The Pickering Masters

The Novels and Selected Works of Mary Shelley

Valperga: or, the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca

Edited by
Nora Crook

ROUTLEDGE

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Volume 3. *Valperga: or, the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca*

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MARY SHELLEY

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VOLUME

3

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VALPERGA: OR, THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF CASTRUCCIO, PRINCE OF LUCCA

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 1996 by Pickering & Chatto (Publishers) Limited

Published 2016 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

BRITISH LIBRARY CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION DATA
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA
Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft, 1797–1851.
Valperga / edited by Nora Crook.
p. cm. -- (The novels and selected works of Mary Shelley ; v. 3) (The Pickering masters)
Includes bibliographical references (p.).

Castracani, Castruccio, 1281–1328--Fiction. 1. Guelfs and Ghibellines--History--Fiction. 3. Nobility--Italy--Fiction. 4. Condottieri--Fiction. 5. Italy--History--1268–1492--Fiction. 6. Lucca (Italy)--History--Fiction. I. Title. II. Series: Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft, 1797–1851. Selections. 1996 ; v. 3.
PR5397.A1 1996 vol. 3
823'.7 s--dc20
[823'.7] 96–1537
CIP

ISBN-13: 978-1-85196-076-7 (set)

Typeset by Waveney Typesetters
Norwich

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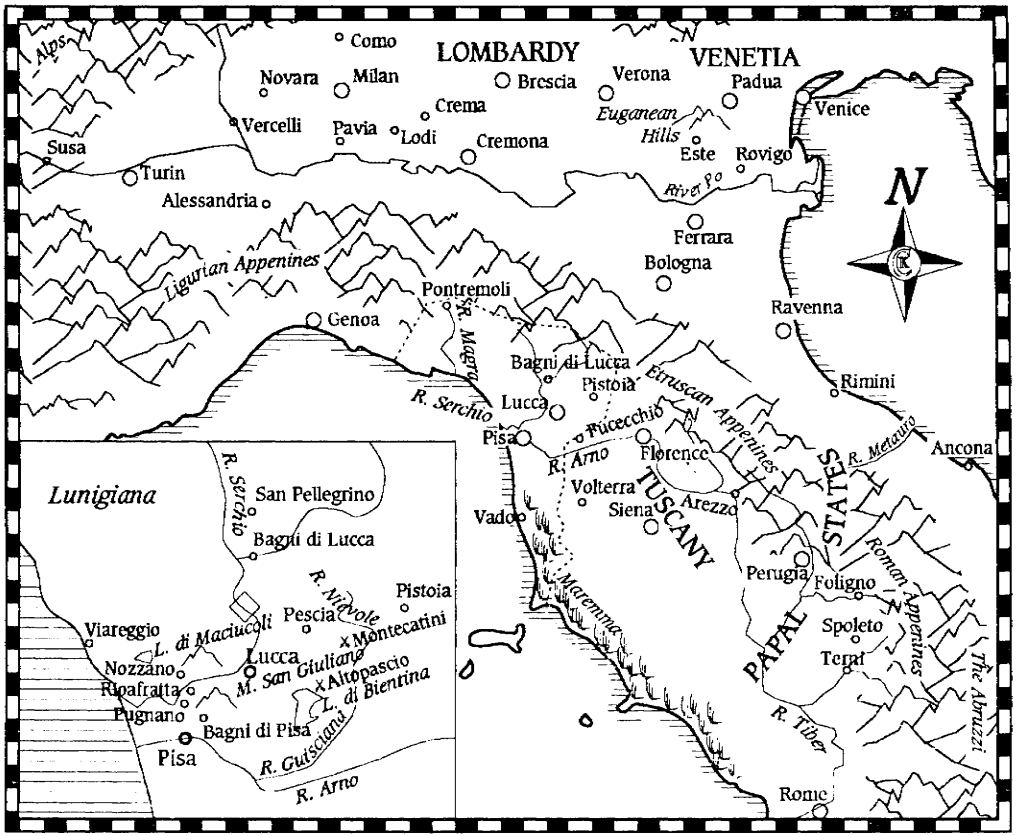
ABBREVIATIONS

Ab. Dep. e. 274	Bodleian Abinger MS Dep. e. 274.
adds. e. 17	Bodleian MS Shelley adds. e. 17.
Bennett (1978)	Betty T. Bennett, 'The Political Philosophy of Mary Shelley's Historical Novels' in *The Evidence of the Imagination*, eds D. H. Reiman, M. C. Jaye and B. T. Bennett (New York: New York University Press, 1978).
Cary	*The Vision; or Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, of Dante Alighieri. Translated by the Rev. H. F. Cary* [etc.] (London, 1814).
CC Journals	*The Journals of Claire Clairmont*, ed. Marion Kingston Stocking, with the assistance of David Mackenzie Stocking (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968).
'Charles the First' Notebook	*The 'Charles the First' Draft Notebook; Bodleian MS Shelley adds. e. 17*, transcribed and edited by Nora Crook, vol. XII of *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1991).
'Devils' Notebook	*Shelley's 'Devils' Notebook; Bodleian MS Shelley adds. e. 9*, transcribed and edited by P. M. S. Dawson and Timothy Webb, vol. XIV of *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* (New York and London: Garland Press, 1993).
Forsyth	Joseph Forsyth, *Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters during an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803* (1813), 2nd edn (London: John Murray, 1816).
Gisborne & Williams	*Maria Gisborne & Edward E. Williams, Shelley's Friends: Their Journals and Letters*, ed. Frederick L. Jones (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951).
Godwin, *Political Justice*	William Godwin, *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (London: G. G. J. and G. Robinson, 1793), 3rd edn (1797).
Godwin, *Religious Writings*	William Godwin, *Religious Writings*, ed. Mark Philp, vol. 7 of *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1994).
Green	Louis Green, *Castruccio Castracani* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).
Hellas Notebook	*The Hellas Notebook; Bodleian MS Shelley adds. e. 7*, transcribed and edited by Donald H. Rieman and Michael J.

	Neth, vol. XVI of *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1994).
Lastri	Marco Lastri, *L'Osservatore Fiorentino* (1776–8), 3rd (enlarged) edn, 8 vols (Florence: Gaspero Ricci, 1821).
Lemprière	J[ohn]. Lemprière, *A Classical Dictionary* [etc.] (1788), 11th edn (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820).
Lyles	W. H. Lyles, *Mary Shelley: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1975).
Marshall	Mrs Julian Marshall, *The Life and Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley & Sons, 1889).
Medwin	Thomas Medwin, *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (1847), rev. edn, ed. H. Buxton Forman (London: Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford, 1913).
Muratori	Lodovico Antonio Muratori, *Dissertazioni sopra le Antichità Italiane* (1751), new edn, ed. Gaetano Cenni, 3 vols (Monaco: Agostino Olzati, 1765–6).
Muratori, *Rerum*	Lodovico Antonio Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* [etc.], 25 vols (Milan, 1723–51).
MWSJ	*The Journals of Mary Shelley, 1814–1844*, eds Paula Feldman and Diana Scott-Kilvert, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).
MWSL	*The Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, ed. Betty T. Bennett, 3 vols (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980–88).
MWS Matilda etc	Mary Shelley, *Matilda, Dramas, Reviews & Essays, Prefaces & Notes*, ed. Pamela Clemit, vol. 2 in *The Novels and Selected Works of Mary Shelley* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1996).
MWST	*Mary Shelley, Collected Tales and Stories*, ed. Charles E. Robinson (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).
Novellino	*Novellino e conti del duecento*, ed. Sebastiano lo Nigro (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1963).
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*.
Palacio	Jean de Palacio, *Mary Shelley dans son œuvre: Contribution aux études shelleyennes* (Paris: Editions Klincksieck, 1969).
Paradise Lost	John Milton, *Paradise Lost, a Poem in Twelve Books* (1674).
PBSL	*The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. F. L. Jones, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964).
PJV	*Political Justice Variants*, ed. Mark Philp, vol. 4 of *Political*

	and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1994).
Robinson (1983)	Charles E. Robinson, 'Percy Bysshe Shelley, Charles Ollier and William Blackwood: the contexts of early nineteenth-century publishing' in *Shelley Revalued*, ed. Kelvin Everest (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1983).
Romantics Reviewed	*The Romantics Reviewed: Contemporary Reviews of British Romantic Writers*, ed. D. H. Reiman, 9 vols (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1972).
Sismondi	Jean-Charles-Leonard Simonde de Sismondi, *Histoire des républiques italiennes du moyen âge* (1807–9), 2nd edn, 16 vols (Paris, 1818).
Sunstein	Emily W. Sunstein, *Mary Shelley, Romance and Reality* (Boston and London: Little, Brown, 1989; 2nd edn, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).
Targioni	Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti, *Relazioni d'alcuni viaggi fatti in diverse parti della Toscana* [etc.] (1751), 2nd edn, 12 vols (Florence, 1768–9).
Tegrimi	Niccolò Tegrimi, *Vita Castruccii Castracani* (1496); bilingual edn, *Vita Castruccii Antelminelli lucensis ducis auctore Nicolao Tegrimo equite jurisconsulto una cum Etrusca Versione Giorgii Dati* (Lucca: Sebastian Cappuri, 1742).
Villani	*Croniche di Messer Giovani Villani, Cittadino Fiorentino* [etc.], ed. Jacomo Fasolo (Venice: Bartholomeo Zanetti Casterzagense, 1537).
Walling	William A. Walling, *Mary Shelley* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972).
Ward	William S. Ward, *Literary Reviews in British Periodicals, 1821–26, A Bibliography* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1977).



