1985


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POETRY IN PROCESS: ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING AND THE SONNETS NOTEBOOK

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col. PH.D. 1985

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POETRY IN PROCESS:
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING
AND THE SONNETS NOTEBOOK

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
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Doctor of Philosophy

in
The Department of English

by
Phillip D. Sharp
B.A., Baylor University, 1979
M.A., Baylor University, 1981
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ABSTRACT

To date, the examination of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's composition and publication history has been hampered by the inaccessibility of the manuscripts and corrected proofs that were sold at public auction following the death of the Brownings' son in 1913. This examination of the "Sonnets" manuscript notebook at the Armstrong Browning Library at Baylor University, then, sheds new light on Elizabeth Barrett Browning's literary interests and activities in the early 1840's as well as on her methods of composition and revision.

Each of the twenty-three poems and fragments in the "Sonnets" notebook was written between 1842-1844, years which mark a turning point in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's artistic development. Nearly half the poems in the notebook are unpublished, and examination of the unpublished pieces illuminates the author's later work on the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," Aurora Leigh, and Poems Before Congress. Moreover, the drafts of all the published poems in the notebook vary significantly from the versions published under the author's supervision, and examination of these and other recently discovered drafts illuminates her process of
revision and answers a number of questions about establishing a text of her poetry.

By far the most significant implication of the present study of the "Sonnets" notebook involves the shortcomings in the existing criticism written without reference to Elizabeth Barrett Browning's unpublished manuscripts. That many of the holographs scattered at the Sotheby auction of 1913 have been located calls for a re-assessment of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's career in light of manuscripts--like those in "Sonnets"--to which critics and biographers have had no previous access. This examination of the "Sonnets" notebook is among the first in which such materials are incorporated, and in it the necessity of consulting Elizabeth Barrett Browning's unpublished manuscripts is demonstrated throughout.
INTRODUCTION

The complications involved in settling the estate of Robert Wiedemann Barrett Browning account perhaps more than any other factor for the incomplete published canon of his mother's poetry, particularly for the poems written before her marriage in 1846.\(^1\) Elizabeth Barrett Browning's manuscripts did not accompany those of her husband to the library of Balliol College, Oxford, where Pen Browning sent most of them in the 1890's, and the dispersal and subsequent inaccessibility of many of her manuscripts and corrected proofs following the public auction of the Brownings' estate at Sotheby's in 1913 complicate the establishment of a text of her poetry and the understanding of her methods of composition and revision.\(^2\) One such group of manuscripts, simply entitled "Sonnets," has recently been made available following its acquisition by the Armstrong Browning Library of Baylor University from the private collection of Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., at the Wye Plantation in Maryland. My aims in this study of the "Sonnets" notebook are to present a usable edition of its contents, to close a number of existing lacunae in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's
accessible canon and composition history, and to add to our understanding of her interests and literary activities in the early 1840's.

My principal tasks have been to transcribe and annotate the "Sonnets" notebook and to examine ways in which a consideration of the manuscripts contributes to existing scholarship. That the "Sonnets" notebook remained in private hands from 1913 to 1979 accounts for there having been no prior critical awareness whatsoever of its contents, and the significance of this addition to her canon is apparent in light of the rest of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry and what has been said about it. On the other hand, the difficulty of transcribing the notebook and examining the poet's methods of composition and revision is considerably exacerbated by the absence of a style manual or standard procedure for the presentation of heavily corrected manuscripts and by the lack of any critical precedent for establishing a text of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry, accounting for her published variants, or discussing her working methodology. Presenting the manuscript notebook in full, recognizing the importance of the drafts it contains, and outlining the editorial problems involved in publishing Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry are the three purposes of this examination.
That is not to say, however, that the present study of "Sonnets" exhausts the materials in the notebook, nor does it pretend to give the last word on the state of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's extant holographs or the criticism of her poetry written before her marriage. A considerable portion of the following pages involves the study of other manuscript notebooks, those at Yale and the New York Public Library, for example, as well as of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's authorized publications; that the material in "Sonnets" allows for a discussion of larger questions which the study of the notebook alone fails to answer is the primary significance of the discovery of the manuscripts in the first place. In other words, the contents of the notebook by themselves are less important than what the drafts reveal about Elizabeth Barrett Browning's greatest achievements—Aurora Leigh, the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," and Poems Before Congress. And, given that there has been virtually no adequate editorial treatment of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry, even if the notebook were made up exclusively of drafts and fair copies of poems which have already been published, it would still be the largest and most significant collection of her manuscripts to be made available since the Hope End Diary of 1831-1832, located in 1961 and published in 1969.3 The condition of the published drafts in
"Sonnets," however, generates only a portion of the interest raised by the discovery of the notebook.

The "Sonnets" notebook, containing fifty pages, is by no means the longest of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's extant holograph collections; manuscript notebooks from roughly the same period, now at the New York Public Library, Yale, and Wellesley, contain more leaves, drafts of more poems, and even early drafts of some of the same unpublished poems, fair copies of which are in "Sonnets." The "Sonnets" notebook is unique, however, in that eleven of its twenty-three poems and fragments are unpublished; of these eleven, moreover, seven appear in no other extant manuscript and are never mentioned in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's correspondence. This exclusivity and the length and contents of the drafts not appearing elsewhere emphasize the importance of the contribution of "Sonnets" to the accessible canon of a major author who still holds a secure place among early Victorian poets.

The principal evidence for dating the "Sonnets" notebook is found on leaf 2 recto in the poet's inscription, "Sonnets/ by Elizabeth Barrett Barrett/ 1842," though fewer than half the poems in the notebook are sonnets and many were possibly written as much as two years later. Several verse forms are represented among the twenty-three poems and fragments in
"Sonnets," all appearing in varying stages of completion. In other words, fair copies and heavily corrected drafts of poems polished elsewhere are written along with early drafts to which the poet apparently never returned, and "Sonnets" provides a unique opportunity to observe in a single notebook Elizabeth Barrett Browning's process of composition from conception to fair copy. The unpublished poems in the notebook, two of which are lengthy, provide substantial evidence of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's firsthand knowledge of the conventional Petrarchan sonnet sequence, her interest in French nobility well before the coup of Louis Napoleon in 1850, and her concern for the poor in England following R. H. Horne's investigation of 1843; consequently, a familiarity with these unpublished works sheds new light on her "Sonnets from the Portuguese," her later involvement in the political matters of France, and her lifelong interest in social reform.

The presentation of "Sonnets" stimulates more than a biographical interest, however. Scholars have long known about the Elizabeth Barrett Browning manuscript notebooks at Yale, Wellesley, and the New York Public Library, each filled with poems appearing in authorized publications, but the addition of the "Sonnets" poems to her accessible canon at last makes possible the comprehensive study of her practice
of composition and her preparation of manuscripts for publication. Even a preliminary examination of her extensive corrections, revisions, and cancellations on these drafts explains why scholars have been reluctant to tackle a variorum edition of her work and why no existing edition of her poetry adequately reflects the autograph corrections she wished to introduce. That there has been little tracing of substantive variants in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry invites such an investigation, and the "Sonnets" notebook provides an excellent point of departure.

Given the unlikely assortment in the "Sonnets" notebook of fair copies, revised working drafts, and unpublished translations and narratives on a variety of subjects, the portion of this examination subsequent to the annotated transcript is divided into a study of four major areas of interest. To begin with, the unpublished fair copies of translation from the Canzoniere of Petrarch and the Rime of Felice Zappi call for a discussion of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's career as a translator and of her indebtedness to the Italian sonneteers in her composition of the "Sonnets from the Portuguese." Secondly, a discussion of her supervision of publications centers on the revised drafts of the published poems in "Sonnets" as well as the extant drafts of the same poems in other manuscript collections. Finally,
the two longest unpublished poems in the notebook, "The Princess Marie" and "O pardon dear lady," merit attention, each in light of its contribution to an understanding of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's social consciousness prior to her emigration. Their appearance in a notebook dated 1842 implies that critics have underestimated the breadth of her interests during her isolation at Wimpole Street and the depth of her understanding of the dominant social issues of her day.

While it is unreasonable to expect critics to withhold judgment of a poet's work until a variorum has been completed and all letters and journals have been edited, many of the findings of this examination of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Sonnets" notebook clearly demonstrate the necessity of consulting primary evidence at the initial stages of literary research and support the simple premise that any textual analysis, regardless of its methodology, is only as valid as the text itself. For example, a good deal of editorial work as well as criticism written without knowledge of the manuscripts in the "Sonnets" notebook has been incomplete as a result and in some cases downright misleading. If the present study corrects a number of such errors without introducing any of its own and facilitates further work on Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry of the early 1840's, then
it will fulfill its principal goals.

Bibliographical Description

The "Sonnets" notebook contains twenty-five leaves of wove paper bearing no watermark and measuring 15.3 cm long by 10.1 cm wide. There are no holes or tears in the leaves requiring conjectural readings of the text. The format is octavo, and the leaves are slightly faded. Certain gatherings are in better condition than others, and several leaves are missing from the notebook, probably as a result of booksellers' and prior owners' handling--and mishandling--the leaves. Some leaves, in fact, appear to have been deliberately excised from the binding, probably by the author herself. These leaves may well be among other manuscript collections; a bibliographical description of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's extant manuscripts providing leaf sizes, formats, and conditions of the paper remains, however, a desideratum.

The "Sonnets" notebook is bound in the original limp black morocco and has the original marbled endpapers. The maroon morocco slipcase in which the notebook was purchased in 1979 is of recent make and bears the misleading title "Poems and Sonnets," which is, incidentally, the title of an Elizabeth Barrett Browning notebook at Yale. Of the
twenty-three poems and fragments in the notebook, eleven are unpublished, eleven appeared in authorized publications, and one (the first canto of Dante's Inferno) was published in a fugitive printing in Hitherto Unpublished Poems (1914).  

Contents

The "Sonnets" notebook is accurately described in little detail by Philip Kelley and Betty Coley in The Browning Collection: A Reconstruction with Other Memorabilia (1984) and in great detail with several inaccuracies in Jo Klingman's article "Baylor Browning Collection Adds Houghton Materials" in Studies in Browning and His Circle (Fall 1980). The following table of contents identifies the poems by title (or working title) if one is given or by first lines enclosed in square brackets if no title is given and the poem is unpublished. If the poem is untitled in the notebook but has been published, the title under which it was first published is given in square brackets. The condition of the manuscript (fair copy, draft, etc.) is also noted along with the description of first publication and any title variants. Kelley and Coley have identified all extant drafts of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's manuscripts, and this information is included in Chapter III.
Contents


Leaf 1 recto: Blank.

Leaf 1 verso: "Canzone 5." Translation of the first eleven lines of Petrarch's "Canzone 27" (Rime 359) of the *Canzoniere*. Numerous autograph corrections. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's misleading title probably refers to that given in an unidentified edition of Petrarch's works from which she translated. Publication: none traced.

Leaf 2 recto: Title page reading "Sonnets/ by Elizabeth Barrett Barrett/ 1842."

Leaf 2 verso: Blank.

Leaf 3 recto: "Mr. Haydon's portrait of Mr. Wordsworth."
Sonnet. Fair copy. Publication: The Athenaeum, 29 October 1842 as "Sonnet on Mr. Haydon's Portrait of Mr. Wordsworth."

Leaf 3 verso: "Translated--/ From Zappi--To Pilli--." Translation of Felice Zappi's sonnet 28 of the Rime beginning "Love sits beside my Phillis all day long." Several autograph corrections. Publication: none traced.


Leaf 4 verso: "Translation--/ From Petrarch./ Sonnet XI." Translation of Petrarch's sonnet 292 from the Canzoniere. Fair copy. One autograph correction. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's misleading title is probably from an unidentified edition of Petrarch's works from which she translated. Publication: none traced.

Leaf 5 recto: "An Apprehension" (subtitle "A thought" cancelled). Sonnet. Fair copy. Two autograph
corrections. Publication: Poems (1844).


Leaf 13 recto: "A Year's Spinning." Many autograph corrections. Publication: Blackwood's, October 1846 as "Maud's Spinning."


Leaf 14 recto: "A Reed." Numerous autograph corrections.

xviii
Publication: Blackwood's, October 1846.

Publication: none traced.

"Little Mattie." Many autograph corrections in pencil and ink. Publication: Cornhill, June 1861.

Leaf 15 verso to leaf 16 recto: Dost thou hate my father. . mother? Fragment (?). Numerous autograph corrections.
Publication: none traced.

Leaf 16 verso: Blank.

Leaf 17 recto: Blank.

Beginning at this point the manuscript is written in reverse, Elizabeth Barrett Browning having inverted the notebook and begun to write from back to front.

Lower free endpaper recto: The land of Sweden is a silent land. Fragment. Several autograph corrections.
Publication: none traced.

xix
Leaf 25 verso to leaf 25 recto: "A Dead Rose." Numerous autograph corrections. Publication: Blackwood's, October 1846.

Leaf 24 verso: "A Man's Requirements." Numerous autograph corrections. Publication: Blackwood's, October 1846.

Leaf 24 recto to leaf 23 verso: Rock me softly—softly mother. Fragment(?). Numerous autograph corrections. Publication: none traced.


Leaf 18 recto: Blank.

Leaf 17 verso: "The Best Thing in the World." Numerous autograph corrections. Publication: see above.
Editorial Apparatus

Since many of the poems in the "Sonnets" notebook are unpublished, one-of-a-kind items to which one cannot refer elsewhere, a transcription of the notebook is necessarily a part of this examination. In order to insure a faithful recording of the contents of "Sonnets," every word has been transcribed as it appears in the manuscript. All transcribed material is written originally in the author's hand in ink unless otherwise indicated; for example, there are several passages in her hand in pencil in "Little Mattie" which are identified in footnotes. In addition, there are numerous booksellers' abbreviations, usually indicating whether or not a poem had been published (and often as not incorrect), which are also recorded in footnotes to the transcription.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's frequent use of subscripts and superscripts in her heavily corrected drafts has been maintained in the transcription along with all cancellations of passages in the text. Cancellations are denoted by a vertical mark through each letter of the word or passage except when entire stanzas or groups of stanzas are cancelled, in which case the cancellation is recorded in a footnote.

There are no holes or tears in the paper of the
"Sonnets" notebook requiring conjectural readings of the text. Unfortunately, one cannot say the same of the poet's handwriting; conjectural readings necessitated by questionable legibility are enclosed in angle brackets. Entirely illegible words—and there are a few—are denoted by asterisks enclosed in angle brackets. Since superscripts are indicated exactly as they appear, carots (^) are used in the transcription only where the author used them herself.

Rendering Elizabeth Barrett Browning's erratic punctuation into type presents a number of problems, though in the transcription there are no editorial emendations of the text. The typescript approximations of the author's dashes, exclamation points, and ellipses are entirely in keeping with her consistent use of those marks in her manuscripts written in the last twenty-five years of her life, and editors' attempts to standardize her punctuation have resulted in the introduction of countless unauthorized variants to the publications of her poetry. Only in the interest of producing a comprehensible version of "The Princess Marie" in Chapter IV have I taken any liberties with the poet's unorthodox mechanics or spelling; similarly, punctuation and capitalization have been standardized in the brief excerpts from rough drafts quoted in Chapters IV and V.

The most difficult editorial task, however, involves the
transcription of passages written—often horizontally—in the margins of the manuscripts with no indication of where the author intended them in the text. Incorporation of these passages (often entire stanzas) into the transcript of material written in normal, sequential order would necessitate a number of editorial decisions based on pure conjecture. As a result, the passages written in the margins of the manuscripts are recorded after the transcription of the remainder of the page with a detailed description of the location and condition of these passages.
Notes

1 R. W. B. Browning, the only child of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, died intestate in Asolo on 8 July 1912, and the seventeen heirs to his estate (sixteen first cousins and his estranged wife, Fannie Coddington Browning) agreed to sell his personal effects at auction and divide the proceeds according to Italian law, with two-thirds of the money going to the cousins and one-third going to his wife.

2 The poet is referred to as Elizabeth Barrett Browning throughout this examination, even though the events described, including the composition of all the poems, took place before her marriage in 1846. Her maiden name, Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, appears on the title page of the notebook, however, and is not a misprint.


4 There are, however, several entire stanzas in "The Princess Marie" which were later published as part of "Human Life's Mystery" (1850). An additional line, also from "The Princess Marie," was included in an altered but identifiable form in "Napoleon III in Italy" (1860). These passages which the author lifted wholesale from the unpublished "Princess Marie" are identified in footnotes to the transcription.

5 That a number of the manuscripts are unpublished, one-of-a-kind items is supported by the two most comprehensive studies of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's composition and publication history, The Browning Collections, ed. Philip Kelley and Betty Coley (Waco: Baylor; New York: Browning Institute; London: Mansell; Winnfield: Wedgestone, 1984), and Warner Barnes' A Bibliography of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press; Waco: Baylor, 1967).

6 See the Appendix for a brief account of the evidence used for dating the "Sonnets" manuscript.
CHAPTER I

Sonnets: A Transcript

[free endpaper, verso]

All in the middle of the road of life

I found me
wandering in a darksome wood

The path was lost that took me straight from strife

Alas—how hard its way & how rough & rude

The bristling trees did grow round with shadows hoar

Still in the memory is the dread renewed

So bitter is it, Death is scarcel[y] more

& yet how good I found it to declare

I needst must utter things I missed before.

I cannot tell <you> how I entered there

In that same

the moment that I left the path

slumberful

I was so full of sleep & unaware

But when I reached the foot the mountain hath
Whereat the valley ended I

[leaf 1, recto]

Blank

[leaf 1, verso]

Canzone 5

When she

\( \frac{\text{my sweet & faithful consolation}}{\text{peace}} \)

\( \frac{\text{some upon my weary life rested}}{\text{To give unto my weary life some calm}} \)

Stands \( \frac{\text{\text{on}}}{\text{\text{on the left side of my bed}}} \)

graceing

\( \frac{\text{puts her graceful with \text{\text{exhortation}}}}{\text{& \text{\text{exhortation}} \text{\text{with words of soft accentuation.}}}} \)

\( \frac{\text{\text{faint with}}}{\text{& moved with solemn,}} \)

I moved by dread & mournful passion

\( \frac{\text{& I faint with pitying dread & struggling passion.}}{\text{spirit calm}} \)

\(<\text{Aclaim}>\) Whence comest thou o \( \frac{\text{\text{\text{happy}}} \text{\text{\text{happy}}}}{\text{\text{happy}} \text{\text{\text{happy}}}} \)

\( A^2 \text{ little branch of palm} \)

And one of laurel draws\(^3\) she \&\> from her breast

\( \frac{\text{Thereat, & saith--From rest}}{} \)
'neath God's holy feet
In the empyraeum & holy
I come--& only to console thee, sweet.

[end of leaf 1, verso]

[leaf 2, recto]

Sonnets.
by
Elizabeth Barrett Barrett
1842

[end of leaf 2, recto]

[leaf 2, verso]

Blank

[leaf 3, recto]

Mr. Haydon's portrait of Mr. Wordsworth

Wordsworth upon Helvellyn! Let the cloud
Ebb audibly along the mountain=wind
Then break against the rock, & show behind
The lowland vallies floating up to crown
The sense with beauty. He with forehead bowed
And humble-lidded eyes, as one inclined
Before the sovran thoughts of his own mind
And very meek with inspirations proud,
Takes here his rightful place as poet-priest
By the high altar, singing prayer & prayer
To the yet higher Heav'ns. A vision free
And noble, Haydon, hath thine Art releast!
No portrait this with Academic air—
This is the poet and his poetry.

Evangelist

of nature!

[end of leaf 3, recto]

[leaf 3, verso]

Translated—
From Zappi. To Pilli.¹

Love sits beside my Phillis all day long:
Love follows closely wheresoe'er she lies,
Speaks in her, is mute in her, in her, sighs..
Yea, lives in her, till he and she are strong.
Love teacheth her his graces and his song;

* * * * * of pretty anger
And if she weeps or if her wrath shall rise,
Love parts not from her so, but magnifies
Himself in her sweet tears & passion wrong.
And if she haply treads the measured maze
Love waves her pretty foot discernibly
As the air moves a flower in summer days.
I see Love in her brows throned royally,
Love in her hair, and eyes, and lips always—
But near her heart, this Love, I do not see.

[end of leaf 3, verso]

[leaf 4, recto]

Translated--
From Petrarch--
Hearers, in broken rhyme, of echoes old,
Of those weak sighs wherewith I fed mine heart
in my first youthful error, when in part
I was another man than ye behold:
My weepings and singings manifold,
The balance of my vain desire and smart,
Give me to hope from those who know Love's dart,
Some pity,.though their pardon they withhold.
But now I can discern how very long
I was the people's proverb, and I wear
A blush before mine own soul, thus to seem!
And shame is all the fruit of that vain song,
And late contrition, and the knowledge clear
That what the world calls sweetest, is a dream.

[leaf 4, verso]

Translated—
From Petrarch.¹

Sonnet XI.

The eyes I spake such ardent praises on,
The arms, the little hands, the feet and face
That twixt myself and me did thrust their grace
And forced me in the world to dwell alone

The crisped curls whose gold so clearly shone,
The angel smile's sun-lightening, which <apace>
Made paradise where earth showed no such place

Affecting
Are now a little dust...none!

And I still live!..Whence I bewail & scorn
This life left blind..surviving that dear light..
This shattered bark on stormy waters borne

End here, o loving songs I did delight
To sing my love in...the old vein is worn--

¹ Petrarch was an Italian poet, philosopher, and humanist. His works have been influential in the development of modern literature and thought.
And where I struck the harp, I weep outright.

[end of leaf 4, verso]

[leaf 5, recto]

Boston. <Evg.> 193

An apprehension.

19

If all the gentlest-hearted friends I know,
Endowed the heart of one with gentleness
That still grew gentler, till its pulse was less
For life than pity; I should yet be slow
To bring my own heart nakedly <†††> below
The palm of such a friend that he should press
Motive, condition, means, appliances,
My false ideal joy, and fickle woe
to light and
Out full <†††> knowledge—I should fear
Some plait between his brows; some rougher chime
In his free voice.... O angels let the flood
Of your salt scorn dash on me! Do ye hear
What I say who bear calmly, all the time,
This everlasting face=to=face with God!

[leaf 5, verso]

From Petrarch. translated.¹

How blessed be the day & month & year,
The season, time, the hour & moment--yea
The land and place, where first I did survey
Two beauteous eyes which took me prisoner.
And blessed be the first sweet grief severe
Which I endured in meeting Love that day—
The bow and arrows which he shot away,
And the heart=piercing wounds which rankle here.
Blessed, the many breaths I did respire
In calling round the world my lady's name;
The lover's sighs, the tears, and the desire!
And blessed, all the songs which gave her fame—
And all my thoughts, though unsung on the lyre—
Since² all must still be of Her, and the same.

[leaf 6, recto]¹

Thou large brained woman & large hearted man
Self called George Sand! whose soul amid the lions
Of thy tumultuous senses, moans defiance,
And gives them roar for roar, as spirits can.
I would, some spheric thunder nimbly ran
Across that stormy circus, in appliance
Of thy high nature & its subtle science,
Until two pinions white as wings of swan,
Shot sovran from thy shoulders through the place,
In hushing calms! that thou who hast no claim
To either sex, sh'd take an angel's grace
Of genius holy & pure—while children came
To live beneath thy sanctity of face
And kiss upon thy lips a stainless fame

[end of leaf 6, recto]

[leaf 6, verso]

The Princess Marie

a king at least
Her father was a crowned king
Of kingly soul & ways—
A kingly soul always!
I do not stroke the ermine breast.

Kings ermine risk my praise—
As courtiers make their earnest

King by right of mind.

A throne to me, 

Than libertys first trodden stair
As the first stair of liberty
And yet I give this praise
By which the lowest mount
Yet Louis Phillip reigneth by

Souls right I say again—
By the king of frenchmen worthily
Like Homer's king of men
His sceptre is the staff of oak
Which is a desert never broke
He used thro life—which never broke—
Brave ruling for brave men.
May it bud out & shadow men.

And a king her father was—

This fair princess Marie's
Just proves her greater\textsuperscript{12}
Of whom I sing this song because

All princely dignities
She rose above in womanhood
And princess less than artist stood
In nobler dignities.

\textbf{Upper Left Margin}

A king I say again

\textbf{Left Margin}

Trod black by struggling man

\textbf{Lower Left Margin}

She left her princely ease
feet
With $\textdollar\textdollar\textdollar\textdollar$ of gifted womanhood

<To> glory above ease

[end of leaf 6, verso]

[leaf 7, recto]\textsuperscript{1}

I know of many a song to sing\textsuperscript{2}
Of genius rounding fair
crowns
With $\textdollar\textdollar\textdollar\textdollar\textdollar$ of a mild glimmering
The peasants rough combed hair
   may flash against
O songs to my lips
Of many a peasant born known
By a glory as it clips
Whose large pale brows the glory clips
His ragged hair wind-blown
Of genius, crownlike worn—

   my Burns, is worthy thine
† This brow for song of mine

gems
Which born for crown effaced the sign
With laurels like thy own
By wreath of genius worn.

Her father was a king I said
Her mother was a queen
A crowned Cornelia
And swept her purple with a tread
More as woman &
   serene
Yet gentler for
Who smiled at court, as mothers may
Beside their home-hearths every day
She smiled at court serene.

