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The Shelley Society's Publications.

SECOND SERIES No 2.

REVIEW

OF

HOGG'S

"MEMOIRS OF PRINCE ALEXY HAIMATOFF"

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

SECOND EDITION

London

PUBLISHED FOR THE SHELLEY SOCIETY

BY REEVES AND TURNER 196 STRAND

1886

AMS PRESS

NEW YORK

REVIEW OF HOGG'S MEMOIRS

OF PRINCE ALEXY HAIMATOFF

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

TOGETHER WITH AN EXTRACT FROM

SOME EARLY WRITINGS OF SHELLEY

BY PROF. E. DOWDEN LL.D

Edited with an Introductory Note

BY THOMAS J WISE

REVISED EDITION

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

PROFESSOR DOWDEN has stated so fully—both in his original *Contemporary Review* article, and in the *Postscript* which he has now added to our reprint of it—the circumstances which led him to light upon Shelley's Review, and to prove with sufficient certainty its authorship, that little remains to be recounted here. Suffice it to say briefly, that in 1813 Hogg published pseudonymously a novel,[1] of the title-page of which the following is a transcript.—

> Memoirs / of / Prince Alexy Haimatoff. / Translated from / the original Latin MSS. / under the immediate inspection of / the Prince, / By / John Brown, Esq / . . . / London: / Printed for T. Hookham, / 15, Old Bond Street, / 1813

[1] Not the only Romance of which he was the author

The collation is —

12mo Title (with imprint on verso—"S Gosnell, Printer, Little Queen Street, London"), Preface pp iii—iv, and pp. 1—236 of Text.

The imprint is repeated at the foot of the last page.

This book received an appreciative and somewhat lengthy notice in *The Critical Review*,[1] vol. vi, No. vi, December, 1814,—Article vii, pp. 566—574, and the authorship of this review has, as is now well known, been traced home to Shelley. The Review is here reprinted verbatim, without alteration or correction of any kind whatever, save only where a word is distinctly mis-spelt, in which case the fact of its correction is noted at the foot of the page. The punctuation is most erratic, and the errors on that account are many and grave, but I think that for

[1] The / Critical Review · / or, / Annals / of / Literature. / Series the Fourth / Vol vi / London / Printed for the Proprietors, / By Thomas Bluck, 2, Paternoster Row, / Published by G & S Robinson, Paternoster Row, / 1814 / (July to December) Octavo. Half-Title, Title, and pp 1—700, followed by an Index, consisting of six unnumbered pages.

these the printer and his reader are as likely as Shelley to be accountable. Only upon *one* occsion have I ventured to interfere with the original stops (page 23, line 8), and it will be seen that I have there placed within brackets the semi-colon which I have considered it advisable to insert.

Publicly attributed to Shelley only in September, 1884, this most interesting piece of the poet's early prose writing has never yet been incorporated in any edition of his *Works*, and it is matter for congratulation that the Committee of the Shelley Society have, thus early in the Society's existence, found an opportunity of reproducing a fugitive essay of so much character in a convenient and accessible form.

The *Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff* itself is an exceedingly scarce volume, and I believe that I am correct in stating that only two copies are at present publicly known to be in existence Of these, one is in the possession of Hogg's daughter, Mrs Lonsdale; and the other is preserved in the British Museum Though obtained for that institution on November 16th, 1878—as the date stamped

upon it testifies—it was not until after the publication of Professor Dowden's article that the book was in any way connected with its author's real name.

The essay by Professor Dowden which occupies pp. 31—52 of this brochure, is the second portion of an article which appeared in *The Contemporary Review*, for September, 1884, pp. 383—396. For permission to reprint it upon the present occasion, the Society is indebted to the Professor's courtesy.

THOMAS J WISE.

127, *Devonshire Road,*
Holloway, N

NOTE.

Since the above was in type, I have been informed by Mr R. A. Potts that a *third* copy of the *Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff* is in existence, and was sold by auction at Messrs Sotheby's rooms some time in 1879 It would be interesting to discover its present whereabouts.

T. J. W.

SHELLEY'S REVIEW

OF MEMOIRS

OF PRINCE ALEXY HAIMATOFF

SHELLEY'S REVIEW OF

MEMOIRS OF PRINCE ALEXY HAIMATOFF.

Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff Translated from the original Latin MSS under the immediate inspection of the Prince. By JOHN BROWN, ESQ. Pp. 236. 12mo. Hookham, 1814

IS the suffrage of mankind the legitimate criterion of intellectual energy? Are complaints of the aspirants to literary fame, to be considered as the honourable 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 stigmatised 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 There is indeed, nothing so remarkable in the contempt of the ignorant for the enlightened · the vulgar pride of folly, delights to triumph upon mind This is an intelligible process the infancy [infamy ?] or ingloriousness that can be thus explained, detracts nothing from the beauty of virtue or the sublimity of genius. But what does utter obscurity express ? if the public do not advert even in censure to a performance, has that performance already received its condemnation ?

The result of this controversy is important to the ingenuous critic. His labours are indeed, miserably worthless, if their objects may invariably be attained before their application. He should know the limits of his prerogative. He should not be ignorant, whether it is his duty to promulgate the decisions of others, or to cultivate his taste and judgment that he may be enabled to render a reason for his own.

