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## 194 Sonnet — Political Greatness.

See note on *Sonnet to Byron*.

5. Shelley had slight enthusiasm for historical study as such.

8. "obscene." Ugly Cf. *Prometheus Unbound*, IV, 95.

## 195 A Lament ("O World! O Life! O Time!")

8. Rossetti inserts "autumn" after "summer," most improperly, as regards both music and content.

## 197 Adonais.

See Introduction, pp. xlv, xlvi, lxi, lxiii, and lxiv.

The most notable personal elegies or elegiac poems in our language may be stated as follows: —

Author.	Title.	In Memory of
Unknown (Anglo-Saxon Period)	<i>The Wanderer</i>	The singer's patron.
Edmund Spenser	<i>Astrophel</i>	Sir Philip Sidney
John Milton	<i>Lycidas</i>	Edward King
Percy Bysshe Shelley	<i>Adonais</i>	John Keats
Alfred Tennyson	<i>In Memoriam</i>	Arthur Henry Hallam
Matthew Arnold	<i>Thyrsis</i>	Arthur Hugh Clough
Robert Browning	<i>La Saisiaz</i>	Miss A. Egerton-Smith
Algernon Charles Swinburne	<i>Ave atque Vale</i>	Charles Baudelaire
Ralph Waldo Emerson	<i>Threnody</i>	His son
Walt Whitman	<i>When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed</i>	Abraham Lincoln

The more canonical and literary — by no means therefore the less vital — among these elegies, including *Adonais*, show the influence of the memorial idylls of Theocritus, Bion and Moschus. Shelley, more particularly, is indebted to Bion's *Lament for Adonis* and to Moschus's *Lament for Bion*. Keats's death, though the circumstances attending it and its meaning for him and for humanity are treated with poetic energy, is yet made but the occasion of a penetrating glance into the problems of physical decay and spiritual futurity. While Milton's elegy makes its chief burden clerical insincerity and undutifulness, corruption *versus* incorruption; Tennyson's, the difficult restoration of the indispensable minimum of faith; and Browning's, the intellectual veracity of the idea of the Soul; Shelley, for his part, wings through palpable darkness his flaming way into the slow sunrise of Eternal Love and Beauty. His own opinions of the poem are given freely in such passages as these: —

"You may announce for publication a poem entitled *Adonais*. It is a lament on the death of poor Keats, with some interposed stabs on the assassins of his peace and of his fame." (*Letter to Ollier*.)

"I have received the heart-rending account of the clos-