NORTHERN ITALY

showing places mentioned in *Valperga*

The boundary of Castruccio's Lucca in 1328 is shown on the main map by a pecked line.

The approximate imagined site of Valperga is shown on the inset map by a diamond. ◇

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Valperga: or, the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca (3 vols, London: G. and W. B. Whittaker, 1823), Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's second novel, was written at Pisa and the Bagni di Pisa. The present text is based on the first and only edition. Its genesis, writing and publication (1817–23) is in some respects better documented than that of *Frankenstein*. This 'child of mighty slow growth', she wrote on 30 June 1821, had been conceived 'in our library at Marlow'.[1] The idea took shape at Naples in early 1819 with the reading of Sismondi, but want of suitable books held her back until her move to Pisa (January 1820).[2] Journal entries 'Write' and 'read Machiavelli Hist. of Castruccio Castracani', for March 12 and 31 respectively, may signal the formal start.[3] After a summer hiatus at Leghorn she moved to the Bagni di Pisa in August and 'continued again'. She visited Lucca on 11–12 August 1820; a period of almost daily reading, note-taking and writing followed. This tailed off and virtually ceased during the winter of 1820–21. On 10 April 1821 it resumed, with writing quickly assuming primacy over reading. On 30 June the novel, she reported, was 'in a state of great forwardness': she had arrived at page 71 of the 'rough transcript' of Volume III. This she intended to finish within a month, allowing herself a further month for corrections, before fair-copying.[4]

She kept to her schedule; copying had begun by 31 August. On 11 November, P. B. Shelley told his publisher, Ollier, that *Castruccio, Prince of Lucca* (the first title) was ready; nevertheless, copying and late corrections, to which his cousin Thomas Medwin records him contributing by 'now and then altering in pencil' what Mary Shelley had written that day, continued until at least 3 December 1821.[5]

Mary Shelley described the novel as 'a work of some labour since I have read & consulted a great many books'.[6] This has been interpreted to mean that she exhaustively trawled through chronicles.[7] A study of her journal, working notebooks and *Valperga* itself, however, suggests that her research for the political and socio-historical background consisted, rather, of the judicious study and collation of a limited number of well-chosen primary and secondary sources, some of which are mentioned in *Valperga*'s Preface. Additionally, she used Muratori's *Dissertazioni sopra le Antichità Italiane*, Targioni-Tozzetti's *Viaggi in Toscana* and Lastri's *L'Osservatore Fiorentino* (first read in April 1821). These last two may be among the works she 'consulted' (i.e. did not read

through from the first volume to the end). The editions used of Sismondi, Muratori, Villani, Targioni, Lastri and Tegrimi have been identified by the present editor, all except the last from information in Mary Shelley's research notebooks. (For full references, see Abbreviations, under the author's name.)[8] As with the later *Perkin Warbeck*, Mary Shelley follows her sources sometimes with rigorous fidelity, sometimes with great freedom, often taking contradictions between them as providing opportunities for invention.

The 'great many books' undoubtedly include imaginative works of Early Renaissance writers – Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Tuscan *novellisti* and, perhaps, the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century *Novellino* ('The Hundred Old Tales').[9] Among contemporary writers, the most obvious influences are Godwin, Wollstonecraft, and P. B. Shelley, with Leigh Hunt, Scott, Byron, and de Staël contributing less overtly. However, the central story and much of the detail derive not from books, but from Mary Shelley's imagination and her exterior world: the abortive revolutions of Naples and Piedmont in 1820–21; the Tuscan landscape and its old towns; weather changes; people. Francesco Pacchiani (1772–1835), 'the Devil of Pisa', canon and ex-professor of chemistry, was said to be there 'drawn to the life',[10] while the *improvvisatore* Guarino is a fictional prototype in artistry, if not in personality, of Tommaso Sgricci (1789–1836), who so impressed the Shelleys in early 1821.

Valperga proved difficult to publish as Mary Shelley was concerned not to undersell it. An early (1819) approach to Lackington elicited no better terms than those the firm had exacted for *Frankenstein*. Charles Ollier expressed interest; active negotiations had begun (through P. B. Shelley) by July 1821.[11] However, they met an obstacle later that year, this apparently being not the sum Ollier offered (£300) but his unwillingness to pay £100 immediately, cash needed by Mary Shelley to discharge Godwin's most pressing debts.[12] By 11 January 1822 the manuscript had been shipped to Godwin, giving him the copyright to sell for his own benefit, while the Olliers pleaded for patience in the hope of keeping the commission. Mary Shelley awaited Godwin's reaction; as late as 2 June she had not even heard of the novel's arrival.[13]

It had, however, arrived. Godwin read 'Castruccio' between 18–27 April, during one of the major financial crises of his life, and with an eviction order impending. His business saved, he read it through again (2–10 July). On 11 July, and again on the 12th, he wrote 'Castruccio, abridge'.[14] According to Mrs Godwin, he postponed trying to sell it, fearing that knowledge of his financial distress would cheapen the price.[15] Eventually, on 1 August, he approached a publisher (unsuccessfully) and well into November was still trying others.[16] From 23 October–8 November he re-read 'Castruccio' once more almost daily, breaking off twice to revise; on completion of reading he revised on three subsequent days.[17] On 16 November he wrote to Mary Shelley to say that 'Castruccio' had more genius than *Frankenstein*, but too much 'proud flesh' (i.e. bulk).[18] Yet again he read it through, in shorter bursts, between 9 December

and 10 January. Negotiations with Whittaker were now under way and by 18 February he was able to tell Mary Shelley that the novel was in print.[19] He had 'taken great liberties' but assured her that his intervention was 'nearly confined to the taking away things that must have prevented its success'. One was a 'long detail of battles and campaigning after the death of Beatrice, & when the reader is impatient for the conclusion'; he had scarcely ever seen 'anything more unfortunately out of taste'. But he praised the characterisation of Beatrice ('the jewel'), Euthanasia, Pepi, Bindo and Mandragola. His journal entry for 19 February says 'Valperga published'.[20]

Up to 10 January Godwin had been referring to 'Castruccio'; this is the first mention of a new title. According to Medwin Godwin chose it.[21] Conjecturally, Godwin's 'liberties' also cover such items as the excision of the final -l (as in 'waterfall') a possible spelling preference,[22] the kind of minor changes that he was to make to the 1823 *Frankenstein*, and the present form of the preface. The first paragraph of the latter is written in Mary Shelley's person and clearly derives from information supplied by her. But it is curiously ruled off from the remainder, which is taken from a reference book which she is not known ever to have used.[23]

For the rest, the available evidence supports Godwin's statement that his changes were mostly just cuts (i.e. not major rewritings or insertions), with, presumably, a few link phrases or sentences for continuity. 'Castruccio' is mentioned on fifty-seven days in Godwin's journal, but revision (without mention of recopying) figures on only seven of these. Moreover, while the tally *seems* to allow time for Godwin virtually to re-write the book, this would be an entirely misleading inference. Godwin gave up only a part of each day to 'Castruccio', keeping up his own routine of activities.

The manuscript Mary Shelley sent to Godwin is lost. Seventeen random pages of autograph manuscript of *Valperga* are extant, but these are 'rough transcript' or intermediate draft, which he did not see. What they do indicate, if imperfectly, is Mary Shelley's own process of correcting and excision; one omitted passage, the defrauding of Luparo, is of especial interest. These stray leaves are reproduced in transcript (see Endnotes and *Valperga* Draft Transcripts) by kind permission of the Pierpont Morgan library, New York.[24]

On 6 May 1823, still in Italy, Mary Shelley awaited her copy of *Valperga*, while Godwin learned from Whittaker that, of the print-run of 1000 copies, half had been sold.[25] But sales would then appear to have slumped; in 1826 Henry Colburn advertised *Valperga* as 'Just Published' (see vol. 1, Introductory Note, n. 22); he had bought up the unsold stock and was re-issuing it (with the 1823 price of 21s discounted to 18s).

