

ALBERT VERWEY'S TRANSLATIONS

FROM SHELLEY'S POETICAL WORKS

A study of their style and rhythm
and a consideration of their value
as translations.

Thesis presented for the degree of
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by

B.M. BAXTER

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ABSTRACT

Albert Verwey's translations from Shelley's Poetical Works can be divided into three groups: Early Translations (including some of Shelley's lyrics, part of "The Daemon of the World" and a fragment from "Queen Mab") in 1881; "Poems Written in 1816" ("The Sunset", "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" and "Mont Blanc") translated in 1903; and the two versions of a translation of "Alastor" in 1909 and 1922. In these translations a definite development can be traced, which runs to some extent parallel to that in Verwey's original work.

The early translations are still very much in the traditional style of Dutch poetry immediately prior to 1880. The language tends to be stilted and rhetorical, the rhythm regular, even to the point of monotony. These early translations appear to be, to a great extent, experiments in rhythmic and acoustic effect. They are undoubtedly immature renderings of Shelley's poems and are unworthy of the later Verwey. But they are not without interest, and seen in conjunction with the later translations they form a link, which is not without importance in the development of Verwey's poetry.

By 1903 Verwey's interest in poetry had acquired a new depth. Although still considering rhythmic and acoustic effects of great importance, he was now deeply concerned with a philosophical idea, the development and expression of which was to pervade most of his original work. In this second group of translations Verwey had to seek to understand and re-express Shelley's philosophical

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thought.

In translating "Alastor" in 1909 Verwey was faced with a threefold task: to translate the text; to reproduce the general sound pattern, and also to achieve a sweeping movement similar to that in the original poem. The result, even in the earlier version, was remarkable, and the revised version in 1922 crowned Verwey's translations from Shelley's Poetical Works.

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I

INTRODUCTION

Much has been said and written about the influence of the English Romantic poets, particularly Shelley and Keats, on the Dutch poets who made their debut between 1880 and 1890. There are indeed traces of direct influence in the poetry of the "Tachtigers", as these poets were called, where the metre, form or imagery is reminiscent of one of the English poems, and these have been discussed in detail by Dr. G. Dekker in "Die Invloed van Shelley en Keats in Nederland Gedurende die Negentiende Eeu."¹⁾ But all cases of similarity cannot be ascribed to direct influence.

The "Tachtigers" were driven by an urge to break away from the somewhat stereotyped form and diction of the poetry of their predecessors. Imagery, which when first used had been vivid and ~~alive~~, had often been repeated and imitated until it degenerated into empty rhetoric. The young "Tachtigers" wanted to bring fresh life into Dutch poetry and, in bringing life, to bring back also beauty of expression. Images were no longer to be the ~~fixed~~, stereotyped expressions which had lost so much of their meaning, but were to be vivid and original.

In the early days of their reaction to the old

1) Dr. G. Dekker : Die Invloed van Shelley en Keats in Nederland Gedurende die Negentiende Eeu.

(J.B. Wolters - Groningen, Den Haag. 1926)

form of poetry the "Tachtigers" discovered Shelley and Keats. The works of Shelley and Keats had been known in The Netherlands for some time, and since 1870 their popularity had been increasing, but these young Dutch poets had to "discover" Shelley and Keats for themselves before they could accept them. In the works of these two poets they found a worship of beauty which was similar to their own. Their approach was therefore one of affinity, and in admiring the poetry of Shelley and Keats they were in a sense admiring their own ideals. It is not surprising, therefore, that the "Tachtigers" read the works of these poets with interest and admiration and, consciously or unconsciously, followed in their footsteps, frequently taking English poems as models for their own.

There is another factor which should be taken into consideration at this point. In addition to the influence of imitation Shelley distinguished an influence of the age. In answer to an assertion that he imitated Wordsworth Shelley wrote:

"It may as well be said that Lord Byron imitates Wordsworth, or that Wordsworth imitates Lord Byron, both being great poets, and deriving from the new springs of thought and feeling, which the great events of our age have exposed to view, a similar tone of sentiment, imagery and expression. A certain similarity all the best writers of any particular age inevitably are marked with, from the spirit of that age acting on all." 1)

In this respect the "Tachtigers" can perhaps be considered

1) Shelley : Letter to Charles and James Ollier, dated 15 October 1819.

to belong to the same age as Shelley in that the "new springs of thought and feeling" of Shelley's age in England appeared later in The Netherlands. This would account for a certain similarity of thought and aims between the writings of the "Tachtigers" and those of Shelley apart from direct influence. Shelley explains this theory of the influence of the age more fully in the Preface to the "Revolt of Islam".

"I have avoided.... the imitation of any contemporary style. But there must be a resemblance, which does not depend upon their own will, between all the writers of any particular age. They cannot escape from subjection to a common influence which arises out of an infinite combination of circumstances belonging to the times in which they live; though each is in a degree the author of the very influence by which his being is thus pervaded. ... In this view of things, Ford can no more be called the imitator of Shakespeare than Shakespeare the imitator of Ford. There were perhaps few other points of resemblance between these two men than that which the universal and inevitable influence of their age produces. And this is an influence which neither the meanest scribbler nor the sublimest genius of any era can escape." 1)

According to Dekker ²⁾ the influence of Shelley and Keats is most marked in the poetry of Albert Verwey, where, especially in the earlier poems, these two different influences are often found side by side. There are certainly many traces of direct influence in

1) Shelley : Poetical Works. (Oxford 1952) p.35.

2) Dr. G. Dekker : Die Invloed van Shelley en Keats in Nederland Gedurende die Negentiende Eeu. p.140.

"Die invloed van Keats en Shelley, is by geen een van die tagtigers so direk en so duidelik as by Verwey nie."

the rhythm and imagery of some of Verwey's earlier poems. The resemblance between Verwey's poem "Rouw om het Jaar"¹⁾ and Shelley's "Dirge for the Year"²⁾ is in fact so great that when Verwey's poem was first published it provoked a reader to write the following letter to the "Nederlandse Spectator" in 1886.

"Gij weet hoe onze Albert Verwey op 31 Dec 1884 een gedicht maakte, voorkomende in zijn bundel Persephone en Andere Gedichten, bl. 39 getiteld Rouw om 't Jaar ... Welnu, Shelley heeft dat gedicht reeds gekend in 1820, want op 1 Jan 1821 heeft hij er eene Engelsche bewerking van geschreven."³⁾

Nevertheless, it is not a case of slavish imitation, as Gerben Colmjon seems to suggest.⁴⁾

Dekker takes the view that after "Cor Cordium",⁵⁾ which was written in 1886, there is very little evidence of Shelley's influence in Verwey's poetry.⁶⁾

In Shelley and Keats the "Tachtigers" recognised fellow-worshippers of beauty. But his worship of beauty represented only one aspect of Shelley. He was

1) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk. I p.28.

2) Shelley : Poetical Works. (Oxford 1952) p.636

3) Quoted also by Gerben Colmjon in De Oorsprongen van de Renaissance der Cultuur in Nederland in het laatste kwart der negentiende eeuw. p.272

4) Gerben Colmjon : De Oorsprongen van de Renaissance der Cultuur in Nederland in het laatste kwart der negentiende eeuw. p.272

5) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk. I p.63

6) Dekker : Die Invloed van Shelley en Keats in Nederland Gedurende die Negentiende Eeu. p.167

"Na "Cor Cordium" vind ons geen spore van invloed van Shelley meer nie, behalve hier en daar 'n sporadiese geval."

also a zealous and active reformer. His chief aim was to reform the world; to liberate the slaves, crush the tyrants and oppressors, and create a new and better world of love, beauty and freedom. It is the influence of Shelley the reformer, Shelley the teacher, rather than the mere lover of beauty, which is more in evidence in Verwey's later poems. Yet, even in his youth Verwey seems to have been aware of this aspect of Shelley's character. Referring to the three poets he admired most in his youth (Homer, Vondel and Shelley) in the autobiographical poem "De Gestalten van mijn Levenstijd", Verwey wrote of Shelley:

"Shelley: de ziel van vuur die vlammend recht."¹⁾

In the case of Verwey more perhaps than any other "Tachtiger", with the possible exception of Jacques Perk, (if he is indeed to be considered a "Tachtiger") it is frequently a question of affinity rather than influence, particularly as far as Shelley is concerned.

Although differing greatly in background, upbringing and education, Verwey and Shelley were in several respects "kindred spirits". Both were from an early age assiduous readers, finding their delight in the world of imagination rather than in the world of reality. In fact, such was the power of imagination of both poets that the world of imagination, or dream, was as real for them as the world of reality. We read of the young Verwey:

"... niets kon die andere wereld evenaren die uit het boek te voorschijn kwam, de wereld van de verbeelding, van de droom. Wanneer Albert een boek bemachtigen kon, bestond er geen uiterlijke

1) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk. I p.563.

wereld meer."1)

Of Shelley, too, it has been said:

"Shelley displayed a singular capacity for projecting himself imaginatively into the literature he admired, and his reading became for him a part of his actual experience, like any other emotional or intellectual adventure which arose from his contact with flesh-and-blood people."2)

A.M.D. Hughes wrote of Shelley:

"He touched the living person with the quality of a dream, just as he allowed to his dreams the power to move him like real life; and when he delighted in others, threw his being into theirs."3)

One is reminded here of a later utterance by Verwey in relation to himself:

"Wat ik liefheb, gaat in me over. Ik word het zelf." 4)

A passage sometimes quoted against Verwey as an admission on his part of imitation and lack of originality is:

"Ik ben Erinring van veel boeken en
Een macht waarmee 'k mijzelf en al mijn zijn
Gedachte en daad, gelijk maak aan den schijn
Dien 'k daarin schoonst vond ..." 5)

This, to my mind, is not imitation, for such was Verwey's power of imagination that he, like Shelley, would actually experience what he read, and in this respect Carlos Baker's reference to Shelley's borrowings from

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- 1) Maurits Uyldeert : De Jeugd van een Dichter. p.37
 - 2) Carlos Baker : Shelley's Major Poetry. p.27
 - 3) A.M.D. Hughes : The Nascent Mind of Shelley. p.18
 - 4) Verwey : Mijn Verhouding tot Stefan George. p.55
 - 5) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk. I p.42

other poets is, in my opinion, equally applicable to those of Verwey.

"The record of Shelley's borrowings from other poets is the record of his own intense imaginative reactions to people and landscapes or striking situations which he encountered in his reading."1)

Both Shelley and Verwey had a great thirst for knowledge, and neither would accept doctrines or statements without adequate proof. In "De Jeugd van een Dichter" Maurits Uylert wrote of the young Verwey:

"De weethonger kende geen grenzen: het strookte toen niet, en nocit, met Albert's aard om met bloot beweren genoeg te nemen: hij ervoer graag het onomstootelijk bewijs."2)

One is reminded here of Shelley's eager search for knowledge, of his endless experiments in chemistry and with his electrical machine, and also of the pamphlet "The Necessity of Atheism", which was the cause of his expulsion from Oxford, and which, according to A.M.D. Hughes, should have been entitled "The Uncertainty of Deism", in view of the words: "Through deficiency of proof, an atheist" found in the prefatory "Advertisement" to this pamphlet.3)

Both Verwey and Shelley were ardent champions of

1) Carlos Baker : Shelley's Major Poetry. p.28

See also Edmund Blunden : Shelley. p.310

"Shelley acknowledged himself that he had "a tendency to imitate whatever he thought beautiful, in ancient or modern writers." This was true of idea and expression, but all that he borrowed was in a deep sense his own already."

2) Maurits Uylert : De Jeugd van een Dichter. p.50

3) A.M.D. Hughes : The Nascent Mind of Shelley. p.66

liberty. In reading of Verwey's efforts, while still at school, to raise a subscription for Multatuli, one is reminded of similar activities by Shelley at Oxford on behalf of Peter Finnerty, the Irish patriot. Young as they were, both were eager to associate themselves in this way with the cause of the oppressed in their struggle for freedom: Shelley with the Irish patriots, and later with the Greeks; Verwey with the Javanese and with the Boers of Transvaal.

Carlos Baker likens Shelley to both Prospero and Ariel.

"Often he rose like Ariel to sport among the clouds ... it was at such times that he produced his most harmonious music, a music elicited by his ecstatic delight in moving swiftly among the timeless objects of his thought. Behind the ascensions of Ariel, however, there lay always the directive brain of Prospero, author of all the visions, wielder of power." 1)

In view of this, it is a strange coincidence, if nothing more, that Uyldert, in the last of his collected essays on Verwey²⁾ should take as his motto four lines from one of Verwey's later poems in which the poet refers to himself as:

"Ik Tovenaar en Ariel
Ik bond de wereld in mijn spel
En groter fout begint ge niet
Dan dat ge me op een eiland ziet." 3)

A further point of affinity between Verwey and Shelley can be seen in their early reaction to the ortho-

- 1) Carlos Baker : Shelley's Major Poetry. pp.12-13
- 2) Uyldert : Over de Poëzie van Albert Verwey.
- 3) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk. II. p.545.

dox religion of their day and immediate environment. Verwey, like Shelley, was brought up as a Christian and, again like Shelley, went through a period of doubt in his early youth which culminated in a definite break away from orthodox Christianity. It was a time when he found himself no longer able to accept the Christian conception of God and substituted for it his own personal belief. Verwey referred to this later as a crisis in his life.

"Mijn krisis bestond dus alleen hierin dat ik de tegenstrijdigheid tussen mijn eigen geloof en dat van mijn omgeving erkennen moest, en het gezag van die omgeving in mijn gedachten vernietigen." 1)

This crisis took place when Verwey was about seventeen. He himself dated it as:

"In het jaar dat voorafging aan het ontstaan van mijn eerste goede gedichten" 2)

When Shelley began to doubt the existence of God he tried, by means of his pamphlet "The Necessity of Atheism" in 1811, to goad eminent Christians and theologians into convincing him of God's existence. This hoped-for reaction was not forthcoming and a short time after the publication of his pamphlet Shelley was expelled from Oxford as an atheist - at the age of eighteen.

Further affinity between Shelley and Verwey is apparent in their attitude towards poetry; also in their respective philosophies, the search for and development of which played such an important part in their poetry. This particular aspect of the subject, however, falls

1) Verwey : Mijn Dichterlijk Levensbedrijf.
(Nieuwe Taalgids 1951 (No.44)) p.66.

2) Verwey : Idem. p.65.

outside the field of study for this thesis.

It is not known which edition of Shelley's works Verwey used for his translations. At his death in 1937 there were two copies in his possession: an edition of the Poetical Works published by Edward Moxon in 1874 and one published by Chatto and Windus. Unfortunately no date of publication for the Chatto and Windus edition was entered on the catalogue card of Verwey's library, which was sold in 1946, and the present whereabouts of this copy, as also of the Moxon copy, is unknown. The poet's daughter, Mevrouw Nijland-Verwey, was unable to throw any more light on the subject of the edition used by Verwey for these translations, although she thought it probable that her father's earliest copy of Shelley's works was the Moxon 1874 edition, for that copy was in his study. Mevrouw Nijland did not know when either of these came into her father's possession, but she thought the Moxon edition was acquired very early.

An edition of Shelley's works was published by Chatto and Windus in 1875. If this was indeed the edition Verwey possessed it may seem at first glance a little strange that he should have had in his possession two editions, the dates of which are only a year apart. The four volumes of this Chatto and Windus edition contain Shelley's poems and prose writings including the two novels "Zastrozzi" and "St. Irvyne" and the prose fragments but not "A Defence of Poetry" nor the translations from Plato. The Moxon edition does not include the novels, but it does contain "A Defence of Poetry" and

the translations from Plato.¹⁾ It seems unlikely that Verwey should have bought a second copy of Shelley's works merely for the sake of the two tales of horror, which Shelley himself referred to in later years as:

"... distempered, although unoriginal visions"²⁾

but he might have bought another edition in order to have "A Defence of Poetry" and the translations from Plato.

It seems probable that when Verwey translated the group of shorter poems in 1881 he was using the Chatto and Windus edition as all these poems appear in the same volume, that entitled "Posthumous Poems". This cannot of course be considered conclusive evidence that this was in fact the edition used for these early translations, but an examination of "The Daemon of the World" appears to confirm this belief. The division of the poem into stanzas is not the same in all editions of Shelley's works. In this respect the Chatto and Windus edition differs from the Oxford and Buxton Forman editions.³⁾ The translation, however, has the same divisions, as far as the subject-matter is concerned, as the Chatto and

1) In view of the difficulty in tracing a 1874 Moxon edition an edition of 1854 was consulted.

2) Shelley : Letter to Godwin, 8 March 1812.

"To them (Godwin's writings) and to you I owe the inestimable boon of granted power, of arising from the state of intellectual sickliness and lethargy into which I was plunged two years ago, and of which St. Irvyne and Zastrozzi are the distempered, although unoriginal visions"

3) The Moxon edition of 1854 does not contain "The Daemon of the World". See note(1) above.

Windus edition, although the stanzas or sections are not always the same length as those in the original poem. It therefore seems probable that Verwey's oldest copy of Shelley's works was the Chatto and Windus edition, and that he used this in 1881 for the early translations. The fact that Verwey only translated the first part of "The Daemon of the world" does not help to determine which of the two editions known to be in his possession later he was then using, as these were both prior to 1876, when the second part was published for the first time by Buxton Forman.

A Moxon edition of "The Works of P.B. Shelley", dated 1847 and edited by Mrs. Shelley prints "The Sunset", "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" and "Mont Blanc" together under the heading "Poems written in MDCCCXVI", which, in view of the title under which Verwey's translations of these poems were originally published: "Shelley's Gedichten van het Jaar MDCCCXVI", seems to suggest that he was using this edition (or a reprint of it). In the Chatto and Windus edition these poems appear in different volumes, "Sunset" appearing in the volume entitled "Posthumous Poems" and "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" and "Mont Blanc" in "Early Poems". An undated edition of "The Poetical Works", also published by Moxon and edited by W.M. Rossetti, which prints the poems referred to above under the heading: "Poems written in 1816" could not possibly have been used for the early translations as it contains neither "The Daemon of the World" nor the fragment "To the Moon", although it could, of course, have been

used for the later translations.¹⁾ The Moxon edition must therefore have come into Verwey's possession prior to 1903 as it seems probable that this was the edition used for the second group of translations. If the edition used was that of "The Works" and not "The Poetical Works" it may even have been in his possession as early as 1891, when the translation of "A Defence of Poetry" may well have been the reason for the purchase of another edition.

When he came to translate "Alastor" in 1916, Verwey appears to have referred to both the editions of Shelley's works in his possession, for some variants are taken from the Chatto and Windus edition and some from the Moxon edition. By the time he revised his translation in 1922, however, it is possible that he also had access to and in fact made use of an Oxford edition.²⁾

The quotations from the early (unpublished) trans-

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- 1) It is interesting to note that an examination of this edition of "The Poetical Works" reveals the inclusion of a poem entitled "The Indian Serenade". Verwey's reference to this poem as: "de bekende Serenade: I arise from dreams of thee" is quoted on page 19. In both the Chatto and Windus edition and the Moxon edition of "The Works" the title of this poem is given as: "Lines to an Indian Air". This cannot, of course, be considered conclusive evidence; it merely suggests that Verwey first came across this poem (possibly on the occasion described on page 19) in an edition in which the title appeared as "The Indian Serenade". It need not necessarily have been his own copy.
 - 2) Information from Mevrouw Nijland-Verwey, whose 1907 Oxford edition of Shelley's Poetical Works Verwey used in later years.

lations are taken from manuscripts in the "Verzameling - Albert Verwey" in the University Library at Amsterdam. Copies of these translations are reproduced at the end of this thesis by kind permission of the heirs of Albert Verwey. The quotations from "Shelley's Gedichten van het Jaar MDCCCXVI" are, unless otherwise stated, taken from "Poëzie in Europa", published in 1920, although reference is also made to the manuscript in the "Verzameling - Albert Verwey" in Amsterdam and to the first printed version of these translations in the February Number 1904 of "De Twintigste Eeuw". The quotations from the translation of "Alastor" are taken from the Shelley Centenary Number of "English Studies", 1922, and for the convenience of the reader a copy of this version is also reproduced at the end of this thesis. If reference is made to the earlier version, quotations are from "De Beweging", July 1909, Number 7.

The edition used for quotations from Shelley's Poetical Works was, unless otherwise stated, the Oxford Edition, 1952, and all line references are taken from this edition. Where reference is made to the Chatto and Windus edition, the 1875 edition of Shelley's Works in four volumes was used. As has already been stated, in view of the difficulty in tracing an 1874 Moxon edition, an edition of 1854 was consulted.

II

EARLY TRANSLATIONS

A. Short poems

In the collection of Verwey's manuscripts in the University library at Amsterdam there are several school exercise books containing Verwey's first attempts at poetry. Four of these are entitled "Mijn Lentebloemen". A fifth book seems to have been lost or destroyed, for these are numbered: 1, 3, 4 and 5. Another book, bearing no title but only the date "December 1881", obviously comes after "Mijn Lentebloemen" as the dates of the poems in the "Lentebloemen" books are between 1880 and September 1881. These early poems are frequently interspersed with translations from the English poets, including Shelley. In "Mijn Lentebloemen" Verwey was, in Maurits Uyldeert's words, "tuning his instrument"¹⁾. What better method could he choose for this purpose than that of subjecting himself to the discipline of translation.

Verwey's earliest translations from Shelley are, as one might expect, renderings of some of the lyrics and shorter poems, although later in 1881 he also trans-

1) Maurits Uyldeert : De Jeugd van een Dichter. p.59

"Uit de cahiers die "Lentebloemen" heeten leert men den dichter kennen die zijn instrument stemt, die zijn weg zoekt in werkelijkheid en in droom. Tot het stemmen van het instrument behoorde ook het maken van vertalingen."

lated part of "The Daemon of the World" and a fragment from "Queen Mab". The lyrics and fragments translated by Verwey in 1881 are all works of Shelley's poetical maturity, and all date from the years 1820 and 1821, with the exception of the last in this group, which was written in 1822.¹⁾

After the many difficulties and vicissitudes which had surrounded his life in England, Shelley had, by 1820, reached a period of comparative calm in Italy. Here, amid the beauties of the Italian scenery, and in a climate better suited to his health, he wrote some of his most beautiful and melodious lyrics. Yet it was only comparative calm, for he was still frequently in pain and was still subject to attacks of melancholy and depression. The cause of his complaint was unknown and no physician seemed able to alleviate his suffering. Shelley's letters of this period testify to his moods of depression and melancholy. In November 1820 he wrote to Thomas Love Peacock:

"I am speaking literarily, infirm of purpose. I have great designs, and feeble hopes of ever accomplishing them."

and on June 8th 1821 to Claire Clairmont:

"I have a great desire and interest to live and I would submit to any inconvenience to attain that object ... Anything that prevents me from thinking does me good. Reading does not occupy me enough:

1) The fragments referred to here do not include those from the longer poems "Queen Mab" and "The Daemon of the World", which will be discussed under section B.

Locock, in his edition of Shelley's Poetical Works, casts some doubt on the date of some of these poems. See page 47 Note (1) and page 48 Note (3)

the only relief I find springs from the composition of poetry, which necessitates contemplations that lift me above the stormy mist of sensations which are my habitual place of abode."

Not only were these "contemplations" able to lift the poet "above the stormy mist of sensations", but they also seem to have had a similar effect on the young reader. In "De Jeugd van een Dichter" Maurits Uyldert quotes a letter dated 23 July 1889 from Verwey to Kitty van Vloten (later to become Verwey's wife) in which he described an incident which took place during his school-days.

"Ik stond naast Van Hell in een Shelley te bladeren en las de bekende Serenade: I arise from dreams of thee.1) Ik las die drie keer en bij de derde keer viel ik flauw, tegen Van Hell aan."2)

"Een dergelijke flauwte" (comments Uyldert, referring to this incident,) "een fysieke weerloosheid tegen de in hem opgolvende psychische ontroering, veroorzaakt door de ritmische schoonheid van het vers, heeft hij vaker ervaren."3)

But this may also have been due in part to a peculiar quality of much of Shelley's work. Peter Butter calls it synaesthesia.

"When two diverse sense impressions are so intimately combined - in whatever grammatical form - as to fuse in the imagination, I call that synaesthesia. Such sense minglings are fairly common in Shelley, and are used especially to describe moments of ecstasy. They are effective in a different way from Keats'. In Keats one sense is brought in to reinforce another, to produce an intenser, richer sensual effect; in Shelley different senses are brought together that

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- 1) The Indian Serenade. Oxford Edition p.580. See also p.15 Note (1).
 - 2) Maurits Uyldert : De Jeugd van een Dichter. p.63
 - 3) Maurits Uyldert : idem p.64

they may be dissolved in one another and transcended in a joy beyond sense."1)

The young Verwey seems to have been particularly sensitive to Shelley's poetry. In a letter to Willem Kloos in November 1882 he admitted to an ability to feel and appreciate a poem although he could not entirely follow the poet's train of thought. In a collection of sayings, published in "De Twintigste Eeuw" in May 1904 under the title "Eenzame Volzinnen", he again referred to this feeling.

"Het komt er doorgaans op aan te voelen wat een auteur bedoelt, meer dan hem na te denken. Vandaar dat de moeilijkste schrijvers verstaanbaar zijn voor met hen eensvoelenden."2)

The first poems Verwey translated from Shelley appear to have been selected for their beauty of sound and rhythm, and his choice of these for translation might therefore be considered characteristic of the "Beweging van Tachtig". The early "Tachtigers", especially Willem Kloos and also Jacques Perk, who is sometimes considered the fore-runner of the "Tachtigers", were primarily concerned with beauty; not only the beauty they worshipped as a deity, the Platonic conception of absolute and eternal beauty, but also beauty of form and sound in the poetry itself. Yet, when he translated these poems Verwey had not read Perk's poems, nor had he yet met Kloos. His friendship with Kloos later was to stimulate, if that were indeed necessary, his interest in the works of Shelley, but Verwey's admiration for Shelley's poetry existed before his friendship with Kloos. Most of these early trans-

1) Peter Butter : Shelley's Idols of the Cave. p.24

2) Verwey : Proza. VIII p.15. No.XLIX.

lations were in fact made before the end of November 1881, when Verwey met Willem Kloos for the first time.

Aan den Nacht¹⁾

The first poem in this early group of translations is a Dutch rendering of "To Night", one of Shelley's most melodious poems. The prevailing mood is one of longing for the night and its peace.

On first reading Verwey's translation one is struck by its great similarity to the original poem. The same rhythmic lilt runs through the translation as through the original poem; there is the same subdued tone and mood of longing. A closer examination of the rhyme scheme, however, reveals that this, although indeed similar to Shelley's rhyme scheme, is different in one respect: instead of using Shelley's scheme: a b a b c c b, Verwey used a b a a c c b. By restricting the use of the "b" rhyme to the two short lines Verwey emphasized the connection between them and also their difference from the other lines in length. This is certainly effective, but the stanza acquires thereby a somewhat different structural pattern and creates a different effect from that of Shelley's stanza. By repeating the rhyme of the two short lines in one of the longer lines Shelley linked the two, and his stanza is thus more closely-knit structurally, whereas Verwey's restriction of the "b" rhyme to the two short lines tends to isolate them.

In the third stanza Verwey deviated slightly from his own rhyme scheme by introducing an impure rhyme

1) For the text of this translation see Appendix page 223.

into the fifth and sixth lines.

"En als een ongewenschte gast
De dag nog dralend ging ter rust"

The effect of this impure rhyme, which may be intentional, is to provide a link between these two lines and the preceding lines by the use of a very similar vowel in "gast" to those in the rhyme words "zag", "dag" and "lag".

In the first stanza the metrical pattern is almost identical with that of the original poem. There is only one deviation, namely the substitution of a trochee for Shelley's second dactylic foot, thus instead of using: dactyl, dactyl, trochee, catalectic trochee, the translation has: dactyl, trochee, trochee, catalectic trochee.¹⁾

1) There are two versions of this line of Shelley's poem.

"Swiftly walk over the western wave"

which is the version printed in the earlier editions of Shelley's works, those of 1824 and 1829, and:

"Swiftly walk o'er the western wave"

which is the version in the Harvard manuscript, and is used in the later editions. The Chatto and Windus edition, which was probably the edition used for this translation (see page 13) favours the earlier version: "Swiftly walk over the western wave".

Verwey's translation could be of either version as it bears a rhythmic resemblance to both. The second version admits of two readings:

- + + - + - + -
"Swiftly walk o'er the western wave"
(dactyl, trochee, trochee, catalectic trochee), and

- + - + + - + -
"Swiftly walk o'er the western wave"
(trochee, dactyl, trochee, catalectic trochee).
In the former reading the rhythm is identical with that of the translation, and in the latter there are two deviations: the substitution of a dactyl for Shelley's trochee in the first foot, and a trochee for his dactyl in the second.

In his poetry Verwey makes frequent use of alliteration and assonance to link words and ideas, and also to create certain effects. This poem, early though it is, is no exception. Apart from alliteration and assonance representing a similar use in Shelley's poem, there is also very felicitous use of it in the line:

"Uw droomen weeft van vrees en vreugd."

The internal structure of Shelley's stanza is reproduced in the translation by careful use of alliteration and assonance. Verwey appears to have had difficulty, however, in finding sufficient alliteration in Dutch to produce the cohesive effect of the alliteration in:

"Swiftly walk o'er the western wave¹⁾
Spirit of Night!"

and therefore resorted to assonance to supplement the alliteration, in an attempt to produce the same or at least a similar effect.

"Zweef door des hemels westerpoort
Geest van den Nacht!"

The assonance of the vowels in "zweef", "hemels" and the closely related vowel in "wester" replaces the alliteration in "swiftly", "walk", "western" and "wave", although there is in the Dutch also a limited use of alliteration in "zweef" and "wester". The alliteration and assonance in "swiftly" and "spirit" is represented in "zweef" and "geest" by assonance alone.

The alliterating "l" in:

"Where all the long and lone daylight"

1) The Chatto and Windus edition has:

"Swiftly walk over the western wave"

See page 22.

is retained to a certain extent in the translation, although it does not always fall on a stressed syllable.

"Waar gij zoolang het zonlicht gloort".

The lilt and the sound of the waves suggested in this stanza by the rhythm and the preponderance of liquid consonants in the original is also present in the translation. Unfortunately, however, the image itself is lost, for the "western wave" becomes in Dutch: "des hemels westerpoort". The impression of solitude conveyed by the words: "lone daylight" is also missing in the translation.

Strictly speaking, "Kom nu, ik wacht" is not a translation of "Swift be thy flight". Nevertheless the idea conveyed of impatient waiting and longing is the same.

It will be noticed that Verwey's use of alliteration and assonance is very similar to Shelley's. Where Shelley indicates by this means a connection between certain words or images their equivalents are frequently linked in the same way in the translation. It is difficult to say with any degree of certainty whether or not Verwey, at the age of sixteen, was already conscious of the position and use of sounds in poetry. It is possible at this stage that he noticed the effect of the alliteration and assonance as used by Shelley and merely attempted to imitate it. That two years later he was indeed aware of the importance of the sounds themselves is abundantly clear from his article on Potgieter's "Florence", written in 1883.¹⁾ By 1891, and possibly earlier Verwey was also

1) Verwey : De Oude Strijd.

"Het zou de moeite waard zijn - en voor de Hollanders is het een moeite - zulke verzen langzaam, luide en

familiar with Shelley's ideas as expressed in "A Defence of Poetry"¹⁾. After his introduction to Kloos and Van der Goes, Verwey undoubtedly heard opinions on this subject expressed by them, but it must be remembered that when he translated this poem Verwey had not yet made their acquaintance.

The pattern of the second stanza is again similar to that of the original poem rhythmically, although to a lesser degree than that of the first stanza.

The text of this stanza is, on the whole, a close

als verzen te lezen. Dat wil zeggen regel na regel, met heldere, juiste betoning van iederen klinker, met omhoogheffing van elken klank, die weerkaatst wordt in rijm of assonantie; altoos met de gedachte, dat er in goede verzen niet één toon overtollig is, en hij, die ze genieten wil, de volheid dier verschillende tonen moet opnemen in zijn ziel." (p.37)

"Om goed te lezen is allereerst noodig een fijn oor voor de klanken en klankecombinaties, die de beteekenis der woorden vergezellen ..." (p.38)

"De indruk, dien een klank op de ziel maakt - de psychologie moge nog niet ver genoeg gevorderd zijn om dien voor iederen afzonderlijk, voor alle gezamenlijk te bepalen - zooveel is zeker dat die indruk zeer in 't bijzonder medewerkt aan de voorstellingen der phantasie. En hoe moet het dan zijn, als de lezer de klanken niet leest?" (p.39)

1) Verwey : Dichters Verdediging. p.9

"Klanken zoowel als denkingen betrekken zich beide tot elkander en tot dat wat zij voorstellen, en een perceptie van de maat van die voortstellen betrekkingen is altijd bevonden saam te gaan met een perceptie van de maat van de denking-betrekkingen. Vandaar dat de taal van de dichters altijd een zekere één-vormige en harmonische weerkeering van geluiden heeft aangenomen, waarzonder ze geen poëzie was en die nauwelijks minder ontbeerlijk tot de meedeeling van haar invloed is dan de woorden zelve, buiten die bepaalde geluiden-maat beschouwd."

translation of the English, but there seems to be a difference between:

"Ga dan door stad en zee en land
Bedwelm hen met uw staf en hand"

and:

"Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand - "

"All" presumably means all people, whereas "hen" can only refer to "stad en zee en land". The verb "bedwelmen" in preference to a literal translation of the adjective "opiate" was a happy choice, and the idea of "opiate" is continued in the following line, where:

"Lenig er leed"

takes the place of a more literal translation of:

"Come, long-sought!".

