PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

A

Signed Autograph Letter from the Poet in Italy to his friend.

Jefferson Hogg,

which marks the development of the Poet's style and convictions, from the passionate impulsiveness and ardent preoccupation with religion and politics of his youth, to the serenity permeated with classical feeling of this, his last letter from Pisa.

In the following month of July, Shelley was drowned in the Bay of Spezzia.

October 1821

Bagni di Pisa. October 22. 1821.

My dear friend

letter from Paris, where his wife has persuaded a physician to assure her that the climate of Italy would destroy her. You have perhaps already heard of my iniquity in seducing. Hunt over to Italy. If is coming with all his children, to Pisa. What pleasure it would give me and him and all of us if you would follow his example. But law, that disease inherited from generation to generation, that canker in the birthright of our nation, that sieve through which our thoughts flow as fast as we pour them in, pens you in London at least for the greater part of the year.

I addict myself but little to walks of any length, but wander about the edges of the hills sometimes with my book, and live in a total intellectual solitude. I knew a very interesting Italian lady last winter, but she is now married, which to quote our friend Peacock, is you know, the same as being dead. I have employed Greek in large doses, and I consider it the only sure remedy for diseases of the mind. I read the tragedian Homer and,

Plato perpetually, and have translated the Symposium, the Ion, and part of the Phaedon. I selected the first piece on account of the surpassing graces of the composition, but I have no intention of publishing it. The Gorgias is now open before me, and I shall read it with double interest? from the views which you suggest about it. Do you know the NDXITEIA and especially the sixth book of it?? It is speculations on civil society and surely the foundations of true politics, and if ever the world is to be arranged upon another system than that of the several members of it destroying and tormenting one another for the sake of the pleasures of sense, or from the force of habit and imitation; it must start from some such principles. I congratulate you on your Demosthenic energy - to me the feat appears to require the OBEYOS of an entire DYNOS. I have tried a philippic; I find it horribly difficult - but I shall gather up my courage and assail him again.

I receive with delight your Milkwort — itt reposes between the leaves of a folio Plato, whose incrediable contractions and abominable inaccuracy torment me to death, as I have only 3 vols. of my own edition as yet here. I send you a flower which grows on the mountains,

" perche i Pisani veder Lucca non ponno," and which when alive is very beautiful. I shall herborize myself and send. you as I find them, whatever plants are rarest or peculiar to this country. I saw a great number of the Cryptogamia. genus the other day which I had never remarked in England -ferns especially. There are also peculiar fleshy flowers and one that runs blood and that the peasants say is alive. You see the Bisbornes of course. I read Bothe's Faust? with Mr. G. I advise you to read it — it has passages of surpassing excellence though there are some scenes which the fastidiousness of our taste would wish erased — as to Botany how much more profitable and innocent an occupation it is than that absurd and unphilosophical diversion of killing birds. Besides the ill task of giving pain to sensi = tive and beautiful animals this amusement of shooting famiarises people with the society of inferiors and the gross and harsh habits belonging to those sort of pursuits. How much I enry your walks - though I find my health would hardly allow me to share in them. I am glad to hear that you do not neglect the rites of the true relia gion. Your letter awakened my sleeping devotion, and the same evening I ascended alone the high mountains behind. my house, and suspended a garland and raised a small. turf altar to the mountain-walking Pan.

My health in the main, is much better than when I left England, but I am weak and with much nervous irritability. My spirits also are by no means good and I feel sensibly - la noia e l'affanno della pasa - sata vita - I have some thoughts, if I could get a respectable appointment, of going to India, as anywhere where I might be compelled to active exertion, and at the same time enter into an entirely new sphere of action. But this I dare say is a mere dream — I shall probably have no opportunity of making it a reality but finish as I have begun. Have you seen a poem I wrote on the death of Keats, a young writer of bad taste, but wonderful powers and promise. It is called Adonais. When you pass Olliers you may tell him I desired you to call for one. It is perhaps the least imperfect of my pieces. I do not write to Peacock who has something better to do than read scrawls, in the persuasion that you will fell him my news: and be so kind as to say he would or blige me very much in dispatching instantly all my books to me to the care of Messrs. Guebhard & Co, of t Leghorn. Gisborne will tell him how to send them if he finds any difficulty. Of course if he or you should, wish to retain any of them they are much at your service.