Over twenty reviews dating from 1823–4 have been found;[26] most are favourable, but are not always reliable indicators of *Valperga*'s reception. Some are brief eulogies from friendly newspapers which Godwin had approached before publication.[27] The fashionable *La Belle Assemblée*, luke-warm towards

Scott's comparable *Quentin Durward* the month before, extolled *Valperga* as a work of 'extraordinary talent' displaying 'perfect knowledge' of the passions. The Whittakers acquired the magazine in 1823; the hyperbole and the timing of the review (August 1823, well past the first flush of notices) fuel suspicion of a sales puff. More discriminatingly, the *Literary Gazette* advised its readers to skim the 'sheer mummery' of the witch-scenes but assured them that they would find 'energetic language, landscapes worthy of a poet or a painter, feelings strong in their truth'; the *British Magazine*, won over despite disliking *Frankenstein*, treated *Valperga* approvingly as a revival of the older, pre-Walter Scott romance. *Valperga* was 'one of the best' of modern novels, admirable in its descriptions of elegant medieval dress and the sack of Cremona alike, in a class above most 'ladies' writing', though Mary Wollstonecraft's daughter might 'box our ears for saying so'. *Blackwood's*, the only one of the three 'Great Reviews' to notice *Valperga*, and one of the few to see contemporary political significance in it, offered barbed praise: 'It is impossible to read [Beatrice's anathema] without admiration of the eloquence with which it is written, or without sorrow, that any English lady should be capable of clothing such thoughts in such words'. Ignoring the Preface, it complained that the 'real' Castruccio (i.e. Machiavelli's) was a witty satirist, unlike hers; that she had succumbed to a new vogue for historical romances featuring a thinly disguised Napoleon (d. 1821); that she obtruded historical knowledge and fine writing ('we are mortally sick of "orange-tinted skies," "dirges," and "Dante"'). This mischievous piece (*Blackwood's* was at the height of its campaign against Leigh Hunt's *Liberal* and its contributors) was the longest, most widely-circulated and probably most challenging review of 1823–4.[28]

Medwin later (1847) ascribed *Valperga's* failure partly to the low tastes of 'readers of fiction' on whom its 'eloquence and beauty and poetry' were lost, and partly to 'Mrs Shelley's' shortcomings in dialogue and the delineation of character. But the reviews do not altogether bear him out. It was narrative structure that was most criticised, while eloquence, sentiment, painterly qualities and characterisation (except for Castruccio's) were praised. So was her ability to recreate the past, a dissenter being Anne Louise Swanton-Belloc, who, in the only Continental review so far found, preferred Scott. Predictably, most reviewers compared *Valperga* to *Frankenstein*; some were glad to find the stamp of the same 'wild imagination' (*Literary Gazette*), others relieved to find 'a more sober turn of feeling' (*Ladies' Monthly Museum*). *Blackwood's* apart, Beatrice's anathema drew little censure, contrary to Mary Shelley's own expectations. However, one critic, praising *Frankenstein* in the talented, short-lived *Knight's Quarterly*, confessed to throwing aside *Valperga* before finishing the first volume ('I do not think I ever was so disappointed in a work'), finding 'not one flash of imagination, not one spark of passion'. Perhaps, he conjectured, Mrs Shelley did write *Frankenstein*, 'but, knowing its fault was extravagance, determined to be careful and correct in her next work'. How damaging this late

notice was is hard to assess, but it shows that the notion of Mary Shelley as a one-book author was already incipient.[29]

Mary Shelley hoped for a critique from Leigh Hunt, but it never materialised; she wrote to him in August 1823 'If ever I write another novel it will be [...] more pleasing to you than this – After all, Valperga is merely a book of promise, another landing place in the staircase I am climbing'. But others tried to keep *Valperga* in the public eye. In 1825, John Watson Dalby wrote a laudatory 'Sonnet Written after reading "Valperga"' and in 1826 Thomas Jefferson Hogg wrote, with more gallantry than truth, of Lucca as famous for Castruccio 'who is known to many, because his life was described by Machiavelli, and to all as the hero of Valperga'. A systematic search of periodicals might well uncover more such. But, unlike *Frankenstein*, *Valperga* faded from view. The Bentley Archive records another Colburn remainder issue (1830), but that is all. Mary Shelley in 1837 wrote that it 'never had fair play; never being properly published' when trying (unsuccessfully) to suggest that Bentley reissue it in his Standard Novels.[30]

Had Mary Shelley read the proofs, *Valperga*'s printing (by Richard Taylor of Shoe Lane) would have had fewer Italian errors (for instance 'agiolo' 'Teroretto' and 'Antichristà'). Most of these are here corrected but a few doubtful instances have been allowed to stand. Some inconsistency of names is ascribable to the mixture of medieval, modern, French, Latin and Italian texts that Mary Shelley used; these instances are left uncorrected, together with 'dei' where modern Italian would have 'degli'. Her factual sources, where traced, are (selectively) given in footnotes.[31] A guide to the general principles of textual treatment is found in volume 1 of this edition.

NOTES

[1] *MWSL*, I, p. 203; probably in the second half of 1817. Germs of *Valperga* may be found in her Marlow reading, e.g., Dante's *Divina Commedia* and Hume's *Essays*.

[2] See *MWSL*, I, pp. 120–21 and n.

[3] *MWSJ*, I, pp. 312–13. *Valperga* contains more of Machiavelli than the dismissive remark in the preface might suggest.

[4] 'All the winter I did not touch it' (*MWSL*, I, p. 203); for the journal record, see *MWSJ*, I, pp. 328–72.

[5] *MWSJ*, I, pp. 378–84; *PBSL*, II, p. 365; Medwin, p. 374. A single emendation by P. B. Shelley in ink to the 'rough transcript' has also survived. His interest is also shown by his translation 'If the good money which I lent to thee' (see Endnote 4); and possibly by (i) the first Canzone of Dante's *Convito* (Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 9, pp. 337–9, 341, reproduced in the *'Devils' Notebook* and dated c.January-February 1821 by the editors. Mary Shelley's transcript is in Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. c. 5. ff. 157–8); (ii) 'Love, Hope, Desire and Fear', his free version (composed ?July-November, 1821) from Brunetto Latini's *Tesoretto* (XIX. 81–154) (Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 7 pp. 155–9; reproduced in the *Hellas Notebook*, and discussed pp. lv-lviii). The *Canzones* of Dante and the *Tesoretto* are mentioned together on p. 108.

[6] *MWSL*, I, p. 203; see, too, P. B. Shelley's semi-jocular remark of November 1820, that she had 'raked' *Castruccio* out of 'fifty old books' (*PBSL*, II, p. 245).

[7] Palacio (p. 48n.) inferred that at least another ten chronicles were read by her, having found various citations and authors' names in her research notebook (Ab. Dep. e. 274), originating in Muratori's twenty-five volume *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (1723–51). In fact they are all secondary references taken from Muratori's *Dissertazioni*, which drew on the *Rerum* for its illustrative material. Tegrimi's *Vita* of Castruccio is in volume XI of *Rerum*, but she used the 1742 bilingual edition. A reference for the latter is in Journal III (*MWSJ*, I, p. 427); it conveniently had a Latin chronology, unlike Muratori's edition. The titles of four chronicles included in the *Rerum* collection are listed, also in Journal III (*MWSJ*, I, p. 418), but they relate to Naples (tangential to *Valperga)*. Position in the journal and subject-matter suggest that these were connected with the drama on Manfred which she projected in the autumn of 1822.

[8] Notes begin in Abinger MS. Dep. e. 274, pp. 26–97, and comprise, in order: (i) p. 26, some dated events relating to Manfred and Ezzelin from Sismondi, followed by two blanks; (ii) pp. 29–46, a chronology of selected events from 1300 to 1328, from Sismondi; (iii) pp. 46–7, transcripts of both monumental inscriptions to Castruccio in San Francesco, Lucca; (iv) pp. 49–97, brief notes, virtually in sequence, from Muratori, *Dissertazioni*, taken during August-September 1820, on (main topics) dowries, social rank, usurers, leprosy, laws, luxury, house-furnishings, dress, feasts, weddings, funerals, furs, shoes, overgarments, the *carroccios*, warfare, jousts, entertainments, trials, learning, seers, struggles for liberty, the law of reprisals, female visionaries, nunneries, fortune-telling, heresies, monasteries. When space ran out, she completed Muratori notes in another notebook, continuing straight on to Villani, Sismondi, Targioni, Lastri (Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, pp. 234–21 rev.). A few short entries are untraced. Bodleian notebook notes are reproduced in the *'Charles the First' Notebook*, pp. 396–422, but those in Ab. Dep. e. 274 remain unpublished. No notes from the relatively brief works of Machiavelli or Tegrimi have been found. Notes are informational; the (sparse) comments never refer to her intentions for the novel. For the identified editions, see Abbreviations, under relevant names.

