

And then Mrs. Wainwright said, "No, not for the chafing-dish," and they drove off, laughing.

"Look at 'em," said Travers, morosely. "They don't think the wheels are going around, do they? They think it is just the earth revolving with them on top of it, and nobody else. We don't have to say 'please' to no one—not much! We can do just what we jolly well please, and dine when we please and wherever we please. You say to me, 'Travers, let's go to Pastor's to-night'; and I say, 'I won't'; and you say, 'I won't go to the Casino, because I don't want to'; and there you are, and all we have to do is to agree to go somewhere else."

"I wonder," said Van Bibber, dreamily, as he watched the carriage disappear down the avenue, "what brings a man to the proposing point?"

"Some other man," said Travers, promptly. "Some man he thinks has more to do for the girl than he likes."

"Who," persisted Van Bibber, innocently, "do you think was the man in that case?"

"How should I know?" exclaimed Travers, impatiently, waving away the unprofitable discussion with a sweep of his stick, and coming down to the serious affairs of life. "What I want to know is to what theatre we are going, that's what I want to know."

THE LAST DAYS OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

(WITH NEW DOCUMENTS.)

BY GUIDO BIAGI.

OF that dark catastrophe which ended the life of Percy Bysshe Shelley so tragically, as in some antique drama woven by inevitable fate, it were idle to present the details already known to those who have felt their hearts ache, as they have read Trelawny's and other accounts of the event, as also the particulars collected with such devotion by Professor E. Dowden, in his masterly biography of the poet. And, indeed, who can read without profoundest sympathy, one might almost say without tears, the touching letter written to Mrs. Gisborne on the 15th August, 1822, by Mary Shelley, the bereaved widow, in which she narrates the story of those days of anguish?

"The days pass," she writes, after the awful event, "pass one after another, and we still live. 'Adonais' is not Keats's elegy, but his very own." And who may tell how often she read and re-read it in those long nine-and-twenty years in which she outlived him, vestal of her one and only love? A copy of the Pisa edition of this poem found in her possession after death bears witness to this. Among the pages was a tiny silken bag containing the ashes taken by her from the fatal urn.

On the 15th of January, 1822, the Shelleys and Williamses took apartments in a house called I Tre Palazzi di Chiesa, on the Lung' Arno at Pisa, and opposite to Palazzo Lanfranchi, where Byron was

then living. The two families were close friends, and had been living together for over a year. Edward Williams, who had been a school-fellow of Shelley at Eton, had come from Geneva to Italy to make the personal acquaintance of the poet, whom he had heard so enthusiastically lauded by Medwin. He had served in the navy, but, disgusted at the tyrannical discipline exercised in it, had entered a regiment of dragoons, and been for many years in India. Frank, loyal, brave, and generous, devoted to the sea, fond of travelling, an enthusiast for art, he could not fail to please Shelley. His wife, Jane Williams, was possessed of such natural grace that she made conquest of all who came in contact with her. To Shelley she seemed, with her grace and gentleness and the blandishment of her every word and action, the incarnation of the utmost ideal sweetness.

The apartment in the Tre Palazzi di Chiesa looking westward over sea and country, "suspended citadel," as he calls it, in which blossomed flowers whose fragrance still endures in the verses to the Zucca, and other fugitive poems, was to receive a new inmate on that evening of January 15th, a new friend, who had arrived on the previous day. Edward Trelawny, to whom Medwin had also spoken of Shelley with his accustomed admiration and enthusiasm, had conceived a strong affection for him, and had come to Pisa to make his acquaint-

ance, and to take Williams and another old navy friend, Captain Daniel Roberts, to winter in Maremma for the hunting season.

In the course of that memorable evening the talk turned again to the plan so often discussed by Shelley and Williams, of passing the coming summer together at Spezia. In order to do this a boat was necessary, and Trelawny had already been written to, to get Captain Roberts to see to its construction. He had now brought with him the model of an American schooner, and it naturally formed the subject of their discussion. They decided to have a boat built, thirty feet long, and wrote to Genoa requesting Captain Roberts to have it put in hand at once. "Thus on that night, one of gayety and thoughtlessness," writes poor Mrs. Shelley, later, "Jane's and my miserable destiny was decided."

Shortly after, they began to look out for a villa for the summer colony, which was to include Lord Byron and the Guiccioli, Pietro Gamba, Trelawny, and Captain Roberts. Those first warm spring days of clear sky, brilliant sunshine, and flowering hedges were admirably adapted to such expeditions. The two friends, Shelley and Williams, explored the Gulf of Spezia, but with poor result. Meanwhile certain circumstances had occurred to modify the notion of the *villeggiatura* in common. When they again set to work hunting for the long-dreamed-of summer quarters, it was only for the Williamses and themselves, and they had to be content with the Casa Magni at San Terenzo, on the Gulf of Spezia, to which they transferred their furniture by sea, moving in on the 1st of May, 1822.

There could have been, writes Montegazza, no more splendid frame for Shelley's genius, no abode more worthy of the transcendental idealism of his

"High-spirited winged heart."

A rugged old house standing in the sea, and backed by a hill covered with pines and evergreen oaks; lonely, strong as the foundations of a fortress, with a terrace and a little porch opening on to the sea. More ship than house, the sea flows as if by right into the porch, washes the walls, and often sends its salt greeting even up to the inhabitants of the terrace and first floor. These rough caresses give to the

house, called to this day "Shelley's house," the wrinkled, weather-beaten look seen on old sailors' faces. The iron railings are eaten away like old cheese, and the sea-salt sparkles in wavy lines on the crumbling bricks.

Poor Mary, then *enceinte* and suffering, did not like the place, the gorgeous beauty of which jarred on her overstrung and delicate nerves. The house seemed to her dreary, and the sense of misfortune hung over her spirits. "No words can tell you how I hated our house and the country about it. . . . My only moments of peace were on board that unhappy boat, when, lying down with my head on his knee, I shut my eyes, and felt the wind and our swift motion alone."

The "unhappy boat" arrived on the afternoon of Sunday, May 12th. The whole crew consisted of a boy of eighteen, Charles Vivian, who had come from Genoa on board. Trelawny wanted to add a Genoese sailor who knew the coast; but Williams, who thought he knew all about it, would not listen to him.