Circumstances the least connected with intellectual nature have contributed, for a certain period, to retain in obscurity, the most memorable specimens of human genius. The author re[f]rains perhaps from introducing his production to the world with all the pomp of empirical bibliopolism A sudden tide in the affairs of men may make the neglect or contradiction of some insignificant doctrine, a badge of obscurity and discredit those even who are exempt from the action of these absurd predilections, are necessarily in an

indirect manner affected by their influence It is perhaps the product of an imagination daring and undisciplined. the majority of readers ignorant and disdaining toleration refuse to pardon a neglect of common rules, their canons of criticism are carelessly infringed, it is less religious than a charity sermon, less methodical and cold than a French tragedy, where all the unities are preserved: no excellencies, where prudish cant and dull regularity are absent, can preserve it from the contempt and abhorrence of the multitude. 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 accom[m]odates its attempts to the spirit of the age, which has produced it, and adopts with mimic effrontery the cant of the day and hour for which alone it lives

We think that 'the Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff,' deserves to be regarded as an example

the fact, by the frequency of which, criticism is vindicated from the imputation of futility and impertinence We do not hesitate to consider this fiction, as the product of a bold and original mind. We hardly remember even [ever?] to have seen surpassed the subtle delicacy of imagination, by which the manifest distinctions of character, and form are seized and pictured in colours that almost make nature more

beautiful than herself The vulgar observe no resemblances or discrepancies, but such as are gross and glaring The science of mind to which history, poetry, biography serve as the materials, consists in the discernment of shades and distinctions where the unenlightened discover nothing but a shapeless and unmeaning mass The faculty for this discernment distinguishes genius from dulness. There are passages in the production before us, which afford instances of just and rapid intuition belonging only to intelligences, that possess this faculty in no ordinary degree As a composition the book is far from faultless. Its abruptness and angularities do not appear to have received the slightest polish or correction The author has written with fervour but has disdained to revise at leisure. These errors are the errors of youth and genius and the fervid impatience of sensibilities impetuously disburthening their fulness The author is proudly negligent of connecting the incidents of his tale. It appears more like the recorded day dream of a poet, not unvisited by the sublimest and most lovely visions, than the tissue of a romance skilfully interwoven for the purpose of maintaining the interest of the reader, and conducting his sympathies by dramatic gradations to the denouement It is, what it professes to be, a memoir, not a novel Yet its claims to the former appellation are established, only by the impatience and inexperience of the author,

who, possessing in an eminent degree, the higher qualifications of a novelist, we had almost said a poet, has neglected the number by which that success would probably have been secured, which, in this instance, merit[s] of a far nobler stamp, have unfortunately failed to acquire. Prince Alexy is by no means an unnatural, although no common character. We think we can discern his counterpart in Alfieri's[1] delineation of himself The same propensities, the same ardent devotion to his purposes, the same chivalric and unproductive attachment to unbounded liberty, characterizes both We are inclined to doubt whether the author has not attributed to his hero, the doctrines of universal philanthropy in a spirit of profound and almost unsearchable irony at least he appears biassed by no peculiar principles, and it were perhaps an insoluble inquiry whether any, and if any, what moral truth he designed to illustrate by his tale Bruhle, the tutor of Alexy, is a character delineated with consummate skill, the power of intelligence and virtue over external deficiencies, is forcibly exemplified. The calmness, patience and magnanimity of this singular man, are truly rare and admirable: his disinterestedness, his equanimity, his irresistible gentleness form a finished and delightful portrait. But we cannot regard his commendation to his pupil to indulge in promiscuous concubinage

[1] *Alfieri's* in the original

without horror and detestation The author appears to deem the loveless intercourse of brutal appetite, a venial offence against delicacy and virtue! he asserts that a transient connection with a cultivated female, may contribute to form the heart without essentially vitiating the sensibilities. It is our duty to protest against so pernicious and disgusting an opinion. No man can rise pure from the poisonous embraces of a prostitute, or sinless from the desolated hopes of a confiding heart. Whatever may be the claims of chastity, whatever the advantages of simple and pure affections, these ties, these benefits are of equal obligation to either sex.[1] Domestic relations depend for their integrity upon a complete reciprocity of duties. But the author himself has in the adventure of the sultana, Debesh-Sheptuti afforded a most impressive and tremendous allegory of the cold blooded and malignant selfishness of sensuality.

We are incapacitated by the unconnected and vague narrative from forming an analysis of the incidents, they would consist indeed, simply of a catalogue of events, and which, divested of the aerial tinge of genius might appear trivial and common. We shall content ourselves, therefore with selecting some passages calculated to exemplify the peculiar powers of the author. The following description of the simple and interesting Rosalie is in the highest

[1] See in the original

style of delineation, 'Her hair was unusually black, she truly had raven locks, the same glossiness, the same varying shade, the same mixture of purple and sable for which the plumage of the raven is remarkable, were found in the long elastic tresses depending from her head and covering her shoulders. Her complexion was dark and clear the colours which composed the brown that dyed her smooth skin, were so well mixed, that not one blot, not one varied tinge injured its brightness, and when the blush of animation or of modesty flushed her cheek, the tint was so rare, that could a painter have dipped his pencil in it, that single shade would have rendered him immortal. The bone above her eye was sharp, and beautifully curved; much as I have admired the wonderful properties of curves, I am convinced that their most stupendous properties collected, would fall far short of that magic line. The eyebrow was pencilled with extreme nicety; in the centre it consisted of the deepest shade of black, at the edges it was hardly perceptible, and no man could have been hardy enough to have attempted to define the precise spot at which it ceased: in short the velvet drapery of the eyebrow was only to be rivalled by the purple of the long black eyelashes that terminated the ample curtain. Rosalie's eyes were large and full, they appeared at a distance uniformly dark, but upon close inspection the innumerable strokes of various hues of infinite

fineness and endless variety drawn in concentric circles behind the pellucid chrystal, filled the mind with wonder and admiration, and could only be the work of infinite power directed by infinite wisdom'

Alexy's union with Aur-Ahebeh the Circassian slave is marked by circumstances of deep pathos, and the sweetest tenderness of sentiment. The description of his misery and madness at her death, deserves to be remarked as affording evidence of an imagination vast, profound and full of energy.

