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Vonely's Ruins, and some necessitarian speculations taken in part from the writings of Lucretius, partly from his former teachers, the Calvinists.

In Queen Mab the sustained power of melody and the lavish richness of imagery appears, which we mark in his later poems, and which Shelley was the first poet to revive from the rich storehouses of the Elizabethans. Take for example the midnight scene.

"How beautiful this night—the balmiest sigh  
That vernal Zephyrs breath in evening's ear  
Were discord to the speaking quietude  
That wraps this moveless scene. Heaven's ebon vault,  
Studded with stars unutterably bright,  
Seems like a canopy that love had spread  
To curtain her sleeping world."

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In Queen Mab, as in the later poem, the verse has a melodious cadence peculiar to Shelley—and which most nearly resembles the blank verse line of Tennyson. In it we find what is so much to be regretted in the nebulous half-expressed "suggestive" poetry of our time, that is, clearness and manly straightforwardness of style. What is meant is fully expressed. There is great command of language, but a command which shews itself not by affectation of ornament, or by straining after metaphor, but by a certain restrained power: the wealth of words is kept well in hand. On Shelley's character the outlawry which this publication entailed in a generation which, if not religious, was at least intensely respectable, had a depressing influence—it drove him to associations with the pariahs of literature and society. We have been told by one, whose poems were the means of leading Shelley in after life to study the Faust of Goëthe, that he saw Shelley about this period of his life, the time of his ill-timed love for Harriette Westbrook and his disastrous friendship for William Godwin. Young Shelley visited Dublin in order to be present at some political meeting. His appearance, our informant told us, resembled the portraits which represent him as a boy—his face was a winning one of almost girlish delicacy—pale and freckled, the hair thick and curling. An early marriage with a girl who, neither in education nor temperament was fitted to be the wife of Shelley, ended in separation, and some years afterwards in the suicide of the unhappy wife, not in consequence of any ill-usage on the part of Shelley, whose conscience, an unusually sensitive one, seems to have acquitted him of blame in the matter. There appears to be good evidence that her mind was disordered at the time; still the tragedy, occurring as it did, during an estrangement, ~~must have~~ been a terrible shock to Shelley—that it was so appears in many of his ~~writings~~ about this time.

"That time is dead ~~for ever~~, child,  
Drowned, frozen, dead for ever;  
I think on the past—and stare aghast  
On the ghosts by life's dull river."