The schooner, when she was ordered from Captain Roberts at Genoa, was to have belonged to Shelley in partnership with Trelawny and Williams. Trelawny, in his enthusiasm for Byron, proposed to christen her the *Don Juan*, and Shelley made no objection. But the partnership was dissolved before the vessel was ready, and she remained Shelley's property at the price of £80. Mary and the poet gave her the name of the *Ariel*.

Shelley left with Williams on the *Ariel* on the 1st of July for Leghorn to meet Leigh Hunt. The last mentioned (Shelley's paragon of a friend) was coming to Italy, with the means Shelley had procured for him, to talk over with Byron the establishment of a literary periodical.

At last the two friends met. Shelley, with a cry, threw himself on Hunt's neck, and they embraced one another. "I am inexpressibly delighted," he exclaimed; "you cannot think how inexpressibly happy it makes me!" Thornton Hunt, Leigh Hunt's eldest son, still remembered many years later that cry and that affectionate greeting.

From Leghorn the Hunts went with Shelley to Pisa, where Byron put them up on the ground-floor of the Lanfranchi Palace.

Shelley wrote melancholy letters to

Jane and Mary, lamenting the never-to-be-forgotten hours of the peaceful intimacy at Casa Magni, as if foreboding disaster. Mrs. Williams replied with one even sadder, in which she complains of not having seen her dear husband Ned return, and which she ends with the following singular postscript: "Why do you say that you will never again enjoy moments like those which are past? Do you mean that you are going to join your friend Plato?"

Shelley and Hunt went together to see the monuments, the cemetery, the cathedral, the "melancholy leaning tower"—glorious records of republican splendor.

Hunt used to recall a conversation they had together. "He assented warmly to an opinion I expressed in the cathedral at Pisa, while the organ was playing, that a truly divine religion might yet be established if charity were really made the principle of it, instead of faith."

But the day was waning, and the hour came for the sad farewells. It was time to depart. Williams could not restrain his impatience, and the two women were panting for the joy of the return. Leigh Hunt implored his friend not to venture out to sea if the weather were bad, and gave him to read on the voyage a copy of the last volume of poor Keats, that containing the sublime fragment of "Hyperion." "Keep it," he said, "till you can give it back to me with your own hands." They embraced for the last time, and Shelley's carriage disappeared in the dark night on the road to Leghorn.

The days had been very hot, close, and stifling. On the 8th of July, the fatal Monday, the rain so long implored seemed near. The sky had changed, and a storm broke, but circled round in the distance, and the weather became fine and calm again as before. Shelley spent all the morning paying visits. Then, still accompanied by Trelawny, he went back to the harbor. A light breeze was blowing in the direction of Lerici; and Williams, who was impatient to put off, assured him that they would reach home in seven hours. Shelley was in especially high spirits that morning, as is sometimes the case when some occult danger hangs over us. He paid no heed to Captain Roberts, who prophesied that a violent hurricane would shortly be blowing up.

At noon or a little later the two friends and the sailor, Charles Vivian, went on

board the *Ariel*. At the stroke of two the *Ariel* went out of the harbor, almost simultaneously with two feluccas.

Captain Roberts at the extreme end of the harbor was keeping the *Ariel* in sight. He saw her at first making a speed of about seven knots an hour; then, ascending to the top of the light-house, whence he commanded a much wider extent of sea, he saw with terror the hurricane coming up from the gulf, and the whirlwind envelop the frail boat, the mainsail of which had been lowered.

"In the darkness of the tempest," he says, "it was hidden from my gaze and I could no longer distinguish it. When the storm had a little subsided I looked again and again, hoping to see it, but on the whole expanse of sea not a boat was to be seen."

Hours and days of anguish followed. On the morning of the third day Trelawny hastened to Pisa, to Palazzo Lanfranchi, hoping to find that some letter had been received from Casa Magni. There was nothing.

"I told my fears to Hunt," he writes, "and then went up stairs to Byron. When I told him, his lips quivered and his voice faltered as he questioned me. I sent a courier to Leghorn to despatch the *Boliviar* to cruise along the coast, whilst I mounted my horse and rode in the same direction. I also despatched a courier along the coast to go as far as Nice."

Those days had been passed by the two widows of Casa Magni in a state of the most cruel anxiety. Mary was slowly recovering, but oppressed by such unconquerable melancholy that she could not refrain from tears. Summer was full of painful memories to her mother's heart. Three years before, on a hot June day, she had watched the veil of death dim William's blue eyes—her precious boy, who seemed to be beckoning to her from the cemetery by the pyramids of Caio Cestio, at Rome, as though awaiting her; and now she was trembling for her little Percy, on whom she had set all her affection. She was yearning for Shelley's return as for a healing balm. He had written to her once or twice, telling her of the difficulties connected with arranging for the Hunts, adding that it was impossible to say when he would get back. Thus a week had passed. On Monday, 8th, Jane received a

letter from Edward, dated Saturday, telling her that he was waiting at Leghorn for Shelley, who had been detained at Pisa. Shelley would be sure to return, but, he added, "if not here by Monday, I will hire a felucca and be with you, at latest, by Tuesday evening."

"This was Monday—the fatal Monday," writes the bereaved widow in her letter to Mrs. Gisborne. "But with us it was stormy all day, and we did not at all suppose that they could put to sea. At twelve at night we had a thunder-storm. Tuesday it rained all day and was calm—the sky wept on their graves. On Wednesday the wind was fair from Leghorn, and in the evening several feluccas arrived thence. One brought word they had sailed on Monday, but we did not believe them. Thursday was another day of fair wind, and when twelve at night came, and we did not see the tall sails of the little boat double the promontory before us, we began to fear, not the truth, but some illness, some disagreeable cause for their detention." The poor women still deceived themselves. "Jane got so uneasy that she determined to proceed the next day to Leghorn in a boat to see what was the matter. Friday came, and with it a heavy sea and bad wind. Jane, however, resolved to be rowed to Leghorn, since no boat could sail, and busied herself with preparations. I wished her to wait for letters, since Friday was letter day. She would not, but the sea detained her; the swell rose so that no boat would venture out. At twelve at noon our letters came. There was one from Hunt to Shelley. It said: 'Pray write to tell us how you fared on Monday,' and, 'we are anxious.' The paper fell from my hands. I trembled all over. Jane read it. 'Then it is all over,' she said. 'No, my dear Jane,' I cried, 'it is not all over; but this suspense is dreadful. Come with me; we will go to Leghorn. We will post, to be swift to learn our fate.' We tried to encourage each other, but we felt death in our hearts. We crossed to Lerici, despair in our hearts. They raised our spirits there by telling us that no accident had been heard of, and that it must have been known, etc. But still our fear was great, and without resting we posted to Pisa.

