lose such desire we become living sepulchres of our higher selves" (Desire and Restraint in Shelley, p. 300). Schulz suggests that "The curse of subjection to accident, 'Life's dark veil,' is surely related to Plato's conception of the world of appearances as a kind of error" (Shelley's Theory, p. 75).

STUDY. As might be expected, the imagery here is that which also appears in poetry, other than just Epipsychidion, of the years close to the Defence. The "figured curtain" which is the universal life or spirit of poetry in the Defence appears
just three times in Shelley's poetry, and means as it does in the *Defence* a covering over a deep spirit which is placed there until the proper moment for removal. In *Prometheus Unbound* (IV.57-60) Man's spirit has been so protected, for after tyranny has fallen:

The voice of the Spirits of Air and of Earth
Have drawn back the figured curtain of sleep
Which covered our being and darkened our birth
In the deep . . . .

In the *Prologue to Hellas* (48-53) after the "sons of God" are told to speed "the unaccomplished destiny," then "The curtain of the Universe / Is rent and shattered." In *Adonais* (VIII.71-72) the opposite condition prevails momentarily, at any rate, for darkness and chance "shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw." The "dark veil" appears as a "painted veil" in the poetry, and is twice used in close approximation to the use in the *Defence*. Shelley's "Sonnet: Lift not the painted veil" (1818) partly reappears in *Prometheus Unbound*, III.IV.190-194:

The painted veil, by those who were, called life,
Which mimicked, as with colours idly spread,
All men believed or hoped, is torn aside;
The loathsome mask has fallen, but man remains
Sceptreless, free . . . .

In the "Sonnet" (11. 1-6) the picture is more explicit about the two forces of the "veil" or "curtain":

```plaintext
The voice of the Spirits of Air and of Earth
Have drawn back the figured curtain of sleep
Which covered our being and darkened our birth
In the deep . . . .
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Lift not the painted veil which those who live
Call Life: though unreal shapes be pictured there,
And it but mimic all we would believe
With colours idly spread,—behind, lurk Fear
And Hope, twin Destinies; who ever weave
Their shadows, . . .

*Prometheus Unbound* (IV.400-401) also shows a universal "epi-
psychidion" idea: "Man, one harmonious soul of many a
soul, / Whose nature is its own divine control." The poetry,
as it does here, very often helps to define or pinpoint the
meaning to which Shelley is alluding by his choice of image
in the *Defence*. It is interesting to note the close con­
nection of *Prometheus* to this particular section of the *Defence*.

The connection with the thinking of Drummond still is
present as this passage of the *Defence* continues. The use
of the "painted" or "figured" curtain and the "dark veil"
can be explained by passages in Drummond, at least in part.
Drummond, in Book II, Chapter V, examines a system of "some
mechanical philosophers, who suppose the vital, or animal,
spirits to be the immediate instruments by which the soul
holds communication with the external world. When a prospect
is spread before the eyes, the animal spirits paint it in all
its brilliant colours to the soul; . . . Again, when we
desire to impart our feelings, the service is not less
punctually performed . . . The animal spirits are the
ministers of the passions, and express all their transitions
. . . . They collect at the call of the poet, and bear his
genius away to the regions of fiction and romance."
Drummond considers the ancient and modern answers to "what is the substance of the animal spirits," and then goes from the ancient idea of "aerial" to Descartes' "pure flame," Newton's "tenuity of light," and Boissier's "electrical fluid." Drummond's ideas here bear relationship to Shelley's use of "sparks," "lightning," and other forms of fire, and suggest his work as at least a partial source for Shelley's work (Academical Questions, pp. 283-284).

Drummond, as does Shelley, has also considered the ways a "series of images passes" to the imagination. Drummond says in Book I, Chapter VII, that when he looks at a scene, these images "fill the painted field of my vision, and successively attract my notice. But all these objects, with their different distances, and relative magnitudes, being, as it were, summed up, make me perceptive of the simple mode of duration, which has been called continuous extension" (p. 71). In another passage later in Chapter IX., the concluding one of Book I, Drummond says: "We have now traced the visible images of things to those which are painted on the retina. We may suspect, however, that these are no more the objects of vision than the rest, and that they would not be so, even if they were not always inverted. But their being inverted sufficiently proves, that they are not the real images which we see" (p. 133). Drummond helps in understanding what is back of Shelley's thinking about perception in this whole paragraph, for the above passages also apply in the following
lines. When we truly perceive what we see, we see a reality of life quite different from what the physical eye has "painted" with its upside-down images received only from the senses. The "poetry" which adjusts our vision to true reality, of course, has the result which Shelley pictures immediately for us. If true vision is straight, then the upside-down world is "chaos," and we see our "common Universe" for what it really is. This all takes place in our "inner being" which is not only created by our new perception, but then commences functioning by taking our "blunted impressions" and, by the process which Drummond calls "continuous extension," creates the world of reality from the same impressions now properly pictured and understood without obscuring "veils of familiarity." Shelley's poetic imagery has shown the "being" behind the "curtain" to be Life; thus, we really reach a vision in our new inner being of the "Life of Life."

1381-91 "It makes . . . purges . . . film of familiarity . . . compels . . . creates . . . re-iteration."

EDITIONS. Cook, Brett-Smith, and Verkoren all see this passage as indebted to three of Sidney's. The first of the suggested parallel passages is: "Onely the Poet disdeining to be tied to any subjection, lifted up with the vigor of his own invention, doth grow in effect into an other nature; in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or quite a new, formes such as never were in nature" [F., p. 8].
The second is: "Nature never set foorth the earth in so rich Tapistry as diverse Poets have done, neither with so pleasaunt rivers, fruitfull trees, sweete smelling flowers, nor whatsoever els may make the too much loved earth more lovely: her world is brasen, the Poets only deliver a golden" [F., p. 8]. The third is: "Neither let it be deemed too sawcy a comparison, to ballance the highest point of mans wit, with the efficacie of nature" [F., p. 8].

CRITICISM. The critics comment most upon Shelley's use of "the film of familiarity." Grabo suggests that "Shelley believed the poetry of his own day marked a reawakening . . . of wonder . . . an augury of a new and better society" (The Magic Plant, p. 361). Wellek says that "what modern theory would describe as 'realization' is well phrased when Shelley speaks of poetry as 'purging . . . the film of familiarity'" (A History, II, p. 126). C. Baker comments that "the film of familiarity" was a phrase of Coleridge's, and was another way of describing the cold light to which Rousseau and Wordsworth, and dozens of other great poets, had surrendered" (Shelley's Major Poetry, p. 264). B. Kurtz comments that "The Adonais as a whole, and particularly in its close, is the very picture and living example of what Shelley describes in this definition" (The Pursuit of Death, p. 305).

STUDY. See the final comments under Study immediately above.
1391-93 "It justifies . . . Tasso . . . Poeta."

EDITIONS. The critics in general give the translation of this quotation, "None merits the name of creator except God and the poet," and refer to other places in which Shelley has used it. They also point out that it is not verbatim. (Shelley has used the quotation in letters to Peacock, August 16, 1818, and to Hunt, November 14-18, 1819, and in his essay, On Life.) Clark points out that the quotation derives from Tasso's Discorsi del Poema Eroico (p. 75). Both Cook and Miss Winstanley suggest a passage from Sidney relevant to these lines: "but rather give right honor to the heavenly maker of that maker, who having made man to his owne likenes, set him beyond and over all the workes of that second nature" [E., p. 8] (pp. 78-79). Brett-Smith points out that in Shelley's letter to Peacock in which he quotes Tasso he also comments on the passage in Phaedrus which speaks of the definition of poetry, and of how a man becomes a poet (p. 103).
1394-97 "A Poet . . . happiest . . . of men."

EDITIONS. Jordan comments that "Wordsworth and Coleridge would agree. Wordsworth called poets 'the happiest of all men' . . . and Coleridge ascribes the loss of his poetic powers to his loss of 'joy' ('Dejection: an Ode,' stanza v)" (p. 75).

CRITICISM. McElderry also compares Wordsworth and Shelley at this point. He points out that "hardly any of Wordsworth's comments are better remembered than his definition of the poet as 'a man speaking to men,' a man of 'more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature and a more comprehensive soul than are supposed to be common among mankind.'" McElderry notes that Shelley characteristically chooses superlatives to describe the poet as "happiest, the best . . ." and notes that later he calls the poet "more delicately organized" and "sensible to pain and pleasure." In McElderry's view, "to twentieth-century theorists these assertions of Wordsworth and Shelley may seem obvious and by no means adequate. Yet in both poets there is clearly evident a desire to emphasize their kinship with other men, and to account for difference in the simple terms of degree" ("Common Elements," p. 177).

1410-16 "Let us . . . arbitration of popular breath . . . 'there sitting . . . soar' . . . reprehensible."

EDITIONS. Cook and later editors identify this quotation as
from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, IV.829-830*: "Ye knew me once no mate / For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar" (Cook, p. 79). Clark notes that *Adonais*, line 337, should also be compared (p. 295).

STUDY. Shelley means here the literary critics, and the words he chooses indicate exactly how deeply he regards them as unfair dispensers of literary justice. Behind this passage lies his own bitter personal experience, as well as that of others such as Keats, who, he believed, was literally cut down by unjust criticism. His letters clearly reveal what his feelings are, but show a rather surprising objectivity of viewpoint and tone, as the lines here also evidence, in face of abusive attack on his art and personal life.

He wrote to Leigh Hunt on September 27, 1819 that "Ollier tells me the *Quarterly* are going to review me; I suppose it will be a pretty morsel, and as I am acquiring a taste for humour and drollery I confess I am curious to see it" (*Letters*, II, p. 123). This article, a very abusive review of *The Revolt of Islam*, appeared in the April, 1819 issue of the *Quarterly*, to which Hunt responded in defence in *Examiner* issues of September 26, and of October 3 and 10, 1819. On October 15, 1819, Shelley wrote to Ollier: "The droll remarks of the *Quarterly*, and Hunt's kind defence, arrived as safe as such poison, and safer than such an antidote, usually do" (*Letters*, II, p. 126). On July 12, 1820 in his letter to Peacock Shelley comments: "I am told the magazines, etc., blaspheme me at a great rate. I wonder
why I write verses, for nobody reads them. It is a kind of disorder, for which the regular practitioners prescribe what is called a torrent of abuse; but I fear that can hardly be considered as a specific" ([Letters], II, p. 213). In November, 1820, Shelley drafted a letter, probably not sent, to William Gifford, the Quarterly editor. Although he felt the injustice of his own case, his real purpose was to defend Keats. The letter opens by mentioning the "slanderous paper" which had appeared some time since. He then comments, "I never notice anonymous attacks," and continues that "the wretch who wrote it" doubtless has the reward of his motives besides the pay. Shelley says, "I certainly bear you no ill will for having edited the abuse to which I allude . . . ." Seriously speaking, I am not in the habit of permitting myself to be disturbed by what is said or written of me, though I dare say I may be condemned sometimes justly enough.--But I feel in respect to the writer in question, that 'I am there sitting where he durst not soar--.'" He then turns to Keats and the censorious review which he felt Keats's work did not deserve, pointing out that it is a "very remarkable production" and deserved "milder usage." He then notes that "Poor Keats was thrown into a dreadful state of mind by this review . . . embittering his existence, & inducing a disease from which there are now but faint hopes of his recovery" ([Letters], II, pp. 251-253). On February 22, 1821 Shelley writes to Ollier that "if any Review of note abuses me excessively, or the contrary, be so kind as to send it me by post" ([Letters], II,
p. 269). On April 16, 1821 his letter to Byron indicates his belief that Keats died "in paroxysms of despair at the contemptuous attack on his book in the Quarterly Review" (Letters, II, p. 284). On June 8, 1821 he writes to Ollier to announce publication of "Adonais," a lament for Keats "with some interposed stabs on the assassins of his peace and of his fame." He also asks Ollier to inquire the degree to which "the brutal attack" in the Quarterly excited Keats's disease (Letters, II, p. 297). He begins to show some fraying from the criticism he has endured. In his letter of June 11, 1821 to Ollier he writes the same request as in February: "I hear that the abuse against me exceeds all bounds. Pray if you will see any one article particularly outrageous, send it me. As yet I have laughed--but woe to these scoundrels if they should once make me lose my temper.--I have discovered that my calumniator in the Quarterly Review was the Rev. Mr. Milman.--Priests & Eunuchs have their privilege.--" (Letters, II, pp. 298-299).