In the fourth line Verwey corrected what appears to be a careless mistake on the part of Shelley. In this stanza Day is referred to as feminine:

"Kiss her until she be wearied out",

but in the following stanza as masculine:

"And the weary Day turned to his rest,"¹⁾.

Verwey made Day masculine throughout, influenced to some extent no doubt by the fact that the gender of "dag" was itself masculine in Dutch, according to the rules of De Vries and Te Winkel.

Shelley varied the rhythm of the short lines from stanza to stanza but Verwey tended to keep to the same rhythm, although in the fourth and fifth stanzas the

1) The undated Mexon edition of "The Poetical Works", edited by W.M. Rossetti has:

"And the weary Day turned to her rest".

rhythm of these lines was varied slightly to agree with Shelley's rhythm in these stanzas. Apart from the short lines, this stanza is similar to the English stanza rhythmically, but the effect of the two consecutive stressed syllables in the fifth line of the original:

"And the weary Day turned to his rest,"

is lost in the translation, where this line is a regular iambic line:

"De dag nog dralend ging ter rust"¹⁾.

Verwey grasped the meaning of the original in this stanza but his translation sometimes lacks Shelley's imagery. For instance, "When light rode high" means the same as "bij vollen dag", but how much more expressive is Shelley's image of the sun god riding high in the sky. On the other hand the imagery in the line quoted above:

"De dag nog dralend ging ter rust",

although slightly different from Shelley's:

"And the weary Day turned to his rest"

is, to my mind, equally effective. The slow, lingering movement (interpreted by Shelley as weariness) is clearly suggested by the sound and rhythm of both lines.

"Hijgen" is rather more active and energetic than the English "sigh" in:

"I sighed for thee",

but it certainly resembles it in sound.

The preponderance of liquid and nasal consonants in this stanza, particularly in lines 4, 5 and 6, helps to emphasize the weariness and languor expressed in the text.

1) This is actually the sixth line in the translation as Verwey reversed the order of the text.

"And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest"

A similar effect can be observed in the translation, although in a lesser degree.

"En Middag op de velden lag
En als een ongewenschte gast
De dag nog dralend ging ter rust".

It seems, therefore, that Verwey was consciously striving to achieve in his translation a sound effect similar to that in the original.

In the third line the important words of the first image are linked by assonance:

"When light rode high, and the dew was gone".

Verwey replaced the assonance in this position by alliteration, but as in his translation he reversed the order of this line the words so linked are those of the second phrase:

"Toen dauw verdween bij vollen dag."

The alliteration in this line of the translation links both phrases.

The fourth stanza of the translation is remarkable for its regularity of rhythm. Apart from the two short lines, which, as has already been mentioned,¹⁾ follow the pattern of Shelley's short lines in this stanza, there is only one possible deviation from the regular iambic rhythm.²⁾ Shelley's stanza is less regular and differs

1) See pages 26-27.

2) Namely in the third line, but even this could be read as an iambic line. In normal reading, however, the stress in the second half of the line tends to be suspended as the result of the succession of heavy syllables.

from the translation in that the fourth, fifth and sixth lines are trochaic rather than iambic. The iambic rhythm of the first line of the original is also broken by the occurrence of two consecutive stresses in the middle of the line.

"Thy brother Death came, and cried"

This irregularity is not followed by Verwey in the translation,

"De Dood uw broeder kwam nabij",

although a slight rearrangement of this line and the omission of the article would have enabled Verwey to reproduce Shelley's rhythm exactly and also to retain the parallel:

"Thy brother Death ..."

"Thy sweet child Sleep ...".

As Verwey followed this word order in the third line:

"Uw zoet kind Slaap ..."

it is difficult to understand why he avoided it in the first line, unless it be that at this stage he rated a smooth and regular rhythm more highly than Shelley's effective irregularity. The two consecutive stresses tend to add emphasis to the words "Death came", with their implied finality. This is missing in the translation where the regular, flowing iambic rhythm continues without interruption.

This stanza, although again conveying the general sense of Shelley's stanza, is a freer translation than the preceding ones. Several expressions and images are left untranslated.

"Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed"

is translated, somewhat prosaically, as:

"Uw zoet kind Slaap kwam mij terzij".

Admittedly, "filmy-eyed" is not easy to translate. It is, however, a most fitting and expressive description of Sleep.¹⁾

In the fifth and sixth lines of this stanza of the translation there is effective use of repetition and parallelism.

"Verlangt gij mij 'k daal tot u neer
Verlangt ge mij? En ik zei weer:".

In Verwey's later poems there are several similar cases of parallelism to be found,²⁾ but this particular case is of interest in that it is one of the earliest examples of this device in Verwey's poetry. Moreover, the original text does not in any way give occasion for its use.³⁾

- 1) Other examples of less consequence than the one quoted above are:

"Thy brother Death came, and cried,"

which is translated as:

"De Dood uw broeder kwam nabij"

and:

"Shall I nestle near thy side?"

which is translated rather freely as:

"Verlangt gij mij 'k daal tot u neer".

- 2) As for example, the following quotations from "Het Blank Heelal":

"Ik ging om u. Ik heb u niet gevonden.
Ik vind u toch. Om u werd ik gezonden."

(Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk. I p.556)

"Ik liep haar na: ik vond haar in een delling,
Ik nam haar hand, ik trok haar tot de helling."

(Verwey : idem p.566)

- 3) There is certainly repetition in the second line of

Apart from the first line, the rhythm of the last stanza of the translation is very similar to the original, albeit with some modifications. The slumbrous effect of the three regular trochaic lines at the beginning of this stanza is lost in the translation, where these lines have an irregular, but predominantly iambic rhythm.

In the fourth line there is a pencil addition "er" to the manuscript.

"Wat mij (er) elk van hen reeds bood".

This addition makes the scansion of this line identical with that of the fifth line, a regular iambic line.

Another deviation of interest in this stanza is the pause in the seventh line after the first syllable:

"Kom, kom snel"

whereas Shelley has a pause after the second syllable:

"Come soon, soon."

In Shelley's line the position of the pause helps to emphasize "soon", which is also repeated. In the translation the emphasis is on "kom", which in this case is the word repeated. The exact reproduction of Shelley's rhythm would also have been possible in this particular case, but Verwey may have preferred his version for its

the original, where:

"Wouldst thou me?"

is repeated at the beginning of the sixth line. This particular repetition, however, is not retained in the translation, where the second line is translated as:

"Wilt ge mij?"

whereas the sixth line has:

"Verlangt ge mij?".

sound. The effect of Shelley's line is one of gradual slowing down and fading away. This effect is lost in the translation, but acoustically "kom" bears more resemblance to "soon" than does "snel", and this may well have been the reason for Verwey's choice of this word as the repeated word in the translation.

In Shelley's stanza there is a close link between the second and seventh lines:

"Soon, too soon - "

and

"Come soon, soon!"

This link could also have been reproduced in the translation, but Verwey appears to have avoided it to some extent. The two lines in the translation read:

"Snel, te snel"

and

"Kom, kom snel",

but the avoidance of exact reproduction in the second of these lines is no doubt due to the acoustic consideration discussed above.

For the rest, the translation of this stanza does not appear to have been accomplished without difficulty. The fourth line:

"Wat mij (er) elk van hen reeds bood"

is not really a translation of:

"Of neither would I ask the boon"

although it is a reasonable deduction on the grounds of the preceding stanza, where Death and Sleep in turn offer themselves to the poet. But Verwey obviously grasped, and succeeded in conveying, the general sense of the passage.

The sixth line:

"O, kom snel, o kom, ik wacht"

is in itself a weak and unpoetic translation of:

"Swift be thine approaching flight,"

but the musical effect of this line is not unlike that of the last line in Shelley's stanza, namely a gradual slowing down and fading away. Verwey's task in translating this line was rendered more difficult by his endeavour to follow the internal structure of Shelley's poem. In:

"Swift be thine approaching flight"

Shelley points back to the last line of the first stanza:

"Swift be thy flight!"

thus linking the last stanza of the poem with the first.

In the translation:

"O, kom snel, o kom, ik wacht"

likewise links up with the last line of the first stanza:

"Kom nu, ik wacht."

of which it is an extended version.

This translation shows the young Verwey trying out various sound effects used by Shelley and also his use of rhythm. As a translation it is usually quite close to the original, reproducing the general sense of the poem where it does not translate the text literally. It is, of course, poetically inferior to Shelley's poem; but one can hardly expect a poet of sixteen, in his first attempts at poetry, to achieve the high poetic standard of one who at the time of writing this poem had reached his maturity as a poet. There are, nevertheless, as has been pointed out, even in this very early effort, passages which are by no means without merit.

Morgen¹⁾

Verwey's next translation from Shelley is of the six-lined poem "To-Morrow", also written in 1821.²⁾

The rhyme-scheme of this stanza (a b a b c c) is one frequently found in Shelley's poetry. It is, among others, that of the "Dirge for the Year", the influence of which is so noticeable in Verwey's own poem "Rouw om het Jaar", written in 1884.³⁾ It is also the rhyme-scheme of "Marianne's Dream", the final Chorus of "Hellas" and the "Song of the Voice in the Air" in "Prometheus Unbound" (Act II Scene v.)

In translating this poem Verwey retained Shelley's rhyme-scheme. Once again, the translation follows the original poem very closely rhythmically. The irregular first line, with its pause after the third syllable, is rhythmically identical in the translation. The pause in the last line also occurs in the translation in the same position as in the original. The basic rhythm of both the original and the translation is trochaic (although the second line of the original is iambic). Halfway through the fifth line, however, Shelley changed to iambic rhythm. This change is not followed in the translation, where the rhythm remains trochaic throughout.

The change from trochaic to iambic rhythm coincides in the original with a change of subject and a change in style. The first four lines are concerned with the

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- 1) For the text of this translation see Appendix page 224
 2) Some editions of Shelley's works print a second stanza to this poem. The Chatto and Windus edition, however, only has this one stanza.
 3) See also page 6.

search for "To-morrow", but in the fifth line the poet comes, as it were, face to face with what he has been fleeing, "Today". At this point the style changes abruptly from the somewhat elevated style, in which the poet has been addressing the object of his search, to the more commonplace, even verging on the colloquial, style in which he refers to "Today", with which he is already so familiar. This sudden change in style is not followed in the translation, where an elevated style is maintained throughout.

"In uw plaatse zien wij treden,
Wat wij 't meest ontvloden - Heden."¹⁾

There is, moreover, nothing to suggest the rather whimsical mood of Shelley's lines:

"In thy place - ah! well-a-day!
We find the thing we fled - To-day."

This is in many ways a good translation, as far as the reproduction of the text is concerned,²⁾ in spite of the fact that Shelley's construction in this poem is not particularly easy to follow. As has already been pointed out, however, it lacks the variety of the original and

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- 1) There is, however, a certain change in the translation at this point. The syntax of the first four lines differs from that of the original in that the subject is in the third person. This tends to give the first section a somewhat formal and distant air, which becomes less marked when the subject changes, in the fifth line, to the first person. This may possibly be an attempt to imitate Shelley's change of style, which is, nevertheless, more marked, although the first person is used throughout.
 - 2) Nevertheless, "Om uw goeten lach vertrouwt" is rather a free translation of: "Thy sweet smiles we ever seek".

also the whimsical touch at the end.

Aan de Maan¹⁾

This is a translation of "To the Moon", a fragment written in 1820, consisting of one stanza of six lines and, in some editions, two lines of a second stanza. Only the first stanza is translated.²⁾

In this translation Verwey merely used the subject matter, rendering it in Dutch in his own form and with his own rhyme-scheme (a b b a c d c d). Shelley's rhyme-scheme in this fragment is the same as in the preceding poem (a b a b c c).

Although the form of the translation differs considerably from that of the original, even to the extent of two additional lines, the rhythm is very similar. The first line is almost identical rhythmically with the first line of the English poem, but thereafter Verwey's lines differ from Shelley's in length. In the first two lines of the translation the metre is possibly influenced by that of "To Night", as the short second line is rhythmically identical with the short second and seventh lines in several of the stanzas in both the original and Verwey's translation of that poem.

Verwey appears to have translated this poem very painstakingly and each phrase in the original is reproduced

1) For the text of this translation see Appendix page 224

2) The Chatto and Windus edition and the Moxon edition of "The Works" print the first stanza only. In the Moxon edition of "The Poetical Works" this fragment is missing altogether. (See also page 14)

in the translation. It is therefore in this respect a close translation.¹⁾ But the style of the translation is very different from that of the original. The first line is both melodious and a close translation of the text, but this standard is unfortunately not maintained throughout the poem. After the elevated, poetic style of the first line the translation lapses into such commonplace expressions as:

"Zonder ooit een vriend te krijgen
Onder sterren daar omhoog". (lines 4-5)

This poem, more than the two preceding translations, gives the impression of being a literal translation forced into a prescribed shape and made to conform to a certain pattern of rhyme and metre, and, in this case, the pattern is not Shelley's pattern. The poetic beauty of the original poem is entirely lacking in the translation after the first line. Whereas in "Aan den Nacht" Verwey seems to have tried to reproduce the pattern of Shelley's poem and the sound impression, here he appears to have concentrated on translating the text literally. A translation should, of course, be accurate, but it should also reproduce as far as possible the sound impression and the general tone of the poem. Neither the accuracy of the text nor the sound impression is sufficient in itself. These early translations, however, were probably undertaken as "poetic exercises" rather than as attempts at poetry, and by concentrating in turn on the various aspects of poetry in these translations Verwey was exercising and developing

1) Although "a different birth" need not necessarily be "niet terzelfder tijd geboort".

his own poetic talent.

De Vluchtelingen.¹⁾

Unlike most of Verwey's translations from Shelley, this poem bears no reference to its source.

With this translation of "The Fugitives", a narrative poem written in 1821, Verwey turned again to the sound effects used in poetry, for "The Fugitives" is in itself little more than rhythmic and acoustic play. This is particularly noticeable in the first two stanzas.

Shelley's amphibrach rhythm is followed very closely in the translation, which is in fact very similar to the original rhythmically. Verwey also used the same rhyme-scheme, except in one respect: Shelley linked the three stanzas in each section by making the last lines rhyme, as for example:

"Away", "Come away", "Come away";

"Shouted he", "O'er the sea", "From the lee".

Verwey either did not notice this, or was unable to link his stanzas in the same way.²⁾

A similar structural device is used by Shelley to bind together the four sections of this poem. The first couplet of the last stanza in the first section rhymes with the first couplet of the last stanza in the third section, and the second couplet of the final stanzas in

1) For the text of this translation see Appendix page 225

2) The last lines in the first section almost rhyme: "Daarheen", "Kom mee", "Kom mee"; and in the second section two of the three lines rhyme: "Kreet hij", "Over zee", "Van lij"; but this is probably by accident rather than by design, as the third and fourth sections have no such rhyme.

the second and fourth sections also rhyme. This is not followed in the translation.

The first section in the original poem is very onomatopoeic. Verwey seems to have endeavoured to follow this as closely as possible and the Dutch words are also very suggestive of the sound of the elements they describe, although sometimes the sound itself differs from that given in the original.¹⁾

In his translation Verwey altered the syntax of the first stanza, thus changing the meaning to some extent. Instead of Shelley's four short, disconnected phrases:

"The waters are flashing,
The white hail is dashing,
The lightnings are glancing,
The hoar-spray is dancing - "

the translation has two longer phrases in which the second line of each couplet is joined to the first line by the preposition "bij".²⁾

"De wateren plettren,
Bij 't hagelsteen klettren,
En rijmtakjes dansen,
Bij 't bliksemlichtglanzen."

Verwey's translation of "hoar-spray" as "rijmtakjes" is interesting. This is certainly a possible inter-

1) In the first stanza, for instance, the sound of the waters is represented by "wateren plettren", which to my mind is as suggestive of the actual sound as Shelley's "flashing", and "klettren" is more suggestive of the sound of hail than Shelley's "dashing". Verwey's rhyme words in the next couplet: "dansen" and "bliksemlichtglanzen", are remarkable for their great acoustic similarity to Shelley's rhyme words: "glancing" and "dancing".

2) This necessitated reversing the order of the lines of the second couplet.

pretation of the English text and may well be the correct one. There is, however, another possible interpretation, which in my opinion seems more probable, namely sea spray which is white, or hoar, with foam.¹⁾

"Daarheen" was undoubtedly necessary for the purposes of metre. It is not, strictly speaking, a translation of "Away" as used here, and tends to place too much emphasis on the destination or direction, whereas in "away" the destination is of minor importance.

In the second stanza of this section Verwey again altered the syntax in the first couplet. As in the first stanza, the two phrases forming this couplet are linked by the preposition "bij". The verbs in this stanza are not translations of the English verbs. They are onomatopoeic and expressive but the effect conveyed sometimes differs from that conveyed by the original. In the third line, for example, the emphasis in the original is on the movement of the forest:

"The forest is swinging"

whereas the translation describes the sound made by that movement:

"De woudreuzen kraken".

Similarly, in the fourth line:

"The minster bells ringing"

Shelley describes the sound made by the bells, whereas in the translation the emphasis is on the beginning of the action:

1) The change in number from singular, as in the original, to plural, as in the translation, was obviously made necessary by the need for the plural form of the verb to provide the rhyme: "dansen", "glanzen".

"De klokken ontwaken - ".

In the third stanza of this section Verwey again resorted to plural nouns for the sake of a feminine ending, thus:

"The Earth is like Ocean"

becomes in Dutch:

"De vlakten zijn zeeën".

In the second line:

"Met wrakken bespreeën",

which translates only half the English line:

"Wreck-strewn and in motion;"

Verwey formed his own past participle "bespreeën" to provide the rhyme for "zeeën".

In the manuscript the original word order of the third line:

"Vogel mensch en wormen"

followed Shelley's order exactly:

"Bird, beast, man and worm"

but the word "beast" remained untranslated as the length and rhythm of the Dutch words made it impossible to translate the line in full. The revision of this line to:

"Mensch vogel en wormen"

was undoubtedly made for the sake of the rhythm. Verwey seemed to have a predilection for feminine rhymes and to be reluctant to do without them, even where the original poem had masculine rhymes, as in this couplet. There seems to be no other reason why "worm" and "storm" should be put into the plural.

There is a difference in the imagery of the fourth line where:

"Gevlucht voor de stormen"

does not convey the same impression as:

"Have crept out of the storm".

The English text suggests a much slower movement in search of shelter, whereas the translation suggests swifter and more energetic flight in the face of the pursuing storm.

After the descriptive first section in which the stage is set there now follows, in the second section, the narrative itself. Here all the rhymes are masculine, both in the original and also in the translation, and give the impression of definite and deliberate action as opposed to the rhythmic movement of the elements of nature in the first section.

In the first stanza of this section the syntax of the translation is very close to that of the original, as is also the translation itself, although:

"En de stuurman ontvlood"

is perhaps a rather free translation of:

"And the helmsman is pale; - "

Verwey's choice of the nautical word "reê" in the third line of this stanza is interesting and would, one feels, have met with the approval of Shelley, who was himself a keen sailor. It is not, however, a very close translation of the English word "bold", which it is intended to represent.

In the second stanza of this section:

"Op zee zijn we vrij"

bears little resemblance to the English:

"Put off gaily from shore!"

although it has the same spirit of eagerness for departure.

"En de hagel sloeg 't nat
 En de bliksem hun pad
 Over zee"

is somewhat obscure syntactically, but the loose construction is undoubtedly due to the difficulties of translating the English:

"As she spoke, bolts of death
 Mixed with hail, specked their path
 O'er the sea."

The "bolts of death" are softened to "bliksem" and the image of the fugitives' path across the sea as being "specked" by hail and "bolts of death" is lost in the translation, where this is rendered somewhat vaguely by "sloeg 't nat".

The third stanza in this section is considerably simplified in the translation.

"And from isle, tower and rock"

becomes simply:

"En van 't eiland ...";
 "The blue beacon-cloud"

becomes:

"De baken ..."

and

"The red cannon flashed fast"

is simplified to:

"Rolt de noodgalm daar van".

The first stanza in the third section continues the action of the second section and the rhymes, after the first two lines, are again masculine. The second and third stanzas, however, are more descriptive and the rhymes, as in the opening descriptive section, are feminine. This is

also followed in the translation, with the exception of the first two lines of the second stanza, which are masculine.

In the first stanza of this section Verwey altered the order of the questions in the first two lines and made one addition. After the first "Fear'st thou", translated as "vreest gij", he continued with the questions "Zucht gij" and "hoort gij", finishing with the second "fear'st thou", now translated as "ducht gij". The question "seest thou" is not translated.¹⁾

In the next stanza the alliteration in the second line:

"The loved and the lover"

is reproduced in the translation:

"Over hem en op haar".

"Wijl eéNZelfde weelde
Hun aderen streelde"

although translating rather freely the original:

"Their blood beats one measure
They murmur proud pleasure"

does nevertheless show an attempt to reproduce, by means of assonance, the cohesive effect of the alliteration.

There is also a general slowing down of the rhythm in the last three lines:

1) In the last two lines of this stanza the order is also changed in the translation, where the last line of the English text: "I and thou" appears as the second half of the preceding line in the translation: "Op de zee, gij met mij" and is replaced in the last line by a repetition of the first phrase of this line: "Op de zee", which is, moreover, a somewhat oversimplified version of: "O'er the terrible sea".

"Their blood beats one measure,
They murmur proud pleasure
Soft and low; - "

The translation of these lines clearly suggests the slower movement and quieter tone of the original:

"Wijl eéNZelfde weelde
Hun aderen streeLde
Zoet en zacht"¹⁾

The last stanza in this section is descriptive of the movement and the sound of the sea. The feminine endings help to convey the impression of continual movement, which is emphasized still more in the first two lines by the use of the stressed vowels. These, and also the vowel in the unstressed first word of each line, are the same in each of these lines.

"While around the lashed Ocean
Like mountains in motion".

An attempt is made in the translation to convey, by the same means, a similar impression of ceaseless movement. The endings, as in the original, are all feminine, but whereas in these lines Shelley used two different stressed vowels alternately in the same order in each line, Verwey used the same stressed vowel throughout.

"En om hen de golven
Weer golven bedolven".

Here also, and to a greater extent even than in the original, even the unstressed vowels are similar, if not the same, in each line. The assonance and internal alliteration in the second line of the translation (quoted above) serve

1) The alliteration in the last line does not correspond to any alliteration or assonance in the original but serves to link in this way two qualities which are linked in the original by association.

to reproduce the effect of the alliteration in the second line of the English text.¹⁾

In the fourth section the scene changes to the shore and to those left behind by the fugitives. The first stanza of this section is translated rather freely, the first line of the original being omitted altogether.

The English of the last three lines of this stanza:

"Like a bloodhound well beaten
The bridegroom stands, eaten
By shame;"

does not seem to justify the excessive exaggeration of the first three lines of the translation:

"Als een bloedhond, dien schaamte
Verteert tot 't geraamte
Staat de bruidegom ..."

and there is also an element of exaggeration and elaboration in the translation:

"De portierster terzij
Die beeft"

for:

"Beside the pale portress",

but the second stanza of this section is translated more closely.²⁾

1) The alliteration in the third line:

"Sunk, shattered and shifted"

is not reproduced in the translation, which in this case makes use of a rather poor metaphor:

"En zonken tot dwergen".

2) Although the last two lines of the translation:

"Overstemmend te gader
"Aard' en zee"

form a rather over-simplified version of the English:

"To his voice the mad weather
Seems tame".

In the first line of the last stanza:

"En met vloekroepend weê"

Verwey interpreted rather than translated the first two lines of the original:

"And with curses as wild
As e'er clung to child".

As he had condensed the first two lines of Shelley's stanza into one line it was necessary for him to expand elsewhere in the stanza. The third line of the original:

"He devotes to the blast"

is therefore expanded in the translation to fill two lines:

"Geeft hij daar aan de zee
Aan de stormen ten beste".

The last two lines of the poem:

"The best, loveliest and last
Of his name!"

are very closely translated, even to the retention or reproduction of the alliteration in the fourth line:

"De liefste en leste
Van zijn naam."

This poem, written in a melodramatic ballad style, and with a strong, pulsing rhythm, is the kind of poem one would expect to appeal to the young Verwey, as it would undoubtedly also have appealed to the young Shelley, with his predilection for dramatic, Gothic romances. This poem, however, was not written until 1821, when Shelley was a mature poet, and is an indication perhaps, if one were indeed necessary, that even his maturity as a poet did not rob Shelley of his love of dramatic, even melodramatic romances.¹⁾ In this translation the imagery

1) Loock, however, casts some doubt on the date of this poem, quoting it as from "Posthumous Poems" (1824). See

is on the whole weak compared with that of the original. What attracted Verwey most in this poem, however, was probably the acoustic and rhythmic effect Shelley managed to achieve, and which Verwey in his turn tried, with considerable success, to imitate.

Muziek¹⁾

This is a translation of an unfinished fragment, "Music", which was written by Shelley in 1821.²⁾ Music, according to Leigh Hunt, affected Shelley deeply.³⁾ It is not surprising, therefore, that he should use music as a means of approaching the ideal or divine. Just as earthly beauty led him to contemplate and desire absolute and eternal beauty, of which earthly beauty is but the shadow, so music led him to contemplate and desire its absolute and eternal counterpart.

Both the translation and the original have the same basic rhythm, but whereas Shelley varied his rhythm considerably, Verwey maintained a fairly regular rhythm

the note on p.520 of his edition of Shelley's Poetical Works. The possibility that this poem was in fact an early effort of Shelley's, which had not previously been published, cannot therefore be altogether ruled out.

- 1) For the text of this translation see Appendix page 227
- 2) Similar doubt is cast by Loceock on the date of this poem. See Note (1) on page 47
- 3) Leigh Hunt : Memoir of Shelley.

This was originally published in 1828 and forms the introduction to "Shelley's Works" published by Chatto and Windus in 1875, in which edition the above reference is to be found on page 17 of Volume I.

throughout, which tends at times to become monotonous. To a certain extent Verwey also followed Shelley's rhyme-scheme; that is to say, the rhyme-scheme of each stanza is, as in the original, a b a b c c, but Shelley's use of rhyme to knit the stanzas more closely together was not followed by Verwey, either because he did not observe it, or possibly because he was not able to reproduce it in his translation.¹⁾ There is, however, a rhyme link between the last two stanzas in the translation, where the rhyme of the final couplet in the third stanza reappears as the second rhyme of the quatrain in the fourth stanza. This may be accidental, but the use of the unusual form "togen" seems to suggest an attempt to link the stanzas after the manner of Shelley.

As far as the translation of the text is concerned the first line appears to show a difference in approach from that of the original:

"I pant for the music which is divine".

Shelley, in this poem, pants for the divine music, as opposed to earthly music, just as in an earlier poem²⁾ he

1) In the original the last couplet in each of the first two stanzas has the same rhyme. Moreover, the first line in each of these couplets also has internal rhyme. This is not continued in the third stanza, and the fourth stanza is incomplete. The last two stanzas are also linked together by rhyme, but in a different way from the first two stanzas. In this case the first rhyme of each quatrain is the same, even to the use of the same rhyme words. Moreover, the last stanza is linked again with the opening stanza in that the second rhyme of the quatrain in the last stanza is the same as the first rhyme in the quatrain of the first stanza, the rhyming words again being identical.

2) "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty".

sought for divine or intellectual beauty, as opposed to earthly beauty. The translation, however, does not make this clear.

"Ik hijg naar muziek, naar die hemelsche taal". The choice of "hemelsche" as a translation for "divine" instead of the more literal translation "goddelijke" was probably due to its alliteration with "hijg". It is also possible that Verwey, who had already shown himself to be greatly concerned with the actual sound of the words, preferred it for its acoustic effect. "Hemelsche taal", with long vowels in both the stressed syllables, is smoother and more euphemous than "goddelijke taal" would have been.

The translation of this stanza is quite close to the original, with the exception of the fourth line which shows considerable freedom. In the original this line is merely an extension of the image in the preceding line:

"Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine
Loosen the notes in a silver shower;"

in the translation, however, the next image: that of the poet enjoying, or rather longing to enjoy, this "silver shower", is anticipated.¹⁾

"Laat vloeien als wijn het verrukkend koraal
Opdat 'k in dien zilveren stroom mij verpooze."

As has already been observed, Verwey did not imitate Shelley's internal rhyme in the final couplet. He did, however, make frequent use of alliteration, internal alliteration and assonance to link words and images, even

1) "Like a herbless plain, for the gentle rain,
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again."

where this was not done in the original.¹⁾

In the final couplet there is an interesting alternation of vowels in the stressed syllables in the half-lines:

"Als een vlakte die hijgt ...
Zoo kwijn ik en wacht"

where the two different stressed vowels are used with a mirror effect.

The half-lines in this stanza appear to be linked to a certain extent by assonance in the translation. In the first two lines the half-line ends with the same vowel:

"Ik hijg naar muziek,
En mijn dorstende ziel ..."

The fourth line has a closely related vowel in the same position, although this line cannot really be divided into half-lines.

"Opdat 'k in dien zilveren ..."²⁾

The second stanza opens with a simplified version of Shelley's first line:

- 1) The alliteration in the first line of the translation has already been referred to. In the second line imperfect internal alliteration links the two images "dorstende ziel" and "stervende roze".

"En mijn dorstende ziel is een stervende roze"

In the fourth line assonance links the "zilveren stroom" with the verb "verpooze".

"Opdat 'k in dien zilveren stroom mij verpooze".

- 2) There is, moreover, alliteration linking the second and fourth lines in "ziel" and "zilveren". The third and fifth lines also have assonance rhyme in the half-lines:

"Laat vloeien als wijn ..."

"Als een vlakte die hijgt ..."

It is possible, however, that this is accidental rather than intentional.

"O laat mij zwelgen den zaligen zang".

Shelley, with his great interest in and knowledge of science, has:

"Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound",
"spirit" being used here in the sense of the liquid, or
essence.¹⁾

In the original there is alliteration in the first line in "spirit", "sweet" and "sound" and assonance in "drink" and "spirit".

"Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound".
The translation follows this pattern of alliteration and assonance very closely.

"O, laat mij zwelgen den zaligen zang",
where there is alliteration in "zwelgen", "zaligen" and "zang" and also internal alliteration in "laat", "zwelgen" and "zaligen". But the vowel harmony and the preponderance of long vowels, (for even the short vowels in "zwelgen" and "zang" are lengthened by the following consonant combinations) tend to give an air of sensuousness to the translation which is not present in the original. The effect of the combination of short vowels and light consonants, especially in the first part of this line in the original, is a quicker

1) There is also a slight deviation in the last two lines of this stanza. In the English version the "dissolving strain" enters the "heart and brain" by means of the veins.

"The dissolving strain, through every vein
Passes into my heart and brain."

In the translation the "stervende toon" flows through heart, head and veins without any apparent aim or destination.

"De stervende toon van die trillende snaren
Stroomt door mijn harte, mijn hoofd en mijn åren".

lighter rhythm, underlining, as it were, the eagerness of the poet to quench his thirst. The Dutch is more suggestive of sensuous enjoyment.

Although Verwey did not imitate Shelley's method of linking the two lines of the final couplet by internal rhyme, he did nevertheless link them by alliteration.

"De stervende toon van die trillende snaren
Stroomt door mijn harte, mijn hoofd en mijn âren."

The alliterative use of "s" and "t" in the first of these lines, unless it be purely accidental, seems to indicate Verwey's interest, even at this early stage, in alliteration and its effect.

The third stanza recaptures the spirit of the original and is a fairly close translation.¹⁾ Here again Verwey made use of alliteration to link words and images, as for example "dauw" and "dorst" in the fourth line:

"Geen dauw meer ontving om zijn dorst te lesschen"²⁾
and also in the last line:

"Op de wieken van 't koeltje over 't water getogen"
where the alliteration in "wieken" and "water" partly reproduces Shelley's alliteration in this line:

"On the wings of the wind o'er the waters blue."

As in the original, this stanza is linked by rhyme with

1) The image of the third line of the original:

"When the hot noon has drained its dewy cup"
is omitted in the translation, however:

"Toen 't kelkje dat wiegelde heen en weer
Geen dauw meer ontving om zijn dorst te lesschen"

2) This is one of the very few cases of impure rhyme used by Verwey in these translations: "verflensen" - "lesschen".

the final fragmentary stanza, although the lines so linked in the translation are not those which are linked in the English text.¹⁾

Although this translation is not dated, it seems probable, judging by its position among poems which are dated, that it was written in July 1881. In spite of its obvious weaknesses it is not without merit. It is of interest in that it shows the young Dutch poet's handling of alliteration, frequently to good effect, and often to underline, as it were, the parallelisms; for even at this early age Verwey appeared to have a tendency towards parallel and balanced phrases. A striking example of balance is to be found in the final couplet of the first stanza and has already been referred to:

"Als een vlakte die hijgt naar den milden regen
Zoo kwijn ik en wacht van die tonen een zegen" 2)

-
- 1) The translation of the fragmentary stanza has certain deviations from the original, as for example:

"Als een die daar drinkt uit betooverden kroes
Den vonklenden wijn in bedwelmende togen"

where in "bedwelmende togen" Verwey interpreted rather than translated the English:

"As one who drinks from a charmed cup
Of foaming, and sparkling, and murmuring wine".