[9] For her reading of Dante, Boccaccio and Petrarch between 1817–21, see *MWSJ*, II, pp. 643, 637, 667; for a detailed treatment of Dante and Boccaccio in *Valperga* see Palacio, pp. 47–62, 69–70. *Novellisti* include Franco Sacchetti (c.1335–c.1400), read aloud by P. B. Shelley on 11 May 1821 (*MWSJ*, I, p. 366); novella 5 concerns Castruccio. For evidence that she read Ser Giovanni, Bandello and the *Novellino*, see pp. 44, 117, 177. The journal entry 'much Italian' (*MWSJ*, I. p. 347) possibly records these. Unknown inferred possible 'lost' sources include a collection of 13–14th-century Tuscan poetry containing Brunetto Latini's *Tesoretto* and a work on saints' lives.

[10] By Medwin (pp. 276–7), probably thinking of Pepi, but Tripalda also fits. 'One or two of the inferior characters are drawn from her own observation of Italians' (*PBSL*, I, p. 354); on Sgricci, see *MWSL*, I, pp. 176–7, 182.

[11] *PBSL*, II, pp. 117, 311 (fragment of 26 July letter to Ollier, in which P. B. Shelley evidently set out terms) and p. 312 (follow-up to the foregoing, asking that the novel not be announced as being by 'The Author of Frankenstein').

[12] According to Godwin's letter to Mary Shelley of 10 October, Ollier assented to P. B. Shelley's first set of terms around the beginning of September, making one stipulation (unspecified, but probably concerning the question of immediate payment). P. B. Shelley's letter of 25 September shows him insisting on immediate payment of a third of the copyright price, the rest to follow within eighteen months (*PBSL*, II, pp. 352–3; see also p. 365). Robinson points out that Godwin (unjustifiably) cautioned Mary Shelley against trusting Ollier in a letter of 10 October. According to P. B. Shelley, it was she who rejected Ollier's offer (*PBSL*, II, p. 424). Medwin (p. 374), possibly garbling P. B. Shelley's opinion that Godwin *might* get up to £400, reported that Ollier had actually offered that amount.

[13] See *PBSL*, II, pp. 372, 424; *MWSL*, I, pp. 218, 222; for the Olliers' reaction see Gisborne & Williams, pp. 73–4, 75, 80; *MWSL*, I, pp. 237 and n.

[14] Godwin, *Journal*, Ab. Dep. e. 219, entries for 18 April-1 May, 2–12 July; see also William St Clair, *The Godwins and the Shelleys* (London: Faber & Faber, 1989), pp. 465–9. Godwin's journal entries have enabled me to deduce that volume I of Mary Shelley's manuscript had 319 pages, volume II had 306 and volume III had 314. His page numbers record both where he broke off daily and the last page of each finished volume, sometimes by 'fin.'. Each of his four readings record all three numbers (the only numbers they have in common), except that his April reading of volume III has '304' where one would expect '314', an evident slip, since it is followed by 'fin.' (the end) as is '314' in his July reading. The record also shows that Godwin preserved Mary Shelley's pagination

throughout. See also P. B. Shelley's letter to Mrs Godwin of 29 May 1822 (*PBSL*, II, p. 428), which shows *his* awareness that Godwin had received *Valperga*, and his concern that Mary Shelley should retain ultimate control over any amendments that Godwin might wish. He was extremely averse to the part of Beatrice being cut.

[15] *MWSL*, I, p. 237 n.; *PBSL*, II, p. 428 and n.

[16] My inferences; he sent off 'Castruccio' on 1 August, received a visit from 'J. Ollier' and 'M. from Murray' on 18 September (Ab. Dep. e. 219). He was hoping (letter of 16 November to Mary Shelley) to make a deal with Longman. Whittaker is not mentioned in his journal until 31 December.

[17] Ab. Dep. e. 219; 'Castruccio, revise' entries occur on 31 October, the day after finishing volume I (i.e. p. 319); 7 November, having reached vol. III, p. 230 the day before, and on 9, 11, 17 November.

[18] Marshall, II, pp. 50–52.

[19] Godwin met Whittaker on 31 December 1822, 1 and 13 January and 10 and 11 February 1823 (Ab. Dep. e. 219).

[20] Ab. Dep. e. 219; *MWSL*, I, p. 322 and n.; in its published form, volume III is the shortest.

[21] Medwin, p. 374; Walling, p.152, n. 60. This is confirmed by Mary Shelley's letter of 10 April 1823: 'all alterations that have been made since I read it to you in my little room at Pisa have been made by my father.' She was displeased by the intrusion of '*The Life and Adventures of*' into the title, but what she thought of '*Valperga*' is not clear (*MWSL*, I, p. 331 and n.).

[22] See St Clair (p. 21–2) for Godwin's 'personal vendetta against unnecessary consonants' especially in proper names. Mary Shelley also prefers forms such as 'farewel' throughout her writing. But this was a common eighteenth-century practice.

[23] Godwin, though not Mary Shelley, used Moréri elsewhere, albeit much later, in a footnote to *Lives of the Necromancers* (London: F. J. Mason, 1834) and again in *The Genius of Christianity Unveiled* written c.1835 (Godwin, *Religious Writings*, pp. 195, 198).

[24] For a discussion of these leaves as evidencing Mary Shelley's essential Godwinism in *Valperga*, see Bennett (1978), pp. 361–2.

[25] 'I wish much to see it – as my father has made some curtailments' (*MWSL*, I, p. 336); Godwin to Mary Shelley, 6 May (Marshall, II, p. 84); Godwin visited Whittaker on 12, 15, 16, 22 and 23 of April and 6 and 21 May (Ab. Dep. e. 219).

[26] Listed in Palacio; Lyles; Ward.

[27] *Examiner*, no. 788 (3 March 1823), 154; *Morning Herald*, no. 13287 (12 March 1823), 3; see *MWSL*, I, pp. 323 n.

[28] *La Belle Assemblée*, n.s. XXVIII (August 1823), 82–5; for its ownership, see *Romantics Reviewed*, pt B, vol. I, p. 81. The *Quentin Durward* review appeared in the July number (pp. 32–3); *Literary Gazette*, no. 319 (1 March 1823), 132–3; *British Magazine*, I (March 1823), 33–41; *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, XIII (March 1823), 283–93; the reviewer, J. G. Lockhart, revealed his ignorance or hostility here. Witticisms attributed to Castruccio by Machiavelli are mostly borrowings from Diogenes Laertius, as Mary Shelley would have been aware.

[29] Medwin, p. 274; notices criticising plot while praising characterisation (especially of the heroines) include those of the *Monthly Review*, CI (May, 1823), 105, the *London Chronicle*, no. 10019 (8–10 March 1823), 240 and *The British Luminary and Weekly Intelligencer* (9 March, 1823), 74 (the last two taken from Palacio and Lyles; originals not seen); *Revue encyclopédique*, XX (October 1823), 132–3; *Ladies' Monthly Museum*, n.s. XVII (April 1823), 216–18; for Mary Shelley's surprise, see *MWSL*, I, p. 336; *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*, III (August–November 1824), 195, 199; reprinted in *Romantics Reviewed*, pt C, vol. II, p. 491; see also *Frankenstein*, vol. 1, Introductory Note.

[30] *MWSL*, I, p. 361; *Pocket Magazine of Classic and Polite Literature*, IV, n.s. (1826), 360, reprinted in Palacio, p. 657; 'Journal of a Traveller on the Continent: VII', *London Magazine*, VI (Sepember–December, 1826), 23–4; *MWSL*, II, p. 332 and n.; see also Walling (pp. 56–7).

[31] Villani: referenced by book and 'cap.' (chapter/section), omitting folio numbers; this differs sometimes in text and section numbers from the version in Muratori, *Rerum*, vol. XIII, and others based on it. Sismondi: referenced by chapters only; these remain constant in major (perhaps all) editions. Machiavelli: edition used not ascertained, but it seems that the Shelleys had access to a collection of his chief works. Muratori, Tegrimi, Targioni and Lastri entries: volume, division, and page numbers are as in the editions used by Mary Shelley.

Valperga: or, the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca

VALPERGA:

OR, THE

LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

CASTRUCCIO,

PRINCE OF LUCCA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FRANKENSTEIN."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. AND W. B. WHITTAKER,

AVE-MARIA-LANE.

1823.