In the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam (1817-1818) he indicates the position about criticism of his work which he continues to hold thereafter: "I am certain that calumny and misrepresentation, though it may move me to compassion, cannot disturb my peace . . . . I shall endeavor to extract, from the midst of insult and contempt and maledictions, those admonitions which may tend to correct whatever imperfections such censurers may discover in this my first
serious appeal to the Public. If certain Critics were as clear-sighted as they are malignant, how great would be the benefit to be derived from their virulent writings! As it is, I fear I shall be malicious enough to be amused with their paltry tricks and lame invectives" ("Preface," The Revolt of Islam, Poetry, p. 36).

The November, 1820 letter to William Gifford, editor of the Review, quoted above, was in his mind four months later in writing the Defence for he uses the same quotation from Milton.

A stern fighter of injustice wherever he felt it to be observable, he here chooses to put into legal terminology his indictment of what was obviously in his own time, and in his own case, real injustice against which there was little recourse.

1416-21 "Let us assume that Homer ... poet laureate."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley says that "Shelley probably imagines this because Elizabeth assigned a pension to Spenser, but the office of poet laureate was not created till after the Restoration" (p. 94). Jordan notes that "the laureateship was not then in high repute, having been held from 1790 to 1813 by Henry James Pye and being currently in the possession of Robert Southey, whom the liberals considered a renegade" (p. 76).

STUDY. It is obvious that Shelley is using a passage of Socratic irony here with his listing of famous artists. When
Shelley has employed irony heretofore in the *Defence* it has been several-faceted and this occasion is no exception. First, he is using his list of famous artists in a somewhat facetious and mocking manner to illustrate just what the unjust critic can do to defame artists who may have produced the finest work. He has been clever in finding a grain of truth on which to hang this list of "accusations" and "executions" on the basis of "virtue" or "prudence." These men are equally, however, of the highest wisdom, poets such as he talks about in the opening of the paragraph.

He is also taking on the guise of a "Socrates" in these assumptions of feigned ignorance, of which the list is composed. A Socrates investigates to seek truth, but the critic who would produce the kind of nineteenth-century criticism which this list is set up to exemplify, is not seeking either truth or justice. The assumption of the modern critic this list leaves is that he uses calumny and achieves injustice. His list makes very clear what such criticism does. One has only to place Virgil, the flatterer of Augustus, against Virgil, the poet of the *Aeneid*, to see the truth and the justice of the point his mocking list makes about what is real poetry.

On the face of it, the list itself is interesting for several reasons: its probable source, its facts, and its relative disorder. Shelley perhaps got the idea for using a list like this from his reading of Drummond, whose in-
fluence at this point of the Defence seems marked. In the Academical Questions, Book II, Chapter ix, Drummond comments on Kant having treated with contempt some of the most celebrated men of ancient and modern times, by calling Plato a "mere noologist," Aristotle "an empiric," Leibnitz "a purist," and Condillac "an experimental psychologist," when they really are "interpreters of transcendental philosophy" (p. 351). Another source is Plato. The whole implication of this paragraph is that of the Ion, which discusses what art and inspired creation are, and the way to judge art and artists correctly. There is the subtle irony, too, of Socrates sitting as a critic in judging Ion, but also, through him, Homer and all artists. The first example of Homer also seems to point directly to the Ion as a source. Shelley was reading the Ion at the time he received Peacock's Four Ages, as he notes in his letter of February 15, 1821 (Letters, II, p. 261).

The Ion speaks of good lyric poets, and of Homer as the greatest of the poets, and then goes on to the "iron rings" passage (533d-3), which speaks of good lyric poets being seized or possessed in a state of inspiration. Shelley, in his translation, says that during "this supernatural possession" they become "like Bacchantes." A translation closer in letter to the original Greek, Lane Cooper's, reads that they are "seized with the Bacchic transport and are possessed--as the bacchants . . . ." (For Shelley's translation, see The Platonism, p. 472; for Cooper's, The Collected
Dialogues of Plato, p. 220). "Bacchic" or "Bacchantes," of course, implies drunkenness. Thus, Homer, the great type of the Greek poet, is in this sense a "drunkard."

The designation of Virgil as a "flatterer" undoubtedly refers to his relationship to Emperor Augustus, and to one of the purposes for which the Aeneid was written.

Calling Horace a "coward" seems a straightforward allusion to Horace's own somewhat playful and debated reference to his leaving the battle of Philippi, as he records it in Odés, Book II, Ode VII: "O Pompey . . . With thee I knew Philippi's day and its headlong route, leaving my shield ingloriously behind, when Valour's self was beaten down and threatening hosts ignobly bit the dust. But me in my terror Mercury bore swiftly through the foe in a dense cloud . . ." (Horace, The Odes and Epodes, Loeb edition, p. 123). Later he also left the republican side, a fact which Shelley would not have overlooked. Mary Shelley records that she and Shelley were reading Horace on March 3, 1821 (Journal, pp. 148, 222).

Considering Tasso as a "madman" is of course based on recorded facts concerning Tasso's mental disorders and depressions, and his incarceration for seven years by the Duke of Ferrara, the early part of the term in chains. Only a small part of that time was his mind in any disorder. The tyranny he was subjected to Shelley comments upon in his letter to Peacock of November 6, 1818. Shelley's real feelings are contained in a further comment to Peacock, a letter
of April 22, 1818, in which he says: "I have devoted this summer & indeed the next year to the composition of a tragedy on the subject of Tasso's madness, which I find upon inspection is, if properly treated, admirably dramatic & poetical" (Letters, II, p. 8). Later, the story of the "madman" in Julian and Maddalo (composed in the autumn of 1818) is based on Tasso's biography.

The characterization of Lord Bacon as a "peculator" is again based on historical fact, Bacon's admission of the receipt of gifts from suitors in cases pending in the court of chancery, for which he was convicted, though later pardoned. He himself firmly noted, however, that his intent was never swayed by any bribe, and he was his own severest judge. Shelley really saw Bacon as a "reformer of the world" as his comment, which follows his discussion of his own passion for reform in the "Preface" to Prometheus Unbound, clearly shows: "For my part I had rather be damned with Plato and Lord Bacon, than go to Heaven with Paley and Malthus" (Poetry, p. 206).

His comment on Raphael as a "libertine" might indicate his having read in Italy the well-known book on artists by Giorgio Vasari (1511-74), an Italian painter and writer, whose biographies of artists of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, Vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori e scultori italiani (1550; rev. ed. 1568) are a basic source for knowledge of Renaissance artists. This work would have provided Shelley with the idea of Raphael as a
"libertine" in about the same proportion as Shelley means it here, as a very small part of the full portrait of Raphael. Vasari notes that Raphael "was much disposed to the gentler affections and delighted in the society of woman for whom he was ever ready to perform acts of service. But he also permitted himself to be devoted somewhat too earnestly to the pleasures of life, and in this respect was perhaps more than duly considered and indulged by his friends and admirers. We find it related that his intimate friend Agostino Chigi had commissioned him to paint the first floor of his palace, but Raphael was at that time so much occupied with the love which he bore to the lady of his choice, that he could not give sufficient attention to the work. Agostino therefore, falling at length into despair of seeing it finished . . . after much difficulty . . . prevailed on the lady to take up her abode in his house, where she was accordingly installed in apartments near those which Raphael was painting; in this manner the work was ultimately brought to a conclusion" (Vasari's Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects, Vol. III, p. 47). Shelley, in his letter of August 20, 1819 to Leigh Hunt calls Raphael the "finest painter" of the world (Letters, II, p. 112), and elsewhere speaks of the "profound beauty," the "light," and "harmony" of his work (see Letters, II, pp. 84, 122).

The designation of Spenser as a "poet laureate" stems from the fact that he did, indeed, perform the function of one,
though without the title. His *Fairy Queen* in part is cer-
tainly verse commemorative of Elizabeth, and he did seek
and need the patronage of the Queen. He is, as it were,
predecessor indeed to the later poet laureates in fact.
In Shelley's view this flattery of royalty would not be to
his credit. But the importance of this flattery in com-
parison to his true poetic gift is as minor as any of the
other personal, moral, or political attributes Shelley has
just listed about great artists.

The implication of all this list is that such is the kind
of criticism that is current in his own time, where the
irrelevant matters of personal life are emphasized, and the
quality of the poetry is unjustly attacked on the wrong
basis or even ignored.

1421-24 "It is inconsistent . . . living poets, but
Posterity . . . justice . . . to."

STUDY. Shelley here is referring to the fact that he intends
to write another part of the *Defence* on modern poetry, a
plan which he spells out more exactly at ll. 1492-97 below.

When he comments that "Posterity has done ample justice"
to the figures he has named he is asserting a thought which
he has expressed before, and one in which he takes comfort
for himself. It is an idea which Hume commented on in his
essay, *On the Standard of Taste*, and which may have influenced
Shelley's own view. Shelley's consideration of poetry as uni-
versal is the basis on which he has written the *Defence*. He
has shown in a more personal way, also, what he saw his own preparation as a poet to be. In the "Preface" to The Revolt of Islam he noted his consideration of poetry in its broadest sense, by reading poets, historians, and metaphysicians, by looking on the beautiful scenes of nature, and by taking all these "as common sources of those elements which it is the province of the Poet to embody and to combine."

He sees that great poets, while they differ from each other, also "all resemble each other" not only in normal likenesses of a shared period but in a refusal to be sensible of "temporary praise or blame." Thus, a Homer, Shakespeare, or Lucretius wrote "with an utter disregard of anonymous censure."