The third and fourth lines also add to the original:

"Wijl de toovenares hem, in zaligen roes
Tot liefde verleidt, met de kus harer oogen."

The English text has merely:

"Whom a mighty Enchantress filling up
Invites to love with her kiss divine ..."

- 2) See also page 51.

But there are several other examples which show this tendency towards balance or parallelism to a lesser degree.¹⁾

Vrijheid.²⁾

This translation of "Liberty" was probably also made during July 1881. There is a strong pulsating rhythm throughout, which differs from that of the original in that it is almost entirely regular, even to the point of monotony. Furthermore, the last line of each stanza, with the exception of the first, is one foot longer than the corresponding line in the original. Verwey followed Shelley's rhyme-scheme in this translation.

In the first line:

"De trotsende bergen ..."

seems at first glance to be a peculiar translation of:

"The fiery mountains ..."

On closer examination, however, this is not so strange as at first appeared. Shelley, in this poem, was undoubtedly

1) As for example the balanced use of "stervende" and "trillende" in:

"De stervende toon van die trillende snaren".

(See also page 53) and "Vonklenden" and "bedwelmende" in:

"Den vonklenden wijn in bedwelmende togen".

The use of alliteration in the lines:

"Geen dauw meer ontving om zijn dorst te lesschen"
and:

"Op de wicken van 't koeltje over 't water getogen"
also gives a balanced effect.

2) For the text of this translation see Appendix page 228

thinking of the revolt or uprising of various peoples, or possibly individuals, in their struggle for liberty. They are likened to volcanoes which are on the point of erupting. Verwey transferred the "defiance" of the people to the mountains by which they are symbolised. But whereas Shelley's symbol or image is a natural phenomenon, Verwey's is merely a startling metaphor.¹⁾

"En de stormende golven verschrikken elkander"²⁾

"Verschrikken" may at first glance appear to be rather a free translation of "awake". Yet, on closer examination it is not so strange as at first appeared. The action of "awakening" caused by "tempestuous oceans" might well contain an element of fright.

There is also a structural difference in this stanza.

"The fiery mountains answer each other;
 Their thunderings are echoed from zone to zone
 The tempestuous oceans awake one another,
 And the ice-rocks are shaken round Winter's throne,³⁾
 When the clarion of the Typhoon is blown."

The fifth line here is the operative line. When the clarion is blown the actions mentioned in the preceding lines take

1) There is also a slight deviation in the second half of this line:

"De trotsende bergen, zij roepen elkander".

In the original the emphasis is on the result of the action:

"The fiery mountains answer each other".

2) "The tempestuous oceans awake one another".

3) The Chatto and Windus edition has "round winter's zone". If Verwey was indeed using this edition the omission of the metaphor "round Winter's throne" calls for no further comment.

place. The translation, however, has a somewhat different structure.

"De trotsende bergen, zij roepen elkander
 En d'echo huns donders rolt galmende voort
 En de stormende golven verschrikken elkander
 De rust van die rotsen van ijs is gestoord:
 De klaren van de Typhoon is luide gehoord."

Here again the fifth line is the operative line, but it is no longer stated as the cause or occasion of the preceding events. It now appears, as it were, in apposition to the preceding statements. Yet, the implication is the same, and this construction is not without effect. The close parallel in form between "is blown" and "is ... gehoord" is remarkable although it involves the use of a different tense in Dutch.¹⁾

The parallelism in the first and third lines:

"The fiery mountains answer each other"

"The tempestuous oceans awake one another"

is also present in the translation:

"De trotsende bergen, zij roepen elkander"

"En de stormende golven verschrikken elkander".

In the translation, as in the original, but to a lesser degree, the sound of the words forms, as it were, the background of sound, supplementing the meaning of the words themselves. The actual sound of a poem could perhaps be compared to an orchestral accompaniment to a song in that it sets the mood for the contents of the song. The second line of the translation is very descriptive of the sound

1) A further difference in meaning between "is blown" and "is gehoord" is one of approach. Whereas in the original the emphasis is on the making of the sound, in the translation it is on the reception of it.

of the "thunderings".

"En d'echo huns donders rolt galmende voort."

The sound of the waves breaking can be heard in the word "tempestuous" in the third line of the original:

"The tempestuous oceans awake one another."

This may possibly explain Verwey's preference for "verschrikken" as a translation of "awake" in this line.¹⁾ After the rhythmic rolling of the waves in the first part of the line:

"En de stormende golven ..."

with a vowel harmony that is almost assonance in the stressed syllables, there is a sudden clash and breaking in "verschrikken", where not only is the stressed vowel, as it were, a discord after the harmony at the beginning of the line, but the plosive consonants add to the sharpness and suddenness of the impact. "Verschrikken", as used by Verwey in this line, has much the same effect in reproducing the clash and breaking of the waves as Shelley's "tempestuous".

The second stanza deviates somewhat from the original.

"From a single cloud the lightning flashes."²⁾

"A single cloud" is not necessarily "een eenzame wolk". Shelley was probably thinking of a sky dark with thunder clouds, and from one of these clouds the lightning flashes. This is the beginning of the storm and symbolises the first revolt of many against tyranny and oppression. Shelley's cloud is by no means lonely, it is merely the first to flash

1) See also page 56.

2) Translation reads:

"Van een eenzame wolk is de bliksem geslagen"

its lightning.¹⁾

Verwey made use of assonance in the first two lines of this stanza to link the lightning with its effect.

"Van een eenzame wolk is de bliksem geslagen
Verlichtende d'eilanden verre in het rond"

There is a certain similarity between Verwey's rhyme words: "rond", "grond", and "afgronden mond", and Shelley's "around", "sound", and "underground". There is, moreover, great resemblance acoustically between:

"En honderden schudden ..."

and:

"An hundred are shuddering ..."

A certain amount of similarity might possibly be due to coincidence, but coincidence alone cannot be said to account for all the similarity of sound in this stanza, nor for the

1) The third line also shows some deviation and an addition by the translator:

"Een stad ligt in puin, dat de winden verjagen"

In the original the action is not yet completed:

"Earthquake is trampling one city to ashes"

and there is no mention of the dust or the ashes being blown away by the wind. Moreover in the translation the personification in this line is omitted altogether, "earthquake" itself not even being translated.

As in the original there is a pause followed by enjambment in the fourth line:

"... de grond
Verbergt het geluid in des afgronden mond"

This is, however, an immature and not very poetic translation of the English:

"... the sound
Is bellowing underground"

and here, too, the personification is omitted.

fact that the sounds which are so similar are predominantly the descriptive sounds in the original. This appears to be one more indication that Verwey, even at this stage, consciously attempted to imitate as far as possible the actual sounds in Shelley's poetry which seemed to him to be of most significance.¹⁾

"Maar uw blik is nog scherper dan 't bliksemlichtglanzen"

Verwey seems to have been well-pleased, and rightly so, with the acoustic effect of his word "bliksemlichtglanzen", for it also occurs in the translation of "The Fugitives", dealt with earlier in this section.²⁾

"Gij spot met de zee in haar stormende dansen"

appears to be a very free translation of:

"Thou deafenest the rage of the ocean ...".

There is certainly alliteration in this line of the translation, and his desire for this undoubtedly influenced Verwey's choice of words, but alliteration, however effective, cannot justify such an absolute departure from the meaning of the original.³⁾

1) In the next stanza Verwey achieved even greater acoustic similarity in the rhyme words: "der aarde gestamp", "lamp", and "damp", although the meaning is not in every case the same as in Shelley's rhyme words: "earthquake's tramp", "lamp" and "damp". "Der aarde gestamp", for instance, can hardly be said to translate fully "earthquake's tramp", and "der hemelen lamp" introduces a slightly different metaphor from "the sun's bright lamp".

2) See page 39.

3) There is also alliteration in the second line of this stanza:

"En sneller uw stap dan der aarde gestamp"

which is reminiscent of the alliteration in the original:

"And swifter thy step than the earthquake's tramp".

There is an interesting sequence of stressed vowels in the final stanza in the line:

"Van golven en bergen en heemlen en wolken"
which almost amounts to mirror effect.¹⁾

The final couplet of this stanza seems to provide additional evidence that Verwey was more interested in achieving certain sound effects than in translating the text literally.²⁾

Nevertheless, in spite of some blemishes, a certain increase in power of expression is discernible in this translation.

1) For similar mirror effect see also page 51.

His desire for assonance may also have suggested to Verwey the word "geworpen" in the second line of the final stanza as a translation of "darted".

"Is 't zonlicht geworpen door mist en orkaan".

It is, however, much more prosaic and far less descriptive than the English word "darted":

"The sunlight is darted through vapour and blast".

There is a close parallel in the form of "is ... geworpen", and "is darted", achieved only by the use of a different tense in Dutch. See also page 57.

2) As for example:

"En tyrannen en slaven als schauwen der Nacht
Zijn gelijk in het licht dat de morgen ons bracht."

where, in order to achieve the assonance or near-
assonance, Verwey found it necessary to use a different
construction, which in this case conveys a slightly
different meaning from the original:

"And tyrants and slaves are like shadows of night
In the van of the morning light."

De Twee Geesten Een Allegorie.¹⁾

In this translation of "The Two Spirits" the rhythm bears little resemblance to that of the original, although with few exceptions the lines bear the same number of stresses; Verwey's rhythm is mainly triple rhythm, whereas Shelley's is a mixture of duple and triple in which the duple rhythm predominates. Moreover, Verwey's rhythm is much more regular, verging at times on the monotonous. In the translation the two short lines of each stanza (the fourth and eighth lines) are rhythmically identical throughout the poem. Shelley, however, introduced an element of contrast, contrasting the slow, trochaic rhythm of the First Spirit's stanzas:

"Night is coming"

with the lighter iambic rhythm of the Second Spirit's stanzas:

"And that is day!"

"And make night day"

"Which makes night day".

The rhythm of the Second Spirit's final short line is the same as that of the short lines throughout the translation:

"On high, far away."

Verwey did not follow Shelley's rhyme-scheme exactly although there are indeed points of similarity. All the short lines in the First Spirit's stanzas are identical in the translation, as in the original. The first three short lines in the Second Spirit's stanzas are, as in the original, very similar and have the same rhyme. The fourth short line differs from the other three in content, but whereas

1) For the text of this translation see Appendix page 228

in the original it rhymes with the other three, in the translation it does not.¹⁾ With the exception of the first stanza, which is somewhat irregular, the long lines of the original have a very closely-knit rhyme-scheme: a b a : b a b . This rhyme-scheme was not followed by Verwey in his translation, although the two groups of three long lines in each stanza are still linked by rhyme: a b a : c b c , which is in fact the same as Shelley's rhyme-scheme in the irregular first stanza. The similarity between the "a" and "c" rhymes in the first three stanzas of the translation does, however, help to supply the cohesive effect of Shelley's more closely-knit rhyme-scheme.

The first stanza is on the whole a close translation as far as the meaning of the text is concerned, although there are a few deviations from, and additions to the original text.²⁾

1) It does, however, bear a certain resemblance to the other three in that it also terminates in -g. Compare "dag" and "weg".

2) In the third line, for example:

"Een schaduw rijst op die uw vuurvlucht beteugelt -"
 "beteugelt" does not mean the same as "tracks" in:

"A shadow tracks thy flight of fire -".

The second line:

"Wilt drijven omhoog der Aarde uit 't gezicht"
 is a somewhat clumsy version of the English and also makes unnecessary additions to the text of the line:

"Wouldst float above the earth, beware!"

"Vluchten" in the seventh line:

"Daarheen te rijzen, te zweven, te vluchten"
 is also an unnecessary addition as far as the meaning

Verwey's use of "dreven" for "regions" in the fourth line (in itself one of the most beautiful lines in this translation) enabled him to achieve double rhyme in this and the seventh line:

"Schoon zijn de onzichtbare dreven der luchten" (1.4)

"Daarheen te rijzen, te zweven, te vluchten." (1.7)

The second stanza shows greater freedom in translation.¹⁾

"Het Eeuwig gesternt' ..."

is not a very elegant translation of:

"The deathless stars ..."

although it is quite close to it in meaning. In the third line, however,

"Niets kan de Liefde in mijn harte verdooven"

is farther removed from the English:

"Within my heart is the lamp of love".

The third stanza is closer, but here again there is a certain amount of freedom. In the first two lines of this stanza Verwey followed Shelley's word-order exactly.

"Maar als de stormen van 't duister ontwaken
Hagel en bliksem en regengeplas;"

is concerned of the English line:

"It were delight to wander there - "

- 1) In the second half of this stanza the young translator gave full rein to his own inventiveness:

"En het teedere maanlicht zal lachend me omzweven
En drukken een kus op mijn veedren van goud
De vallende sterren ook zullen me omgeven
En Nacht wordt er dag!"

These lines certainly bear some resemblance to Shelley's lines:

"And the moon will smile with gentle light
On my golden plumes where'er they move;
The meteors will linger round my flight,
And make night day."

but cannot be said to be a translation of them.

yet there is a difference in meaning, for "ontwaken" is intransitive, whereas "waken" is used transitively.

"But if the whirlwinds of darkness waken
Hail, and lightning, and stormy rain;".

This difference may possibly be due to Verwey's misunderstanding the English. But the somewhat clumsy and awkward construction in these lines, with the second line, as it were, in apposition to "de stormen van 't duister" is probably due to the technical difficulties involved in connection with the versification. Nevertheless, "regen-geplas" is somewhat weak as a translation of "stormy rain".¹⁾

In the third line Verwey's inventiveness again led him away from the meaning of the original.

"Zie, de grendels der hemelen schudden en kraken - "
This imagery, however much it may have appealed to the dramatic instinct of the young translator, deviates somewhat from the English:

"See, the bounds of the air are shaken - ".

"Bounds", although certainly restrictive, are not the same as "grendels", which suggest something far more concrete.

In the fifth and sixth lines:

"The red swift clouds of the hurricane
Yon declining sun have overtaken,"

the image of the clouds chasing, eventually catching up with and overtaking the sun, is lost in the translation:

"De vliegende wolken gezweept door de vlagen
Bedekken de zon die aan 't dalen was,"

although this conveys the same meaning as the original.

In the following line:

1) Moreover, abstract nouns formed with "ge-" in Dutch tend to have a pejorative force.

"Hoort ge over de vlakte den hagel niet jagen - " the use of assonance and internal alliteration in "hagel" and "jagen" is also worthy of note, and is comparable to the use of assonance in the English: "hail" and "plain".

The fourth stanza is, with certain exceptions, a reasonably close translation.¹⁾ Two versions exist of the seventh line of this stanza in English:

"My moon-like flight thou then mayst mark" which is the normally accepted reading as published in the Oxford Edition of Shelley's Poetical Works, and also in the Moxon Edition of 1854. The Chatto and Windus Edition of 1875, however, has:

"My moonlight flight thou then mayst mark".

Verwey's translation of this line:

"En ziet dan mijn vlucht boven starrengeflonker" is sufficiently free to make it impossible to determine with any degree of certainty which of these readings he used. The avoidance of the more usual form "sterren" in this line in favour of "starren" is difficult to account for as this was not needed for alliteration or assonance, unless Verwey intended "dan" to be stressed in this line and also in the preceding line:

"Hef dan van uw sluimerende aarde eens uw oog".

It is even possible that "starren" was used to avoid

1) In the second line, however, the future tense in the original:

"I'll sail on the flood of the tempest dark"

is rendered by the present tense in the translation:

"'k Drijf op den stroom van den storm naar omhoog"

which gives a slightly different interpretation.

assonance with "verre" in the following line:

"Omhoog, verre weg".

But "starren" was formerly considered more poetic than "sterren", so this may possibly have influenced Verwey's choice.

The alliterative use of the consonant "d" in the fifth and to a certain extent also in the sixth line is very effective and somewhat reminiscent of Keats.

"En gij, als de duisternis diep is en donker
Hef dan van uw sluimerende aarde eens uw oog".

The opening line of Keats' "Hyperion":

"Deep in the shady sadness of a vale"

made a great impression in Holland in the late nineteenth century. W.W. van Lennep, in the Notes to his own translation of "Hyperion" in 1879 referred to Keats' alliterative use of "d" in this line, and endeavoured to imitate this in his translation:

"Diep in de sombre droefheid van een dal".

Van Lennep's notes on this line from "Hyperion" are quoted by Verwey in "Inleiding tot de Nieuwe Nederlandsche Dichtkunst", first published in 1905. It is improbable that Verwey had read Van Lennep's translation of "Hyperion" when he translated this line from Shelley's poem, for he did not really enter the group or circle of literary friends until after his acquaintance with Willem Kloos in November 1881. It is quite possible, however, that he had by then read Keats' poem in the original. Two years later this line from Keats' "Hyperion" was to find an echo in Verwey's own poem "Persephone".¹⁾

1) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk I p.15

"Diep tussen steilen wanden wond hun weg"

The translation ends here, but some editions, including the Chatto and Windus edition (but not, however, the Moxon edition) print two additional stanzas.

Wat Goeden Nacht! Ach slecht is 't uur.¹⁾

This four-line fragment from "Good Night" comes in the manuscript between the translation of "The Daemon of the World" and the fragment from "Queen Mab". It was therefore presumably written between 10 August (the date of "The Daemon of the World") and 13 August (the date of the translation from "Queen Mab"). The original poem consists of three four-line stanzas, only the first of which is translated.

The rhythm of this translation is very similar to that of the original. The rhyme-scheme, however, is only partly followed. Whereas Shelley's rhyme-scheme is a b a b, the translation has only one rhyme: a b a c. Moreover, the rhyme Verwey omitted, namely the "b" rhyme, is the more important of the two in the original, for it is carried through all three stanzas, thus linking them together.

This fragment is merely described as being "after Shelley", and there are indeed certain differences in thought and meaning between the original and the translation. The second line:

"Dat scheidt wie 't zou vereenen"
seems to point to a misunderstanding of "should" in the original:

"Which severs those it should unite"
and there is also a difference in thought between:

1) For the text of this translation see Appendix page 238

"Let us remain together still,
Then it will be good night"

and:

"Bleef 't samenzijn van eeuwgen duur,
Dan kon 'k dat Goed eerst noemen. - "

Nevertheless, bearing in mind the fact that this makes no claim to being a "translation" it is not without merit.

Tijd.¹⁾

This translation of "Time" does not strictly speaking belong to the "Mijn Lentebloemen" collection, as it is in a separate notebook dated December 1881 and entitled "Poëzie". It was therefore written some five months later than the other lyric translations (with the exception of "Good-night") and four months later than "The Daemon of the World" and the fragment from "Queen Mab".

This is described as "Shelley gevolgd", but as far as the text is concerned it is a close translation. Verwey seems, however, to have poured Shelley's poem into a mould of his own. Instead of Shelley's pentameters Verwey used the Alexandrine with its regular caesura. Instead of finishing the stanza with two short lines of three feet, as in the original, Verwey divided his stanza into two with a three-foot line (now an Alexandrine half-line) after each section. As in the original, the short lines rhyme, thus linking the two sections. This may possibly be in imitation of Shelley for in the original the fifth line, although not a short line, rhymes with the final couplet. The last line of Shelley's poem, moreover, repeats the

1) For text see Appendix page 240

opening phrase: "Unfathomable Sea", which thus acts as a refrain. This is not followed in the translation.

Apart from the fact that the fifth and tenth lines rhyme, there is no resemblance between Verwey's rhyme-scheme and that of the original.

The translation follows the original text closely. In this respect it is perhaps the closest of the early translations.

At first glance:

"Gij kustenlooze vloed, die of gij rijze of dein'
De Sterfelijkheid omsluit"

may seem rather a free translation of:

"Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality!"

"Rijze of dein'" is, after all, not the same as "ebb and flow", yet both describe various, (albeit differing) states of the water, and the connection between them cannot altogether be denied. A more literal translation would, moreover, have resulted in repetition of "vloed", which had already been used as a translation of "flood".¹⁾

- 1) Other deviations, both of which are slight, are: in the seventh line, where "inhospitable shore" was replaced by a descriptive phrase:

"... op 't strand waar geen voor storm kan schuilen"
and in the last three lines, where the order is altered somewhat and the text in part expanded:

"Traacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?"

becomes in Dutch:

"Wie steekt op u, o zee, verraderlijk in rust
Ontzaggelijk in storm, wie steekt zich des bewust
Een veilge haven uit?"

In the last three lines there is a good example of the parallelism and balance so often found in Verwey's poems.

"Wie steekt op u, o zee, verraderlijk in rust
Ontzaggelijk in storm, wie steekt zich des bewust
Een veilge haven uit?"

"Wie steekt op u, o zee" is balanced by "wie steekt zich des bewust" and "verraderlijk in rust" by "ontzaggelijk in storm". This is, as it were, a case of inverted parallelism, with a mirror effect comparable to that referred to on page 51.

In this poem Verwey gave full vent to his apparent predilection for alliteration and assonance.¹⁾ The sixth line:

"En zat van prooie alreê, altijd om meer blijft huilen"
is, moreover, remarkable in that the stressed words bear great resemblance to the actual words in the original:

"And sick of prey, yet howling on for more".

This may be further evidence of Verwey's endeavour in translating the text to reproduce as far as possible the actual sound of the original.

This translation, to a greater extent than the other early translation, is in the traditional style and form of Dutch poetry prior to 1880. It has already been remarked that Verwey in this case did not use the same form as the

1) Striking examples of this are:

"... wier baren jaren zijn"

"... wiens wateren der smarte"

and:

"De wrakken werpt op 't strand waar geen voor storm
kan schuilen"

original.¹⁾ The monotonously regular Alexandrines with regular caesuras and the stiff, elevated style²⁾ are typical of the stereotyped form of poetry against which the "Tachtigers" including Verwey himself, were to react so strongly.

Het Eilandje.³⁾

The translation of "The Isle" is the last of the group of Shelley's lyrics translated by Verwey at this period. Like the preceding translation, it was written after the "Mijn Lentebloemen" collection of poems and translations and is contained in a separate notebook dated December 1881.

This time Verwey followed Shelley's rhyme-scheme but the rhythm bears no resemblance to that of the original.

The translation of this poem was apparently not without difficulty. Much of it is indeed a word for word translation, but the requirements of rhyme sometimes made it necessary to deviate from the original. That these deviations are usually due to rhyme difficulty and not to misunderstanding or faulty reading of the English seems to be evident from the fact that most of them occur at the end of a line rather than in the middle.⁴⁾

1) See page 69

2) As for example: "... wier baren jaren zijn" and:
"Gij Oceaen des Tijds, wiens wateren der smarte".

3) For text see Appendix page 240

4) In the first line, however,

"There was a little lawny islet"

"lawny" is represented very freely by the phrase:
"... met paadjes om in te dolen". The island may possibly have had grass paths, but "lawny" merely suggests that the ground was covered with short smooth

"Waar noch zonne, noch buiige vlagen
De reuzige stammen omjagen"

is rather far removed, however, from Shelley's:

"Where nor sun nor showers nor breeze
Pierce the pines and tallest trees."

Shelley's image is of tree-tops so interwoven that they form a roof which nothing can pierce or penetrate. Verwey appears to have had a different image in mind, which, moreover, conveys a different meaning.

The translation of the ninth and tenth lines appears to have presented some difficulty. The original version:

"En dansenden golven 't omblauwen
Waar de wolken en bergen mee bouwen
Het blauwe vlak van een meer."

apparently did not satisfy Verwey as a translation of:

"Girt by many an azure wave
With which the clouds and mountains pave
A lake's blue chasm."

for the manuscript shows traces of attempted correction. Above the word "bouwen" is written "plaveien", which is

grass, irrespective of any possible paths.

"Die de zomersche luchtjens baren"

is also rather free as a translation of:

"Which the summer's breath enweaves".

A rhyme was necessary for "blaren", however, and the word "baren" seems to have suggested itself to the translator as being the most suitable, combining, as it does, alliteration and assonance.

"Het blauwe vlak van een meer"

in the last line ignores the sense of depth suggested by the word "chasm" in:

"A lake's blue chasm".

certainly nearer to the English "pave" in both sound and meaning. It raised the difficulty of a suitable rhyme word, however, and above the last half of the word "omblauwen" is written "rijen". There is also "van" inserted above and slightly to the right of "waar", but Verwey's final version is uncertain, for, in making these alterations he did not cross out the original.

The effect created by the light lilt of the opening lines of the original and the preponderance of short, light syllables and the alliterating liquid consonants resembles the gentle lapping of waves against the shore of the island. This is entirely missing in the translation.¹⁾

Shelley's poem is a fine and delicately wrought miniature. Its fantasy bears the light touch of an Ariel, such as few poets are capable of emulating. Only Shelley, apparently, could imbue mere words with such lightness that they seem to acquire an ethereal quality. Verwey's translation is, by comparison, heavy and earthbound. It will be remembered that Verwey has also been likened to Ariel, both by Maurits Uyldert and by himself.²⁾ He certainly possessed the power of emulating Ariel's flight in his thought and imagination, but here, at least, he lacked the ability to attach the wings of Ariel to his poetry.³⁾

1) Although there is a certain amount of alliteration and assonance as, for example, in the first line:

"Daar was een eilandje klein ..."

and in the fourth line:

"En zijn dak was bloemen en blaren"

2) See Introduction page 10.

3) See, however, discussion of fragment from "Queen Mab" on page 107

B. Fragments of longer poems

De Demon der wereld.¹⁾

This translation is of the first part of "The Daemon of the World", a revised version of part of Shelley's first long poem "Queen Mab", published with "Alastor" in 1816. A second part was published posthumously in 1876. It is possible, however, that only the first part was known to Verwey at that time, for both his own editions of Shelley's works were prior to 1876.²⁾

The translation is divided into sections corresponding to those in the original as far as the subject matter is concerned.³⁾ These sections, however, do not always contain the same number of lines as those of the original, nor do they have the same metre and rhythm, although there is at times a certain similarity.⁴⁾

The opening section shows very clearly Verwey's pre-occupation with acoustic effect achieved by means of

- 1) For text see Appendix page 230
- 2) In later years he sometimes used his daughter's Oxford 1909 edition of Shelley's Poetical Works, which did contain the second part of "The Daemon of the World".
- 3) In this section references are to the 1875 Chatto and Windus edition of Shelley's works.
- 4) Shelley's first section consists of eight lines without rhyme. In the translation the subject matter is spread over ten lines. Rhythmically both the translation and the original are similar in that both are predominantly iambic, but whereas Shelley used trimeters and pentameters, Verwey's lines are all trimeters, with the exception of the last line, which is an Alexandrine with a caesura.

alliteration, assonance and repetition. In this respect this section does not always imitate the original, for the effect achieved is not always the same. In the first two lines, however, "Death" and "Sleep" are still linked by repetition, although the word repeated is not the same in the Dutch:

"Hoe vreemd toch is de Dood
Hoe vreemd de Slaap, zijn broeder"¹⁾

This repetition of "vreemd" is continued in the last line of this section:

"En toch zoo vluchtig bei, zoo vreemd en wondervol"
where, by linking in this way the first and last lines, it reproduces a similar link to that in the original:

"How wonderful is Death," (l.l.)

"Yet both so passing strange and wonderful!"(l.8)²⁾

"Vreemd" is perhaps an unusual translation for "wonderful" in the first line, stressing as it does a quality inherent in the word, but one which is generally overlooked. Shelley himself used the word "strange" to describe "Death" and "Sleep" in the last line of this section, but by emphasizing the strangeness in preference to the fuller meaning of "wonderful" Verwey somewhat misrepresented

1) Compare:

"How wonderful is Death,
Death and his brother Sleep!"(ll.1-2)

- 2) In this line Verwey appears to have been unfamiliar with the word "passing" in the somewhat archaic phrase "passing strange", where it means "very" or "exceedingly", and not the more usual "fleeting" or "transient" so Verwey's translation of this line deviates somewhat from the actual meaning, although "vluchtig" certainly plays an important part in the balance suggested by the alliteration.

Shelley's attitude of wonder and amazement.

There is a certain amount of sound symbolism in this section of the translation. In so young a poet one hesitates to speak of a conscious use of sound symbolism, but in the preceding translations Verwey had already shown himself to be not indifferent to the effects caused by the sounds, and corrections in his manuscripts are frequently improvements in sound rather than in meaning. The thin, somewhat empty sound of the vowel in "bleek", already anticipated in "vreemd" and "d'een", seems to symbolise Death in its emptiness and lifelessness. In striking contrast to this is the diphthong in "gloeit", which is richer and fuller, and, if such an adjective can be applied to a sound, warmer. The vowel similarity between "gloeit" and "broeder" may possibly be intentional, serving, as it does, to link these two words. The sound sequence of both vowels and consonants in the words: "gloeit", "gelijk" and "licht" is also striking and effective.

The assonance in the line:

"Als 't op de wolken troont"

may have been suggested by the assonance in:

"When throned on ocean's wave". (1.6)

The assonance in:

"En ademt over d'aard"

however, has no corresponding assonance in the original:

"It breathes over the world". (1.7)

This stanza seems to betray here and there Verwey's unfamiliarity with the words translated, as for example:

"Met lippen wassig blauw"

where "wassig" does not translate accurately the English "lurid" in:

"With lips of lurid blue". (1.4)

It is possible that Verwey was led astray here by the image of Death, which suggested to him "wassig" as a description of lips which are lifeless. "Lurid" has indeed several shades of meaning, but it mainly suggests horror or ghastliness. "Wassig" does, however, provide near-*assonance* with "blauw", which may have been intended to correspond to the near-*assonance* in "lurid blue".¹⁾

The second section is longer, being twenty-two lines in the original and twenty-four in the translation. Again Verwey appears to have been unable to fit the subject matter into the same number of lines as the original. Verwey apparently felt under no obligation to keep to the same number of lines as the original if in his opinion the translation could be improved by extending it over a few more lines.²⁾

-
- 1) There is further deviation from the original in the second half of this stanza, yet for no apparent reason. Shelley's image in:

"The other glowing like the vital morn,
When throned on ocean's wave
It breathes over the world"

is changed in the translation to:

"Wijl d'ander gloeit gelijk
Het licht van 't morgenblozen
Als 't op de wolken troont
En ademt over d'aard",

the necessity for which change from wave to clouds is obscure, unless it be in the sound of the word itself.

- 2) In this connection it is interesting to note Verwey's comments on Gosler's translation of Byron's "Manfred", a work Verwey himself also translated in November 1881.

"Het zou dunkt mij beter zijn geweest dat (sic) de

This section, like the first, consists of an arrangement of pentameters and trimeters. The translation is also composed of pentameters and trimeters, but the arrangement differs from that of the original, and the rhythm is more regularly iambic.

There is a certain amount of freedom in the translation of this section. As there is no rhyme this is not due to difficulty in finding the necessary rhyme words but in some cases appears to indicate a preference for the sound of the word chosen.¹⁾

In:

"Wiens golvenlijn als marmer schoon, ..."

"golvenlijn" is an unusual translation for "outline" in:

"Whose outline is as fair as marble ..." (1.16)

The "outline" is presumably that of the "divinest form" but "golvenlijn" seems to suggest some connection with the "dark streams" of the preceding line:

vertaler zich hier niet zoo strikt aan hetzelfde getal verzen gehouden had."

("Het weekblad Amsterdam", 14 May 1882)

It has not been possible to find a copy of "De Groene Amsterdamer" (the periodical referred to) for 14 May 1882. The above is therefore quoted from the manuscript. (The year 1882 appears to be missing from the archives.)

- 1) "'t Zwakste hart" is not the same as "the lightest heart" (1.22). "Zwak", however, was probably preferred for its assonance with "hart" and also for its alliteration with "zedeles".

"Waar 't zwakste hart een zedeles uit trekt".

The near-asonance and alliteration in "dons-gewiekte droomen" in the following line may have influenced Verwey in his choice of "droomen" as a translation for "slumbers" in the phrase: "downy-winged slumbers".

"Als donkere stroomen zijn in velden sneeuw".

In "van licht en leven ver", as a translation of "far from noise and day" (1.28) the freedom again appears to be due to Verwey's delight in alliteration. Although a somewhat free translation, it does not deviate to any great extent from Shelley's meaning, and is not without beauty. The necessity for "'t Westerland", in the same line, as a translation of "western cave" is difficult to understand, unless this is another example of sound prevailing over sense, or literal meaning. "Westerland" continues the alliteration in "licht en leven", and there is also effective assonance in "ver" and "wester-":

"Van licht en leven ver, in 't Westerland".

"Met zacht gestuwden wind" in the next line, although perhaps not a literal translation of "with soft and pausing winds" (1.29) is nevertheless a felicitous one, conveying as it does both the rhythm and the sense of the original.

In the last line of this section:

"Vreesachtig schuilen gaan"

is rather surprising. There is nothing in the original to suggest that there was anything "vreesachtig" or timorous about the "downy-winged slumbers" in their retirement to "some western cave" at daybreak.

"Will they, when morning's beam
Flows through those wells of light,
Seek far from noise and day some western cave,
Where woods and streams with soft and pausing winds
A lulling murmur weave?-" (11.26-30)

Abundant use is made of alliteration, internal alliteration and assonance. Several cases have already been mentioned. Alliteration and assonance used to link

two words is to be found in the first line:

"Heeft dan 't Geraamt' dat in de vunze graven"

where it corresponds to a similar use in the original:

"Hath then the iron-sceptred Skeleton
Whose reign is in the tainted sepulchres". (11.9-10)

There is also effective use of internal alliteration and near-assonance in the line:

"Wiens âren van szuur".