'Alexy, who gained the friendship, perhaps the love of the native Rosalie the handsome Haimatoff, the philosophic Haimatoff, the haughty Haimatoff, Haimatoff the gay, the witty, the accomplished, the bold hunter, the friend of liberty, the chivalric lover of all that is feminine, the hero, the enthusiast see him now, that is he, mark him! he appears in the shades of evening, he stalk[s] as a spectre, he has just risen from the damps of the charnel house, see, the dews still hang on his forehead He will vanish at cock-crowing, he never heard the song of the lark, nor the busy hum of men, the sun's rays never warmed him, the pale moonbeam alone shews his unearthly figure, which is fanned by the wing of the owl, which scarce obstructs the slow flight of the droning beetle,[1] or of the drowsy bat. Mark him! he stops, his lean arms are crossed on his bosom, he is bowed to the earth, his sunken eye gazes from its deep cavity on vacuity, as the toad skulking in the corner of a sepulchre, peeps with malignity through the circum[am]-bient gloom. His cheek is hollow, the glowing tints of his

[1] *beatle* in the original

complexion, which once resembled the autumnal sunbeam on the autumnal beech, are gone, the cadaverous yellow, the livid hue have usurped their place, the sable honours of his head have perished, they once waved in the wind like the jetty pinions of the raven, the skull is only covered by the shrivelled skin, which the rook views wistfully, and calls to her young ones His gaunt bones start from his wrinkled garments, his voice is deep, hollow, sepulchral[,] it is the voice which wakes the dead, he has long held converse with the departed. He attempts to walk he knows not whither, his legs totter under him, he falls, the boys hoot him, the dogs bark at him, he hears them not, he sees them not —Rest there, Alexy, it beseemeth thee, thy bed is the grave, thy bride is the worm, yet once thou stoodest erect, thy cheek was flushed with joyful ardour, thy eye blazing told what thy head conceived, what thy heart felt, thy limbs were vigour and activity, thy bosom expanded with pride, ambition, and desire, every nerve thrilled to feel, every muscle swelled to execute

'Haimatoff, the blight has tainted thee, thou ample roomy web of life, whereon were traced the gaudy characters, the gay embroidery of pleasure, how has the moth battened on thee, Haimatoff, how has the devouring flame scorched the plains, once yellow with the harvest! the simoon, the parching breath of the desert, has swept over the laughing plains, the carpet of verdure rolled away at its approach, and has bared amid desolation Thou stricken deer, thy leather coat, thy dappled hide hangs loose upon thee, it was a deadly arrow, how has it wasted thee, thou scathed oak, how has the red lightning drank thy sap Haimatoff, Haimatoff, eat thy soul with vexation Let the immeasurable ocean roll between thee and pride you must not dwell together' P. 129

The episode of Viola is affecting, natural, and beautiful. We do not ever remember to have seen the unforgiving fastidiousness of family honor more awfully illustrated. After the death of her lover, Viola still expects that he will esteem, still cherishes the delusion that he is not lost to her for ever.

'She used frequently to go to the window to look for him, or walk in the Park to meet him, but without the least impatience, at his delay She learnt a new tune, or a new song to amuse him, she stood behind the door to startle him as he entered, or disguised herself to surprise him.'

The character of Mary, deserves, we think, to be considered as the only complete failure in the book. Every other female whom the author has attempted to describe is designated by an individuality peculiarly marked and true. They constitute finished portraits of whatever is eminently simple, graceful, gentle, or disgustingly atrocious and vile. Mary alone is the miserable parasite of fashion, the tame slave of drivelling and drunken folly, the cold hearted coquette, the lying and meretricious prude. The means employed to gain this worthless prize corresponds exactly with its worthlessness. Sir Fulke[1] Hildebrand is a strenuous tory, Alexy, on his arrival in England professes himself inclined to the principles of the whig party, finding that the Baronet had sworn that his daughter should never

[1] *Eulke* in the original.

marry a whig, he sacrifices his principles and with inconceivable effrontery thus palliates his apostacy and falsehood

'The prejudices of the Baronet, were strong in proportion as they were irrational. I resolved rather to humour than to thwart them I contrived to be invited to dine in company with him, I always proposed the health of the minister, I introduced politics and defended the tory party in long speeches, I attended clubs and public dinners of that interest I do not know whether this conduct was justifiable, it may certainly be excused when the circumstances of my case are duly considered. I would tear myself in pieces, if I suspected that I could be guilty of the slightest falsehood or prevarication, (see Lord Chesterfield's letters for the courtier-like distinction between simulation and dissimulation,) but there was nothing of that sort here. I was of no party, consequently, I could not be accused of deserting any one. I did not defend the injustice of any body of men, I did not detract from the merits of any virtuous character. I praised what was laudable in the tory party, and blamed what was reprehensible in the whigs: I was silent with regard to whatever was culpable in the former or praiseworthy in the latter. The stratagem was innocent, which injured no one, and which promoted the happiness of two individuals, especially of the most amiable woman the world ever knew.'

An instance of more deplorable perversity of the human understanding we do not recollect ever to have witnessed. It almost persuades us to believe that scepticism or indifference concerning certain

sacred truths may occasionally produce a subtlety of sophism, by which the conscience of the criminal may be bribed to overlook his crime

Towards the conclusion of this strange and powerful performance it must be confessed that *aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus* The adventure of the Eleutheri, although the sketch of a profounder project, is introduced and concluded with unintelligible abruptness. Bruhle dies, purposely as it should seem that his pupil may renounce the romantic sublimity of his nature, and that his inauspicious union and prostituted character, might be exempt from the censure of violated friendship Numerous indications of profound and vigorous thought are scattered over even the most negligently compacted portions of the narrative It is an unweeded garden where nightshade is interwoven with sweet jessamine, and the most delicate spices of the east, peep over struggling stalks of rank and poisonous hemlock.

