

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Defoe Abbot Stoker Wilde Carroll Christie Maupassant Byron Molière Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Goethe Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Hall
Baum Cotton Henry Flaubert Turgenev Balzac Willis
Leslie Dumas Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
Kant London Descartes Cervantes Voltaire Cooke
Poe Aristotle Wells Shakespeare Irving
Hale James Hastings Richter Chekhov da Shakespeare Alcott
Doré Swift Dante Shaw Wodehouse
Pushkin Newton



tredition®

tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, tredition offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. tredition is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

TREDITION CLASSICS

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series. The creators of this series are united by passion for literature and driven by the intention of making all public domain books available in printed format again - worldwide. Most TREDITION CLASSICS titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades. At tredition we believe that a great book never goes out of style and that its value is eternal. Several mostly non-profit literature projects provide content to tredition. To support their good work, tredition donates a portion of the proceeds from each sold copy. As a reader of a TREDITION CLASSICS book, you support our mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion. See all available books at www.tredition.com.



Project Gutenberg

The content for this book has been graciously provided by Project Gutenberg. Project Gutenberg is a non-profit organization founded by Michael Hart in 1971 at the University of Illinois. The mission of Project Gutenberg is simple: To encourage the creation and distribution of eBooks. Project Gutenberg is the first and largest collection of public domain eBooks.

The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Volume II

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Imprint

This book is part of TREDITION CLASSICS

Author: Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Cover design: Buchgut, Berlin - Germany

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg - Germany

ISBN: 978-3-8424-8202-9

www.tredition.com

www.tredition.de

Copyright:

The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations, such as Project Gutenberg, worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.



W. B. E. & Co. London

Robert Browning

ROME 1854.

From an Old Painting by W. Turner

London: Printed and Sold by W. B. E. & Co.

Contents

CHAPTER VII

1851-1852

'Casa Guidi Windows'—Venice—Milan—Paris—London—
Winter in Paris—The Coup d'Etat—Louis Napoleon—Miss Mit-
ford's 'Recollections'—George Sand—Miss Mulock—Summer in
England

CHAPTER VIII

1852-1855

Return to Florence—Spiritualism—Robert Lytton—Bagni di Lucca—Florence—Rome—Florence—The Crimean War—Death of Miss Mitford

CHAPTER IX

1855-1859

Visit to England—Tennyson's 'Maud'—Winter in Paris—Mr. Ruskin—Last Visit to England—'Aurora Leigh'—Death of Mr. Kenyon—Return to Florence—Carnival—Death of Mr. Barrett—Bagni di Lucca—Illness of Lytton—Paris—Havre—Paris—Florence—Rome

CHAPTER X

1859-1860

The Franco-Austrian War—Napoleon and Italy—Villafranca—
Florence—Siena—Italian Politics and England—Landor—
Florence—Rome

CHAPTER XI

1860-1861

'Poems before Congress' – Napoleon and Savoy – France, Italy, and England – Florence – Death of Mrs. Surtees Cook – Garibaldi – Rome – The 'Cornhill Magazine' and Thackeray – Increasing Weakness – Death of Mrs. Browning

Portrait Of Robert Browning, Rome 1854

Facsimile Of Letter To The Emperor Napoleon

THE LETTERS

OF

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

CHAPTER VII

1851-1852

Since they first settled in Florence the Brownings had made no long or distant expeditions from their new home. Their summer excursions to Vallombrosa, Lucca, or Siena had been of the nature of short holidays, and had not taken them beyond the limits of Tuscany. Now they had planned a far wider series of travels, which, beginning with Rome, Naples, Venice, and Milan, should then be extended across the Alps, and comprehend Brussels, Paris, and ultimately London. This ambitious programme had to be curtailed by the omission of the southern tour to Rome and Naples, as well as the digression to Brussels, but the rest of the scheme was carried out, and about the beginning of June they left Casa Guidi for an absence which extended over seventeen months.

The holiday had been well earned, especially by Mrs. Browning, who, since the preparation of the new edition of her poems in the previous year, had been writing the second part of 'Casa Guidi Windows.' It is probably to this poem that she refers in the letter to Miss Browning printed at the end of the last chapter, Miss Browning having on more than one occasion helped both her brother and her sister-in-law in the task of passing their poems through the press. The book appeared in June, just as they were starting on their travels, and probably for this reason we hear less in the letters of its reception. It was hardly to be expected that the English public would take a very keen interest in a poem dealing almost entirely with Italian politics, and half of it with the politics of three years ago. Either in 1849 or in 1859 the interest would have been livelier; but Italy was passing now through the valley of the shadow, and, save for the horrors of the Neapolitan prisons, was not much before the public for the moment. The intrigues of Louis Napoleon and the

ostentatious aggression of the Pope in England were the matters of most interest in foreign politics, and both were overshadowed by the absorbing topic of the Great Exhibition.