After the two introductory sections the reader is now introduced to the sleeping Ianthe.

In this section Verwey included two lines of four feet in the arrangement of pentameters and trimeters. Both the translation and the original are strongly iambic in rhythm, but the rhythm of the translation is more regular.¹⁾

The slumbrous effect of the regular rhythm, suggestive of the steady breathing of the sleeping maiden, is enhanced at times by the sound of the words. That this was not always equally successful, as for example in the last four lines,²⁾ must undoubtedly be ascribed to Verwey's extreme

1) Compare, for example:

"Ianthe slaapt den slaap,
Den stillen doodslaap niet;
En ook hoort Henry niet,
In 't maanverlicht vertrek,
't Geregeld kloppen van haar polsen;"

and:

"Ianthe doth not sleep
The dreamless sleep of death:
Nor in her moonlight chamber silently
Doth Henry hear her regular pulses throb" (11.31-34)

2)

"Haar gouden lokken dekken
Dien boezem onbevlekt,
Als woekerplanten ranken
Om marmaren zuilenschaft. - "

youth and inexperience at the time. Very felicitous in its acoustic effect is the line:

"In wisseling van tint het maanlicht tarten"

where the light vowels and sharp light consonants combine to create an impression of light playfulness, in momentary contrast to the slumbrous effect of the surrounding lines.

It has been rightly observed:

"An honest translation cannot help being more explicit than the original, thinner in texture, more intellectual (and less sensual) because more explanatory ..."1)

This is particularly true of this section, where instead of:

"... mock the broad moon,
Outwatching weary night,
Without assured reward." (11.36-38)

the translation has:

"... het maanlicht tarten,
Dat d'uitgeputten nacht
Doorwaakt, van dank noch loon verzekerd."

and in the place of:

"Her dewy eyes are closed;" (1.39)

has:

"Haar oogen, rein als dauw zijn zachtgeloken;".

There is but one slight deviation from the original in this section, where in the second line:

"Den stillen doodslaap ..."

although similar, is not the same as:

"The dreamless sleep of death:" (1.32)

The reason for this deviation may possibly lie in the alliteration. In Shelley's line the alliteration is

1) The Times Literary Supplement, August 13, 1954, p.509
Front Page Article.

spaced to give a balanced line. A literal translation: "Droomloze doodslaap", would have been ugly in its jerky piling up of the alliteration. In Verwey's line the internal alliteration is better spaced and more balanced.

The calm peacefulness is disturbed in the fourth section when the approach of the Daemon of the World is heralded.

The translation bears great rhythmic resemblance to the original here. Verwey once more included tetrameters, but so in this stanza did Shelley. The first line is interesting rhythmically. Originally Verwey's line had the same number of syllables as Shelley's line, but was a regular iambic trimeter.

"Maar hoor! van waar die toon?"

Shelley's line, however, began with two consecutive stressed syllables:

"Hark! whence that rushing sound?"(1.48)

thus making a four-stress line, followed by an iambic tetrameter (1.49). By the addition of an extra "van waar" Verwey, with his apparent preference for regular rhythm, changed his three-stress line into a four-stress line, an iambic tetrameter matching his own and also Shelley's second line.

"Maar hoor! van waar van waar die toon?"

't Is als een tooverklank die om" 1)

This section repeatedly deviates from the meaning of the original. Did the translator perhaps find it too

1) Compare:

"'Tis like a wondrous strain that sweeps"(1.49)

difficult to fit a literal translation into the rhythmic pattern? Or did he perhaps choose to deviate from the original in order to achieve certain acoustic effects? An examination of the deviations seems to suggest that some of them at least were due to acoustic considerations. In the second and third lines, for example:

"'t Is als een tooverklank die om
Een stomme bouwval trilt."

both "stomme" and "trilt" are metaphors introduced by Verwey. They do not appear in the original.¹⁾ Yet both words help to form a harmony of sound comparable to that of the English, whether this was intentional on the part of the translator or not.²⁾

In the following lines the translation is more explicit than the original.

"Hij 's wilder nog dan d'ongedwongen noten
Die van d'onzichtbre harpen vloeien
Van hol en rotsenkloof,
Besnaard door storm en onweergeesten."

The English is more concise:

"'Tis wilder than the unmeasured notes
Which from the unseen lyres of dells and groves
The geni of the breezes sweep." (ll. 53-55)³⁾

-
- 1) "'Tis like a wondrous strain that sweeps
Around a lonely ruin." (ll. 49-50)
 - 2) Compare for example the alliteration in "tooverklank" and "trilt" with that in "strain" and "sweeps"; also the vowel harmony in "toover-" - "om" - "stomme" - "bouwval" with that in "wondrous" - "around" - "lonely ruin".
 - 3) Moreover, this passage contains several slight deviations from the meaning of the original. The "notes" do not "flow", they are "swept" or borne by the "geni of the breezes". Furthermore, the "harps" or "lyres" are not "strung" by the "geni of the breezes". They may possibly be played by them, or the "geni" may possibly be the bearers of the "notes" played by some unseen hand. The "geni of the breezes" moreover, do not necessarily suggest "storm en onweergeesten".

"Van hol en rotsenkloof"

conveys a totally different impression, both in sound and in meaning, from the verdant "dells and groves" of the original. Yet a certain acoustic effect is unmistakable, the vowels in "hol" - "rots-" - "kloof" suggesting a hollow echoing as in a rocky cave, and this may well have seemed of greater importance to Verwey at that time than a more accurate reproduction of the sense and sound of the original. For it must be remembered that these early translations are frequently in the nature of experiments in which Verwey tried out and practised various effects.¹⁾ As a translation of Shelley's "dells and groves" this line falls short, but as an example of an original image supported by descriptive acoustic effect it is not without merit.

The last six lines contain additions to Shelley's image.

"Hij rust daar: licht gelijk een wolk
Die 't fijnste purpertintje ontvangt der zon,
Als de avond 't duister wijkt,
Doch schitterend ook gelijk dat veedrig kleed
Als gulden sterren door
Zijn vluchtig weefsel schijnen."²⁾

The idea of definite colour in the phrase "'t fijnste purpertintje" is absent in the English "the palest tinge of day"; likewise in "gulden sterren" where the English merely has "stars". The colour gold seems to be inseparable from Verwey's image of stars, for both here and in the following

1) See also page 17.

2) "Its shape reposed within: slight as some cloud
That catches but the palest tinge of day
When evening yields to night,
Bright as that fibrous woof when stars indue
Its transitory robe." (ll.59-63)

stanza:

"Een goudbesterde roede zwaaiend'"

he added this indication of colour to Shelley's image.¹⁾

"Licht" is not a very close translation of "slight", but this may have been chosen for a purpose. In the English the two qualities attributed to the Daemon are connected by rhyme: "Slight as some cloud...", "Bright as that fibrous woof ...". This may possibly be accidental, but it is certainly effective. In the translation these do not rhyme but they are still linked by assonance: "licht gelijk een wolk ...", "Doeh schittrend ook gelijk dat veedrig kleed." It is difficult to say, however, whether this is conscious or unconscious use.

The fifth section describes the arrival of the Daemon and his discovery of the sleeping Ianthe.

This passage of the translation is composed predominantly of tetrameters, unlike the original which has greater variety. The rhythm also differs from that of the original in that it is almost entirely iambic, whereas Shelley's rhythm is more varied.

The translation has two rhymes: "vlucht" - "lucht", "gehoord" - "gestoord", and one impure rhyme: "menschenoeren" - "lentegeuren" - "voeren" in this stanza. These may be accidental as there is nothing comparable in the original.²⁾

The translation of this stanza is more explanatory than the original, particularly in the last five lines which were apparently needed to translate the last three lines of

1) This may possibly be under the influence of poetic usage prior to 1880.

2) But see also page 87.

Shelley's stanza.

"En nimmer hebben menschenooren
Zoo zoeten toonendans gehoord,
Als daar als jonge lentegeuren,
Den kamer door ten hemel voeren,
Door 't zilvren maanlicht niet gestoord."

The last two lines in particular are also rather far removed from the meaning of the original:

"Such sounds as breathed around like odorous winds
Of wakening spring arose
Filling the chamber and the moonlight sky." (ll.75-77)

That this freedom in translating the last two lines was not due to Verwey's misunderstanding of the English is clear from the original version of these lines of the translation which read:

"Den kamer en den hemel vulden
Den hemel, waar het maanlicht scheen."

It is not certain whether these lines were revised merely because Verwey felt them to be weak, or because he wished to introduce rhyme in the last four lines of this stanza to provide the transition from the unrhymed stanzas to the rhymed stanzas which now follow. The original has no such transition.

The sixth section is in the form of a song of five rhymed stanzas sung or spoken by the Daemon.

Verwey did not follow Shelley's rhyme-scheme exactly in this song, although his rhyme-scheme is sometimes similar to Shelley's.¹⁾ The second, third and fourth

1) All Verwey's stanzas, like Shelley's, end in a rhyming couplet, but the rhyme-scheme of the preceding quatrain varies in the translation. The quatrains of the first two stanzas rhyme a b b a, the third: a b a b, which is the same as Shelley's rhyme-scheme for all the stanzas; the fourth: a a b b, and the fifth: (again like Shelley's rhyme-scheme) a b a b.

stanzas of the translation are linked by rhyme, but this may or may not be intentional.¹⁾ The regular iambic rhythm greatly resembles that of the original and frequently where inversion occurs in the first foot in Shelley's lines similar inversion is to be found in the translation.

The translation of this song does not appear to have been without difficulty. There are several deviations from the meaning of the original and also passages where the Dutch is obscure. In the third stanza Verwey gave up altogether, apparently being unable to understand the English, as the pencilled words: "niet begrepen" at the end of the quatrain and in place of the final couplet seem to indicate.

In the second line of the first stanza:

"Vouwt in den schaduw harer veeren"

the vowel harmony and alliteration are pleasing, although there is nothing comparable in the original:

"Beneath the shadow of her wings" (1.79)

The parallelism in the final couplet is also effective:

"Gevoelens tuk u te verraân
Gedachtevlammen die vergeen."

but has no counterpart in the original:

"Feelings that lure thee to betray
And light of thoughts that pass away." (11.78-83)

The correction of the third line from:

"Alwat uw Geest uit hooger sferen"

to:

"Al wat uit hooger hemelsferen"

is yet another indication of Verwey's preoccupation with

1) The same rhyme is used for the final couplets of the second and fourth stanzas and for the second rhyme of the quatrain of the third stanza.

acoustic effect achieved by means of alliteration and assonance, whether a similar effect exists in the original or not.

The second stanza of the song is very freely translated, either because Verwey did not fully understand the English or because he was unable to translate it more accurately within the pattern of rhyme and metre by which he was bound. The first and last lines are fairly closely translated, but the image in the remaining lines is replaced by another, which appears to be somewhat obscure.

"Wat duister is den wijsten Dichter
 Worde in uw ziel als loonend richter
 Van eigen majesteit gegrift,
 In reiner stoffe neergeleid,
 Van zichvergetende eenzaamheid"¹⁾

It is difficult to understand how:

"In reiner stoffe neergeleid"

could be considered a translation of:

"Entranced in some diviner mood". (1.88)

The third stanza is incomplete. Apparently Verwey did not understand the final couplet and was therefore unable to translate it. The quatrain, however, is quite an accurate translation.²⁾

1) "The truths which wisest poets see
 Dimly, thy mind may make its own,
 Rewarding its own majesty,
 Entranced in some diviner mood
 Of self-oblivious solitude" (11.85-89)

2) Although the action inherent in "ontgloeit" in the third line:

"Als 't zonlicht rein en warm ontgloeit gij"
 is not present in the English "burnest":

"Ardent and pure as day thou burnest".(1.92)

The alliteration in:

"Uw hart's van haat en vrees bevrijd"

is similar to that in:

"From hate and awe thy heart is free" (l.91)

The spacing of Shelley's alliteration, however, gives a more balanced line.

The fourth stanza is a close translation of the text,¹⁾ although there is a slight syntactical difference in the fifth line between:

"... de slang der Eeuwigheid"

and:

"... the vast snake Eternity" (l.100)

In the first two lines there is effective use of assonance linking the principal words: "alleenig" and "verheven geest".

"Aan u alleenig zij 't daarom,
Verheven geest! van 't heiligdom".

The fifth and last stanza of the Daemon's song follows quite closely the pattern of the original.

The rhythm of the seventh section is predominantly iambic and several lines are purely iambic. The translation, however, is even more regular in rhythm, being in fact entirely iambic. It follows the pattern of the

1) The idea of worship, however, in:

"Where gods and fiends in worship bend" (l.97)

is less obvious in the translation:

"Waar Goden nevens duivlen bukken"

where "buigen" or "nederbuigen" would have been better, but "bukken" was obviously needed for the rhyme.

original with the exception of the last three lines, which are shorter.

This section has several deviations from and additions to the meaning of the original.

In the first line:

"'t Verstomde en van dat lichaam stom en koud"

"dat lichaam stom en koud" suggests death rather than sleep, which is all that is implied by Shelley's "mute and moveless frame" (1.108). The alliteration, which is almost repetition, in "verstomde" and "stom", moreover, seems to suggest a link between "it ceased" (referring to the sound, or the voice) and the "mute and moveless frame", which does not in fact exist.¹⁾

The first two lines of the eighth section are somewhat similar rhythmically to the original but the first line of the translation is one foot longer. The section itself is in fact longer than Shelley's section.

There are some deviations from the meaning of the original,²⁾ and in the first line an unnecessary addition,

1) Furthermore, "koud" does not really translate "moveless". Another deviation occurs in the third line,

"In naakte reinheid als volkomen schoon"

where the meaning of Shelley's line is altered somewhat by the addition of "als".

"All beautiful in naked purity" (1.110)

2) "Hun teedre vleugelen" does not translate "their prismatic wings" (1.117). "Prismatic" suggests the shape and also the transparent quality of the wings. They are referred to earlier as: "wings of braided air" (1.67)

There is also an addition to the original in:

"De nacht was godlijkschoon".

It does not, however, alter the meaning of the

"tokklend",

"Gehoorzaam op den toon van 't zwevend tokklend lied" without which it would have been rhythmically identical with the original and also nearer to it in meaning.

"Obedient to the sweep of aëry song". (1.115)

Was Verwey thinking perhaps of the

"... unmeasured notes

Which from the unseen lyres of dells and groves

The geni of the breezes sweep." (11.53-55)

mentioned earlier in the poem? Here, however, the music is described as "aëry song". Or is this another of Verwey's experiments with words and sounds?

In the second and third lines:

"Ontplooiden de eeuwge geesten
Hun teedre vleugelen"

"eeuwge geesten" does not strictly translate "mighty ministers" in Shelley's lines:

"The mighty ministers

Unfurl'd their prismy wings" (11.116-117)

It does, however, provide assonance to correspond to Shelley's alliteration, and presumably the "mighty ministers" referred to are also "eternal spirits". The translation misses, however, the full import of the word "minister", meaning a servant. The "mighty ministers" are the powerful spirits or shadows drawing the Daemon's chariot. They are therefore "mighty" but are at the same time in the service

original: "The night was fair ..." (1.119) to any extent.

There is a further deviation in "bedekte" as a translation for "studded" in:

"... innumerable stars

Studded heaven's dark blue vault". (11.119-120)

of the Daemon.

Verwey's original version of the next line:

"De tooverkar ging voort"

was a literal translation of Shelley's line:

"The magic car moved on"(l.118)

but was later altered to read:

"Voort ging de tooverwagen".

When this line is repeated later in the poem,¹⁾ it was translated as:

"De tooverkar ging voort"

in which the original version was allowed to stand unaltered. In the original there is a sequel in the line:

"The magic car no longer moved".(l.229)

but this last line was not translated. Verwey therefore seems to have taken pains to avoid the repetition:

"The magic car moved on"(ll.118, 123 and 159)

The ninth section of Shelley's poem was not translated, possibly owing to its difficulty. It is a passage in which Shelley gives full rein to his imagination. The young translator was probably unable to follow Shelley in his flight of fancy, or, if able to follow him, was unable to recapture the imagery in his own tongue. The pencilled comment: "Zie bijliggend stukje", in the margin at this point seems to suggest that possibly some attempt was made, but so far no trace has been found of the enclosure referred to.

The rhythm of the tenth section bears striking resemblance to that of the original. The text itself,

1) Lines 123 and 159, but line 123 was not translated.

however, deviates occasionally from the meaning.¹⁾

"De trillende Oceaen" in the third line deviates greatly from Shelley's "tremendous Ocean" in meaning. (l.135) Was Verwey perhaps playing with words here when he translated "tremendous" according to its Latin etymology rather than its English meaning? Another possible reason for this deviation may have been the striking assonance it provided, linking the "trillende Oceaen" with its "stille spiegel" in the following line. There is no such link in the original, although the image of the "broad and silent mirror" is linked with that of the "pale and waning stars" by the assonance in "gave", "pale" and "waning".

"Its broad and silent mirror gave to view
The pale and waning stars," (ll.136-137)

In the translation this link is even closer:

"Zijn breede en stille spiegel kaatste zwijgend
De bleeke sterren weer."

Another possible indication that the link between the "trillende Oceaen" and the "stille spiegel" was intended is the fact that "silent" (l.136) is actually translated twice: by "stille" and by "zwijgend".²⁾

1) In the first line:

"Ver, ver beneên des wagens stormenvaart"

"stormenvaart" is not the same in meaning as "stormy path" in Shelley's line:

"Far, far below the chariot's stormy path." (l.133)

but it resembles it greatly acoustically.

2) The possibility that "trillende" was merely an incorrect translation of "tremendous" cannot, however, be ruled out altogether.

The rhythm of the eleventh section is more regular in its irregularity, paradoxical though this may sound, than that of the original. It is as if, having discovered Shelley's rhythmic motif of three unstressed syllables in succession in the second line:

"Through the abyss of an immense concave" (l.143)

Verwey took pains to use this motif wherever possible.

The translation of this section is fairly close, although it is doubtful whether

"Met schaduwten getint oneindger kleuren"

is a true translation of:

"... tinged

With shades of infinite colour" (ll.144-145)

"Shades" is indeed used archaically and poetically in the sense of "shadows" but in this case Shelley was undoubtedly using it in the sense of "degrees or gradations of colour".

Unlike many of Verwey's sections in this translation, the twelfth is very similar in shape to the original, although it does not resemble it rhythmically. Apart from a few minor deviations¹⁾ the translation is a faithful rendering of the English.

The combination of alliteration and assonance and

1) The "shadowy" element in:

"... earth

Appear'd a vast and shadowy sphere. ..." (ll.150-151)

is omitted in the translation:

"... en d'aarde scheen

Een uitgestrekte sfeer..."

The image of the ship's prow cleaving the water in:

"Whose rays of rapid light

Parted around the chariot's swifter course

rhythm in the first two lines of this section:

"De lichtgewiekte schauwen schenen
Spoed te vergaren bij het naadren van hun doel"

is successful in conveying an impression of acceleration comparable to that in the original.¹⁾ The unusual expression "spoed te vergaren" in the second line is undoubtedly an anglicism, the use of which was probably due, in part at least, to Verwey's wish to introduce assonance into this line.

In the thirteenth section the translation and the original are very similar rhythmically in that both are predominantly iambic. The shape of the Dutch section, however, is quite different from that of the original. By using five regular iambic tetrameters in succession, identical in rhythm (with the exception of the fourth line which was a feminine ending) Verwey produced a somewhat monotonous effect, which was avoided in the original where Shelley used greater variety.

The last line of this section:

"Die niet één oogenblik dezelfde was"²⁾

And fell like ocean's feathery spray
Dash'd from the boiling surge
Before a vessel's prow." (ll.154-158)

is lost when "parted" is rendered by "dreven" and these lines are further translated:

"... wier snelle stralen
Om den nog sneller loop van 't voertuig dreven
En vielen als 't geveederd schuim der waatren
Dat afspringt van de baar
En 's vaartuigs steven lekt."

- 1) Compare: "As they approached their goal,
The winged shadows seemed to gather speed" (ll.148.
-149)
- 2) "En bollen ongeteld,
Een glorie om zich spreidden
Die niet één oogenblik dezelfde was."

although in itself a literal translation of "ever varying"¹⁾ is not the only possible one, and is in fact misleading. It is possible that Shelley was thinking of the infinite variety in the glory diffused by the different spheres. Thus the variety need not be, as in Verwey's reading, a constant changing in the glory itself, but may represent a difference in the glory diffused by the various spheres.

There are certain weaknesses in the fourteenth section. In the sixth line, for example, the use of the past tense "gloorde":

"... andre
Verspreidden helder licht als Hesperus
Terwijl de zee in 't wijkend zonlicht gloorde."

instead of the present as in Shelley's "glows":

"... some did shed
A clear mild beam like Hesperus, while the sea
Yet glows with fading sunlight; ..." (ll.168-170)

appears to alter the meaning. The use of the same tense in "gloorde" as in "verspreidden" is at best ambiguous and appears to suggest a connection between these verbs which is not present in the original, where "glows" is contemporary with a repetition of the verb "shed" (in the present tense) which is understood but not expressed. In other words: "some shed a clear mild beam such as Hesperus sheds while the sea is still glowing with the fading sunlight." The translation seems to convey the impression that "some shed a light like Hesperus, while, at the same time, the sea glowed in the fading sunlight."

The last line appears to be a deviation from or a misunderstanding of the English.

1) "And countless spheres diffused
An ever varying glory." (ll.164-165)

"Ook eengen schenen, sterren,
En waar de wagen kwam
Werd alle licht verduisterd. - "

This is not quite the same as the English:

"Some shone like stars, and as the chariot pass'd
Bedimm'd all other light."

It is the "countless spheres" with their diffusion of "an ever varying glory" now referred to as shining "like stars" which "bedim all other light", not, as the Dutch would seem to suggest, the chariot. The significance of the phrase "as the chariot pass'd" lies in the fact that this "sight of wonder" is described from the point of view of the occupants of the chariot.

In the fifteenth section the poet turns from his narrative to address the Spirit of Nature. Here the translation and the original are similar in rhythm and in shape. Even the repetition in the fifth and fourteenth lines¹⁾ and the partial repetition in the first and twelfth lines:

"Spirit of Nature! here" (l.175)

"Spirit of Nature! thou" (l.186)

is followed in the translation:

"Geest der Nature! hier"

"Geest der Natuur! o, gij".

There is effective use of assonance in:

"Geest der Natuur! o, gij,

Als dit verheven schouwspel, eeuwig"

the assonance in "geest", "verheven" and "eeuwig" forming

1) "Here is thy fitting temple" (ll.179 and 188)

"Hier is uw heilige tempel!"

"Heilige" is not the same as "fitting" in Shelley's line, but was probably chosen for its alliteration.

a link, as it were, between the "spirit of Nature", addressed in this stanza, and the "sight of wonder" described in the preceding stanza. This is indeed suggested by the words themselves, but the assonance serves to underline the meaning. This device was not used by Shelley in these lines, the "sight of wonder" of the preceding stanza now being referred to as "this glorious scene".

The sixteenth section is much longer and takes the form of an aside or remark in parenthesis addressed to the reader. Here again the translation bears some resemblance to the original in shape and rhythm.

There are some cases of free translation, but for the most part this section is a fairly accurate rendering of the original.¹⁾ The following passage:

"Al wat des menschen geest tot stand kan brengen,
 't zij lieflijk of verheven,
 Om 't samenstel eens tempels opterichten,
 Noch iets van d'aard vermag een schaduw slechts
 Te zijn dier majesteit."

appears to misconstrue the English, however, conveying the exact opposite to:

"The elements of all that human thought
 Can frame of lovely or sublime, did join
 To rear the fabric of the fane, nor aught
 Of earth may image forth its majesty." (11.217-220)

1) The imagery and degree of personification in:

"And yet there is a moment
 When the sun's highest point
 Peers like a star o'er ocean's western edge" (11.201-203)
 is lost in the translation, which, although close in meaning, is considerably weaker in imagery.

"En nog is daar een oogenblik,
 Als 't hoogste punt des Dags,
 Gelijk een ster den westerzooom der zee
 Bestraalt; ..."

"Peer" may possibly have proved the stumbling block here

Possibly "nor aught" proved misleading here, as its literal translation does not in this case render the actual meaning.

The reason for the use of the plural noun "welfsels" as a translation of the singular "dome" in the original is obscure.¹⁾

"Zijn welfsels van azuur;".

It is, moreover, difficult to imagine a night sky with more than one "dome". Verwey may possibly have preferred the plural in this case for the close parallel it forms with the preceding line:

"Zijn vloeren schittrend licht".

The use of assonance here in "schittrend" and "licht" is worthy of note and is undoubtedly an attempt to reproduce the effect of the alliteration in the original ("floors" - "flashing" and internal alliteration in "light") where the parallel, however, is not so close.

"Dien stikdonkren afgrond" is somewhat strong as a translation of "that obscure abyss" (1.225) and an "obscure abyss" need not necessarily be "pitch dark".²⁾

In this section there is again very frequent use of alliteration and assonance,³⁾ as for example in:

"Als Eenzaamheid ooit naar de kust der zee
Der ongemeetne, uw stap heeft heengeleid"

where the assonance in "Eenzaamheid", "zee", "ongemeetne", "heengeleid" serves to link these words and with them the

- 1) "Its floors of flashing light,
Its vast and azure dome;" (11.223-224)
- 2) The word "stikdonker", moreover, is ill-suited to the style of this passage.
- 3) In: "Als gitten rots er trotsend", the assonance and internal alliteration in "rots" and "trotsend" almost amount to repetition.

ideas they represent. In the original the link is shown partly by assonance ("led" - "steps" - "immeasurable") and partly by alliteration. ("solitude" - "steps" - "shore" - "see")

"If solitude hath ever led thy steps
To the shore of the immeasurable see" (ll.189-190)

The alliteration in:

"Hoog boven 't brandend diep"

is also worthy of mention. Not only does the alliteration correspond to Shelley's alliteration in:

"Above the burning deep" (l.200),

but the same consonant is used. Moreover, the sequence of consonants used in this line is very similar to that found in the English line.

Between this long section and the nineteenth and final section, which is approximately the same length, come two shorter sections, of which only the second (the eighteenth) was translated.

The meaning is more or less accurately reproduced here¹⁾ and the rhythm bears some resemblance in places to Shelley's rhythm, yet the general effect is different in that it is more explanatory than the original. Shelley's short

1) Although it is doubtful whether the fifteenth line of the translation:

(En iedre (sic) volgde d'eigen baan

.....

Welsprekend stil door 't ruim der heemlen)

Naar 't nimmer wijkend, wachtend doel"

renders accurately the meaning of:

"Each with undeviating aim

(In eloquent silence through the depths of space
Pursued its wondrous way. -)" (ll.250-252)

pregnant statements are replaced by longer drawn out descriptive passages. Instead of Shelley's graphic conciseness:

"Unending orbs mingled in mazy motion" (l.244)
the translation, which is spread over two lines, is purely descriptive:

"Verwarden zich de kronkelbanen,
Van bollen, zonder naam of tal"¹⁾

The idea behind "mingled in mazy motion" is suggested in the translation by what one can perhaps term "mingled assonance". ("Verwarden" - "tal", "kronkelbanen" - "zonder naam" - "bollen").

The nineteenth and last section is written predominantly in iambic pentameters, a metre in which Verwey no doubt felt quite at home, and bears some resemblance to the original.

Here we see the Shelley of the Gothic romances, the Shelley of the horror stories, "Zastrozzi" and "St. Irvyne". With apparent delight he seems to revel in his descriptions, dwelling on each sordid detail. Verwey appears to have had some difficulty in following Shelley in his orgy of horror, and there are some deviations from the original,²⁾

1) "Immutably fulfilling
Eternal Nature's law." (ll.245-246)

is also more concise and graphic than the translation which is longer and more prosaic.

"Die onveranderd, d'eeuwge wet
Vervulden, door natuur gegeven."

2) "Zij bouwden ook tropheeën, marteltuig"

"Marteltuig" is not the same as "instruments of murder" in:

"And they did build vast trophies, instruments
Of murder, ..." (ll.263-264)

some details omitted¹⁾ and explanatory passages inserted which weaken the effect of Shelley's outburst, in some cases even misconstruing his meaning.

In:

"Der menschen hoop ten vloek, als hel en hemel
Vereend, ter dood de wereld overstromen:"

"vereend" is not a translation of "confounded" in:

"Blasting the hopes of men, when heaven and hell
Confounded burst in ruin o'er the world." (ll.261-262)

It is possible that Verwey was led astray here by the Latin verb "confundo", which can be used in this sense. The English verb "confound" does not have this meaning.²⁾

1) The force of Shelley's paradox:

"... and false looks
Of true submission ..." (ll.278-279)

is lost by the omission of "true" in the translation:

".... in 't oog
Den valschen blik der onderwerping ..."

"... wasr
De reine geest bedaard en zeker stond,"

lacks the full force of Shelley's:

"... where the pure Spirit,
Serene and inaccessibly secure,
Stood. ..." (ll.285-287)

There is also a slight difference in the last line between:

"Noodzaaklijkheid in eeuwge harmonie. - "

and:

"Necessity's unchanging harmony." (l.291)

2) For another example of translation of the Latin etymology rather than the English meaning of a word of Latin origin see also page 94.

Only half the line:

"... (and towers of skulls)
With sightless holes gazing on blinder heaven" (l.266)

is translated by:

"... doodshoofden
Met holten zonder licht.... "

Alterations in the manuscript show that Verwey considered "ooge" as an alternative to "light" but then reverted to his original choice.

In spite of certain weaknesses this translation of "The Daemon of the World" succeeds for the most part in conveying the meaning of the original, although in so doing it inevitably becomes more explanatory and less concise. Acoustic effect seems frequently to have been considered of paramount importance and (in the eyes of the translator) to justify deviation from the meaning of the original. The use of alliteration and assonance, whether in an attempt to reproduce the effect of the original or to create an effect of Verwey's own, is too frequent and at times too successful to be merely accidental. It can therefore be assumed that many deviations were indeed intentional. The style is frequently forced and unnatural.¹⁾ This may be due in some degree to the strong influence of the traditional style of Dutch poetry prior to 1880, particularly that of Potgieter, for whom and for whose work Verwey had great admiration. Verwey's own style was to become more natural in his later poems, but at this stage it still tended at times to be a clumsy imitation of Potgieter. This is less noticeable in the lyrics and in the lyric fragment

1) Shelley's own style in this poem, however, is not entirely free from these defects.

from "Queen Mab", which will be discussed next.

Fragment uit Queen Mab.¹⁾

The last of these early translations is of a passage from "Queen Mab", the first thirty-three lines of section IV. This passage, although part of Shelley's first long poem, published as early as 1813 when he was 21, is nevertheless of remarkable beauty. There is a harmony of sound which sets the tone of the passage and forms a descriptive background for the words. This is a good example of unity of sound and sense. The calm, still background of sound and rhythm, so suited to the first part of this passage, where the night itself is described, changes in the second part with the coming of morning, gradually working up to the storm. It is a passage that would readily appeal to a young poet in the early stages of his worship of beauty, and is in striking contrast to the previous poem translated ("The Daemon of the World") both in subject matter and in treatment. Instead of the concentration of horror, as in the last section of "The Daemon of the World", there is now, at least in the first part of this passage, beauty and peace.

This passage falls naturally into five verse paragraphs: lines 1-8; 8-15; 15-19; 19-25; 25-33; the divisions falling in every case in the middle of a line. This is reflected to a certain extent in the translation, where the sections are: lines 1-9; 9-17; 18-22; 22-29; 29-36. Apart from the division after the second section (ll.9-17) which comes at the end of a line, all the divisions fall (as in the original) in the middle of a line. As in "Tijd" (see page 69) Verwey poured his material into a mould of

1) For text see Appendix page 238

his own and the translation has thirty-six lines instead of the thirty-three in the original.

This is without doubt the most successful of Verwey's early translations, reaching at times a degree of beauty of which surely even the later Verwey need not have been ashamed. As is only to be expected, however, it has some weaknesses.

The translation, which is dated 13th August 1881, is written predominantly in regular iambic pentameters. Shelley's rhythm, on the other hand, is varied in such a way that it does not obtrude, thus fitting into the general harmony of the passage. There are also some deviations from the original. In most cases, however, the difference in meaning is slight, and the word used was obviously preferred for its sound and the general effect in its context¹⁾

1) An example of this is to be found in the line:

"Zij allen vormen saam een paradijs
(Waar mijmerende Eenzaamheid welgaarn haar ziel
Zou heffen ...)"

where "paradijs" is an addition by the translator. The original merely speaks of a "scene".

"... all form a scene
Where musing solitude might love to lift
Her soul..." (ll.15-17)

The word "paradijs", however, apart from the meaning it conveys, has an important contribution to make towards the sound pattern of its immediate surroundings. By repeating the vowel of "saam" it indicates a connection between these two words. It is also linked by assonance to "mijmerende" in the following line.

The sound of the word itself and also its assonance with "gemanteld" may also have influenced the choice of "blanke" in:

"Gemanteld in een kleed van blanke sneeuw"
as a translation for "untrodden" in:

The rhythm and use of assonance, particularly of short vowels, impart a lilt and an air of lightness to the first two lines worthy of Shelley himself.¹⁾

"Hoe schoon deez' Nacht! het zachtste balsemzuchtje,
 Det lentezephirs d'avond tegenaâmen"

The original in these lines is slower and smoother:

"How beautiful this night! the balmiest sigh
 Which vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear"(11.1-2)

That the use of assonance was not accidental is apparent from the alteration in the manuscript from "het zoelste balsemzuchtje" to "het zachtste balsemzuchtje".