For himself Shelley also sees true public judgment, and the later judgment of posterity, as being the proper tribunal for his work. This he indicates when he says: "Should the Public judge that my composition is worthless, I shall indeed bow before the tribunal from which Milton received his crown of immortality; and shall seek to gather, if I live, strength from that defeat, which may nerve me to some new enterprise of thought which may not be worthless. I cannot conceive that Lucretius, when he meditated that poem whose doctrines are yet the basis of our metaphysical knowledge, and whose eloquence has been the wonder of mankind, wrote in awe of such censure as the hired sophists of the impure and superstitious noblemen of Rome might affix to what he should produce" (pp. 34-36). Hume had said in his essay on Taste,
that "though the principles of taste be universal and nearly, if not entirely, the same in all men, yet few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art or establish their own sentiment as the standards of beauty," and thus the true judge of the finer arts "even during the most polished ages" is of "so rare a character." Though "prejudices may prevail for a time, they never unite in celebrating any rival to the true genius, but yield at last to the force of nature and just sentiment," and thus a "civilized nation" never has been found "long to err in their affection for a favorite epic or tragic author" (The Essential David Hume, pp. 378-379).

1424-33 "Their errors . . . weighed . . . as scarlet . . . Time . . . judged."

EDITIONS. Cook comments that "this passage is framed out of Scriptural reminiscences. Some or all of the following sentences must have been present to Shelley's mind: 'Dan. 5.27. Thou art weighted in the balances, and art found wanting; Isa. 40.15. Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; Isa. 1.18. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Rev. 7.14. Washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; Heb. 9.15. The mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament . . . ; Heb. 12.24. And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,
and to the blood of sprinkling.; Matt. 7.1. Judge not, that ye be not judged" (p. 79). Later editors also note the Biblical sources. Jordan suggests an additional source in Colossians 4:5 ["Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."] and notes the paraphrase rather than quotation of Isaiah (p. 76). Shelley has amplified his thinking at this point in both his draft and in MS B (see Textual Notes above). As Koszul notes, "the draft is fuller of personal appeal." Jordan comments that "Shelley was naturally sensitive about society's judgment of poets and played with this passage" (p. 76).

CRITICISM. M. Roston notes the "pains" which Shelley has taken "to explain away the immoral lives of various famous poets on the grounds that the sense of beauty and love which their poetry inspired cancels out such peccadilloes; or to use the phrase from Isaiah which he himself quotes at this point, if their sins 'were as scarlet, they are now white as snow'. Again, therefore, the ethical, reforming element of romantic poetry, the belief that the poet had a more sublime function to perform than merely to amuse or instruct in the limited Augustan sense, is seen to derive directly from the biblical consecration of poetry to a divine purpose" (Prophet and Poet: The Bible and the Growth of Romanticism, p. 193). B. Weaver comments on this as a passage of "ethical loveliness" and "one of his most remarkable works of creation." Peacock's Four Ages was the excitation, the impulse
was defense, and "suddenly at a great moment in that defence
the Genius seized these various elements from Ecclesiastes,
Psalms, Job, Daniel, Isaiah, Revelation, and Matthew, heated
them with his own electric inspiration and created 'their
[the great poets'] errors have been weighed . . . Look to
your own motives [Mote - Motives!] . . . judged.' How
swiftly here the imagination has substituted the errors of
the great poets for those of the man of high degree, a man
who was light dust in the balance, and has left that light
dust to be associated with errors other than those of Bel­
shazzar. The dust was not originally in the balances; but
a man who was dust lay there; and as he was light, so in­
stantly dust becomes the symbol of that which is light, of
no consequence. As the Genius knows nothing of enthymemes
or syllogisms, he whirls his materials, and we find that the
errors of the poets are negligible. For the rest, he boldly
substitutes 'Time' for 'the lamb,' builds three letters on
to the word "mote," and finishes his composition by adding
to the facile transmutations a solid law in just that form
in which he found it" (Toward the Understanding of Shelley,
pp. 222-223). Firkins calls this comment on time the "most
strongly humanizing and vitalizing appellation" ever perhaps
"applied to the vacancy and formlessness of the subject"
(Power and Elusiveness, p. 20).

STUDY. As the Textual Notes above indicate, both Shelley
in the copy sent to the printer, MS D, and Mary Shelley in
her later editions, punctuate the passage after "sins" as
a quotation, but it is actually a paraphrase from Isaiah 1:18, and an allusion to the full thought expressed there: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (The Bible, p. 624). It is typical of Shelley to put a borrowing in words which fit his own ideas, rather than to be exact in quotation. The quotations in the Defence are all of this nature.

1428-1433 "Observe . . . imputations of real or fictitious crime . . . contemporary calumnies . . . little is as it appears . . . judged."

STUDY. While Shelley is speaking about poets in general, he is also voicing, at the same time, his own experience with criticism. His most explicit statement on his own work and the judgment of critics also carries with it his real opinion on what the critics may rightfully judge, and is contained in a letter he wrote to Leigh Hunt on December 20, 1818. He is speaking of a Quarterly review which had attacked both Hunt and himself in reviewing Hunt's Foliage (1818). He comments: "As to what relates to yourself & me, it makes me melancholy to consider the dreadful wickedness of heart which could have prompted such expressions, as those with which the anonymous writer insults over my domestic calamities, & the perversion of understanding with which he paints your character. There can be no doubt with respect to me,
that personal hatred is intermingled with the rage of faction." Shelley believes it is Southey who is responsible, and says he will enquire of him what has aroused this hatred, and if indeed he has "injured him unintentionally" he will try to repair this, but if not, "to require that he should produce his proofs of my meriting the appellation he employs." He continues, "As far as the public is concerned, it is not for him whom Southey accuses, but for him whom all the wise & good among his contemporaries accuse of delinquency to all public faith & honour, to defend himself. Besides I never will be a party in making my private affairs or those of others topics of general discussion; who can know them but the actors? And if they have erred, or often when they have not erred, is there not pain enough to punish them? My public character, as a writer of verses, as a speculator on politics or morals or religion, as the adherent of any party or cause, is public property, & my good faith or ill faith in conducting these, my talent, my penetration or my stupidity are all subjects of criticism" (Letters, II, p. 66). Thus, Shelley again emphasizes, it is not the judgment of the critic but the judgment of many which must count, and it is not on the grounds of personal life or error, but on the grounds of public work and the talent of the poetry in this work that forms the right basis for critical judgment. The whole paragraph is both impersonal with respect to all poets, and at the same time, highly personal with respect to himself.
PARAGRAPH 44: LINES 1434-1459

1434-42 "Poetry . . . no . . . connection . . . will . . . them."

EDITIONS. Jordan comments that "Coleridge held that the secondary imagination was 'co-existing with the conscious will' (Bio. Lit., Chap. XIII), but Wordsworth agrees, 'Nor is it I who play the part / But a shy spirit in my heart, / That comes and goes' ('The Waggoner,' 209-211)" (p. 77).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos calls this "a restatement of Plato's conception of poetry in the Ion" (The Platonism, p. 356).

STUDY. Drummond's influence is still apparent behind these lines. He notes that it is by the attribute of reason that man is defined, and that here the "soul has received the impressions of sense by its passive capacity" and language and invention are "fatigued" in dividing and subdividing the qualities of the mind. He continues that there can be "no desire about that which is no object of perception, and the idea about which we will, must be previously distinguished by us. How then shall we pretend, that ideas present themselves to our contemplation by the power of the will, or by the choice of the mind?" He says further, "When we contemplate the thoughts in our mind we are generally able to refer them to some one principle idea or sensation. No man will pretend that he can choose whether he shall feel or not . . . These things by no means depend upon the will." He then discusses the idea as seen in Hume, that the child's experience,
small as it is, enables him "to observe the constant conjunc-
tion of certain events, which he afterwards learns to call
cause and effect . . . perceptions neither produced, nor
influenced, by any power of will, or effort of his volition.
If we could not will the succession of our first ideas, nor
the order of their trains, may it not be inferred that this
has happened in consequence of the original and permanent
constitution of the human mind?" (Academical Questions, pp.
4, 12-15). Shelley concurs with this reasoning since he
calls it "presumptuous" to determine that consciousness or
will are the "necessary conditions of all mental causation."

1442-50 "The frequent recurrence . . . . reflux . . .
live."
STUDY. There is probably still a mixture of the influence
of Drummond and Hume at this point. Shelley is speaking of
periods of "order and harmony" and "intervals of inspiration."
Drummond says that "our minds are either tranquil or trou-
bled, either joyful or sorrowful, according to the nature
and strength of our sensations. Sometimes our perceptions
are vivid, our feelings are acute, and our ideas are im-
pelled in a full and rapid current. Then it is, that passion
roused us from indolence, and urges us on to enterprise . .
. we have no time to reflect . . . . Yet these are moments,
when emotions are forcibly felt, and are easily imparted;
when bold expressions convey strong meaning--mind speaks to
mind--thoughts are breathed in words--and eloquence, exciting
and excited by passion, surprises, disturbs, and bears away the soul. At other times our ideas are more equal, more lucid. The mind then best indulges in the pleasures of taste and imagination . . . more easily acquires knowledge, exercises reason, perceives the beauty of moral order, and appreciates the importance of science, and the value of truth" (Academical Questions, p. 16). What Shelley is saying here is really a synthesis of Drummond's thinking.

Shelley states that the poet, between periods of inspiration, comes under habitual influences which affect men in general. Hume has suggested that ordinary man's ideas about pain and pleasure arise, in part, from religion, whose principles "have a kind of flux and reflux in the human mind." They are not looking for a "supreme mind" in their ignorance, but take a "more confined and selfish view," and "finding their happiness and misery to depend on the secret influence . . . of external objects" they regard, "with perpetual attention, the unknown causes, which govern all these natural events, and distribute pleasure and pain . . . by their powerful, but silent, operation. The unknown causes are still appealed to on every emergence; and in this general appearance or confused image, are the perpetual objects of human hopes and fears, wishes and apprehensions" (The Natural History of Religion, pp. 46-47). So man builds up systems, as he does with religion, to account for his apprehensions.
"But... delicately organized... pain and pleasure... difference."

Editions. Jordan notes that "Wordsworth also held that poets were 'possessed of more than usual organic sensibility' ['Preface,']" (p. 77).

Study. Shelley at this point may be reflecting in a brief compass a number of different influences on his thinking. Hume, Wordsworth, and Plato all have ideas with which he would be familiar and which are similar to his. Shelley is now saying about the poet what Hume comments on in his passage on the flux and reflux of religion. Hume points out there that the "vulgar, that is, indeed, all mankind, a few excepted, being ignorant and uninstructed, never elevate their contemplation to the heavens or penetrate by their disquisitions into the secret structure of vegetable or animal bodies; so far as to discover a supreme mind or original providence, which bestowed order on every part of nature." Shelley is saying that the poet is one of the few who do carry out such a contemplation. Hume also indicates, as noted in the preceding Study, that man perpetually wonders about the "unknown causes" of pleasure and pain. Shelley states it is the poet, in a degree unknown to other men, who is "sensible to pain and pleasure."

Shelley is also thinking along lines similar to those expressed by Wordsworth in his "Preface" to Lyrical Ballads, 1800, where he describes the poet as a "man speaking to men," one endowed with "more lively sensibility" than is "common
among mankind," and one who "rejoices more than other men in
the spirit of life that is in him." Shelley calls the poet
"more delicately organized," and one who pursues with ardour
"pleasure, both his own and that of others." Wordsworth
also says, somewhat further in his "Preface": "The Poet
writes under one restriction only, namely, that of the
necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being
possessed of that information which may be expected from him,
not as a lawyer, a physician, . . . but as a Man. Except
this one restriction, there is no object standing between
the Poet and the image of things" (Prose of the Romantic
Period, pp. 57-59). Shelley, in his next line, talks about
the "objects of pursuit."

