

**THE LETTERS OF  
THOMAS  
LOVELL BEDDOES**

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The Letters of Thomas Lovell Beddoes by Thomas Lovell Beddoes & Edmund Gosse

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**THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES & EDMUND GOSSE**

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# The Letters of Thomas Lovell Beddoes

EDITED WITH NOTES

By EDMUND GOSSE  
HON. M.A. OF TRINITY COL-  
LEGE, CAMBRIDGE

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## Prefatory Note

*By publishing the correspondence contained in this volume, I conclude the performance of a duty laid upon me by the late Mr. Robert Browning.*

*It is not necessary that I should here repeat in detail the circumstances of the transference of these papers to Mr. Browning by the will of Mr. Thomas Forbes Kelsall in 1872. All information on this point will be found given minutely in the preface to my edition of the Poetical Works of Beddoes (J. M. Dent & Co., 1890. 2 vols.). It suffices to say that it was the wish of Kelsall, at whose absolute disposal all the MSS. of Beddoes were placed by the poet's death-bed*

### *Prefatory Note*

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*memorandum, that these letters should be published, at a proper interval after the death of Miss Zoë King, an event which took place twelve years ago. Large use was made of the correspondence by Kelsall himself, when he compiled the memoir of Beddoes which was prefixed to the Poems of 1851, but this is the first time that the letters are textually published, while the volume of 1851 has never been reprinted, and has now become rare. A few of these letters, those addressed to B. W. Procter, were published by my friend Mr. Coventry Patmore in his anonymous memoir of that writer. Another was given to myself by the late Mrs. Procter. I have to thank Mr. Robert Barrett Browning for the kindness with which he confirmed his father's wish that I should publish these papers, the originals of the remainder of which are now in his possession.*

*Few collections of letters exist in which the discussion of literary topics holds so prominent a place as it does in these of Beddoes. If any excuse were needed for bringing them before*



## Prefatory Note

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*the public, it would be more than supplied by Mr. Swinburne, who, as long ago as 1875, remarked of the author of Death's Jest Book that his "noble instinct for poetry" was better shown in his letters than even in his practice as a verse-writer, and added that Beddoes' "brilliant correspondence on poetical questions gives to me a higher view of his fine and vigorous intelligence than any other section of his literary remains."*

*It is the letters which were thus distinguished which are here presented to the public.*

E. G.

December, 1893.

## *Memoir*

*THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES* was born in Rodney Place, Clifton, on the 20th of July, 1803. He was educated at the Bath Grammar School and at the Charterhouse, proceeding to Pembroke College, Oxford, in 1820. He published *The Improvisatore* in 1821, and *The Brides' Tragedy* in 1822. He died at Basel on the 26th of January, 1849. His tragedy of *Death's Jest Book* was published in 1850, and his *Poems* in 1851.

LETTERS OF  
THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES

LETTER I

To THOMAS FORBES KELSALL

*a Douvres C.*

*A Sunday in Feb<sup>r</sup> [1824]*

DEAR KELSALL,—Being on the edge of a journey deep into the country for a fortnight, and altogether desperate of receiving any official answer from Mr. J. Hunt,<sup>1</sup> I write to inform you how the Shelley<sup>2</sup> affair goes on. On Mr. Waller's receiving your answer he brought it here and we in full assembly with your paper proxy declared for 250 copies. I was installed secretary and wrote on the spot to J. Hunt informing him that we offered to