The contrast between the calm at dawn:

"Met zachten lech
 Daalt ginds in zuider streek op 't golfloos vlak
 Der zee de ster des daags: geen adem zweeft
 Langs 't ongerimpeld diep, wijl d'avondwolken
 Gerust het dralend licht der zon weerkaatsen,
 En 't beeld der avondster ter westerzij
 Nog lieflijk straalt." 2)

and the approach of the storm:

"..... De morgen nadert: wolk
 Op wolk rolt boven 't vlak der zwarte waatren
 In massas dicht en diep; de schorre galm
 Des verren donders bromt en brult schrikwekkend;
 De storm ontplooit zijn vleuglen over 't duister,
 Dat broeit op 't kokend perk; de geest des storms
 Met vlaag en bliksemvlam, vervolgt zijn prooi;
 't Gescheurde water huilt en 't vaertuig vindt
 Zijn graf beneên de torenhooge golven - " 3)

is striking and compares favourably with the original.

"Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;" (1.9)

"Untrodden" is actually translated twice, since it is also rendered by "Nog door geen voet bevlekt" in the following line.

- 1) Compare with the discussion of "Het Eilandje" on page 74.
- 2) Shelley : "Queen Mab" IV 11.19-25
- 3) " " " " IV 11.25-33.

The assonance in "straalt" and "nadert", however, is unfortunate, for with the phrase "Tomorrow comes" begins also a change in sound and subject matter, the effect of which is weakened when this verb in the translation is linked with a verb in the preceding section.

"In massaas dicht en diep:..."

lacks the active movement suggested by the English:

"... in dark and deepening mass" (1.26)

The alliteration in this phrase is interesting, however, in that the same consonant is used for the alliteration in both Dutch and English phrases, and this appears to be intentional, for the earlier version read:

"In massaas zwart en diep",

"zwart" being altered in the manuscript to "dicht".

Another reason for this alteration may have been to avoid the repetition of "zwart", which occurred in the previous line:

".... wolk

Op wolk rolt boven 't vlak der zwarte waatren".

The many alterations point to painstaking efforts to improve the acoustic effect of the translation.¹⁾

1) As for example:

"... die duistre rotsen
Met kegels ijs omkranst ..."

to the more descriptive acoustically:

"... die donkre rotsen
Omkranst met kegels ijs."

with the assonance of the dark vowels in "donkre" and "rotsen". Also:

"Waar stilt', door niets gestoord, alleen wou waken"
to the smoother:

"Waar stilt', door niets gestoord, alleen wou zijn".

The last lines show some deviations, possibly as the result of misconstruction of the English, as for example in:

"'t Gescheurde water huilt en 't vaartuig vindt
Zijn graf beneên de torenhooge golven".

Shelley's image in:

"The torn deep yawns, - the vessel finds a grave
Beneath its jagged gulf." (ll.32-33)

is of a deep gulf with jagged edges, Verwey's image, on the other hand, is of mountainous waves. Moreover, "huilt" is not the same as "yawns" as used by Shelley here. 1)

Nevertheless, this translation, in spite of these deviations from the original, and instances of forced and clumsy construction, is one of the best of the early translations. In it Verwey attained at times a poetic beauty approaching that of his model.

These early translations, as will have been seen, are very unequal in merit. Lines of considerable beauty are

1) Other deviations are:

"De storm ontplooit zijn vleuglen over 't duister
Dat broeit op 't kokend perk; ..."

which does not translate the English:

"Tempest unfolds its pinion o'er the gloom
That shrouds the boiling surge; ..." (ll.29-30)

although the image it suggests is effective and not far removed from the original in meaning. Nor, in the same line, does:

"... de geest des storms"

fully translate:

"... the pitiless fiend" (l.30)

found side by side with greatly inferior ones and expressions obviously used for line-filling or to provide the rhyme. The style is frequently awkward and inconsistent, the elevated and poetic alternating with the commonplace; the rhythm all too regular and tending to be monotonous. In themselves, with the possible exception of the fragment from "Queen Mab", they are not worthy to take their place beside Verwey's published work, and this was undoubtedly Verwey's own opinion. As experiments in sound effect and form, however, they are of interest and also of value. Sound effect appears to have played an important part in these experiments. One of the most striking examples is "De Vluchtelingen", although in the fragment from "Queen Mab" the effect is more successful and more poetic. Experiments in form and the use of repetition and rhyme are to be found in "Aan den Nacht" and "De Twee Geesten". There are many examples of experiment in the use of alliteration and assonance, frequently with good success.

In these translations one can see, as it were, the beginnings of Verwey's own later poetry. Parallelism, "mirror effect", balance, alliteration, assonance and acoustic effect generally, all these, which were used so much and so effectively in his own poetry later, are present in these early efforts, albeit with varying degrees of success.

In spite of defects, due undoubtedly to inexperience and immaturity, these translations are not without merit and contain lines which are worthy of the later Verwey.

III

"SHELLEY'S GEDICHTEN VAN HET JAAR MDCCCXVI"

Verwey's next translations from Shelley, apart from his translation of the prose work "A Defence of Poetry" in 1891, were of the three poems written in 1816: "The Sunset", "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" and "Mont Blanc". These were translated in December 1903 and first published in the February Number 1904 of "De Twintigste Eeuw"; later being reprinted, with certain revisions, in Verwey's collection of translated poetry. "Poëzie in Europa" in 1920.

Although these poems were all written by Shelley in 1816, they were not originally published together. "Mont Blanc" was published by Shelley in 1817 with his "History of a Six Weeks' Tour". "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" first appeared in Hunt's "Examiner" also in 1817¹⁾ and "The Sunset" was published posthumously. Extracts from "The Sunset" appeared in Hunt's "Literary Pocket-Book" in 1823 but the poem was not printed in full until 1824, when it was included in the "Posthumous Poems". In some editions of Shelley's Poetical Works these three poems appear separately. In the Chatto and Windus edition, for example, "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" and "Mont Blanc" appear in the volume "Early Poems" (although not together) and "The Sunset" is in the volume of "Posthumous Poems". In the Moxon and Oxford editions, however, the three poems appear together under the heading "Poems written in 1816".

1) January 19, 1817.

There is indeed a certain link between these three poems; a common theme running through all, although the treatment of this theme varies. All are concerned in varying degrees with the Power behind the Universe; a Power sometimes seen as the Spirit of Beauty, of Eternal Beauty, or Absolute and Eternal Love in the Platonic sense; a Power which remains and is eternal amid the transient things of life; a Power beyond death. There is also a certain development to be seen in these poems when taken in this order. In "The Sunset" there is uncertainty, a groping into the darkness of the unknown.

"Inheritor of more than earth can give,
 Passionless calm and silence unproved,
 Whether the dead find, oh, not sleep! but rest,
 And are the uncomplaining things they seem,
 Or live, or drop in the deep sea of Love;" (ll.45-49)

In "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" there is still uncertainty, but now the poet is aware of the existence of the Power, although there is still much that he does not understand. He has now experienced the Power and is fervent in his belief, but it is a belief affecting his emotion rather than his mind or his reasoning faculty. In "Mont Blanc" the poet comes to full acceptance, with the realisation that the Power is and must remain beyond human comprehension.

"Remote, serene, and inaccessible:" ("Mont Blanc" l.97)
 Gone is the timid, fearful groping for something which must surely exist, as in "The Sunset". The excited, fervent belief in a Power which has just been revealed (in "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty") and blind and eager willingness to serve this Power, now give way to calm acceptance and resignation.

"Power dwells apart in its tranquillity,
 Remote, serene, and inaccessible:
 And this, the naked countenance of earth,
 On which I gaze, even these primaeval mountains
 Teach the adverting mind." ("Mont Blanc" 11.96-100)

The attributes of calm and silence accorded to the
 Power are to be found in all three poems:

"Inheritor of more than earth can give
 Passionless calm and silence unreprieved"
 ("The Sunset" 11.45-46)

"The day becomes more solemn and serene
 When noon is past - ..."

"Thus let thy power, which like the truth
 Of nature on my passive youth
 Descended, to my onward life supply
 Its calm - ..."
 ("Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" 11.73-74, 78-81)

"Power dwells apart in its tranquillity,
 Remote, serene, and inaccessible:"

"... the power is there
 The still and solemn power of many sights"

"... Winds contend
 Silently there and heap the snow with breath
 Rapid and strong, but silently! ..."
 ("Mont Blanc" 11.96-97, 127-128, 134-136)

The power is the same; it is the poet's attitude towards
 this power that changes.

"Mont Blanc" represents the climax of a development
 begun in "Alastor" (composed less than a year earlier,
 in the autumn of 1815). In "Alastor" the poet forsakes
 the world in his search for the vision of his ideal,
 which was revealed to him and then taken from him, leaving
 him desolate. There is great similarity in this respect
 between "Alastor" and "The Sunset". Both the poet in
 "Alastor" and the Lady in "The Sunset" awake after a night
 of ecstasy to find themselves alone and desolate. In

the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" the same theme is also present, but by now the poet has recognised the "Spirit of Beauty". She it is whose departure leaves desolation.

"Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?"
(11.16-17)

In "Mont Blanc" the last stage of the development is reached, when the poet realises at last that the Spirit or the Power can only be contemplated but not possessed.

"Power dwells apart in its tranquillity,
Remote, serene, and inaccessible:
And this, the naked countenance of earth,
On which I gaze, even these primaevial mountains
Teach the adverting mind. . . ." (11.96-100)

"... The secret Strength of things
Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome
Of Heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!
And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea,
If to the human mind's imaginings
Silence and solitude were vacancy?" (11.139-244)

Shelley's interest in death and the possibility of life after death deepened in 1815, when it was thought for a while that he himself was rapidly dying of consumption. The result of his thoughts and contemplations on the subject of death, and his preoccupation with the Eternal at a time when he thought death to be so near, can be found in "Alastor" and the three poems written in 1816. In her "Note on Alastor" Mary Shelley wrote:

"The death which he had often contemplated during the last months as certain and near he here represented in such colours as had, in his lonely musings, soothed his soul to peace."

The underlying motif in all four poems is Shelley's pre-occupation with the Eternal in a world of death and transiency, a preoccupation stimulated by the thought of

his own death, which he had supposed to be so near.

Did Verwey perhaps also feel this underlying motif linking these four poems? If he did not, it seems a strange coincidence that his only mature translations from Shelley's Poetical Works should be of these four poems alone, and moreover, that he should be engaged on them much about the same time. Although "Alastor" was not actually translated until 1909 (six years after the "Poems Written in 1816"), Verwey had long been familiar with this poem, as is apparent from certain letters written to him by Willem Kloos in 1884. Other references in this correspondence indicate that as early as 1884 he was also familiar with "Mont Blanc", which Kloos was at that time translating. Yet nine years were to elapse before Verwey attempted his own translation of "Mont Blanc" and fifteen before he ventured on a translation of "Alastor". Was this perhaps because, although in 1884 he was capable of appreciating these poems and, judging from certain references in the letters of Kloos, apparently believed he understood them, yet he himself could not at that stage experience them? He was as yet too immature to project himself into these poems and make them his own, without which translation was unthinkable, even if he had possessed the necessary technical skill.

By 1903 Verwey's own poetry had acquired a new depth. In the poem "De Benzame"¹⁾ (published in 1901) and also in "De Verlatene"²⁾ (published in 1903, the year in which

1) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk I p.361.

2) " " " " I p. 440.

Verwey translated the "Poems Written in 1816") there seem to be echoes of "Alastor" and also of "The Sunset". Yet "De Eenzame" and "De Verlatene", although the very names seem to suggest some connection with Shelley's poems "Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude" and "The Sunset", where the theme is again bereavement, are by no means translations or adaptations of these poems. Where similar images are used it is because Verwey has now made them his own. They represent his own feelings at that moment, not Shelley's. Similarity in subject matter is to a great extent a question of similar experience, although it may also be unconscious borrowing. In this connection one is again reminded of Carlos Baker's reference to Shelley's borrowings, which has already been quoted.¹⁾

De Zonsondergang

The theme of "The Sunset" is similar to that dealt with in "Alastor" lines 140-222. After a brief period of ecstasy comes the sense of desolation and loss, and a longing for reunion with the beloved. Both the poet in "Alastor" and the Lady in "The Sunset" pine away. The eyes of both are described as "wan".

"... His wan eyes
Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly
As ocean's moon looks on the moon in heaven."
(*"Alastor"* 11.200-202)

"Her eyes were black and lustreless and wan"²⁾
(*"The Sunset"* 1.37)

1) See page 9.

2) This line, however, does not appear in the Chatto and Windus and the Moxon editions.

In this translation Verwey used an irregular rhythm very similar to that of the original. The regularity of the iambic rhythm of some of the earlier translations has now given way to greater freedom, which is more expressive and less monotonous.

There are some deviations from the original, but these are admittedly slight and of minor importance.¹⁾

The image in:

"De zon ging onder, doch gesmolten goud
Bevloei'de 't grauw gewolk, zonk op de punten
Van 't ver vlak gras. ..."

is different from that in the original:

"There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold
Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points
Of the far level grass..." (11.12-14)

but it is effective, describing, as it does, the action

1) As for example:

"Zich ziel en dood bestreden ..."

where "ziel" does not convey quite the same as "genius" in:

"Genius and death contended ..." (1.4)

although it is certainly connected with it by association.

It is doubtful whether "zware bruine boomen" renders accurately "brown massy woods". (1.17) The Dutch seems to indicate big massive trees, whereas the English suggests a dense wood.

"Uitkwamen" in:

"... wijl
De bleeke starren uitkwamen omhoog"

is less expressive than "gather" in:

"While the faint stars were gathering overhead. - "
(1.20)

rather than the result, as in Shelley's image. The vowel harmony is remarkable, changing from a predominance of dark vowels and diphthongs, suggestive of depth, in the first two lines to lighter vowels in the third line. Alterations in the manuscript were undoubtedly made with this end in view, for "maar" in the first line quoted (on page 117) was altered to "doch", and "'t ver laag gras" to "'t ver vlak gras", which also provides both alliteration and assonance and, moreover, helps to give an impression of flatness in contrast to the depth suggested by the preceding lines. The harmony is not so striking in the original, although there is a certain amount of assonance.

Verwey changed the Lady's name from Isabel to Selinda. The reason for this change was undoubtedly the rhythm. In its Dutch pronunciation, with the stress on the last syllable, Isabel would have been inelegant and clumsy. Selinda, on the other hand, is rhythmically and acoustically more pleasing.

In:

"Haar wimpers waren als gescheurd door tranen"
there is some indication of the edition used by Verwey for this translation. The original of this line in the Chatto and Windus and the Oxford editions reads:

"Her eye-lashes were worn away with tears" (1.38)
but the Moxon edition of 1854¹⁾ has:

"Her eye-lashes were torn away with tears".

There seems to be some deviation in:

1) See page 16.

"Haar handen waren dun, hun dwalende aren,
Zwak kloppend, lieten, dat het elk kon zien,
't Ros daglicht door ..."

This does not mean the same as:

"Her hands were thin, and through their wandering veins
And weak articulations might be seen
Day's ruddy light..." (ll.40-42)

Verwey appears to have misunderstood the word "articulation". Perhaps he was unfamiliar with this word in its less usual and more technical use in the sense of "joints". Moreover, the "articulations" do not refer to the veins but to the hands themselves. Nevertheless, although different from the original, Verwey's image is effective, emphasizing the weakness of the life within her rather than (as in the original) the weakness of her frame. In the first of these lines there appears to be another example of Verwey's use of "mirror effect" in the sequence of vowels:

"Haar handen waren dun, hun dwalende aren"

There is a deviation in:

"'t Zij dooden vinden ...
Of leven, of bestaan in de Eeuwge Liefde"

where Verwey altered somewhat the meaning of the original:

"Whether the dead find ...(l.47)
Or live, or drop in the deep sea of Love;" (l.49)

Shelley's image, which is lost in this later version of the line, was retained in an earlier version, but even there the active verb "drop" was rendered by "bestaan".

"Of leven, of bestaan in de diepe Liefde zee"
thus altering the sense a little.

Alterations in the manuscript, as will have been noticed, frequently indicate an attempt to improve the sound of the poem.¹⁾ The revision in the thirty-sixth

1) Thus in the fourth line: "Niemand wist", although

line, however, was probably for reasons of rhythm rather than sound. The original version of this line in the manuscript read:

"Te doen wecken in smart die wijsheid werkt."

which was in fact nearer to the English:

"... (to make hard hearts)

Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief; - " (11.35-36)

than the revised version:

"Week te doen zijn door smart die wijsheid werkt."

Neither version, however, fully translates the English "dissolve away".

Both the earlier version:

"Erfgenaam van wat de aard geen sterfling geeft:"

nearer to the English, was altered to: "Geen begreep".

There is another deviation in:

"Erfgenaam van zooveel als de aard niet geeft:
Strijdlooze kalnte en onbetwiste stilt, - "

which differs somewhat from the English:

"Inheritor of more than earth can give,
Passionless calm and silence unreprieved" (11.45-46)

"Silence unreprieved" is admittedly an unusual image, but it is not the same as "onbetwiste stilt".

The earlier version of the second of these lines:

"Lijdzame kalnte en onbetwiste vree"

seems to suggest that "onbetwiste stilt" was chosen for its assonance, but "stilt" is in fact nearer the English "silence" and also avoids a repetition which would have weakened the effect of "Vree" in the last line but one:

"O had als gij, ook ik voor grafschrift - Vree!"

See also page 121.

and the revised version:

"Erfgenaam van zooveel als de aard niet geeft:"
are somewhat clumsy in their attempts to render the
English:

"Inheritor of more than earth can give" (1.45)
although the revised version is certainly an improvement
acoustically on the earlier version.

In the last line but one the earlier version of the
translation:

"O dat als 't uw' mijn grafschrift "Vrede" waar!"
was actually nearer to the English syntactically.

"Oh that like thine, mine epitaph were - Peace!"(1.50)
but the revised version:

"O had als gij, ook ik voor grafschrift - Vree!"
while retaining the meaning, is an improvement acoustically.
It also brings the main word "Vree" to the strongly
emphasized final position, as in the original.

The theme of this poem seems not only to have had
its echo in some of Verwey's poems written in 1903 and
earlier (while he was occupied with this translation), but
also to have inspired a later poem, "Haar Leven",¹⁾
published in 1908. In "Haar Leven", however, the
separation is due to unfaithfulness, not death as in "The
Sunset". The theme of madness is present in both, but
in "Haar Leven" the old man is treated as a personification
of this madness, whereas in "The Sunset" he, or rather
the Lady's concern for him, is considered as an indication
of her madness. The second line of the second stanza:

1) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk. I p.582

"Dat niets u bleef dan smet en scheur en tranen" is particularly reminiscent of the thirty-seventh line of Verwey's translation of "The Sunset":

"Haar wimpers waren als gescheurd door tranen". Influence, however, is difficult to prove conclusively. Only Verwey could have said whether or not he had "The Sunset" in mind when writing his original poems, and then there is still the possibility of unconscious borrowing.¹⁾

Hymne aan de Geestelijke Schoonheid

The "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" represents a turning point in Shelley's spiritual life. The revelation described in the sixth stanza of this poem took place in his early youth. According to James Notopoulos²⁾ this was while Shelley was at Syon House Academy, thus prior to 1804, but A.M.D. Hughes³⁾ is of the opinion that it took place while Shelley was at Eton, thus between 1804 and 1810. A voyage in 1816 round the Lake of Geneva, during the course of which Shelley read for the first time Rousseau's "Nouvelle Heloise", provided the direct inspiration for the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty". Of this voyage Shelley wrote to Thomas Love Peacock on 12 July 1816:

"This journey has been on every account delightful, but most especially because then I first knew the divine beauty of Rousseau's imagination as it exhibits itself in "Julie".

1) See also pages 9 and 116.

2) James Notopoulos : The Platonism of Shelley. p.15

3) A.M.D. Hughes : The Nascent Mind of Shelley. p.38

On December 8 of the same year Shelley wrote to Leigh Hunt:

"The poem ("Hymn to Intellectual Beauty") was composed under the influence of feelings which agitated me even to tears."

This poem, although one of Shelley's earlier poems, is of importance in his philosophy, and Verwey's choice of it for translation is of interest. He too had experienced a similar turning point in early youth and, as in Shelley's case, this experience was not expressed until later in his poetry.¹⁾

"Ik weet alleen dat op een mooien uchtend
Mijn donker week: lentewind streek bevruchtend
De bomen over en er zwol in mij
Een lijn van lichaam en een melodij.

.....

Maar woorden faalden mij, woorden alleen."²⁾

Thus Verwey recalled the experience in his autobiographical poem "De Gestalten van mijn Levenstijd", written between 27 December 1905 and 3 January 1906, some three years after the translation of this poem.

As far as the title is concerned, it is thought probable that Shelley was influenced by his reading of Spenser's four platonic Hymns.³⁾ In the title Shelley used the word "intellectual" to refer to things which can only be apprehended by the mind or intellect, as opposed to material things. "Intellectual Beauty", therefore,

1) See also Lascelles Abercrombie's references to what he calls a "second emotion".

Lascelles Abercrombie : Wordsworth. pp. 8-9

2) Verwey : Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk. I. pp.562-3

3) James Notopoulos : The Platonism of Shelley. p.105.

was the beauty invisible to the human eye and only to be approached through the mind. In this sense "intellectual" was formerly synonymous with "spiritual" but this use is now obsolete. In speaking of the Dutch poets after 1890 Verwey said:

"They loved what Shelley called the intellectual Beauty. Only, one of Shelley's biographers, Mr. Koszul, rightly said, that spiritual beauty would have been the true name." 1)

Shelley's rejection of the more usual word "spiritual" in favour of the less obvious and, probably even in his own day, somewhat archaic word "intellectual", was undoubtedly due to his antagonism towards orthodox Christianity and his desire to avoid a word which might suggest some connection between his conception of Beauty and a religion he hated. Verwey's translation of the title as "Hymne aan de Geestelijke Schoonheid", therefore, needs no further comment, as it is the only possible one.

This translation follows very closely the somewhat complicated structure, metre and rhyme-scheme of the original.²⁾ The text is also, on the whole, a faithful rendering of the English. There are some instances of

- 1) Quoted from a lecture on Dutch Poetry to the Dutch Club in London on 19 February 1924. As far as can be ascertained the text of this lecture has never been published.
- 2) Verwey followed Shelley's metre meticulously, both in its regularity and in its irregularity. Of the eighty-four lines of the poem, forty (only seventeen of which are regular iambic lines) are rhythmically identical in the translation, and many others are but slightly modified. The pauses are also, with very few exceptions, retained in the translation in the same position as in the original.

free or even incorrect translation, but in most cases these do not alter Shelley's meaning to any great extent and are usually due to the other demands made on a translator of poetry: those of rhyme and metre.¹⁾

In the first stanza Verwey was particularly successful in reproducing Shelley's sound pattern. The stanza in the original poem opens with a phrase in which dark vowels predominate in stressed or semi-stressed positions. There are but three exceptions: "shadow" and "unseen", which occurs twice.

"The awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats though unseen among us, - ..." (11.1-2)

In this way these words, which are also key words, are made to stand out from the rest. It is the "shadow" floating among us, not the "power" itself, and, as the "power" is unseen, so also is the "shadow" of that power unseen. The next phrase, with its alternation of clear and dark vowels serves to emphasize the theme of inconstancy with which it deals.

"... visiting
This various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower - "
(11.2-4)

1) In the first stanza, for instance:

"Drijft ongezien rondom ons;..."

is not quite the same as:

"Floats though unseen among us, ..." (1.2)

although the difference in meaning between "rondom" and "among" in this context is admittedly slight. Other slight deviations from the original in this stanza, such as the use of the singular in "zomerwind" and "maanglans" instead of the plural as in "summer winds" and "moonbeams" are undoubtedly due to the requirements of the rhyme.

The clear vowels convey an impression of light flitting, which is broken again by the darker vowels in "summer" and "flower to flower", which form the transition to the next, a darker image:

"Like moonbeams, that behind some piny mountain shower."
(1.5)

After further alternation of images illustrating the variableness and inconstancy in the universe with images of more lasting things, the final couplet reverts to the sounds introduced in the opening phrase:

"Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery." (11.11-12)

In "aught" there occurs again the vowel of "awful" in the first line; "that", although not bearing full stress, echoes the vowel of "shadow", and the stressed vowel in "unseen" now reappears in the rhyme position in "may be" and "mystery".

A similar sequence is to be found in the translation. In the first phrase the key words are linked even more closely by alliteration and assonance than in the original.

"De ontzachte schim van een onzichtbare macht
Drijft ongezien rondom ons; ..."

Syntactically "ontzachte" is linked with "schim" and "onzichtbare" with "macht", but "onzichtbare" and "schim" and "ontzachte" and "macht" are also linked by assonance. Moreover, the two qualities "ontzachte" and "onzichtbare" are very closely linked by multiple alliteration. The vowel of "schim" and "onzichtbare" is followed in "ongezien" by a vowel of a similar quality. Thus the emphasis, as in the original, is on the invisibility of the shadow; this key word even having approximately the same stressed vowel as its English equivalent. As in the original,

the various images which follow are closely knit by alliteration and assonance.

"Als zomerwind op bloem na bloem bedacht;"

"Als zang en tint wen d'avond maant,"

"Als heugnis van muziek die vliedt"

The key vowels of the first phrase also recur in the final couplet, as in the original.

"Als al wat door zijn gratie mij
Lief, liever nog door zijn mysterie zij."

The stressed vowel of "ontzachte" (and of "macht") reappears in "al" (and also in "als" and "wat"); and the closely related vowels of "schijn", "onzichtbare" and "ongezien" are represented by "lief, liever". It will be noticed that the words linked in this way in the translation are in most cases the equivalents of the words so linked in the original text; "ontzachte" and "al" representing "awful" and "ought"; "onzichtbare" and "ongezien" representing "unseen".

In the second stanza:

"Waarom verdwijnt ge en laat al wat er leeft
In zwart, breed tranendal dat lach noch luister heeft?"

is rather a free translation of:

"Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?"¹⁾
(11.16-17)

1) "Dim" is not quite the same as "zwart", nor is the "vale of tears vacant and desolate" quite the same as the "tranendal dat lach noch luister heeft", although the freedom in this case is probably due to the desire for alliteration to correspond to the alliteration in the original, and also for heavy initial consonants which, as in the original, tend to add emphasis to the significant words.

Other instances of free translation are:

but Verwey's use of alliteration and assonance in these lines is very similar to Shelley's. In the English version it is as if the poet, in repeating the vowels of "pass away" in the following descriptive passage, wished to draw attention to the connection between the two: between the "passing away" of the Spirit of Beauty and the "vast vale of tears", now "vacant and desolate" in her absence. The alliteration and assonance in "vast", "vale" and "vacant" also heighten the impression of emptiness. These two lines are also closely linked in the translation. The vowels of "laet al wat er leeft" are likewise repeated in the descriptive passage, and the alliteration in "laet", "leeft", "lach" and "luister"

"Waarom iets dat ooit leefde sterft of pijnt;"

which conveys more than the English:

"Why aught should fail and fade that once is shown"
(1.20)

"Fail" and "fade" both imply weakening and eventual disappearance, but not pain; and also in the last two lines of this stanza:

"... waarom zulk een strijd
Van liefde en haat, hoop en verslagenheid? - "

where the translation again deviates from the actual meaning of the English:

"... why man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope?" (11.23-24)

In the English there is no mention or suggestion of struggle or strife, merely man's ability to unite within himself the extremes of love and hate, despondency and hope. It is true that these extremes sometimes occur simultaneously and are the cause of inward strife, but this strife is not necessarily implied by the English.

provides yet another link.

In the third stanza there is a slight difference in meaning between:

"Namen als Demon, Geest en Hemel bleven
Op 't vruchtloos vragen een weergalmend Nooit."

and:

"Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavour."
(11.27-28)

The "records of their vain endeavour" are the records of past endeavours, which until now have all been in vain. The "weergalmend Nooit", on the other hand, suggests that they always will be in vain.

The contrast: "macht", "machtloos" in the line:

"Toovergeluid, wiens macht, machtloos, niet nedergooit"
is typical of Verwey and similar cases are not infrequent in his own poetry.¹⁾

There is a syntactical difference here. In the original this line forms part of a sentence begun earlier in the stanza:

"No voice from some sublimer world hath ever
To sage or poet these responses given -
Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavour,
Frail spells - whose uttered charm might not avail to
sever"
From all we hear and all we see,
Doubt, chance, and mutability." (11.25-31)

The "frail spells" are the "names of Demon, Ghost and Heaven". This connection is less clear in the Dutch where this sentence has been divided.

1) "Nedergooit", however, seems unnecessarily strong and active for "sever" and thereby introduces a somewhat jarring note.

"Geen stem van een verheevner sfeer heeft ooit
 Dichter of wijze antwoord erop gegeven:
 Namen als Demon, Geest en Hemel bleven
 Op 't vruchtloos vragen een weergalmend Nooit.
 Toovergeluid, wiens macht, machtloos, niet nedergooit
 Van al wat oog en oor omring'
 Kans, twijfel en verandering."

but the effect of this division in the translation is to add emphasis to the finality of "Nooit", which immediately precedes the full-stop.

In the last five lines of this stanza the ethereal effect of the abundance of clear vowels and the alliterating liquid and nasal consonants is preserved in the translation.

"Thy light alone - like mist o'er mountains driven,
 Or music by the night-wind sent
 Through strings of some still instrument,
 Or moonlight on a midnight stream
 Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream." (ll.32-36)

Not only is the effect preserved in the translation, but the same sounds are used to produce that effect. The translation at this point is very close.

"Uw licht alleen, als mist langs berg gedreven -
 Of als muziek die nachtwind zendt
 Over besnaard stil instrument
 Of maanlicht over donkere stroom
 Maakt waer en schoon d'onrustge levensdroom."

The connection shown by alliteration between "light", "life", "mist", "mountains", "music", "moonlight" and "midnight" is also partially retained.

In the fourth stanza the translation adds to the original in the lines:

"Onsterflijk en almachtig waar' de mensch
 Kondt, onbekende, ontzachte, met uw tolken -
 Stralende deugden - gij voorgoed zijn hart bevolken."

There is no mention of the "tolken" or the "stralende"

deugden" in the original, which merely refers to a "glorious train".

"Man were immortal and omnipotent
 Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art
 Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his
 heart." (ll.39-41)

Another deviation from the original is to be found in:

"Gij boô van toegenegenheên;
 In minnaarsoogen hier en heen;"

as a translation of:

"Thou messenger of sympathies
 That wax and wane in lovers' eyes - " (ll.42-43)

The fluctuation conveyed by the verbs "wax" and "wane" is missing in the Dutch, where "hier en heen" gives the impression of being used for line filling and to provide the rhyme, although the alliteration is undoubtedly intended to represent the alliteration in "wax and wane", as the use of a similar vowel in "heen" to that in "wane" seems to indicate. Several interpretations have been put forward concerning Verwey's use of the expression "hier en heen" in this context. Of these the most plausible is: "here and gone", giving the interpretation: "Thou messenger of sympathies now present in lovers' eyes and now gone". This is near to the English but fails to express the movement inherent in the verbs "wax" and "wane".

The next line is of interest in that Verwey made no attempt to translate the English literally, but tried to convey Shelley's meaning by a totally different metaphor:

"Thou - that to human thought art nourishment,
 Like darkness to a dying flame!"
 (ll.44-45)

becomes in Dutch:

"Gij 't oog van onze geest een sterker lens
Als duister voor vergaande vlam;".

On the face of it this appears to be a reasonable alternative metaphor, yet on closer examination it proves to be faulty.

"Gij 't oog van onze geest een sterker lens" is in itself acceptable. By means of Intellectual Beauty our mind is enabled to see more clearly. This is sufficiently close in meaning to Shelley's "nourishment" of "human thought" to be a plausible translation. When Verwey continues his metaphor in a translation of Shelley's simile:

"Like darkness to a dying flame"

however, the metaphor breaks down. The conception of darkness nourishing a dying flame is acceptable in that the flame thereby grows stronger, but the idea of darkness, as it were, increasing the sight of a dying flame is not acceptable. Darkness can really only be likened to a lens in the sense that it makes the flame more visible to others, whereas in the conception of darkness feeding the flame the flame itself is increased or made stronger.

In the fifth stanza:

"While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
Through many a listening chamber, cave and ruin"
(11.49-50)

is translated as:

"Als knaap zocht ik naar geesten en liep snel
Door luisterende kamer, grot en slot".

This is indeed a very close translation, although a "ruin" is not necessarily a "slot". There is, however, a stylistic difference between "chamber" and "kamer". "Chamber

as it is used here is archaic and poetic and thus conveys a different impression from the more homely, everyday word "kamer".

The translation continues:

"En starlicht woud, met angstge stappen zot
Op 't griezlig nieuws dat doode mij vertell'"

In his effort to reproduce as accurately as possible the actual sound of Shelley's words Verwey resorted to the unusual form "starlicht" as a translation for Shelley's "starlight", and the somewhat archaic "woud" for the English "wood". His use of the word "starlicht" is also in imitation of Shelley's use of "starlight": as an adjective meaning "lit by starlight". This is fairly common in English with such words as "daylight" and "moonlight", although it is less usual with "starlight". It is, however, rare in Dutch.¹⁾

There is nothing in the English to justify the use of the word "griezlig".

