

gave him somewhat the appearance of undue delicacy.

When Shelley was ten years old he was placed under the care of Dr. Greenlaw, who presided over sixty or seventy roistering youngsters in Sion House Academy, at Brentford. The youth was not happy at Sion House. His second cousin, Captain Medwin, was also in attendance at the Academy, and he tells us in his well-known published reminiscences, how the mental stimulus too strongly dominated the physical energies of the poor young poet for him to care much for the ordinary sports of boyhood. A book was more valued by him than a bat, a ballad than a ball. Then, his companions viewed him with suspicion as a young aristocrat, and he, unconsciously no doubt, scorned them for certain trifling, though none the less real, vulgarities. He belonged to "the caste of Vere de Vere," and although a mere child was even then a Republican and steadfast believer in the essential equality of all men, but the young Hodges about him only thought of his comparatively high descent, and pecked at the strange peacock which had been driven into their barnyard to insult their homely attire with his glowing plumage. Your typical schoolboy is a little savage. I do not believe the students of Sion House Academy were a whit worse than the general run of students elsewhere. Here was a strange youth come among them who coupled with almost feminine beauty, a look of natural gentleness and innocence. Here was one who showed but little inclination for their rough and boisterous games. Here was one who had an incomprehensible habit of amusing himself in a manner which they did not understand. Here was one who spent his time in dreamy reverie and in watching the clouds, the glittering streams, and the white, mysterious moon when he should have been at cricket or manfully kicking the inflated sphere. Surely Dr. Greenlaw's young bears may be well excused for pouncing upon this eccentric young lamb. Was he not fair prey? In this world does might not rule? True, he was a young genius. But men, not to speak of little boys, frequently find it impossible to understand your genius. Girlish, gentle, sensitive, retiring, a dreamer of dreams, fond of solitary reading and lonely musing—surely here was an appropriate

victim for that humane and delightful collegiate institution known as fagging! I have dwelt on this period of the career of Percy Bysshe Shelley, not to prove his juvenile tormentors, depraved, which certainly they were not, but rather to set forth in due proportion events and experiences which many reasonably believe first influenced the subject of this paper to become the lifelong antagonist of—to use his own words—"tyrants and foes"—even when the former assumed the shape of public order and the latter that of religion and of approved convention.

At the age of twelve, according to Professor Bowden, Shelley was removed from Sion House and entered at Eton. Here the youth had to face, not three score of "tyrants and of foes," but a company of several hundred. The head-master was little better than a polished brute, who was known to have gleefully thrashed eighty delinquents in succession on one occasion and on another to have left his meal in order to flog a batch of youngsters, returning to his beef and coffee with intensified gaiety and appetite. Shelley was, at first, placed with a sympathetic tutor, but, ere long, was transferred to the care of a dull and ignorant assistant master. This man entered Shelley's room one day and found the boy occupied in producing a blue flame. The teacher angrily inquired the meaning of the uncanny work and his pupil jocularly replied that he was "raising the devil." A voltaic battery stood on the table, but the master was unaware of its properties. When he received the surprising answer just given he seized hold of the machine and was instantly hurled back against the wall by the unexpected force of the electric shock. Of course Shelley was severely thrashed, and his cherished chemical experiments prohibited, but he must have found infinite solace for his woes in the discomfiture of his stupid chastiser. It is only fair to state, however that all his woes did not proceed from his teachers. His fellow-students made his life perfectly miserable for a long time. William Sharp tells us, in his excellent monogram on Shelley, that the poor youth was baited, worried, jeered at, called "Mad Shelley," and constantly subjected to endless drubbing. He hated cruelty and he hated meanness. Yet much of this abuse he withstood without