In the delineation of the more evanescent feelings and uncommon instances of strong and delicate passion we conceive the author to have exhibited new and unparalleled powers He has noticed some peculiarities of female character, with a delicacy and truth singularly exquisite We think that the interesting subject of sexual relations requires for its successful development the application of a mind thus organised and endowed Yet even here how

great the deficiencies, this mind must be pure from the fashionable superstitions of gallantry, must be exempt from the sordid feelings which with blind idolatry worship[1] the image and blaspheme the deity, reverence the type, and degrade the reality of which it is an emblem

We do not hesitate to assert that the author of this volume is a man of ability. His great though indisciplinable energies and fervid rapidity of conception embody[2] scenes and situations, and[3] passions affording inexhaustible food for wonder and delight. The interest is deep and irresistible. A moral enchanter seems to have conjured up the shapes of all that is beautiful and strange to suspend the faculties in fascination and astonishment

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[1] *Worships* in the original.
[2] *Embodies* in the original
[3] 'And *of* passions' in the original.

PROF. DOWDEN ON

SHELLEY'S REVIEW

OF HOGG'S MEMOIRS

OF PRINCE ALEXY HAIMATOFF

FROM

SOME EARLY WRITINGS OF SHELLEY

BY PROFESSOR DOWDEN.[1]

IN the *Critical Review* for December, 1814,[2] appeared an article of considerable length reviewing a duodecimo volume published by the Hookhams in the preceding year:—"Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff. Translated from the original Latin MSS. under the immediate inspection of the Prince. By John Brown, Esqre" The writer of this imaginary autobiography was Shelley's friend Thomas Jefferson Hogg, and the writer of the review was no other than Shelley.

From Edinburgh, on November 26, 1813, Shelley wrote a letter to Hogg, printed in the second volume

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[1] From *The Contemporary Review*, September, 1884, pp 383-396. —T J W

[2] Vol vi, No vi, art vii, pp 566 574 —T J W

of "The Life of Shelley" [pp. 480-482], from which the following is an extract —

"Your novel is now printed I need not assure you with what pleasure this extraordinary and animated tale is perused by me Every one to whom I have shown it agrees with me in admitting that it bears indisputable marks of a singular and original genius Write more like this. Delight us again with a character so natural and energetic as Alexy—vary again the scene with an uncommon combination of the most natural and simple circumstances: but do not persevere in writing after you grow weary of your toil, 'aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus,' and the swans and the Eleutherarchs are proofs that you were a little sleepy"

No explanation of this passage, no comment on it, was vouchsafed by Hogg; but the allusion to "Eleutherarchs" may perhaps have reminded some readers of a paragraph in Peacock's satirical extravaganza "Nightmare Abbey," in which he describes how young Scythrop—a fantastic counterfeit of the youthful Shelley—became troubled with a passion for reforming the world —

"He built many castles in the air, and peopled them with secret tribunals, and bands of illuminati, who were always the imaginary instruments of his projected regeneration of the human species As he intended to institute a perfect republic, he invested himself with absolute sovereignty over these mystical dispensers of liberty He slept with horrid mysteries under his pillow, *and dreamed of venerable Eleutherarchs* and ghastly confederates holding midnight conversation in subterranean caves"

Every one, Shelley assures his friend, admits that the tale bears "indisputable marks of a singular and original genius" A few days previously, the publisher, Hookham, had written in a flutter to Hogg, because the editor of the *Quarterly Review* had sent for a copy of the book, of which Hookham expected to be able to give a good account before long :—

"That Prince Haimatoff is really published the delivery of six copies of his memoirs will prove, he has been sent to the booksellers this morning only [November 8, 1813]. The editor of the *Quarterly Review* sent for a copy on Saturday last there is a mystery in this which I shall be very glad to have explained perhaps you can elucidate it. . I have a presentiment that His Serene Highness will shortly be in very general request." [1]

Hookham's presentiment was not verified. The book seems to have dropped still-born from the press; it was unnoticed by the reviewers, no copy of the Prince's Memoirs is to be found in the British Museum Library,[2] and it is only through the kindness of Mr. Hogg's daughter that I have been enabled to see a copy—the sole copy of which, after some research, I

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[1] From an unpublished letter which I have been permitted to use by Mr. Hogg's daughter, Mrs Lonsdale —E D

[2] The British Museum does possess a copy of the book, but this was unknown to Professor Dowden at the time—September, 1884—he wrote this article —F J W

have heard tidings. It was the entire neglect of a work which he conceived to be "the product of a bold and original mind," that moved Shelley to assume the part of critic, and in the opening paragraphs of his article he considers whether the indifference of the public is in itself sufficient to condemn a writer of genius and his work —

"Is the suffrage of mankind the legitimate criterion of intellectual energy? Are complaints of the aspirants to literary fame to be considered as the honourable 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 stigmatised 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. There is, indeed, nothing so remarkable in the contempt of the ignorant for the enlightened; the vulgar pride of folly delights to triumph upon mind. This is an intelligible process, the infamy or ingloriousness that can be thus explained detracts nothing from the beauty of virtue or the sublimity of genius But what does utter obscurity express? If the public do not advert, even in censure, to a performance, has that performance already received its condemnation?

"The result of this controversy is important to the ingenuous critic. His labours are indeed miserably worthless, if their objects may invariably be attained before their application. He should know the limits of his prerogative

He should not be ignorant whether it is his duty to promulgate the decisions of others, or to cultivate his taste and judgment that he may be enabled to render a reason of his own.