"And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead." (ll.51-52)

The New English Dictionary (Oxford) gives the following definition of "high" as used here:

"Of exalted quality, character, or style; of lofty, elevated, or superior kind."

This particular line is, in fact, quoted as an example. Moreover, we appear to have here an example of Shelley's unconscious borrowing. In James Thomson's "The Seasons", a work with which Shelley was undoubtedly familiar, we

1) "Het Nederlands Woordenboek" in giving the various uses of "starlicht", "sterlicht" etc. refers to the sense "door sterren verlicht" as "niet meer gebruikelijk".

find:

"... There studious let me sit
And hold high converse with the mighty dead."¹⁾

There is therefore nothing gruesome or creepy about it, unless it be that the mere fact of seeking communion with the "departed dead" was considered by the translator to be gruesome. For Shelley the idea of communion or conversation with the "departed dead" held no such horror, and the translation therefore misinterprets Shelley's text here. Shelley's belief in immortality was, as James Notopoulos points out, "inconstant", swinging from the pole of affirmation to that of denial.²⁾ It was, nevertheless, a subject which interested him greatly. At Oxford, in 1811, Shelley read Plato's "Phaedo - or The Immortality of the Soul" and was, according to his close friend and contemporary, Thomas Jefferson Hogg, "vehemently excited by the striking doctrines which Socrates unfolds".³⁾ Yet, he wanted proof. One is reminded here of the pamphlet "The Necessity of Atheism" with its "advertisement": "through deficiency of proof an Atheist", also written in 1811. In 1817 Shelley wrote:

"Reason tells me that death is the boundary of the life of man; yet I feel, I believe the direct contrary."⁴⁾

1) James Thomson: The Seasons. Winter ll.431-432

2) James Notopoulos: The Platonism of Shelley. p.21

3) Thomas Jefferson Hogg: The Life of Shelley.
ed. Humbert Wolfe (London 1933) I p.73

4) Quoted by A.M.D. Hughes: The Nascent Mind of Shelley
p.192.

a Christian. By 1812, however, when he wrote "Queen Mab", his attitude towards Christianity was one of fierce hatred. In "Queen Mab" we read, of the coming of Christ:

"... humbly He came
Veiling his horrible Godhead in the shape
Of man. ..."1)

and again:

"... He led
The crowd; He taught them justice, truth and peace,
In semblance; but He lit within their souls
The quenchless flames of zeal, and blessed the sword
He brought on earth to satiate with the blood
Of truth and freedom His malignant soul."2)

God is also referred to as the "omnipotent Fiend"³⁾ and "almighty Tyrant"⁴⁾. In his "Notes on Queen Mab" Shelley deals at length with Christianity, God, Christ and the Holy Ghost.⁵⁾ Even in his most anti-Christian days, however, he did not relegate the Trinity to Hell. Verwey may have misunderstood Shelley's meaning here, but it seems more likely that the additional phrase: "uit de hel" was included to meet the requirements of rhyme and metre. Verwey ought in fact to have been able to appreciate Shelley's attitude towards Christianity for it was in some respects akin to his own in the earlier part of his life.⁶⁾

1) Shelley : "Queen Mab" VII, 163-165

2) " " " VII, 167-172

3) " " " VII, 97

4) " " " VII, 199

5) " "Notes on Queen Mab", especially those on VII, 135, 136.

6) See Introduction pp. 10-11.

In the last two lines of this stanza, which, together with the first two lines of the following stanza, form the climax of the poem, there is an interesting sequence of vowels.

"Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!"
(11.59-60)

The vowels in the stressed syllables move gradually forward and upward from "sudden" to the high front vowel in "me". This vowel is repeated at the beginning of the following line in "shrieked", thus linking the two lines: the appearance of the Spirit of Beauty and the poet's reaction. After this repeated vowel in the last line the remaining stressed vowels graduate in the same way as in the preceding line. In fact, the vowels themselves are the same, with the exception of that in "clasped", which replaces the vowel in "sudden" in the eleventh line. That Verwey consciously attempted to follow Shelley's pattern here seems obvious from his revision of the eleventh line in the translation, although an additional reason for the alteration was undoubtedly the unnatural word-order in the earlier version:

"Uw schaduw trof me, één oogenblik - "

In the revised version printed in "Poëzie in Europa" this line reads:

"Me uw schaduw raskte één oogenblik."

Thus the vowel in "trof", which did not fit into Shelley's vowel pattern, was replaced by one which, although it did not continue the forward and upward trend of Shelley's vowels, did nevertheless stay within the pattern. The first stressed vowel in the last line does not repeat the last vowel in the eleventh line (as in the original)

but it is another comparatively high front vowel.

"'k Schreeuwde, in verrukking sloot mijn handen ik." The remaining vowels in this line follow the general trend of Shelley's vowels, with the exception of the stressed vowel in "verrukking" which is a rounded front vowel. They begin, however, with a higher back vowel in "sloot" than occurs in the English text and thus move in a downward, forward and upward curve.

The pauses in the translation are frequently in the same position as those in the original, but in the eleventh line of this stanza the pause in the translation comes after the second foot instead of after the first foot as in the original, thus weakening to some extent the dramatic effect of the climax of the poem.

In this poem Shelley's stanzas fall naturally into sections or verse paragraphs, apparently in accordance with a definite pattern. In the first, third and fifth stanzas there is a division or pause after the fourth line, followed in the first and third stanzas by a second pause after the seventh line. In the second, fourth and seventh stanzas the division comes at the end of the fifth line. The sixth stanza is irregular in that it has no pause after the fourth or fifth lines. The main pause here falls at the end of the second line, followed by a second pause after the seventh line; an irregularity which helps to emphasize the climax of the poem: the last two lines of the fifth stanza and the first two lines of the sixth stanza.

"Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
 To thee and thine - have I not kept the vow?"
 (11.59-62)

The stanzas of the translation can likewise be divided into sections corresponding to the sections in the original. There are two possible readings of the fifth stanza: with pauses after the fourth and tenth lines, thus detaching as it were the last two lines and giving them extra emphasis; or after the fourth and sixth lines, whereby the last eight lines of the stanza (those leading up to and including the climax) are in the same section. In his translation Verwey followed the second reading.

The sixth stanza is remarkable, even in its present form for its very close translation of the English text. In the manuscript and in the version printed in "De Twintigste Eeuw", however, the last lines of this stanza are still closer to the original:

"They know that never joy illumed my brow
 Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free
 This world from its dark slavery,
 That thou - O awful Loveliness
 Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot express."
 (11.68-72)

In the earlier version these lines were translated as:

"Zij weten, zoo me ooit glimp van vreugd weervoer
 Was 't saam met hoop dat gij bevrij'
 De aard van haar duistre slavernij;
 Dat gij, ontzachte Lieflijkheid
 Geven zoudt al dat wat geen woord belijdt."

three of these lines being later revised to:

"Was 't saam met hoop dat eenmaal gij
 De aard van haar slavernij bevrij;
 Dat gij, ontzachte Lieflijkheid
 Alles zoudt geven wat geen taal belijdt."

In the second of these the darkness of the slavery is

lost. The last line, however, is admittedly an improvement on the earlier version acoustically, where the words "al dat wat" in such close succession disturb the rhythmic flow of the poem and are also rather ugly.

There is a difference in meaning between the last line of both versions of the translation and the original which may possibly point to a difference in outlook. In Shelley's version the poet realises his own inability to express in words what he feels and believes to be true, but hopes that Intellectual Beauty will help him where he fails. In the translation the personal element is missing and the translator stresses the impossibility of expressing this faith in words at all.

The final stanza, for the most part, follows the original quite closely. The fourth and fifth lines, however, show some deviation.

"The day becomes more solemn and serene
 When noon is past - there is a harmony
 In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,
 Which through the summer is not heard or seen,
 As if it could not be, as if it had not been!"
 (11.73-77)

The last two and a half lines are translated as:

".... in zijn lucht een luister die
 De heele zomer door ver blijft, zo ver
 Alsof hij nooit kon zijn, dan op een andre ster."

whereby the force of the parallel:

"As if it could not be, as if it had not been!"(1.77)
 is lost. In the earlier version an attempt was made to preserve this parallel.

"Alsof hij nooit kon zijn, nooit blonk en glimlachte er!"
 This line was discarded, however, in the revised version in favour of the more poetic, although considerably freer

translation:

"Alsof hij nooit kon zijn, dan op een andre ster."
 A difference in outlook is also evident in the three versions of this line. Shelley in his version seems to be thinking of the continual rotation of the seasons. The harmony and lustre of autumn which is not heard or seen during the summer, "as if it could not be" in the future (the autumn which is approaching), "as if it had not been" in the past (the previous autumn). In the first version of the translation the poet again looks forward to the coming autumn: "Alsof hij nooit kon zijn", and back to the past: "nooit blonk en glimlachte er".
 The revised translation:

"Alsof hij nooit kon zijn, dan op een andre ster."
 introduces a different conception, namely that this harmony can only exist in another sphere or on another planet.

Shelley was a keen scientist and many evidences of this are to be found in his poetry, where he frequently expressed his philosophy by means of images taken from the field of science or from natural phenomena. Another example of this is to be found in the expression: "the truth of nature" (ll.78-79). This was translated by Verwey, who apparently lacked Shelley's interest in this field, with the more orthodox philosophical term: "De zin van 't zijn", which embraces all forms of being, not only those of nature.

The final stanza in the original is remarkable for its harmony; harmony of sound, in that no individual vowels protrude on the ear, and therefore also harmony

between sound and sense. There is also a calmness, which is accentuated by the frequent use of nasal and liquid consonants, the avoidance as far as possible of sharp final consonants, and by the many enjambments. Harmony and calmness are also present in the translation, although in a lesser degree.

"Zoo moge uw macht die als de zin
 Van 't zijn mijn willige jonkheid in-
 Gezonken kwam, haar kalme reiken wie
 Heel 't verdre leven u vereert
 En iedre vorm die gij beheert;
 Wien, schoone Geest, uw toover bindt
 Dat hij zich vreest, en elke mensch bemint."

An attempt is indeed made (by means of frequent use of nasals and liquids and also of enjambments) to reproduce the effect of Shelley's stanza, but the Dutch final consonants in "vereert", "beheert", "bindt" and "bemint" are sharper than the English final consonants in "bind" and "kind" and the effect is therefore slightly more disturbing.

Mont Blanc

The last poem in this group forms (as has already been observed) the climax to a development begun in "Alastor" and carried on through "The Sunset" and "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty".

Although Verwey did not translate this poem until 1903 his attention had been drawn to it as early as 1884, if not earlier. In November 1884 Willem Kloos sent Verwey his translation of the first seventy-five lines of "Mont Blanc", asking in the accompanying letter for Verwey's opinion of it, and remarking that at that point

he had lost interest in it and given up. Yet, although Verwey was familiar with this earlier translation, (the manuscript of which is to be found among Verwey's papers in the "Verzameling - Albert Verwey" in Amsterdam) it does not appear to have influenced his own translation of the poem in any way. The two translations bear no resemblance to each other. Of the two, Verwey's translation tends to follow more closely the construction and, frequently, the actual sound of the English than does the translation by Kloos.

Verwey's first impression of Shelley's poem "Mont Blanc" was apparently not altogether favourable. Unfortunately only one side of the early correspondence between Verwey and Kloos has been preserved, namely the letters from Kloos to Verwey, which are at present in the "Verzameling-Albert Verwey" in the University Library, Amsterdam. Kloos destroyed the majority of Verwey's earlier letters to him after the estrangement between them. Sometimes, however, it is possible to deduce Verwey's opinion from references in Kloos's letters. In a letter dated 18th November 1884 Kloos wrote to Verwey:

"Wel vind je den Mount (sic) Blanc niet mooi? Ik ook niet, en daarom ben ik er ook mee uitgescheiden.¹⁾ Maar zou het ook aan ons kunnen liggen? Zijn wij werkelijk zoo ver, dat, als iets ons niet bevalt, het ook slecht moet zijn? Ik verbeeld me, dat we niet in de stemming kunnen komen en dat dit aan ons ligt. ..."

Another criticism Verwey appears to have expressed of

1) Presumably a reference to his translation of part of this poem.

this poem is that it is carelessly written,¹⁾ and on another occasion he appears to have referred to it as "brommend".²⁾

An interesting reflection of Verwey's attitude towards "Mont Blanc" at that time is to be found in a letter from Kloos, dated 27th November 1884.

"Maar die schroom, het gevolg van een dood-nuchtere overweging, is heel iets anders, dan die "awe" waarvan jij zegt: "Dat Shelley meer in zijn ziel heeft gehad dan ik nog kan gevoelen, ook zelfs op het oogenblik dat hij M.B. schreef, dat wil ik toegeven. Maar niet dat zoo iets daar in woorden staat. Dan zou ik eenigszins "awe" gevoelen voor die regels - nu zie ik fouten." etc.

De "vergissing" kwam hierdoor, dat jij in je vroegeren brief eerst de oorzaak van het niet-begrijpen toeschreef aan een filosofie waar wij niet in konden komen, dan op grond van een paar anakolouthien en voor jou (ook voor S?) conventionele uitdrukkingen de M.B. tóch gaat veroordeelen, en besluit met de bewering, dat je daar het recht toe hebt, want dat, als het vers goed was, maar jij het niet begreep, je wel een soort van "awe" zou hebben gevoeld, die je van oordeelen had teruggehouden. ...

Ik lachte niet, omdat je je soms liet terughouden van oordeelen, maar, omdat je daartoe reden vindt in een geheimzinnige aandoening, die de Schoonheid ook onbegrepen in je teweeg bracht ..."

Thus Verwey's early admiration for Shelley's poetry did not apparently extend to all his works. The lyrics Verwey translated in 1881 were, for the most part, of a

1) Letter from Kloos to Verwey, 22nd November 1884.

"Je spreekt van Shelley's "slordigheid" in M.B., die mij zoo erg niet voorkomt."

2) Letter from Kloos to Verwey, 18th November 1884.

"Brommend" noem jij het gedicht: ik zou het nog eer chaotisch willen heeten ..."

beauty which would readily appeal to the young poet, and because of their beauty the "awe" of which he spoke in his letter to Kloos would not only restrain him from criticism but would also enable him to "feel" and be moved by the poems even if he could not fully understand them. In "Mont Blanc", however, the beauty is deeper and more subtle. It is not merely beauty of outward form and expression, which was what Verwey still required of a poem in the early 1880's. In "Mont Blanc" there is in addition, beauty and greatness of conception. The "Power", "remote, serene and inaccessible" ¹⁾, dominates the poem as Mont Blanc, in its radiant glory, dominates the Alps. Whereas the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" was an invocation to the "Power" or "Spirit of Beauty", "Mont Blanc" is in effect an expression of Shelley's philosophy, of his belief in and recognition of the "Power", represented in this poem by the mountain itself.

Various attempts have been made to interpret "Mont Blanc". Shelley himself wrote of the poem:

"It was composed under the immediate impression of the deep and powerful feelings excited by the objects which it attempts to describe; and, as an undisciplined overflowing of the soul, rests its claim to approbation on an attempt to imitate the untamable wildness and inaccessible solemnity from which those feelings sprang." ²⁾

According to Peter Butter, the subject of the poem is "the relation of mind to the universe". ³⁾ In the

1) Shelley : "Mont Blanc" 1.97

2) Quoted by Mary Shelley in her "Note on Poems of 1816".

3) Peter Butter : Shelley's Idols of the Cave. p.118

opinion of I.J. Kapstein, Mont Blanc itself represents Necessity; and C.H. Vivian considers it to represent the "Principle of Permanence", as he terms it. Both Kapstein and Vivian are agreed, however, that the "nature of the mind" forms part of the subject matter, and that the poem is one of conflict; for Kapstein:

"... Shelley's conflicting attitudes towards the subject matter - his simultaneous acceptance and rejection of the conclusion to which his ontological speculation led him"1);

for Vivian:

"... a twofold struggle in his own experience. One element in this struggle was an almost agonizing effort to understand the real nature of the mind. ... The other element in this twofold struggle was an effort to understand something else."2)

The "something else" Vivian goes on to explain, was the Principle of Permanence.

"Here, then was the problem: to come to any real understanding of the permanent and single, with nothing to go on but elusive intuition on the one hand and fleeting, multifarious experience on the other."3)

No matter how the poem is interpreted, however, the philosophical content remains in itself of prime importance. Shelley's philosophy was to undergo certain changes during the course of his life, but the "Power" remains, although the terminology and sometimes even the conception of this power may change. The outward forms of the poem

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- 1) I.J. Kapstein : The Meaning of Shelley's "Mont Blanc".
(P.M.L.A. Volume LXII p.1046)
 - 2) Charles H. Vivian : The One "Mont Blanc".
(Keats-Shelley Journal Volume IV Winter 1955 pp.55-56)
 - 3) idem p.56.

introduce and make visible, as it were, the vast, unseen power behind the universe. The very rhyme-scheme, with its rhymes frequently far apart, seems to point to and emphasize the vast realm of the universe and eternity. It is interesting to note, however, that neither Kloos nor Verwey followed Shelley's rhyme-scheme when translating this poem. Yet both were aware that it existed and Kloos at least was aware of its significance.¹⁾

Although there is no rhyme in the translation, a similar effect is sometimes achieved by means of alliteration, assonance and repetition. Thus in the first stanza, where the second and last lines are linked in the original by rhyme they are linked in the translation by repetition in the last line of the predominating sounds in the second line:

"Stroomt door de geest, en rolt zijn snel gegolf

 en een breede stroom
 Door rotsge bedding rustloos breekt en raast."

by alliteration in "rolt" / "rotsge" - "rustloos" - "raast", and assonance in "rolt" - "gegolf" / "rotsge", "geest" / "breekt", "snel" / "bedding". In addition, there is a close link by near repetition in "stroomt" in the second line and "stroom" at the end of the line immediately preceding the last line. The use of alliteration and

1) Letter from Kloos to Verwey, dated 18th November 1884.

"Brommend" noem jij het gedicht: ik zou het nog eer chaotisch willen heeten, chaotisch in de opstapeling der beelden, maar vooral in de constructie der zinnen, en tot in de dooreenslingering der rijmen toe. En in zoover stemt het met het onderwerp overeen: zoo'n bergland-schap is een chaos. ..."

assonance in the last line is particularly striking.

Rhythmically Verwey's translation is very similar to the original, although by no means identical with it. There are also some deviations in meaning and in style.¹⁾

"'t Heelal der dingen, 't onverganklijke,
Stroomt door de geest, en rolt zijn snel gegolf
Nu zwart, nu glinstrend, nu in schemergloor,
Nu glans afgevend waar, geheim ontstaan,
De bron van 't menschlijk denken schatting brengt
Van waatren, met maar half zijn eigen klank, - "

In the sixth line quoted above Verwey used a slightly different punctuation from that of the original:

"The everlasting universe of things
Flows through the mind, and rolls its rapid waves,
Now dark - now glittering - now reflecting gloom -
Now lending splendour, where from secret springs
The source of human thought its tribute brings
Of waters, - with a sound but half its own," (11.1-6)

The sixth line is admittedly ambiguous. Does "its" refer to the "source of human thought" (1.5) or to the "everlasting universe of things" (1.1)? Professor Kapstein takes it as referring to the latter, basing his argument largely on the punctuation.

"It is clear enough that "its" in 1.5 refers to "source of human thought," but the "its" of 1.6 has ambiguous reference. At first glance it

1) In the first line, for example, there is a stylistic difference between:

"'t Heelal der dingen, 't onverganklijke,
Stroomt door de geest, ..."

and:

"The everlasting universe of things
Flows through the mind, ..." (11.1-2)

The original is smoother and more flowing and is thus more in keeping with the image of a flowing stream than the translation, which is more jerky.

seems also to refer to "source of human thought" so that in reading 1.5 and 6 one takes them to say: "The source of human thought with a sound but half its own brings its tribute of waters." But the comma and dash which come after "waters" in 1.6 make an emphatic separation of "with a sound but half its own" from "the source of human thought its tribute brings of waters," so that the "its" of 1.6 may be taken to refer, as does the "its" of 1.2, to "the everlasting universe of things". If this is the reference Shelley intended, then the passage demands a reading of "the universe of things" as the "feeble brook" of 1.7 while the waters from the "secret springs of human thought" become the "vast river".¹⁾

Professor Kapstein finds support for this interpretation in Shelley's "Speculations on Metaphysics". By altering the punctuation Verwey made it quite clear that (according to his reading of this passage) "its" in 1.6 referred to the "source of human thought", a view, moreover, which is shared by Vivian.²⁾

Verwey appears to have had a special preference for the word "zwart" as a translation for "dark". It is used several times in this sense in this poem:

"Nu zwart, nu glinstrend, ..." (1.3)

"... diep, zwart Ravijn, - " (1.12)

"Barstend door 't zwart gebergte, ..." (1.18)

The above are but a few of many such examples. The choice of "zwart" in preference to "donker" or "duister" is probably due to its acoustic similarity to the English word "dark".

1) I.J. Kapstein : The Meaning of Shelley's "Mont Blanc".
(P.M.L.A. Volume LXII (1947) p.1048)

2) Charles H. Vivian : The One "Mont Blanc".
(Keats-Shelley Journal Volume IV Winter 1955 p.57)

"Breekt" in the last line of the first stanza is in itself a little strange as a translation of "bursts" in Shelley's line:

"Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and raves." (l.11) and does not convey quite the same impression, evoking, as it does, an image of waves breaking, rather than the ceaseless bubbling of a brook over rocks and stones. But it plays a part in the cohesive effect of the alliteration and assonance replacing the rhyme in this stanza.¹⁾

There is assonance at the beginning of the second stanza corresponding approximately to the rhyme in the original, but this may be accidental. The rhyme in the second and third lines is represented by assonance in "vallei" - "zeilen", and in the first and fourth lines there is a mixture of final and internal rhyme which may or may not be intentional:

"Zoo gij, Ravijn van Arve - diep, zwart Ravijn, -
.....
Wolkschaduwen en zonschijn: ..."

The general sound pattern of the second stanza is similar to that of the original. First the infinite variety of the "many-coloured", "many-voiced vale", with the "cloud-shadows" and "sunbeams", followed by the deeper and more powerful note of the river rushing down.

"... vreeslijk oord
Waar Macht onder de schijn van de Arve daalt
Van de ijsstroom die zijn duistere troon omgordt,
Barstend door 't zwart gebergte, een vlam gelijk
Van bliksem door het noodweer; - ..."

1) See page 147.

Acoustically the Dutch is even more expressive here than the original.¹⁾ As the poet turns his attention from the mighty river back to the Ravine itself the tone becomes quieter and gentler and this is maintained throughout the stanza except for a momentary return to the deep note of the river in the lines:

"Uw holen galmend op der Arve gedreun,
Eén eenge galm die nooit geen andre toomt;"

The third and fourth lines of this stanza provide an example of Verwey's close adherence to the word order of the English:

"Over whose pines, and crags and caverns sail
Past cloud-shadows..." (11.14-15)

which is translated as:

"Over wier pijnen, spitsen, holen, zeilen
Wolkschaduwen ..."

The unusual form "zonschijn" in the fourth line may perhaps be formed by analogy with "zonlicht", possibly also somewhat influenced by the English word "sunshine", although it is not used as a translation of this word here.

In the seventh and eighth lines Verwey's close imitation of the word order of the original:

"Bursting through these dark mountains like a flame
Of lightning through the tempest; ..." (11.18-19)

led him to use a somewhat awkward word order in Dutch:

"Barstend door 't zwart gebergte, een vlam gelijk
Van bliksem door het noodweer; - ..."

but the acoustic similarity between the Dutch and the English is striking. If anything the sound of the

1) Compare "Mont Blanc" 11.15-19

translation is even more expressive than the original.

The earlier manuscript version of the ninth line:

"'t Reuzenbroed van de pijnen klemt om u,"

was much closer to the English:

"Thy giant brood of pines around thee clinging," (1.20)
than the revised version:

"'t Reuzenbroed van de pijnen rondom u,".

The correction was probably made for the sake of the rhythm, but the line loses thereby some of its graphic quality. Another reason for the correction may have been the remarkable vowel harmony in the revised version comparable to that of the original.

"De doorzichtge val" does not evoke quite the same image as "the aethereal waterfall" (1.26). The "waterfall" may indeed be transparent (or partly so) but "doorzichtig" does not convey the same impression of light mist as "aethereal". Vivian interprets this passage as follows:

"The waterfall - made up, of course, of the waters of experience - robes something behind it as with a veil. Under these circumstances, for anyone actually to perceive what lies behind would perhaps not be impossible, but it would be extremely difficult. Here is the problem: to understand the Permanent behind the transitory."1)

If the waterfall is "doorzichtig" this problem ceases to exist.

In its present state the line:

"Eén eenge galm die nooit geen andre toemt;"

is somewhat ambiguous as a result of the dropping of the

1) Charles H. Vivian : The One "Mont Blanc".
(Keats-Shelley Journal Volume IV Winter 1955 p.59)

inflexional "n" still found in the manuscript and the earlier printed version. "Geen" may possibly be a writing error for "een", although it appears in the manuscript and also in both printed versions, but it was probably used intentionally to give additional emphasis.

The following passage has been variously interpreted:

"One legion of wild thoughts, whose wandering wings
Now float above thy darkness, and now rest
Where that or thou art no unbidden guest," (ll.41-43)

According to Professor Kapstein¹⁾ "that" in line 43 refers back to the poet's mind (line 36), later referred to as "one legion of wild thoughts" (line 41).

Charles H. Vivian,²⁾ however, takes "thy darkness" in line 42 to be the antecedent of "that" in line 43.

Verwey appears to have shared Kapstein's view on the reading of this passage, for in his translation "that", rendered as it is by "zij", can only refer back to "warlend gedachtenheir".

"Warlend gedachten-heir, wier wiekgeklep
Nu op uw duister drijft en aanstonds rust
Waar gij en zij geen vreemde gasten zijt,".³⁾

Verwey is very successful here in reproducing the effect of the original. It will be noticed that the alliteration in the first of the lines quoted above approximates very closely to that in the original. The second line is also very effective and perhaps even more descriptive acoustically than Shelley's phrase, although there is

1) I.J. Kapstein : The Meaning of Shelley's "Mont Blanc".

2) Charles H. Vivian : The One "Mont Blanc".

3) There is a deviation in "gij en zij". The original has "that or thou". (l.43)

a slight difference in meaning.

The third and central stanza reaches a climax with the appearance of Mont Blanc itself.

"Mont Blanc appears, still, snowy, and serene - " (1.61)
In the earlier and more literal translation of this line:

"Mont Blanc verschijnt, stil, sneeuwig, vredevol - ;"
the appearance of the mountain was linked by assonance with the preceding lines:

"... Want de geest in mij bezwijkt,
Huislooze wolk, gejaagd van steilt tot steilt,
Tot in d'onzichtbre stormwind zij verdwijnt.
Hoog, ver omhoog, borende in 't eindloos ruim,
Mont Blanc verschijnt, stil, sneeuwig, vredevol - ;"

The revision of:

"Mont Blanc verschijnt, ..."

to:

"Rijst de Mont Blanc, ..."

not only avoids the unnatural word order, but is also very felicitous, linking by alliteration the vastness of the sky with the peak of Mont Blanc soaring up into it.

"Hoog, ver omhoog, borende in 't eindloos ruim,
Rijst de Mont Blanc, stil, sneeuwig, vredevol - ;"

whereby the preceding line more effectively leads up to the climax. There is no such link in the original.

The second half of this line:

"... stil, sneeuwig, vredevol - ;"

is also particularly successful acoustically.

Although from the arrangement and the heading it appears that Verwey was using the Moxon edition of Shelley's works for these three poems, the translation of line 8 seems to suggest that the Chatto and Windus edition was referred to, if not actually used for the

translation. In several editions, including the Chatto and Windus edition, this line reads:

"Spread far around and inaccessibly
Its circles? ..."

The Moxon edition, however, has:

"Speed far around ...".

It may well be that, finding this latter version somewhat obscure, Verwey turned to the former edition for confirmation or elucidation.

In the lines:

"... Want de geest in mij bezwijkt,
Huislooze wolk, gejaagd van steilt tot steilt,
Tot in d'onzichtbre stormwind zij verdwijnt."

it will be noticed that assonance replaces Shelley's rhyme:

"... For the very spirit fails,
Driven like a homeless cloud from steep to steep
That vanishes among the viewless gales!"

Assonance in "onzichtbre" - "stormwind" also takes the place of Shelley's alliteration in "vanishes" - "viewless".

After his contemplation of Mont Blanc the poet provides the only possible answer to his questioning earlier in the poem:

"None can reply - all seems eternal now," (1.75)

In the translation there is a link, possibly accidental but nevertheless effective, suggested by assonance between this line and the climax:

"Rijst de Mont Blanc, stil, sneeuwig, vredevol - ;"
"Geen antwoord. Alles schijnt of 't eeuwig was."

The meaning of the following passage appears somewhat obscure and is seemingly paradoxical.

"The wilderness has a mysterious tongue
Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so mild

So solemn, so serene, that man may be,
But for such faith, with nature reconciled;" (ll.76-79)

On the face of it this appears to suggest that the faith referred to prevents man from being reconciled with nature. This passage was translated quite literally by Verwey:

"De streek heeft een geheimnisvolle tong
Die twijfel leert, ontzaglijk, of geloof
Zoo mild, zoo kalm, zoo vredig, dat de Mensch,
Was dat geloof niet, vree had met Natuur."

Charles H. Vivian gives the following interpretation to this passage:

"The wilderness..." is the total scene which has just been presented, the single peak above and the chaos all around below it.... If he looks at the chaos and not at the peak - if he cannot see past the distracting welter of experience and intuit the Principle beyond - then he will fall into skepticism about the meaning of life itself. If, on the other hand, while of course perceiving the flow of experience, he can discern the Principle and recognize its significance, then he will see all things sub specie aeternitatis."1)

In a footnote he gives his reason for this interpretation, based as it is on his reading of the phrase "But for such faith".

"I am reading the phrase "But for such faith" in line 79 to mean not "except for such faith" but "by means of such faith alone". This interpretation is supported by the variant "In such a faith" of the Boscombe MS. It is more reasonable to presume that Shelley made the revision to sharpen the emphasis than to think that he wished to change the meaning diametrically."2)

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- 1) Charles H. Vivian: The One "Mont Blanc".
(Keats-Shelley Journal, Volume IV Winter 1955 p.62)
- 2) idem

This appears to be a plausible interpretation, although I personally find it difficult to accept the phrase "but for such faith" in the sense of "in such a faith", unless a comma after "but" be intended instead of after "be" in the preceding line. Even so, the order is somewhat strained if "but" is to be used in the sense: "man may be but reconciled with nature for such faith". It is interesting to note in this connection that Verwey's original translation of line 79 read:

"Door zulk geloof slechts vree kreeg met Natuur", suggesting that his own interpretation in fact coincided with that of Vivian. This line was, however, corrected in the manuscript to its present reading, which retains the original obscurity of meaning. It is as if Verwey, after his original flash of insight, hesitated to give what he felt was perhaps a personal interpretation of the text and preferred to translate Shelley's phrase literally, in all its vagueness and ambiguity. It is probable that Verwey knew of the variant in the Boscombe Manuscript. His original line appears in fact to be a translation of this variant. Yet, why should he first translate the variant and then the generally accepted version, unless the variant conveyed more clearly his own interpretation of the text? And if the variant indeed represented his interpretation, why should he alter his translation later? Did he perhaps believe that Shelley had changed his mind so completely? For Verwey's revised translation: "Was dat geloof niet ..." makes it quite clear that he took the phrase: "But for that faith ..." to mean "except for" or "without that faith", which is diametrically opposed to

the sense of both the Boscombe manuscript and his own earlier version. Another interpretation is put forward by Kapstein:

"If the doctrine of Necessity did not teach men that nature is indifferent to their welfare, nature and men might be reconciled."¹⁾

Apart from other minor deviations²⁾ there is in this stanza a more serious deviation, which appears to be due to a misreading of the English.

"Gij hebt een stem, vreeslijke Berg, die roep
Tegen wetboeken van misdrijf en leed; ..."

This does not translate:

"Thou hast a voice, great Mountain, to repeal
Large codes of fraud and woe; ..." (ll.80-81)

and seems to indicate a too literal translation of the word "repeal".³⁾

The restless movement, suggested by the rhythm and variety of sound in the fourth stanza, pauses for a moment as reference is again made to Mont Blanc, but now to the power it personifies rather than to the mountain itself.

"Macht enkel leeft alleen in stoorloosheid
Veraf, in vrede, en ontoegankelijk."

The revision of the earlier:

"Macht enkel woont alleen ..."

to the present reading was undoubtedly made with a view

- 1) I.J. Kapstein : The Meaning of Shelley's "Mont Blanc".
(P.M.L.A. Volume LXII (1947) p.1055)
- 2) As for example "de streek" for "the wilderness" (l.76)
and "vreeslijke Berg" for "great Mountain" (l.80).
- 3) It is possible, however, that Verwey, objecting to the purely legal word "repeal" = "herroepen", deliberately used "roept tegen", preferring the living word "roepen" to the more fossilized word "herroepen".

to increasing the air of calm suggested by these lines with the assonance in "leeft" - "alleen" - "vrede".