"It must have been fearful to see us—two poor, wild, aghast creatures—driving towards the sea to learn if we were to

be forever doomed to misery." Truly a sad, mournful sight. "I knew that Hunt was at Pisa, at Lord Byron's house, but I thought that Lord Byron was at Leghorn. I settled to drive to Casa Lanfranchi, that I was to get out, and ask the fearful question of Hunt, 'Do you know anything of Shelley?' On entering Pisa, the idea of seeing Hunt for the first time for four years under such circumstances and asking him such a question was so terrific to me that it was with difficulty that I prevented myself from going into convulsions. My struggles were dreadful. They knocked at the door, and some one called out, 'Who is there?' It was the Guiccioli's voice. Lord Byron was at Pisa. Hunt was in bed; so I was to see Lord Byron instead of him. This was a great relief to me. I staggered up stairs; the Guiccioli came to me smiling, while I could hardly say: 'Where is he? Do you know anything of Shelley?'" "They knew nothing; he had left Pisa on Sunday; on Monday he had sailed; there had been bad weather Monday afternoon; more they knew not." "Both Lord Byron and the lady have told me since that on that terrific evening I looked more like a ghost than a woman; light seemed to emanate from my features; my face was very white, I looked like marble." And she was of marble, like the lady sung by Leopardi, who walks alone towards the wind and the tempest. "Alas! I had risen from a bed of sickness for this journey. I had travelled all day; it was now twelve at night, and we, refusing to rest, proceeded to Leghorn—not in despair; no, for then we must have died, but with sufficient hope to buoy up the agitation of spirits which was all my life. It was past two in the morning when we arrived. They took us to the wrong inn; neither Trelawny nor Captain Roberts were there, nor did we exactly know where they were, so we were obliged to wait until daylight. We threw ourselves dressed on our beds and slept a little, but at six o'clock we went to one or two inns to ask for one or the other of these gentlemen. We found Roberts at the Globe. He came down to us with a face which seemed to tell us that the worst was true, and here we learned all that had occurred during the week they had been absent from us, and under what circumstances they had departed on their return."

A thread of hope still remained. The

boat might have been cast by the storm upon the coast of Corsica or Elba. They were said to have been seen in the gulf. Who could tell? "We resolved to return," continues Mrs. Shelley, "with all possible speed. We sent a courier to go from tower to tower along the coast, to know if anything had been seen or found; and at 9 A.M. we quitted Leghorn, stopped but one moment at Pisa, and proceeded towards Lerici. When at two miles from Viareggio, we rode down to that town to hear if they knew anything. Here our calamity first began to break upon us. A little boat and a water-cask had been found five miles off. . . . The description of the boat tallied with one they had made; but then this boat was very cumbersome, and in bad weather they might have been easily led to throw it overboard. The cask frightened me most; but the same reason might, in some sort, be given for that." Dread journey! The two poor women strove to find any pretext to elude the awful doubt; and Trelawny, who was with them, endeavored to delude them with pious falsehoods.

"We journeyed on, and reached the Magni about half past 10 P.M. I cannot describe to you what I felt in the first moment when, fording the river, I felt the water splash about the wheels. I was suffocated. I gasped for breath. I thought I should have gone into convulsions, and I struggled violently that Jane might not perceive it. Looking down the river, I saw two great lights burning at the *Foce*. A voice from within me seemed to cry aloud, 'This is his grave!'

"After passing the river, I gradually recovered. Arriving at Lerici, we were obliged to cross our little bay in a boat. San Terenzo was illuminated for a *fiesta*. What a scene! The waving sea, the sirocco wind, the lights of the town towards which we rowed, and our desolate hearts that colored all with a shroud. We landed; nothing had been heard of them. This was Saturday, July 13th, and thus we waited until Thursday, July 18th, tossed about by hope and fear. We sent messengers along the coast towards Genoa and to Viareggio; nothing more had been found than the skiff. Reports were brought us; we hoped—and yet to tell you all the agony we endured during those six days would be to make you conceive an universe of pain, each moment intolerable, and giving place to one worse.

The people of the country, too, added to one's discomfort; they are like wild savages. On *fiestas* the men and women and children, in different bands, the sexes always separate, pass the whole night in dancing on the sands close to our door, running into the sea, then back again, all the time yelling one detestable air at the top of their voices—the most detestable in the world. Then the sirocco blew perpetually, and the sea forever moaned their dirge. On Thursday, 18th, Trelawny left us to go to Leghorn to see what was doing, or could be done. On Friday, 19th, I was very ill; but as evening came on I said to Jane: 'If anything had been found on the coast, Trelawny would have returned to let us know. He has not returned, so I hope.' About seven o'clock P.M. he did return. All was over; all was quiet now. They had been found, washed on shore."

Wrapped in their deep sorrow, the two victims of this profoundly human drama, which we have here sketched by the aid of documents already published, disappear from our ken. Now follows the epilogue, for the which we are privileged to avail ourselves of other authorities hitherto unknown, culled by us from the archives of Florence, Lucca, and Leghorn, and verbally from some of the old seamen of Viareggio who had been present at the finding and cremation of Shelley's body and the recovery of the *Ariel*.

On July 18th we have proofs, from the letter here appended, how the Governor of Viareggio hastened to notify to His Excellency the Minister for Home and Foreign Affairs of Lucca.

Royal State Archives of Lucca. Foreign Affairs. 1822.
No. 89. 381.

DUCHY [Stamp] OF LUCCA.

VIAREGGIO, July, 1822.