Shall I see you ever in Italy? With what pleasure I should welcome you here I need not say - but both you and Peacock are bound to the oar - not like me by the chains of your sins.

Ever most sincerely yours

P. B. Shelley.

Jefferson Hogg, Esg!,

R. 1. Garden Court,

Temple,

London.

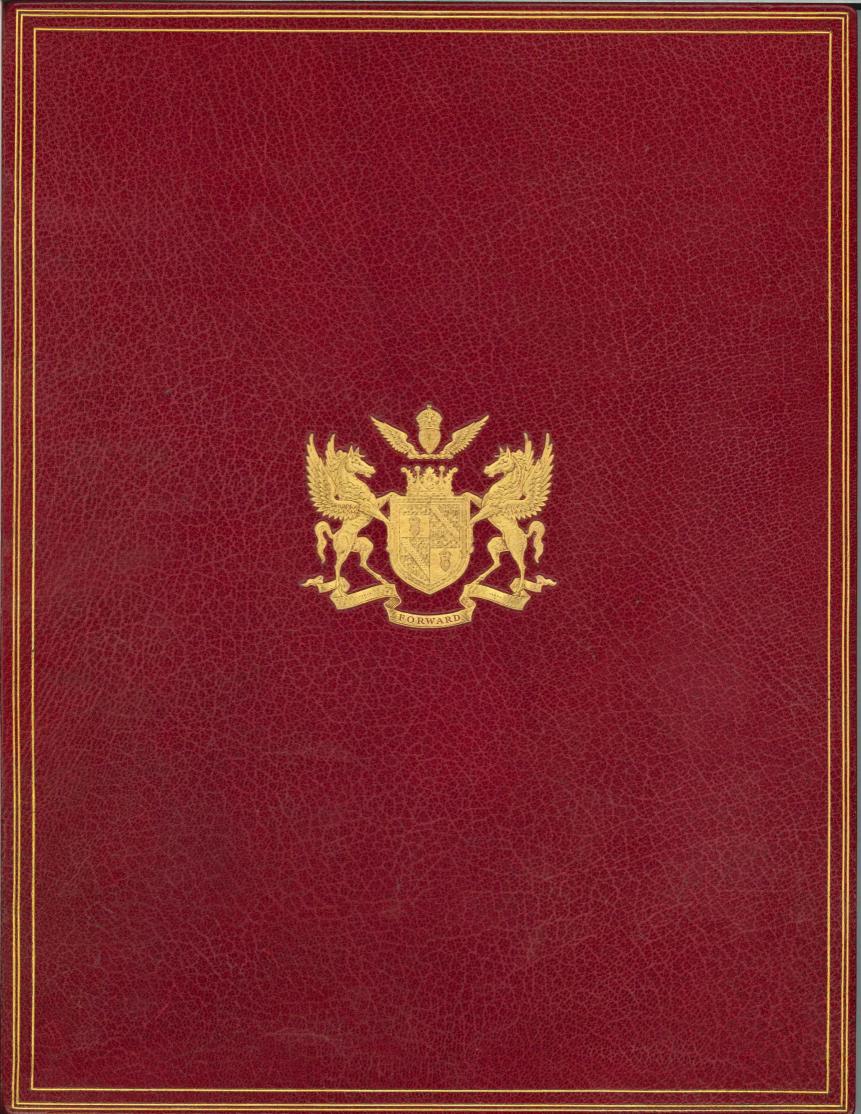
Angleterre.

you or he should wind to atheir my of them they are thick of me service. That I see you are in State I hit what pleases I should welcom you har I will not say - but with I'm & Peacock in brand to the our set like the by the ohain of your sins - tou mint some from Jugni li Vefor, Och. 22, 1871. My dear friend Arrau Smith has just sent me you where Im Jans, when his wife has persualed a physician to apon her that the climate of State worth history you have perhaps whenty heard of my migrity In Sections thank over to State he is siming with M his children to Pife What pleasur it work you m & him & all of me if you work follow his simple. Ant law, that disease inherit from generation to years when - that canker in the best eight of our nature that sien though which me thought flow as but as we pour tem in, persym in down at last for the quate part of the year. which myself but the to Halks of any length, - Lat handa about the edges of the with some time, with my bish, and in in a tetret in which solitude. I know a very interesting Stehen tady last winter, but she is son manied & Which to auto our friend Seacoch, is you min the Same as lung time - There in propa grech in laye loses, & consider it the only