Shelley's passage on the poet and "pain and pleasure" is
in agreement and disagreement with what Plato has to say in
the Republic (X.607a). The talk in the Republic has been
of "encomiasts" who comment on Homer's conduct and refinement
of human life which is so worthy of "study and devotion."
Socrates concludes, however, that no poetry can be admitted
to the city, for "if you grant admission to the honeyed Muse
in lyric or epic, pleasure and pain will be lords of your
city instead of law and that which shall from time to time
have approved itself to the general reason as the best"
(The Collected Dialogues of Plato, p. 832). Shelley, as does
Plato, sees the poet as more "sensible to pain and pleasure."
Shelley, however, has started off his paragraph with the
statement that there is poetical power not necessarily
connected with the "consciousness or will." Plato is opting for logical and habitual power of "law" and "general reason," and refusing the further power involved in the poetic pursuit of pleasure and pain. To Shelley it is "presumptuous" to see consciousness or will as the "necessary conditions of all mental causation," and consequently, of mental effects, one of which is a greater sensibility to pleasure and pain. Such poetical power, as Shelley points out, "may produce" habits of "order and harmony" both in itself and in the minds of others.

Shelley has spoken of the basic importance of the effects of pleasure and pain several times in the Defence as well as in his other essays (see passages at lines 435, 1107, 1151, 1318, and 1394 above). Pain, pleasure and the imagination are closely connected in his mind. He has defined the poetical imagination "prophetically [imaging forth] its objects" as the "faculty on which all progress depends" and has immediately connected it with pain or pleasure, which if analyzed, are qualities found to be directly connected to selfishness or virtue, in A Treatise on Morals (Prose, p. 189).

1455-59 "And . . . objects of universal pursuit and flight . . . garments."

EDITIONS. Miss Winstanley comments on "obnoxious to calumny," as a Latinism, for "exposed to calumny" (p. 94).

STUDY. Shelley's poetry tells what he conceives to be the place of "calumny," and "objects" of pleasure and pain, which
are in "universal pursuit and flight," and clothed in other "garments." All of this imagery has appeared in poems expressing thoughts analogous to this sentence. The Defence is once again synthesizing Shelley's thought as expressed poetically over several years and in key poems.

A direct reference to the calumny to which the poet is exposed appears in Adonais: "Envy and calumny and hate and pain, / And that unrest which men miscall delight, / Can touch him not and torture not again" (XL.353-355).

What is involved universally in "pursuit and flight" is the same "Time," which in the previous paragraph Shelley called "mediator and redeemer." In the poetry there is pain as well as pleasure in the quality of "Time." In Epipsychidion "Night / And Day, and Storm, and Calm, pursue their flight, / Our ministers, along the boundless Sea, / Treading each other's heels, unheededly" (11. 418-421). In Prometheus Unbound, "age on age, / Seems but a point, and the reluctant mind / Flags wearily in its unending flight" (I.418-420). "Worlds on worlds" in Hellas "Clothe their unceasing flight / In the brief dust and light" (11. 197, 204-205), and later "The Future and the Past are idle shadows / Of thought's eternal flight--they have no being" (11. 783-785). Liberty is also involved in Shelley's ideas of "flight" and "garment." In "Lines Written Among the Euganean Hills" liberty is a "garment" which "Clothes the world immortally" (11. 169-170). In the "Ode to Liberty," liberty is "the great voice
which did its flight sustain" (XIX.283). In Hellas the spirits who fight for freedom "weave / The garment of the glory which it wears" (11. 417-418). The "garment" can also be love as well as liberty, for in Prince Athanase, love is asked "yet where shall any seek / A garment whom thou clothest not?" (II.VI.296-297).

The mixture of pleasure and pain appears in a number of ways in Shelley's poetry. It is perhaps most directly expressed in Queen Mab (IV.146-150),

A world of loves and hatreds; these beget
Evil and good: hence truth and falsehood spring;
Hence will and thought and action, all the germs
Of pain or pleasure, sympathy or hate,
That variegate the eternal universe, and in the later passage, (VIII.134-139),

'But chief, ambiguous Man, he that can know
More misery, and dream more joy than all;
Whose keen sensations thrill within his breast
To mingle with a loftier instinct there,
Lending their power to pleasure and to pain,
Yet raising, sharpening, and refining each.

Shelley's last poem, The Triumph of Life, still speaks of man having known "'All pleasure and all pain, all hate and love" (1. 319). Thus, pleasure and pain can be seen as love and hate, and what is pursued because of them encompasses all time. The objects of pursuit are love, hope, and liberty, which the poet can express provided he has true poetic vision.
The only calumny the poet is really subject to is his own failure of poetic vision in perceiving the truth of the objects of his poetry, as they are disguised in a current time's garments. All the other calumny of personal criticism or of criticism based on the utility of reason as against inspiration, which have occupied these two paragraphs, are provably immaterial in time's longer course.
PARAGRAPh 45: LINES 1460-1464

1460-64 "But . . . evil . . . lives of poets."

EDITIONS. Cook comments that "Shelley seems to have in mind some such classification of sins into lesser and greater as Dante adopts in the Inferno . . . the threefold division . . . of Incontinence . . . Malice . . . Bestiality. Of these the former are regarded as the more venial, and the latter as the more deadly" (p. 79).
EDITIONS. The reference to Peacock's essay in this passage is deleted in the Mary Shelley editions and others following hers (see Textual Notes above).

STUDY. Shelley's views as expressed here are substantiated in his letters. When he wrote to Peacock on February 15, 1820 about an answer to The Four Ages of Poetry he used the word "excited" as he does here: "your anathemas against poetry itself excited me to a sacred rage" (see letter in Appendix E). In his letter to Ollier of March 20, 1821, he also indicates the tone of his reply, as he does here, that it is not a "polemical reply": "In fact, I hope that I have treated the question with that temper and spirit as to silence cavil" (see letter in Appendix E). In commenting upon his remarks as arising from the subject itself rather than from a direct response to Peacock's essay, he shows that he has made a choice among possible approaches. This is proven by his first drafts of a reply to Peacock which appear in three letters. The first of these has a rough semblance in its four listed points to Peacock's points, but this approach, as the Defence shows, he abandoned. (See Appendix E for the three draft letters.) Again, his letters indicate his intention of writing two additional parts to the Defence (see letters of March 20 and September 25 to
Ollier, Appendix E). The Defence, also, as it concludes, indicates what the second part is to be about. Shelley here calls Peacock a "learned and intelligent author." In the first draft letter he calls Peacock the "Author" who "has directed the light of a mind replete with taste & learning" to the opinions illustrated. In the second he notes "the wit, the spirit, the learning" of the essay, while the third calls it an essay "of great ingenuity and wit" (See Appendix E).

1478-79 "Theseids of the hoarse Codri"

EDITIONS. The editors in general identify this statement as also appearing in Shelley's letter to Peacock of March 21, 1821 in which he says "The Bavii and Maevii of the day are very fertile," and "These verses enrage me far more than those of Codrus did Juvenal." The reference is to Juvenal's Satires, 1, 1-2, in which Codrus is satirized as a bad writer. Miss Winstanley says that Shelley means: "I am unwilling to be stunned by the bad poems of the conceited poets of the day" (p. 94).

STUDY. Juvenal's Satire I begins: "What? Am I to be a listener only all my days? Am I never to get my word in--I that have been so often bored by the Theseid of the ranting Cordus? Shall this one have spouted to me his comedies, and that one his love ditties, and I be unavenged?" (Juvenal and Persius, Loeb edition, p. 3).
EDITIONS. Again, the editors generally identify the sources as both by Virgil in his Eclogue, iii.90-91, and Horace (Maevius only) in Epode x. Bavius and Maevius represent types of poor poets who are envious of the fame of their better contemporaries. Jordan notes that William Gifford, Quarterly Review editor, "applied the terms to contemporary writers in his The Baviad (1794) and The Maeviad (1795)" (p. 78).

Cook gives the translation from Virgil as "Let him that hates not Bavius, love your verses, Maevius" (p. 80).

STUDY. Shelley is agreeing, at least in part, with Peacock's views on modern writers. He is disagreeing on the great writers, however, as his concluding paragraph shows. Shelley is not thinking only of bad poets but also of bad critics who are envious or spiteful. Undoubtedly Robert Southey is an example of such a poet and critic, for Shelley believed him to be the author of malignant criticism concerning Shelley's own work. Peacock joined him in calling Southey a bad writer, as his comments in The Four Ages reveal.

"But . . . philosophical critic . . . distinguish . . . confound."

STUDY. This is perhaps the only line of criticism directed against Peacock in the Defence, and it is covert. As Shelley considers the tone and effect of The Four Ages he concludes that Peacock's ultimate purpose is to confound, and that he is polemical to a degree. Shelley makes clear that his own
approach to the subject of poetry has not been polemical, and that he has attempted a philosophical criticism. By "distinguishing" he means the showing of differences, which is clearly what he has done, as against "confounding" which is the mixing together of items indiscriminately, which he has not done. It is quite obvious that Peacock, too, has used the method of "distinguishing" with his double cycles of poetic ages. Peacock has, however, been guilty in the end of grouping all current authors together indiscriminately, and of arriving at a disturbing conclusion. Perhaps there is, too, a small play on the meaning of the word "philosophical" in the sense of not only tracing a system of thought but also in the loving of wisdom which the word implies. Shelley has shown himself a lover of the wisdom of poetry. Peacock has traced a system, too, but a lover of the wisdom of poetry in *The Four Ages*, he is not.
"The first part"

EDITIONS. A: the editors note, only one part was written.

"the narrow limits assigned"

STUDY. Shelley has deliberately excluded the modern poets and dramatists from his discussion, intending to include these, as his next paragraph indicates, in a second part. In the Defence, literary discussion is carried only to the seventeenth century. Shelley has chosen to argue for the utility of poetry on modern grounds, but only with economic, social, and moral examples, and he has left the literary examples for later, with the exception of a transitional statement at the conclusion about modern artistic achievement.
STUDY. In *A Philosophical View of Reform* Shelley, as is noted below at lines 1498 ff., uses first what is now the concluding passage of the *Defence*. What he has said in introducing this passage in his 1820 essay is still of significance for the proposed second part of the *Defence*. He says in the first essay that "meanwhile England, the particular object for the sake of which these general considerations have been stated on the present occasion, has arrived like the nations which surround it at a crisis in its destiny" (*Prose*, p. 239). This clarifies what he means in the *Defence* by the words, "the present state of the cultivation of Poetry," which is very evidently the larger moral, political, and social picture which he has touched upon in the *Defence* in his later discussions of utility in modern England, and which he shows as turning away to Mammon rather than toward the poetry of true social action. This is the reason behind his speaking of a new birth of national will in the following passage. It is not just that poetry participates in this, but in his view poetry must do so now, for England needs this new period's birth and reformed leadership.