Privy Councillor, the Governor of the City of Viareggio, President of the Sanitary Commission, to His Excellency the Secretary of State for Home and Foreign Affairs, Lucca.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—It is my duty to inform your Excellency that the heavy sea has washed up a body, greatly decayed; and that the same, after being duly inspected by the Tribunal of Sanitation, has been buried upon the shore, and covered with strong lime, in accordance with existing maritime sanitary regulations.

There has been no notification with reference to the same, but it is thought probable that it may be one of two young Englishmen

who are said to have been wrecked on a voyage undertaken by them on the 8th instant, in a small launch in shape of a brig, which left Leghorn on the 8th instant for the Gulf of Spezia, with the current running strong on to the Tuscan coast.

Receive, your Excellency, the expression, etc., etc.,

The afore-named Governor,
G. P. FREDIANI.

P.S.—What leads me more especially to think that it may have been one of the Englishmen is that an English book has been found in the pocket of a double-breasted cloth jacket with two button-holes, which he always wore. The remaining attire consisted of a pair of nankeen trousers, a pair of boots, and white silk stockings—the whole of which being interred with the before-named regulations.

This document is not without interest and importance. It proves to us that the body of Shelley was "washed up," that is, cast by the sea upon the shore of Viareggio, upon the 18th of July; while, if the Governor Frediani had already received notification of it, that of Williams must have been previously recovered on the shore of Tuscany. From it also we learn what dress the poet wore; and to do away with any doubt concerning the English book, it was the volume of Keats lent to his friend by Leigh Hunt, and doubled back at "The Eve of St. Agnes," "as if the reader, in the act of reading, had hastily thrust it away."

Trelawny halted at Viareggio to see the body before its interment. "The face and hands, and parts of the body not protected by the dress, were fleshless. The tall, slight figure, the jacket, the volume of Sophocles in one pocket, and Keats's poems in the other. . . . were all too familiar to me to leave a doubt on my mind that this mutilated corpse was any other than Shelley's."

Williams's body had been washed up three miles further south, in Tuscan territory, near the Tower of Migliarino, at the mouth of the Serchio. The devoted friend hastened at once to identify it.

The two bodies having been identified, and temporarily buried close to the places where they had been found, it became necessary to devise the mode in which they should be transferred for honorable sepulture. Trelawny had recourse to Mr. Dawkins, then English Resident at Florence and Chargé d'Affaires to the government of Lucca, and Dawkins writes from Lucca, where he then was,

the letter published by Trelawny, recommending him to ask permission to convey Shelley's body to Leghorn. That permission obtained, and with the papers in order, he would be enabled to convey it by sea or land where desired. As concerned the removal of the other body—that of Williams—he was then awaiting reply from Florence. Without delay, Dawkins had despatched the following memorandum to Mansi, Secretary for Home and Foreign Affairs to the Duchy of Lucca:

Royal State Archives of Lucca. Foreign Affairs.
1822.

381.

Un petit Brigantin, propriété de Monsieur Shelley, Gentilhomme Anglais, coula à fond près du Serchio la semaine passée. L'équipage consistait de 3 individus, c. à d., Mr. Shelley, Mon^s le Capitaine Williams, au service de S. M. Brit^{ann}ique, et un garçon de Marine Anglais. Les défuntes mortelles des deux premiers ont été jetées par la mer, le premier sur les côtes du Duché de Lucques, le second sur ceux de la Toscane. Les parens et les amis de Mon^s Shelley voudraient transporter les restes du lieu où ils sont ensevelis à la cimetière anglaise à Livourne.

And Mansi, who annotates, "This document has been remitted by the hand of Mr. Dawkins, British Chargé d'Affaires," writes the following to the Governor of the city of Viareggio:

383.

To His Excellency the Governor of the City of Viareggio.

LUCCA, 27 July, 1822.

EXCELLENCY,—The English Legation accredited to this Court has apprised me that a small brigantine belonging to a Mr. Shelley, an English gentleman, was wrecked some days ago at the mouth of the Serchio. Three persons were on board the said vessel, namely, the owner, Mr. Shelley, Captain Williams, of H. B. M.'s service, and a young English sailor; and that the bodies of the two first have been washed to land, that of Captain Williams on the shore of Tuscany, that of Mr. Shelley on the shore of this Duchy. Further, the above-mentioned Legation, having represented to me that the friends and relatives of the late Mr. Shelley desire to move his remains from the place where they have been interred to the English Cemetery at Leghorn, urgently press me to obtain from this Government the necessary orders for the exhumation of the said body, and for the removal of the same from this Duchy. The above papers appear to leave no doubt but that the before-named body is identical with the one mentioned in the despatch of your Excellency of the 18th instant, No. 89.

His Majesty having granted the request preferred by the English Legation, it devolves upon me to pray your Excellency to be pleased to grant the necessary dispositions, in order that the body of the late Englishman buried upon this shore be given to the person duly authorized, and who shall present himself to your Excellency for that purpose. It being understood that the sanitary laws in force being duly observed in their entirety by the said individual. The transport of the body will, without doubt, be effected by sea, the whole cost of the same to be borne by the person who shall be charged to receive the consignment of the body.

I take this opportunity to express to your Excellency the assurance, etc., etc.

Meanwhile, at first confidentially, negotiations were proceeding with the Tuscan government for the exhumation of Williams's remains. Dawkins—partly to oblige a friend of Byron's, but even more from a conscientious sense of duty that made him write: "Do not mention trouble. I am here to take as much as my countrymen think proper to give me"—had written on the 25th or 26th of July to H. E. Don Neri Corsini, Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Grand Duchy, who sends the following despatch to the President del Buon Governo (Minister of Police):

State Archives of Florence. Foreign Affairs.
Prot. 95. No. 63.

To the Hon. President del Buon Governo.

27 July, 1822.

MY LORD,—The Royal Legation of Great Britain informs me that Captain Williams, who was drowned last week in the Serchio at the point where the river debouches into the sea, and who was buried in a neighboring field in what proved to be Tuscan territory, earnestly requests that the body of the said officer be exhumed and conveyed to the English cemetery at Leghorn.