In I mely for director of the mind teni The Rayering Homer, & Plato perpetually; & have hans tuted the ymporum, The Son, & Am Johnt of the Fracon. I select the first prece in account of the infraging graces of he composition, tat have he intention of puthitung it. The gorgeon in now open befor me, and I shall sen it with douth it 3, you know the topicity to especially the with with of the Son speculations on sunt rock an med the frundethen of the fitters I if ever the work is to be amongo spin another your han that of the sound member fit Mestrying & winting me enother for in sum of the pleasure of Line or from the force of rabit & mi taling it must stat from Jone such principles. I longrate let you on your Person thenic energy to me the feat after to Shell getten up my convey & efall him again. I secur with delight your brillwork. It upones betom The leaves of a folio Diate, whose more with contractions I atominath in macinay truments on to death, as I have only bus von of my own within as gether. I send you a flower what grown on the mountain perche I Fifami Veder Lucca non homo, I which when whis is very beauty.

I stack her tronge myself, I will sow you as find hem Wratern plants an ruest or pleating to this country. I saw a great number of the long plagemen gener In this day which I had her amorales in my andterns whereally. Then are also curious freshy from non that the blood & that the pearant day & there - you see the gir brown of course . I can grether hant with knig - and war a a orne jun to y las to - it has propayer of surpaining exallence, thomas then in many Janes - which the fastioners "will of our task work with wand . _ Is to Many how much mon proportion & inneant as occupation is the trun that was the wight working choquin of Killing hirds besides the all his of giving pain to sensition & beautiful enimals, this mercement of shorting from karnin people with the Society of in ferious of the grown of hach heart relaying Haller - though I fim my health words hundy after In the Shaw in them. I am ghat to him theil you Is not reglect the rites of the mer celigin. In This awaken my sleeping derota, of the same evening I would alone, the high mountain behind my from to the mountain walking Pan. They ogsio 16 200) -My Matth, in In main, is much better free when left mg mus, but I am weath & with much revorains totally in spirit also are by no means good to feel sensity

som thought, if could get a supertath appointment of grains to hoha, or any when when I might be compilled to donn exaction, & at the same time enter ente on entry New sprin of action. - That this I dan vay is a men Mean, & that I shall probably han nochrothing making it a wality but finish is of hot, a your a control of the second of the thomas then me it to the shift The Man B Water of har tack, but readyful former & frame. It is called Latran whim you pap Alain you may at him I desur in the form it is probable the last imported for freeze. In mit to bearon who her something wither to the then und sounds, in the permasin And my with with him try ner. Mipato hing instantly who my broky to Pipo one, in the Care of thep Suchand to deghom. In home will





PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, A. L. S., 22 October 1821, to Thomas Jefferson Hogg.

Bagni di Pisa, Oct. 22. 1821.

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yours

P. B. Shelley.

ALS, 4 pages. Double sheet, 24.6 x 18.4 cm.

Laid paper. Watermark: flowerpot.

Seal removed.

Postmarks: Pisa; FPO | NO · 8 | 1821. Postal fee: 1/11.

Address: Jefferson Hogg Esqr. | No. 1. Garden Court | Temple

Angleterre. [space] London | Inghilt [deleted].

Provenance: Hogg sale, Sotheby, 30 Jun 1948; ex libris Marquess of Queensberry; Sotheby, 11 Mar 1952. In a crimson full morocco binder (extra), with the Queensberry arms in gold on upper cover and in gold on spine: P. B. | SHELLEY | A. L. S. | TO JEFFER- | SON | HOGG | 1821. Listed in De Ricci, p. 136 (without number).

Published in *Shelley-Leigh Hunt*, ed. R. Brimley Johnson (London, 1928), pp. 333–335; Ingpen and Peck, VII, 311–313; Scott, 131–133; Jones, II, 359–362 (no. 667), with 5 substantive and 8 accidental variations from the Lewis MS.

Notes: 1. White (II, 454) refers to this letter as "Bod. Lib., MS. Shelley Adds d. 4"—a copy by Mary (as is that used by Johnson and owned by R. H. Bath), the error being pointed out, without reference to White, by Jones.

2. See Jones, II, 359-360, for Hogg's letter, 15 June, prompting Shelley's

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in English.

reply. Hogg uses 25 Greek words—accounting for Shelley's deletion of republic