And such a queen her mother was
This fair princess Marie's
Her princely brothers <their> And crowned to queendom by the laws
Trod bold to their degrees
And all her princely brothers more
Before her lovely sister <***>
Have kings knelt down in <admiration>
& offered their degrees--

[end of leaf 7, recto]

[leaf 7, verso]

But she—she loosed the silken string
That bound her purple vest
And from her hand she took the ring
And the gold chain from her breast
she told
And <fff> the people, Evermore
Ye shall applaud me only for
God's fire set in my breast.

& not <fff> sovrency nor birth²
Nor beauty in my face
I go among you, ye men of earth,
To choose my own free place
You are
I am very innocent & young
You have
I have God's truth upon my tongue

Now bless me to my face.

artists
I go among your tried
Poor artists of the soil
By all your earthly coil
Among you poets deified.
By grief & Amid the dust of toil
Musicians, painters, sculptors
ye
Who gather glory patiently
I go to share your toil.

[end of leaf 7, verso]

[leaf 8, recto]

Now give me room amid your ranks—
For all the gifts ye have

I will approach with reverent thanks—
I will be meek & brave—
I will walk work with you—& dismiss
My birthright! save my father's kiss
Which keeps me meek & brave—

She took the ring from her right hand—

palm as soft & small
A court ball
Or kissed at court withal
And deep down to the
She plunged it in the sculptor's clay
Dimpled round & veined
So with amethyst
In the sculptor's clay withal

She put aside her purple weed
She donned her sculptor's gown
Knotted plainly on
She the bright bit of her head
The ringlets clustering down—
She said I have prepared my part
I am alone now with my heart—
My brothers, I come down—

[end of leaf 8, recto]

[leaf 8, verso]

<below>
Her hand did knead the clay untired
From morning into night
Till
thoughts of beauty she desired,
She drew up into light
Grand thoughts beneath her steady
her eye
Swelled outwards upwards to the sky
rounds
Through gradual of light.

Her eye beneath her musing brown
Throbbed down a plastic light
And

Till thoughts of beauty manifold
Grew upward through to
in the gradual mould
gradual
Thro' shining rounds of light
throbbed
The torpid clay organized
Believing working
Between her rosy palms

Assumed a beauty—rose
Surprised to ilk a

Thro' motion$ $ $ $ $ calm$

erect
Drew $ $ up its statue=grace

her blindly in
And looked $ $ $ $ $ $ $ $ face

A statue grand & calm.

Dear God & moulder of our clay

A noble was such
To see
That $ $ $ $ $ torpid earth obey

Her maiden eye & touch.

[end of leaf 8, verso]

[leaf 9, recto]

from her from her
How eye to eye & mouth to mouth

Did confirm
She $ $ $ $ $ it with $ $ life & youth

She fed the statue from her youth

<The> creature of her touch--
It was a statue erect

Heroin white

As if her soul she did project

To stand there in her sight

For as the chin took in

And still she paled to sight.

Thus is it

Can glorify a stone

But then our own works master us

And rising tread us down

shrink beneath their feet

And so we die, to give them room to meet

that scorn us

Men's eyes, down.
good
Jeanne d'Arc's brave name the
statue wore

saw the same
And who

Instead of heroine & force
with more

Beheld a nobler fame.

Upper Left Margin, Written Vertically
To see the marble eye & mouth
Fed slowly from her living youth
answer
And open at her touch--
The dimple meet

Left Margin, Written Vertically
To see those faces afterward
earnest
Look each on each
Each virgin with a calm regard
& neither stirred to speech
<Are> warm & young & masterful
The gods our own hands made it
seemed
From out the blessed <heaven> we dreamed
In thunder cast us down
Creators in <our> <head> & heart
Our creatures crush our heart to dust
And to our graves <force> down

[end of leaf 9, recto]

A mild pure woman made sublime
By God, a great cause of all time
       with her own
       & $$$$$$$ by her fame.

the worker
And so she wasted—work by work
She wasted, day by day—
And other statues lit the dark
To which she died away

<shouted> Loyal <Heart>
The people smiled & said apart
She is immortal in her art—
She smiled & died away—
A princely lover\(^2\) crossed the hills
And knelt down at her feet
Thy genius said he brought\(^3\) these ills
is strong to meet
My love shall make them sweet.
He drew her up all young & warm
And bore her on his tender arm
Along the woodlands sweet.
Her eyes looked dimply on his eyes

    Love's statue—shall I make?
She (beneath my Paris skies
For back (beneath my Paris skies

old mute
My statues spake—

*Left Margin, Written Vertically*
Her eyes looked dimly in his eyes
O Love she said is strong—

<Genius> who \(^w\) But Beauty \(^f\) harmonize
This earthly right and wrong?
To <changes> still
Like God to me eternally
How canst we help this wrong?

[end of leaf 9, verso]
Her eyes looked dimly in his eyes

<***> wandered free
Her speech came wanderingly

"Love's statue neath my Paris skies
Now shall I make for thee?

Hush—my old
My statues say apart
I am immortal in my art—
I only die to thee

she died away
So pulse by pulse &
Before her husband's face—
And a great wail rose up that day
& filled her native
And & tears dropped in the place

Her eyes lay & dry beneath
own
His that dropped wild tears—

God's Beauty sitteth with God's
And calls me up the spheres—
God's Death thy touch is calm & cool
God's Beauty—thou art beautiful
O Love—I mount the spheres.

She died before her husband's face—
Went smiling from his woe—
Then wailing voices cried for grace
& Denis' bell tolled slow

Left Margin, Written Vertically

I reach across the Death—the cool
To Beauty o most beautiful

(end of leaf 10, recto)

[leaf 10, verso]

An old grey king knelt down

& moaned before his own high throne

& Denis bell tolled slow

King Louis Phillippe reigneth by

I tell you now
Soul's right & kingly king

& sorrows grace
And there's more softness in his eye

last it left her brow
Since it missed her face
And when her Paris artists see
His smile, it shineth fatherly
   face
As if he saw her

The king of frenchmen is a king
Like Homer's king of men
   his
 & yet, purple c'd not fling
A shadow on his face

And when he passeth by or stands
Before the statues there
Once moulded by his daughters hands
His lips do throb with prayer
Men see them tremble as the rod
Did strike him new..o God..o God..
With bitter inward prayer.²

[end of leaf 10, verso]

[leaf 11, recto]

He since hath lost another life
God's will did intercept—
Before his chambers, he stood up
That kingly king—
And found no word to say
Because his princely Orleans lay

his young Orleans lifeless
How lay

Then left & right we heard that day
And all the chambers wept.

Orleans' grave the father marked
And when young Orleans went to grave
The kingly father said
This marble angel let him have
A guardian at his head—

This holy thought from sister's mind

At brother's grave may watch & find
A father's bended head—
For sister's holy thought make room
Beside her brother's early tomb—
A sister's holy thought should have
A watch beside her brother's grave
Where parents weep for both

God's will
hour another hope
And since that day

Broke in to
God's will did intercept

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Before his chambers he stood up
A kingly king & wept—
Because he not in their sight
Call Orleans dead--then left & right
The silent chambers wept.

Upper Left Margin, Written Vertically
& for his grave the sire reserved
A statue carven new—
A statue of an angel carved
By her who loved the two
The sister's holy thought doth keep
<***> watch upon the brother's sleep
The father weeps for two--

Left Margin, Written Vertically
And Orleans' grave the father marked
For monument is sooth
marble
With that same angel worked
By Mary loved of both
& then the sister's holy thought
Doth watch the grave where he was brought
& parents weep for both
Lower Left Margin, Written Vertically

Before his chambers left & right
He bowed his head so old & white

[end of leaf 11, recto]

[leaf 11, verso]

not
O manyfolded life I lie unkindly—
Swathed like an infant in conventions dark
in
I have a sense of darkness of beyondness
Some
^Outgoing life & some aspirant fondness
And strike my hands toward some believed in mark
Which I believe in blindly—

I hear the outer Hades rolling deep
me and all sides
Above beyond the arches

that float by
Of being <***>! O spirits
sideway
With faces of supremacy
And yet I hear some words between the march
Of all things—and so weep.
God's will & might
And since that day another hope

Hath stilled another breath
God's will hath cast beneath

left & right
Before his chambers he stood up
$ and tried to speak of death

He stood to speak of death
& wept because he couldn't say

low
How his youthful Orleans lay
His heir is only death.

King Louis Phillipe reigneth by
Soul's right I say again

through
He knows mutability

The level of man's
purple carpets
For all his may be worth
He knows the colour of this earth—

Lower Left Margin, Written Vertically
dreams
This youth's first were red with blood

Beneath the scaffolds stand
are understood
His path's first home the stranger showed
Which
<***> fatherhood

[end of leaf 11, verso]

[leaf 12, recto]

God keeps his holy mysteries
On all sides where we wait & dream
We hear their folded wings expand
In a slow music, pure & grand
While they float past beneath His eyes

O life is folded thick & dark

Like a swans down a constant stream
About the stifled soul within
We have a sense of things beyond
A yearning outwards strong & fond
I strike out blindly to a mark
Believed it but not seen.

O spirits ye speak low..speak--low
I comprehend not what ye speak--
I breathe the motions of your feet
as snow
Ye come & go so fast & sweet

That falls beneath our travelling feet
& call you through the deep—life=wound

My thought & woe have left profound
Which soon is large enough for death

Man is with
He has grown strong in pain.

<solemn> memories
But when his sorrows slow & sad
Within his soul uprise
The saddest sweet'st he ever had

ies
Wears Mary's face & eyes--

oft at solemn
I <guess> that  at prayer

unaware
The Ave Mary  near her mortal
Brings back that face & eyes.
Recalls her mortal

Left Margin, Written Vertically

Ye are thick & quick as the laboring breath
A man breathes in a a heavy beat
I hear ye speak so <***> & meek
And when we listen we may hear

The kiss of Peace & righteousness

[end of leaf 12, recto]
Hasten from out among us
Said a people to a poet— out straightway our good land
While we are thinking earthly things, thou singest of divine
Thou singest of divine things while
There's a little fair brown nightingale who sings gateway
in the woodland
accordeth better unto
And his song runs with our harvest for
our pouring of the wine than song of thine—
The poet went out weeping— & the nightingale ceased
chanting
Now wherefore o thou nightingale is all thy music done—
I do not hear the poet <***>
Now where is the poet— his divine song being
Heavnly music
Because the blessed poet with his strain wanting
There is no bird that dares to try a music under sun
abroad bereft there
The poet went out weeping— & died beyond the ocean
flew to
The nightingales singing his grave where amid a thousand people wails.
Yet when I last came by it, I swear the music sounding

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singing
Was φδψγ of the poet's & not the nightingale's
The peoples passion like a sea

[leaf 13, recto]

fair
She was a יוי countess
She was a true wife

<yet> alone the count is
<Springing> of her life.
Evermore it springeth
In that lonely hall
And the song it singeth
Is of rise & fall—
Evermore she sitteth
At the broidery=frame

& her silence
Grief too deep to name.
And the ladies round her
Working in the place
Glance towards--beyond her
Just to see her face
Unawares to mark her
Unreproved to know
   eyes are
  If her darker
With the tears that grow

Sweet neighbours if he comes again
   with <***>

I pray you leave the door ajar
Lest he shd stand & listen <***>
For <***> cares about might be pain
& leave the wheel out very plain
That he may see by moon or sun—
That see it passing in the sun
May know my spinning is all done

Upper Left Margin, Written Vertically
   into
near
Now lay me my mother's grave
dethbed lone
Who cursed me in her dying moan.
& on the next side let me have
cry was heard
My child who spoke word of none
   se
& <***><***> baby blessing none
My baby who spoke word to none
& my dead baby's in to have
Who not to bless me, cried to none

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A stone upon my head &
& lay a stone upon my heart
But write no name upon
the stone
Sweet neighbours when ye talk apart
This sinner was a
She was a weak & loving one
& now her spinning

My mother cursed me when I heard
as I spun
A young man's wooing &
Thank cruel
mother for that word
I have know since a sadder
Less cruel than the heart of one
& now my spinning is all done.

I thought my first born's cry would take
Away mother's lover's words—
But when I listened in my pain
baby
No child cried—my hope was gone
If any see made me groan
\[\text{silence, God, alone}\]

[end of leaf 13, recto]

[leaf 13, verso]

Sonnets

The wind sounds only in opposing straights
The sea beside the shore—Man's spirit rends
Its quiet only up against these ends
Of wants & oppositions, loves & hates
Self worked & worn by passionate debates
Of what that loses while it apprehends
Till the flesh rocks, & every breath it sends
Is ravelled to a sigh. Jehovah Lord

around me—out of sight
Make room for rest—Now float me out of sight
Now float me of this vexing land abhorred
Of all this vexing land these rocks abhorred
Till on the <white> calms of Thine Infinite dropped
My soul with all her wings is calmly moored
in capacious
Till with her wings spread out in golden light
My Soul in thine Eternity is moored
With all her wings dropt loose in air & light
My soul with wings spread outward <&> <secured>
Full satisfaction of capacious light

To I who have wept

All day & night & yet <forgot> my tears
heard men
upon the power & the chain
To hear my brothers
The passions of two mortal hemispheres—
God, grant us such a silence here again
Like that above

I am no trumpet but a reed--
I tell the fishers as they spread
the river's edge—
Their nets around if they fall
I will not tear their nets at all
Or wound their hands if they should fall
Then let them leave me in the sedge.

I am no trumpet but a reed

I hear the river at my need

The fall of summer rains

And bow the lilies

I hear at nights as in a dream

And dying swans

A dying swan sing down the stream

I am no trumpet but a reed

I lean toward the river

<***> the lilies at my side

lilies that fall &

I feel the dream of dying swans that sail

Along the moving tide

[end of leaf 14, recto]

[leaf 14, verso]

I think O Bella there's no cure for love

In all the world, nor chrism nor liquid

Except the moly—that is light & sweet

ay but hard to find, sweet
[Little Mattie]²

She was young but yesternight
Now she is as old as death—

Fair with a child's face
Without a breath³

You can teach her no word more
Though she lieth in your sight

You can teach her nothing more

You can teach her nothing more
She has seen the mystery hid
Under AEgypt's pyramid
By those eyelids sweet & close
Now she knows what Cheops knows.

Left Margin, In Pencil

Meek obedient in your sight

Gentle at a beck or breath

Only at last Monday—Your's
& teach how that could <***> <***>

Only on last Tuesday

Mother <***> her <***> to <***>

with flowers

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Lower Left Margin, In Ink

Tho' you stroke her hands & say

She has died so young so young

Lower Left Margin, In Pencil

mother mother gone

You can teach her nothing else

[end of leaf 14, verso]

[leaf 15, recto]

Draw her to full length out her hair in bands

Part it on each side &让它 lie out smooth & fair

Let it lie out smooth & fair Down on each side past her bands

long

Draw her hair out & smooth

Passive as a thing of silk...

Cold and passive as in truth

You your fingers in spilt milk
a marble floor

Drew along—

But her lips you cannot wring

To say a yes, to say a no

Into saying one word more

Yes or no or such

Mother though you pray and shriek

There she lies without a fault

She—she will not move or speak

In most innocent revolt

Twelve years old

Green & narrow her <life's> walk

Little felt or seen

Lovers she could not know

Never loved

dream or

Even by a talk

Pain seemed something to lift off

In the sunshine—sin was good

To build prayers in high enough

Till <***> <***> where angels stood
Lower Left Margin, Written Vertically, In Pencil

Twas a green
}* an easy world

As she took it—room to play—

Though one's hair would get uncurled

At the far end of the day

With much running

[end of leaf 15, recto]

[leaf 15, verso]

<Dost> thou hate my father..mother?¹
Hate is running in my blood..
And I hated my twin brother
That his heart was good..
Good & evil hate each other.

I am black & he is fair
After² you³ have⁴ smiled to see us
Different children that we were..
Nunquam credat nec Judaeus
But⁵ I hated his pale hair—
If I touched it with my finger
I would touch a toad as soon..
When he used to lean & linger
Gainst the window pane
at noon
Listening to some dull street-singer

Always he was mild & quiet
that calm look in his
sea
With eyes
Which at my riot
Left me in a still
surprise
And then drop me--shamed by it--
[end of leaf 15, verso]

[leaf 16, recto]

For his blue eyes seemed to lord me
With indifference calm & large
What was he to look toward me
Just as God might, giving charge?

"He a god (the devil guard me--"
you
Ah, it always loved him, mother,
That made more room for my hate

<How> you looked at one another

When I came in loud & late
With those sighs you tried to smother—

[end of leaf 16, recto]

[leaf 16, verso]
Blank

[leaf 17, recto]
Blank

[Lower free endpaper, recto]
The land of Sweden was a silent land
Erewhile To me a short time—
The names of its cold hills Do ridge the world

[end of lower free endpaper, recto]
O withered rose—undone!
Rose, thou art withered
Rose, thou art withered

Called roseate as before—
When thou were yet ungathered.

used to blow thee
The breeze that
To rock thy crimson petals up
And take the perfume off a mile away
Seeing thee now

~I think w'd scarcely know thee.

used to suck
The bee that thee
To take thy out
To take thy out

Bliss lost within thee still—as scarce alive
Seeing thee now I think w'd overlook thee
The bird that sang <anigh> thee

    paused in singing when the <***>
And & shook soft its wings

Sweet air did swing its leaves again
his side

Seeing thee now w'd scarce be <flaunted> by thee.

The dew that dropped within thee
And, white itself, grew crimson with the rest

It took upon the crimson of thy breast

Seeing thee now I think w'd scarce to know thee

Upper Left Margin, Written Vertically

    the^3 <***> doth shame

    O rose & |### | all thee

    No longer roseate now, nor soft nor sweet

    hard &
As brown & dry as stalk^4 of wheat

Thou hast survived thyself
Shall any dare o rose, a rose to name thee

Kept seven years in a drawer...who dares to name thee?

[end of leaf 25, verso]
The heart doth recognize thee
Alone, alone. The heart doth smell thee sweet
Doth see thee fair doth love thee most complete
Seeing thee clear from changes that disguise thee.

Ay & the heart goes with thee
More than roses
Which Julia wears at nights in smiling cold—

Love me lady with thy mouth
may say I love thee
Which wears the bold

[leaf 25, recto]

[leaf 24, verso]
In sweet ruth

While the smile of ruth
That true age shall meet thy youth

True love approve thee

Lady

Love me with eyes

Constant still granting

With the colour of the skies

Can their faith be wanting?

Love me with the heart that beats

Softly in thy boddice

While my step comes through the streets

Love with thy blush that burns

When I say I love thee

Love me with thy step that turns

When new lovers prove thee

Love me with thy soul

[end of leaf 24, verso]

[leaf 24, recto]

Rock me softly—softly mother

Like the babe who died last week.

You may rock me like another

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Let me head lie on your shoulder
Though you tell me I am older
I have grown too like a baby - I am thin & I am meek

Rock me mother from the hunger

Rock me softly softly mother
Like the babe who died last week—
I am older than the other
I am grown so thin & weak
That I seem as small as he—
Rock the hunger-pain from me
You may rock me, mother dear,
And I wish you a happy new year.

Rock me softly softly mother
Like the babe who died last week—
I am grown as thin & meek
So now
love me like the other—
I am older

[end of leaf 24, recto]
Rock me softly softly mother
Like the babe who died last week
You may love like the other
I am grown so thin & meek—
I am older certainly

Now Rock me softly oh, softly my mother
Like the baby we buried last week—
You may love me as well as the other
I am growing so little & meek—
I am older than he was & yet you shall see
I am nearly as small & as light on
this knee.

O pardon
Forgive for standing unsightly
O lady dear lady, o

So near to the windows, <courted> by none—
Forgive me for coming so bold in the gate
on the lawn
With my little bare feet I stepped lightly
& when the snow melts all the marks
will be gone—

Oh the squire's lovely lady, the countrysides
new lady
hid me
I \*\*\*\* \* \* in summer to see you go pass

While you smiled to <yourself>
With a <sauntering> step down the chestnut trees shady

The silk of your gown buzzed like bees
to the grass

Left Margin, Written Vertically

In the mud-huts below we have all got the fever

so
My feet burned at night--\*\* you'll leave me to <***>
And my mothers so weak \*\*\*\* I can steal away clever

[end of leaf 23, verso]

[leaf 23, recto]

You drew me afar as the moon draws the water

at the windows in the firelight behind hearth

While you stood \*\*\* light from the \*\*\*\*\*

And the ryebread as white as \*\* suit a Duke's daughter

Cast out to the birds \*\*\*\*\* the \*\*\** of the \*\*\*\*\* for I saw you were kind--

And strength to myself if you pitied the singers

hips
With pretty brown wings, & red \*\*\*\* on the tree
While you heard in the valley the glad <***> ringers

      turn for Christ's sake
You might look on my face & have pity on
      me.

And once, when you wandered too far up^2

      mountains
      cot if the road cd be near
You asked at^3 our hovel & asked $% the $%$%$%

You smiled bright at the babe as you stood
Oh you stood with your beauty so bright in
the doorway

& she
That we never complained that you kept
out the sun—

Poor baby—she lay in the lap of our mother

Do you mind her, fair lady, how pretty &
white

She lay
      $%$%, $ still! as your $%$ hands when enclasped
      in each other

With her blue wandering eyes searching on
for the light—

& my mother said softly..she looks for
an angel

To give her sweet company up to the skies

You stood there that moment. She took not that passage
But smiled at you

[leaf 22, verso]

so she died when you passed from

& just then you came in—she was faces

She wept for the first time

my poor mother wept sore

Oh she said. Is this next in the sweet angels' places

O God

We see the proud ladies, evermore?

Do not blame what she said—mad with

the sorrow

worn past

She was with the watch of long hours—

She was wroth that the child who must die ere the

morrow

Sh'd look off from her face to the sweetness of

yours.

And the babe died at sunset. You ought to have

seen her in & shroud

So pretty she looked the coffin came home & verses

She had learnt all her lessons, & serener
called to
Was taking her holiday over the cloud.

So the minister said & my mother repairing
Her voice from her tears did repeat it anon & mourned in his
But my father grew wicked swearing
That only the dull ones indeed w'd live on.

Pulled where the snow melted often
Five snowdrops I just before the snows
sheltered discerned in my walks
In warm places then on each
& laid white on white little in the coffin
You could only discern them for flowers by the stalks

[end of leaf 22, verso]

[leaf 22, recto]

[in the churchyard-- yes-lady & looking
And how she lies close to the church in the valley
To the right of the road for she lies where she lies kept]
We buried her full in the small of the meadow

On the edge of the churchyard, & under a tree.

But not under the yews for we thought that their shadow weak

Too heavy for such baby as she

The graves lie all flat in the snow, but in looking

You may guess at the place where our baby is left

Look its under that poplar which softly is rocking

As if to the tune that mother sang as she slept

may linger or pass

You may look there o lady & pray there

You may melt off the snow with your footsteps at will

You may startle

The birds as they sit in the grass there

But however you smile on her, she will lie still

In summer its shadow makes room on the grass there
For the sunshine to speckle the place as it will

lovely & yourself as if happening to pass there

However you smiling, the child will lie still

unsightly seen lightly

The next reason seems a less hard one in...

There's at supper one crust more now baby is dead...

I hope God shut her eyes—when they laid her out whitely

Left Margin, Written Vertically

..so hungry! climbed up to the sky for to tread—

[end of leaf 22, recto]

[leaf 21, verso]

Will you keep me a secret safe, safe from my mother—
You won't tell even the birds lest they learn it for good
And go singing it over again to each other
While they fly past our cottage for hips in the wood.

Some secrets are known so they tell me—& truly
Little robin looks sly with his head on one side—

me you promise it

Now you'll keep my secret duly..

Though I loved little babe, I am glad that she died.

The reason which first shall be given

Do not look so— for my mother to see

Is she's happy & that's plain

knee deep

Why I've seen her in the rye fields of

& she said she's in bread for the angels & me

& the spikes of corn rustled brightly to her

Oh—the spikes of the corn rustled brightly around her

And I heard in my dream how it trembled along

& the sun of the sun with a light interwound her

& the thought of my dream is as sweet as a song

But she could not ask them—

wd seem a less one than most

The next reason—but forgive it

And the last reason still an unkinder than this is
But I now have the place—baby had it before
On the lap of our mother, & feel her warm kisses
Fall down on my forehead & cheeks evermore.

Lower Left Margin, Written Vertically
On the lap of our mother & feel how her kisses
Fall down with her tears on my face evermore.
Fall down like the snows on the grave...evermore.

[end of leaf 21, verso]

[leaf 21, recto]

And she rocks me so softly so softly she charms me
Away from the hunger-pain aching within
& my head grows so light while she lulls me & warms me
I seem to float up like a soul without sin—

My sister they say has the heart of a Father
Of a great holy Father to lie on & rest—
Wd3 the angels that lean on her whispering together
<Found> me the sleep on this motherly
Would not grudge me my mother & sleep on her breast.
It is good to feel dizzy, & faint away softly
While the clock in your heart strikes the moments
along aloud
& her arms are still round you, still round you &
softly

eyelids is rained
The kiss on your eyes is unknown from a cloud.

And your ears sing a song to themselves
in the silence
& you float & float on & grow large as you
float—
You forget all the hunger. you're king of the islands
You ride in a chariot—or glide in a boat—

Or you rise, as I said, \[\frac{1}{4}\] a soul does in
dying—
Ah to die so what pleasure & not
to fall back
To the dim heavy pain. like a bird filled with flying
But to die on, die on, to the cold & the black

[end of leaf 21, recto]

[leaf 20, verso]

Do you know what they tell me—that children are
living—
Ay...& children as I am—no better they say

Only sit the
Only finer..who by grace of God's giving
On fair mother's laps, never hungry all day

Do you think it can be so? If I could be sure of it—
If the queen's little children could sit in such state—

In palace & laugh
In—I w'd plead at the door of it

Give us good daily bread..we are hungry & wait.