This Imperial and Royal Government being minded that it should not refuse such request, it being understood that the said exhumation be conducted according to the tenor of the regulations, I am charged to beg your lordship to give such orders as you judge expedient either to the magistrate or local authorities in whose jurisdiction the body was temporarily buried, as also to the government of Leghorn, and to acquaint me about when the instructions and authorizations forwarded by you can reach the above-named magistrate or authorities, that thus the said Legation may apprise two English gentlemen, who will repair to the locality to be present at the disinterment and transport, and who will satisfy all claims.

I avail myself, etc., etc.

All seemed going smoothly, thanks to the good-will of the Tuscan government. Dawkins, it must be borne in mind, had merely spoken of the exhumation and transport of the bodies to the English cemetery at Leghorn. Thus both to Lucca and to Florence he had used the same urgency, which seemed as if it must be favorably received; but now intervened a long exchange of despatches between the various departments concerned in the matter. At length it occurred to Prince Neri Corsini, Secretary of State and Superintendent of the Sanitary Department, "to obviate the difficulties offered by the quarantine laws by the ancient custom of burning and reducing the body to ashes." Certain it is that the first demand was then withdrawn, and the following substituted:

State Archives of Florence. Foreign Affairs.
Prot. 95. No. 63.

To His Excellency Prince N. Corsini, etc., etc.

PRINCE,—Two English gentlemen, Captain Williams and Mr. Shelley, embarked on the 12th of last month at Leghorn, to rejoin their families at Spezia. Their vessel, the property of Mr. Shelley, caught in a storm the following day, was wrecked with all on board, consisting of the two gentlemen above named and a young English sailor. The mortal remains of the Captain were cast, on the 17th of that month, upon Tuscan territory; those of Mr. Shelley upon the coast of Lucca, near the mouth of the Serchio. The relatives of Captain Williams request me to obtain the permission of the Tuscan Government to remove his body, or his ashes, from the spot where he was interred to the English cemetery at Leghorn, with a view to their removal to England.

I have had the honor of addressing a similar request on behalf of Mr. Shelley's family to the Government of H. M. the Duchess of Lucca, who has already acceded to it.

I avail myself, etc., etc.

This request, in which appear those errors of date and locality which have been subsequently perpetuated in all biographies of Shelley, even the most authentic, was despatched to the Governor of Leghorn with the customary formalities. To which he returned the following official reply:

Archives of State in Florence. Foreign Affairs.
Prot. 95. No. 63.

To His Excellency Councillor Corsini, Superintendent of the Sanitary Department, Florence.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—The request preferred by the British Legation to be allowed to burn

the body of Captain Williams, already interred on the shore of Migliarino, with all requisite sanitary precautions, in order that the ashes may be conveyed to the Protestant cemetery, can encounter no difficulty, inasmuch as such operations are prescribed by our regulations upon sandy, rocky tracts of shore whereon are no human habitations, and provided such operations be conducted with regard to necessary sanitary precautions.

Having further consulted the Medical Officer of Health, Cavaliere Palloni, I am of opinion that the exhumation and subsequent burning of the above-named body can take place upon the spot where it was interred; and in order that on the occasion all the measures of the existing regulations be fully observed, I propose to despatch there one of the most trusty and experienced officers of health with seasonable instructions, to the object of insuring that the above-named operation be carried out with greatest exactitude.

This reply I have the honor to submit to your Excellency in answer to your esteemed despatch bearing date of yesterday, and awaiting your further pleasure on the subject, I have the honor to subscribe myself, etc., etc.

SPANNOCHIO.

Now that it was question of burning the body directly upon its being exhumed, there was no further obstacle. It only remained to inform the "English signori" that the operation would be performed at their expense, and that it remained for them to make the necessary arrangements with the Governor of Leghorn. On the 3d of August Prince Corsini advises Mr. Dawkins in the following letter, written in a French worthy of the laws of quarantine:

State Archives of Florence. Foreign Affairs.
Prot. 95. No. 63.

3 Août, 1822.

À Mr. Dawkins:

Mr.—Le Magistrat Sanitaire de Livourne ne met pas de difficulté à ce que le corps de feu Mr. le Capitaine Williams inhumé dans un point de la côte de Migliarino soit deterré et brûlé, sauf toutes les précautions commandées par les lois en pareils cas, pour les cendres en



THE SHELLEY HOUSE, AT SAN TEREZO.

être ensuite transportées dans le cimetière des Protestants à Livourne.

En m'empressant de porter ce résultat à votre connoissance, j'ai aussi l'honneur de vous prévenir que les M. Mrs. Anglais intéressés à ce que cette opération soit effectuée, et à la charge des quels seront tous les frais y relatifs, auront à s'adresser à son Ex. M. le Gouverneur de Livourne chargé de donner les ordres nécessaires afin que le tout soit strictement exécuté d'après les Règlements Sanitaires.

Je saisis cette, etc., etc.

Trelawny made every preparation to carry out the painful duty committed to him. He procured at Leghorn an iron furnace of the dimensions of a human body, and an abundant supply of fuel; took with him, besides, two small oak cases, which he had made, the size of a writing-desk, lined with black velvet, having on the lid a metal shield, on which were engraven in Latin the name, age, and country of the deceased.

On the 14th August Trelawny, with an English friend, Captain Shenley, set sail in the *Bolivar*, after having settled with Byron and Hunt to let them know when all was ready, that they might be present. The breeze was light and fitful, and it took them from ten to eleven hours to reach their destination. Having cast anchor and landed, they arranged matters with the commandant of the tower at Bocca Serchio,* who had already re-

* The correct name of the fort usually called by Trelawny "the Tower of Migliarino, at the Bocca Lericcio."

ceived his instructions from the Tuscan government, and fixed the following day at noon for the exhumation, sending a messenger to inform Byron. The next morning, as Trelawny tells us in his *Records*, they received a note from Byron certifying that he would be there, if possible, even before the time. "At ten we went on board the commandant's boat, with a squad of soldiery in working dresses, armed with mattocks and spades, an officer of the quarantine service, and some of his crew."