PREFACE.[a]

The accounts of the Life of Castruccio known in England, are generally taken from Macchiavelli's romance concerning this chief. The reader may find a detail of his real adventures in Sismondi's delightful publication, *Histoire des Republiques Italiennes de l'Age Moyen.* In addition to this work, I have consulted Tegrino's Life of Castruccio, and Giovanni Villani's Florentine Annals.[b]

The following is a translation from the article respecting him in Moreri.[c]

"Castruccio Castracani, one of the most celebrated captains of his time, lived in the fourteenth century. He was of the family of the Antelminelli[d] of Lucca; and, having at a very early age borne arms in favour of the Ghibelines, he was exiled by the Guelphs.[e] He served not long after in the armies of Philip / king

[a] Probably by Godwin using some information supplied by Mary Shelley (see Introductory Note).

[b] Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527), Florentine political theorist, *La Vita di Castruccio Castracani da Lucca* (1532); Jean-Charles-Leonard Simonde de Sismondi (1773–1842), Swiss historian, economic theorist, liberal, *Histoire des républiques italiennes du moyen âge* (1807–9, 1818); Niccolò Tegrimi (d.1527), senator of Lucca, *Vita Castruccii Castracani* (1496, 1742). 'Tegrino' matches Mary Shelley's journal entry (*MWSJ*, I, p. 347); the 1742 edition contains four other variant spellings of his name (not counting Latin case endings): 'Nicolaus Tegrimus' 'Nicolaus Tigrinus' 'Nicoleus Tegrinius' and 'Nicolao Tegrimo' ('Nicalao Tegrimi' in *C C Journals*, p. 171). 'Tegrini' and 'Tygrini' have been found elsewhere; Giovanni Villani (1275–1348), Florentine historian, *Croniche Fiorentine* (1537).

[c] Louis Moréri (1643–80), *Grand dictionnaire historique* (1674), enlarged and republished several times after his death.

[d] Latinised form of 'Interminelli' found in Tegrimi, Machiavelli and Castruccio's tomb inscription.

[e] Italianised names of rival German ducal families, the Welfs (the Dukes of Saxony and Bavaria) and the Wuablingens (the Swabian house of Hohenstaufen), both candidates for the elective titles of Holy Roman Emperor and 'King of the Germans'. The feud, which had emerged in Germany by 1130, spread because the Emperor was also overlord of northern Italy, and, nominally, the temporal head of Christendom (the Empire in 1300 also comprised the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Burgundy and Provence). Conversely, the pope (usually based in Rome) combined the role of spiritual overlordship of the Empire with frequent support of the emperor's Italian subjects against German domination. When, to re-establish imperial authority, the Hohenstaufen Emperor Frederick Barbarossa invaded Lombardy, the cities of northern Italy formed the Lombard League to expel German influence (1167); this was supported by the pope and Barbarossa's Welfian enemies within Germany. In Florence, warfare broke out among the Guelph and Ghibelline nobility in 1215. By 1300 the original lines of the dispute had become complicated by the eclipse of the Hohenstaufens, the rise of the Hapsburgs, attempts of the French monarchy to supplant German influence in Italy, and, in Pistoia and Florence, the 'Bianchi' and 'Neri' factions, which split the Guelphs. Accounts are found in Villani (V, cap. 37), Muratori (III, diss. 51) and Sismondi (ch. vii, and ch. xiii).

of France, who made war on the Flemings. In the sequel he repassed the Alps; and, having joined Uguccione Faggiuola, chief of the Ghibelines of Tuscany, he reduced Lucca, Pistoia, and several other towns. He became the ally of the emperor Louis of Bavaria, against pope John XXII, Robert king of Naples, and the Florentines. Louis of Bavaria gave him the investiture of Lucca under the denomination of Duke, together with the title of Senator of Rome. Nothing seemed able to oppose his courage and good fortune, when he was taken off by a premature death in 1330, in the forty-seventh year of his age."[a]

The dates here given are somewhat different from those adopted in the following narrative.[b] /

[a] Philip IV (b.1268, reigned 1285–1314), Guelph-supporting, also known as 'le Bel' ('the Fair'). By his intrigues the papacy became French and moved in 1309 from Italy to Provence; Uguccione della Faggiuola (1250–1318), Ghibelline, Imperial Vicar (deputy of the emperor) in Genoa, lord of Pisa; Louis (Ludwig) IV, Ghibelline (c.1287–1347), Holy Roman Emperor-elect 1314–28, eventually crowned in 1328 after winning a civil war waged against his Hapsburg cousin, Frederick; John XXII, second of the 'French popes' (in office 1316–34), who sought to strengthen the papacy through allying himself with the French royal family; Robert of Anjou, King of Naples (b. 1275, reigned 1309–1343), leading supporter of the Guelphs in Italy, allied to the 'French popes' and to Philippe-le-Bel, his second cousin.

[b] Tegrimi, Villani, Sismondi give the historical Castruccio's dates as 1281–1328; Machiavelli gives c.1284–1328; Moréri 1284–1330; Mary Shelley gives her Castruccio the dates 1289–1328.

VALPERGA.

CHAPTER I.

Birth of Castruccio. – His family exiled from Lucca when he is eleven years of age.

The other nations of Europe were yet immersed in barbarism, when Italy, where the light of civilization had never been wholly eclipsed, began to emerge from the darkness of the ruin of the Western Empire, and to catch from the East the returning rays of literature and science. At the beginning of the fourteenth century Dante had already given a permanent form to the language which was the offspring of this revolution; he was personally engaged in those political struggles, in which the elements of the good and evil that have since assumed a more permanent form / were contending; his disappointment and exile gave him leisure to meditate, and produced his *Divina Comedia*.[a]

Lombardy and Tuscany, the most civilized districts of Italy, exhibited astonishing specimens of human genius; but at the same time they were torn to pieces by domestic faction, and almost destroyed by the fury of civil wars. The antient quarrels of the Guelphs and the Ghibelines were started with renovated zeal, under the new distinctions of *Bianchi* and *Neri**. The Ghibelines and the *Bianchi* were the friends of the emperor, asserting the supremacy and universality of his sway over all other dominion, ecclesiastical or civil: the Guelphs and the *Neri* were the partizans of liberty. Florence was at the head of the Guelphs, and employed, as they were employed by it in their turn, the Papal power as a pretext and an instrument.

The distinctions of *Bianchi* and *Neri* took their rise in Pistoia, a town of some moment between Florence and Lucca.[b] The *Neri* being / expelled from Pistoia,

* Black and White.

[a] Dante Alighieri (1265–1321); his *Vita Nuova* (c.1290–4) and the *Convito* (or *Convivio*), at that time believed to pre-date 1300, were written in the Tuscan dialect, which later became the official Italian language; a Ghibelline, he was expelled in 1302 with other leading 'Bianchi'. The date of composition of the *Divine Comedy*, with its tripartite division into the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, is still disputed; it was finished shortly before he died. Mary Shelley read it in Italian in November 1817, and many times thereafter; in December P. B. Shelley ordered H. F. Cary's translation (*MWSJ*, II, pp. 643–4; *PBSL*, I, pp. 575, 586).

[b] The Pistoian 'White' (Bianchi) and 'Black' (Neri) feud spread to Florence owing to the support given to each side by, respectively, the powerful Florentine Cerci and Donati families in c.1300.

the exiles fixed their residence in Lucca; where they so fortified and augmented their party, as to be able in the year 1301 to expel the *Bianchi*, among whom was Castruccio Castracani dei Antelminelli.

The family of the Antelminelli was one of the most distinguished in Lucca. They had followed the emperors in their Italian wars, and had received in recompense titles and reward. The father of Castruccio was the chief of his house; he had been a follower of the unfortunate Manfred, king of Naples,[a] and his party feelings as a Ghibeline derived new fervour from the adoration with which he regarded his noble master. Manfred was the natural son of the last emperor of the house of Swabia;[b] before the age of twenty he had performed the most brilliant exploits, and undergone the most romantic vicissitudes, in all of which the father of Castruccio had been his faithful page and companion. The unrelenting animosity with which the successive Popes pursued his royal master, gave rise in his bosom to a hatred, that was heightened by the / contempt with which he regarded their cowardly and artful policy.

When therefore the quarrels of the Guelphs and Ghibelines were revived in Lucca under the names of *Bianchi* and *Neri*, Ruggieri dei Antelminelli[c] was the chief opponent and principal victim of the machinations of the Papal party. Castruccio was then only eleven years of age; but his young imagination was deeply impressed by the scenes that passed around him. When the citizens of Lucca had assembled on the appointed day to choose their *Podestà*, or principal magistrate, the two parties dividing on the Piazza glared defiance at each other: the Guelphs had the majority in numbers; but the Ghibelines wishing, like Brennus, to throw the sword into the ascending scale,[d] assailed the stronger party with arms in their hands. They were repulsed; and, flying before their enemies, the Guelphs remained in possession of the field, where, under the

[a] Manfred (c.1232, King of Naples and Sicily 1258–66), used Saracen troops to defend his throne (which he had assumed, on behalf of his infant half-nephew, Conradin, to whom he intended that it should eventually revert). The pope excommunicated him and backed a rival French claimant, Charles of Anjou (b. 1220, King Charles I of Naples and Sicily, 1266–84). Manfred was killed at Benevento (1266) fighting the French. Mary Shelley's admiration for Manfred is seen in 'A Tale of the Passions' (*MWST*, pp. 1–23), 'Giovanni Villani' (*MWS Matilda etc*, pp. 136–8) and her attempt at a drama on him in 1822 and early 1824 (Marshall, II, pp. 51–2, 107).