If its true, if its true, I can tell you the reason
For they have a fine prayer which they say in the church
'Give us bread day by day' and God hears them in season
For their white hands held up—as I saw from the porch.

For if God hears them..God, up so high—they may hear me
And if He gives them, all, they may give me a part
I will pray then as soft & as meek so do not fear me
They shall see through my prayer to the want in my heart

Because it is God's..it is ours—he has told us
To ask for it bravely with faith in the heart
Have the tall ones & strong ones a right to withhold us
Because we are feeble from having our part

[end of leaf 20, verso]

[leaf 20, recto]

They may stretch up$^1$ their white hands & pray in the churches who has angels

Does God mind $^\dagger\dagger\dagger\dagger$ white hands—$^\dagger\dagger\dagger\dagger$ clouds with wings $^\dagger\dagger\dagger\dagger$

Does he love their fine garments..who $^\dagger\dagger\dagger\dagger$ looks at has all the arches

Of heaven with its stars & its holiest things.

please$^2$ Him as well for this Our brown hands will pull down his goodness

Blest who

$^\dagger\dagger\dagger\dagger$ the poor--they inherit the earth.. not <***>

Where's our earth o ye rich men..the earth we inherit Has our heritage

$^\dagger\dagger\dagger\dagger$ nothing but graves for its worth.

Like that you have the heavens,$^3$ & we have the graves

$^\dagger\dagger\dagger\dagger$ We're on God's side--O God I would rather

Die out a poor child on my poor mother's knee

Than grow to a rich man with harvest to gather

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save one answer
answer to no man except one to <***>
Than answer God's charge wouldst thou <***>

Now forgive me, I am but a child yet feel holy

When I stand with my naked feet low in the snow
I stamp with my feet in a bold melancholy
And feel on God's side through the strength of the woe.

[end of leaf 20, recto]

[leaf 19, verso]

The earth seems to melt to my eyes as the snow might as I
And I see all the dead once ahungered With their calm sunken eyes

[end of leaf 19, verso]

[leaf 19, recto]

What's the best thing in the world
Truth is when it wounds no friends
Pleasure when not soon it ends
Beauty when not decked & curled
Aprils\(^1\) roses when impearled
With a shower of April rain
Light that never makes you wink

\[\text{true} \]

Memory which it gives no pain

\[<***>^2\]
Love when you are\(^3\) loved again
ever

Whats the best thing in the world
Somet

Whats the best thing in the world
June rose by April dew
\[\text{never meaning rain}\]

not a
Truth cruel to friend,
Pleasure, when not near an end.

self
Beauty when not decked & curled
Light that never makes\(^4\) you wink
Memory which gives no pain
Love when once you're loved again
Left Margin
Sweet south winds

[leaf 18, verso]

Power & service, need & pleasure
In this world
<***> of lily taketh measure

What's the best thing in the world?
Love is when you're loved again
Open roses when
When the maybloom long impearled
    latter
With a shower of summer rain
    up
Breathes its breath without pain

What's the best thing in the world?
Truth is when it nought offendeth
Beauty when not decked & curled
Pleasure, when not soon it endeth
\texttt{Light is when it does not dim}
Memory, when it gives no pain
What's the best thing in the world
Love is

What's the best thing in the world
Love is when you're loved again..
Women may not decked & curled
All day near the window lattice pain
Smiling with a secret pain
At their mirrors—nought beyond..
Cold as lilies down a pond..

_Lower Left Margin, In Pencil_

Light that never makes
you wink

What's the best thing
in the world

Something out of it
I think

[end of leaf 18, verso]
With additions

What's the best thing in the world?
June-rose, by May-dew impearled—
Sweet south wind$ that means no rain.

not cruel
Truth, $¶¶¶¶ to a friend—
in haste to
Pleasure, not $¶¶¶¶¶¶ end—
Beauty, not self-decked & curled—
Till its pride is over-plain
Light, that never makes you wink,
Memory, that gives no pain,
Love, when..so..you're loved again.

Whats the best thing in the world?
Something out of it, I think.

Left Margin

Whats the

best thing in the world

[end of leaf 17, verso]
Notes

[free endpaper verso]

1 From Dante's Inferno, these fourteen lines are written upside down at the bottom of the free endpaper verso.

2 Superimposed over "wandered."

3 Superimposed over <***>.

4 The letter "y" on the adverbial suffix of "scarcely" does not appear at all, though the "1" is quite clear. Square brackets, therefore, enclose what is an obvious ommision from the manuscript.

5 A vertical stray mark follows "missed"; initially it may have been an exclamation point ending the sentence prior to the addition of "before."

6 Superimposed over "way."

7 Superimposed over "slumber."

8 Near the top of the free endpaper verso the symbol "10D" is written in ink; unlike the text, the symbol is not inverted. In addition, in the upper right corner the symbol "mt.ot" is written in ink.

[leaf 1, verso]

1 This leaf is loose and contains, written upside down, a translation of the first eleven lines of Petrarch's Rime 359 from the Canzoniere. The working title is incorrect, this being the twenty-seventh canzone of the collection. The working title probably refers to that given the poem in an unidentified selected edition from which Elizabeth Barrett Browning translated.

2 Superimposed over "Whereat."

3 Superimposed over <***>.
[leaf 2, recto]

1 The information on this title page provides the only external evidence for dating the notebook; an account of the internal evidence for dating the manuscripts is included in Chapters IV and V. Leaf 2, like leaf 1, is loose.

[leaf 3, recto]

1 Fair copy of the sonnet first published in The Athenaeum of 29 October 1842 as "Sonnet of Mr. Haydon's Portrait on Mr. Wordsworth."

2 To the right of the title the numeral "3" is written in ink, indicating that this is the third page of the notebook beginning with and including the title page.

[leaf 3, verso]

1 An unpublished translation from the Italian of Felice Zappi (1667-1719); the bookseller's abbreviation "Unpub" is written in pencil in the upper left corner of the manuscript.

[leaf 4, recto]

1 An unpublished translation of the opening sonnet of the Canzoniere; the bookseller's notation "unpublished" is written in pencil in the upper left corner.

[leaf 4, verso]

1 An unpublished translation of sonnet 292 from the Canzoniere; like "Canzone 5," the poem bears a misleading title, complicating the identification of the edition from which Elizabeth Barrett Browning translated.
This abbreviation remains something of a mystery. According to Poole's Index of Periodical Literature, the only magazine published in Boston with the word "Boston" in the title was the Boston Quarterly, which would not have been abbreviated "Boston Evg." There were several newspapers, however, with likely titles, one of which, the Boston Evening Gazette, was in circulation in 1841-42. The poem was not published in Boston at all, however, but first appeared in Poems (1844). On a manuscript of the poem at Dartmouth, John Kenyon had added a note indicating that it was to appear in Graham's Magazine; unfortunately, that annotation is incorrect as well.

In addition, the bookseller's notation "published" is written in pencil in the upper left corner.

The poem was published without the subtitle.

The numeral "19" is written in ink in the poet's hand in the upper right margin; the significance of the notation is unknown.

This is an unpublished translation of sonnet 61 of the Canzoniere; the bookseller's abbreviation "unpub" is written in ink in the upper left margin.

Superimposed over "Still."

The bookseller's pencil notation "unpublished" in the upper left margin is incorrect; this poem was published for the first time in Poems (1844) as "George Sand. A Desire" in an altered but clearly recognizable form.

The pen name of French novelist Aurore Dudevant (1804-1876). "George Sand" is written in pencil in a bookseller's hand above the first line.
"The Princess Marie," ca. 373 lines, is the longest poem in the "Sonnets" notebook and records the multiple deaths in the Orleans family, the royal house of France, in the late 1830's and early 1840's. The historicity of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's account of the characters' deaths is discussed at length in Chapter IV.

Marie, for whom the poem is named, was Marie Christine (1813-1839), daughter of King Louis Philippe and Queen Marie Amelie of France.

Her father, King Louis Philippe (1779-1850), ruled France from 1830 to 1848. Hailed as the "citizen King," Louis Philippe enjoyed a reputation as a man of the people in spite of belonging to one of the oldest and most powerful families of France.

Superimposed over <***>.

For an interesting parallel, see "Napoleon III in Italy," lines 56-58.

In pencil, as a later revision.

In pencil, as a later revision.

In pencil, as a later revision.

Superimposed over "&."

This line and the six following are cancelled in pencil.

In pencil.

Cancelled in pencil.

In pencil.

Leaf 7 is loose.

The first four lines are cancelled in ink.

Superimposed over "W."
Her mother was Marie Amelie, wife of Louis Philippe and daughter of Ferdinand IV of Naples.

5 Underlined in ink, presumably a cancellation.

[leaf 7, verso]

1 Superimposed over "She."

2 The marginal notation "2(" appears in ink adjacent to this line and the one following and indicates that lines 5-6 and 7-8 would have appeared in reverse order in a subsequent draft of the poem.

3 The marginal notation "1)" appears in ink adjacent to lines 7-8. See above.

[leaf 8, recto]

1 The marginal notation "2" followed by a vertical line approximately one inch long is written adjacent to this stanza and indicates that the first and second stanzas would have appeared in reverse order in a subsequent draft.

2 Corrected in pencil.

3 Cancelled in pencil.

4 Originally "prest," with the standard suffix -ed superimposed over the archaic ending.

5 Corrected in pencil.

6 The marginal notation "1" followed by a vertical line approximately one inch long is written adjacent to this stanza. See above.

[leaf 9, recto]

1 Superimposed over <***>.

2 Superimposed over "A."
The stanzas in the left margin are written in a considerably lighter shade of ink, suggesting that they were composed somewhat later than the rest of the poem.

A number of stray marks appear between "marble" and "eye."

Superimposed over "see."

[leaf 9, verso]

The bookseller's abbreviation "unpub" is written in pencil in the upper left margin.

The Duke Alexander of Wurttemberg, who married Marie of Orleans over a year before her death.

Superimposed over "m," probably an aborted beginning of "made."

[leaf 10, recto]

Leaf 10 is loose.

[leaf 10, verso]

A necessary cancellation; six children of the Orleans family survived Marie and her brother.

Apparently no more than a single leaf is missing at this point, containing no doubt a description of the death of Ferdinand, duc d'Orleans, who died following a carriage accident on 13 July 1842.
This stanza is the first of six which the author later incorporated in "Human Life's Mystery" (1850). Though the rhyme scheme of these stanzas varies from that of the rest of the poem, it is obvious that these passages are intended as part of "The Princess Marie," probably as interior monologues of Louis Philippe's.

Later published in "Human Life's Mystery."

"It" is the correct reading, presumably a slip of the wrist for "in."

Later published in "Human Life's Mystery."

1 The pencil inscription "unpublished" is written in the upper left margin and is incorrect. Similarly, Klingman (SBHC 1980) wrongly identifies the early, heavily corrected draft of "A Year's Spinning" as an unpublished poem and entitles it by the first line, "She was a fair countess." This is the only known manuscript of the poem.

2 Though leaf 13 is loose, this appears to be the beginning of the poem, and much of this draft is absent from the published version. See Chapter III for an account of the variants.

In addition, examination of the binding suggests that at least one leaf is missing between the extant leaves 12 and 13. The condition of the binding also suggests that more than one full gathering may be lost at this point.

3 Superimposed over <***>.

4 Superimposed over "that."

5 Superimposed over <***>.

6 Superimposed over <***>.

[leaf 13, verso]

1 "Finite & infinite," is written in pencil in a bookseller's hand in the upper left margin.

2 First published in Poems (1850) as "Finite and Infinite"; the published version differs considerably from the draft.

3 Superimposed over <***>.

4 Superimposed over "was."

5 Since leaf 13 is loose, the remainder of this fragment may be lost; the draft is not heavily corrected, and it is unlikely that she simply abandoned the project.
[leaf 14, recto]

1 Superimposed over "play."

2 A line is drawn across the manuscript in ink, presumably by the author.

3 The letter "t" is superimposed over the letter "o."

4 Superimposed over "I."

[leaf 14, verso]

1 This fragment remains unpublished; "Bella" mentioned in line 1 is probably Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sister Arabella Moulton-Barrett (1813-1868).

2 "Little Mattie/v.2/pub" is written in pencil in a bookseller's hand in the upper left margin. The draft begins with what is the second stanza of the published version which first appeared in Cornhill magazine in June 1861.

3 Cancelled in pencil.

4 In pencil.

5 Cancelled in pencil.

[leaf 15, recto]

1 The entire first stanza is cancelled in pencil.

2 In pencil.

3 In pencil.

4 This line and the two following are cancelled in pencil.

5 The remainder of the page is written in pencil.

6 Superimposed over "week."

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7 Superimposed over "her."
8 In pencil, and nearly rubbed off the page.

[leaf 15, verso]

1 This poem remains unpublished.
2 Superimposed over "I."
3 Superimposed over <***>, perhaps "hast."
4 Superimposed over "hast."
5 Superimposed over "Yet."

[leaf 16, recto]

1 Superimposed over <***> <***>.

[lower free endpaper, recto]

1 The symbols "--not/ mt. ot." are written in pencil, upper left margin, just as they are on the upper free endpaper verso.
2 This fragment is unpublished.
3 Superimposed over "by."
4 Superimposed over <***>.
5 Between the lower free endpaper and the extant leaf 25, several leaves are missing, the torn edges of two being clearly visible and a straight, blade-cut edge of another remaining. In addition, the condition of the binding suggests that more than one gathering has been lost at this point in the notebook.
[leaf 25, verso]

1 Superimposed over <***>.
2 Superimposed over "thy."
3 Superimposed over "thy."
4 "Dry as stalk" is underlined in ink, probably intended as a cancellation.

[leaf 25, recto]

1 Superimposed over "foods."
2 Superimposed over ".&."
3 Superimposed over "re."
4 Superimposed over "br."

[leaf 24, verso]

1 The bookseller's abbreviation "unpub" appears in the upper left margin and is incorrect; this is an early draft of "A Man's Requirements," first published in Blackwood's in October 1846.
2 Superimposed over "Where."
3 Superimposed over <***>.

[leaf 24, recto]

1 The bookseller's abbreviation "unpub" appears in the upper left margin.
2 Superimposed over "still."
3 Superimposed over "as."
[leaf 23, verso]

1 The subject matter of the following is related to that of the fragment above but is a separate poem rather than an extension of "Rock me softly." See Chapter V.

2 Superimposed over <***>.

[leaf 23, recto]

1 The mark is written in ink in the margin following this stanza and may suggest that a missing passage be included at this point in a subsequent draft of the poem.

2 Superimposed over "in."

3 Superimposed over "came to."

[leaf 22, verso]

1 Superimposed over "it."

2 Underlined in ink, probably intended as a cancellation.

3 Superimposed over "is."

4 "On" and "the" are superimposed over one another.

[leaf 22, recto]

1 Superimposed over <***> <***>.

2 Superimposed over "wept."

3 Superimposed over <***>.

4 Superimposed over <***> <***>.

5 Superimposed over "smile."

6 A line in ink is drawn across the manuscript at this point.
[leaf 21, verso]

1 Superimposed over "I hear."
2 Underlined in ink, probably intended as a cancellation.
3 Superimposed over "Near."

[leaf 21, recto]

1 Superimposed over "breast."
2 Superimposed over <***>.
3 Superimposed over "&."

[leaf 20, verso]

1 Superimposed over "out."
2 Superimposed over "are."
3 Superimposed over <***>.
4 Superimposed over <***>.

[leaf 19, recto]

1 Superimposed over <***>.
2 Two words superimposed, both illegible.
3 Superimposed over <***>.
4 Superimposed over "made."

[leaf 18, verso]

1 In pencil.
2 Superimposed over "is."
3 In pencil.
4 Underlined in pencil, probably as a cancellation.
5 Superimposed over <***>.

[leaf 17, verso]

1 In pencil, top of page; whether it is in the poet's hand or a bookseller's is impossible to determine.
CHAPTER II

The Italian Translations:
Training in the Petrarchan Tradition

Much of the importance of the "Sonnets" notebook stems from its eleven unpublished poems, five of which are translations that could not be more significant were they original compositions. In all, there are six translations from Italian in the "Sonnets" manuscripts, four of which are unpublished fair copies. A study of these translations confirms a number of largely conjectural claims critics have made for years about Elizabeth Barrett Browning's familiarity with the conventional Petrarchan sonnet sequence, particularly with reference to the influence of the Canzoniere on the "Sonnets from the Portuguese." While it is greatly to the credit of those interested in the subject that they have deduced from the lyrics themselves what one can now discover from the evidence contained in "Sonnets," no
evaluation of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's indebtedness to Petrarch is conclusive that does not incorporate the unpublished translations from the "Sonnets" notebook. The following discussion, then, is divided between the study of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's translations from the Italian of Petrarch's Canzoniere and the Rime of Felice Zappi and an account of the ways in which the critical awareness of these primary materials contributes to an understanding of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's artistry and explains in part her development as a sonneteer of historical importance whose works are clearly within the Petrarchan tradition.

While the full extent of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's work as a translator is unknown, no less than sixty-seven of her verse translations are extant, in addition to four brief prose translations. There are one hundred nine separate manuscripts in all (well over two hundred leaves) containing her verse translations, though only ten are from Italian; of those, six are in the "Sonnets" notebook, only one of which, the fragment from Dante's Inferno, has been published. The "Sonnets" notebook contains four translations from Petrarch, the first, sixty-first, and two hundred ninety-second sonnets and the twenty-seventh canzone of the Canzoniere, all of which are unpublished. The remaining sonnet, also unpublished, is the twenty-sixth of Felice Zappi's Rime. Fortunately, most of the manuscripts of
Elizabeth Barrett Browning's translations from Italian are either dated in the author's hand or written on dated watermarked paper; that such dates are available facilitates the study of her work with Italian in relation to her other interests and publications, and examination of the manuscripts in "Sonnets," along with those now in the New York Public Library, casts new light on a number of longstanding critical assumptions about Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Italian scholarship and its impact on her own poetry.4

For example, critics have long attributed Elizabeth Barrett Browning's exclusive use of the Petrarchan sonnet form and her penchant for disyllabic rhymes to her having studied Italian; while it is not unlikely that she could have developed either tendency independently, new evidence of her having not only studied Italian but translated a variety of poems from the Canzoniere does, in fact, strengthen the argument for her indebtedness to Petrarch and the Italian sonneteers, particularly where matters of form are concerned.5 The likelihood of Italian influence on her choice of form seems even greater considering that, given the dates of her translations from Italian, she concentrated on Petrarch and Zappi in the late 1830's and early 1840's, the period of time during which she wrote almost all of her own original sonnets.6
On the other hand, examination of the Italian translations and her other works of the 1820's and 1830's points to no direct connection between her interest in Italian poetry and her use of disyllabic rhymes. In fact, there are several examples of feminine rhyme in The Battle of Marathon, which she wrote at the age of thirteen, with an eye on Pope, not Petrarch. And, oddly enough, with the original Italian in hand, her fondness for disyllabic rhymes all but disappears; in her eight translations from Petrarch and Dante, for example, where feminine rhyme is used exclusively in the original, there are only five disyllabic rhyme words. While her indebtedness to the Italian seems indisputable where form is concerned, it seems likely that the similarities between her disyllabic rhymes and those of the Italian sonneteers are merely coincidental.

In addition to confirming Elizabeth Barrett Browning's familiarity with the Canzoniere, the translations in the "Sonnets" notebook are important in a number of ways to a study of her early career. To begin with, they are her earliest extant love poems and the only ones composed before the "Sonnets from the Portuguese." The discovery of the manuscripts demonstrates not only that she had read Petrarch's sonnets to Laura shortly before meeting Robert Browning and composing the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," but that she translated and polished several of them into fair
copies and, in the process, enabled herself to adapt Petrarch's approach to the subject for use on her only publication of lasting popularity. Secondly, they are her first translations that are more poetic than academic and in which producing a polished poem takes precedence over reproducing countless idioms of the original language. In addition, they are her latest poems translated from Italian; also the next love poems she wrote were entirely her own. Aside from a four-line quotation in a letter to Browning in 1846, after producing fair copies of the translations in "Sonnets," she apparently abandoned her work with Italian altogether.7

Aside from a few general references to Petrarch in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's correspondence, scholars have found little evidence of her interest in his poetry and no evidence whatsoever of her having read the Canzoniere. Her catholicity of taste, however, and her tendency to mask her sources poorly invites the exploration of her personal library, and at least one excellent dissertation has been written on the relationship between the "Sonnets from the Portuguese" and the traditional Petrarchan sonnet sequence—but without a word on her translations from the Canzoniere. In an unpublished dissertation written at the University of Wisconsin in 1958 Melvyn Goldstein demonstrates at great length the Victorians' interest in Petrarch, their
preference for his poetry over that of Dante, the number and accessibility of nineteenth-century editions and translations of the Canzoniere, and the proliferation of English sonnet sequences after the first complete translation of Petrarch's works in 1856, all in the attempt to establish a connection between Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Petrarch.8

Missing from Goldstein's argument—and his is certainly not alone in this respect—is the incontestable evidence of her having read the Canzoniere.

For example, the facts that Capel Lofft in 1814 published a popular five-volume anthology of Petrarch's sonnets from various languages and that Susanna Dobson's translation of de Sade's Life of Petrarch was published in 1775 and went through five editions before 1810 imply the increasing interest in his work in the early nineteenth century but are only tangentially related to either Elizabeth Barrett Browning or the "Sonnets from the Portuguese."9 Heretofore the only available external evidence reflects that Elizabeth Barrett Browning went out of her way to visit Arezzo and Arqua, the places of Petrarch's birth and death, and that two volumes of his works were left in the Brownings' estate, one of which was given to her son by W. S. Landor two years after she died.10 That scholars have been correct about Elizabeth Barrett Browning's familiarity with Petrarch's works is the principal implication of the
"Sonnets" translation.\textsuperscript{11}

The translations by themselves are worthy of consideration on their own merits, moreover. Between the publication of The Seraphim and Other Poems (1838) and Poems (1844) Elizabeth Barrett Browning matured as an artist and abandoned the use of imitative style that marks much of her early derivative verse. Her poetic rather than simply linguistic translations from the Canzoniere mark the end of her slavish devotion to her models for imitation and point to her full-scale revision in 1848-1849 of her 1833 translation of Prometheus Bound, a second, vastly improved version of which was included in Poems (1850). She was satisfied in 1833 with executing what she later called "a frigid, rigid exercise"; by 1842, as the selections from "Sonnets" confirm, translations had not become so much an exercise in linguistic ingenuity as a means of polishing her own poetic skills.\textsuperscript{12}

Even so, the scarcity of available editions and translations of the entire Canzoniere complicates an evaluation of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's work with Petrarch's sonnets. Yet, even while maintaining a fourteen-line structure considerably more difficult in English than in Italian, she manages to produce translations which are remarkably accurate, given the complexity of the task and the difficulty of Petrarch's Italian, both of which
are demonstrated by the following line-by-line presentation.13

Rime 1

Voi ch' ascoltate in rime sparse il suono
Hearers, in broken rhyme, of echoes old

di quei sospiri ond' io nudriva 'l core
Of those weak sighs wherewith I fed mine heart

in sul mio primo giovenile errore
In my first youthful error, when in part

quand' era in parte altr' uom da quel ch' i' sono
I was another man than ye behold:

del vario stile in ch' io piango et ragiono
My weepings and my singings manifold

fra le vane speranze e 'l van dolore,
The balance of my vain desire and smart,

ove sia chi per prova intenda amore
Give me to hope from those who know Love's dart,

spero trovar pieta, non che perdono.
Some pity... though their pardon they withhold.

Ma ben veggio or si come al popol tutto
But now I can discern how very long

favola fui gran tempo, onde sovente
I was the people's proverb, and I wear

di me medesmo meco mi vergogno;
A blush before mine own soul, thus to seem!

et del mio vaneggiar vergogna è'l frutto
And shame is all the fruit of that vain song

e'l pentersi, e ' conoscer chiarmente
And late contrition, and the knowledge clear

che quanto piace al mondo e breve sogno.
That what the world calls sweetest, is a dream.
[You who hear in scattered rhymes the sound of those sighs with which I nourished my heart during my first youthful error, when I was in part another man from what I am now: for the varied style in which I weep and speak between vain hopes and vain sorrow, where there is anyone who understands love through experience, I hope to find pity, not only pardon. But now I see well how for a long time I was the talk of the crowd, for which often I am ashamed of myself within; and of my raving, shame is the fruit, and repentance, and the clear knowledge that whatever pleases in the world is a brief dream.]

Rime 61

Benedetto sia'l giono e'l mese et l'anno
How blessed be the day & month & year,

e la stagione e'l tempo et l'ora e'l punto
The season, time, the hour & moment—yea

e'l bel paese e'l loco ov'io fui giunto
The land and place, where first I did survey

da duo begli occhi che legato m'anno;
Two beautious eyes which took me prisoner.

et benedetto il primo dolce affano
And blessed be the first sweet grief severe

ch'i ebbi ad esser con Amor congiunto,
Which I endured in meeting Love that day—

et l'arco e le saette ond'i' fui punto,
The bows and arrows which he shot away,

et le piaghe che'nfin al cor mi vanno.
And the heart-piercing wounds which rankle here.

Benedetto le voci tante ch'io
Blessed, the many breaths I did respire

chiamando il nome de mia donna o sparte,
In callings round the world my lady's name,

e i sospiri et le lagrime e'l desio;
The lover's sighs, the tears, and the desire!