From the great dread of contagion, the then laws of quarantine had been drawn up. "They had their peculiar tools, so fashioned as to do their work without coming into personal contact with things that might be infectious—long-handled tongs, nippers, poles with iron hooks and spikes, and divers others that gave one a lively idea of the implements of torture devised by the holy inquisitors. Thus freighted, we started, my own boat following with the furnace and the things I had brought from Leghorn. . . . as were said to be used by Shelley's much-beloved Helenes on funeral pyres." "We pulled along for some distance, and landed at a line of strong posts and railings, which projected into the sea, forming the boundary dividing the Tuscan and Lucchese states. We walked along the shore to the grave, where Byron and Hunt soon joined us. They, too, had an officer and soldiers from the Tower of Migliarino, an officer of the Health Office, and some dismounted dragoons; so we were surrounded by soldiers; but they kept the ground clear, and readily lent their aid. There was a considerable gathering of spectators from the neighborhood, and many ladies richly dressed were amongst them. The spot where the body lay was marked by the gnarled root of a pine-tree.

"A rude hut, built of young pine-tree stems, and wattled with their branches, to keep the sun and rain out, and thatched with reeds, stood on the beach to shelter the lookout man on duty. A few yards from this was the grave, which we commenced opening, the gulfs of Spezia and Leghorn at equal distances from us. As to fuel, I might have saved myself the trouble of bringing any, for there was an ample supply of broken spars and planks cast on the shore from wrecks, besides the fallen and decaying timber in a stunted pine forest close at hand. The soldiers

collected fuel whilst I erected the furnace, and then the men of the Health Office set to work shovelling away the sand which covered the body, while we gathered round, watching anxiously. The first indication of their having found the body was the appearance of the end of a black silk handkerchief. I grubbed this out with a stick, for we were not allowed to touch anything with our hands. Then some shreds of linen were met with, and a boot, with the bone of the leg and the foot in it. On the removal of a layer of brushwood, all that now remained of my lost friend was exposed—a shapeless mass of bones and flesh. The limbs separated from the trunk on being touched. . . .

"The funeral pyre was now ready. I applied the fire, and the materials being dry and resinous, the pine wood burnt furiously, and drove us back. I was hot enough before, there was no breath of air, and the loose sand scorched our feet. As soon as the flames became clear and allowed us to approach, we threw frankincense and salt into the furnace, and poured a flask of wine and oil over the body. The Greek oration was omitted, for we had lost our Hellenic bard. It was now so insufferably hot that the officers and soldiers were all seeking shade."

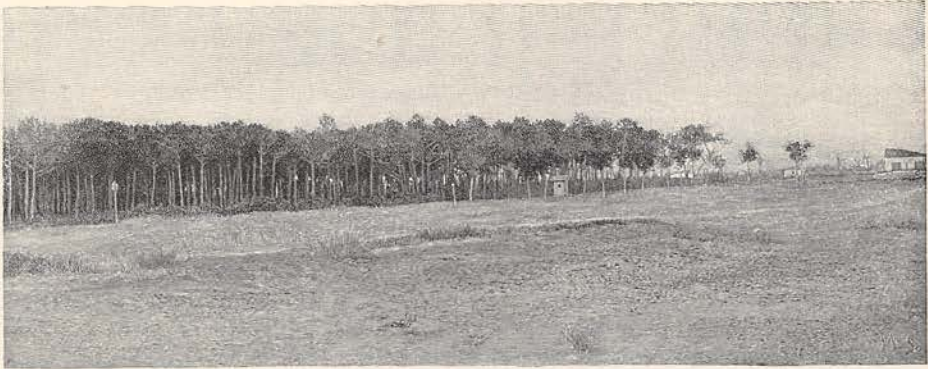
Here Byron made an audacious proposal. "Let us try the strength of these waters that drowned our friends. How far out do you think they were when their boat sank?"

"If you don't wish to be put into the furnace, you had better not try; you are not in condition."

Useless advice. Stripping, he plunged into the sea, followed by Trelawny and Shenley. However, after swimming out a mile Byron felt exhausted, and had to turn back to land. Shenley meanwhile had been seized with cramp, and had to be helped in by Trelawny.

"At four o'clock," he continues, "the funeral pyre burnt low, and when we uncovered the furnace, nothing remained in it but dark-colored ashes, with fragments of the larger bones. Poles were now put under the red-hot furnace, and it was gradually cooled in the sea. I gathered together the human ashes, and placed them in a small oak box bearing an inscription on a brass plate, screwed it down, and placed it in Byron's carriage."

Byron and Hunt returned to Pisa,



EDGE OF PINE WOOD—SCENE OF THE CREMATION.

promising to be at Viareggio next day, while Trelawny and his escort retook the road traversed in the morning, "and supped at the inn" at Bocca del Serchio. Next day, "with the same things," but assuredly not "with the same party," as he writes, as the Tuscan officers of health, with their soldiers and guards, had only to do with Lucchese territory, "rowed down the little river near Viareggio"—probably the Burlamacca Canal—"pulled along the coast towards Massa, then landed, and began our preparations as before."

"Three white wands had been stuck in the sand to mark the poet's grave, but as they were at some distance from each other we had to cut a trench thirty yards in length, in the line of the sticks, to ascertain the exact spot, and it was nearly an hour before we came upon the grave." Meanwhile the carriage drove up containing Byron and Hunt, accompanied by soldiers and officers of health.

The spot where Shelley was buried and subsequently burned cannot be absolutely determined, Trelawny, as we have seen on several occasions, being somewhat confused and uncertain in his topography. Thus Dowden, the accurate biographer, writes that it was "at a spot three or four miles nearer to the Gulf of Spezia." The greatest confusion also exists in the documents of the English legation. Thus it is not to be wondered at if those who carelessly copied from Trelawny easily fell into errors, perpetuated in dictionaries and encyclopædias, and finally in the epitaph on the monument erected by his son Sir Percy and Lady Shelley at Christ Church, Hants, where-

on is inscribed, "Drowned by the upsetting of his boat in the Gulf of Spezia."

The body of Shelley, let us explain once more, was "washed up," as is stated in Governor Frediani's despatch, upon the shore of Viareggio; and very close to the town, for Mary Shelley writes, in a letter to Mrs. Gisborne, these words: "I have seen the place where he lies, the pine trunks which mark the spot where the sand covers him. But they did not burn him there; *it is too close to Viareggio.*"

But it were vain to endeavor now to trace the spot from the romantic description of the romance-loving Trelawny, written amid all the confused memories that were surging in his brain.