Another reason why 'Casa Guidi Windows' has received less appreciation than it deserves, both at the time of its publication and since, is that it stands rather apart from all the recognised species of poetry, and is hard to classify and criticise. Its political and contemporary character cut it off from the imaginative and historical subjects which form in general the matter of poetry, while its genuinely poetic emotion and language separate it from the political pamphlet or the occasional verse. It is a poetic treatment of a political subject raised to a high level by the genuine enthusiasm and fire with which it is inspired, and these give it a value which lasts far beyond the moment of the events which gave it birth. The execution, too, shows an advance on most of Mrs. Browning's previous work. The dangerous experiments in rhyming which characterised many of the poems in the volumes of 1844 are abandoned; the licences of language are less frequent; the verse runs smoothly and is more uniformly under command. It would appear as if the heat of inspiration which produced the 'Sonnets from the Portuguese' had left a permanent and purifying effect upon her style. The poem has been neglected by those who take little interest in Italy and its history, and adversely criticised by those who do not sympathise with its political and religious opinions; but with those who look only to its poetry and to its warm-hearted championship of a great cause, it will always hold a high place of its own among Mrs. Browning's writings.

To Miss I. Blagden

Florence: May 1, [1851].

I am writing to you, dearest Miss Blagden, at last, you see; though you must have excommunicated me before now as the most ungrateful of correspondents and friends. Do forgive what you can—and your kindness is so great that I believe you can, and shall go on to write as if you did. We have been in the extremity of confusion and indecision. Remember how the fairy princes used to do when they arrived at the meeting of three roads, and had to consider what choice to make. How they used to shake their heads and ponder,

and end sometimes by drawing lots! Much in the like perplexity have we been. Everything was ready for Rome—the day fixed, the packing begun, the vettura bargained for. Suddenly, visions of obstacles rose up. We were late in the season. We should be late for the festas. May would be hot in Rome for Wiedeman. Then two journeys, north and south, to Rome and Naples, besides Paris and England, pulled fearfully at the purse-strings. Plainly we couldn't afford it. So everything was stopped and changed. We gave up Rome and you, and are now actually on the point of setting out for Venice; Venice is to console us for Rome. We go to-morrow, indeed. The plan is to stay a fortnight at Venice (or more or less, as the charm works), and then to strike across to Milan; across the Splügen into Switzerland, and to linger there among the hills and lakes for a part of the summer, so working out an intention of economy; then down the Rhine; then by railroad to Brussels; so to Paris, settling there; after which we pay our visit to England for a few weeks. Early next spring we mean to go to Rome and return here, either *for good* (which is very possible) or for the purpose of arranging our house affairs and packing up books and furniture. As it is, we have our apartment for another year, and shall let it if we can. It has been painted, cleaned, and improved in all ways, till my head and Robert's ring again with the confusion of it all. Oh that we were gone, since we are to go! When out of sight of Florence, we shall begin to enjoy, I hope, the sight of other things, but as it is the impression is only painful and dizzying. Our friends Mr. and Mrs. Ogilvy go with us as far as Venice, and then leave us on a direct course for England, having committed their children and nurses to the care of her sister at the Baths of Lucca meantime. We take with us only Wilson.

Do write to me at Venice, Poste Restante, that I may know you are thinking of me and excusing me kindly. If you knew how uncertain and tormented we have been. I won't even ask Robert to add a line to this, he is so overwhelmed with a flood of businesses; but he bids me speak to you of him as affectionately and faithfully (because affectionately) as I have reason to do. So kind it was in you to think of taking the trouble of finding us an apartment! So really sensible we are to all your warm-hearted goodness, with fullness of heart on our side too. And, after all, we are not parting! Either we shall find you in Italy again, or you will find us in Paris. I have a presenti-

mental assurance of finding one another again before long. Remember us and love us meantime.

As to your spiritual visitor — why, it would be hard to make out a system of Romish doctrine from the most Romish version of the S.S. [1] The differences between the Protestant version and the Papistical are not certainly justifiable by the Greek original, on the side of the latter. In fact, the Papistical version does not pretend to follow the Greek text, but a Latin translation of the same — it's a translation from a translation. Granting it, however, to be faithful, I must repeat that to make out the Romish system from even *such* a Romish version could not be achieved. So little does Scripture (however represented) seem to me to justify that system of ecclesiastical doctrine and discipline. I answer your question because you bid me, but I am not a bit frightened at the idea of your becoming a R.C., however you may try to frighten me. You have too much intelligence and uprightness of intellect. We do hope you have enjoyed Rome, and that dearest Miss Agassiz (give our kind love to her) is better and looks better than we all thought her a little while ago. I have a book coming out in England called 'Casa Guidi Windows,' which will prevent everybody else (except you) from speaking to me again. Do love me always, as I shall you. Forgive me, and *don't* forget me. I shall try, after a space of calm, to behave better to you, and more after my *heart* — for I am ever (as Robert is)

Your faithfully affectionate friend,

Elizabeth B. Browning.

To Miss Mitford

Venice: June 4, [1851].

My ever dearest Miss Mitford, — I must write to you from Venice, though it can only be a few lines. So much I have to say and *feel* in writing to you, and thinking that you were not well when you wrote last to me, I long to hear from you — and yet I can't tell you today where a letter will find me. We are wanderers on the face of the world just now, and with every desire of going straight from Venice to Milan to-morrow (Friday) week, we shall more probably, at the Baths of Recoaro, be lingering and lingering. Therefore will you write to the care of Miss Browning, New Cross, Hatcham, near