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et benedette sian tutte le carte
And blessed, all the songs which gave her fame,

ov'io fame l'acquisito, e'l pensier mio,
And all my thoughts, though unsung on the lyre--

ch'è sol di lei sì ch'altra non v'ha parte.
Since all must still be of Her, and the same.

[Blessed be the day and the month and the year and the season and the time and the hour and the instant and the beautiful countryside and the place where I was struck by the two lovely eyes that have bound me; and blessed be the first sweet trouble I felt on being made one with Love, and the bow and the arrows that pierced me, and the wounds that reach my heart! Blessed be the many words I have scattered calling the name of my lady, and the sighs and the tears and the desire; and blessed be all the pages where I gain fame for her, and my thoughts, which are only of her, so that no other has part in them!]

Rime 292

Gli occhi di ch'io parlai caldamente,
The eyes I spake such ardent praises on,

et le braccia et le mani e i peidi e'l viso
The arms, the little hands, the feet and face

che m'avean sì da me stesso diviso
That twixt myself and me did thrust their grace

et fatto singular da l'altra gente,
And forced me in the world to dwell alone,

le crespe chiome d'or puro lucente
The crisped curls whose gold so clearly shone,

e'l lampeggiar de l'angelico riso
The angel smile's sun-lightening, which apace

che solean fare in terra un paradiso,
Made paradise where earth showed no such place
poca polvere son che nulla sente.
Are now a little dust affecting none!

Et io pur vivo, onde mi doglio et sdegno,
And still I live!.. Whence I bewail & scorn

rimaso senza'l lume ch'amai tanto
This life left blind.. surviving that dear light--

in gran fortuna e'n disarmato legno.
This shattered bark on stormy waters borne!

Or sia qui fine al mio amoroso canto;
End here, o loving songs I did delight

secca è la vena de usato ingegno,
To sing my love in! the old vein is worn--

et la cetera mia rivolta in pianto.
And where I struck the harp, I weep outright.

[The eyes of which I spoke so warmly, and the arms and the hands and the feet and the face that had so estranged me from myself and isolated me from other people, the curling locks of pure shining gold, and the lightning of the angelic smile that used to make a paradise on earth, all are a bit of dust that feels nothing. And I still alive, at which I am sorrowful and angry, left without the light I loved so, in a great tempest and a dismasted ship. Now let there be an end to my song of love; dry is the vein of my accustomed evil, and my lyre is turned to weeping.]

Canzone 27

Quando il soave mio fido conforto
When she my sweet and faithful consolation

per dar riposo a la mia stanca
Some peace upon my weary life rested

ponsi del letto in su la sponda manca
Comes on the left side of my bed

con quel suo dolce ragionare accorto,
Puts her with exhortation
tutto di pieta et di paura smorto
I faint with dread & moved with solemn passion
dico: "Onde vien tu ora, o felice alma?"
Aclaim Whence comest thou o spirit calm
Un ramoscel di palma
A little branch of palm
et un di lauro trae del suo bel seno,
And one of laurel draws she from her breast
et dice: "Dal sereno
Thereat & saith-- From rest
Ciel empireo et di quelle sante parti
In the empyraeum Heaven 'neath Gods' holy feet
mi mossi, et vengo sol per consolarti."
I come--& only to console thee, sweet.

[When my gentle, faithful comforter, to give repose to my weary life, sits on the left side of my bed with that sweet, skillful talk of hers, all pale with anguish and fear, I say: "Where do you come from now, O happy soul?" A little palm branch and a laurel branch she draws from her lovely bosom and says: "From the cloudless empyrean Heaven and from those holy places I have come, and I come only to console you."

The dominant stylistic peculiarity of these translations is apparent in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's abandonment of grammatical concerns in favor of simply retaining as many nouns from the original as possible. By actual count, the other parts of speech fare considerably worse. For example, in lines 12-14 of Rime 1, every single noun of the original is translated word for word, while "breve" (line 14), the key adjective--perhaps the key word--of the entire poem on the ephemeral nature of worldly happiness, is omitted from the
translation altogether. Similarly, in Rime 292, lines 11-14, the image of the storm-tossed ship is translated directly into English, but the substitution of "shattered" for "dismasted" ("disarmato") and "old" for "dry" ("secca") is considerably less exact. That she was more conscious of retaining Petrarch's imagery than his choice of modifiers, or verbs for that matter, reflects less interest in faithfulness to the text than in reproducing the pictorial rather than grammatical elements of the Canzoniere.

As with any poetic translation, syntactical rearrangements dictated by meter and the structure of English grammar require an emphasis on translating sentences rather than lines of poetry. Most important, however, is that the translations from Petrarch in 1842, unlike those she executed earlier, are quite intelligible and free of the pedantic concern for every nuance of the original language. Her early translations from Greek, in particular, show a grammarian's, not a poet's touch, but that her translations from Italian are more pictorial than literal hardly reflects a greater knowledge of that language. The number of her translations from Greek, in fact, along with her series of essays on the Greek Christian poets in 1842, suggests quite the opposite. Rather, the freeness of the translations from Italian resulting from an emphasis on stronger poetry at the expense of faithfulness to the text mirrors the considerable
improvement in the quality of her poetry in general written between 1838 and 1844. In addition, her translations from Italian were not subjected to the scrutiny of her mentor Hugh Stuart Boyd, a Greek scholar whose advice on poetic translations Elizabeth Barrett Browning heeded in the 1830's with unfortunate frequency.

A similar emphasis on imagery at the expense of grammar is evident in her translation of a single sonnet by Giovanni Battista Felice Zappi (1667-1719), the appearance of which in the "Sonnets" notebook arouses interest almost solely on the grounds of Zappi's obscurity. His works are currently out of print in Italian and have been for a number of years, and apparently there has never been a book-length publication of Zappi's works translated into English. There have been a few translations of individual poems, nonetheless, one of which was executed by Robert Browning, whose penchant for exploring the works of forgotten Continental artists prompted his translation of "The 'Moses' of Michelangelo" in 1850.

Felice Zappi was an Imolese lawyer of the Arcadian Academy, in the eighteenth century the largest assortment of Italian literati in whose ranks of meritorious authors was an assortment of professional men and other dilettantes whose enthusiasm for poetry and the arts outweighed their talents considerably. Of the few critics whose comments on Zappi are available, most regard his wife, Faustina Mauratti,
as the superior poet, and descriptions of his works run rife with such adjectives as "simple-minded" and "insipid." Though Italian critics seem to regard Zappi's works with only slightly more respect than their English counterparts do those of Richard Flecknoe, his poetry retained a measure of popularity well into the nineteenth century. His Rime went through thirteen editions in the hundred or so years following his death (few "simple-minded" poets have fared so well), and only in the twentieth century have his readers disappeared.

That Zappi's poetry was once widely read and both Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning independently gave their attention to it perhaps invites a re-evaluation of its literary merits, and though his works are largely inaccessible today, the selection translated by Elizabeth Barrett Browning shows him to be no more predictable than countless other imitators of Petrarch. The date of Zappi's composition is unknown; the version reproduced below is from the 1818 edition of the Rime, the last published before the date of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's translation. Unfortunately, there is no other English translation available for use as a convenient standard.

Rime 26

Amor s'asside alla mia Filli accanto,
Love sits beside my Phillis allday long:
Amor la segue ovunque i passi gira; 
Love follows closely whereso' er she lies,

In lei parla, in lei tace, in lei sospira, 
Speaks in her. . . is mute in her. . . in her, sighs. .

Anzi in lei vive, ond' ella, ed ei puo tanto. 
Yea, lives in her. . till he and she are strong.

Amore i vezzi, Amor le insegnna il canto; 
Love teacheth her his graces and his song;

E se mai duolsi, o se pur mai s'adira, 
And if she weeps or if her wrath shall rise,

Da lei non parte Amore, anzi si mira 
Love parts not from her so, but magnifies

Amor nelle bell*ire, Amor nel pianto. 
Himself in her sweet tears & sense of wrong.

Se avvien, che danzi in regolate errore, 
And if she haply treads the measured maze

Darle il moto al bel piede Amor riveglio, 
Love waves her pretty foot discernably

Come l'auretta quando muove un fiore. 
As the air moves a flower in summer days.

Le veggio in fronte Amor come in suo seggio, 
I see Love in her brows throned royally,

Sul crin, negli occhi, sulle labbra Amore; 
Love in her hair, and eyes, and lips always--

Sol d'intorno al suo cuore Amor non veggio. 
But near her heart, this Love, I do not see.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning never mentions Zappi in her published correspondence nor did her copy of his works remain in the Brownings' estate long enough to be auctioned at Sotheby's in 1913.\(^2\) Zappi's Rime is clearly in the Petrarchan tradition, and if Elizabeth Barrett Browning
translated conventional Italian love lyrics by persons as celebrated as Francesco Petrarcha and as obscure as Felice Zappi it is unlikely that she was familiar with no others, even if she did not bother to translate them. Subsequently discovered manuscripts may well include additional translations executed by Elizabeth Barrett Browning or drafts of her published translations, such as the opening passage of Dante's *Inferno*, which she began on the upper free endpaper verso of "Sonnets" and polished as fair copies now at Yale and the Huntington.

Were it not for the recently published findings of Philip Kelley and Betty Coley in *The Browning Collections* (1984) and the auction of a portion of Arthur Houghton's library at Christie's in 1979, the extent of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's interest in Italian sonneteers might well have remained unknown. Her manuscripts and personal library have been difficult to trace since the auction of her son's estate in 1913, and the references to Petrarch in her published correspondence indicate no more than a casual interest in his life and no interest at all in his poetry. None of her six translations from Petrarch have found their way into print, though five of the eleven manuscripts are fair copies presumably intended for publication.23 Aside from the volume (now missing) given by Landor to Robert Wiedemann Barrett Browning in 1863, only one volume of
Petrarch's works was in the Brownings' estate in 1913, a 1829 publication of the Canzoniere in four volumes, only the first volume of which is extant.\textsuperscript{24}

There are no inscriptions, however, indicating whether the volume belonged to Elizabeth Barrett or to Robert Browning or whether it was acquired by either one shortly after it was published—well before they were married—or during their residence in Italy, 1846-1861. In other words, there is no incontestable evidence suggesting that Elizabeth Barrett Browning used the 1829 edition in her translations in the early 1840's. Locating the specific edition from which she translated is not so much an exercise in bibliographic hairsplitting as it first appears, though it would be of little consequence were it not for the peculiar numbering of her working titles and what those titles might mean.

As indicated in the transcript of "Sonnets," Elizabeth Barrett Browning labels Rime 292 of the Canzoniere "Sonnet XI" and Canzone 27 "Canzone 5." What one can infer from her titles is uncertain, though the possibilities are intriguing. Her numbering of the poems indicates nothing, however, about their arrangement in "Sonnets," for she consistently mislabels the same poems as well as others in manuscript notebooks at the New York Public Library, the British Library, and the Wellesley Collection. For example, the draft in the Berg Notebook I entitled "Petrarch 4th Canzone"
is actually Rime 126 of the Canzoniere, and her so-called "Canzone 5" (Rime 359) is similarly mislabeled in fair copies at Wellesley and the British Library.25

That so many of her extant translations from Petrarch are fair copies bearing titles referring to perhaps no particular Italian edition suggests that Elizabeth Barrett Browning may well have entertained plans of producing a selected edition of Petrarch's Canzoniere herself. Her mislabeling Rime 292 as first "From Son IV Petrarch" in the Berg Notebook I and subsequently "Translated from Petrarch. Sonnet XI" in "Sonnets" implies that she may have worked from different Italian editions—an unlikely prospect given the time frame—or that her working titles may refer to a tentative arrangement of translations suitable for publication. Obviously she finished the fair copy, "Translated from Petrarch. Sonnet XI," in "Sonnets" later than the emended draft labeled "From Son IV Petrarch" at the Berg, and her changing the working title of the same poem from sonnet four to sonnet eleven suggests that she had either changed the order in which she would have preferred the poems to appear or had in the process of polishing "From Son IV Petrarch" completed fair copies of seven additional translations, none of which are extant.

One simply cannot overlook Elizabeth Barrett Browning's entitling the Houghton notebook "Sonnets" and then
immediately setting about compiling fair copies of sonnets, most of which are translations, with the probable intention of submitting them to Moxon. Excluding the drafts from Dante and Petrarch written upside down (and probably later than the other poems in the notebook) on the upper free endpaper and leaf 1 verso, respectively, the first seven poems in the notebook are sonnets, four of which are fair copies of Italian translations. The likelihood of her submitting the translations individually to periodicals such as Blackwood's or The Athenaeum seems remote; a random translation or two every so often would have appealed to few subscribers, and there is no record of her having sent them to a magazine.

At any rate, the extensiveness of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's knowledge of languages and the number and occasional beauty of her translations from Greek and Latin, not to mention Italian, belie Gardner Taplin's final assessment of her interest to scholars not as a poet and translator of merit but only as "one of the greatest personalities of an age." Late in life she called her years of translating a waste of time, but her affinity for language studies proved invaluable to her in her own experiments with prosody and in her development as a poet of considerable international reputation. That only three years after finishing her Petrarchan translations Elizabeth Barrett Browning began writing the sonnet sequence which was to
become her greatest achievement is considerably less
surprising to her readers familiar with her work with Italian
sonnet sequences than it was to both her contemporaries and
her critics unaware of the translations now available in the
"Sonnets" notebook.
Notes


2 Kelley and Coley 353-62.


4 Kelley and Coley 353-62.

5 See, for example, Dorothy Hewlett, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (London: Cassell, 1953), 114-15.

6 Kelley and Coley 360-61.

7 Kelley and Coley 361.


9 Goldstein 119, 120.


11 In addition, a copy of Lady Barbarina Dacre's Translations from the Italian (London, 1836) was among the items sold at Sotheby's in 1913. The whereabouts of the volume are currently unknown.


13 The accompanying Italian versions and the English prose translations are from Robert Durling's Petrarch's Lyric Poems: The Rime Sparse and Other Lyrics (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1976); Stephen Minta, Petrarch and Petrarchanism: The English and French Tradition (Manchester:
Regrettably Elizabeth Barrett Browning failed on three separate occasions to complete a translation of this canzone, one of the most moving of the entire Canzoniere.

It is interesting to speculate whether or not she failed to retain—or even recognize—the emasculation image of the original solely because such is not a feminine concern.

Taplin 231.


Vernon Leigh, Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy (London: Unwin, 1906), 27.

Lee 27.

The National Union Catalogue, 629-30.

Rime Di G. Battista Felice Zappi e di Sua Consorte Faustina Mauratti (Firenze: Presso Angiolo Garinei, 1819), 38.

Kelley and Coley.

Kelley and Coley 361.

Kelley and Coley 156.

Kelley and Coley 361.

Taplin 424.
CHAPTER III

The Composition and Revision of the Published Drafts

While the unpublished translations from Italian in the "Sonnets" notebook confirm Elizabeth Barrett Browning's direct familiarity with the conventional Petrarchan sonnet sequence, the early drafts—in some cases the earliest extant—of poems later published for the first time in a variety of periodicals, Poems (1844 and 1850) and Last Poems (1862) invite the study of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's working methods, practice of revision, and supervision of publications. The discovery of the "Sonnets" manuscripts facilitates the kind of textual analysis not included in existing scholarship; examination of the development of the texts, however, extends well beyond the "Sonnets" notebook, and the types of alterations that appear from drafts to fair copies illuminate Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetic techniques as well as her process of composition. In addition, variants in the published versions—and there are many—reveal the extent to which she worked (or did not work) with her publishers, and the examination of the published
variants introduces a number of questions which cannot be ignored in the establishment of the text of her poetry.

That no one has established the text of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry may be attributed in part to the extraordinary number of her cancellations and revisions, the dispersal of her manuscripts and corrected proofs following the auction of the Browning's estate at Sotheby's in 1913, and the brilliantly perpetrated forgeries of Thomas J. Wise. Fortunately, Wise's chicaneries were uncovered through the investigations of John Carter and Graham Pollard, whose findings were published in 1934, though none of the poems in the "Sonnets" notebook were subject to his fraudulent efforts.² The omissions (over 500 of them), shortcomings, and forgeries of Wise's bibliography of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's works have been noted and corrected by Warner Barnes in his comprehensive Bibliography of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1967), and Philip Kelley and Betty Coley have recently located and described the poet's extant manuscripts and corrected proofs in The Browning Collections (1984).³ Still lacking attention, though, are the revisions themselves in the manuscripts and the variants, both substantive and accidental, in the authorized publications; the removal of the "Sonnets" manuscripts from private hands in 1979 offers a beginning for such a project.

The purpose of this examination is not to establish a
copy text of the poems from "Sonnets" but rather to outline stages of composition, many of which are dramatic and demonstrate Elizabeth Barrett Browning's meticulous care in revising her poems. In the process, however, it becomes apparent in most cases which version of a poem most closely approximates what Fredson Bowers calls "ideal copy." Before turning to the complications introduced by the authorized publications, though, it is necessary to outline the kinds of revisions apparent in the manuscripts and to examine why Elizabeth Barrett Browning chose to make them in the first place.

The anonymous reviewer of The Seraphim and Other Poems in the Literary Gazette of 1 December 1838 disparaged Elizabeth Barrett Browning's apparently hasty composition and her penchant for fashioning her poetry "upon the very worst portion of Keats and Tennyson, in labouring for outlandish compound words, picking up obsolete phrases, and accenting every unnecessary syllable." The accusations of carelessness and second-hand tennysonianisms have outlasted Elizabeth Barrett Browning's lengthy denials, and she has been consistently berated for her half-rhymes, sight-rhymes, and disregard for conventional meters while receiving little credit for her experiments in technique. Gardner Taplin, for example, claims that most of her poems call for at least one more careful revision and John Ruskin playfully described her
awkward rhythms as

Tesseric, pentic, hectic, heptic,
Phoenico-daemonic, and dyspeptic
Hipped-ic, Pipped-ic, East-Wind-nipped-ic,
Stiffened like styptic, doubled in diptich
Possi-kephaly-cherseclyptic.7

John Kenyon often read Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry aloud to her, and Mary Russell Mitford once seriously ventured that Mrs. Browning's failure to notice her stylistic peculiarities was the result of Kenyon's having lost his teeth.8 Examination, however, of her working methods as evidenced in the thirty-odd extant manuscripts of the published poems in "Sonnets" confirms Alethea Hayter's suggestion that Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poems were not the result of hasty composition but of hours of revision and choices deliberately made.9

Hayter maintains that Elizabeth Barrett Browning composed on "small slips of paper" the margins of which, like those of her page proofs, she filled with revisions and that she re-worked her poetry constantly even after publication.10 While that assessment is generally correct, it needs clarifying in light of evidence to which Hayter had no access in 1962. Elizabeth Barrett Browning usually composed in notebooks like the "Sonnets" at Baylor
and the "Manuscript Poems and Sonnets" at Yale; whatever "small slips of paper" Hayter observed were almost certainly excisions from manuscript notebooks of which she had no knowledge. That Elizabeth Barrett Browning was a careful revisionist prior to publication is evident in her manner of correction and in the number of times she re-wrote poems before producing fair copies; that her interest waned, however, once she submitted poems for publication is a matter Hayter and others have failed to consider for want of comparing the latest fair copies against the authorized published versions and is a probability supported by the findings of this investigation.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning usually wrote and corrected in ink and made immediate revisions by adding superscriptions with or without cancelling prior choices or by re-writing stanzas in toto in the margins of her manuscripts. The revisions made on the various drafts and fair copies of the eleven poems from "Sonnets" appearing in authorized publications fall into three general categories and reflect in most cases Elizabeth Barrett Browning's concern for removing ambiguities, controlling the dramatic effect of punctuation, and creating smoother rhythms. In the case of "A Year's Spinning," the only manuscript of which is in the "Sonnets" notebook, she completely changes the subject of the poem by removing, no doubt with an eye on unsympathetic
critics, a number of elements reflecting an obvious indebtedness to Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott." In other poems, "Little Mattie" and "To George Sand. A Desire," for example, changes made between the latest fair copy and the first published version show her concern for improving the musicality of lines and eliminating sources of potential indecorous or unintentional humor. While the resulting poems may appeal to fewer readers now than in the 1850's, charges of her writing carelessly are completely unwarranted.

In order to clarify meanings or remove ambiguities Elizabeth Barrett Browning typically altered poems between drafts rather than cancelled the passages in question. In line 12 of the "Sonnets" draft of "The Poet and the Bird," for example, "the poet's singing" which remained with the villagers is changed to "the poet's song" in subsequent versions, and the revision is an improvement not only of meter but of meaning as well. In other words, a poet's actual singing could not survive his death while his songs easily could. Similarly, the needless and indefinite archaisms "narrow marge" appearing in the Yale and Chellis manuscripts of "Finite and Infinite" is wisely replaced by "straightened place" in all the published versions. The awkward phrase "sanctity of face" in line 13 of the only manuscript version of "To George Sand. A Desire" Elizabeth Barrett Browning omits from the first published version, as
she does the line "Who hast no claim to either sex," which was patently untrue, even for Aurora Dudevant.

Without our considering the complications of varied punctuation in the published versions, it is apparent that a single basic trend in punctuation changes appears in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's holographs. In a selected edition of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's correspondence Percy Lubbock suggested in 1906 that she picked up her unorthodox punctuation from reading Robert Browning's letters, but her correspondence with Browning did not begin until 1845 and the drafts in the "Sonnets" notebook clearly demonstrate that Browning's epistolary style had no bearing on her mechanics.\(^{11}\) That dashes were an integral part of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's style, as Alethea Hayter claims, is demonstrated throughout her manuscripts but is particularly evident in the early drafts.\(^ {12}\) Most dramatic punctuation—exclamation points, double hyphens, and dashes, as well as underlining for emphasis—is reduced in subsequently written holographs. There are occasional exceptions to the trend, but for the most part Elizabeth Barrett Browning's emphatic and unconventional punctuation reflects an early stage of composition where indecision and groping after words are accompanied by marks indicating longer caesura or sharper stress. She once told Robert Browning that when she began a poem her "tongue clove to the
roof" of her mouth, suggesting a difficulty in articulation evident in the appearance of her holographs; examination of her stages of composition indicates that as she grew more comfortable with a poem her dependence upon heavier punctuation lessened considerably.13

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's desire to improve the musicality of lines, i.e., to smooth rhythms and replace inharmonious words and phrases, accounts for a third type of revision evident between drafts of her poems. For example, subsequent to the Yale draft of "A Reed," lines 5-6, "One blast that leaves an echoing/ That leaves the bondsman bound for ever more," become the simpler, less repetitive "One blast that in re-echoing/ Would leave a bondsman faster bound." The revised lines are stronger and the poem is better for the change. And however prosaic the name "Rhamses" may seem ("Little Mattie," line 24), it is a definite improvement over "Cheops," which she uses in the Yale and "Sonnets" manuscripts, though it is interesting to note that both names of the infamous pharaoh were current in the 1840's just as they are now.

One word more on her manuscript revisions. Changes not made between drafts but rather executed by cancelling passages and adding superscriptions introduce additional complications for an editor and almost always involve alterations of the rhyme scheme. The cancellations and
superscription revisions in the opening stanza of "The Princess Marie" perfectly illustrate this practice and demonstrate that she was every bit as careful with regard to rhyming as she claimed in a letter to R. H. Horne:

Know, then, that my rhymes are really meant for rhymes—and that I take them to be actual rhymes—as good rhymes as any used by rhymer and that in no spirit of carelessness or easy writing, or desire to escape difficulties, have I run into them...14

It might be argued, rather, that she went to considerable difficulties to run into such rhymes as "vision free" and "poetry" in "On a Portrait of Wordsworth" and "should press" and "appliances" in "An Apprehension." In fact, Virginia Woolf, not the warmest champion of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's verse, even acknowledged that her extensive use of experimental rhymes gave Elizabeth Barrett Browning "some complicity in the development of modern poetry."15

While examination of the manuscripts in the "Sonnets" notebook and the Chellis collection at Baylor, "Manuscript Last Poems" at Yale, and a variety of other holographs at the Berg Collection and the John Rylands Library suggests that Elizabeth Barrett Browning was a conscientious manuscript revisionist, even a preliminary study of her authorized publications reveals that she was considerably less
meticulous in her supervision of a poem once it appeared in print. That is not to say that none of the published variants are authorial; Elizabeth Barrett Browning openly discusses in her letters—one, in fact, to William Wordsworth—her plans to change lines 10-11 of "On a Portrait of Wordsworth" after it first appeared in The Athenaeum. (That Wordsworth had objected to the passage in question, however, no doubt prompted the revision, though she rejected his suggestion of a way to simplify the syntax and revised the passage on her own.) How closely Elizabeth Barrett Browning worked with her publishers is questionable in light of the kinds of variants which appear in the publications over which she had at least nominal supervision.

One such variant is particularly revealing. Though they never met, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Benjamin Robert Haydon, on whose portrait of Wordsworth she wrote the sonnet, carried on a lengthy correspondence recently edited by Willard Bissell Pope, and Pope includes in a footnote, whenever possible, the information contained on the envelopes in which the letters were mailed. Only one of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's envelopes in which she mailed a letter to Haydon is extant, and it is addressed to "B R Haydon Esq." The point is insignificant except that the initials are incorrect in every single British authorized publication of the sonnet on his portrait of Wordsworth. In
Poems (1844), Poems (1850), Poems Third Edition (1853), and Poems Fourth Edition (1856), the initials read "R. B. Haydon"; the error does not appear in The Athenaeum version of the poem (1842) where she simply calls him "Mr. Haydon."