"Circumstances the least connected with intellectual nature have contributed, for a certain period, to retain in obscurity the most memorable specimens of human genius. The author refrains perhaps from introducing his production to the world with all the pomp of empirical bibliopolism A sudden tide in the affairs of men may make the neglect or contradiction of some insignificant doctrine a badge of obscurity and discredit, those even who are exempt from the action of these absurd predilections are necessarily in an indirect manner affected by their influence It is perhaps the product of an imagination daring and undisciplined, the majority of readers, ignorant and disdaining toleration, refuse to pardon a neglect of common rules, their canons of criticism are carelessly infringed, it is less religious than a charity sermon, less methodical and cold than a French tragedy, where all the unities are preserved, no excellencies, where prudish cant and dull regularity are absent, can preserve it from the contempt and abhorrence of the multitude. 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 age which has produced it, and adopts with mimic effrontery the cant of the day and hour for which alone it lives"

In later days when Shelley had tested the feeling of the public with works of his own, and found but little

response to his impassioned utterances, such reflections as these may have recurred to his mind with added force. In the instance of Prince Alexy Haimatoff he does not hesitate to record his solitary vote in its favour against the unjust majority.—

"We think that the memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff deserve to be regarded as an example of the fact, by the frequency of which criticism is vindicated from the imputation of futility and impertinence We do not hesitate to consider this fiction as the product of a bold and original mind. We hardly remember ever to have seen surpassed the subtle delicacy of imagination, by which the manifest distinctions of character and form are seized and pictured in colours, that almost make Nature more beautiful than herself. The vulgar observe no resemblances or discrepancies but such as are gross and glaring The science of mind, to which history, poetry, biography serve as the materials, consists in the discernment of shades and distinctions, where the unenlightened discover nothing but a shapeless and unmeaning mass The faculty for this discernment distinguishes genius from dulness[1] There are passages in the production before us, which afford instances of just and rapid intuition belonging only to intelligences that possess this faculty in no ordinary degree As a composition the book is far from faultless Its abruptness and angularities

[1] Compare Shelley's words respecting himself in a letter to Godwin, December 11, 1817 —"I am formed, if for anything not in common with the herd of mankind, to apprehend minute and remote distinctions of feeling, whether relative to external nature or the living beings which surround us, and to communicate the conceptions which result from considering either the moral or the material universe as a whole."—E D

do not appear to have received the slightest polish or correction The author has written with fervour, but has disdained to revise at leisure These errors are the errors of youth and genius, and the fervid impatience of sensibilities impetuously unburthening their fulness. The author is proudly negligent of connecting the incidents of his tale It appears more like the recorded day-dream of a poet, not unvisited by the sublimest and most lovely visions, than the tissue of a romance skilfully interwoven for the purpose of maintaining the interest of the reader, and conducting his sympathies by dramatic gradations to the denouement. It is what it professes to be, a memoir, not a novel Yet its claims to the former appellation are established only by the impatience and inexperience of the author, who, possessing in an eminent degree the higher qualifications of a novelist, we had almost said a poet, has neglected the number by which that success would probably have been secured, which, in this instance, merits of a far nobler stamp have unfortunately failed to acquire "

Readers of Hogg's "Life of Shelley" think of the writer as a clever man of the world, witty and ingenious, a hater of crotchets and abstractions and theory-mongers, an enjoyer of the good things of life, and, above all, of a good story—in brief, as the reverse in almost every way of "the divine poet," whom he applauds while smiling at him—helpless angel with awkward wings—the touch of mundane disdain broadening visibly at times on the applauder's lips. "Hogg despised poetry," says Trelawny, "he thought it all nonsense, and barely tolerated Shakespeare."

But this surely is an exaggeration, at least it is certain that in earlier days Hogg was a zealous student of literature, and cared for Plato and the Greek dramatists as much as for Blackstone or Coke. In truth, the Thomas Jefferson Hogg, who was Shelley's comrade at Oxford, while having within him a potential man of the world, to be afterwards developed by circumstance, owned much more in common with Shelley, and was in every way much more of a romantic person than readers of his "Life of Shelley" may be disposed to admit. He wrote poetry, he planned romances; to his fellow-students he seemed a youth of high intellectual powers, but singular and wilful in his bearing and habits; and we must put to his credit the fine indiscretion with which he came forward to claim an equal share in the responsibility incurred by Shelley as the author, or assumed author, of "The Necessity of Atheism." It would be interesting if we could get some account of "Leonora," a fiction partly founded on a piteous tale of real life, the joint production, it is said, of the two inseparable Oxford friends, and in great part in type, when tidings of their expulsion from University College alarmed the Abingdon printer, King, in whose hands was the manuscript, and placed an obstacle in the way of the intended publication "Leonora" has probably disappeared beyond recovery We must rest content with making the acquaintance

of Hogg as romancer, and of Shelley as his reviewer, at a date three years and a half subsequent to the scene in the common room of University College, on Lady-day, 1811.

Prince Alexy Haimatoff was born at St Petersburg, of illustrious parents, who, however, made a secret of his birth At the age of five or six he was sent to Lausanne, there to be educated under the care of an elderly French clergyman, Monsieur Gothon. This venerable pedagogue made amends for his stern and forbidding aspect, and a plainness of manners bordering on coarseness, by his profound skill in ancient literature, his passionate love of the abstruser sciences, and the stern and philosophic regard with which he watched over the best interests of his pupils Haimatoff, condemned to physical inactivity by weakness of an ankle, yet of a disposition eager, glowing, and insatiable, became an enthusiastic student, and at the age of fifteen was his master's favourite pupil. In two things only was he deficient —he had acquired none of those habits of prompt and decisive action which his associates had formed in their boyish sports and in the use of arms; and his heart was as little exercised as were his limbs. The tall, slight, effeminate student lacked manly vigour and courage, yet he despised all women as the intellectual inferiors of such beings as his master and himself Before long one of these defects was

remedied, and Alexy had found an Egeria to be his instructress and inspirer. Rosalie, a distant relation of M. Gothon, a charming girl of seventeen, who had lately lost her parents, was placed by the old schoolmaster, somewhat indiscreetly, at the head of his table, and made mistress of his house. I spare my reader the author's description of the charms of Rosalie, several pages in length, although it is declared by Shelley to be "in the highest style of delineation." One particular only shall here be noted—the peculiar beauty of Rosalie's eyes "Rosalie's eyes were large and full they appeared at a distance uniformly dark, but upon a closer inspection the innumerable strokes of various hues of infinite fineness and endless variety, drawn in concentric circles behind the pellucid crystal, filled the mind with wonder and admiration." Can Shelley, who quotes at length the description of Rosalie, have had some vague memory of this passage, when long afterwards he wrote the lines of Prometheus Unbound, in which Asia describes the eyes of her sister Panthea:

> "Thine eyes are like the deep, blue, boundless heaven,
> Contracted to two circles underneath
> Their long fine lashes, dark, far, measureless,
> Orb within orb, and line thro' line inwoven"[1]

[1] In Hogg's description of Haimatoff one touch seems to be taken direct from Shelley's person "My hands were very small and my head remarkable for its roundness and diminutive size" Compare "Life of Shelley," i. p. 328 "The air of his little round hat upon his little round head was troubled and peculiar"—T. D.

The more Prince Alexy sees of Rosalie the less reason has he to be satisfied with his theory of the inferiority of woman to man. True, she cares not for Aristotle's ethics or rhetoric, she learns from a mountain mist more than she can learn from all the geometrical diagrams of M. Gothon and his pupil; she does not read poetry, for it seems as if she already knew whatever it has to say; yet by some strange intuitive energies of her mind, she has gained more of true wisdom than can be found in the most cultivated intellects. Rosalie is introduced into Hogg's romance only to be withdrawn as soon as she has quickened and aroused the heart of Haimatoff, she dies, and her disconsolate lover is called away from Lausanne by his old kinsman, Baron Groutermann, master of a venerable German castle in which feudal and military ideas are the ruling powers. Here Haimatoff is initiated into the arts of war, and shaking off his physical weakness, becomes ere long a keen and desperate sportsman, a frantic follower of the chase. But intellectual pursuits are not neglected, and a tutor for the young Prince is secured in the person of Mr. Frederic Bruhle, a strange and remarkable being, who henceforth exercises a dominant influence over Haimatoff's character and fortunes:—

"He was about five feet in height, crooked and club-footed; his head was high and peaked, he squinted; his hair was long and lank, his complexion sallow, and his

mouth awry. . His manners, however, were mild, attentive, and perfectly unassuming, he adopted, rather than gave, the subject of conversation, he expressed great respect for the opinion of every person, and, if his own sentiments were different, he softened the apparent without diminishing the real difference, and conveyed what was diametrically opposite in terms at once so gentle and so powerful as often to convince and never to offend. He carefully avoided the appearance of being striking, so as never to excite jealousy and opposition, he never wounded, but, on the contrary, occasionally flattered self-love, so as imperceptibly, by mild insinuation, to wind himself into the hearts of all who knew him"

This amazing deformity, Bruhle, is unrivalled in his mastery of Latin; skilled in music, a painter, a profound adept in all sciences, and, to crown the wonders, he will accept no salary. It is not until long after this first acquaintance with Bruhle that Haimatoff discovers in his master a member of a secret society of Illuminati, advocates of unbounded political liberty, materialists in philosophy, and presided over by the supreme Eleutherarch Shelley's remarks on the characters of pupil and teacher, and on Bruhle's licentious wisdom are not without interest. Amid the animalisms of young Oxford Shelley remained, says his wife, "of the purest morals;" "the purity and sanctity of his life," declares Hogg, "were most conspicuous"

"Alexy is by no means an unnatural although no common character We think we can discern his counterpart in

Alfieri's delineation of himself. The same propensities, the same ardent devotion to his purposes, the same chivalric and unproductive attachment to unbounded liberty, characterises both. We are inclined to doubt whether the author has not attributed to his hero the doctrines of universal philanthropy in a spirit of profound and almost unsearchable irony at least, he appears biassed by no peculiar principles, and it were perhaps an insoluble inquiry whether any, and if any, what moral truth he designed to illustrate by his tale. Bruhle, the tutor of Alexy, is a character delineated with consummate skill, the power of intelligence and virtue over external deficiencies is forcibly exemplified The calmness, patience, and magnanimity of this singular man are truly rare and admirable, his disinterestedness, his equanimity, his irresistible gentleness, form a finished and delightful portrait. But we cannot regard his commendation to his pupil to indulge in promiscuous concubinage without horror and detestation. . . . Whatever may be the claims of chastity, whatever the advantages of pure and simple affections, these ties, these benefits are of equal obligation to either sex. Domestic relations depend for their integrity upon a complete reciprocity of duties. But the author himself has in the adventure of the 'Sultana Debesh Sheptuti,' afforded a most impressive and tremendous allegory of the cold-blooded and malignant selfishness of sensuality."

