

# **SHELLY: A POEM**

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Shelly: A Poem by Claude Edward Foster

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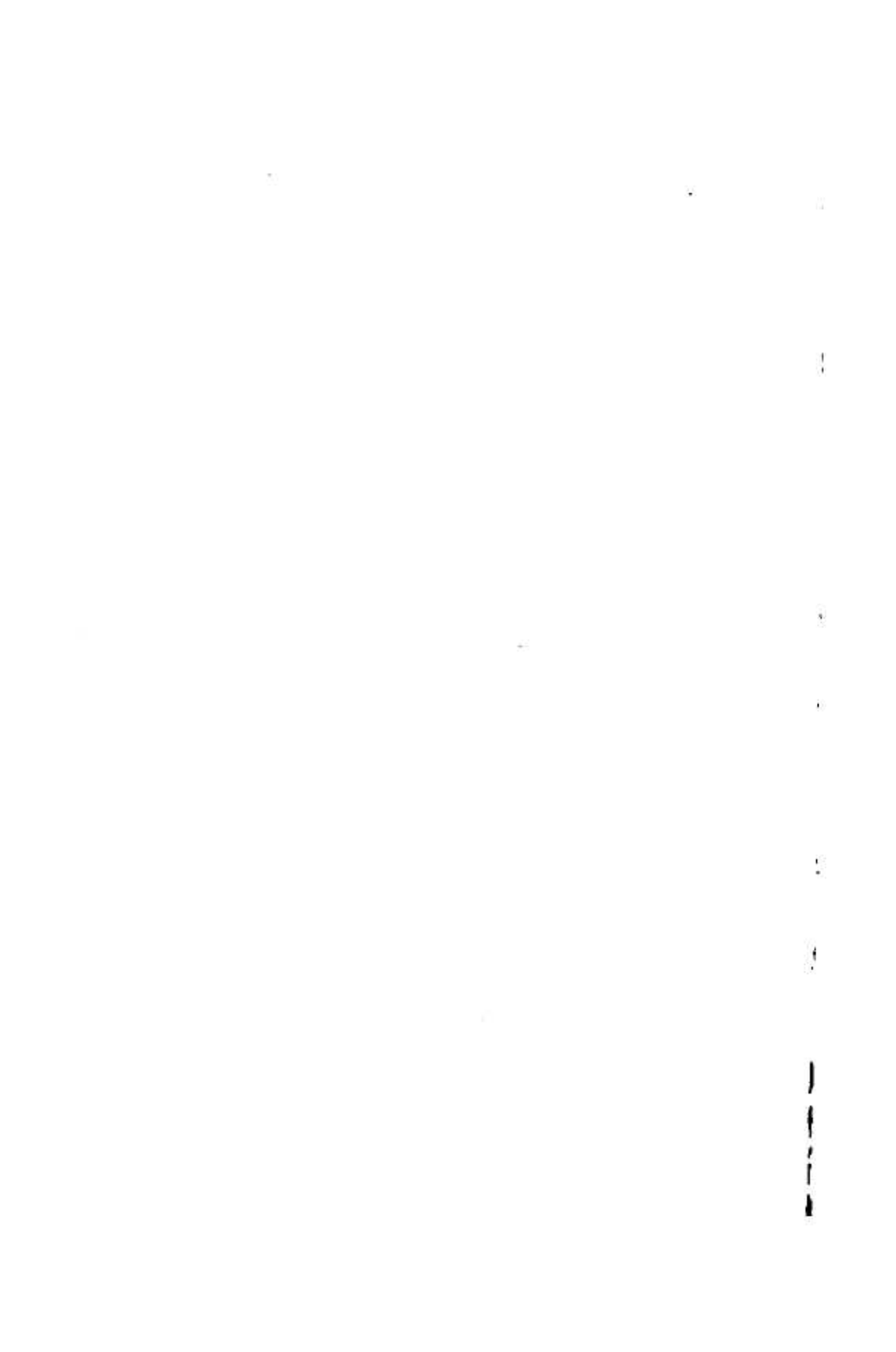
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**CLAUDE EDWARD FOSTER**

# **SHELLY: A POEM**



SHELLEY



# SHELLEY

A POEM

WRITTEN BY

CAPTAIN CLAUDE EDWARD FOSTER

*(King's Own Regiment)*

LONDON :

JOHN OUSELEY LTD.

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1908

Thou glorious Being of unchanging Love,  
Enthroned eternally so far above  
Man's mind, if spring not from thy sacred mount  
The quickening waters of the limpid fount  
Where poets seek high inspiration for  
Their utterance, then shall I sing no more.  
I must be mute; for not a single strain  
This voice would give forth of a source profane.  
If all the triumphs of exalted art  
Be aught but travail of the human heart,  
To tell of heaven, just transiently seen  
As if through rifts rent in the triple screen  
That shrouds thy majesty from mortal sense  
By seraphim, who sweep on pinions tense  
About thy messages—then all are vain,  
And better far the lyre had idle lain,  
The gleaming marble had remained unwrought,  
The master's brush the canvas had not taugth  
With glowing pigments to enchant the gaze;  
For then—such are but idols that men raise.



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### PREFACE.

It is the author's belief that the soul is to be led towards God and essential freedom through its emotions rather than by reason.

The following dramatic poem is an attempt to render some of the emotional crises of Shelley's career. For the benefit of those readers unfamiliar with the life of Shelley a biographical sketch has been prefixed as a key to this poem, but seekers after a more detailed knowledge of Shelley will read the beautiful "Life," by Professor Dowden.



## INTRODUCTION.

SHELLEY was born at Field Place, in Sussex, on August 4th, 1792. His grandfather, a wealthy baronet, laid the foundations of a great fortune by eloping with one heiress, and, on her death, completed it by repeating the enterprise with another.

Shelley was the first-born of his parents, and his relations with them were the most miserable that can exist between human beings so connected. Misunderstanding, antagonism, estrangement, and hostility—such is their record.

From a private school he went to Eton, and from thence to University College, Oxford. Like many boys of genius, he was hated by his school-fellows, and underwent the severest tormentings. The boy of genius is as a strange intruding bird among his fellows—a thing to be driven out or done to death if possible—but Shelley was defiant, passionate, indomitable. Though he endured much, his spirit was untamed, and he developed an intensely optimistic view of human nature, which latter is surprising under the circumstances.