The address on the extant envelope indicates that Elizabeth Barrett Browning knew what Haydon's Christian name was, but were there no concrete evidence it would still be inconceivable that she could have written so many letters to a prominent artist and remained ignorant of his initials. Ironically, the mistake does not appear in the American first edition of A Drama of Exile, the counterpart to Poems (1844). 17

The failure to correct Haydon's transposed initials in four authorized publications is an obvious oversight suggesting that Elizabeth Barrett Browning paid little attention to the changes her publishers introduced to her poems. At the Armstrong Browning Library there are a number of leaves excised from Poems (1844) which she used as proof sheets for Poems (1850), and among those included is the sonnet on Haydon's portrait. While there are autograph corrections in the margins of several of these poems, the sonnet with the error in the title remained completely untouched. Consequently, the addition of the comma following "Wordsworth" in the title of the 1850 edition is not authorial, nor is the removal of the exclamation point
following "Heavens" in line 12. This introduction of changes is apparently inconsistent. "To George Sand. A Desire" and "An Apprehension," both from "Sonnets" and both among the excised proof sheets, were similarly unmarked by the poet and appear in Poems (1850) exactly as they do in Poems (1844).¹⁸

Elizabeth Barrett Browning corresponded with her publishers and apparently got along well with them. Why she changed from Edward Moxon, who published the 1844 volume, to Chapman and Hall, who published the other volumes under examination here, is unknown, though it may have had something to do with Robert Browning's having used them previously.¹⁹ (One recalls that Poems of 1850 was Elizabeth Barrett Browning's first book-length publication after she eloped in 1846.) At any rate, such a change alone should have introduced no new accidentals to the text since the house style of Bradbury and Evans was used by both Moxon and Chapman and Hall. The general trend toward reduced dramatic punctuation in the published versions mirrors that of the manuscripts but may well have been the result of editorial, not authorial, decisions. Elizabeth Barrett Browning spent very little time in England after her marriage, and it is doubtful that she followed closely a third or fourth printing of a poem written in the early 1840's, especially as late as 1856 when Aurora Leigh was in
the works. Unfortunately, if proof sheets are extant for Poems Third Edition (1853) and Poems Fourth Edition (1856), their whereabouts are currently unknown.

That Elizabeth Barrett Browning's editors took liberties with her punctuation in 1853 and 1856 is uncertain; it is quite certain, on the other hand, that she supervised, however carelessly, the publication of Poems (1850). Comparison of the 1850 versions against the latest fair copies, one of which is in the British Library and is currently unavailable in microfilm, should settle the matter of ideal copy. The purpose of the present study, however, is not to establish a copy text but to demonstrate stages of composition of the published poems in the "Sonnets" notebook, and printing the latest authorized version in full by no means implies greater authority. Rather, presenting variants in chronological order from both manuscripts and publications best illustrates the full range of changes made during the author's lifetime.

The nature of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's revisions on her manuscripts requires a brief explanation of the editorial approaches in the following presentation. To begin with, in the examination of heavily revised drafts, only the final version of the poem is considered in the variorum. Variants between drafts are noted but not changes made within the same draft; while the resulting variorum is not selective with
regard to which manuscripts are examined, it is complete only so far as final versions of individual drafts are concerned.

In other words, cancelled passages are not considered manuscript variants; to include them would be essentially to reproduce all the drafts among the list of variants and would involve an endless variety of transcriptions of deleted passages, illegible cancellations, superscriptions and the like. Passages containing such superscriptions and cancellations are marked, however, with an asterisk indicating where Elizabeth Barrett Browning rejected earlier choices. Often the same variants appear in more than one manuscript or early published version. All variants are listed in each manuscript or publication, however, rather than simply once with additional entries noted by abbreviated titles; such single entry listings would introduce more complications than they would remove and would poorly demonstrate the different stages of composition from draft through authorized final version. Manuscripts are naturally listed in chronological order; undated manuscripts are listed just as they are in Kelley and Coley unless internal evidence, recorded in footnotes, indicates the order of composition.

Entire lines are included in variant listings only if shorter entries would introduce ambiguities. Otherwise, only the variant word or phrase is given. Variant marks of
punctuation are listed along with adjacent words indicating context, and terminal marks of punctuation are given along with the single preceding words.

Abbreviations of Frequently Used Titles

Publications:


Manuscript Locations:

Aldrich: The Aldrich Collection of the Iowa State Historical
Society.

Baylor: The Armstrong Browning Library, Baylor University.

Baylor ("Sonnets"): The "Sonnets" notebook.


Chellis: The Chellis Collection, Armstrong Browning Library, Baylor University.

Dartmouth: The Dartmouth College Library, Dartmouth University.


V&A: The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Wellesley: The Wellesley College Library.

Yale: The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

From Poems 4th edition (1856):

ON A PORTRAIT OF WORDSWORTH BY R. B. HAYDON.

Wordsworth upon Helvellyn! Let the cloud
Ebb audibly along the mountain-wind
Then break against the rock, and show behind
The lowland valleys floating up to crowd
The sense with beauty. He with forehead bowed
And humble-lidded eyes, as one inclined
Before the sovran thought of his own mind,
And very meek with inspirations proud,
Takes here his rightful place as poet-priest
By the high altar, singing prayer and prayer
To the higher Heavens. A noble vision free
Our Haydon's hand has flung out from the mist!
No portrait this, with Academic air!
This is the poet and his poetry.

Variants

Poems 3rd edition (1853):
2. [wind,]; 5. [He, with]; 8. [proud,—];
10. [high-altar]; 13. [Academic air--].

Poems (1850):
2. [wind,]; 5. [He, with]; 8. [proud,—];
10. [high-altar]; 11. [free,]; 13. [Academic air--].

A Drama of Exile (1845):
title. [WORDSWORTH, BY B. R. HAYDON]; 2. [wind,];
5. [He, with]; 8. [proud,—]; 12. [Heavens!] [free,];
13. [air--].

Poems (1844):
title. [WORDSWORTH, BY]; 2. [wind,]; 5. [He, with];
8. [proud,—]; 12. [Heavens!] [free,]; 13. [Academic air--].

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The Athenaeum, 29 October 1842:

title. [SONNET/ On Mr. Haydon's Portrait of Mr. Wordsworth.]; 1. [Helvellyn!—Let]; 2. [wind,]; 4. [vallies]; 5. [He]; 8. [proud,—]; 9. [poet-priest,]; 11. [To the yet higher heav'ns. A vision free]; 12. [And noble, Haydon, hath thine art releast—]; 13. [this with].

Fair Copy, Yale:

title. [Sonnet/ On Mr. Haydon's picture of Mr. Wordsworth. 1842--]; 2. [mountain=wind]; 4. [vallies]; 5. [He]; 6. [humble=lidded]; 8. [proud;..]; 9. [poet=priest]; 11. [Heav'ns.] [A vision free]; 12. [And noble, Haydon, hath thine Art releast.]; 13. [No portrait this with Academic air—]; signed. [Elizabeth Barrett B—].

Fair Copy, Harvard:

title: [Sonnet/ on Haydon's picture of Mr. Wordsworth. 1842.]; 2. [mountain=wind]; 4. [vallies]; 5. [He]; 6. [humble=lidded]; 8. [proud;..]; 9. [poet-priest]; 10. [prayer & prayer]; 11. [Heav'ns] [A vision free]; 12. [And noble, Haydon, hath thine art releast.]; 13. [this with Academic air]; signed. [Elizabeth Barrett]; annotated. [Very fine—B R Haydon].
Fair Copy, Baylor ("Sonnets"):

title. [Mr. Haydon's portrait of Mr. Wordsworth];
2. [mountain=wind]; 3. [&]; 4. [vallies]; 5. [He];
7. [thoughts]; 10. [prayer & prayer]; 11. [yet higher
Heav'ns.] [A vision free]; 12. [And noble, Haydon, hath
thine Art releast!]; 13. [this with] [air--];
subscript. [Evangelist of nature].

Fair Copy, Berg:

title. [Sonnet/ On Mr. Haydon's picture of Mr.
Wordsworth--/ 1842]; 2. [mountain=wind]; 3. [&];
4. [vallies]; 5. [He]; 6. [humble=lidded];
7. [thoughts]; 9. [place, the poet=priest]; 10. [&];
11. [Heav'ns] [A vision free]; 12. [And noble, Haydon,
ham thine Art releast!]; 13. [air!--*];
signed. [EBB].

Draft, Berg:

title. [untitled]; 3. [against his foot & slow define];
4. [Its lowland (the remainder of the line is
illegible)]; 5. [He standing there with <***> kingly
forehead bowed]); 7. [Humbly before the thoughts of his
own mind]; 8. [proud]; 9. [Assumes]; 10. [altars]
[prayer & prayer]; 11. [Out of the earth to Heaven!]
[That vision noble and free*]; 12. [Noble Haydon, hath
thy gifted hand releast!]; 13. [This is no portrait

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<gazing> me declare]; 14. [&].

From Poems 4th edition (1856):

AN APPREHENSION.

If all the gentlest-hearted friends I know
Concentrated in one heart their gentleness,
That still grew gentler, till its pulse was less
For life than pity,—I should yet be slow
To bring my own heart nakedly below
The palm of such a friend, that he should press
Motive, condition, means, appliances,
My false ideal joy and fickle woe,
Out full to light and knowledge; I should fear
Some plait between the brows—some rougher chime
In the free voice. . . . O angels, let your flood
Of bitter scorn dash on me! do you hear
What I say, who bear calmly all the time
This everlasting face to face with God?

Variants

Poems 3rd edition (1853):

9. [knowledge. I]; 12. [Do]; 14. [face-to-face].

Poems 1850:

9. [knowledge. I]; 12. [Do]; 14. [face-to-face].
A Drama of Exile (1845):
8. [wo,]; 9. [knowledge. I]; 11. [let the flood];
12. [Of your salt scorn dash on me! Do]; 13. [calmly];
14. [face-to-face].

Poems (1844):
9. [knowledge. I]; 12. [Do]; 14. [face-to-face].

Fair Copy, Baylor ("Sonnets"):
subtitle. [A thought (cancelled in ink)];
1. [gentlest=hearted]; 2. [Endowed the heart of one
with gentleness]; 5. [nakedly <***> below]; 6. [friend
that]; 8. [joy, and]; 9. [knowledge!];
10. [brows. .]; 11. [angels!] 12. [Of your salt scorn
dash on me! Do ye hear]; 13. [What I say who bear
calmly, all the time,]; 14. [face=to=face] [God!].

Fair Copy, Dartmouth: 21
title. [A Thought]; 1. [gentlest=hearted] [know,];
2. [Should pour into]; 3. [life was less];
4. [pity. . . I]; 6. [sh2]; 8. [joy, and];
9. [knowledge!]; 10. [his brows; . . some]; 11. [his
free voice. . . ! O angels!]; 13. [say who bear]
[time,]; 14. [face=to=face with God!?]; signed. [EBB].

Draft, Berg:
title. [untitled]; 1. [gentlest hearted]; 2. [Endowed
the heart of one with gentleness*]; 3. [Which still*];
4. [sh.d]; 5. [naked out*]; 6. [sh.d*];
7. [Motive condition means appliances*]; 8. [& pulse of
fickle joy & foolish woe]; 9. [Out into light &
knowledge I sh.d fear*]; 10. [brows, scme];
11. [voice--What <***> hath overflooded*]; 12. &[your
foreheads bent o angels, as ye hear*]; 13. [For I
unashamed unshrinking*]; 14. [Unto this eternal face to
face with God.].

From Poems 4th edition (1856):

TO GEORGE SAND.
A DESIRE.

Thou large-brained woman and large-hearted man,
Self-called George Sand! whose soul, amid the lions
Of thy tumultuous senses, moans defiance,
And answers roar for roar, as spirits can!
I would some mild miraculous thunder ran
Above the applauded circus, in appliance
Of thine own nobler nature's strength and science,
Drawing two pinions, white as wings of swan,
From thy strong shoulders, to amaze the place
With holier light! that thou to woman's claim,
And man's, might' st join beside the angel's grace
Of a pure genious sanctified from blaim,—
Till child and maiden pressed to thine embrace,
To kiss upon thy lips a stainless fame.

Variants

Poems 3rd edition (1853):
7. [science, --]; 10. [That].

Poems (1850):
4. [can:]; 7. [science, --]; 10. [That]; 11. [might];
12. [blame:].

A Drama of Exile (1845):
4. [can:]; 7. [science, --]; 10. [That]; 11. [might];
12. [blaim:].

Poems (1844):
4. [can:]; 7. [science, --]; 10. [That]; 11. [might];
12. [blaim:].

Fair Copy, Baylor ("Sonnets"):
title. [untitled]; 1. [large brained] [&] [large hearted]; 2. [Self called] [sould amid]; 4. [can.];
5. [spheric thunder nimbly ran]; 6. [Across that stormy]; 7. [high nature and its subtle science,];
8. [Until] [pinions white]; 9. [Shot sovran from thy shoulders through the place,]; 10. [In hushing calms!
that thou who hast no claim]; 11. [To either sex, shd take an]; 12. [Of genius holy & pure--while
children came]; 13. [To live beneath thy sanctity of face]; 14 [And] [fame].

From Poems 4th edition (1856):

FINITE AND INFINITE

The wind sounds only in opposing straights,
The sea, beside the shore; man's spirit rends
Its quiet only up against the ends
Of wants and oppositions, loves and hates,
Where, worked and worn by passionate debates,
And losing by the loss it apprehends,
The flesh rocks round, and every breath it sends
Is ravelled to a sigh. All tortured states
Suppose a straitened place. Jehovah Lord,
Makes room for rest, around me! out of sight
Now float me, of the vexing land abhorred,
Till in deep calms of space, my soul may right
Her nature,—shoot large sail on lengthening cord,
And rush exultant on the Infinite.

Variants

Poems 3rd edition (1853):

5. [Where worked]; 10. [Out of sight];
11. [abhorred!]; 12. [Till, in].

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Poems (1850):
5. [Where worked]; 7. [sends,]; 10. [Out of sight];
12. [Till, in]; 13. [nature; shoot].

Fair Copy, Baylor (Chellis):
title. [Sonnets/ Finite & Infinite]; 1. [straights;];
2. [shore.] [Man's]; 4. [&] [&]; 5. [&]; 9. [narrow marge.]; 10. [Out of sight]; 11. [Now float my soul of all this land abhorred;] 12. [Where treading her own shadow through the white]; 13. [Wide calms, and crowding sail on every cord,]; 14. [She may rush fearless on the Infinite].

Draft, Yale:
title. [The finite & infinite--/ Sonnet];
1. [straights,--]; 2. [shore.] [Man's]; 4. [&] [&]; 5. [&]; 7. [&]; 9. [narrow marge.];
11. [abhorred,--]; 12. [Till free in space my soul may <***> aright*]; 13. [Her image shoot on airy cord*]; 14. [& rush up onto the Infinite*].

Draft, Baylor ("Sonnets"):
title. [Sonnets]; 1. [straights]; 2. [shore--Man's];
4. [& hates]; 5. [Self worked and worn by passionate debates]; 6. [Of what that loses while it apprehends*]; 7. [Till the flesh rocks, &]; 8. [Is ravelled to a sigh. Jehovah Lord]; 9. [rest--around me--out];
From Poems 4th edition (1856):

THE POET AND THE BIRD
A FABLE

I.
Said a people to a poet—'Go out from among us straightway! While we are thinking earthly things, thou singest of divine. There's a little fair brown nightingale, who, sitting in the gateway, Makes fitter music to our ear, than any song of thine!'

II.
The poet went out weeping—the nightingale ceased chanting, 'Now, wherefore, O thou nightingale, is all thy sweetness done?' '--I cannot sing my earthly things, the heavenly poet wanting, Whose highest harmony includes the lowest under sun.'

III.
The poet went out weeping,—and died abroad, bereft there. The bird flew to his grave and died amid a thousand wails. And when I last came by the place, I swear the music left there Was only of the poet's song, and not the nightingale's.
Variants

Poems 3rd edition (1856):
2. [divine;]; 5. [chanting;]; 7. ['I cannot];
9. [there--]; 10. [wails;--].

Poems (1850):
1. ["Go";  4. [thine!"]; 5. [chanting;]; 6. ["Now]
done?"];  7. ["I cannot]; 8. [sun."]; 9. [there--];
10. [died, amid].

Corrected proof for Poems (1850), Wellesley:
1. ["Go] [from among*]; 4. [Makes*] [thine!"];
5. [chanting;]; 6. ["Now] [thy sweetness done?"*];
7. ["I] [my earthly*]; 8. [sun."]; 9. [Abroad, bereft there--*]; 10. [wails!--*]; 11. [Yet,*];
12. [nightingales!*].

A Drama of Exile (1845):
[stanzas unnumbered]; 1. ["Go];  4. [thine!];
5. [chanting;]; 6. ["Now] [done?"]; 7. ["I cannot];
8. [sun."]; 9. [there--]; 10. [wails!--]; 11. [Yet];
12. [nightingale's].

Poems (1844):
1. ["Go];  4. [thine."]; 5. [chanting;]; 6. ["Now]
done?"];  7. ["I cannot]; 8.[sun."]; 9. [there--];
10. [wails!--]; 11. [Yet, when]; 12. [nightingales!].

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Draft, Baylor ("Sonnets"):

1. [poet--Hasten from among us*];
2. [divine]; 3. [nightingale who sings in the gateway];
4. [And his song accordeth better unto out pouring of
the wine than song of thine.*]; 5. [weeping--& the]
[chanting]; 6. [Now wherefore o thou] [music done--];
7. [Because the blessed poet with his strain wanting*];
8. [There is no bird that dares to try a music under
sun]; 9. [weeping--& died abroad bereft there*];
10. [The nightingale flew to his grave amid a thousand
wails.*]; 11. [Yet when I last came by it, I swear the
music sounding]; 12. [poet's singing & not]
[nightingale's*].

From Poems 4th edition (1856):

A YEAR'S SPINNING

I.

He listened at the porch that day,
To hear the wheel go on, and on;
And then it stopped--ran back away--
While through the door he brought the sun.
But now my spinning is all done.

II.

He sate beside me, with an oath

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That love ne'er ended, once begun.
I smiled—believing for us both,
What was the truth for only one.
And now my spinning is all done.

III.
My mother cursed me that I heard
A young man's wooing as I spun.
Thanks, cruel mother, for that word,—
For I have, since, a harder known!
And now my spinning is all done.

IV.
I thought—O God!—my first-born's cry
Both voices to mine ear would drown.
I listened in mine agony—
It was the silence made me groan!
And now my spinning is all done.

V.
Bury me 'twixt my mother's grave,
(Who cursed me on her death-bed lone)
And my dead baby's, (God it save!)
Who, not to bless me, would not moan.
And now my spinning is all done.
VI.
A stone upon my heart and head,
But no name written on the stone!
Sweet neighbors, whisper low instead,
'This sinner was a loving one--
And now her spinning is all done.'

VII.
And let the door ajar remain,
In case he should pass by anon;
And leave the wheel out very plain,—
That HE, when passing in the sun,
May see the spinning is all done.

Variants
Poems 3rd edition (1856):
1. [day]; 2. [on,]; 4. [sun:]; 7. [begun];
13. [word,]; 17. [drown:] 22. [Who] [lone,];
23. [baby's--(God)]; 28. [neighbors!]; 33. [plain,];
35. [see].

Poems (1850):
1. [day]; 2. [on,]; 4. [sun:]; 7. [begun];
13. [word,]; 17. [drown:] 22. [Who] [lone,];
23. [baby's--(God)]; 28. [neighbors!]; 29. ["This];
30. [done."]; 33. [plain,]; 35. [see].

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Blackwood's, October 1846:

title. [Maude's Spinning]; 1. [day]; 2. [on,]; 7. [begun]; 13. [word,]; 17. [drown!]; 22. [Who] [lone,]; 23. [baby's--(God)]; 29. ["This]; 30. [done."]; 31. [In case that he should pass anon;]; 33. [plain,]; 35. [see].

Draft, Baylor ("Sonnets"): 22

title. [untitled]; 11. [when]; 12. [spun]; 13. [Thank cruel mother for]; 14. [I have known since a harder one*]; 15. [& now]; 16. [I thought my first born's cry would drown*]; 17. [Away mother's lover's words anon*]; 18. [But when I listened in my agony*]; 19. [No baby cried--my hope was gone*]; 20. [If any see silence, made me moan*]; 21. [Now lay me into my mother's grave*]; 22. [Who cursed me in her death bed alone]; 23. [& on the next side let me have]; 24. [My child whose cry was heard on none*]; 26. [A stone upon my head and heart*]; 27. [But write no name upon the stone]; 28. [when ye talk apart]; 29. [This sinner was a loving one]; 30. [& now her spinning]; 31. [Sweet neighbors if her come again*]; 32. [I pray you leave the door ajar]; 33. [& leave] [plain*]; 34. [That see it passing in the sun*]; 35. [May know my] [done*].

From Poems 4th edition (1856):

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A REED.

I.
I am no trumpet, but a reed:
No flattering breath shall from me lead
A silver sound, a hollow sound.
I will not ring, for priest or king,
One blast that in re-echoing
Would leave a bondsman faster bound.

II.
I am no trumpet, but a reed,—
A broken reed, the wind indeed
Left flat upon a dismal shore;
Yet if a little maid, or child,
Should sigh within it, earnest-mild,
This reed will answer evermore.

III.
I am no trumpet, but a reed.
Go, tell the fishers, as they spread
Their nets along the river's edge,
I will not tear their nets at all,
Nor pierce their hands, if they should fall;
Then let them leave me in the sedge.

Variants
Poems 3rd edition (1853):
3. [sound!]; 13. [reed:]; 15. [edge,—];
17. [hands—if].

Poems (1850):
3. [sound!]; 5. [that, in re-echoing,]; 9. [shore:];
13. [reed:]; 15. [edge,—]; 17. [hands—if] [fall:].

Blackwood's, October 1846:
1. [reed!]; 3. [sound!]; 5. [that, in re-echoing,];
9. [shore!]; 13. [reed!]; 15. [edge,—];
17. [hands—if] [fall:].

Fair Copy, Rylands:23
1. [reed —]; 3. [sound:]; 5. [that, in the echoing,];
6. [Can]; 7. [reed—]; 9. [Laid] [dreary shore!];
10. [But] [child]; 11. [Will] [it earnest=mild,];
13. [reed!]; 16. [cords]; 17. [fall,];
18. [sedge!].

V & A:24
1. [trumpet but] [reed--]; 3. [sound:] [that, in
re-echoing,].

Draft, Baylor ("Sonnets"):
13. [reed--]; 14. [I tell the fishers as they spread];
15. [nets around the] [edge--*]; 16. [all]; 17. [Or
wound their hands if they sh'd fall].
Draft, Yale:

1. [reed--]; 3. [A silver song & sound along the shore--*]; 4. [king]; 5. [One blast that leaves an echoing*]; 6. [That leaves the bondsman bound for ever more*]; 7. [reed--]; 8. [winds]; 9. [distant shore--*]; 10. [maid or child]; 11. [it earnest=mild]; 12. [evermore]; 13. [reed!]; 14. [Go, tell*];
15. [river's edge*]; 16. [the nets]; 17. [hands if they shd fall, . . .]; 18. [sedge!].

From Poems 4th edition (1856):

A DEAD ROSE.

I.

O ROSE, who dares to name thee?
No longer roseate now, nor soft, nor sweet,
But pale, and hard, and dry, as stubble-wheat,—
Kept seven years in a drawer—thy titles shame thee.

II.

The breeze that used to blow thee
Between the hedge-row thorns, and take away
An odour up the lane to last all day,—
If breathing now,—unsweetened would forego thee.
III.
The sun that used to smite thee,
And mix his glory in thy gorgeous urn
Till bean appeared to bloom, and flower to burn,—
If shining now,—with not a hue would light thee.

IV.
The dew that used to wet thee,
And, white first, grow incarnadined, because
It lay upon thee where the crimson was,—
If dropping now,—would darken, where it met thee.

V.
The fly that 'lit upon thee,
To stretch the tendrils of its tiny feet
Along thy leaf's pure edges after heat,—
If 'lighting now,—would coldly overrun thee.

VI.
The bee that once did suck thee,
And build thy perfumed ambers up his hive,
And swoon in thee for joy, till scarce alive,—
If passing now,—would blindly overlook thee.

VII.
The heart doth recognize thee,
Alone, alone! the heart doth smell thee sweet,
Doth view thee fair, doth judge thee most complete,
Perceiving all those changes that disguise thee.

VIII.
Yes, and the heart doth owe thee
More love, dead rose, than to any roses bold
Which Julia wears at dances, smiling cold!—
Lie still upon this heart—which breaks below thee!

Variants

Poems 3rd edition (1853):
1. [ROSE! who]; 17. [lit]; 20. [If lighting];
27. [complete--]; 28. [Though seeing all those
changes]; 30. [rose!].

Poems (1850):
1. [ROSE!]; 2. [sweet;]; 10. [win,]; 17. [lit];
18. [feet,]; 19. [edges, after]; 20. [If lighting];
27. [complete--]; 28. [Though seeing now those
changes]; 30. [rose!].

Blackwood's, October 1846:
1. [rose!]; 2. [sweet;]; 3. [But barren,]
[stubble-wheat,]; 6. [hedge-thorns,]; 9. [light];
10. [urn,]; 12. [dight]; 17. [lit]; 18. [feet,];
20. [If lighting]; 26. [The]; 27. [complete--];
28. [Though seeing now those changes]; 29. [Yes and];
30. [dead rose!].