This stanza has some slight deviations¹⁾; and "hieuw" is not a translation of "piled" (l.104), but

"... menigen afgrond hieuw
Vorst met de Zon tot hoon van menschenmacht:"

is more acceptable as imagery than:

"... there, many a precipice
Frost and the Sun in scorn of mortal power
Have piled - ..." (ll.102-104)

"'t Menschlijke doen en gaan, geboorte en dood,
Al dat de mensch raakt of van mensch mag zijn;"

seems to be a free translation of the original:

"The works and ways of man, their death and birth,
And that of him and all that his may be;" (ll.92-93)

but the original is admittedly somewhat obscure.

The acoustic effect of:

"Toch, niet een stad maar een verwoestingsvloed
Is daar, die van de grenzen van de lucht
Zijn eeuwge stroom stort; reuzenpijnen strooien
Zich voor hem heen of, in gekneusde grond,
Staan twijgloos en verbrijzeld; rotsen, stortend
Van ginds ver die woestijn, verwentelden
Voorgoed de grenzen tusschen 't rijk des doods
En dat van 't leven. ..."

is strikingly suggestive of the flood of ruin sweeping down. It differs, however, from the original in that

1) As for example "felle vloed" for "fiery flood" (l.87) where "felle" was presumably preferred for its sound and also for the near-alliteration it provides, which somewhat resembles that of the original. Also "vloekbre ban" for "detested trance" (l.91)

"Gekneusde grond" is weaker in imagery than "mangled soil" (ll.10), and another slight deviation is to be found in "wijde hopen" for "vast caves" (l.120)

it is stronger and fiercer. The sound of:

"Zijn eeuwge stroom stort; ..."

suggests sudden bursts or gushes of water, whereas both the rhythm and the sound of the English:

"Rolls its perpetual stream; ..." (1.109)

suggest a smooth, steady flow.

There is freedom of translation in:

"... Wat verblijfplaats was
Van dier, vogel, insekt, verwoesten zij;
Voedsel en schuilplaats voor altijd voorbij,
Voorbij leven en vreugde. ...".

Although somewhat similar, the meaning conveyed is not the same as:

"... The dwelling-place
Of insects, beasts, and birds becomes its spoil;
Their food and their retreat for ever gone,
So much of life and joy is lost. ..." (11.114-117)

There is also a difference in meaning between:

"Hun plaats kent hen niet meer. ..."

and:

"And their place is not known. ..." (1.120)

But Verwey's translation is interesting. Hearing apparently an echo of Psalm 103 in the lines:

"... The race
Of man flies far in dread; his work and dwelling
Vanish, like smoke before the tempest's stream,
And their place is not known. ..." (11.117-120)

he adapted the wording of the "Staten-Vertaling" of Psalm 103, verse 16.

In the fortieth line of this stanza as printed in "Poëzie in Europa" the full stop after "één breede rivier" is undoubtedly a misprint, as the earlier version in "De Twintigste Eeuw" has only a comma, which, apart from being nearer to the English, is also the only possible

reading.¹⁾

The transitive use of the verb "opwolken" in the last line of this stanza:

"De vlugge nevels opwolkt in de lucht."

is unusual and may possibly be by analogy with the verb "opwoelen", which can be used both transitively and intransitively. "Opwolkt", however, is much less expressive than "breathes" in the original:

"Breathes its swift vapours to the circling air." (1.126)

In the final stanza the poet's attention is turned once more to Mont Blanc and the air of calm silence underlying all references to Mont Blanc in this poem pervades the entire stanza. Particularly effective in suggesting this almost breathless silence is the passage:

".... winden strijden
Geluidloos, hoopen met hun adem sneeuw,
Haastig en sterk, geluidloos.

This stanza is in the main a close translation, although the translator makes a slight alteration to the original by using "als een kind" as a translation for "innocently" (1.138)

"... Als een kind
Blijft stemmelooze bliksem bij zijn huis
In de eenzaamheid, ..."

Used in conjunction with "innocently" the simile "as a

1) In the fifth line of this stanza there appears to be a misprint in the version of the translation published in "Poëzie in Europa". The manuscript and the version printed in "De Twintigste Eeuw" both have "De doodslaap van het jaar", which is also nearer in meaning to "The torpor of the year..." than "De doodslach van het jaar ..." as in "Poëzie in Europa".

child" would be quite effective, but it is hardly sufficient on its own.

The use of the descriptive phrases "veel voor 't oog" and "veel voor 't oor" in preference to single word translations of "sights" (1.128) and "sounds" (1.129) is probably due to the requirements of rhythm and sound.¹⁾

In all these three translations to some extent, but particularly in "Mont Blanc", the article is sometimes omitted before nouns, where in normal prose this would be impossible, as for example:

"In kalme toovergrot der Poëzie"²⁾

"Men zegt dat glimp van afgelegen sfeer"³⁾

"Over besnaard stil instrument"⁴⁾

There are also a few instances of this in the early translations, but they are less obvious. Verwey had,

- 1) Another alteration, presumably made for the sake of the sound is to be found in the fifteenth line where:

"... als een wet is,"

as in "De Twintigste Eeuw", which is a literal translation of the English:

"... is as a law ..." (1.141)

was changed in "Poëzie in Europa" to read:

"... als een wet werkt, ..."

"... Geheime kracht der dingen,
Die geest beheerst, en in de oneindige dom
Des hemels als een wet werkt, woont in u!".

- 2) "Mont Blanc" Stanza II line 33
3) "Mont Blanc" Stanza III line 1
4) "Hymne aan de Geestelijke Schoonheid" Stanza III line 10.

even at an early age, definite ideas about a poet's right to take liberties with the language. The following passage, from his review of Potgieter's "Florence" in June 1883, deals with this very point. The phrase under discussion is: "... door kalklaag overgrijd".

"Ik hoor reeds den een of ander de opmerking maken dat het lidwoord voor "kalklaag" is weggelaten.

Doch niet zoo, lezer! Dat lidwoord zou daar misplaatst zijn: het zou een klank bijvoegen, die noodzakelijk, als alle klanken, den indruk der overigen moest wijzigen, en hier, waar de indruk volkomen juist is weergegeven, zou iedere wijziging schade doen. In poëzie is het er niet om te doen grammatisch-ineen-gezette zinnen te leveren - Het doel van den kunstenaar moet zijn door middel van woorden den indruk te maken, die elders in de natuur door andere middelen wordt opgewekt. Wie in staat is naar dit doel te streven acht de grammatica een bijzaak."1)

The above was written by Verwey only two years after his early translations and some twenty years before the translations dealt with in this chapter.

The translations of the "Poems Written in 1816" are technically superior to the early translations. The rhythm is generally freer and far less regularly iambic than in the earlier translations, and the use of sound is for the most part successful and unobtrusive.

As we have seen, Verwey's early opinion of "Mont Blanc" was poor. He considered it bad poetry and was unable to appreciate it. Nevertheless he realised even then its deep philosophical content, although he was not

1) Verwey : De Oude Strijd. pp.33-34

yet capable of appreciating it.¹⁾ Only when he himself had reached maturity and discovered a new depth within himself, (and consequently in his poetry) could Verwey appreciate fully the depth and import of Shelley's "Mont Blanc". Here beauty of form, which could be seen and appreciated superficially, was no longer important for itself alone but to give access to the realm of Shelley's philosophical thought, rendering it, as it were, visible. How well Verwey succeeded in recapturing the deeper beauty of Shelley's philosophical poems, and in particular of "Mont Blanc", will, it is hoped, be clear from the discussion of these poems. It must be remembered, however, that these are all early poems of Shelley's, presenting difficulties of translation which Verwey even in his maturity was unable to surmount entirely. The crowded imagery and the sometimes vague or involved train of thought, signs perhaps of Shelley's own immaturity and uncertainty,²⁾ do not present an easy task for a translator.

1) Letter from Kloos to Verwey, dated 27th November 1884, and already quoted on p. 144.

"Dat Shelley meer in zijn ziel heeft gehad dan ik nog kan gevoelen, ook zelfs op het oogenblik dat hij M.B. schreef, dat wil ik toegeven."

2) On this point see also Peter Butter's comments on "Mont Blanc": ("Shelley's Idols of the Cave")

"Here, as elsewhere in Mont Blanc, he is labouring to express interesting ideas which he has not fully grasped." (p.109)

"Mont Blanc" is a difficult poem, written in 1816 after he had abandoned materialism and declared himself a convert to Berkeleian Idealism, but was not really sure of his ground." (p.118)

IV

ALASTOR

Verwey's last translation from Shelley's Poetical Works is of the poem "Alastor". This translation was first published in "De Beweging" in July 1909. It was later "carefully corrected, also in point of verse and diction"¹⁾ and this revised version (with an introduction by Verwey in English) appeared in the Shelley Centenary Number of "English Studies" in 1922.

As has already been mentioned, Verwey, as early as 1884, was corresponding at length with Kloos on the subject of "Alastor".²⁾ That is to say, the letters from Kloos deal at very great length with this poem, and particularly with lines 374-401, which he was unable to understand. From the fact that Kloos constantly referred to this passage in his letters, and also from his remarks, it appears that Verwey himself played no small part in this correspondence and, moreover, that he experienced no difficulty with the passage in question.³⁾

1) Verwey : Preface to translation of "Alastor" in "English Studies", 1922. p.152

2) See page 115

3) In view of Verwey's translations of this poem some twenty-five years later, it is interesting to note the following remark made by Kloos in a letter to Verwey, dated 18 November 1884.

"Ja, Alastor! Ik zeg dat maar zoo, vertalen! maar ik geloof niet, dat ik het nu al kan ... Ik denk ook wel eens, dat het beter voor jou geschikt zou zijn ..."

Kloos's grounds for thinking as he did are not known.

Verwey's views on "Alastor" are stated in the "Naschrift bij de Vertaling van Alastor" ("De Beweging", July 1909) and also in the "Preface" to the translation of this poem in the Shelley Centenary Number of "English Studies", both of which are similar in content.

"The poem has two qualities: its impetuosity and its majesty. These together constitute its movement, which is the immediate expression of the poet's subject: the passionate and rapid and sacred life, that he wished to represent. Because in Alastor movement is the prime principle of imaginative expression, the poem lives by the concatenation of its parts, more than by the parts themselves, their feeling and their visibility. These two are of high value, but not of the highest: it is a fact, that some descriptions lack clearness, some thoughts comprehensibility, that many terms are vague or too often reiterated. But these deficiencies are of little moment: The connection of the parts, the movement makes up for them all. It is the strong flight of an exalted soul, overlooking the stream of its life."¹⁾

One is therefore led to assume that in 1884 the "awe" referred to in the letter from Kloos to Verwey, dated 27 November 1884,²⁾ prevented Verwey from expressing criticism of "Alastor", and caused him to accept the poem without question, with all its technical defects. "Mont Blanc" on the other hand seems to have aroused no such feeling of "awe" and could therefore be criticised freely. The following excerpt (also taken from the letter from Kloos to Verwey, dated 27 November 1884) presumably refers to Verwey's two different attitudes: towards "Mont Blanc" and towards "Alastor". The passage begins with a quotation from Verwey's letter.

1) "English Studies", Shelley Centenary Number 1922. p.152

2) See also page 144

"Ik begreep het wel niet, (n.l. dat ik lachte), want ik werd eerst uitgelachen, omdat ik zei, dat mijn gevoel mij soms terughield van oordeelen, en daarna werd het me kwalijk genomen, dat ik me niet liet terughouden van oordeelen" ... 't is een handige draai ... maar 't is niet waar... Ik lachte niet, omdat je je soms liet terughouden van oordeelen, maar omdat je daartoe reden vindt in een geheimzinnige aandoening, die de Schoonheid ook onbegrepen in je teweegbracht."

When Verwey came to translate "Alastor", however, he did not shrink from mentioning the poem's defects, although, (as can be seen from the passage quoted from the "Preface" to this translation) they were to him of minor importance compared with the greatness of conception of the poem itself.

Both versions of the translation are divided into sections or paragraphs corresponding in length to those of the original poem, with the possible exception of lines 296-315 in the "English Studies" version, which is printed as one paragraph, whereas in the earlier version and also in the Chatto and Windus and Oxford editions of Shelley's Poetical Works it is divided into two. This is unusual, for, as has already been pointed out, Verwey felt under no obligation whatever to fit his translation into the same number of lines as the original, and, in fact at times advised against it.¹⁾

Both translations resemble the original poem rhythmically, although the later version is frequently even closer to the original in this respect than the earlier version published in "De Beweging". Some of the revisions in fact appear

1) See pages 78-79

to have been made with the rhythm in mind.¹⁾

The first line provides another example of Verwey's efforts to follow Shelley's rhythm as closely as possible. If "Earth, ocean, air..." had been translated in the order given there would have been an appreciable difference in rhythm. In Verwey's translation, however,

"Lucht, aarde en zee, ..."

the rhythm is the same as in Shelley's line.

The alliteration in the second half of this line:

"Lucht, aarde en zee, beminde broederschap"

corresponds exactly to the alliteration in:

"Earth, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood",

yet this translation did not apparently satisfy Verwey, for in the revised version he altered it to:

"Lucht, aarde en zee, mij dierbre broederbond",

where, although a certain amount of alliteration is retained, it is less obvious, and mainly internal. The alteration of "broederschap" to "broederbond", moreover, intensifies the close bond or union existing between "Earth", "ocean" and "air".

"Stortte" in the third line of both versions of

1) Thus, for example,

"Indien ons aller Moeder in mijn ziel
Iets stortte van natuurlijk meegevoel" (11.2-3)

although rhythmically not unlike the English:

"If our great Mother has imbued my soul
With aught of natural piety to feel"

was altered in the later version to:

"Zoo in mijn ziel de almachtige Moeder stortte
Een vleug maar van natuurlijk meegevoel"

which is much closer in rhythm to the original.

the translation:

"Zoo in mijn ziel de almachtige Moeder stortte
Een vleug maar van natuurlijk meegevoel"

conveys an abrupter impression than "imbued" in Shelley's line:

"If our great Mother has imbued my soul
With aught of natural piety ..."

although this is perhaps a minor point. "Meegevoel", as a translation of "piety" seems at first glance to indicate a misunderstanding of the text, but the clue may perhaps be found in Wordsworth's use of "natural piety".¹⁾

In the earlier version:

"Zoo 't hol gerucht van herfst in 't dorre woud"

"gerucht" is probably a misprint. In the later version

- 1) "The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety".

These lines from an earlier poem appear as the motto above Wordsworth's Ode, "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections in Early Childhood." In "Poëzie in Europa" Verwey translated the above lines as:

"Het Kind is vader van de Man
En jaar wenschte ik aan jaar gereid
Door een natuurlijk-vrome aanhankelijkheid"

The translation in "Alastor" of "natural piety" by "natuurlijk meegevoel" may possibly have been influenced by Verwey's reading of Wordsworth's ode and in particular of the expression "primal sympathy" in the following passage: (lines 183-190)

"We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering:
In the faith that looks through death
In years that bring the philosophic mind."

it appears as "gezucht", which is much nearer to the English both in meaning and in sound.

For the rest, this section is a fairly close translation, with the exception of the last three lines, where there is some deviation, apparently based on a misreading of the text, for the Dutch:

"... duldt
Beminde broedren, dan die lof en laat
Me ook thans geen deel van de oude gunst ontgaan"

does not appear to mean the same as the English:

"... then forgive
This boast, beloved brethren, and withdraw
No portion of your wanted favour now!"

The poet is asking the "beloved brethren" to "forgive" his "boast", which is the content of the preceding lines, not to "endure" or "tolerate" his "praise" of the "brethren". The poet already enjoys the favour of the "beloved brethren". This in fact is his boast.¹⁾ He now asks that this favour may continue; may not be withdrawn now he has boasted of it. The difference between the Dutch and the English, apart from the slight difference in actual meaning between "withdraw" and "laat ... ontgaan" is also one of emphasis and approach. In the English version the emphasis is on the bestowers of favour: the poet therefore begs that this favour may not be withdrawn. In the Dutch version the emphasis is on the poet himself; he hopes he may not lose the favour previously enjoyed.

1) A possible explanation, however, is that by using "lof" in this way Verwey hoped to suggest its sense when used in the well-known combination "eigen lof", in which case the meaning is the same as in the English version.

The construction of this section is the same as that of the original; the five conditional clauses introduced by "zoo" correspond to similar clauses in the original, where they are introduced by "if"; "indien" in the second line of the earlier version of the translation being altered later to "zoo".

The second section is strongly reminiscent of the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty", but the "Power" addressed is now the "Mother of this unfathomable world". In this connection it is interesting to note that Shelley speaks of "awful talk", whereas in the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" (written some months later) the reference is to "high talk". It is possible that Verwey's translation "griezlig nieuws" for "high talk" may have been influenced somewhat by this reference to "awful talk" (translated here by "gruwbre praat"). Yet "awful" was still used in Shelley's day in its more literal sense.¹⁾

There are several instances in this section of Verwey's use of the words and the sounds represented by those words in order to achieve certain effects. In the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" the contrast suggested by the repetition in:

"Toovergeluid, wiens macht machtloos niet nedergooit" has already been remarked on.²⁾ There is now a similar juxtaposition in:

1) A similar use of "awful" can be found, for instance in a hymn by Josiah Conder (1789-1855):

"Yet dear the awful thought to me
That thou, my God, art nigh"

See also, however, line 108 where "awful" is translated by "ontzachbre" (page 179)

2) See page 129

"Die 't leven zelf stelt op een donkre hoop
- Wanhopig - ..." (11.32-33)

This is emphasized even more strongly in the later version of the translation by the insertion of a hyphen in "Wan-hopig". There is nothing comparable in the English version, either here or in the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty".

The repetition of "diep" tends to intensify the impression of depth.

"En mijn hart staart gedurig op het diep
Van uw diepe geheimen ..." (11.22-23)

This exact repetition does not occur in the original:

"And my heart ever gazes on the depth
Of thy deep mysteries.",

where a similar effect is achieved by means of the alliteration in "depth" and "deep" and assonance or near-
assonance in "deep mysteries".¹⁾

The last five lines of this section are of interest in that, although conveying a similar impression to that conveyed by Shelley's lines, they are actually different in structure. This difference may possibly be due to Verwey's reading of "that" in line 45 as a relative. This reading is not impossible, but the word order: "that my strain may modulate..." in the sense: "that may modulate my strain..." is somewhat forced and unnatural. A more probable reading would be: "I await thy breath ... in order that my strain may modulate ..." in which "modulate" is used intransitively instead of transitively as in the former reading.

1) In Shelley's poetry the final syllable in such words as "mystery" is frequently lengthened to rhyme with words like "me". This vowel therefore approximates closely to that in "deep" in Shelley's usage.

The use of "snaar" instead of a more literal translation of "strain" is perhaps even more in keeping with the image of the "long forgotten lyre" than is the English "strain".

After this invocation there follows a brief section describing the poet's lonely death and his loss to the world. The melancholy tone of this passage is underlined by the sound of the actual words and the slow rhythm. The sound of the translation, with its preponderance of long or lengthened vowels also conveys a similar effect.

In his effort to follow as closely as possible the word order of the English, Verwey resorted to unusual compounds, somewhat reminiscent of the style of Keats. This is particularly noticeable in:

"Geen mensch-hand vroom-eeerbiedig heeft gebouwd,¹⁾
Maar herfstwind-vlagen door zijn lijk bekoord,"¹⁾ (11.51-
52)

where the translation follows the original very closely.²⁾

"En Stilte, als ook verliefd op dat geluid,"
seems to indicate that Verwey was no longer using the Chatto and Windus edition of Shelley's works when he translated this poem, or at least, no longer this edition alone. In the Chatto and Windus edition, and also the Oxford edition, this line reads:

"And Silence, too enamour'd of that voice,"³⁾

- 1) "No human hands with pious reverence reared,
But the charmed eddies of autumnal winds" (11.51-52)
- 2) Other examples are: "Van blader-lijken in de wildernis",
and "Vreemdingen weenden bij zijn hartetocht-toon"
(11.54 and 61). Also later in the poem Verwey resorted
to almost Keatsian word combinations, as for example
"schitter-kleur" (1.412) and "mengel-schaduw" (1.421)
- 3) The Oxford edition has "enamoured".

Other editions, including the Moxon edition have:

"And Silence too, enamoured of that voice,"¹⁾

It is interesting to note how Verwey achieved comparable emphasis to that found in:

"... no lorn bard

Breathed o'er his dark fate one melodious sigh:".(58-59)

This apparently necessitated a reversal of the negative and positive as found in the lines quoted above, but the result in emphasis is striking similarity.

"... een dwalend bard

Aênde om zijn donker lot geen zucht en zang."

In the fourth section, which begins the review of the ill-fated poet's life, there is a change of tone from the very first line:

"By solemn vision and bright silver dream

His infancy was nurtured. ..." (ll.67-68)

Gone is the slow melancholy of the preceding paragraph.

The short, light vowels suggest a quicker pace and a lighter, brighter tone, compatible with the young poet's awakening senses and his eager and keen thirst for knowledge. This same quickening of pace and change of tone is suggested by the Dutch:

"Gewijd vizioen en schitterend zilvren droom

Voedden zijn kindertijd."

The impression of restlessness suggested by the rhythm and the sound of the words is continued throughout this section until the last eight lines, where the sense demands (and receives) a slower, more peaceful setting, broken only by the phrase:

1) Most editions, however, favour the former version, with the comma before "too".

"... that starts whene'er

The dry leaf rustles in the brake, ..." (ll.103-104)

A similar effect is suggested in the translation, although the impression of restlessness is not sustained to quite the same extent as in the original. But here, also, a quieter tone is introduced in the last eight lines, only to be broken by the phrase:

"... die opschrikt, als

Ben dor blad ritselt in 't gestruik, ..."

Several revisions were made in this section when it was published in "English Studies". These alterations are, with one exception,¹⁾ improvements in rhythm and sound rather than in meaning. The revised versions are, in fact, frequently freer translations.

Verwey's use of assonance and alliteration in:

"Heilig als feit of fabel, ..."

serves to make this a very closely-knit phrase, although the phrase itself is not a particularly close translation of the English:

"... which the sacred past

In truth or fable consecrates, ..." (ll.73-74)

1) The exception referred to is the alteration of:

"... of waar geheime grotten

Duister en ruig, voortgaand de bronnen langs

Van gif en aardvuur, ..."

to: "... of waar verborgen grotten

Duister en ruig, windend de bronnen langs

Van gif en aardvuur, ..."

which is closer to the English:

"... or where the secret caves,

Rugged and dark, winding among the springs

Of fire and poison, ..." (ll.87-89)

than is the former version.

The resulting improvement in rhythm and sound more than makes up for the freer translation in:

"... De eerste jeugd voorbij, weerhouden
Door koude haard noch vreemd geworden thuis,
Zocht hij in vreemde streken nieuw geheim." (11.75-77)¹⁾

There is a slight difference between:

"On black bare pointed islets ever beat" (1.86)

and:

"Op zwart naaktpuntig eiland eldoor slaan."

but the acoustic effect is remarkably similar.

Great is also the rhythmic and acoustic similarity between the revised version:

"Duister en ruig, windend de bronnen langs"²⁾

and:

"Rugged and dark, winding among the springs" (1.88)

This section is for the most part a fairly close and accurate translation of the English. The few instances of freer translation already noted do not alter to any extent the meaning and, as has been seen, result in a rhythmic and acoustic effect more nearly corresponding to that of the original. There are, nevertheless a few

1) Compare the earlier version:

"... Vroege jeugd voorbij, verliet
Hij kouden haard en vreemdgeworden thuis,
Naar vreemde waarheid in vreemd land op zoek."

and the original:

"... When early youth had passed, he left
His cold fireside and alienated home
To seek strange truths in undiscovered lands."

2) Compare the earlier version:

"Duister en ruig, voortgaand de bronnen langs"

cases of free translation where the meaning of the English is not fully rendered.

"Noch had dat veld van weidscher majesteit
Dan goud of steenen, 't wisslend hemeldak,
Noch 't groen van de aard geringere aanspraak op
Liefde en bewondering: ..." (11.95-98)

This is vaguer than the English, which makes it quite clear that the reference is to the poet's love and admiration.

"Nor had that scene of ampler majesty
Than gems or gold, the varying roof of heaven,
And the green earth, lost in his heart its claims
To love and wonder; ...".

There are also some slight differences between:

"... lang verwijlde hij
In onbewoonde dalen, had voor huis
De wildernis: duiven en eekhoorns namen
Hun bloedloos voedsel uit zijn veilige hand,"

and:

"... he would linger long
In lonesome vales, making the wild his home,
Until the doves and squirrels would partake
From his innocuous hand his bloodless food,". (11.98-101)

"Onbewoond", although not, strictly speaking, a translation of "lonesome", does nevertheless convey the same sense here, and is, moreover, similar in sound. "Hun bloedloos voedsel", for "his bloodless food", however, alters the meaning, and so also does the omission of "until" in the translation.

This section contains two striking examples of Verwey's love of assonance: "meren van teer" (1.85) and "nissen klaar van paarl" (11.93-94).

From the wonders of nature the poet turns in the fifth paragraph to the wonders of past civilizations. In this section the sound of the last eight lines is particularly

expressive of the content:

"He lingered, poring on memorials
Of the world's youth, through the long burning day
Gazed on those speechless shapes nor, when the moon
Filled the mysterious halls with floating shades
Suspended he that task, but ever gazed
And gazed, till meaning on his vacant mind
Flashed like strong inspiration, and he saw
The thrilling secrets of the birth of time." (11.121-128)

The atmosphere of quiet concentration is broken suddenly in the seventh line by "Flashed", and the last two lines seem to vibrate with excitement. A similar effect is achieved in the translation.

"Draalde hij, broedende op gedachtnisteevens
Van 's werelds jeugd, brandende dagen lang
Dat spraakloos volk beturend, noch, wen maan
't Geheimvol ruim met schaduwen bedreef,
Staakte die taak hij, maar betuurde aldoor
En tuurde, tot zijn leedgen geest een zin
Doorbliksemde als inblazing sterk: hij zag
Trillen 't geboortgeheim van de' aardschen tijd."

Here is the same atmosphere of deep concentration, broken suddenly by "Doorbliksemde", which is even in the same position as "Flashed" in the original text. The lines after the spell has, as it were, been broken are (like the English lines) filled with a trembling air of excitement and expectancy.

The few examples of freedom of translation are for the most part so slight as to be considered negligible. The revisions made are in every case improvements in sound or rhythm, sometimes by means of a freer translation.¹⁾

1) An example of this is to be found in:

"De ontzachtbre puinen van den ouden tijd:" (1.108)
which became in the revised version:

The sixth paragraph is a form of interlude, and intermezzo as it were, in which Shelley shows the hopeless love the poet inspires, although unaware of it himself. The general tone both in the original and in the translation is, as is to be expected, quiet and almost reverent. This is for the most part a close translation and the few cases of freedom do not alter the sense to any great extent.¹⁾
The sound harmonies in:

"Rees in onschuldige droomen: 't roode licht
Bleekte de bleeke maan, als haar koud huis,
Angstig en mat en hijgend, zij hervond." (ll.137-139)

are remarkable in their great similarity to those in the original:

"... then, when red morn
Made paler the pale moon, to her cold home,
Wildered, and wan, and panting, she returned."

In the seventh section the description of the poet's journeyings is continued; but now that he has been allowed to see "the thrilling secrets of the birth of time"

"De ontzachte puinen van een doode tijd:"

a less literal but acoustically a more pleasing translation of:

"The awful ruins of the days of old:".

- 1) The main instances of free translation in this section are:

"... waar zijn adem kalm
Rees in onschuldige droomen: ..." (ll.136-137)

as a translation of:

"... whence the regular breath
Of innocent dreams arose: ..."

and also lines 137-139 quoted above in connection with the sound harmonies.

(l.128) he is filled with "joy and exultation" (l.144). In this passage, however, a revelation takes place which is to have far-reaching effects on the course of his life. In his sleep a vision appears to him of a "veiled maiden" (l.151). This "veiled maiden" has been variously identified. In the Preface to this poem Shelley states that the poet "images to himself the Being whom he loves". Evan K. Gibson interprets this as follows:

"The vision is a creation by his soul of an ideal "soul-mate", one who will respond to every characteristic of his soul on all three planes". (i.e. intellectual, imagination and sense.) 1)

which is indeed in accordance with Shelley's own theory of the epi-psyche. In his dream the poet experiences the ecstasy of communion with this being, but the section ends with the vision fading and sleep continuing its natural course.

The pace quickens as the section proceeds, with an undercurrent of suppressed excitement, rising to the climax:

"Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,
With frantic gesture and short breathless cry
Folded his frame in her dissolving arms." (ll.185-187)

With this the vision fades and the pace slackens. The last four lines are calm as natural sleep once more takes possession of the poet. A similar pattern is followed in the translation, where in the last four lines a similar slowing down of the pace is suggested by the comparatively regular rhythm, the preponderance of long vowels and the very sparing use of sharp consonants.

1) Evan K. Gibson : Alastor: A re-interpretation.
(P.M.L.A. Volume LXII. p.1029)

"Zijn duizlende oogen zwart omsluerd, nam
Nacht het vizioen op en verzwolg het: slaap,
Een duistere vloed met kort weerhouden loop,
Rolde zijn golf weer door zijn ledig brein." (11.188-191)

There is further indication in "Poëet zijzelf" (161) that, if he was not actually using the Chatto and Windus edition for this translation, Verwey did at least refer to it or possibly to the Oxford edition, for whereas these editions print: "Herself a poet.", the Moxon edition has "Himself a poet".

There are in this section some discrepancies in the translation of the English, but most of them are slight.¹⁾

In:

"Omving zijn lijf ze in arremen van damp."

Verwey interpreted rather than translated the original:

"Folded his frame in her dissolving arms." (1.187)

It is quite reasonable to suppose, however, that the departing vision would appear to dissolve in mist.

Rousing from his trance the poet awakens in the eighth paragraph to a bleak and empty world. The ecstasy

1) As for example:

"... hij wendde op dat geluid
En zag bij 't warm licht van haar eigen leven
Haar lijf dat gloeide onder de leenge sluier"

which is not quite the same as the English:

"... at the sound he turned
And saw by the warm light of their own life
Her glowing limbs beneath the sinuous veil".
(11.174-176)

Nor does "heftig siddrende" (1.180) convey the same impression as "quivering eagerly". There is also a difference, albeit it slight, between "onteugelbare vreugd" and "irresistible joy" (1.185)

caused by the vision has disappeared with the vision.¹⁾

The somewhat brittle sound of the sharp plosive consonants, particularly those in lines 193-196, helps to paint in the cold bleakness of the world to which the poet has awakened.

"Roused by the shock he started from his trance -
The cold white light of morning, the blue moon
Low in the west, the clear and garish hills,
The distinct valley and the vacant woods,
Spread round him where he stood. ..." (ll.192-196)

This is echoed in the translation to such an extent that it must be considered as a conscious echo of the English sound effect.

"De schok hem wekkend schrok hij uit zijn droom.
't Koud-witte morgenlicht, de blauwe maan
Laag in het westen, heuvels kleurig-klaar,
Het duidelijk dal en 't onbewoonde bosch
Spreidden rondom hem waar hij stond. ..."

It will be noticed that the sound pattern, if we may call it such, has been followed as closely as possible, even though this necessitated the use of such unusual combinations as "koud-witte" and "kleurig-klaar".

Another passage where the sound effect is very closely

1) A parallel to this mood of vacancy and desolation following a period of ecstasy can be found in the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" lines 16-17.

"Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?"

See also pages 127-128

There is also a certain rhythmic similarity between:

"The cold white light of morning ..." ("Alastor" l.193)

and:

"This dim vast vale of tears ..."

and successfully reproduced is:

"... Zijn moede oogen
Staren op 't leeg tooneel zoo leeg van blik
Als de zee-maan staart op de maan omhoog." (11.200.202)

which in its suggestion of quiet emptiness and hopelessness is very similar to Shelley's lines:

"... His wan eyes
Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly
As ocean's moon looks on the moon in heaven."

Apart from such slight discrepancies as "droom" for "trance" and "hoe" for "whither", most of the weaknesses are corrected in the revised version, which in this case is not only an improvement poetically, but also more accurate as a translation.¹⁾

1) Instances of inaccuracies corrected in the revised version are:

"... Voert fonkelende regenboog
Door hangend wolkgebergte dat kaatst in 't meer"
as a translation of:

"... Does the bright arch of rainbow clouds,
And pendent mountains seen in the calm lake"
Lead ..." (11.213-215)

later corrected to:

"... Voert flonkerboog in regenwolken
En hangend bergland onder 't effen meer"

and:

"En zal doods blauw gewelf, walglijk bedampt,
Waar iedre walm die slaat uit rottend graf
Zijn dood oog bergt voor den verfoeiden dag,
Leiden o Slaap, naar uw verruklijk rijk?"

as a translation of:

"While death's blue vault with loathliest vapours hung
Where every shade which the foul grave exhales
Hides its dead eye from the detested day,
Conduct, O Sleep, to thy delightful realms?" (216-219)

One other point worthy of notice here is the use of "heftig" as a translation for "eagerly".

"... Heftig volgt hij
Buiten het droomenrijk die schim die vliedt;"¹⁾
(11.205-206)

"Heftig", to my mind, is stronger and more violent than "eagerly", and conveys a somewhat different impression. In the preceding section also "eagerly" was translated by "heftig", with in my opinion the same lack of success.