EDITIONS. Brett-Smith is the first editor to point out that all the rest of the *Defence* from this point is taken in
entirety [ll. 1498-1536] from a closely parallel passage in the next-to-the-last paragraph of the first chapter of Shelley's *Philosophical View of Reform*. Brett-Smith assigns a probable date of 1820 to this essay, as does Clark. This essay Brett-Smith notes as first being printed by Mr. T. W. Rolleston in 1920. (p. 104).

CRITICISM. Wellek says that "the feeling for the stream of history of which poetry is a part helps to explain Shelley's repeated assertion of his own contemporaneity . . . . It explains the peculiar glorification (peculiar if we consider Shelley's personal isolation and the unfriendliness of his reviewers) which he confers upon his own age in the conclusion of the *Defence*. His age was a 'new birth' ([*A History*, II, p. 129]).

STUDY. Shelley is repeating here an idea expressed in 1819 in the "Preface" to *Prometheus Unbound*: "The great writers of our own age are, we have reason to suppose, the companions and forerunners of some unimagined change in our social condition or the opinions which cement it. The cloud of mind is discharging its collected lightning, and the equilibrium between institutions and opinions is now restoring, or is about to be restored" (Poetry, p. 206).

1501-03 "In . . . low-thoughted envy . . . merit"

EDITIONS. Cook states that this is "an epithet borrowed from Milton, *Comus* 6: "Low-thoughted care" (p. 80). Brett-Smith comments that "this phrase shows how Shelley's vocabulary
benefited from his great predecessors. It is reminiscent of the 'low-creeping objections' against Poesie of Sidney's Apologie, and the 'low-thoughted care' of Milton's Comus" (p. 104).

STUDY. The word "low-thoughted" is one which Shelley has used twice in his poetry, both times in the phrase "low-thoughted care(s)." In 1820 it appears in "Letter to Maria Gisborne" (1. 294), and in 1818 in the Dedication to The Revolt of Islam (XIII.115). This line in the Defence, however, has an additional direct tie to the poetry. The reference here to "low-thoughted envy which would undervalue contemporary merit" is an allusion to Keats, who, in Adonais, is shown as having suffered from the critic's "envy, hate, and wrong" and has gone where "Envy and calumny" cannot hurt him (XXXVI.321, XL.352).

That critics, or poets writing as critics, are in Shelley's mind here is more clearly revealed by the additional phrase which appears after "undervalue" in the original of this passage in A Philosophical View where he says, "In spite of that low-thoughted envy which would undervalue, through a fear of comparison with its own insignificance, the eminence of contemporary merit" (Prose, p. 239).

1503-07 "our own . . . liberty."

EDITIONS. Clark comments that "Shelley's judgment has stood the test of time" (p. 297).

STUDY. In the original of this passage in A Philosophical
View, Shelley has phrased the passage somewhat differently, saying "it is felt by the British [that] ours is in intellectual achievements a memorable age." It is obvious that the Defence passage shows a surer and more universal view of his age than Shelley had held earlier. At the end of the passage he has also added a significant qualification to "liberty" which did not appear in the original, which said "last struggle for liberty," and now has become "last struggle for civil and religious liberty." He sees now a broader, more universal effect possible in the present age's work. It is not just literature and philosophy as such that he speaks of now in the Defence. (See Prose, p. 239, for Philosophical passages.)

Shelley's letters and essays indicate some of the philosophers and poets of his own age whom he would consider to be part of this memorable age of intellectual achievement. Among the philosophers would certainly be included Godwin, Bentham, and Sir William Drummond (see A Philosophical View of Reform, Prose, p. 233; letter to Hunt, November 3, 1819, Letters, II, p. 142). His opinions of the great merit of Byron and Keats appear in a number of letters. (For example, see letters of July 16, 1821, and January 12, 1822 on Byron; May 14, 1820, and November 29, 1821 on Keats; Letters, II, pp. 309, 376, 197, 366). Lamb is also esteemed by Shelley as his letter of August 20, 1819 shows (see Letters, II, p. 112). Mary Shelley has noted Shelley's feeling about Wordsworth: "No one ever admired Wordsworth's poetry more—he read it per-
petually, and taught others to appreciate its beauties" 
("Note on Peter Bell the Third," Poetry, p. 362).

1508-1520 "The . . . correspondence . . . good . . . 
abjure . . . Power . . . throne . . . soul."

EDITIONS. Cook says that "the thought seems to owe something 
to the arguments of Plato's Ion [see 11. 1327-32 above] (p. 
80). Jordan comments that Shelley "is probably thinking of 
Robert Southey and William Wordsworth, whom he found guilty 
of playing the renegade from their youthful radical positions 
and becoming administrative toadies" (p. 79).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos also feels that in the passage which 
commences here Shelley "restates once more with kaleidoscopic 
variety Plato's conception of poetry in the Ion" (The Plato­ 
nism, p. 356). Wasserman, however, in connection with the 
"Power" seated in the "soul," comments that "although the 
Defence speaks of inspiration it is to be understood as a 
metaphor for 'instinct and intuition,' as Shelley calls it 
rather than as the inspiration from without of which the 
Ion speaks." He notes that Shelley has spoken previously of 
"divinity in man" and the power which awakens the mind as 
coming "from within" ("Shelley's Last Poetics," pp. 489-
490). J. Baker notes that in Shelley's translation of Plato, 
"Socrates, in the Apology, comments that poets 'say many 
fine things but do not understand the meaning of them,' and 
in the Ion he says poets are 'as it were, possessed by a 
spirit not their own'" (Shelley's Platonic Answer, p. 49).
STUDY. The original passage, instead of reading "follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is Poetry" has "follower, of an universal employment of the sentiments of a nation to the production of beneficial change, is poetry." In the earlier essay he pinpoints what he means by "poetry": "meaning by poetry an intense and impassioned power of communicating intense and impassioned impressions respecting man and nature." This passage in the Defence more generally states only that "at such periods there is an accumulation of the power of communicating . . . conceptions respecting man and nature."

Shelley has made another significant change of emphasis in wording between the essay and the Defence. In the Defence passage appears, "The persons in whom this power resides, may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature have little apparent correspondence with that spirit of good of which they are the ministers." The original reads "may often . . . have little tendency [to] the spirit of good of which it is the minister." The emphasis has switched from the power of poetry as a passive element within persons to an active one. This is an important distinction, for the necessary raising up of a new period has to be done by people who have to bring actively into play the poetic principle of renovation.

The last significant change in wording comes in the sentence "But even whilst they deny and abjure, they are yet compelled to serve, the Power which is seated on the throne
of their own soul." In the original, this appears as "... they are yet compelled to serve that which is seated on the throne of their own soul." Shelley has taken the indeterminate "that" of the essay, and has made it "Power" in the Defence. The word "Power" has far greater signification of spiritual, and the Platonic highest rational, as well as moral, or other, aspects of the soul. As the following portion of the Study indicates, its real signification is both of highest moral human and of religious power, as seen through examples of Rome and Christ. The original essay adds a sentence after "soul," dropped in the Defence, which indicates Shelley then was thinking only generally about influences: "And whatever systems they may [have] professed by support, they actually advance the interests of liberty." But the idea of liberty is still essential though now merely inherent in the Defence's "Power." (See Prose, pp. 239-240, for quotations from A Philosophical View of Reform.)

Both the idea of this passage, and some of its wording, indicate that Shelley is presenting a neat synthesis of a long passage in his Essay on Christianity (1816), and in his short poem, "Otho" (1817), concerning persons compelled by a Power to act in a way which seems not to be connected to good, but actually is just that.

In that Essay, Shelley states that "the distinction between justice and mercy was first imagined in the courts of tyrants." The example of this is Julius Caesar, who, having ruined
the liberties of his country, receives "the fame of mercy because, possessing the power to slay and torture the noblest men of Rome, he restrained his sanguinary soul." Shelley continues that "his assassins understood justice better. They saw the most virtuous and civilized community of mankind under the insolent dominion of one wicked man, and they murdered him. They destroyed the usurper of the liberties of their country-men, not because they hated him, not because they would revenge the wrongs which they had sustained. Brutus, it is said, was his most familiar friend; most of the conspirators were habituated to domestic intercourse with the man whom they destroyed. It was in . . . extinguishable love for all that is venerable and dear to the human heart, in the names of country, liberty, and virtue; it was in a . . . reluctant mood that these holy patriots murdered their father and their friend . . . . His own selfish and narrow nature necessitated the sacrifice they made."

Shelley then shows a parallel situation with Christ: "Such are the feelings which Jesus Christ asserts to belong to the ruling Power of the world . . . . If there is the slightest overbalance of happiness which can be allotted to the most atrocious offender consistently with the nature of things, that is rigidly made his portion by the ever watchful power of good . . . . God is represented by Jesus Christ as the Power from which or through which the streams of all that is excellent . . . flow; the Power which models, as they pass,
all the elements of this mixed universe to the purest and
most perfect shape which it belongs to their nature to
assume; Jesus Christ attributes to this power the faculty of
will" (Prose, pp. 203-204).

It will be noted that in the lines just preceding those
considered here in the Defence, Shelley has spoken of the
development of the "national Will," and the "struggle for
civil and religious liberty," the subjects of the Essay's
passage above. The "impassioned conceptions" of the Defence
passage can be seen to be those of "justice and mercy" and
"love" in the Essay's development. The Defence's ruling
"Power" in the soul is both the Essay's "power of good" which
is also that of Christ's "god," who is the "Power" modelling
all the elements of the universe to the best their nature
will allow.

Shelley, in "Otho," picks up a parallel to the action of
Cassius and Brutus in the life of the Roman Otho, and a paral-
lel to its good, arising from bloodshed, with which it would
seem to have "little apparent correspondence." The poem is
addressed to Cassius, and says:

'Twill wrong thee not—thou wouldst, if thou couldst feel,
Abjure such envious fame—great Otho died
Like thee—he sanctified his country's steel,
At once the tyrant and tyrannicide,
In his own blood--a deed it was to bring
Tears from all men—though full of gentle pride,
Such pride as from impetuous love may spring,
That will not be refused its offering.

(II.9-16)

Here the "Power" in the soul is the familiar one, that of love. It was "inextinguishable love" which also moved Brutus and the conspirators, in the Essay. The word "abjure" which appears in I. 10 above is its only use in Shelley's poetry. This word, however, reappears in this passage in the Defence's "whilst they deny and abjure." The use of the word "Power" and its capitalization is another similarity between the Essay passage above and the Defence passage.

Imagery which connects "Power," "throne," and "soul" has appeared several times in Shelley's poetry over the years. In Queen Mab (1812) the Spirit of Nature has a "throne of power" in "every human heart" (III.214-218), and God's "throne" is "girt . . . with power" (VII.90-91). In The Revolt of Islam (1817), the madness which arises from seeing tyranny and selfishness is a "beam of light, a power / Which dawned through the rent soul" and the "gestures" it gave "might not be withstood" (VII.2884-87). The closest use to that of the Defence is also the closest in time, in the "Ode to Liberty" (1820), where it is wished that wise minds would kindle "Till human thoughts might kneel alone, / Each before the judgement-throne / Of its own aweless soul, or of the Power unknown!" (XVI.231-233).

This passage of the Defence once more indicates how close a relationship the thought and expression of the Defence has to Shelley's other prose and to his poetry.