But let us take yet another page from the *Records*, which sets before us the touching scene: "The work went on silently in the deep and unresisting sand, not a word was spoken, for the Italians have a touch of sentiment, and their feelings are easily excited into sympathy. We were startled and drawn together by a hollow sound that followed the blow of a mattock; the iron had struck a skull, and the body was soon uncovered. Lime had been strewn on it; this or decomposition had the effect of staining it of a dark and ghastly indigo color. Byron asked me to preserve the skull for him; but remembering that he had formerly used one as a drinking-cup, I was determined that Shelley's should not be so profaned. The limbs did not separate from the trunk, as in the case of Williams's body, so that the corpse was removed entire into the furnace. I had taken the precaution of having more and larger pieces of timber, in consequence of

my experience of the day before of the difficulty of consuming a corpse in the open air with our apparatus.

"After the fire was well kindled we repeated the ceremony of the previous day, and more wine was poured over Shelley's dead body than he had consumed during his life. This, with the oil and salt, made the yellow flames glisten and quiver. The heat from the sun and fire was so intense that the atmosphere was tremulous and wavy. The corpse fell open, and the heart was laid bare. The frontal bone of the skull, where it had been struck with the mattock, fell off, and as the back of the head rested on the red-hot bottom bars of the furnace, the brains literally seethed, bubbled, and boiled as in a caldron for a very long time."

This time Byron's feelings did not allow him to remain at a scene that must have seemed too repulsive to him. "He withdrew to the beach, and swam off to the *Bolivar*. Leigh Hunt remained in the carriage. The fire was so fierce as to produce a white heat on the iron, and to reduce its contents to gray ashes. The only portions that were not consumed were some fragments of bones, the jaw, and the skull; but what surprised us all was that the heart remained entire. In snatching this relic from the fiery furnace my hand was severely burnt, and had any one seen me do the act, I should have been put into quarantine. After cooling the iron machine in the sea, I collected the human ashes and placed them in a box, which I took on board the *Bolivar*." The Mediterranean, writes Leigh Hunt, who could not forget that day, "now soft and lucid, kissed the shore, as if to make peace with it. The yellow sand and the blue sky were intensely contrasted with one another, marble mountains touched the air with coolness, and the flame of the fire bore away towards heaven in vigorous amplitude, wavering and quivering with a brightness of inconceivable beauty."

The documents which have been sought out and collected by us from the archives of Florence, Lucca, and Leghorn have enabled us to clear up various facts which from the information hitherto accepted had appeared uncertain and confused. Nevertheless, the story of those last unhappy days of Shelley being very present to us, we determined on visiting Viareggio in August of 1890 to find out

whether there was any remembrance of or eye-witness to the burning of the bodies and recovery of the *Ariel*. After the lapse of only sixty-eight years, the spectators of that never-to-be-forgotten scene could not be all dead. Surely among the old men to be met with on the quay, smoking their pipes or sitting at the open doors of their cottages, the which, after the manner of Viareggio cottages, disclose all their simple interiors to the passers-by, some must be bordering upon ninety. The thing was to search about and investigate, and not to trust to vague gossip or interested statements, for quite as much as at a certain age people like to give themselves out to be younger, so, that stage passed, they affect wrinkles and white hair.

Here and there I found some recollection of the affair, but the name of Shelley was unfamiliar. Of the burning of the Englishmen or man, for popular tradition tended to turn the two into one, there was some confused recollection; and some of the shrewdest, who liked to air their knowledge at the apothecary's or the baths, stated that the cremation had taken place beside the canal of Burlamacca—that is, to the east, over against the Fort of the Royal Marines. But who could prove it? There was none.

Even among the higher classes in Viareggio and the mayoralty little was known. The archives, recently rearranged, even if they possessed any of the documents we fruitlessly sought to find, would have been valueless to those who merely knew the English poet by name, by the Carduccian quotation, "Titan soul in virgin form," and who were ignorant of the date of his death and the circumstances connected with it.

We then conceived the idea to make more sure investigations, and to have recourse to the one the most calculated to give the necessary aid; and this we deemed to be the captain of the port at Viareggio, officer of the Italian navy, and head of all maritime affairs in virtue of his office and jurisdiction. And such, in truth, was Captain Pietro Anselmo, who is possessed in the highest degree of the qualities requisite to an official in the Italian navy, combined with intelligence and refinement, an infinite courtesy and patience. With his vigorous assistance the investigation proceeded with ease and facility. It was



Raffaele Simonetti. Antonio Canova. Raffaello Canova. Francesco Simonetti. Carlo Simonetti. Francesco Pietrucci. Giacomo Bandoni.
 Maria Guidi.

THE EIGHT SURVIVING WITNESSES OF SHELLEY'S CREMATION.

only necessary to consult the books of the Naval Reserve to find the names of the oldest seafaring men, the probable witnesses of the act. The courteous official, accustomed to similar examinations, and understanding our desire to confront the depositions of living witnesses with the documents we had collected, sent to some among them, and made all arrangements for the examination to be held that very day, 30th August, at 3 P.M., in the hall of the Capitaneria of the Port.

The examination commenced at the hour appointed. The captain, who knew nearly all the weather-beaten old men by sight, questioned them, while we performed the office of clerk. Before beginning his inquiry he made each man produce his papers, from which he gleaned a general idea of the facts, which he dictated to us as he went on.

The first to present himself was Raffaele Simonetti, fu Domenico, sea-captain, born at Viareggio 3d October, 1817. A

fine old man with white whiskers and eyes still full of fire under his white bushy eyebrows. He was a tall man, dressed in a good cloth suit, with the air of a well-to-do countryman, wearing round his linen shirt a silk tie knotted with artistic skill. He answered frankly, with a sailor's brusqueness. "Giuseppe Giampieri was captain of two fishing-smacks, owned by Stefano Baroni, of Viareggio (father of Antonio, now living by the post-office). A child at the time, he remembered, in September of 1822, the hull of a small schooner that had foundered in the roads of Viareggio being caught in the net of the said Giampieri's boat. The schooner had left Leghorn, and at the time of the wreck had three persons on board. One of those three persons, washed up on to the shore by the sea, had been found between the Palazzo della Paolina (Piazza Paolina) and the Two Dykes.* The body was buried where found with quick-lime; then, after some days, disinterred and burned. He recollected that there were two gentlemen in the carriage that came from Pisa, either friends or relatives of the deceased. He knew that the body was burned in an iron furnace, and had been an eye-witness of the burning. He added that, boy-like, having gone too close to the fire, he was warned off by the quarantine officers."