Fair Copy, Yale:

title. [A Dead Rose—1844.]; 3. [But brown, and hard, & dry as stubble-wheat, . . .]; 4. [drawer, thy]; 6. [hedgerow]; 7. [day; . .]. 8. [If it blew now]; 9. [light]; 10. [urn,*]; 11. [burn, . . .]; 12. [If it shone thee now, with never a hue would dight thee]; 15. [was, . . .]; 16. [If it fell thee now, would darken where it met thee]; 17. [lit upon thee]; 19. [*]; 20. [If it <***> thee now, would]; 23. [alive, . . .]; 24. [If it came now, would]; 25. [The Heart]; 27. [complete,—]; 28. [Seeing thee clear of changes that disguise thee!*]; 29. [Yes! and the Heart doth owe thee]; 30. [rose,—than]; 31. [That Julia wears at midnight smiling cold!*]; 32. [heart. . . which breaks below thee.].

Fair Copy, Wellesley:

title. [A dead rose. 1844—]; 1. [rose!]; 3. [brown, & hard, & dry as]; 4. [drawer, thy]; 6. [hedgerow]; 11. [bloom & flower] [burn]; 12. [now; . .] [dight*]; 14. [And white] [incarnadined because]; 16. [now; . . would darken where]; 17. [lit]; 19. [the] [heat, . . .]; 20. [now; . .] [over run]; 21. [thee]; 22. [hive]; 23. [joy till]; 24. [passing now; . . would*].
25. [Heart]; 26. [alone! The Heart];
27. [complete,...]; 28 [Though seeing now those];
30. [love dead rose than]; 31. [That]; 32. [heart, which*] [thee]; signed. [EBB].

Draft, Baylor (*Sonnets*):25
1. [O rose the <***> doth shame thee*]; 2. [soft nor sweet]; 3. [As hard & dry as stalk of wheat]; 4. [Kept seven years in a drawer. . who dares to name thee?*];
6. [To rock thy crimson petals all the day]; 7. [And take the perfume off a mile away]; 8. [Seeing the now w'd scarcely know thee*]; 13. [The dew that dropped within thee]; 14. [white itself,] [grew crimson with the rest]; 15. [It took upon the crimson of thy breast]; 16. [Seeing thee now I think w'd scarce to know thee]; 21. [The bee that used to suck thee];
22. [To take thy sweetness out to fill its hive];
23. [Bliss lost within thee still. . as scarce alive];
24. [Seeing thee now I think w'd overlook thee];
25. [thee]; 26. [The] [sweet]; 27. [Doth see thee fair doth love thee most complete]; 28. [Seeing thee clear from changes that disguise thee.]; 29. [Ay &] [goes with thee]; 30. [More than with roses bold]; 31. [at nights in smiling cold--]; 32. [Lie on that heart, o rose, that] [thee].
From Poems 4th edition (1856):

A MAN'S REQUIREMENTS

I.
Love me, sweet, with all thou art,
Feeling, thinking, seeing,—
Love me in the lightest part,
Love me in full being.

II.
Love me with thine open youth
In its frank surrender;
With the vowing of thy mouth,
With its silence tender.

III.
Love me with thine azure eyes,
Made for earnest granting!
Taking colour from the skies,
Can Heaven's truth be wanting?

IV.
Love me with their lids, that fall
Snow-like at first meeting.
Love me with thine heart, that all
The neighbors then see beating.
V.
Love me with thine hand stretched out
Freely—open-minded.
Love me with thy loitering foot,—
Hearing one behind it.

VI.
Love me with thy voice, that turns
Sudden faint above me;
Love me with thy blush that burns
When I murmur, 

VII.
Love me with thy thinking soul—
Break it to love-sighing;
Love me with thy thoughts that roll
On through living—dying.

VIII.
Love me with thy gorgeous airs,
When the world has crowned thee!
Love me, kneeling at thy prayers,
With the angels round thee.

IX.
Love me pure, as musers do,
Up the woodlands shady.
Love me gaily, fast, and true,
As a winsome lady.

X.
Through all hopes that keep us brave,
Further off or nigher,
Love me for the house and grave,—
And for something higher.

XI.
Thus, if thou wilt prove me, dear,
Woman's love no fable,
I will love thee--half-a-year--
As a man is able.

Variants

Poems 3rd edition (1853):
14. [meeting:]; 18. [open-minded:]; 24. [murmur Love me!]; 34. [shady:].

Poems (1850):
14. [meeting:]; 18. [open-minded:]; 24. ["Love me!"]; 34. [shady:].

Blackwood's, October 1846:
12. [heaven's]; 14. [meeting!]; 18. [open minded!];
22. [above me!]; 24. [murmur 'Love me!'];
34. [shady!].
Fair Copy, Yale:

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title. [How a lady should love. 1844.]; 1. [me sweet];  
2. [seeing,]; 5. [youth,]; 6. [surrender--];  
7. [mouth,]; 9. [eyes]; 12. [faith]; 13. [lids that];  
14. [Snowlike, at]; 17. [hand, stretched]; 18. [Where my ring may find it--]; 20. [behind it--]; 22. [Sudden soft above me--]; 23. [burns,]; 24. [When I murmur, 'Love me.']; 25. [soul. .]; 26. [love=sighing;];  
27. [Love me with thy thoughts that roll*]; 28. [dying . .]; 29. [sovrn airs,]; 35. [fast & true,]; 39. [grave,]; 40. [higher!]; 41. [Dear,];  
42. [fable, . .]; 43. [thee . . half a year. .]; 44. [able!].
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Fair Copy, Wellesley:

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title. [How a lady should love--1844--]; 3. [thy];  
4. [being--]; 6. [surrender!--]; 7. [mouth,--];  
8. [tender!--]; 9. [eyes]; 10. [granting=];  
14. [Snowlike] [meeting--]; 18. [Freely...open minded!--*]; 19. [foot,]; 20. [it,]; 22. [me!--];  
24. ['Love me'!--]; 25. [soul!--]; 26. [love-sighing--]; 28. [living..dying];  
29. [sovrn]; 34. [shady!--]; 36. [lady--];  
41. [Dear,]; 42. [fable,--]; 43. [thee...half a year..]; signed. [EBB].
```
Draft, Baylor ("Sonnets"):
title. [untitled]; 1. [Love me lady with thy mouth];
6. [Which may say I love thee]; 7. [While the smile in
sweet ruth]; 8. [True of love approve thee]; 9. [Love
me lady with thy eyes*]; 10. [Constant still &
granting]; 11. [With the colour of the skies];
12. [Can their faith be wanting?]; 21. [Love me with
thy blush that burns]; 22. [When I say I love thee];
23. [Love me with thy step that turns]; 24. [When new
lovers prove thee]; 25. [Love me with thy soul].

From Poems 4th edition (1856):

HUMAN LIFE'S MYSTERY
I.
We sow the glebe, we reap the corn,
We build the house where we may rest,
And then, at moments, suddenly,
We look up to the great wide sky,
Enquiring wherefore we were born... For earnest, or for jest?

II.
The senses folding thick and dark
About the stifled soul within,
We guess diviner things beyond,
And yearn to them with yearning fond;
We strike out blindly to a mark
Believed in, but not seen.

III.
We vibrate to the pant and thrill
Wherewith Eternity has curled
In serpent-twine about God's seat;
While, freshening upward to His feet,
In gradual growth His full-leaved will
Expands from world to world.

IV.
And, in the tumult and excess
Of act and passion under sun,
We sometimes hear—oh, soft and far,
As silver star did touch with star,
The kiss of Peace and Righteousness
Through all things that are done.

V.
God keeps his holy mysteries
Just on the outside of man's dream.
In diapason slow, we think
To hear their pinions rise and sink,
While they float pure beneath His eyes,
Like swans adown a stream.
VI.
Abstractions, are they, from the forms
Of His great beauty?—exaltations
From His great glory?—strong previsions
Of what we shall be?—intuitions
Of what we are—in calms and storms,
Beyond our peace and passions?

VII.
Things nameless! which in passing so,
Do stroke us with a subtle grace.
We say, 'Who passes?'—they are dumb.
We cannot see them go or come.
Their touches fall soft—cold—as snow
Upon a blind man's face.

VIII.
Yet, touching so, they draw above
Our common thoughts to Heaven's unknown;
Our daily joy and pain, advance
To a divine significance,—
Our human love—O mortal love,
That light is not its own!

IX.
And, sometimes, horror chills our blood
To be so near such mystic Things,
And we wrap round us, for defence,
Our purple manners, moods of sense—
As angels, from the face of God,
Stand hidden in their wings.

X.
And, sometimes, through life's heavy swound
We grope for them!—with strangled breath
We stretch our hands abroad and try
To reach them in our agony,—
And widen, so, the broad life-wound
Which soon is large enough for death.

Variants

**Poems 3rd edition (1853):**
15. [seat!]; 26. [dream!]; 39. [dumb;]; 40. [come;];
44. [unknown,—]; 55. [Life's].

**Poems (1850):**
2. [rest;]; 15. [seat!]; 26. [dream!]; 39. ["Who passes?""] [dumb;]; 40. [come;]; 44. [unknown,—];
49. [blood,]; 50. [Things;]; 55. [Life's] [swound,];
59. [wound,].

**Quotation, stanza 4 only, Wellesley:**
19. [And in]; 21. [harken. . soft and far. .]; 22. [on
clear;]; signed. [Elizabeth Barrett Barrett/
December--1845].

Fair Copy, Baylor:

title. [mystery]; 2. [rest;]; 15. [serpent=twine]
[seat!]; 17. [full=leaved]; 21. [hear..oh,];
25. [His]; 26. [dream!]; 32. [exaltations,];
33. [glory? strong]; 34. [be? intuitions];
35. [are..in]; 39. [passes'? .. they are dumb:];
40. [come:]; 41. [soft..cold..as]; 44. [unknown,--];
47. [love. .. 0]; 50. [Things]; 52. [sense. .];
55. [swound,]; 57. [abroad, and]; 59. [life=wound].

Fair Copy, Yale:

title. [Human Life]; 1. [glebe--we]; 2. [rest--];
3. [than at] [suddenly]; 4. [great, wide];
5. [born. .]; 6. [earnest or]; 7. [sense is] [&];
8. [within.]; 9. [beyond. .]; 10. [fond=]; 12. [in
but]; 13. [&]; 15. [serpent=twine]; 16. [their];
17. [full=leaved]; 19. [&]; 21. [hear..oh soft and
far,]; 22. [star. .]; 23. [peace & righteousness];
24. [done. .]; 27. [slow we]; 28. [&];
31. [Abstractions, are]; 32. [beauty exaltations];
33. [his] [glory. .. strong]; 34. [be?.. intuitions];
35. [are in] [&]; 36. [&]; 37. [nameless, which in
passing so]; 38. [strike] [grace--]; 39. [We say who
passes? .. they are dumb]; 40. [come. . .].

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41. [soft. cold. as snow]; 43. [Yet touching];
46. [significance]; 47. [love. . o mortal Love,];
49. [And sometimes horror]; 50. [things];
52. [sense. ]; 53. [angels from] [God]; 55. [And
sometimes, through life's darksome swound]; 56. [them!
with]; 58. [agony,]; 59. [broaden so the]
[life=wound].

Draft, Montana:

title. [Life]; 1. [glebe & reap] [corn*]; 2. [rest--];
3. [then at moments suddenly]; 4. [sky]; 5. [With
questions wherefore we were born*]; 6. [In jest--*];
7. [sense is] [&]; 8. [within.]; 9. [We have a sense
of things beyond, . .]; 10. [A yearning outwards wild &
fond. .*]; 13. [&]; 15. [serpent twine] [throne*];
16. [While freshening] [feet*]; 17. [full leaved];
18. [world*]; 20. [&]; 21. [hear . oh] [&];
22. [star--]; 23. [&]; 24. [done!]; 25. [Holy*];
26. [dream!*]; 27. [slow we]; 28. [We] [&];
29. [float beneath*]; 31. [Abstractions are];
32. [beauty? exaltations]; 33. [glory? . strong];
34. [be? . intuitions]; 35. [are, in] [&]; 36. [&];
37. [O nameless--which in passing so*]; 38. [Ye]
grace--]; 39. [say 'Who passes?' ye are dumb!];
40. [you come!]; 41. [soft. cold. as]; 43. [Yet
touching so ye draw above*]; 44. [&] [one known in your
unknown*]; 45. [Our little joy & pain advance];
46. [significance]; 47. [little] [oh love]; 48. [thine
own.]; 49. [And sometimes horror chills*]; 50. [your]
things!]; 51. [defence]; 52. [sense. .]; 53. [angels
from] [God]; 54. [Do stand]; 55. [O nameless! through
life's darkened swound*]; 56. [We grope for you! with
faint]; 57. [&]; 58. [you]; 59. [widen so the]
[life=wound,--]; 60. [Soon*].

Draft, Yale:

title. [Stanzas/ Life]; 7. [Our life is folded thick
&]; 8. [within--]; 9. [We have a sense of things
beyond]; 10. [A yearning outwards strong & fond*];
26. [our dream;]; 27. [And in slow harmony we think*];
28. [&]; 29. [When] [float beneath] [eyes];
30. [stream]; 31. [Abstractions are they from];
32. [God's] [beauty? exaltations,]; 33. [his] [glory?
Strong previsions]; 34. [be? intuitions]; 35. [are in]
[& storms]; 36. [&]; 37. [O spirits, ye speak low. .
speak low. .]; 38. [Ye strike] [grace--]; 39. [We say
who passes? ye] [dumb*]; 40. [you] [come. . .];
41. [Your] [soft. . cold. . as]; 42. [the]; 49. [And
sometimes horror]; 50. [things--]; 51. [us for
defence]; 52. [manners moods & sense]; 53. [angels
from] [God]; 54. [Fold up their purer wings];
55. [<***>]; 56. [you with quickened]; 57. [above]
[to]; 58. [And strive for you in agony*]; 59. [broaden so the] [life=wound]; 60. [grows*].

Draft, Stanford:


Draft, Baylor ("Sonnets"):

7. [O life is folded thick &]; 8. [within]; 9. [We have a sense of things beyond]; 10. [A yearning outwards strong & fond]; 11. [I*]; 12. [it but]; 25. [On all sides where we wait & dream*]; 27. [We hear their folded wings expand]; 28. [In a slow music, pure & grand]; 29. [past] [eyes]; 30. [Like a swans down a constant stream]; 55. [O spirits ye speak low... speak--low]; 56. [I comprehend not what ye speak--]; 57. [I breathe the motions of your feet]; 58. [That fall beneath our travelling feet]; 59. [& call you through the deep-life=wound]; 60. [death].

From Last Poems (1862):
THE BEST THING IN THE WORLD

WHAT's the best thing in the world?
June-rose, by May-dew imppearled;
Sweet south-wind, that means no rain;
Truth, not cruel to a friend;
Pleasure, not in haste to end;
Beauty, not self-decked and curled
Till its pride is over-plain;
Light, that never makes you wink;
Memory, that gives no pain;
Love, when, so, you're loved again.

What's the best thing in the world?
--Something out of it, I think.

Variants

Fair Copy, Iowa State Historical Society (Aldrich): 26
2. [June rose]; 3. [rain--]; 6. [selfdecked &];
7. [over-plain]; 10. [Love;] [again!]; annotated by
Robert Browning. [(written by Elizabeth Barrett
Browning)].

Draft, Baylor ("Sonnets"): 27
2. [impearled--]; 3. [south wind] [rain.];
4. [friend--]; 5. [end--]; 6. [& curled--];
7. [over-plain]; 8. [wink]; 9. [pain,]; 10. [Love,
when . . so . . you're]; 11. [Whats]; 12. [Something].
From Last Poems (1862):

LITTLE MATTIE.

I.
DEAD! Thirteen a month ago!
Short and narrow her life's walk;
Lover's love she could not know
Even by a dream or talk:
Too young to be glad of youth,
Missing honour, labour, rest,
And the warmth of a babe's mouth
At the blossom of her breast.
Must you pity her for this
And for all the loss it is,
You, her mother, with wet face,
Having had all in your case?

II.
Just so young but yesternight,
Now she is old as death.
Meek, obedient in your sight,
Gentle to a beck or breath
Only on last Monday! Yours,
Answering you like silver bells
Lightly touched! An hour matures:
You can teach her nothing else.
She has seen the mystery hid
Under Egypt's pyramid:
By those eyelids pale and close
Now she knows what Rhamses knows.

III.
Cross her quiet hands, and smooth
Down her patient locks of silk,
Cold and passive as in truth
You your fingers in spilt milk
Drew along a marble floor;
But her lips you cannot wring
Into saying a word more,
'Yes,' or 'No,' or such a thing:
Though you call and beg and wreak
Half your soul out in a shriek,
She will lie there in default
And most innocent revolt.

IV.
Ay, and if she spoke, may be
She would answer like the Son,
'What is now 'twixt thee and me?'
Dreadful answer! better none.
Yours on Monday, God's to-day!
Yours, your child, your blood, your heart,
Called . . you called her, did you say,
'Little Mattie' for your part?
Now already it sounds strange,
And you wonder, in this change,
What He calls His angel-creature,
Higher up than you can reach her.

V.
'Twas a green and easy world
As she took it; room to play,
(Though one's hair might get uncurled
At the far end of the day).
What she suffered she shook off
In the sunshine; what she sinned
She could pray on high enough
To keep safe above the wind.
If reproved by God or you,
'Twas to better her, she knew;
And if crossed, she gathered still
'Twas to cross out something ill.

VI.
You, you had the right, you thought
To survey her with sweet scorn,
Poor gay child, who had not caught
Yet the octave-stretch forlorn
Of your larger wisdom! Nay,
Now your places are changed so,
In that same superior way
She regards you dull and low
As you did herself exempt
From life's sorrows. Grand contempt
Of the spirits risen awhile,
Who look back with such a smile!

VII.
There's the sting of't. That, I think,
Hurts the most a thousandfold!
To feel sudden, at a wink,
Some dear child we used to scold,
Praise, love both ways, kiss and tease,
Teach and tumble as our own,
All its curls about our knees,
Rise up suddenly full-grown.
Who could wonder such a sight
Made a woman mad outright?
Show me Micheal with the sword
Rather than such angels, Lord!

Variants
Cornhill, June 1861:
2. [walk.]; 5. [youth;]; 10. [it is--]; 11. [mother
with]; 17. [yours,]; 18. [an hour]; 22. [pyramid.];
32. ["Yes" or "no," or such a thing.]; 39. ["What is
now 'twixt thee and me?"]; 43. [Called . . . you]; 44.
["Little Mattie"]; 50. [took it!]; 52. [day.]);
58. [her she knew]; 59. [And, if]; 61. [you
thought,]; 73. [of it.]; 74. [Hurts the most, a
thousandfold!]; 83. [--Show].

Fair Copy, Wellesley:

title. [Little Mattie--]; 1. [Dead!--] [ago--];
2. [walk:]; 4. [talk.]; 17. [monday!--yours];
19. [touched!--an] [matures,]; 20. [else:];
22. [AEgypt's]; 23. [close--]; 24. [Rhamses*];
32. [Yes or no or] [thing!--]; 35. [default,];
37. [be,]; 38. [She'd make]; 39. [me'--];
40. [answer!--]; 41. [Your's] [today!]; 42. [Your's,]
[heart,]; 45. [strange,]; 47. [angel=creature];
49. [Twas]; 56. [safe*]; 57. [you,]; 61. [right you];
64. [octave=stretch]; 65. [wisdom!--];
70. [sorrows--grand*]; 72. [such]; 73. [think];
74. [thousandfold,--*]; 77. [teaze]; 79. [knees,.....];
83. [Gabriel*]; signed. [Elizabeth Barrett Browning].

Fair Copy, Yale:

1. [ago--]; 2. [&] [walk--]; 3. [know,]; 4. [talk.];
6. [honor,]; 13. [yesternight!]; 14. [death!];
16. [breath,]; 17. [Monday! yours,]; 19. [matures,];
20. [else--]; 22. [Aegypt's pyramid,]; 24. [Cheops];
26. [silk,]; 29. [floor,]; 32. [Yes or no or such a thing,]; 37. [may be,]; 38. [She'd make answer, like the Son,]; 39. ["What] [me,"]; 41. [Today!];
42. [heart,]; 44. ["Little Mattie"}; 45. [strange,];
46. [wonder in]; 47. [angel creature]; 49. [T'was,];
58. [T'was]; 60. [glad,]; 64. [octave=stretch,];
65. [wisdom,]; 68. [low,]; 72. [such,]; 74. [Must be fatal--that strikes cold--]; 76. [child, we,];
77. [teaze,]; 79. [knees . .]; 81. [C, ];
83. [Gabriel,].

Draft, Baylor ("Sonnets"):  
13. [She was young but yesternight]; 14. [death--];
15. [Meek obedient in your sight*]; 16. [Gentle at*];
17. [Monday--Your's]; 20. [else*]; 22. [AEgypts' pyramid]; 23. [sweet & close]; 24. [Cheops];
25. [Draw her hair out long & smooth*]; 26. [Passive as a thing of silk . .]; 29. [floor,]; 31. [more,];
32. [Yes or no or such a thing]; 33. [Mother though you pray and shriek]; 34. [There she lies without a fault];
35. [She--she will not move or speak]; 36. [In most innocent revolt]; 49. [Twas] [an*]; 50. [it--room to play--]; 51. [Though one's hair would get uncurled*];
52. [At the far end of the day*]; 53. [Pain seemed
something to lift off*]; 54. [In the sunshine--sin was good]; 55. [To build prayers in high enough];
56. [Till <***> <***> where angels stood].
Notes

1 In all there are thirty-eight autograph manuscripts of the poems from "Sonnets" appearing in authorized publications, only eleven of which are in "Sonnets" itself. Only one, now in the British Library, is unavailable in microfilm or photocopy; the rest are included in this investigation.

2 Barnes 7.

3 Kelley and Coley.

4 Establishing the text of eleven random poems from the early 1840's in and of itself would be of little consequence, though the issues raised in the examination of the process of composition and publication are another matter altogether, especially since the task has gone unattempted. Understanding the problems involved in establishing a text begins with the kind of analysis the discovery of "Sonnets" now makes possible.


6 The Literary Gazette, 1 Dec. 1838, quoted in Taplin 70.

7 Taplin 69; John Ruskin, Works, ed. E. T. Cook and A. Wedderburn (London: Allen, 1903-12), 192, quoted in Hayter 49.

8 Hayter 39.

9 Hayter 40.

10 Hayter 37.


12 Hayter 9.


15 **Flush: A Biography** (New York: Harcourt, 1933), 175.


17 It is curious to note that on the corrected proofs for the American volume, all of which are now in the New York Public Library Rare Book Division, Elizabeth Barrett Browning corrects the transposed initials in the title of the poem itself but fails to do so in the proofs for the 1850 edition, now at Wellesley. If fact, in the Wellesley proofs she makes a number of revisions to the table of contents and adds "Sonnet on a picture of Wordsworth by R B Haydon."

18 The few poems from "Sonnets" are not the only ones on the excised leaves, and in the 1850 versions of several of the others there are variants which are apparently not introduced by authorial consent.

19 Hewlett 346.

20 W. W. Greg is quite clear on this point and maintains that whenever an author has made autograph corrections on an earlier edition, the resulting revised reprint should be chosen as the copy text ("The Rationale of the Copy-Text," Studies in Bibliography 3 [1951]:33).

21 Kelley and Coley list two additional fair copies sold at the Sotheby's auction in 1913, the locations of which are currently unknown. On the Dartmouth fair copy there is John Kenyon's annotation that the poem was to be sent to Graham's Magazine.

22 The "Sonnets" draft of the poem contains several stanzas of material not included in any published versions and such material is not reflected in the list of variants, which is designed only to show variations in the published stanzas. See Chapter I for a complete transcript of "A Year's Spinning."

23 The only fair copy of this poem contains four stanzas, not three, the second of which is omitted from all published versions.

24 Only one stanza of the poem is on the V & A manuscript.
As with the draft of "A Year's Spinning," the "Sonnets" draft of "A Dead Rose" contains material not appearing in any published version, and this material is not reflected in the list of variants.

Kelley and Coley identify a second fair copy sold at Sotheby's; the present whereabouts are unknown.

Annotated by Robert Browning.
CHAPTER IV

"The Princess Marie":
Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Lost Romance

Adding to the canon of a major author is a rare privilege, especially when the addition provides substantial new evidence of a writer's interests, sources, and process of composition. Failure to examine unpublished manuscripts has left existing scholarship on Elizabeth Barrett Browning's career incomplete, and nowhere is the inadequacy more evident than in the examinations of her poetry written prior to her marriage. The overlooked translations from the Canzoniere discussed in Chapter II are a case in point; "The Princess Marie" is another. Among its 373 crabbed lines of text and corrections is a coherent poem, the existence of which has remained unknown to scholars and the examination of which sheds light on Elizabeth Barrett Browning's literary activities and extensive reading at 50 Wimpole Street in the early 1840's as well as her working methods on heavily revised drafts and her interests in contemporary affairs.

"The Princess Marie," by far the longest poem in the "Sonnets" notebook and the longest of Elizabeth Barrett Barrett
Browning's unpublished works to come to light in recent years, appears in no other manuscript, is mentioned in none of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's extant correspondence or journals, and is her only narrative poem dealing with contemporary historical personages.\(^1\) Though entitled in the poet's own hand, "The Princess Marie" is a curious anomaly dealing less with Marie, Duchess of Wurttemberg, than with her father, King Louis Philippe of France, and was almost certainly prompted by the sensational newspaper accounts of the accidental death of Marie's brother, the Duke of Orleans, in an overturned carriage on 13 July 1842. That "The Princess Marie" differs so radically from the body of political verse Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote only a few years later on the wars, coups, and vicissitudes of life on the Continent during the reign of Napoleon III and the Italian Risorgimento confirms Dorothy Hewlett's thesis that Elizabeth Barrett Browning had no more than a passing interest in national affairs prior to her emigration.

Reading "The Princess Marie" in view of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's subsequent writings on current events highlights the growth of her social consciousness after her marriage to Robert Browning in 1846 and explains at least in part why she failed to return to a poem so near completion.\(^2\)

That Elizabeth Barrett Browning may have been benignly oblivious to the affairs of state, domestic and foreign, for
much of her life is not to say, however, that she paid no attention to the world outside her own bedroom. Before she left for the Continent in 1846 her interests were primarily personal and familial, not doctrinal or patriotic, but her domesticity hardly implies that she was poorly informed about current events. Many details from "The Princess Marie," in fact, suggests an impressive knowledge of the lives of a number of the most obscure participants in the pageantry of France, a country which she had visited only once at any length and in which she apparently had no correspondents until the late 1840's. Though it is not unlikely that she had other sources, a number of details in the poem seem to have been gathered directly from the London Times, especially the facts regarding Marie's accomplishments in sculpture and her widespread popularity in France. The Duchess of Württemberg died in 1839, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's recollection of the details of her life more than three years later testifies that she had once followed closely the career of a woman of whom there is no biography in English or French and whose name only rarely appears in the biographies of her own father.3

The possibility of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's having read the newspaper at 50 Wimpole Street presents no startling revelations, but evidence of her interest in France in the early 1840's is a different matter. Such recent studies as
Roy Gridley's *The Brownings and France* (1982) and Genevieve Wiggins' "The Brownings and Napoleon III" (dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1976), both written without knowledge of "The Princess Marie," focus primarily on the periods of the Brownings' residence in France in the late 1840's and 1850's and fail to take into account Elizabeth Barrett Browning's composition in 1842 of a lengthy apolitical poem on the private lives of members of the French royal family. The discovery of "The Princess Marie" completely belies Gridley's claim that in the early 1840's "her poem on Napoleon ["Crowned and Buried"] is the only work completely given to a French subject." While Gridley is correct in saying that the two sonnets addressed to George Sand "make no mention of Sand's nationality," the fact that the only known draft of "The Princess Marie" begins on the verso of the leaf containing the only known draft of "To George Sand. A Desire" is hardly coincidental, especially in light of Louis Philippe's celebrated patronage of writers and artists.

Critics attribute Elizabeth Barrett Browning's excessive enthusiasm for political gossip about heads of state and the like after her elopement to France to her having once been a sheltered girl and later a sheltered invalid for much of her life, and that her dramatic change of temperament is reflected in her poetry as well as her letters is a point
difficult to overlook in the examination of her career.\textsuperscript{6} It is almost inconceivable that the diffident author of the "Sonnets from the Portuguese" (1845-46) could have drafted only a few years later a robust defense of the Italian Risorgimento in \textit{Casa Guidi Windows} or be bedridden when the Treaty of Villafranca ended the hostilities. Yet the woman too shy in 1845 to receive her inveterate correspondents B. R. Haydon and R. H. Horne in the drawing room at 50 Wimpole Street cheered wildly at military parades on the Champs-Elysees in 1851, tackled the British press head-on over her expatriation, and in 1857 wrote Napoleon III asking forgiveness for the exiled Victor Hugo. Equally difficult to imagine in view of \textit{Aurora Leigh} and \textit{Poems Before Congress} is the prospect that in 1842 she began a detailed examination of a reigning head of state without a word on his military prowess, concern for the poor, or thoughts on the Austrian occupation of Italy.

While much has been made of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's career as a political activist in the 1850's, it is only fair to affirm that her political philosophy, if one can call it that, had very little to do with her political affiliations or endorsements. Her \textit{Hope End Diary} of 1831-32 and her letters from the 1830's and 1840's indicate that she held republican sympathies, believed in national self-determination, and supported the expansion of suffrage.
as well as the abolition movement. Nevertheless, there is no positive correlation, much less a cause-effect relationship, between her support of political figures and their treatment of the issues. No one, for example, fares better in her correspondence than Napoleon III and no one much worse than Sir Robert Peel. It is best, then, to differentiate between her political, issue-related works, such as "O pardon dear lady" in the "Sonnets" notebook, and her treatment of national or international events or personages, such as Casa Guidi Windows.

That "The Princess Marie" is a domestic poem about a head of state separates it from all her works on grand-scale political upheavals or larger-than-life soldiers and statesmen. Only "The Duchess of Orleans," which she wrote at the same time as "The Princess Marie" and submitted to Schloss's English Bijou Almanac—where it was published for the first and only time—shows a similar lack of interest in a prominent figure's public behavior. That the Duchess was Louis Philippe's daughter-in-law and the widow of Marie's brother enforces the suggestion that Elizabeth Barrett Browning prior to her emigration simply did not consider the Orleans family in the same terms as later she did Napoleon III, Cavour, and Mazzini.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning alludes to "liberty's first trodden stair" and voices her democratic sympathies near the
beginning of "The Princess Marie," but neither is central to
the development of the poem. She focuses primarily on King
Louis Philippe's reactions to the deaths of two of his
children, and that the poem has a personal but no political
dimension hardly detracts from its literary merits. In fact,
Robert Browning and her contemporary critics would have
preferred that she had left politics alone altogether. Her
affinities for the policies of Napoleon III in the late
1840's and 1850's, for example, were certainly among the
"seven distinct issues" over which, Robert Browning told Isa
Blagden, he and his wife had quarreled; and her partisan
enthusiasm in Poems Before Congress with what Blackwood's
called its "shrill oracular raving" marked the end of her
popularity in England. It is uncertain why Elizabeth
Barrett Browning never returned to "The Princess Marie,"
especially during the years separating the beginning of the
"Sonnets" draft and her elopement in 1846, but no doubt her
wholehearted support of Louis Philippe's immediate successor
contributed to the neglect of the poem.

On the other hand, Elizabeth Barrett Browning may have
withheld "The Princess Marie" from publication for reasons
having more to do with poetic temperament than politics.
Most critics trace the inception of Aurora Leigh to the
winter of 1845-46, a full nine years before it was published,
when Elizabeth Barrett Browning told Robert Browning in a
letter of her "chief intention" to write "a sort of novel-poem—a poem as completely modern as 'Geraldine's Courtship' . . . .", and her description of the project continues,

That is my intention. It is not mature enough to be called a plan. I am waiting for a story, & I won't take one, because I want to make one, & I like to make my own stories, because then I can take liberties with them in the treatment.\(^9\)

That Elizabeth Barrett Browning may have previously borrowed a story to enlarge upon and found the task unpleasant is a possibility critics have failed to consider, but that seems to have been precisely the case with "The Princess Marie," a story with which she took considerable liberties with both characters and plot in ways easily recognizable to a faithful reader of the Times.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's difficulties with "The Princess Marie" and her reluctance to tamper with a ready-made story demonstrate a major artistic difference between the Brownings which is worth mentioning. While leaving the facts and figures intact, Robert Browning made a career of exploring the motives of prominent men and women, many of whom, like Andrea del Sarto and the Duke of Ferrara, tell their own stories in such a way that historicity becomes
less important than unintentional self-exposure. The Ring and the Book, one recalls, has a borrowed plot that cost Robert Browning eight pence in an Italian street market, and the casuistry of Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau helps form a thinly disguised expose of Napoleon III, still very much alive when the poem was published in 1871. Only in the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," however, does psychological character analysis play a successful role in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry, and like "A Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point," most of her dramatic monologues and soliloquies are two-dimensional and unconvincing. Rather than explore characters from within or expose self-deceiving casuists, Elizabeth Barrett Browning frequently used dramatic shifts in the plots of her narrative poems, like those near the end of "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" and "The Romaunt of the Page," to enforce the thematic implications. That penetrating character analysis is not her long suit is evident in "The Princess Marie"; that she was aware of this shortcoming is evident in her abandonment of the project and her refusal to write similar poems.

While critics elaborate at length on Elizabeth Barrett Browning's enthusiasm for Napoleon III and his intervention into Italian affairs, the most convincing argument for her re-alignment of loyalties is one the scholars have missed and one that has nothing to do with her political poetry or her
letters to the likes of Mary Russell Mitford and Mrs. David Ogilvy. It concerns, rather, a line from "The Princess Marie" which was included in one of her last publications, though certainly with no acknowledgment of where it first appears. Though Elizabeth Barrett Browning observed the political arena and often praised a number of kings and queens individually, she consistently avoided admiring them collectively both before and after her emigration, and the opening lines of "The Princess Marie" clearly demonstrate the distinction:

Her father was a king at least
Of kingly soul & ways--
I do not stroke the ermine beast
As courtiers make their earnest praise
& yet I am not slow to find
King Louis Philippe reigns by right of mind.\textsuperscript{10}

The lines below, on the other hand, make up part of a poem written in 1860:

I was not used at least
Nor can be, now or then,
To stroke the ermine beast\textsuperscript{11}
On any kind of throne.

"Napoleon III in Italy," where these lines appear, bears no
additional resemblance to "The Princess Marie," and the inclusion of a passage from an unpublished description of Louis Philippe in a poem celebrating the victories of his successor is perhaps the most convincing sign that by 1860 Elizabeth Barrett Browning had become not only a thoroughgoing Bonapartist but a literary magpie as well.¹²

Though the details of politics play no part in the story, the topicality of "The Princess Marie" presents nearly as many difficulties to the modern reader as the heavily corrected draft does to the editor. Orleanist France of the 1830's and 1840's has fallen into relative obscurity, and the principals of "The Princess Marie"—though there are only a few—are no longer household names. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's liberal treatment of the historical evidence justifies a brief sketch of Duchess Marie of Württemberg, Louis Philippe of France, and the Duke of Orleans, all members of the house of Orleans appearing in "The Princess Marie," and the following should remove a number of difficulties in reading the poem as well as establish the historical context.

King Louis Philippe, the oldest son of the Duke of Orleans and cousin to King Charles X, was born 6 October 1773 and died 26 August 1850, after ruling France from 1830 to 1848 and abdicating the throne at the insistence of liberals.
favoring what was to become the short-lived Second Republic. His title, "King of the French" and not "King of France," earned him the nickname "Citizen King" and suggested that he did not so much rule a nation as lead its people; how sincerely he sympathized with the populists is debatable, however, in light of his conservative appointments, restrictions on the press and theater, and laissez-faire posture in relation to the financial crises resulting from the poor harvests and bank failures of 1846-47. Revolutionary in his youth and reactionary in his old age, Louis Philippe was a successful political opportunist whose luck ran out only a few years before he died and whose popularity waned only as France struggled to enter the industrial age. In all fairness to him, however, he did send his children to public schools and was the first, and perhaps only, French king to do so. Largely as a result of his non-interventionist foreign policies, the British press treated Louis Philippe warmly and followed his personal affairs with interest; the British newspaper accounts of the deaths of members of his family, especially the two mentioned in "The Princess Marie," demonstrate a cordiality uncommon in their treatment of French monarchs of the nineteenth century.

Louis Philippe's third child and second daughter was the Princess Marie, later the Duchess of Württemberg. Born in 1813, Marie developed considerable skill in sculpture at an
early age and was a celebrated beauty before dying of tuberculosis at 26.\textsuperscript{15} That she, too, was consumptive and shared Marie's artistic temperament and devotion to her work may well have prompted Elizabeth Barrett Browning's interest in her career, but her account of the duchess's death in "The Princess Marie" is misleading. There is no evidence to suggest that Marie worked herself into either exhaustion or poor health in the late 1830's. In 1837 Marie married Duke Alexander of Württemberg, the "princely lover" of "The Princess Marie," who was the penultimate ruler of a small duchy in what is now the southwestern corner of West Germany.\textsuperscript{16} Elizabeth Barrett Browning never mentions the duchess or her husband in any of her letters or her journal, and that she wrote a substantial poem on Marie's death has remained one of the best kept secrets of a closely examined career.

Ferdinand, the Duke of Orleans (1810-1842), does not appear in the poem, but his death and funeral, on which Elizabeth Barrett Browning elaborates at some length, caused a considerable stir in the British press in July 1842, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's mention of it confirms that she used leaves 6-12 of the notebook during the year given on the title page. Though heir apparent to the throne, the Duke of Orleans was a friend to republicans and, according to the \textit{Times}, "popular and beloved of all classes."\textsuperscript{17} At least
one leaf is missing from the draft of "The Princess Marie" at the point of the story concerning Orleans' death, which resulted from his falling (or leaping) from a moving caleche on the streets of Paris. The London Times carried the story of his accident for the entire week of 13 July 1842 and called his funeral of 5 August "the grandest affair of the kind witnessed since the Revolution." A number of details in "The Princess Marie," especially those concerning Louis Philippe's reaction to the news of his son's death and his "magnanimity and firmness truly royal," suggest that the Times was a primary source of information about matters of which the poet could have had no firsthand knowledge.

Before presenting the text of "The Princess Marie" free of cancellations and complete with revisions, I believe it necessary to point out what are almost certainly the deliberate inaccuracies in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's rendition of the Orleans saga. It is only fair to say, though, that her errors are minor and not those of a self-conscious historian. Historical romances and adaptations are often misleading and artistic license is the poet's due; John Keats' attributing the discovery of the Pacific to Cortez, for example, makes no difference in his sonnet on the types of discoveries one makes in a good book. That the liberties Elizabeth Barrett Browning took with the story at hand are easily spotted, however, may account for
her flatly expressed aversion to historical romance and her failure to turn the "Sonnets" draft into a fair copy and submit it for publication.

In stanzas 21-22 of "The Princess Marie" Elizabeth Barrett Browning describes the scene at Pisa on the morning of 8 January 1839, when the Duchess of Wurttemberg died, she claims, in the arms of her husband. According to a naval officer present at her death, however, the Duchess died in the arms of her brother, the Duke of Nemours, and her deathbed speech had nothing to do with her interest in sculpture.20 "I entreat you to become a Catholic," she is reported to have said to her husband, "and to bring up our child in that religion."21 A second eyewitness, the Vicar of the diocese, makes no mention of the Duke and claims that she did not speak to anyone after receiving Extreme Unction.22 At any rate, all the business about immortality through one's art, attributed to the Duchess in stanza 21, is Elizabeth Barrett Browning's contribution to the story and, according to two people present, has no basis in fact. Similarly, the Duke's attributing Marie's illness to her dedication to her art is fictitious, though associating genius with poor health and premature death was common in the early nineteenth-century.

A second factual error of "The Princess Marie" concerns the statuary appropriated for Orleans' grave. Elizabeth
Barrett Browning claims that Louis Philippe ordered one of Marie's statues, an angel, to be placed above his tomb so that "the sister's holy thought/ Doth watch the grave where he was brought." Considering the Princess's talents, it is unfortunate that her work was not used as a headstone or commemorative piece for her brother; it would have been a nice touch, but there is no evidence to suggest that Louis Philippe gave such an order. Instead, he commissioned a M. Pradier to carve two statues of the Duke himself, one for the palace at Versailles and one for a monument at Dreux, where his body lies. Pradier completed the task after taking a plaster cast of the Duke's features while he lay in state in late July 1842.  

A beautiful princess dying in her brother's arms, not her husband's, while attacking Protestantism, not professing her love, makes for poor romance, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's alterations of the story of Marie's death are perfectly in keeping with the genre in which she writes. Though the Barretts were Nonconformists, it is unlikely that Marie's Catholicism had anything to do with the poet's changing the deathbed scene. Re-introducing Marie's artistry near the end of the poem in the discussion of Orleans' grave is one of the cohesive elements of a story that would otherwise appear disjointed, especially since the character for whom the poem is named dies well before the end of the
piece. The liberties Elizabeth Barrett Browning took with the story of the French royal family strengthen rather than weaken the poem, and probably few readers would have quibbled over the changes she introduced. Because the newspapers were her most likely source of information, Elizabeth Barrett Browning knew where the changes lay, however, and if her letter to Browning of February 1845, is any indication, she felt uncomfortable hedging the facts and may have failed to polish the poem for no other reason.  

The "sonnets" draft of "The Princess Marie" is presented in its entirety in Chapter I, but the superscriptions, revisions, cancellations, and marginal stanzas interfere with a reading of the text. The length of the poem (373 lines) given in the auction catalogue description is correct only if revised stanzas and lines obviously re-written in the manuscript are included. The text of "The Princess Marie"--the poem incorporating Elizabeth Barrett Browning's revisions and excluding rejected alternatives and unrestored cancellations--is much shorter and far more comprehensible. In fact, were not a few leaves missing from the notebook at places indicated in the footnotes to Chapter I, there would be no reason to assume that "The Princess Marie" is a fragment, the remainder being apparently complete. Piecing together stanzas from the superscribed lines and marginal notations becomes much less complicated once the rhyme
scheme, ABABCCB, is established. Unfortunately, Elizabeth Barrett Browning did not always cancel lines for which she had written replacements, and it is often difficult as a result to decide which items to include in a text and which to omit.

The following polished version of "The Princess Marie" is not intended as an authorized or even standard rendition of the text. There is little room in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's canon for yet another fugitive printing of dubious authority; T. J. Wise did quite enough of that sort of thing, and whatever changes Elizabeth Barrett Browning may have made on a later draft are irrelevant since there is no evidence to suggest that such a revised draft exists. The following is intended, rather, as a suggested reading of a poem, the full transcript of which is as confusing to read as it is difficult to present in type.