[b] Emperor Frederick II, of the house of Hohenstaufen (sometimes called 'of Swabia').

[c] 'Geri' in Dati's Tegrimi. In Machiavelli, Castruccio is a foundling adopted by a celibate canon, Antonio Castracani and his childless widowed sister. Only Tegrimi and Machiavelli describe Castruccio's early life.

[d] In the *History of Rome from its Foundation*, V. xlviii. 48–9 of Livy (Titus Livius, 59 BC–AD 17). Brennus, the Gallic chief besieging Rome (387 BC), brought 'unequal weights' to weigh the ransom. To Roman protests, Brennus 'added his sword to the weights' saying 'Vae victis!' ('Woe to the conquered!'). Mary Shelley takes it that the weights were too light, and thus ascended when the Romans placed the correct amount of ransom gold in the other pan; Brennus's sword reversed the balance and made the gold appear light; another interpretation is that the weights were too heavy, and the sword was added to the weights as a further insult. (Camillus, champion of Rome, appeared on the scene at this moment and lifted the siege). Mary Shelley read systematically through Livy between June 1818 and July 1820 (*MWSJ*, II, p. 659).

guidance of their chiefs, they voted the perpetual banishment of the Ghibelines; and the summons was read by a herald, which commanded all the districts of Lucca to range themselves / the next morning under their respective banners, that they might attack and expel by force those of the contrary party who should refuse to obey the decree.

Ruggieri returned from the Piazza of the Podestà, accompanied by several of his principal friends. His wife, Madonna Dianora,[a] was anxiously waiting his return; while the young Castruccio stood at the casement, and, divining by his mother's countenance the cause of her inquietude, looked eagerly down the street that he might watch the approach of his father: he clapped his hands with joy, as he exclaimed, "They come!" Ruggieri entered; his wife observed him inquiringly and tenderly, but forbore to speak; yet her cheek became pale, when she heard her husband issue orders, that the palace should be barricadoed, and none permitted to enter, except those who brought the word which shewed that they belonged to the same party.

"Are we in danger?" – asked Madonna Dianora in a low voice of one of their most intimate friends. Her husband overheard her, and replied: "Keep up your courage, my / best girl; trust me, as you have ever trusted. I would that I dared send you to a place of safety, but it were not well that you traversed the streets of Lucca; so you must share my fortunes, Dianora."

"Have I not ever shared them?" replied his wife. His friends had retired to an adjoining hall, and she continued; – "There can be no dearer fate to me than to live or perish with you, Ruggieri; but cannot we save our son?"

Castruccio was sitting at the feet of his parents, and gazing on them with his soft, yet bright eyes. He had looked at his mother as she spoke; now he turned eagerly towards his father while he listened to his reply: – "We have been driven from the Piazza of the Podestà, and we can no longer entertain any hope of overcoming our enemies. The mildest fate that we may expect is confiscation and banishment; if they decree our death, the stones of this palace alone divide us from our fate. And Castruccio, – could any of our friends convey him hence, I should feel redoubled courage – but it is too much to risk."

"Father," said the boy, "I am only a / child, and can do no good; but I pray you do not send me away from you: indeed, dear, dearest mother, I will not leave you."

The trampling of horses was heard in the streets: Ruggieri started up; one of his friends entered: – "It is the guard going to the gates," said he; "the assembly of the people is broken up."

"And what is decreed?"

"No one ventures near to inquire out that; but courage, my noble lord."

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[a] In Machiavelli, the name of Castruccio's foster-mother. The historical Castruccio's mother was named Puccia (Tegrimi, p. 15).

"That word to me, Ricciardo? – but it is well; my wife and child make a very woman of me."

"*Ave Maria* is now ringing," replied his companion; "soon night will set in, and, if you will trust me, I will endeavour to convey Madonna Dianora to some place of concealment."

"Many thanks, my good Ricciardo," answered the lady; "my safest post is at the side of Ruggieri. But our boy——— save him, and a mother's blessing, her warm, heartfelt thanks, all the treasure that I can give, shall be yours! You know Valperga?"[a] /

"Yes, the castle of Valperga. Is the Countess there now?"

"She is, – and she is our friend; if my Castruccio were once within the walls of that castle, I were happy."

While Madonna Dianora conversed thus with Ricciardo, Ruggieri held a consultation with his friends. The comfortable daylight had faded away, and night brought danger and double fear along with it. The companions of Ruggieri sat in the banqueting hall of his palace, debating their future conduct: they spoke in whispers, for they feared that a louder tone might overpower any sound in the streets; and they listened to every footfall, as if it were the tread of their coming destiny. Ricciardo joined them; and Madonna Dianora was left alone with her son: they were silent. Dianora wept, and held the hand of her child; while he tried to comfort her, and to show that fortitude he had often heard his father praise; but his little bosom swelled in despite of his mastery, until, the big tears rolling down his cheeks, he threw himself into his mother's arms, and sobbed aloud. At this moment / some one knocked violently at the palace-gate. The assembled Ghibelines started up, and drew their swords as they rushed towards the staircase; and they stood in fearful silence, while they listened to the answers which the stranger gave to him who guarded the door.

Ruggieri had embraced his wife he feared for the last time. She did not then weep; her high wrought feelings were fixed on one object alone, the safety of her child. – "If you escape," she cried, "Valperga is your refuge; you well know the road that leads to it."

The boy did not answer for a while; and then he whispered, while he clung round her neck, – "You, dear mother, shall shew it to me."

The voice of the man who had disturbed them by his knocking, had re-assured the imprisoned Ghibelines, and he was admitted. It was Marco, the servant of Messer Antonio dei Adimari. A Florentine by birth, and a Guelph,

[a] The name has associations with Lucca, witchcraft and May-day. The body of the abbess St Walburga, a Wessex missionary, was said to be the source of a healing oil which flowed from her rock-tomb in Germany. The anniversary of her interment, 1 May, was celebrated with popular rites surviving from an older nature-religion, as depicted in the *Walpurgisnacht* scene (translated by P. B. Shelley in 1822 under the title 'May-Day Night') of Goethe's *Faust, Part One*, Her father, 'St Richard King of the English', or, according to another version, her brother St Willibald, was buried in the church of San Frediano at Lucca, and venerated there.

Antonio had retired from his native city while it continued under the jurisdiction of the opposite party, and had lived at the castle of Valperga, of which his wife was Countess / and Castellana.[a] He was bound to Ruggieri by the strongest ties of private friendship; and he now exerted himself to save his friend. Marco brought intelligence of the decree of the assembly of the people. "Our lives are then in safety," – cried Dianora, with a wild look of joy, – "and all the rest is as the seared leaves of autumn; they fall off lightly, and make no noise."

"The night wears apace," said Marco, "and before sunrise you must depart; will you accompany me to Valperga?"

"Not so," replied Ruggieri; "we may be beggars, but we will not burthen our friends. Thank your lord for his many kindnesses towards me. I leave it to him to save what he can for me from the ruins of my fortune. If his interest stand high enough with our rulers, intreat him to exert it to preserve the unoffending walls of this palace: it was the dwelling of my forefathers, my inheritance; I lived here during my boyish days; and once its hall was graced by the presence of Manfred. My boy may one day return; and I would not that he should find the palace of his father a / ruin. We cannot remain near Lucca, but shall retire to some town which adheres to our party, and there wait for better days."

Dianora made speedy preparations for their departure; the horses were brought to the door; and the stars were fading in the light of dawn, as the cavalcade proceeded through the high and narrow streets of Lucca. Their progress was unimpeded at the gates; Ruggieri felt a load taken from his heart, when he found himself, with his wife and child, safe in the open country. Yet the feeling of joy was repressed by the remembrance, that life was all that remained to them, and that poverty and obscurity were to be the hard-visaged nurses of their declining years, the harsh tutors of the young and aspiring Castruccio.

The exiles pursued their way slowly to Florence.