STUDY. Shelley, in the original passage in *A Philosophical View* after "writers," adds "whatever may be their system relating to thought or expression," which he omits from the *Defence* passage. On the contrary, in the last part of the sentence he adds a word. The original has "electric life which there is in their words," while the *Defence* passage has, "electric life which burns within their words." It is not surprising that Shelley has added the word "burns," for it is one which has appeared with great frequency in his poetry of this general period. Of fourteen uses he has made of it, thirteen have been in 1818 or thereafter, and in *Prometheus Unbound*, *Epipsychidion*, and *Adonais* alone there are ten uses. This "electric life which burns" is now picking up, in a play on words, the idea of "Power" which has just been expressed above.

EDITIONS. Clark notes that this passage does not always agree with the various statements in other works of Shelley on the same subjects (p. 297).

CRITICISM. Notopoulos calls this passage a continuation of Plato's conception of poetry in the *Ion* (*The Platonism*, p. 356).

CRITICISM. D. King-Hele has suggested that there was a
profound influence on Shelley from the work of Erasmus Darwin, the physician, poet, and speculator in many fields. King-Hele suggests "hierophants" as an echo of Darwin: "Hierophant (or 'expounder of mysteries') is the key figure in The Temple of Nature, and this uncommon word is used by Shelley in the conclusion of the Defence of Poetry" ("The Influence of Erasmus Darwin on Shelley," pp. 31, 35). G. M. Matthews sees the use of "hierophants" of an unapprehended inspiration as meaning "the servants of an unconscious influence," who are "compelled to serve the power" seated in their "own soul." This, Matthews feels, is another piece of evidence that Shelley has not "abandoned his belief in 'necessity' as applied to the individual will." He continues that Shelley stated repeatedly, throughout his life, that 'poets' are subject to coercive forces which they are powerless to evade, although they themselves form part of those forces" ("A Volcano's Voice in Shelley," Shelley: A Collection of Essays, pp. 115-116).

STUDY. In the original passage in A Philosophical View Shelley used the word "priests" instead of "hierophants." He is making a much more definitive use of the word "priest" for a hierophant is a priest who in antiquity was an initiating or presiding priest, and an official interpreter of sacred mysteries and religious ceremonies, the one who explained the esoteric principles. Shelley is now also picking up an earlier idea, for he talked about esoteric and exoteric principles of moral, intellectual, and sacred truths
which had joined from the ancient philosophers through Plato to Christ for the future good of man (see 11. 886-895 above).

A primary source for Shelley's use of the word "hierophants" is Volney's *A Survey of the Revolutions of Empires*, in which it is used throughout the book and also in the concluding passage. There the Hierophants were interrogated, and their "sacred books examined." What the Hierophants were being questioned about was the future coming of a power, who was to be mediator, judge, saviour, king, God, and "victorious legislator," and who was "to restore the golden age," and "to deliver the world from evil, and regain for mankind the reign of good, the kingdom of peace and happiness" (pp. 232-233). These "priests" or "hierophants" of the sacred mystery of the future in the *Defence* become the poets, and, as the allusion to Volney indicates, it is clear what their "unapprehended inspirations" and "shadows" of "futurity" are really to encompass.

1533-35 "the trumpets . . . influence . . . moves."

STUDY. The influence of Shelley's poetic imagery appears here. Twice in 1819 he uses the "trumpet" as a symbol of prophecy. In *Prometheus Unbound* the Spirit bearing a prophecy whose sound was freedom, hope, and Love, came "On a battle-trumpet's blast" (I.694). The "Ode to the West Wind" concludes with "The trumpet of a prophecy" (V.69).

This whole passage of prophecy and "influence which is moved not, but moves" seems probably to derive, at least in
part, from Plato's Phaedrus. There, inspired prophecy finds its source in "madness that is heaven-sent," and this madness is given to four classes: to the prophet who guides rightly; to the one [hierophant] who uses rites and "means of purification" to deliver from troubles; to the poet, who is stimulated to glorify deeds for the "instruction of posterity"; and to the lover, who represents the highest type of "madness." This gift is proven through the soul, which comes from a place where "that true being dwells, without color or shape, that cannot be touched . . . and all true knowledge is knowledge thereof." The soul "nourishes" itself when it has "beheld being" and then in full revolution of heaven's circle sees "justice," "temperance," "knowledge" of "being that veritably is," and then descends to home. The immortal soul is the "self-mover" and the "source and first principle of motion for all other things that are moved" (244a-247e, 265b, The Collected Dialogues of Plato, pp. 491-494, 511). Here seem to be the Defence's sources of "unapprehended inspiration" in Plato's "divine madness" and of that "which is moved not, but moves" in the Platonic immortal soul. Here too is a source of the comment at 1. 1524 about the "circumference" and the "depths," for, as can be seen in the Phaedrus passage, the inspired soul makes a "full revolution" of a "circle" and descends from heaven to earth.

1535-36 "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World."

EDITIONS. Cook notes Shelley's first use of poets as
"legislators, or prophets" [11. 160-161] (p. 80). Ingpen, in the Julian edition, points out that Shelley's line in A Philosophical View reads "Poets and philosophers are the unacknowledged legislators of the world" (p. 358). Clark's comment is that "Just as the plowman prepares the soil for the seed, so does the poet prepare mind and heart for the reception of new ideas, and thus for change" (p. 297).

CRITICISM. K. N. Cameron feels that this line still reflects, as did Shelley's early line on "legislators or prophets" [11. 160-161] the influence of Johnson's Rasselas where Imlac declares that the poet "must write as the interpreter of nature and the legislator of mankind" ("A New Source," p. 635). Notopoulos suggests that "for poets, as the unacknowledged legislators of the Greek world, see Republic, 599e" (The Platonism, p. 356). Pulos, on the other hand, thinks that the conclusion of the Defence is "based on premises derived from Hume and Drummond" (The Deep Truth, p. 47).

Wellek comments that "Shelley believed in the 'grand march of intellect' . . . and in some mysterious scheme which he would not ascribe to Divine Providence. Of this scheme poetry was part and parcel. The poet and the art of poetry had almost lost their identity, but they had newly found a social role which was so exalted and so secure in its very inevitability that no contemporary neglect and no isolation could affect it. Poetry was re-established as part of the fabric of society and of the process of history: potent even when
scarcely visible. This was Shelley's true defense of poetry, surely more convincing than the arguments confusing philosophy, morality, and art in one common mixture. It was the defense of poetry which came to dominate the 19th century" (A History, II, p. 129). C. Woodhouse declares that it was Byron, Shelley, and other poets "who sent the philhellenes of Europe to fight for the independence of Greece," and that the Greek War of Independence "is a peculiarly satisfactory instance" of Shelley's generalization that poets are "unacknowledged legislators." He comments further that "it is legislation in the sense that changes the outlook and character of mankind that Shelley meant; and he meant mankind as a whole . . . and he meant the impact of these forces beyond national boundaries, in which again he was quite right. For it is not difficult, and it is very instructive, to find cases where the legislative impact of a poet is more effective in another country than his own" ("The Unacknowledged Legislators (Poets and Politics)," pp. 49, 51, 64-65).

STUDY. Shelley's ending reflects certainly, as one of its sources, the ending of Volney's The Ruins. Early in his work, Volney's "Genius" had said to the teller of the story, "I will enquire of the ashes of legislators what causes have erected and overthrown empires . . . what the maxims upon which the peace of society and the happiness of man ought to be founded." He continues, somewhat later, "let the experience of past ages become a mirror of instruction." Volney,
after tracing the long history, concludes his work with a passage in which the people of the general assembly of nations testified "their adherence to the sentiments of the legislators," and "encouraged them to resume their sacred and sublime undertaking." They told the legislators to investigate "the laws which nature, for our direction, has implanted in our breasts, and form from thence an authentic and an immutable code. Nor let this code be calculated for one family, or one nation only, but for the whole without exception. Be the legislators of the human race, as ye are the interpreters of their common nature. Shew us the line that separates the world of chimeras from that of realities; and teach us, after so many religions of error and delusion, the religion of evidence and truth." The legislators then resumed "enquiry into the physical and constituent attributes of man, and the motives and affections which govern him in his individual and social capacity" (pp. 19-20, 26, 262-263).
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The following bibliography is limited to works of criticism from which material has been drawn for the present edition, and to those writers cited as possible influences. A key to abbreviations follows:

EIC   Essays in Criticism
JHI   Journal of the History of Ideas
KSJ   Keats-Shelley Journal
KSMB  Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin
MLQ   Modern Language Quarterly
PMLA  Publications of the Modern Language Association
PQ    Philological Quarterly
RES   Review of English Studies
SIR   Studies in Romanticism
SP    Studies in Philology


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________. *Sir Philip Sidney's Defense of Poesy*, ed.


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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THREE HOLOGRAPH FRAGMENTS FROM A SHELLEY MS NOTEBOOK

[MS G]

The various MSS and fragments pertaining to A Defence of Poetry have been described in the Introduction. The following three fragments, first published by Dr. Richard Garnett in Relics of Shelley, 1862, are given below as printed in that edition. Included also are notes on variant readings of the text of the first fragment appearing in later editions of the Defence. The two short fragments appear without change in all editions. Koszul prints the second and third fragments only. In this study these three fragments are identified as MS G.

In one mode of considering those two classes of action of the human mind which are called reason and imagination, the former may be considered as mind employed upon the relations borne by one thought to another, however produced, and imagination as mind combining the elements of thought itself. It has been termed the power of association; and on an accurate anatomy of the functions of...
APPENDIX A

mind, it would be difficult to assign any other origin to the mass of what we perceive and know than this power. Association is, however, rather a law according to which this power is exerted than the power itself; in the same manner as gravitation is a passive expression of the reciprocal tendency of heavy bodies towards their respective centres. Were these bodies conscious of such a tendency, the name which they would assign to that consciousness would express the cause of gravitation; and it were a vain inquiry as to what might be the cause of that cause. Association bears the same relation to imagination as a mode to a source of action: when we look upon shapes in the fire or the clouds, and image to ourselves the resemblance of familiar objects, we do no more than seize the relation of certain points of visible objects, and fill up, blend together, * * * *

The imagination is a faculty not less imperial and essential to the happiness and dignity of the human being, than the reason.
APPENDIX A

It is by no means indisputable that what is true, or rather that which the disciples of a certain mechanical and superficial philosophy call true, is more excellent than the beautiful.

---

1 those G Fo BS these J Cl Jo
8 functions of mind G Fo BS functions of the mind J Cl Jo
23 clouds, G Fo clouds BS J Cl Jo image G Fo BS imagine J Cl Jo
26 together, * * * * G BS together, . . . Fo together . . . J Cl Jo
APPENDIX B

A HOLOGRAPH FRAGMENT FROM THE SHELLEY MS NOTEBOOK

CONTAINING THE NOTES ON SCULPTURE, &C.

[MS C]

The three-paragraph fragment first published by Harry Buxton Forman in his edition, Works of Shelley, 1880, is given below as printed in Volume 7, pp. 130-132. No significant variations appear in later uses of this text. In this study this fragment is identified as MS C.

