

is to bring forth hereafter the fruit of freedom. The poem itself has finer passages in it than *Alastor*, but as a whole it is inferior to it. It is quite formless. The same year Shelley went to Italy, and renewed health and the climate gave him renewed power. *Rosalind and Helen* appeared, and in the beginning of 1818 *Julian and Maddalo*. The first tale circles round a social subject that interested him, the second is a familiar conversation on the story of a madman in San Lazzaro at Venice. In it his poetry becomes more masculine, and he has for the first time won mastery over his art. The new life and joy he had now gained brought back his enthusiasm for mankind, and he broke out into the splendid lyric drama of *Prometheus Unbound*. Prometheus bound on his rock represents Humanity suffering under the reign of Evil impersonated in Jupiter. Asia, at the beginning of the drama separated from Prometheus, is the all-pervading Love which in loving makes the universe of nature. The time comes when Evil is overthrown. Prometheus is then delivered and united to Asia; that is, Man is wedded to the spirit in Nature, and Good is all in all. The fourth act is the choral song of the regenerated universe. It is the finest example we have of the working out in poetry of that idea of a glorious destiny for the whole of Man which Cowper introduced into English poetry. The marriage of Asia and Prometheus, of Nature and Humanity, the distinct existence of each for that purpose, is the same idea as Wordsworth's differently expressed; and Shelley and he are the only two poets who have touched it philosophically, Wordsworth with most contemplation, Shelley with most imagination. Shelley's poetry of Man reached its height in *Prometheus Unbound*, and he turned now to try his matured power upon other subjects. Two of these were neither personal nor for the sake of man. The first was the drama of the *Cenci*, the gravest and noblest tragedy since Webster wrote,