Florence was then in a frightful state of civil discord. The Ghibelines had the preponderance; but not a day passed without brawls and bloodshed. Our exiles found many of their townsmen on the same road, on the same sad errand of seeking protection from a foreign / state. Little Castruccio saw many of his dearest friends among them; and his young heart, moved by their tears and complaints, became inflamed with rage and desire of vengeance. It was by scenes such as these, that party spirit was generated, and became so strong in Italy. Children, while they were yet too young to feel their own disgrace, saw the misery of their parents, and took early vows of implacable hatred against their persecutors: these were remembered in after times; the wounds were

[a] Used in its original sense of a noblewoman who possessed a castle (Muratori, III, diss. 47, pp. 65–6).

never seared, but the fresh blood ever streaming kept alive the feelings of passion and anger which had given rise to the first blow.

When they arrived at Florence, they were welcomed with kindness by the chiefs of the *Bianchi* of that city. Charles of Valois had just sent ambassadors to the government, to offer his mediation in composing their differences; and on that very day the party of Ghibelines who composed the council assembled to deliberate on this insidious proposition.[a] It may be easily supposed therefore, that, entirely taken up with their own affairs, they could not bestow the attention they would / otherwise have done on the Lucchese exiles. On the following day Ruggieri left Florence.

The exiles proceeded to Ancona.[b] This was the native town of the Lady Dianora; and they were received with hospitality by her relations. But it was a heavy change for Ruggieri, to pass from the active life of the chief of a party, to the unmarked situation of an individual, who had no interest in the government under which he lived, and who had exchanged the distinctions of rank and wealth for that barren respect which an unblamed old age might claim. Ruggieri had been a man of undaunted courage; and this virtue, being no longer called into action, assumed the appearance of patience and fortitude. His dearest pleasure was the unceasing attention he paid to the education of his son. Castruccio was an apt and sprightly boy, bold in action, careless of consequences, and governed only by his affection for his parents. Ruggieri encouraged his adventurous disposition; and although he often sympathized in the fears of his anxious wife, when Castruccio would venture out to sea on a windy day in a little fair-weather skiff, or when he saw him, without / bridle or saddle, mount a horse, and, heading a band of his companions, ride off to the woods, yet he never permitted himself to express these fears, or check the daring of his son.

So Castruccio grew up active; light and graceful of limb, trusting that by his own powers he should always escape. Yet the boy was not without prudence; he seemed to perceive instinctively the limits of possibility, and would often repress the fool-hardiness of his companions, and shew his superior judgement and patience in surmounting the same difficulties by slower and safer means. Ruggieri disciplined him betimes in all the duties of a knight and a soldier; he wielded a lance adapted to his size, shot with bow and arrows, and the necessary studies to which he applied, became, on account of their active nature, the source of inexhaustible amusement to him. Accompanied by a troop of lads, they would feign some court surrounded by an old wall, or some ruined tower, to be Troy Town, or any other famous city of antient days, and then with mimic *balestri*,[c] and slings and arrows, and lances, they / attacked,

[a] This mediation of Charles of Valois (1270–1325), brother of Philippe-le-Bel of France, and thus, like him, second cousin to Robert, King of Naples, resulted in Dante's exile.

[b] The bare facts of Geri's exile to Ancona with his wife and son are in Tegrimi.

[c] Catapults (see p. 213).

and defended, and practised those lessons in tactics which their preceptors inculcated at an early age.

During the first year of their banishment his mother died; her weak frame was destroyed by hardship and disappointment. She recommended her son to his father in terms of tender love; and then closed her eyes in peace. This circumstance for a considerable time unhinged the young mind of Castruccio, and interrupted his studies. His father, who loved her tenderly, and who had found in her a friend to whom he could confide those regrets which pride forbade him to impart to any other hearer, now lamented her with excessive grief.

He did not dare check the silent tear that started into the eye of Castruccio, when, returning from his exercises with his companions, he was no longer embraced by his mother; he felt that his own sentiments would refute the lesson he wished to impress.

Ruggieri was consoled for all his past misfortunes by the promising talents and disposition of his son, and parental tenderness, the strongest of all passions, but often the most unfortunate, was to him the sunbeam, solitary, but bright, / which enlightened his years of exile and infirmity.

Yet at the moment that he most enjoyed this blessing, his security was suddenly disturbed. One morning Castruccio disappeared; and the following perplexing note addressed to his father, was the only trace that he left of his intentions: –

"Pardon me, dearest father; I will return in a very few days; I am quite safe, therefore do not disquiet yourself on my account. Do not be very angry with me; for, although I am indignant at my own weakness, I cannot resist! Be well assured that in less than a fortnight your unworthy son will be at your feet.

"CASTRUCCIO."

This was the year 1304, when Castruccio was fourteen years of age. Ruggieri hoped and trusted that he was safe, and that he would fulfil his promise and soon return; but he waited with inexpressible anxiety. The cause of Castruccio's flight was curious, shewing at once the manners of the age and country in which they lived, and the imagination and disposition of the boy. /

CHAPTER II.

Castruccio visits Florence. – Characters of Euthanasia dei Adimari and her father. – The father of Castruccio dies.

A traveller had arrived at Ancona from Florence, and had diffused the intelligence that a strange and tremendous spectacle would be exhibited there on the first of May of that year. It had been proclaimed in the streets of the city, by a herald sent by the inhabitants of the quarter of San Frediano,[a] that all who wished to have news from the outer world, should repair on the first of May to the bridge of Carraia or to the quay of the Arno. And he added, that he believed that preparations were made to exhibit Hell, such as it had been described in a poem now writing by Dante Alighieri, a part of which had been read, and had given rise to the undertaking.[b]

This account raised the curiosity, and fired the imagination of Castruccio. The idea darted / into his head that he would see this wonderful exhibition; and no sooner had he conceived the possibility of doing so, than his determination was fixed. He dared not ask his father's permission, for he knew that he should be refused; and, like many others, he imagined that it was better to go, not having mentioned his design, than to break a positive command. He felt remorse at leaving his father; but curiosity was the stronger passion, and he was overcome: he left a billet for Ruggieri; and during the silence of a moonlight night, he mounted his steed, and left Ancona. While proceeding through the streets of the town, he several times repented, and thought that he would return; but no sooner had he passed the walls than he seemed to feel the joy of liberty descending on him; and he rode on with wild delight while the mountains and their forests slept under the yellow moon, and the murmur of the placid ocean was the only sound that he heard, except the trampling of his own horse's hoofs.

Riding hard, and changing his horse on the road, he arrived in five days at Florence. He experienced a peculiar sensation of pleasure, / as he descended from the mountains into Tuscany. Alone on the bare Apennines, over which

[a] 'Friano' in Villani; San Frediano (St Frigidian, an Irish missionary), venerated chiefly in Lucca, was reputed to have altered the course of the Serchio.

[b] The *festa* of 1 May 1304 figures in Villani (VIII, cap. 70), Muratori (II, diss. 29, p. 22) and Sismondi (ch. xxv); it is alluded to in *Inferno*, XXII. 8–9 as if in prophecy; for Sismondi this confirms Boccaccio's statement that Dante completed Cantos I-VII of the *Inferno* before his exile. (Modern scholarship places the start of composition no earlier than 1307.)

the fierce wind swept, he felt free; there was no one near him to control his motions, to order him to stay or go; but his own will guided his progress, swift or slow, as the various thoughts that arose in his mind impelled him. He felt as if the air that quickly glided over him, was a part of his own nature, and bore his soul along with it; impulses of affection mingled with these inexplicable sensations; his thoughts wandered to his native town; he suffered his imagination to dwell upon the period when he might be recalled from exile, and to luxuriate in dreams of power and distinction.

At length he arrived at the fair city of Florence. It was the first of May, and he hastened from his inn to the scene of action. As he approached, he observed the streets almost blocked up by the multitudes that poured to the same spot; and, not being acquainted with the town, he found that he had better follow the multitude, than seek a way of his own. Driven along by the crowd, he at length came / in sight of the Arno. It was covered by boats, on which scaffoldings were erected, hung with black cloth, whose accumulated drapery lent life to the flames, which the glare of day would otherwise have eclipsed. In the midst of these flames moved legions of ghastly and distorted shapes, some with horns of fire, and hoofs, and horrible wings; others the naked representatives of the souls in torment; mimic shrieks burst on the air, screams and demoniac laughter. The infernal drama was acted to the life; and the terrible effect of such a scene was enhanced, by the circumstance of its being no more than an actual representation of what then existed in the imagination of the spectators, endued with the vivid colours of a faith inconceivable in these lethargic days.