In one sense Utility expresses the means for producing and fixing the most intense and durable and universal pleasure, and has relation to our intellectual being; in another it expresses the means of banishing the importunity of the wants of our animal nature; and surrounding us with security and tranquillity of life, destroying the grosser desires, superstition, &c., and conciliating such a degree of mutual forbearance between men as may spring from motives consistent with their own present and manifest advantage.---The author of the Four Ages of Poetry employs it solely in the latter sense.

Undoubtedly the promoters of Utility, in this
limited sense, have their due praise; they have their appointed office in society; they follow the footsteps of poets and copy their creations into the book of familiar life, and their exertions are of the highest value so long as they confine their administration of the concerns of the inferior powers of our nature within the limits of what is consistent with what is due to the superior ones. But whilst the sceptic destroys gross superstitions, let him not as some French writers have done, destroy the eternal truths written upon the minds and imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the political economist combines labour, let them beware that the consequences of their speculations do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and want. But without an intermixture of the poetical element, such are the effects which must ever flow from the unmitigated exercise of the reason. The rich become richer, and the poor become poorer; and tyranny and anarchy alternately furious.

It is difficult to define pleasure in the highest sense, without combining a number of words which produce apparent paradoxes on account of the incommunicability of popular and philosophical
APPENDIX B

from an inexplicable want of harmony in the constitution of our mortal being. The pain of the inferior is frequently synonymous with the pleasure of the superior portions of our nature, and terror, anguish, sorrow, despair itself, are often the selectest expressions of our approximation to this good. On this depends our pleasure with tragic fiction. Our pleasure in tragic fiction depends on this principle; and tragedy produces pleasure by affording a shadow of the pleasure which exists in intense . This is the source also of the melancholy which is inseparable from the sweetest melody. The pleasure in sorrow is far intenser than that of pleasure itself, and it is sweeter to enter into the house of mourning than into the house of mirth. The pleasure of comedy is to that of tragedy as the pleasure of the senses to that of the imagination.
APPENDIX C

FOLIO AND PAGE NUMBERS OF MSS A AND D KEYED TO LINE NUMBERS OF THIS STUDY'S TEXT OF

A DEFENCE OF POETRY

The folio numbers of Bodleian MS. Sh. d. 1 (called MS A in this study), and the page numbers of Bodleian MS. Sh. e. 6 (called MS B in this study), are keyed below to the line numbers of this study's text above. The draft's folio numbers, and Mary Shelley's page numbers as they appear on the copy prepared for Ollier, are taken from A. H. Koszul's edition, Shelley's Prose in the Bodleian Manuscripts, 1910, pp. 63-117. The MS A folio numbers are recorded as "f." below, the MS D page numbers as "p.", and the study text numbers as "1."

f. 86 v rev. / p. 1 / 1. 1  f. 86 rev. / 1. 15
f. 85 v rev. / 1. 25  f. 85 rev.,
f. 84 v rev. / 1. 26  f. 84 rev. / 1. 33
p. 2 / 1. 50
f. 83 v rev. / 1. 54  f. 83 rev. / 1. 71
f. 82 v rev. / 1. 86  f. 82 rev. / 1. 98
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f. 76 v rev. / 1. 147  f. 76 rev. / 1. 159
APPENDIX C

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APPENDIX C

f. 61 rev. / l. 711
f. 60 v rev. / l. 729  f. 60 rev. / l. 739
p. 16 / l. 753
f. 59 v rev. / l. 760  f. 59 rev. / l. 765
f. 58 rev. / l. 788
p. 17 / l. 799
f. 57 v rev. / l. 804  f. 57 rev. / l. 818
f. 56 v rev. / l. 832  f. 56 rev. / l. 839
p. 18 / l. 844
f. 55 rev. / l. 851
f. 54 v rev. / l. 862  f. 54 rev. / l. 876
f. 53 v rev. / l. 884  f. 53 rev. / l. 891
p. 19 / l. 892
f. 52 v rev. / l. 908  f. 52 rev. / l. 919
f. 51 v rev. / p. 20 / l. 942  f. 51 rev. / l. 957
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f. 50 rev. cont. / l. 1029
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f. 48 v rev. / l. 1062  f. 48 rev. / l. 1069
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f. 47 rev. cont. / p. 25 / l. 1177
f. 46 v rev. / l. 1188
f. 45 v rev. / l. 1207
f. 44 v rev. / l. 1213
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f. 45 rev. / l. 1241
f. 42 v rev. / l. 1254 f. 42 rev. / l. 1257
f. 42 v rev. cont. / l. 1268 f. 42 rev. cont. / l. 1275
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f. 40 v rev. / l. 1318 f. 40 rev. / l. 1328
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f. 39 v rev. / l. 1341 f. 39 rev. / l. 1347
f. 38 v rev. / l. 1359
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f. 38 rev. / l. 1427
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p. 31 / l. 1492
APPENDIX D

MRS. SHELLEY'S OPENING COMMENTS ON SHELLEY
AND ON A DEFENCE OF POETRY IN THE "PREFACE"
TO HER EDITION OF 1840

A Defence of Poetry was published for the first time in 1840 in Volume I of Mary Shelley's two-volume edition of Shelley's works entitled Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments. It is the work with which she opened the edition. The following excerpt contains her introductory remarks about Shelley and her comments upon A Defence of Poetry in the 1840 edition, pp. v-vii.

These volumes have long been due to the public; they form an important portion of all that was left by Shelley, whence those who did not know him may form a juster estimate of his virtues and his genius than has hitherto been done.

We find, in the verse of a poet, "the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds*." But this is not enough—we desire to know the man. We desire to learn how much of the sensibility and imagination that animates his

*"A Defence of Poetry."
APPENDIX D

poetry was founded on heartfelt passion, and purity, and elevation of character; whether the pathos and the fire emanated from transitory inspiration and a power of weaving words touchingly; or whether the poet acknowledged the might of his art in his inmost soul; and whether his nerves thrilled to the touch of generous emotion. Led by such curiosity, how many volumes have been filled with the life of the Scottish plough-boy and the English peer; we welcome with delight every fact which proves that the patriotism and tenderness expressed in the songs of Burns, sprung from a noble and gentle heart; and we pore over each letter that we expect will testify that the melancholy and the unbridled passion that darkens Byron's verse, flowed from a soul devoured by a keen susceptibility to intensest love, and indignant broodings over the injuries done and suffered by man. Let the lovers of Shelley's poetry—of his aspirations for a brotherhood of love, his tender bewailings springing from a too sensitive spirit—his sympathy with woe, his adoration of beauty, as expressed in his poetry; turn to these pages to gather proof of sincerity, and to become acquainted with the form that such gentle sympathies and lofty aspirations wore in private life.
The first piece in these volumes, "A Defence of Poetry," is the only entirely finished prose work Shelley left. In this we find the reverence with which he regarded his art. We discern his power of close reasoning, and the unity of his views of human nature. The language is imaginative but not flowery; the periods have an intonation full of majesty and grace; and the harmony of the style being united to melodious thought, a music results, that swells upon the ear, and fills the mind with delight. It is a work whence a young poet, and one suffering from wrong or neglect, may learn to regard his pursuit and himself with that respect, without which his genius will get clogged in the mire of the earth: it will elevate him into those pure regions, where there is neither pain from the stings of insects, nor pleasure in the fruition of a gross appetite for praise. He will learn to rest his dearest boast on the dignity of the art he cultivates, and become aware that his best claim on the applause of mankind, results from his being one more in the holy brotherhood, whose vocation it is to divest life of its material grossness and stooping tendencies, and to animate it with that power of turning all things to the beautiful and good, which is the spirit of poetry.
APPENDIX E

LETTERS AND LETTER DRAFTS WRITTEN CONCERNING

A DEFENCE OF POETRY

A number of letters reveal Shelley's interest in, and reaction to, Thomas Love Peacock's *The Four Ages of Poetry*, which appeared in the first (and only) issue of Charles Ollier's periodical, *Literary Miscellany, in Prose and Verse, by Several Hands*, in 1820. When he began his reply to this article he started in letter form, as is evidenced by two drafts of a letter addressed to Charles Ollier, Editor of the Miscellany. Shelley abandoned this letter form after two tries, and started over in essay form, the form which the Defence finally takes. Shelley then wrote a third draft of a letter, this one covering transmittal of the new essay. He actually sent a different letter, a brief one of transmittal and directions on how he wished the copy to be handled. Thereafter, in five letters written from June, 1821 to March, 1822 he briefly referred to the Defence. In one he made mention of the proposed second part of the Defence which he expected to write and publish. Finally, he wrote in tones of anger about Ollier's remissness in publication matters, and referred for the last time to the unpublished and unre­turned Defence.
APPENDIX E

Shelley first mentioned The Four Ages of Poetry in a letter to Peacock written November 8, 1820:

The box containing my books, and consequently your Essay against the cultivation of poetry, has not arrived; my wonder, meanwhile, in what manner you support such a heresy in this matter-of-fact and money-loving age, holds me in a suspense (Letters, II, p. 244).

Shelley's second mention of The Four Ages of Poetry appeared in a letter to Charles Ollier, London, written January 20, 1821, in a brief comment which said:

I have also to thank you for the present of one or two of your publications. I am enchanted with your Literary Miscellany, although the last article it contains [The Four Ages of Poetry] has excited my polemical faculties so violently, that the moment I get rid of my ophthalmia I mean to set about an answer to it, which I will send to you, if you please. It is very clever, but, I think, very false (Letters, II, p. 258).

Shelley next mentioned The Four Ages in a letter to Peacock, dated February 15, 1821, in which he told of receiving a letter from Peacock, and then said:

I received at the same time your printed denuncia-
tions [The Four Ages] against general, and your written ones against particular, poetry; and I agree with you as decidedly in the latter as I differ in the former. The man whose critical gall is not stirred up by such ottava rimas as Barry Cornwall's, may safely be conjectured to possess no gall at all. The world is pale with the sickness of such stuff. At the same time, your anathemas against poetry itself excited me to a sacred rage, or caloethes scribendi of vindicating the insulted Muses. I had the greatest possible desire to break a lance with you, within the lists of a magazine, in honour of my mistress Urania; but God willed that I should be too lazy, and wrested the victory from your hope; since first having unhorsed poetry, and the universal sense of the wisest in all ages, an easy conquest would have remained to you in me, the knight of the shield of shadow and the lance of gossamere (Letters, II, p. 261).

On February 22, 1821 Shelley again wrote to Charles Ollier, and he now referred to his own reply to Peacock's article:

Peacock's essay is at Florence at present. I have sent for it, and will transmit to you my paper
APPENDIX E

['A Defence of Poetry'] as soon as it is written which will be in a very few days. Nevertheless, I should be sorry that you delayed your magazine through any dependence on me. I will not accept anything for this paper, as I had determined to write it, and promised it you, before I heard of your liberal arrangements; but perhaps in future, if I think I have any thoughts worth publishing, I shall be glad to contribute to your magazine on those terms (Letters, II, pp. 268-269).

On March 4, 1821 Shelley wrote again to Charles Ollier:

The subject to which the 4 ages of Poetry has provoked my attention requires more words than I had expected;--I shall trespass on your patience yet a few days.--- . . . You may expect to hear from me in a very few days (Letters, II, p. 271).