Baron Groutermann, Alexy's aged kinsman, having died, the Prince, accompanied by his tutor Bruhle, sets forth upon his travels They visit Athens, and one night, while climbing the steep of the Parthenon, Alexy, unperceived, is spectator of a moonlight dance

performed by ten Grecian maidens, who chant while evolving their slow and solemn movements. At Constantinople, he is inveigled by the arts of the Sultana into the Seraglio; but escapes, and finds his way back to the faithful Bruhle. And now he wins the love of a fair Circassian slave—a timid and trembling dove, who yet unites an exquisite vivacity with her gentleness. The slave, Aur-Ahibah, becomes Alexy's wife, happy years go by, made happier by the birth of two sons; when fate strikes at the heart of all this joy—the babes are seized with small-pox and die, and their mother quickly follows them to the grave. Alexy is distracted, and it is not long before his madness gives place to a deep and enduring melancholy. At length he resumes his travels in company with Bruhle. They spend some months at Rome, shocked at "the grinding oppression of the Church, the spiritual despotism of the ecclesiastics," delighted with the recollections summoned up by the ruins of the ancient city. At Florence, the Prince meets with an old schoolfellow of the Lausanne days, and is obliged to act as his second in a fatal affair of honour. "We do not ever remember," writes Shelley, "to have seen the unforgiving fastidiousness of family honour more awfully illustrated." At length Bruhle thinks the time has come for disclosing to Haimatoff the end towards which his education has been directed. They travel north, and arrive at an old university

town of Germany. The description of the University —really the centre of a secret society of the Eleutheri —represents Hogg's romance at its best:—

"When we arrived at the University, we were ushered into a spacious hall, floored and wainscotted with black oak; the roof was of the same materials, most elaborately carved with armorial bearings and grotesque figures; the windows were filled with painted glass, and the walls were hung with portraits of benefactors and the most eminent members of the Society; the whole of the apartment was in the style of the most noble of college halls The room was lighted by a large fire, abundantly piled with logs of wood. Several venerable old men were seated upon benches at a little distance from the fire, they rose to receive us, and embracing Bruhle in the most affectionate manner, expressed their satisfaction in welcoming him again. My friend then presented me, I was received with a simple dignity, which charmed me I had never witnessed manners at once so free from all restraint, and so dignified. It called to my mind what I had read of the noble plainness of the Romans, entirely devoid of all ceremony, and so stately as to inspire the most profound veneration. I contemplated their wrinkled faces, replete with the most profound knowledge, and the most amiable complacency, their sunken eyes, in which the fires of genius were tempered by the experience of age; their figures gracefully bending under the weight of years; the plain neatness of their garments."

They speak of the dignity, the liberty, the happiness of man, and hint at the necessity of a general reform. Above the rest, one of the fathers, who sits shaded in

the chimney-corner, impresses Haimatoff by his appearance. "He was a tall man, his arms were folded upon his breast, he appeared about fourscore years of age, his head was bald, his complexion sallow, his nose large and prominent, and of the finest Roman form; his eyes small but dark and piercing, they were rivetted upon me, as if they could penetrate my inmost soul He was motionless as a statue" This is no other than the Eleutherarch, the principal of the University. Next day he explains to Haimatoff the purpose of their Society—to restore to man his natural rights, to banish oppression, to break the bonds, to shake off the yoke of slavery A three years' noviciate precedes admission into the Society of the Eleutheri, which by special permission is reduced to one year in the case of Haimatoff. After a public discourse to prove that the soul is material, and that death is complete annihilation, an eternal sleep, the Eleutherarch conducts Haimatoff to the cathedral to watch, as part of the initiatory rites, night-long and alone beside a corpse wrapt in grave-clothes and extended on the bier; in his right hand the novice holds a dagger, in his left a skull. Moonlight vaguely entering the church, and sad and solemn organ strains add awe and wonder to the ceremony. Presently a strange and sudden noise is heard, like the flapping of large wings, and white forms are discerned floating aloft in the air, and waving their

spectral pinions. At length the welcome morning dawns and ends these terrors of the night. The novice is brought before the Eleutherarch, to whom he makes confession of all the thoughts which had passed through his brain during the night, and these confessions are placed among the archives of the Society. Three months of solitary confinement follow these rites in the cathedral: "it is of admirable use," observes the Eleutherarch, "in condensing the mind." On being released from his prison, Haimatoff is next required to set down in writing an exactly truthful account of his past life; and then, and not till then, is he instructed in the secret language spoken by the Eleutheri. Finally, when the year of probation has expired, he is invited to take the oath of obedience to the Eleutherarch and Eleutheri in council. Its terms are so absolute that he starts back in alarm, and in a sudden recoil of horror is about to strike the venerable president of the Society with his dagger. "With a serene countenance he bared his breast, and pointing to his heart, said, 'Strike there, Alexy, thy blow will then be effectual.' I trembled in every limb. 'Nay, if thy hand is unsteady, let me guide it,' he continued, taking hold of my hand and raising it as if to strike. The dagger fell to the ground." Alexy is banished for twelve months to England. And here, while one evening seeing Garrick in "Richard the Third,"

Alexy's attention is attracted by "a young female" in the front row of the boxes—the daughter of Sir Fulke Hildebrand, the Mary who saves him from further thought of Eleutheri or Eleutherarchs, and who, after various trials and difficulties have been overcome, replaces his lost Aur-Ahibah, and becomes the consolation of his manhood, the support of his old age. Mary's father has Tory prejudices, "strong in proportion as they were irrational." The astute Alexy, though a votary of liberty and equality, resolves rather to humour than to thwart the Baronet's foibles · "I contrived to be invited to dine in company with him I always proposed the health of the minister, I introduced politics, and defended the Tory party in long speeches. I attended clubs and public dinners in that interest . . . . The stratagem was innocent, which injured no one, and which promoted the happiness of two individuals, especially of the most amiable woman the world ever knew." With the Prince's marriage to Mary Hildebrand, and the death of Bruhle a few months later, the memoirs come to a close. The fair daughter of the Tory house does not please Shelley:

"The character of Mary, deserves, we think, to be considered as the only complete failure in the book. Every other female whom the author has attempted to describe is designated by an individuality peculiarly marked and true They constitute finished portraits of whatever is eminently

simple, graceful, gentle, or disgustingly atrocious and vile. Mary alone is the miserable parasite of fashion, the tame slave of drivelling and drunken folly, the cold-hearted coquette, the lying and meretricious prude. The means employed to gain this worthless prize corresponds exactly with its worthlessness Sir Fulke Hildebrand is a strenuous Tory; Alexy on his arrival in England professes himself inclined to the principles of the Whig party, finding that the Baronet had sworn that his daughter should never marry a Whig, he sacrifices his principles, and with inconceivable effrontery thus palliates his apostacy and falsehood. . . . . An instance of more deplorable perversity of the human understanding we do not recollect ever to have witnessed. It almost persuades us to believe that scepticism or indifference concerning certain sacred truths may occasionally produce a subtlety of sophism, by which the conscience of the criminal may be bribed to overlook his crime."

"Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus," wrote Shelley in his letter to Hogg, of November, 1813, "and the swans and the Eleutherarchs are proofs that you were a little sleepy." The swans of which Shelley speaks thus disrespectfully are those slow-sailing forms of white which Alexy beheld during his midnight watch in the cathedral, birds trained by the Eleutheri to test by their ghost-like apparition the materialistic faith of the novice. In his account of the Society of the Eleutheri, Hogg seems to be indulging in a bad dream after having read a book which was always perused with interest by Shelley —Barruel's "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du

Jacobinisme"—let the reader look into the chapters on Spartacus Weishaupt, the founder of Illuminism, and he will see grounds for this conjecture; and Bruhle, in capturing and preparing Alexy for the Society, plays the part of the Abbé Barruel's illuminé, bearing the title of "le Frère insinuant ou l'Enrôleur." A year later than his letter to Hogg, Shelley, when writing his article for the *Critical Review*, was still of the same opinion respecting the swans and the Eleutherarch:—

"Towards the conclusion of this strange and powerful performance it must be confessed that *aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus* The adventure of the Eleuthern, although the sketch of a profounder project, is introduced and concluded with unintelligible abruptness Bruhle dies, purposely, as it should seem, that his pupil may renounce the romantic sublimity of his nature, and that his inauspicious union and prostituted character might be exempt from the censure of violated friendship"

Summing up his judgment upon the romance as a whole, Shelley writes, at the close of his review —

"Numerous indications of profound and vigorous thought are scattered over even the most negligently compacted portions of the narrative. It is an unweeded garden, where nightshade is interwoven with sweet jessamine, and the most delicate spices of the East peep over struggling stalks of rank and poisonous hemlock

"In the delineation of the more evanescent feelings and uncommon instances of strong and delicate passion we

conceive the author to have exhibited new and unparalleled powers. He has noticed some peculiarities of female character with a delicacy and truth singularly exquisite. We think the interesting subject of sexual relations requires for its successful development the application of a mind thus organised and endowed Yet even here how great the deficiencies, this mind must be pure from the fashionable superstitions of gallantry, must be exempt from the sordid feelings which, with blind idolatry, worship the image and blaspheme the deity, reverence the type and degrade the reality of which it is an emblem

"We do not hesitate to assert that the author of this volume is a man of ability His great though indisciplinable energies, and fervid rapidity of conception embodies scenes and situations and of passions (*sic*) affording inexhaustible food for wonder and delight. The interest is deep and irresistible A moral enchanter seems to have conjured up the shapes of all that is beautiful and strange to suspend the faculties in fascination and astonishment."

The general verdict on Hogg's romance was not reversed by Shelley's extravagant eulogy, and Hogg himself probably accepted the general verdict as just. Shelley, in 1814, was far from being a trustworthy critic of books or men. A person, a poem, or a tale which stimulated his imagination and moved his feelings was at once idealised by Shelley, and was viewed through a golden vapour which magnified the object it half concealed. It was indeed so with Shelley to the close, but as his mind matured, he conferred its splendour more and more often upon

things which are in themselves truly admirable and splendid.

Shelley was at work on his review of "Prince Alexy Haimatoff" on November 16, 1814, and did not cease to write until long past midnight. He resumed his work early next day, and then turned for relief to Brockden Brown's romance, "Edgar Huntly." The December number of the *Critical Review* was published at the end of the month. On January 3, 1815, Shelley received from Hookham a copy of the number containing his article. On the evening of that day Hogg called at Shelley's lodgings, and very pleasantly sped by the evening hours.

POSTSCRIPT.

I HAVE been asked in what way I was able to identify the article on Hogg's novel in the *Critical Review* as by Shelley. It was thus: in the unpublished journal kept now by Shelley, now by Mary, I read—under the date Wednesday, Nov. 16 [1814]—"Shelley writes his critique till half-past 3 [*i e.* at night]", and again,—"Nov. 17—Shelley writes his critique, and then reads *Edgar Huntly* all day." This made me curious. I read again "Jan. 3rd [1815]. A parcel comes from Hookham—the *Critical Review* which has the critique of *Prince Alexander Haimatoff* in it. . . Hogg comes. A very pleasant evening." Putting the two passages together I guessed that this was the critique written by Shelley in November. I noticed the resemblance between the passage in Shelley's letter to Hogg of Nov 26, 1813,[1] "'*Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*', and the swans and the Eleutherarchs are proofs that you were a little sleepy," and the passage in the *Review*.[2] "Towards the conclusion

[1] See Hogg's *Life of Shelley*, vol ii p. 481.—T J W.
[2] See *ante*, p 26 —T J W.

of this strange and powerful performance it must be confessed that *aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus.* The adventure of the Eleutheri . . . is introduced and concluded with unintelligible abruptness," and the inference was that the writer of the letter and the writer of the article must be one and the same. Other pieces of internal evidence (*e g* the reference to *Alfieri's Life*, see pp. 19 and 43, a book which Shelley finished reading on Oct. 22), and the general style of the article left no doubt on my mind. Perhaps it is right to add that in giving an account of Hogg's novel in the *Contemporary Review* I glided lightly past the voluptuous scenes in the seraglio; and in quoting from Shelley's article I omitted one of the most remarkable passages—that in which he speaks with horror and detestation of the hired pleasures of sensual appetite.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

Feb 17, 1886.