Castruccio felt a chill of horror run through his frame; the scene before him appeared for a moment as a reality, rather than a representation; the Arno seemed a yawning gulph, where the earth had opened to display the mysteries of the infernal world; when suddenly a tremendous crash stamped with tenfold horror the terrific mockery. The bridge of Carraia, on / which a countless multitude stood, one above the other, looking on the river, fell. Castruccio saw its props loosening, and the curved arch shake, and with a sudden shriek he stretched out his arms, as if he could save those who stood on it. It fell in with a report that was reverberated from the houses that lined the Arno; and even, to the hills which close the valley, it rebellowed along the sky, accompanied by fearful screams, and voices that called on the names of those whom they were never more to behold. The confusion was beyond description terrible; some flying, others pressing towards the banks of the river to help the sufferers; all, as himself, seized with a superstitious dread, which rebuked them for having mimicked the dreadful mysteries of their religion, and which burst forth in clamorous exclamations and wild horror. The heroism of Castruccio failed; he seized with eagerness the opportunity of an opening in the crowd; and, getting into a by street, ran with what speed he could, while his knees still shook beneath him, from the spot he in the morning as eagerly sought. The sound of the shrieks began / to die away on his ear before he slackened his speed.

The first idea that struck him, as he recovered his breath, was – "I am escaped from Hell!" – And seeing a church open, he with an instinctive impulse entered its doors. He felt as if he fled from the powers of evil; and if he needed protection, where should he seek it with more confidence, than in the temple where the good God of the universe was worshipped? It was indeed as a change from Hell to Heaven, to have escaped from the jostling of the crowd, the dreadful spectacle of mimicked torments, the unearthly crash that bellowed like thunder along the sky, and the shrieks of the dying – to the silence of the empty church, the faint smell of incense, and the few quiet lights that burned on the high altar. Castruccio was seized with a feeling of awe as he walked up the aisle; and conscience, alive at that moment, reproached him bitterly for having quitted his father. When the idea struck him – "If I had been on that bridge," – he could no longer resist his emotions; tears ran fast down his cheeks, and he sobbed aloud. /

A man, whom he had not perceived before kneeling in a niche beside the altar, arose on hearing the voice of grief, and drew near the boy. "Why do you weep?" – he said. Castruccio, who had not heard his approach, looked up with surprise; for it was the voice of Marco, the servant of his father's friend, Messer Antonio dei Adimari. Marco instantly recognised him; for who that had once seen, could ever forget his dark eyes, shaded by long, pointed lashes, his sun-bright hair, and his countenance that beamed with sweet frankness and persuasion? The boy threw himself into the arms of his humble, but affectionate friend, and wept there for some time. When he had become more calm, his story was told in a few words. Marco was not inclined to find fault with an adventurous spirit, and soon consoled him. – "You are safe," – he said; "so there is no harm done. Come, this is rather a fortunate event than otherwise; my lord and lady are in Florence; you shall stay a night with them; and to-morrow morning we will send you home to your anxious father." /

The eyes of Castruccio sparkled with hope – "Euthanasia is here?"[a]

"She is."

"Quick then, dear Marco, let us go. – How fortunate it was that I came to Florence!"

The life of Messer Antonio dei Adimari had been spent in the military and civil service of his country; he had often been *Priore*;[b] and now, that age and

[a] From the Greek, with overtones of 'noble death', 'good death'; also so used by Godwin when urging that with the annihilation of ignorance and blind subservience would come the demise of the state and thus 'the true euthanasia of government' (*Political Justice*, I, III, vi, 'On Obedience'; *PJV*, p. 114. 281); Godwin here engaged against David Hume, to whom the 'true *Euthanasia* of the British constitution', would be its replacement by absolute monarchy (*Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* (1753–6), pt I, vii); Hume's *Essays* were read by Mary Shelley 1817–20 (*MWSJ*, II, pp. 649, 654). The more common meaning 'easy death' appears in Byron's 'Euthanasia' (*Poems to Thyrza*, 1811–12); Mary Shelley's employment of the word as a first name appears to be original.

[b] One of the six elected members of the *signoria* or chief magistracy governing Florence. The system, dating from 1282, excluded aristocrats from holding office.

blindness had caused him to withdraw from the offices of the state, his counsels were sought and acted upon by his successors. He had married the only daughter of the Count of Valperga, a feudal chief who possessed large estates in the territory of Lucca. His castle was situated among the Apennines north of Lucca,[a] and his estates consisted of a few scattered villages, raised on the peaks of mountains, and rendered almost inaccessible by nature as well as art.

By the death of her father the wife of Adimari became Countess and Castellana of the district; and the duties which this government imposed upon her, often caused the removal of her whole family from Florence to the castle of Valperga. It was during these visits / that Adimari renewed a friendship that had before subsisted between him and Ruggieri del Antelminelli. Messer Antonio was a Guelph, and had fought against Manfred under the banners of the Pope: it happened during one campaign that Ruggieri fell wounded and a prisoner into his hands; he attended him with humanity; and, when he perceived that no care could restore him if separated from his prince, and that he languished to attend at the side of Manfred, he set him free; and this was the commencement of a friendship, which improved by mutual good offices, and more than all by the esteem that they bore one to the other, had long allied the two houses, though of different parties, in the strictest amity.

Adimari continued in the service of his country, until hs infirmities permitted him to withdraw from these active and harassing duties, and, giving up the idea of parties and wars, to apply himself exclusively to literature. The spirit of learning, after a long sleep, that seemed to be annihilation, awoke, and shook her wings over her favoured Italy. Inestimable / treasures of learning then existed in various monasteries, of the value of which their inhabitants were at length aware; and even laymen began to partake of that curiosity, which made Petrarch but a few years after travel round Europe to collect manuscripts, and to preserve those wonderful writings, now mutilated, but which would otherwise have been entirely lost.[b]

Antonio dei Adimari enjoyed repose in the bosom of his family, his solitude cheered by the converse which he held with the sages of Rome in ages long past. His family consisted of his wife, two boys, and a girl only two years younger than Castruccio. He and Euthanasia had been educated together almost from their cradle. They had wandered hand in hand among the wild mountains and chesnut woods that surrounded her mother's castle. Their studies, their amusements, were in common; and it was a terrible blow to each

[a] '[G]o to the top of the tower of the palace of Guinigi [in Lucca] an old tower as ancient as those times – look towards the opening of the hills, on the road to the Baths of Lucca, & on the banks of the Serchio & you will see the site of Valperga' (Mary Shelley to Leigh Hunt, 7 August, 1823, *MWSL*, I, p. 364).

[b] Francesco Petrarcha (1304–74), Florentine poet and humanist, in 1333 journeyed to Paris, Flanders and Cologne, copying the manuscripts of classical authors. He spent his final years in literary scholarship at Arquà in the Euganean hills.

when they were separated by the exile of the Antelminelli. Euthanasia, whose soul was a deep well of love, felt most, and her glistening eyes and infantine complaints told for many months / even years after, that she still remembered, and would never forget, the playmate of her childhood.

At the period of this separation Adimari was threatened by a misfortune, the worst that could befall a man of study and learning – blindness. The disease gained ground, and in a year he saw nothing of this fair world but an universal and impenetrable blank. In this dreadful state Euthanasia was his only consolation. Unable to attend to the education of his boys, he sent them to the court of Naples, to which he had before adhered, and in which he possessed many valued friends; and his girl alone remained to cheer him with her prattle; for the countess, his wife, a woman of high birth and party, did not sympathize in his sedentary occupations. – "I will not leave you," said Euthanasia to him one day, when he bade her go and amuse herself, – "I am most pleased while talking with you. You cannot read now, or occupy yourself with those old parchments in which you used to delight. But tell me, dear father, could you not teach me to read them to you? You know I can read very well, / and I am never so well pleased as when I can get some of the troubadour songs, or some old chronicle, to puzzle over. These to be sure are written in another language; but I am not totally unacquainted with it; and, if you would have a little patience with me, I think I should be able to understand these difficult authors."

The disabled student did not disdain so affectionate an offer. Every one in those days was acquainted with a rude and barbarous Latin, the knowledge of which Euthanasia now exchanged for the polished language of Cicero and Virgil. A priest of a neighbouring chapel was her tutor; and the desire of pleasing her father made her indefatigable in her exertions. The first difficulties being conquered, she passed whole days over these dusky manuscripts, reading to the old man, who found double pleasure in the antient poets, as he heard their verses pronounced by his beloved Euthanasia. The effect of this education on her mind was advantageous and memorable; she did not acquire that narrow idea of the present times, as if they and the world were the same, which characterizes the unlearned; she saw / and marked the revolutions that had been, and the present seemed to her only a point of rest, from which time was to renew his flight, scattering change as he went; and, if her voice or act could mingle aught of good in these changes, this it was to which her imagination most ardently aspired. She was deeply penetrated by the acts and thoughts of those men, who despised the spirit of party, and grasped the universe in their hopes of virtue and independence.

Liberty had never been more devotedly worshipped than in the republic of Florence: the Guelphs boasted that their attachment to the cause of freedom might rival what history records of the glorious days of antiquity. Adimari had allied himself to this party, because he thought he saw in the designs and