Dated as early March, 1821 three drafts of a letter to "Mr. Editor" [Charles Ollier] now appeared the first two of which were in very rough form, full of cancellations and changes. These first two drafts appeared in six pages of the Shelley notebook which also contained the holograph draft of the Defence [MS A], Bodleian MS. Shelley d. l. The first letter draft appeared on f. 81 rev., then continued on f. 79
APPENDIX E

rev., and on to f. 78 v. rev. Additional sentences, seem­
ingly part of this draft, appeared on f. 80 v. rev. and f. 80 rev. The second letter draft appeared on f. 79 v. rev. When Shelley started his essay draft he turned back a few pages in his notebook to f. 86 v rev. and wrote up to f. 81 v rev., then continued the draft on f. 77 v rev., following the pages on which he had first written the drafts of the letter. [See Appendix D above; see also Textual Notes above; and Brett-Smith, p. 107.]

The first letter draft, which appears below, is based up­
on the MS readings by Koszul (pp. 118-120), Brett-Smith (pp. 108-109), and the Letters edition (II, pp. 272-273), and includes the most pertinent cancellations in brackets:

The ingenious author of a paper which lately ap­
peared in your Miscellany, entitled the four ages of Poetry, has directed the light of a mind replete with taste & learning to the illustration of [a paradox, so dark, as of itself to absorb whatever rays of truth might fall upon it.] I will endeavour to place the propositions which compose this opinion.

There are four ages of Poetry, corresponding to the four ages of the world [; in which this art or faculty has progressively deteriorated] as the arts of
APPENDIX E

Poetry [at first] was no more than the rude efforts of [savages to state the fervor of a semi barbarian age] expression of early ages of the world before language had assumed any degree of philosophical perfection, and instead of softening the manners & refining the feelings of the semi-barbarians [whom it addressed] whose intervals of repose it soothed; it flattered their vices & hardened them to fresh acts of carnage fraud & destruction. The character & personal conduct of the poets themselves (and this is the most favourable period for poetry) was then contemptible.

3dly With the progress of civil society & the development of the arts of life poetry has deteriorated in exact proportion to the universal amelioration; & the examples [afforded by it] in ages of high refinement & civilization, & especially in the age in which we live, are below derision, & the instruments of the utmost passiveness (narrowness) & depravity of moral sentiment.

4thly Every person conscious of intellectual power ought studiously to wean himself from the study & the practise of poetry, & ought to apply that power to general finance, political economy, to the study [of new and better] in short [of] the laws
APPENDIX E

according to which the forms (frame) of the social order might be most wisely regulated for the happiness of [mankind] those whom it binds together.-- These are indeed high objects, [& I pledge myself to worship Themis rather than Apollo if I have attempted to, if it could be found that--]

Before we subject these propositions to [analysis examination], it were well to discover what poetry is

There are additional sentences appearing on f. 80 v rev.:

So dark a paradox may absorb the brightest rays of the mind which fall upon it. [It is an impious daring attempt to extinguish Imagination which is the Sun of life. Impious attempt parricidal & self murdering attempt] & would leave to its opponent a secure but an inglorious conquest.

He would extinguish Imagination which is the Sun of life, & grope his way by the cold & uncertain & borrowed light of that Moon which he calls Reason,—stumbling over the interlunar chasm of time where she deserts us, and an owl, rather than an eagle, stare with dazzled eyes on the watery orb which is the Queen of his pale Heaven.—But let us in true sense place within the scale of reason an opinion so light, that [weighted in that more delicate
balance of sentiment & taste,) there is less dan­
ger that it should preponderate, than that the
winged words of which it is composed should fly
out of the balance like those with which Spensers
giant thought to counterpoise the golden weight of
justice.

with which this writer attempts to prove that
Poetry is a bad thing [(I hope soon to see a Trea­
tise against the light of the Sun adorn your col­
umns.) He rides his hobby, like Obadiah did the
coach horse through thick and thin, but] He rides
his hobby of a paradox with a grace

The second letter draft, also addressed to "Mr. Editor"
is as follows, taken from joint readings of Koszul, (p. 120),
Brett-Smith, (p. 110), and Letters, II, (p. 274):
The following remarks were suggested by an essay
entitled the Four ages of Poetry which appeared some
months since in your valuable Miscellany. [(I was
delighted by the wit, the spirit, the learning of
this essay; but that a writer but the paradox it
attempts to support I suspect it to be written by
a friend of mine who is a desperate rider of a hobby

hobby horsical thrown. It is impossible not to
be delighted by The wit the learning & the spirit
APPENDIX E

of this essay are the spurs of a hobby of a new construction:] but these qualities [in the present instance ought] deserve to [be] buried where the four roads meet, with a stake through their body, for they are caught in the very fact of suicide. The writer, is in this respect, like a pig swimming, he cuts his own throat.

The third draft addressed to "Mr. Editor" read as follows:

The following remarks which I have presumed to call a Defence of Poetry were suggested by an Essay of great ingenuity & wit which appeared some time since in your valuable Miscellany; entitled the 'Four Ages of Poetry'. The object of that paper seems to be to persuade the world that Poetry, as Lance says of Conscience 'ought to be driven out of all towns & cities as a dangerous thing'--I entreat, Mr. Editor, to be heard on suspension of judgement (taken from Letters, II, p. 274).

The actual letter of transmittal sent by Shelley to Charles Ollier along with the transcription of the Defence was dated Mar. 20, 1821, and read as follows:

I send you the 'Defence of Poetry', Part I. It is transcribed, I hope, legibly.
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I have written nothing which I do not think necessary to the subject. Of course, if any expressions should strike you as too unpopular, I give you the power of omitting them; but I trust you will, if possible, refrain from exercising it. In fact, I hope that I have treated the question with that temper and spirit as to silence cavil. I propose to add two other parts in two succeeding Miscellanies. It is to be understood that, although you may omit, you do not alter or add.

Pray let me hear from you soon.

(Letters, II, p. 275).

On the day following, March 21, 1821, Shelley sent a letter to Peacock, in which he said:

I dispatch [to Ollier] by this post the 1st Part of an Essay intended to consist of 3 parts, which I design for an antidote to your 'Four Ages of Poetry.'--You will see that I have taken a more general view of what is Poetry than you have, and will perhaps agree with several of my positions without considering your own touched. But read & judge, & do not let us imitate the great founders of the picturesque Mr. Price & Payne Knight, who like two ill-trained beagles began snarling at
APPENDIX E

each other when they could not catch the hare.—
(Letters, II, p. 275).

On June 8, 1821 Shelley wrote to Charles Ollier: "I have received no answer to my last letter to you. Have you received my contribution to your magazine ['A Defence of Poetry']? (Letters, II, p. 297)

Again, on September 25, 1821, he wrote to Ollier, and said: "Pray give me notice against what time you want the second part of my Defence of Poetry. I give this Defence, and you may do what you will with it" (Letters, II, p. 355).

On January 26, 1822 Shelley wrote to John Gisborne about his dissatisfaction with Ollier as a publisher, and his desire that another publisher be sought. He mentioned having given Ollier certain rights, and noted: "As also the paper entitled the Defence of Poetry over which I gave Ollier the right of insertion in his magazine.—If he declines to insert it, you can do what you will with it—Publish it as a pamphlet—(Letters, II, p. 387).

John Gisborne replied to Shelley on February 19, 1822, telling him of the failure of the first issue of Ollier's Miscellany but stating: "They seem, however, inclined to try another number, for which they reserve your 'Defence of Poetry' (Letters, II, p. 378). Shelley replied to
APPENDIX E

Gisborne on March 7, 1822 about the Defence, and said: "The Defence of Poetry was not given to him [Ollier] to keep two years by him--If he chooses to publish it in a pamphlet (the likeliest form for success) he is welcome; if not I wish it to be sent to me--" (Letters, II, p. 396).

There was, of course, no further publication of the Miscellany by Ollier. The Defence transcription sent to Ollier eventually found its way into the hands of John Hunt. The cancellations in dark ink on MS D, which delete the Peacock references, are considered to be done by him, as he was preparing the transcript for publication in the Liberal. This periodical failed to publish further, and so the Defence did not get into print here either. Eventually the transcript was returned to Mrs. Shelley, who published it finally in 1840, with the Peacock references deleted, in her two-volume edition, Essays, Letters From Abroad, Translations and Fragments.
APPENDIX F

FOUR FRAGMENTS FROM THE SHELLEY MS NOTEBOOK
CONTAINING THE DRAFT OF A DEFENCE OF POETRY [MS A]

The following four fragments were published by A. H. Koszul in Shelley's Prose in the Bodleian Manuscripts, 1910, in his Appendix entitled "Unpublished Drafts and Notes," pp. 121-122. The position of these fragments in relation to the Defence draft in Shelley's Notebook is shown by the folio numbering. Fragments I and II are contained in f. 91 v and f. 89 v rev.; fragments III and IV appear on f. 42 rev., f. 42 v rev., and f. 35 rev. Shelley's draft runs from f. 86 v rev. to f. 37 v rev. (see Appendix C).

Fragments I and II have been identified by J. A. Notopoulos as being an earlier translation by Shelley of a continuous passage of Plato's Ion, 533d3-534a6, 534a7-b7, (The Platonism of Shelley, pp. 353-354, 482).

The brackets used below contained doubtful meanings or editorial additions.

I

For a divine power moves you, as that of f. 91 v rev. in pencil, the magnet; which not only can draw iron rings to itself but can endow them with a similar power of attraction to draw other rings, until a long chain of rings is attached to each other; and all is attached to the stone itself.--
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Thus poetry, being itself divinely inspired, communicates this inspiration to others, until a long chain is made every link of which is a human spirit and the first [link] of which is attached to that of the [poet]. For no. poets f. 91 rev. are excellent from their act, but when they sing those beautiful poems, they are inspired and possessed by a higher power. And as the Corybants dance in being mad; so poets being mad make those beautiful poems and possessed with the divinity bacchanalize so soon as they[?] arrive?] at harmony and rhythm; like those Menads who in their orgasm find milk and honey in the rivers and when they are in their senses find it no more.

II

For Poets tell us that flying like bees, and f. 89 v rev. wandering over the gardens and the meadows and the honey flowing fountains of the Muses they return to us laden with sweet melodies, and they speak truth: for a poet is a thing aetherially light; winged and sacred; nor can he make poetry before he becomes divinely inspired and out of his senses; and until understanding he no longer in him. So long as he has this poses[s]ion] a man is incapable of pro-
APPENDIX F

ducing poetry and vaticination.

III

[Poetry is the medicinal honey of those bees, f. 42 rev. who feed upon the sweetest dew of the softest flowers of thought.]

[It is the golden-winged Love which broods over the dusky embryos of chaos.]

It is the Serpent which clasps eternity. f. 43 rev.

IV

Nothing can exceed the simplicity of the real f. 35 rev. questions through which financiers, political economists, and writers on government and external policy and international law have interspersed the mist of their micrology. Poetry and poetical philosophy regard society in its elements; and cut the Gordian knot which like a serpent 'too intricate to unloose,' binds men to their hard fate.