Unfortunately, there is no style manual for the presentation of a heavily revised draft, much less one for the presentation of an edited version of the same. While Philip Gaskell, W. W. Greg, Fredson Bowers, and others have helped editors of previously published works standardize their bibliographical descriptions, the manuscripts scholar has little ready assistance from either scholarship or precedent.

The same editorial apparatus is used in the following
version of "The Princess Marie" as was used in the transcript of the entirety of "Sonnets" in Chapter I, save that square brackets are introduced to indicate where syntactical problems in the working draft result in confusion in the text or needless ambiguities. In addition, rows of asterisks are used at two points where entire lines of poetry are either illegible, have been rubbed off the manuscript, or make no sense whatsoever in context. In view of the smoothness and clarity of the edited "Princess," it is unfortunate that Elizabeth Barrett Browning failed to complete the poem, which would certainly have been one of the more celebrated pieces of her early career.

The Princess Marie

Her father was a king at least
Of kingly soul and ways--
(I do not stroke the ermine beast
As courtiers do with airy praise;
A throne to me seems less rare
Than liberty's first trodden stair
And yet I give this praise.)

Yet Louis Philippe reigneth by
Soul's right I say again--
A king of frenchmen worthily
Like Homer's king of men.
His sceptre is the staff of oak
He used thro life—which never broke;
May it bud out and shadow men!

And still a king her father was,
This fair Princess Marie's—
Just proves here greater of whom I sing
  this song because
All princely dignities
She rose above in womanhood
And princess less than artist stood
In nobler dignities.

O songs may flash against my lips
Of many a peasant born known
By many a glory as it clips
His ragged hair wind-blown.
This brow, my Burns, is worthy for song of thine
Which born for gems effaced the sign
With laurels like thy own.

Her father was a king I said,
Her mother was a queen
And swept her purple with a tread
Majestic though serene,
Who smiled at court as mothers may
Beside their home-hearthns every day
She smiled at court serene.

And such a queen her mother was,
This fair Princess Marie's.
Her princely brothers through the laws
Trod bold to their degrees.
Before their lovely sister knelt
* * * * * * * * *
Have kings knelt down in admiration
And offered their degrees.

But she, she loosed the silken string
That bound her purple vest
And from her hand she took the ring
And the gold chain from her breast,
And she told the people, "Evermore
Ye shall applaud me only for
God's fire set in my breast.

"I go among you, men of earth,
To choose my own free place,
And not for sovereignty nor birth
Nor beauty in my face.
I am very innocent and young,
I have God's truth upon my tongue--
Now bless me to my face."
"I go among you artists tried,
Poor artists of the soil,
Among you poets deified
Amid the dust of toil.
Musicians, painters, sculptors, ye
Who gather glory patiently,
I go to share your toil.

"Now give me room amid your ranks
And all the gifts ye have;
I will approach with reverent thanks,
I will be meek and brave.
I will work with you and dismiss
My birthright—save my father's kiss—
Which keeps me meek and brave."

She put aside her purple weeds,
She donned her sculptor's gown.
She knotted plainly on her head
The ringlets clustering down.
She said, "I have prepared my part,
I am alone now with my heart,
My brothers, I come down."

She took the ring from her right hand,
A palm as soft and small
As any pressed at Seraband
Or kissed at a court ball.
She plunged it deep down to the wrist
So dimpled round with amethyst
In the sculptor's clay withall.

Her hand did knead the clay untired
From morning into night,
Till thoughts of beauty she desired
She drew up into light.
Grand thoughts beneath her steady eye
Swelled outwards, upwards, to the sky,
Through gradual rounds of light.

The torpid clay throbbed organized
Beneath her working palms,
Assumed a beauty, rose surprised
Through motions to a calm,
Drew up erect its statue grace
And looked her blindly in [the] face,
A statue grand and calm.

Dear God and moulder of our clay
A nobler sight was such
To see [that] torpid earth obey
Her maiden eye and touch.
To see the marble eye and mouth
Led slowly from her living youth.
Recover at her touch.

To see those faces afterward
Look calmly each on each,
Each virgin with a calm regard
**********

In ever as the marble chin took in
More life, her own grew pale and thin,
And still she paled to sight.

Always so—genius thus
Can glorify a stone,
But then our own works master us
And, rising, tread us down.
And so we shrink beneath their feet
And die to give them room to meet
Men's eyes that scorn us down.

And so she worked, work by work,
She wasted, day by day,
And other statues lit the dark
To which she died away.
The people shouted, "Loyal heart!
She is immortal in her art."
She smiled and died away.

A princely lover crossed the hills
And knelt down at her feet.
"Thy genius," he said, "brought these ills;
My love shall make them sweet."
He drew her up all young and warm
And bore her on his tender arm
Along the woodlands sweet.

Her eyes lay dim and dry beneath
His own that dropped wild tears.
"God's beauty sitteth with God's death
And calls me up the spheres.
I reach across the death, the cool,
To beauty, o most beautiful,
O Love, I mount the spheres.

She died before her husband's face,
Went smiling from his woe.
Then wailing voices cried for grace
And Denis' bell tolled slow.
An old grey king knelt down alone
And moaned before his own high throne,
And Denis' bell tolled slow.

And since that day God's will and might
Hath stilled another breath.
Before his chambers left and right
He tried to speak of death
And wept because he could not say
How low his youthful Orleans lay;
His heir is only death.

And Orleans' grave the father marked
For monument is sooth
With that same marble angel worked
By Mary loved of both.

And then the sister's holy thought
Doth watch the grave where he was brought,
And parents weep for both.

[At this point in the manuscript the revisions to the poem are numerous, and a number of speech prefixes, indicating that King Louis Philippe is praying, are not given in the manuscript.] 26

"O many folded life, I lie not unkindly,
Swathed like an infant in conventions dark.
I have a sense of darkness of beyondness,
Some outgoing life and some aspirant fondness,
And strike my hands toward some believed-in mark
Which I believe in blindly.

"I hear the outer Hades rolling deep
Above, beyond me and all sides the arches
Of being such! O spirits that float by
With faces of divine supremacy!
And yet I hear some words between the march
Of all things, and so weep.

"God keeps his holy mysteries
On all sides where we wait and dream.
We hear their folded wings expand
In a slow music pure and grand
While they float past beneath his eyes a constant stream.

"O spirits. ye speak low--
  I comprehend not what ye speak.
Ye come and go as fast as sound
That falls beneath our unwilling feet.
I call you through the deep life-wound
Which soon is large enough for death."

He has grown strong with pain.
But when his sorrows slow and sad
Within his soul uprise,
The saddest, sweetest, he ever had
Wears Marie's face and eyes.
I guess that oft in church at prayer
The Ave Mary unaware
Recalls her face and eyes.
Notes

1 Kelley and Coley.

2 Hewlett 235-36; see also Genevieve Wiggins, "The Brownings and Napoleon III," diss., Univ. of Tennessee, 75.

3 Even so, rarely is she mentioned outside genealogical tables.


5 Gridley 53.

6 Hewlett 236; Wiggins 25.


11 Examination of a manuscript of "Napoleon III in Italy" now at the University of Texas confirms that the phrase "to stroke the ermine beast" is not an editorial emendation of the text.

12 Apparently she began combing through her unpublished materials for lines, even stanzas, to include in other poems well before 1860. In fact, the most curious feature of "The Princess Marie" involves the stanzas which seem to be an interior monologue of Louis Philippe's and which she later used in writing "Human Life's Mystery." It seems odd that she would insert stanzas having a different rhyme scheme into the text of a lengthy narrative, yet these passages are clearly a part of the longer work. Though Elizabeth Barrett Browning often began poems without plainly indicating where the preceding poem had ended, it does not stand to reason that she would alternate stanzas from two
different poems on the same manuscript page.


15 "Death of the Duchess Alexander of Wurtemberg," London Times 12 Jan. 1839, 4

16 "Duchess" 4.

17 Times 15 July 1842, 4.

18 Times 5 Aug. 1842, 5.

19 Times 15 July 1842, 4.

20 Times 26 Jan. 1839, 7.

21 Times 26 Jan. 1839, 7.

22 Times 29 Jan. 1839, 6.

23 Times 20 July 1842, 6.

24 It is unlikely that she could have known much about the events described in "The Princess Marie" without reading the same newspaper accounts from which her version of the story departs at three points.

25 A stanza form to which she later returned in "A Tale of Villafranca."

26 The following passages in quotation marks are those which were later published in an altered but recognizable form in "Human Life's Mystery."
CHAPTER V

"O pardon dear lady"
and the Spirit of Reform

While the discovery of "The Princess Marie" contributes to an understanding of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sometimes fickle attitudes toward an assortment of Continental political figures, the appearance of "O pardon dear lady" in the "Sonnets" notebook highlights the inconsistencies in her political philosophy itself. "O pardon dear lady" is as exclusively a poem of issues as "The Princess Marie" is a poem of personalities, the former bluntly advocating economic egalitarianism and the latter treating the private grievances of a monarch whose forced abdication at the hands of leftists in 1848 is strongly criticized in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's own correspondence. Making sense of such mercurial postures is greatly aided by the study of "O pardon dear lady," the addition of which to Elizabeth Barrett Browning's canon not only confirms her one-time advocacy of the liberal ideas so roundly cursed in *Aurora Leigh* but sharpens the contrast between her political idealism prior to her emigration and her pragmatic disregard for political
philosophies during her residency in Italy and France, from 1846 to 1861.

Complicating an assessment of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's political acumen is the distinction which she invariably drew between doctrines and the men who carried them out. While there is a discernible pattern to the development of her own political views, her idiosyncratic treatment of contemporary government leaders and heads of state remained divorced from both their ideologies and their accomplishments. For example, she whole-heartedly endorsed the Chartist plea for universal manhood suffrage (a position which she never abandoned) yet supported a reactionary like Louis Philippe; similarly, she warmly praised his successor Napoleon III in spite of his dictatorial rule and wholesale censorships yet continued to advocate democracy and freedom of the press. In order to evaluate her political philosophy one must simply disregard her references to people of national importance in her day, her appreciation or dislike of whom defies accountability, and focus on her discussion of the issues themselves.\(^1\) The appearance of "The Princess Marie" and "O pardon dear lady" in the same manuscript notebook perfectly illustrates the distinction she made quite comfortably between policies and personalities.

In a letter to Mary Russell Mitford dated 28 May 1848, Elizabeth Barrett Browning alludes to "the absurdity of
communism & mythological fete-ism" and in a subsequent letter attacks socialism as well, stating,

I love liberty so intensely that I hate Socialism. I hold it to be the most desecrating & dishonoring to Humanity, of all creeds. I would rather (for me) live under the absolutism of Nicholas of Russia, then in a Fourier-machine, with my individuality sucked out of me by a social air-pump.²

Whatever doubts Miss Mitford may have entertained on the subject were surely dispelled by such a damning testimony, and throughout Elizabeth Barrett Browning's correspondence of 1848-1861 the same anti-socialist, reactionary sentiments surface again and again, making the endorsement of economic equality in "O pardon dear lady" so completely unexpected.

That the thematic implications of "O pardon dear lady" run directly counter to the views Elizabeth Barrett Browning expressed in her letters written near the end of the decade is understandable in light of the political upheavals which took place during the intervening years, particularly in France, and in view of the poet's own radically altered circumstances. The early 1840's in England were singularly marked by "plug plot" strikes, bread riots, Chartist unrest, and violent anti-corn league protests; and while it is not certain that revolution was ever an immediate danger, even a

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casual reading of the London Times of 1842 reveals the learned Englishman's awareness that he was living in troubled times. Only a year earlier Henry Mayhew had founded Punch, specifically designed to attack a complacent, irresponsible aristocracy, and a year later Thomas Carlyle published Past and Present and Benjamin Disraeli began writing Sybil, or The Two Nations, both directed at the economic problems dividing England. The appearance of "O pardon dear lady" in a notebook dated 1842 places Elizabeth Barrett Browning well within the mainstream of Victorian writers whose social consciousness and genuine concern for the poor dominate the literature of the early 1840's.

Two changes took place between 1846 and 1848 which altered Elizabeth Barrett Browning's political sympathies: she moved from England, never to reside there again, and socialist revolutionaries overthrew Louis Philippe's July Monarchy in France. Though conditions in England remained much the same, Elizabeth Barrett Browning was, for the rest of her life, only a distant observer involved primarily in Italian schemes to oust the Hapsburgs. In addition, the notorious ineptitude of the socialist provisional government in France made a lasting impression on her, prompting her suggestion that socialism was "adapted to states of society more or less barbaric."
Such outspoken aversion to the idea of economic equality has escaped the notice of few of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's biographers or critics. It is particularly evident in the recently published Mitford letters as well as in those written to Mrs. David Ogilvy and Henrietta Moulton-Barrett, and nowhere in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry is there a more harshly treated object of ridicule and scorn than Romney Leigh, whose mismanaged phalanstery burns down with him inside it in the ninth book of Aurora Leigh. To underscore the point, she even allows Romney to survive the fire long enough to decide "Fourier's void,/ And Comte absurd,—and Cabet puerile" and vow "Less mapping out of masses to be saved" (IX, 867-68). To be sure, it was the "mapping out" and not the saving that rankled Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who remained a champion of reform while detesting what she called "this communist idea of quenching individuality in the masses." That her sympathies prior to her emigration may have been decidedly more liberal is a possibility critics have failed to consider but is substantiated by the unpublished "O pardon dear lady."

"O pardon dear lady" is untitled by the poet in what is apparently an only manuscript of thirty-eight four-line stanzas which, in spite of having relatively few corrections, seem to make up a first draft developed directly from an unsuccessful and unfinished poem beginning "Rock me
softly—softly mother.⁸ Beginning on leaf 24 of the notebook Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote and re-wrote the only stanza of "Rock me softly" five times before abandoning the project in favor of another treating a related subject, namely a child's reflections on her sister's death and on her family's indigence. In fact, Kelley and Coley list the two poems as a single work of 183 lines without regard to the change in stanza form or the fact that the dead child is a boy in the first fragment and a girl in the second.⁹ From one poem to another, even the speaker's interlocutor changes from her mother to the wife of an unnamed aristocrat; that the separation between the two pieces is poorly marked in the manuscript is by itself an insufficient indication of continuity, especially in view of all the evidence to the contrary.¹⁰ Rather, it seems that Elizabeth Barrett Browning decided that a poem on the hardships of poverty would be better served by a girl's testimony delivered to a wealthy woman than by one given to her own mother, and she made a fresh start on the second poem without turning to a new leaf of the notebook.

"O pardon dear lady, the penultimate poem in the "Sonnets" notebook, is slightly shorter than "The Princess Marie" but is hardly less significant. Given the date on the title page of the notebook, the composition of "O pardon dear lady" antedates that of "The Cry of the Children" by no less
than eight months and perhaps by as much as a year; internal evidence, on the other hand, suggests that it was probably written between February and May of 1843, shortly after the publication of Richard Henry Horne's findings on the employment of children in mines and factories, long assumed to be Elizabeth Barrett Browning's introduction to the world of the lower classes. In either case, "O pardon dear lady" antedates "The Cry of the Children" by several months and is one of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's earliest works entirely devoted to the social problems on which the literati began focusing their attention in the early 1840's. In addition, the poem is unquestionably her lengthiest and strongest indictment of an unconcerned aristocracy oblivious to the suffering described in Horne's report.

"O pardon dear lady" is among Elizabeth Barrett Browning's earliest dramatic monologues and involves an indigent child's testimony against the "squire's lovely lady." The fragment consists of a few introductory stanzas and a digression on the death of the child's sister before concluding with a wholesale indictment of those she holds responsible for her hardships, namely the complacent local gentry. The monologue is loosely organized, reflecting a child's wandering conversation, and that the discussion never strays far from food and warmth implies the immediacy of the speaker's difficulties. Examination of the background and
sources of the poem illustrates the timeliness of the child's demands and explains her impatience, particularly evident near the end of the poem.

For all her illnesses and confinement at 50 Wimpole Street, Elizabeth Barrett Browning was not without her windows on the world, among them the London Times, Athenaeum, Blackwood's, and Douglas Jerrold's Illuminated Magazine, all of which she acknowledged reading and from which she gathered a sense of the urgency of the problems afflicting the poor in England in the 1840's. Her interest in periodicals notwithstanding, the greatest single influence on the development of her social consciousness was the poet Richard Henry (later "Hengist") Horne, with whom she corresponded regularly until her marriage and whose involvement in the Commission on the Employment of Children in Mines and Manufactures gave her ready access to information about a world of which she had no firsthand knowledge. While it is untrue that he "discovered" Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry, as he claimed in 1876, it is impossible to overestimate Horne's influence on her career of the early 1840's, and one cannot begin to approach "O pardon dear lady" without considering the nature of Horne's investigation at Wolverhampton and the impact his findings had on her poetry.12

Horne is largely forgotten now except by Browning
scholars who read his correspondence, but in his heyday in
the 1840's and 1850's his poetry sold exceptionally well,
particularly his epic Orion, and in his circle of friends
were Dickens, Forster, Tennyson, and the Brownings. With
Horne, Elizabeth Barrett Browning co-authored A New Spirit of
the Age (1844), which featured articles on Lord Ashley and
Dr. Southwood Smith, under whose direction Horne had
previously inspected the factories at Wolverhampton in
1841. In February 1843, Horne's report on the
employment of children was published independently in Douglas
Jerrold's Illuminated Magazine, which Elizabeth Barrett
Browning read regularly, and in a letter to Horne dated the
following 7 August she acknowledged that her "Cry of the
Children" "owes its utterance to your exciting
causations." Though she never mentions any poem which
may have been "O pardon dear lady," internal evidence
suggests that the same "exciting causations" prompted its
composition as well.

The Physical and Moral Condition of the Children and
Young Persons Employed in Mines and Manufactures, published
in February 1843 was rivaled only by Henry Mayhew's London
Labour and the London Poor (1856) as the most influential
work of its kind in the nineteenth century. As a
sub-commissioner Horne was responsible for the Wolverhampton
metalworks, and nearly half of his report covers the
educational deficiencies of the factory children, most of whom, he testifies, had never heard of Jesus Christ, the Apostles, Samson, Job, or Moses. One point is of particular interest to Elizabeth Barrett Browning studies. In his report Horne mentions that many of the children, unable to read or remember the Lord's Prayer, simply mumbled the words "Our Father" before going to bed. The detail surfaces in "The Cry of the Children":

Two words, indeed, of prayer we remember,
And at midnight's hour of harm,
"Our Father," looking upward in the chamber,
We say softly for a charm.

Similarly, the speaker of "O pardon dear lady" demonstrates an ignorance of the identical prayer which she has overheard others reciting at church.

Near the end of the poem, the child superstitiously attributes the good fortune of wealthy children to their knowledge of a strange sounding church litany:

If it's true, if it's true, I can tell you the reason,
For they have a fine prayer which they say in the church:
"Give us bread day by day." and God hears them in season

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For their white hands help up—as I saw from the porch.
(leaf 20)

Yet another indigent child's misquoting the Lord's Prayer in a second poem on the social injustices in England in 1843 speaks of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's additional indebtedness to Horne, whose close affiliation with Benthamites Southwood Smith and Lord Ashley and later with Louis Blanc colored her own poetic treatment of the issues raised in his report.

That Elizabeth Barrett Browning's sympathies became decidedly more conservative once her correspondence with Horne ended supports the probability of his influence on the composition of "O pardon dear lady." She wrote ninety-one letters to Horne between 1839 and 1846 and only two during the following fifteen years. The positive correlation between the break in correspondence and the re-alignment of her political views is difficult to overlook, especially given the nature of his work and her acknowledgment of having used excerpts from him in "The Cry of the Children."

Most striking, however, about "O pardon dear lady" is not the degree of influence of contemporary sociologists and statisticians but the unprecedented aggressiveness with which Elizabeth Barrett Browning attacks those responsible for the economic conditions of her day. With the author's unqualified sympathies, the speaker initially confronts the
lady of the manor and expects her to respond favorably to the tale of woe, just as the poet would have liked her contemporaries to experience a change of heart after reading the poem. The tone of "O pardon dear lady" becomes increasingly hostile, however, especially after leaf 20 verso, and resembles that of Shelley's "Men of England" and Hood's "Song of the Shirt" more than anything in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's published canon.

For example, it is difficult to imagine that the poet who wrote "Victoria's Tears" in 1838 and "The Crowned and Wedded Queen" in 1840 could refer to the royal family in terms no more respectful than the following:

Do you think it can be so? If I could be sure of it--
If the queen's little children could sit in such state
In the palace and laugh--I would plead at the door of it
"Give us good daily bread, we are hungry and wait."

(leaf 20 verso)

At a time when the growing royal brood was decidedly off limits to even the most oblique criticism, the suggestion that they should have shared their bounty with a beggar child would have been unforgivably indecorous and may alone account for Elizabeth Barrett Browning's failure to publish the poem.

The recurring imagery in "O pardon dear lady"--almost always related to food--unifies what would otherwise be a badly disjointed, rambling monologue. The dramatic setting
of the poem illustrates a direct confrontation between what Disraeli called "the two nations" of England, and after a brief apology for the interruption, the child begins a lengthy account of her familiarity with the lady and points out when and where she has seen her before. The entire poem, in fact, is a series of digressions by the child, reiterating the idea that the two are not strangers, having lived near one another for years and having actually met once before in the child's home. Though the speaker openly solicits neither food nor money, the request is implicit throughout the early moments of her narrative, particularly in her references to "the ryebread as white as would suit a Duke's daughter/ Cast out to the birds. . . ." The class difference between the two characters could not be more dramatically illustrated than by the incessant hunger of one and the other's willingness to feed pets, and that it is the child and not the adult who points out the irony of the situation emphasizes the obvious nature of the problem afflicting not only the two characters in the poem but, by implication, the whole of England as well.

The tone of supplication soon vanishes, however, and because the poem is incomplete, it is difficult to tell whether the sudden change in the speaker's temperament results from the dramatic situation or the author's failure to control the tone. In other words, immediately after
alluding to the death of her sister, the child boldly
demands, "Where's our earth, o ye rich men, the earth we
inherit?" and concludes that she would rather "Die out a poor
child on my poor mother's knee/ Than grow to a rich man with
harvests to gather." Within the dramatic structure itself,
the hostility is unprovoked, especially since the lady's
responses are not recorded and the child was so plainly
apologetic in her opening remarks. Since apparently nothing
initiated the child's vigorous assault on her listener, it
seems that Elizabeth Barrett Browning experimented with the
tone of the poem (after all, it is an early draft) and failed
to reconcile the child's initial behavior with her militant
attitude near the end of the fragment.

At any rate, the monologue begins with apologies and
ends with accusations, and the speaker sounds less like a
child and more like Elizabeth Barrett Browning with each
passing stanza. Nowhere is that more evident than in the key
passage of the entire poem:

   Because it is God's, it is ours. He has told us
   To ask for it bravely with faith in the heart.
   Have the tall ones and strong ones the right to
   withhold us
   Because we are feeble from having our part.

   (leaf 20 verso)

Such point-blank demands, though of a different nature,
resemble what Alethea Hayter calls the "Pythian shrieks" of the poet's Risorgimento propaganda of the 1850's. But in the 1850's, Elizabeth Barrett Browning herself would not have answered that particular question, and in view of the ideas expressed in *Aurora Leigh* it is difficult to imagine her ever asking it. Appealing to a nation's sense of charity is one thing; suggesting that the poor should boldly demand their "part" is quite another and presents a radical departure from both the poet's middle-class Whig upbringing and her exclusively non-economic political views of the late 1840's and 1850's, not to mention her strident attacks on Fourier and Louis Blanc. The question remains, however, as the central issue in "O pardon dear lady," and the discovery of the poem suggests that it was an issue which she entertained during the period of her social awakening in the early 1840's.

The indigent persona of "O pardon dear lady" is among Elizabeth Barrett Browning's most memorable characters, but the monologue itself is marred by several flaws, any one of which may have kept her from completing and publishing it. For one thing, how the listener in the poem is expected to react to all the child's accusations in uncertain, and given that she is the silent interlocutor of a dramatic monologue, her answer naturally goes unrecorded. Similarly, what the audience response might have been to a poem outlining a
waif's random grievances is difficult to calculate. In other words, a member of the leisure class admonishing her peers, as Elizabeth Barrett Browning does in "The Cry of the Children," might tend to arouse their righteous indignation and a good deal of sympathy resulting in the amelioration of the living conditions in the slums, or at least the working conditions in the factories. Speaking the same words through the persona of a member of the lower class, however, might simply alienate the potential benefactors, especially by posing such questions as "Where's our earth, o ye rich men, the earth we inherit?/ Has our heritage nothing but graves for its worth?" "The Cry of the Children" created quite a stir when it was published in Blackwood's in August 1843, and many scholars credit the poem with the passage of Sir James Graham's Factory Bill of 1843.20 "O pardon dear lady," on the other hand, might have brought out the reactionary in every middle-class Englishman who read it, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning may have wisely kept the poem out of print.

That steps should be taken to eliminate the sickness and malnutrition of the poor in England is the dominant thematic implication of "O pardon dear lady," but precisely what steps the poet fails to say. References to the poor inheriting the earth echo the Beatitudes but remain ambiguous in the context of social reform, and while the poet no doubt sympathizes with the child's demands, it is uncertain how far she would
have gone to see them realized. Such complete absence of specificity in "O pardon dear lady" with regard to reform suggests that in 1843 Elizabeth Barrett Browning had not sufficiently considered the implications of the subject at hand and that she advocated a more equitable distribution of goods without considering the means or the consequences. Her approach to reform became much more sophisticated (and her demands more modest) after her emigration, and the idealism of "O pardon dear lady" presents an interesting contrast with the resigned pragmatism of her poems written after 1846.

Nowhere is Elizabeth Barrett Browning's pragmatic disregard for political philosophies and social panaceas more evident than in "A Song for the Ragged schools of London" (1854), in which she openly acknowledges the hopelessness of feeding and clothing the poor and simply requests that funds be provided for their religious education. Opening a few Sunday schools in London is considerably less ambitious than feeding England's masses, and referring to hungry children as "the scurf and mildew of the city" (line 90) reflects a startling degree of cynicism in light of her portrayal of the brave, articulate child in "O pardon dear lady."

That in her later years Elizabeth Barrett Browning became less hostile to what she termed "the cruel social jungle" hardly calls for a re-assessment of either her sincerity or her humanitarianism; rather, the introduction of
"O pardon dear lady" to a study of her interest in reform demonstrates the vigor with which she attacked social injustices at a time when, under the influence of Horne, she still believed the poor could be saved. To a greater extent than any of her poems, "The Cry of the Human" (1839) and "The Cry of the Children" (1843) included, "O pardon dear lady" openly questions the decency of the system perpetuating the miseries of the poor, or at best ignoring them, and because they are based on moral, not economic, grounds, its charges are the most difficult to answer. More than any poem in the "Sonnets" notebook, "O pardon dear lady" provides a glimpse of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's personal convictions, not simply her art, in the early stages of development and shows a hint of the combativeness which later marks Aurora Leigh and her enthusiastic assaults on the foreign interventionists in Italy.
Notes

1 She once admitted, in fact, that Napoleon III captured her fancy partly because he looked good sitting on a horse. See Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, ed. Frederic Kenyon (London, 1897), 2:30.


4 Dodds 103, 211.

5 Meredith and Sullivan 3:235.

6 See, for example, Alethea Hayter, Mrs. Browning: The Poet's Work in its Setting (New York: Barnes, 1963), 175-92.

7 As cited in Hayter 123.


9 Kelley and Coley 323.

10 Similarly, she began the earliest draft of "Little Mattie" on leaf 14 verso immediately following the fragment beginning "I think O Bella there's no cure for love."


13 When the volume first appeared Elizabeth Barrett Browning was given no credit on the title page for collaboration with Horne. See A New Spirit of the Age, ed. R. H. Horne, 2 vols. (London, 1844).
14 Horne, Letters, 80.


16 Roughly the other half of Horne's report deals with the hunger of the children, the central concern of "O pardon dear lady."

17 Royal Commission 248.


19 Hayter 193.

20 Hayter 179.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX

Though the poet's inscription "Sonnets/ by Elizabeth Barrett Barrett/ 1842" found on leaf 2 recto provides the principal evidence for dating the "Sonnets" notebook, internal evidence suggests that a number of the poems may have been written as much as two years later. In The Browning Collections: A Reconstruction (1984), Kelley and Coley mention only the author's inscription in their attempt to date the manuscript.\(^1\) Jo Klingman, on the other hand, in her article "Baylor Browning Collection Adds Houghton Materials" (1979) suggests that the author's inverting the notebook and writing in reverse--from back to front--on leaves 17 to 25 provides a clue for dating the materials not included in Poems (1844).\(^2\) Unfortunately, neither of these published descriptions of "Sonnets" settles the matter of the dates of composition; examination of the drafts in light of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's interests and publication history, however, does answer a number of
questions about when she probably began many of the poems in "Sonnets."

While the entry provided by Kelley and Coley is merely descriptive rather than analytical, Klingman's assessment of the notebook includes a brief discussion of the probability that the poems may have been written over a period of several years. Noting that none of the poems written in reverse on leaves 17 to 25 were published in Poems (1844), Klingman suggests that Elizabeth Barrett Browning may have inverted the notebook after Poems went to the press. While her observation is correct, Klingman fails to take into account the fact that many of the poems written in normal, sequential order on leaves 1 through 16 were likewise first published about 1844. Similarly, three of the four manuscript notebooks from roughly the same period, now at the New York Public Library, contain material written in reverse, but in each case the poet's inverting the notebook reveals little or nothing about dates of composition.

In other words, it is unwise to assume that the inversion of the "Sonnets" notebook demonstrates anything in particular about when the poems were written, though a brief examination of the contents does help to establish the chronology. Judging from the poet's own inscription on leaf 2 recto, dated manuscripts in other manuscript notebooks, and dates of first publications of the poems in question, it
seems likely that the poems written on leaves 1 through 12 verso were begun (and in some cases polished) in 1842. That many of the events described in "The Princess Marie" (leaves 6 verso through 12 recto) occurred during the summer of 1842 strengthens the probability that the poet's inscription accurately applies to at least the first twenty-three pages of the notebook.

Dating the material on leaves 13 recto through 16 recto is slightly more complicated. Though none of the poems written on these pages were published before 1846, it is difficult to determine when the poet began composing them. It is important to remember that each of the poems on these pages is a heavily corrected draft and not a fair copy ready for the printer. It is not unlikely, then, that a year or two may have passed between the time Elizabeth Barrett Browning began the poems and the time she submitted a number of them to Blackwood's Magazine in the fall of 1846. For example, the fair copy of "A Reed" (leaf 14 recto) at the John Rylands Library is dated in the author's hand "April 1845"; the poem was not published until 1850, a full five years later, and that the draft of the poem in "Sonnets" may have been composed somewhat earlier is quite within reason. It seems probable, then, given the rough condition of the drafts, that the six poems and fragments appearing on leaves 13 recto through 16 recto were written
between 1842-1845.

Similarly, there is no reason to believe that the material written on leaves 17 verso through lower endpaper recto was composed any later than the mid-1840's. In fact, the subject matter of "O pardon dear lady" (leaves 24 recto through 19 verso), discussed at length in Chapter V, suggests that Elizabeth Barrett Browning probably began the poem a short time after the publication of R. H. Horne's investigation of the child labor practices in 1843 and certainly before she moved to Italy in the fall of 1846. The fact that the last poem in the notebook, "The Best Thing in the World," was first published posthumously in Last Poems (1862) does not imply such a late date of composition; we know, for example, that Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote "De Profundis" in 1840 and withheld publication for twenty-one years. In addition, there is no evidence of her having used any extant manuscript notebook for a period exceeding three or four years.

It seems safe, then, to suggest 1842 as the date for the poet's use of the first twenty-three pages of the notebook and 1843-1845 for the remainder of "Sonnets," including the portion written in reverse. That merely dating, much less editing, such early drafts presents a number of complications explains at least in part why there is still no variorum edition of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry; such
complications, coupled with the fact that the Barrett family seems to have saved every scrap of paper on which Elizabeth wrote as much as her autograph, call for a re-evaluation of her extant holographs, the likes of which have been attempted here.
Notes

1 Kelley and Coley 376


3 Klingman 29

4 "Little Mattie," for example, a draft of which appears on leaves 14 verso through 15 recto, was not published until 1861.
VITA

Phillip David Sharp was born 13 July 1957 in Crossett, Arkansas, and grew up in Jasper, Texas, where his family has lived since 1959. After graduating as salutatorian at Jasper High School in 1975, he attended Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where he graduated summa cum laude and was invited to join Phi Beta Kappa in 1979. From 1979 to 1981 he served as graduate assistant to the director of the Armstrong Browning Library at Baylor while he worked toward the Master of Arts degree in English literature, which he received in 1981.

He began his doctoral work at Emory University in September of 1981 but transferred the next year to Louisiana State University, where he was awarded an Alumni Federation Fellowship. He is scheduled to take the Ph.D. in English from Louisiana State University in December 1985 and is currently living in Texas, where he is doing research in preparation for a volume establishing a text of the poetry of Elizabeth Barrett Browning.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

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Major Field: English

Title of Thesis: "Poetry in Process: Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Sonnets Notebook"

Approved:

Rebecca Chung
Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

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