Giacomo Bandoni was next examined. Born 10th September, 1812, at Viareggio, son of Giovanni, then head sanitary inspector. A poor, miserable, ragged, unshod creature, with furrowed face and beard unkempt, who spoke in a hoarse, hollow voice. He remembered that his father was present at the burning; he had taken his dinner to the place. Could point out the spot where the cremation took place, between Palazzo della Paolina and the Two Dykes. The day was fine. There were present the aforesaid Giovanni Bandoni, sanitary inspector, Michele Orlandi, and Ottavio Baroni, called Comparini. Captain Domenico Simoncini and Antonio Partito, quarantine officer, had directed the work.

The third witness that appeared was Francesco Giovan Simonetti, born at Viareggio 13th November, 1813, a tidy-looking old man, with eyes half closed and small white beard fringing his face.

* The sea at that time came up to within a few yards of Piazza Paolina.

He confirmed the above, as also the place of cremation. On asking him how it happened that he and the other witnesses concurred in stating that the act had taken place on the shore east of Viareggio, and how that shore came to be now called *west*, he said that by west shore is always known that to the left on entering the canal of Burlamacca, that is, that towards Spezia.

Next came Francesco Pietrucci di Cosimo, born at Viareggio 18th February, 1809. A tall old man, with bright eyes and iron-gray hair that contrasted with his white beard, who carried his eighty-one years wonderfully. "He remembered," says his deposition, "seeing the schooner brought in by Giampieri, captain of Baroni's two fishing-smacks, and knew that the burning of the corpse was before the boat was brought in. Concurred as to locality; and added that it was said *that when the ashes were taken to England, the dead came to life again.*"

Carlo Simonetti di Giovan Domenico, born at Viareggio, 1822, "remembers that he began going to sea at the age of four, and that the fishermen of that time, when wanting to be believed, used as an oath, 'May I be burnt like the *Ingresi* [*sic*] at Du' Fossi.'"

This witness ended the inquiry for that day. We then repaired with the Captain of the Port to visit an old woman of ninety-three, who lived in a clean little cottage in Via del Riposo, near the Campo Santo Vecchio. Maria Pietrini, wife of Andrea Guidi, known as Giuraddua, and therefore called Maria Giuraddua, was a wrinkled old woman, nearly blind, but who well remembered the occurrence. "She agrees the locality to be that of Two Dykes," I read in her deposition; "she was present, but drew back and stood by the sea."

The next morning, at 10 A.M., August 31st, we examined, in the office of the Captain of the Port, Antonio Canova del fu Giovanni, born at Viareggio, 1803. This was a fine type of a well-to-do old sailor, with long beard and white flowing hair. His answers were given frankly and without hesitation. "A fisherman at nineteen, he was one of the crew of Baroni's fishing-smacks, commanded by Giampieri, who retrieved the schooner in the roads of Viareggio, exactly five miles out, in the direction of the Tower of Migliarino, it having caught in their net. They

towed her westward, beached her, bailed out the water, cleaned her, and found on board a chest with cloth clothes, bills of exchange or bonds, one hundred francs in cash, sixteen sand-bags for ballast, some iron spades, and several hampers full of bottled beer. Canova and another sailor, accompanied by two Leghornese, subsequently conveyed the schooner into the harbor of Leghorn. The amount of salvage-money was 25 crowns 25 bolognini to every man on board the two fishing-smacks, being their share of the value of the wreck and its effects, thirty parts of which went to the owner of the smacks. He too, though not present at the cremation, knew that the body had been burned close to Two Dykes, and remembered having seen smoke in that direction. He related that during the time they were in quarantine, it being the Feast of Santa Croce (September 14th), Giampieri dressed himself in one of the suits he had found in the chest."

Lastly, Raffaello Canova di Giovanni, aged eighty-two, an emaciated old man, with clean-shaven face, confirmed his brother's deposition.

The inquiry ended, there now only remained to determine the exact spot where the burning of Shelley's body had taken place. We repaired thither, accompanied by the Captain of the Port and two veterans who had been present at the scene,

and succeeded in identifying it with tolerable accuracy.*

By the side of the Marine Hospital Vittorio Emmanuele lies a vast sandy waste, shut in on the west by a row of pine-trees (Pineta). On this shore, between the hospital and the Pineta, at about a distance of two hundred and fifty yards from the sea, is the spot where was burned with fire the philanthropic poet, whose heart responded to every exalted aspiration, of whom we can say, with Lady Shelley, "that his wild spiritual character seems to have prepared him for being thus snatched from life under circumstances of mingled terror and beauty, while his powers were yet in their spring freshness, and age had not come to render the ethereal body decrepit, or to wither the heart which would not be consumed by fire."†

VIAREGGIO, 12th August, 1891.

* We took photographs of the eye-witnesses and of the place of cremation.

† Returning this year to Viareggio, I learned that the poor old woman Maria Giuraddua had died some months before, and that the municipality had collected the depositions of those fishermen and sailors examined by us, the which entirely coincide with those to which we have referred. A committee has also been formed to erect a memorial on the spot where the cremation took place, the authorities having granted a site upon the beach for the purpose. The first stone of the monument is to be laid on August 11, 1892, that being the centenary of the birth of the poet. G. B.

AT NIJNII-NOVGOROD.

BY THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

"A CRAFTY Persian set this stone;
A dusk Sultana wore it;
And from her slender finger, sir,
A ruthless Arab tore it.

"A ruby, like a drop of blood—
That deep-in tint that lingers
And seems to melt, perhaps was caught
From those poor mangled fingers!

"A spendthrift got it from the knave,
And tost it, like a blossom,
That night into a dancing-girl's
Accurst and balmy bosom.

"And so it went. One day a Jew
At Cairo chanced to spy it
Among a one-eyed peddler's pack,
And did not care to buy it,—