"Haar buigende oogen stralend, mond ontsloten
Gereikt en bleek en heftig sidrende." (11.179-180)²⁾

In both instances the air of hopeful expectancy suggested by "eagerly" is lost.

Another slight inaccuracy in this section is the use of "hei" as a translation for "desert":

"In padenlooze hei van duistere slaap"³⁾ (1.210)
or perhaps it would be nearer the truth to describe this as the use of a slightly different image to express the same idea.

The poet continues his search but now, in the ninth section, the eager expectancy has changed to frantic

corrected in the revised version to read:

"Terwijl doods blauw gewelf, walglijk bedampt,
Waar iedre schim die rijst uit rottend graf
Zijn dood oog bergt voor de verfoeide dag,
Zal leiden, Slaap, naar uw verruklijk rijk?"

1) The original reads:

"... He eagerly pursues
Beyond the realms of dream that fleeting shade;"

2) "Her beamy bending eyes, her parted lips
Outstretched, and pale, and quivering eagerly"

3) "In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep"

despair. Driven on by a wild frenzy the poet knows no rest, gradually wasting away in the course of his hopeless search. This frantic restlessness is emphasized by the rhythm and the sound of both translation and original. The effect is heightened in the translation, moreover, by abrupt and jerky constructions as for example:

"... Hutbewoners,
Menschlievend in zijn menschlijke behoeften
Voorziende, zagen wondrend met ontzag
Hun snelle gast. ..." (11.254-257)

"... dacht dat de Windgeest zelf
Met bliksemoogen, hijgende adem, voet
Die op de sneeuw geen spoor liet, van zijn vaart
Verpoosde:..." (11.259-262)

As far as the translation of the text is concerned this shows slightly more freedom than the preceding sections, although in most cases the freedom is indeed slight.¹⁾ But a "bergbewoner" (1.257) is not the same as a "mountaineer", nor does "hun snellen gast" (1.257) convey quite the same impression as "their fleeting visitant".

"Hijgende" as a translation for "eager" in the phrase: "hijgende adem" (1.260) is perhaps more felicitous than the "heftig" used in the preceding sections, but still fails to convey fully the sense of eagerness.

"Waarvan 't vreemd licht in meenge laatre droom
Hen plaagde; ..." (11.265-266)

1) "Door warr'ge paden, ..." (1.235)

is however a very free translation of:

"Through tangled swamps ..."

and was corrected in the revised version to read:

"Door warr'ge poelen ..."

It is possible that the earlier version was a misprint.

appears to be a somewhat free translation of:

"To remember their strange light in many a dream
Of after times; ...",

but in this case "plaagde" is in agreement with the general sense of the passage.

Some of Verwey's alliterative effects in this section, (frequently in compounds) are worthy of note, although they do not correspond to anything in the original. The most striking examples are perhaps: "dol-duizlig" (1.231), "schitter-schaduw" (1.233), "nare nacht" (1.234) (where "nare" is used as a somewhat free translation of "desolate"), and "hole-kloven" (1.235), where the assonance is achieved by the use of the unusual form "hole". Also interesting is the clear contrast between "levenskleuren" and "doodswang" in the lines:

"En wierp het spotlicht van haar levenskleuren
Over zijn doodswang. ..." (ll.238-239) 1)

Verwey's use of the Flemish word "glariën" in the line:

"Beängst door 't glariën van die wilde blik," (1.264)

was undoubtedly influenced by the English:

"In terror of the glare of those wild eyes,".

At length the poet's wanderings bring him, in the tenth section, to the sea-shore, where his attention is drawn by a swan flying off at his approach. He contrasts the happy fate of the swan returning to its home and its mate with his own solitary existence, homeless and alone, and in his desperation his thoughts turn towards death.

1) In the original the contrast is less striking:

"Shedding the mockery of its vital hues
Upon his cheek of death. ..."

"Hij poosde op 't laatst aan het Chorasmisch strand, -
Eenzaam en wijd, zwaarmoedige woestijn
Van moer en veen. ..." (11.272-274) 1)

The opening lines of this section give the same impression of melancholy and loneliness, but there seems to be a slight deviation from the original in "moer en veen", although the difference is mainly that of description. "Putrid marshes" is more graphic, but probably no more is meant than is conveyed by the translation. The effective assonance and near-asonance is moreover enhanced by the use of the Brabant word "moer".

There is an interesting case of what appears to be translation of an English idiom in:

"... boog zijn heldre vlucht hij
Hoog over het onmeetlijk vasteland." (11.278-279) 2)

In English the expression "to bend one's steps" or, as we have here, "bend one's course" is normal idiom, although used less frequently now than in Shelley's day. Verwey's choice of "boog" may have been partly influenced by its assonance with "hoog" in the following line, whereby the swan's flight is linked with the impression of height in the next line.

A felicitous, though not particularly literal translation of:

"... and heaven
That echoes not my thoughts"... " (11.289-290)

is:

1) English text reads:

"At length upon the lone Chorasmian shore
He paused, a wide and melancholy waste
Of putrid marshes. ..."

- 2) "... bent its bright course
High over the immeasurable main."

"... en hemel
Die op mijn mijnen zwijgt? ..."

There is a further example of Verwey's love of paradox in the phrase: "hoop die wanhoopt" (1.291). The sense, however, although similar, is not quite the same as "desperate hope". "Hoop die wanhoopt" suggests despair and resignation, whereas "desperate hope" conveys an impression of utmost exertion and tension.

"... en stille dood, misschien
Trouwloos als slaap, bood schaduw-lokaas aan,
't Eigen vreemd schoon hoonend met twijfellaach."
(11.293-295)

is to my mind not a very successful translation of:

"... and silent death exposed,
Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy lure,
With doubtful smile mocking its own strange charms."

although the last line is admittedly an improvement on the earlier version, which read:

"Vreemd schoon door zijn twee-zin'gen lach bespot.", but the result is still far from satisfactory acoustically and rhythmically, and, moreover, does not translate the English. The subtle suggestion of an attraction held out to the poet, leading him on - perhaps to nothingness - is lost in the translation.

Startled to find himself thinking of death, the poet (in the eleventh section) looks about him, but neither sees nor hears anything to alarm him. Seeing a small boat floating near the shore, (not "nearer" as the translation "die d'oever nader dreef" (1.299) would appear to suggest), he suddenly resolves to put to sea in it and meet death alone at sea.

"Alastor" is frequently considered to be an obscure

poem. It contains what appear to be physical impossibilities and one is consequently inclined to accept it (if one accepts it at all) as allegory rather than reality. Evan K. Gibson offers an interpretation in his article: "Alastor - A re-interpretation".¹⁾ He suggests that the first part of the poem is meant to describe the world of reality until the poet reaches the "Chorasman shore", and his contemplation of death. Thereafter, according to Gibson:

"the poet is carried through a natural allegory of death and the span of life, as he continues his search for the vision beyond this life." 2)

Verwey saw in the whole poem a survey, as it were, of the poet's life, ending with his death. Moreover, in his opinion (an opinion which may or may not be shared by other Shelley scholars) the poet in "Alastor" is Shelley himself.³⁾

"Alastor" is het eerste gedicht waarin Shelley zichzelf verbeeldt. Ongeneeslijk ziek verklaard, moest hem zijn rusteloze leven wel als een jacht naar den Dood voorkomen. Jarenlang bezeten geweest door den drang een hervormingsideaal te verwerkelijken, dat hem ten slotte verder dan ooit verwijderd gebleken was, leek die Dood hem tevens het natuurlijke eind van een diepe geestelijke teleurstelling.

Maar tegelijkertijd scheen zijn leven hem niet een episode toe. Zoals wel verteld wordt van drenkelingen dat zij, op het oogenblik van zich te voelen ondergaan, in één enkele gedachte zich van hun heele bestaan bewust worden, zoo zag hij zijn levensloop als een eenheid, en dus als meer dan die op éénig vroeger tijdstip voor den levende had kunnen zijn. Hij zag

1) P.M.L.A. Volume LXII

2) idem p.1034

3) Peter Butter for one does not share this view.

"The Alastor poet is not Shelley; he is not Wordsworth, though hints for him may be taken from the lives of both; he is simply an idealised portrait of any highly intellectual, sensitive and idealistic poet." (Shelley's Idols of the Cave. p.47)

zich zooals een doode zich zien zou: een volledig leven, als zoodanig hem van alle leven een zinnebeeld, en - als zijn eigen leven - van al zulke zinnebeelden het helderste." 1)

All the poet's journeyings are taken by Verwey to be in this life, even those after he embarked in the boat. There is, with Verwey, no suggestion that the poet's earthly life ends when his boat is swept into the cavern, and that from that point onwards Shelley is describing the life or condition after death, as maintained by Gibson. Peter Butter, although not agreeing with Gibson's interpretation of the allegory, does nevertheless feel that he is right in taking the rest of the poem as allegorical.²⁾ But then Shelley himself, in the Preface to this poem referred to it as allegorical.³⁾

Apart from the two slight inaccuracies already mentioned, the translation follows the original quite closely, although

"De onrustige drang noopte hem sloop te gaan,
De Dood te ontmoeten op de sombre zee." (ll.304-305)

1) Verwey : Naschrift bij de Vertaling van "Alastor".
("De Beweging", July 1909)

2) Peter Butter : Shelley's Idols of the Cave.

"I am sure that Mr. Evan Gibson is right in interpreting the rest of the poem as allegorical." (p.49)

"Certainly, in embarking in the boat, the poet submits himself to the direction of a power greater than himself; he is henceforward passive, driven on by fate." (p.50)

3) Shelley : Preface to "Alastor".

"The poem entitled "Alastor" may be considered as allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind."

is weaker and less graphic than:

"A restless impulse urged him to embark
And meet lone Death on the drear ocean's waste;".

The acoustic and rhythmic effect of

"A little shallop floating near the shore" (1.299)

is clearly suggested by:

"Een kleine sloep die de oever nader dreef".

An off-shore breeze is blowing and the poet is borne out to sea. The tone (in marked contrast to the sombre hopelessness of the preceding sections) is bright and expectant, characterised by such phrases as: "fair and sunny" (1.308), "inspiring radiance" (1.309), "his eager soul" (1.311), "the wanderer leaped in the boat" (11.311-312), and "felt the boat speed o'er the tranquil sea" (1.314).¹⁾

A similar tone is to be found in the translation. This is no melancholy departure but a joyful entry into a new phase of his journey. His frailty gone, or at least forgotten, the poet is, as it were, in tune with the elements.

The translation is fairly close to the original in this section, with the exception of the last two lines:

"De boot schoot over 't water en hij voelde
Haar gaan gelijk een wolkflard voor de orkaan." (11.314-
315)

1) Peter Butter : Shelley's Idols of the Cave. p.50

"Certainly, in embarking in the boat, the poet submits himself to the direction of a power greater than himself; he is henceforward passive, driven on by fate. In so submitting himself, he achieves a new serenity, even exultation. There is a marked change of tone in the verse. Instead of the stagnation of putrid marshes and sluggish stream we have the excitement of rushing over the sea; and this is echoed in the quicker movement of the verse."

in which Verwey omitted to translate "tranquil sea".

"And felt the boat speed o'er the tranquil sea
Like a torn cloud before the hurricane."

No doubt he felt the image of a "tranquil sea" to be incompatible with the line which follows it, and also with lines 309-310:

"... and the wind
Swept strongly from the shore, blackening the waves."

In this section the emphasis is on the speed with which the poet's boat is swept from the shore rather than the effect the wind may later have on the sea. It is a swift, smooth departure. Moreover, with an off-shore breeze blowing the sea near the shore would be comparatively calm.

The opening lines of the twelfth section, thought by Gibson to represent "the experience of losing consciousness"¹⁾ and by Butter, the poet's submission to a power greater than himself,²⁾ have indeed an air of calm resignation.

"As one that in a silver vision floats
Obedient to the sweep of odorous winds
Upon resplendent clouds, so rapidly
Along the dark and ruffled waters fled
The straining boat. ..." (ll.316-320)

It is unlikely that Shelley intended "straining boat" to be taken in the sense Verwey translated by "krakend vaartuig". It is certainly a frail, creaky affair, as we have seen in lines 301-303:

"It had been long abandoned, for its sides
Gaped wide with many a rift, and its frail joints
Swayed with the undulations of the tide."

1) P.M.L.A. Volume LXII p.1038

2) Peter Butter : Shelley's Idols of the Cave. p.50
See also footnote on page 191

but here surely Shelley was not referring to the joints of the frail boat being strained, but rather to the fact that the boat itself was, as it were, straining ahead, swifter and ever swifter.

Now the full force of the storm begins to be felt. The smooth swiftness changes to restless motion.

"... Warlwind sleepte 't voort,
Met heftige vlaag en aanstortend geweld,
Door 't kokend branden van het blanke schuim."
(11.320-322)

The contrast shown by Shelley between the restless upheaval all around and the poet, calm amid the storm is clearly suggested by the translation.

"Alsof hun geesten hem als dienaars waren
Gegeven, dat ze 'm leidden tot het licht
Van de oogen die hij liefhad, zat de Dichter,
De hand aan 't roer. ..." (11.330-333)

Shelley emphasized the calmness still more by his reference to "the steady helm" (l.333), merely translated as "'t roer".

Verwey's revisions show his attempts to achieve an even stormier effect in this section.

"... in het strijdgewoel
Van golf die rende op golf, en vlaag die daalde
Op vlaag, en zwarten vloed op draaikolk stortend
Met donkren uitwisschenden loop, ..." (11.326-329)

is altered in the later version to read:

"... in het strijdgewoel
Van golf stroomende op golf, en vlaag die zonk
Op vlaag, en zwarte vloed op draaikolk stortend
Met donkre en meesleurende loop, ..."

The Chatto and Windus edition and also the Oxford edition, following the first edition of "Alastor", print line 327 as:

"Of wave ruining on wave, ..."

Most other posthumous editions, however, altered "ruining" to "running", in spite of the existence of parallel uses of "ruining" in the sense of "falling in ruins" or "falling in streams", in English poetry.¹⁾ In the earlier version of the translation:

"Van golf die rende op golf ..."

Verwey seems to have followed the (possibly erroneously) amended version of the English text. "Stroomende" in the revised version, however, is not only remarkably close to Shelley's use of "ruining", but also gives the same rhythmic effect. It is probable that when Verwey revised this translation he was familiar with Thomas Hutchinson's note on "ruining" in the Oxford edition, for it is known that in later years he used a 1909 Oxford edition of Shelley's Poetical Works.²⁾

- 1) Other examples of similar use of "ruining" quoted by Thomas Hutchinson in his notes to the Oxford Edition (1904) are: Milton: Paradise Lost, vi. ll.867-869

"Hell heard th' insufferable noise, Hell saw
Heav'n ruining from Heav'n, and would have fled"

and Coleridge: Melancholy: a Fragment (Sibylline
Leaves 1817, p.262)

"Where ruining ivies propped the ruins steep - "

A note in the Chatto and Windus edition also refers to the line in Tennyson's "Lucretius" :

"Ruining along the illimitable inane".

- 2) Information kindly volunteered by Mevrouw Nijland-Verwey, whose copy of this edition Verwey used. This copy came into Mevrouw Nijland's possession about 1916, so could well have been consulted for the revision of the "Alastor" translation.

The approach of evening and the calm of the night sky is described with a tranquillity that is in marked contrast to both the preceding and following descriptions of the turbulent water. In the first part of this passage, however, the movement of the water can still be felt in the rhythm.

"... En de avond kwam nabij;
De stralen van zoneinde regenboogden
Hoog in schuim-vlagige fonteingewelven
Die over 't woeste diep zijn pad bespanden;"
(11.333-336)

With the description of the coming of twilight the rhythm becomes slower and the water is forgotten. One is only aware of the growing peace of the evening sky.

"Schemering langzaam stijgend uit het Oost,
Wond in donkerder wrong haar lokkenvlechten
Over Dags stralende oogen en blond voorhoofd.
Nacht kwam, in 't eterrekleed. ..." (11.337-340)

In this passage Verwey achieved very successfully the effect suggested by Shelley's lines:

"... Evening came on,
The beams of sunset hung their rainbow hues
High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted spray
That canopied his path o'er the waste deep;
Twilight, ascending slowly from the east,
Entwined in duskier wreaths her braided locks
O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of day;
Night followed, clad with stars. ..." (11.333-340)

In contrast to the apparent calm above, the storm continues to rage below, with the seas becoming more and more mountainous. Both Shelley and Verwey make full use of the opportunity this offers for suitable sound effect. The thunderous breaking of the seas can be heard quite clearly in both the original and the translation.

"... Aan iedre kant
Stormden vreeslijker de veelvoudige

Stroomen van de oceaansche bergwoestijn

Ten strijd, dondrend in donkren drang, ..." (ll.340-343)

Yet the frail craft continues to ride the storm.¹⁾

In the thirteenth section a climax is reached when with breath-taking speed the little boat is swept into a cavern. The effect of ever-increasing speed conveyed by Shelley's lines in this passage is also present in the Dutch, although perhaps in a slightly lesser degree.

"De boot vlood voort, - de stroom joeg kokend door, -
De rotsen sloten zwart, zaag-armig zich,
De berg, doorkloofd, hing over op de zee,
En haastiger nog, en meer dan menschlijk snel,
Geheven op de boog van effen golf
Jaagde de kleine boot. Een open hol
Gaapte, en zijn smalle en diepe winding in,
Gulpte de woelge zee. De boot vlood voort
Haar vaart niet mindrend. ..." (ll.358-366) (2)

In this and the preceding sections we have several examples of the "correction" referred to by Verwey in the Preface to the revised version of the translation, where words referring to the gender of the boat are changed

- 1) There is a slight deviation from the original in the last few lines of this section, where:

"Dan achterlatend de uitgeborsten vracht
Die, vallend, de oceaen doorgroef; - ..."

is not quite the same as:

"Now leaving far behind the bursting mass
That fell, convulsing ocean. ..." (ll.348-349)

In "doorgroef" Verwey introduced a different metaphor from that used by Shelley.

- 2) There is one slight deviation from the original in line 364, where "slant" is translated by "smalle".

"... amid its slant and winding depths".

Compare: "... zijn smalle en diepe winding in"

from masculine to feminine. Of the other alterations in this section, that from "scheen" to "blonk" (1.352) was probably for reasons of sound and partly, no doubt, for the assonance it provided with "onder" in the following line. It also avoided the ambiguity of "scheen". The alteration in line 360 from "haastger" to "haastiger" was probably for reasons of rhythm.

As this section reaches its climax the poet and his frail craft are swept into the cavern.

The storm is now left behind, and in the fourteenth section the little boat, moving more slowly over calm waters, sails through the cavern and out into a chasm filled by a whirlpool. In the eddying waters of this whirlpool the boat is brought to the top of the chasm and, after hovering on the brink of it for a moment, it is gently propelled on to a "placid stream" (1.400) into which the waters of the whirlpool overflow.

This passage, full as it is of physical improbabilities, (if not actually impossibilities) has been a stumbling block for several readers and would-be interpreters of this poem. Willem Kloos was quite unable to accept it, and in particular lines 374-401. At great length and with the aid of diagrams he explained his objections to Verwey.¹⁾ Evan K. Gibson, in taking this section of the poem as purely allegorical, accepts the physical impossibilities for their symbolic value alone.²⁾ Peter Butter attributes

1) Letters from Kloos to Verwey dated 18, 22 and 27 November 1884, to be found in the "Verzameling - Albert Verwey" in the University library at Amsterdam.

2) P.M.L.A. Volume LXII p.1038-1039

"The conflict is over. The storm of death has

the obscurity of this passage to Shelley's doubts about death and immortality.¹⁾ Verwey, however, accepted the weaknesses in imagery, thought and style objected to by Kloos at such length in his letters as inevitable in a poem which is, as it were, an inspired flight. This movement, impetuous and yet majestic, is, according to Verwey, of prime importance. Feeling and imagery, important as they are, take second place, which accounts for these weaknesses in visual expression, confused thought and frequent use of repetition.

"Gevoel en zichtbaarheid, de twee elementen die in dit werk zoo krachtig en boeiend zijn, beteekenen er toch minder in: vandaar dat soms een beschrijving niet kan ontward worden, dat een gedachte niet sluit, dat herhaling of benadering in de woordenkeus niet zeldzaam is." 2)

Verwey therefore translated this passage in all its

subsided. What lies beyond? But Shelley is not prepared to give the answer. ... There may be nothing but oblivion awaiting the soul after death. Who knows? And so he presents both possibilities in the allegory, choosing the more optimistic for the purposes of the story. ... The whirlpool suggests the possibility of complete oblivion, utter annihilation of personality after death. ... But it is not the only one. ... There may be a quiet cove in eternity where the wise and good will continue their existence."

1) Peter Butter : Shelley's Idols of the Cave. p.51

"However, I think it is true that the obscurity of this and some later parts of the poem is due to Shelley's doubts - seen also in his prose works of the same period - about death and immortality."

2) "De Beweging", July 1909. "Naschrift bij de Vertaling van "Alastor"."

seeming impossibility. As in the original, there is a strong feeling of movement throughout; slow and calm at the beginning of the section where the boat in the shelter of the cavern now glides forward on smooth water, quickening again for a moment as the little boat is swept upwards by the whirlpool. At the top of the chasm the calm returns as the boat is gently driven on to a quiet stream. The sounds are also used to effect for descriptive purposes, as for example:

"Eer nog 't reusachtige lichaam van de stroom
 Viel tot de voet van Caucasus met klank
 Die de eeuwge rotsen schokte, - ..." (11.376-378)

The sound of the words "klank", "rotsen" and "schokte", and particularly of the last two of these, is very expressive in the sudden abruptness of its impact and is comparable to that of the English:

"... with sound
 That shook the everlasting rocks, ..."

It seems probable that in:

"Ridge after ridge the straining boat arose" (1.388)

Shelley was using "straining" in the sense of "eagerly pressing forward".¹⁾ Yet, if Verwey wished "gespannen" to be taken figuratively the difference is not great. Moreover, the rhythmic assonance "straf-gespannen" provides with "trap na trap" is most effective.

The unusual word "glassig" in:

"... en een plek
 Van glassige rust midden dat golfgevecht
 Ontstond, ..." (11.392-394)

was undoubtedly chosen for its acoustic effect, which is

1) See also page 192.

very similar to the original.¹⁾

It is doubtful whether "En, kijk," (1.398) is stylistically the best translation for "And lo!", yet by its very unexpectedness it draws the attention.

The fifteenth section describes the world of nature the poet has arrived in, in the full glory of "the noonday sun" (1.420). As is to be expected in such a description, the tone is varied, but is for the most part light.

Verwey is particularly successful in this. Very effective also is the judicious use of assonance, at times almost amounting to repetition in such passages as:

"... Geweldige holen,
Gehold in donkre voet van hooge rotsen
Die spotten met hun klacht, brullen en galmen"
(11.423-425)

and:

"... Al donkrer
En donkrer hoopt schaduw op schaduw. De eik
Breidt zijn reusachtge en knoestige armen uit,
Omhelst de heldre beuk. ..." (11.430-433)

where there is far less repetition and assonance in the original:

"... More dark
And dark the shades accumulate. The oak,
Expanding its immense and knotty arms
Embraces the light beech. ..." 2)

1) Original reads:

"... and a smooth spot
Of glassy quiet mid those battling tides
Is left, ..."

2) Other striking examples of assonance and alliteration are:

"... De pyramiden
Van hooge ceder, nederwelvend, ..." (11.433-434)

and: "... drijvende
Bevend en bleek. ..." (11.437-438)

Into this scene of nature at its loveliest now comes, in the sixteenth section, the poet. While gazing into the well or fountain he is aware of a presence beside him with whom he seems to have communion. Looking up, he sees only two eyes, which seem to beckon him. With the entry of the poet the melancholy mood of the earlier sections returns.

The alliteration at the beginning of this section, and in the third line in particular, in both the original and the translation, is somewhat reminiscent of the opening lines of Keats' "Hyperion".¹⁾

"Hier kwam de Dichter heen. Zijn oogen zagen
't Eigen moe licht door de weerkaatste strepen
Van zijn dun haar, duidelijk in donker diep
Van 't stille water; ..." (ll.469-474) 2)

After the slow, melancholic opening lines there is a sudden change of tone in:

1) Compare:

"Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
Sat grey-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone."

translated by W.W. van Lennep as:

"Diep in de sombre droefheid van een dal,
Ontzonken aan den vollen morgenwind,
Aan al het vuur des daags en de avondstar,
Zat grijze Kronos, roerloos als een steen."

See also p.67.

2) Original reads:

"Hither the Poet came. His eyes beheld
Their own wan light through the reflected lines
Of his thin hair, distinct in the dark depth
Of that still fountain; ..."

"... 't gras dat sproot,
En schrikte en blikte en beefde door 't besef
Van ongewoon nabijzijn, ..." (ll.475-477)

where the use of assonance and multiple alliteration is in itself startling and is comparable to that in the original:

"... the grass that sprung
Startled and glanced and trembled even to feel
An unaccustomed presence, ..."

In:

"... en 't geluid
Van de effen beek die uit geheime sprongen
Van die donkre fontein rees. ..." (ll.477-479)

"effen" seems at first glance to be a strange choice as a translation for "sweet" in:

"... and the sound
Of the sweet brook that from the secret springs
Of that dark fountain rose. ..."

Shelley was probably using "sweet" as a transferred epithet. However, if one chooses to take "sweet" as meaning a sweet, or even-tempered brook (a reading which is as plausible as the former reading) then the translation is indeed a very close rendering.

"En vliet die springt, en avondsomerheid" (l.484) suggests that Verwey preferred the Chatto and Windus reading of this line, which is the same as the Oxford edition:

"And leaping rivulet, and evening gloom".
The Moxon edition has "rippling rivulet".

The eyes which seem to beckon him have a similar, though less startling, effect on the poet's course to that of the appearance of the vision earlier in the poem. As then inspired by the vision, so also now inspired by the beckoning eyes, the poet sets forth (in the seventeenth

section) with renewed vigour and eagerness. This is also noticeable in the rhythm and the sound of this section. The air of resigned melancholy now gives way to a lighter and more impatient tone. The sound of the stream in all its variety, now light and playful, now deep and hollow, now tripping lightly, now calmly meandering, is clearly suggested in the translation. Particularly striking is the contrast in:

"... Het viel somtijds
 Temidden 't mos met een hol murmelen,
 Donker en diep; dan danste 't op de gladde
 Steenen; ..." (11.496-499)

The slight freedom in translating "hollow harmony" by "hol murmelen" is more than compensated by the actual harmony thereby achieved.¹⁾

The poet continues his journey in the eighteenth section, but the eager impatience with which this section begins gradually grows less, and just as in the scenery around him the brightness and radiance give way to darker bleakness, so also his eagerness and impatience give way to calm resignation. This is also underlined by the rhythm and sound, especially in a descriptive passage such as:

"Grauw rots keek uit schaarsch mos, en stiet op beek
 Die schuimend bruiste; ..." (11.527-528)

which is rendered more graphic by the jerky, jagged

1) Another instance of freedom in translation in this section: "de haastige wind" (1.514) for "the passing wind" is undoubtedly also due to the acoustic similarity between "haastige" and "passing". It is in fact the expression normally used by Verwey in translating "the passing wind" wherever it occurs in this poem.

rhythm and sharp consonants used.

The poet follows the stream until it brings him to the edge of a precipice over which it falls.¹⁾

The revisions in this passage are, almost without exception, improvements poetically and acoustically.

"... de vlam
Van krachtlooze verrukking ..." (11.520-521)

is more expressive as imagery than:

"Van zijn zwakke verrukking ..."

which is moreover somewhat ambiguous.

"... Met snelle schreden liep hij
In schaduw van geboonte, ..." (11.522-523)

is also an improvement acoustically and poetically on:

"... Met snelle treden liep
Hij onder boomeschaduw, ..."

The reason for the change from:

"Met wintersch haasten"

to:

"Met vreugdloos haasten" (1.543)

is less obvious, although "vreugdloos" is acoustically more pleasing. Winter in its cold bleakness may indeed be considered to be "vreugdloos", but is that the aspect of winter Shelley was referring to? Is it not more probable that in referring to the stream's "wintry speed"

1) The free translations "grijs" for "white":

"... en 't haar dunner wordt
En grijs; ..." (11.534-535)

and "warme" for "beautiful":

"... warme schaduw
Van groene helen, ..." (11.537-538)

were presumably used for their acoustic effect rather than accuracy of translation.

he was thinking of the stream's increased volume in winter, often accompanied by increased speed? In the preceding lines the poet has passed, as it were, from summer into winter, both in the nature around him and, allegorically, in himself.

The alteration of "een voorgebergt" to "de steile wand" (l.546)

"... de steile wand

't Ravijn verduistrend, ..." (ll.546-547) 1)

is an improvement in sense. "De steile wand" is much nearer in meaning to "precipice" than is the earlier translation.

It is more difficult to appreciate the reason for the revision of:

"... breekt steil de berg ..." (l.551)

to:

"... breekt bruusk de berg ..."

although the final choice was probably influenced by the alliteration. Both versions are quite close translations of the English:

"... the abrupt mountain breaks"

in which Shelley appears to be using a transferred epithet.

"Van een loodkleurige avond" (l.557)

is poetically to be preferred to:

"Van loodgekleurden avond"

although as it happens the latter has the same rhythm as the original:

"Of leaden-coloured even, ...".

1) Original reads:

"... its precipice

Obscuring the ravine, ..."

When the inflexional "n" was later abolished, however, a hiatus occurred which Verwey avoided by means of his revision.

In the Moxon edition there is no division between lines 570 and 571. In other editions, however (including the Chatto and Windus and Oxford editions) line 571 begins a new paragraph. Both versions of the translation follow the Chatto and Windus edition in this.

Even on the brink of the precipice, when it seems as if all must be swept away by the torrent, there is yet a "silent nook" (l.572), which the nineteenth section describes in all its light serenity and beauty, in striking contrast to the grim scene all around.

In the translation the lightness and serenity of tone is increased by many of the revisions. Some of these are indeed, as Verwey stated in his "Preface", "corrections", but others are undoubtedly improvements both poetically and acoustically.¹⁾

Neither "dien breeden berg" (l.573), as in the earlier version, nor "die machtige berg", as in the revised version, is a very close literal translation of "that vast mountain", although in both cases the words chosen have some connection with the conception of "vast", either by meaning or by association. Of the two, "machtige" is undoubtedly to be preferred, both for the image it suggests and also the sound harmony.

1) The first line of this section is an example of both correction and poetic improvement, where:

"Maar 't grijze voorgebergt en plechtge pijn"
is revised to read:

"Maar grauwe en steile wand en plechtige pijn"

The smooth effect of the rhythm and harmony of:

"... uitzierende in onaantastbre vreë
Op donkere aarde en buigend stergewelf." (ll.575-576)

is considerably more beautiful than the earlier version:

"... het schouwde in onaantastbre vreë
De donkere aarde en 't buigend stergewelf."

The revision of lines 588-592 also resulted in greater smoothness of rhythm and improved harmony.

"... Eén stap,
Eén menschestap alleen brak ooit voorheen
De stilte van die eenzaamheid: één stem
Bezielde er de echoos; 't was dezelfde stem
Die hierheen kwam, aandrijvende op den wind,"

One is all too conscious here of the fact that this is a translation. The effort involved in rendering the meaning in another language is made too obvious. How different is the effect suggested by the revised version:

"... Eén stap,
Eén menschestap alleen heeft ooit de stilte
Van 't eenzaam oord verbroken: ééne stem
Bezielde er de echoos; de eigen stem alleen
Die hierheen kwam aandrijvende op de wind,".

The rhythm no longer obtrudes in its jerkiness, and the sounds now merge into a harmonious background more in keeping with the general tone of the passage.

The next lines of Shelley's poem are somewhat obscure on first reading. The translator succeeds, however, in following Shelley through this long, rather involved sentence and also in rendering it in his own tongue. The revisions here tend to simplify a more involved passage in the earlier version, although they are not necessarily any closer to the English.¹⁾

1) "... 't was dezelfde stem
Die hierheen kwam aandrijvende op den wind
En die de lieflijkste van menschgedaanten

But now, in the twentieth section, a change comes over this peaceful scene. There is a lull as it were before the final storm of death, invoked in the latter half of this section.

The beginning is calm and restrained; the stillness being accentuated in the translation by the effective juxtaposition of the words "niet een klank verklonk" (1.607), in which the sound appears to die away.

The phrase: "tot hij vol was" (1.606) is perhaps not the most felicitous stylistically. It does, however, translate accurately the meaning of the English "even to fulness" and by its very simplicity seems to enhance the suggestion of calm.

The revision in line 609 is also an improvement, where:

"Vast in zijn arm geklemd. ..."

replaces the more awkward:

"Door hem in de' arm geklemd. ..."

With the invocation to the storm of death the mood becomes fiercer and the acoustic effect sharper.

It seems unlikely that Shelley intended "reeking hospital" (1.615) in the unusual sense of the translation "dampend hospitaal". In view of its combination here with "hospital" it seems more probable that Shelley was

Geleidde opdat die 't wild verblijf de bergplaats
maakte
...." (11.591-594)

in the earlier version was later revised to read:

"... de eigen stem alleen
Die hierheen kwam aandrijvende op de wind,
Opdat de lieflijkste van menschgedaanten
Die wilde helen tot de bergplaats maakte
....."

using "reek" in its more usual sense, meaning an unpleasant smell or odour, and in particular that of blood.

"... snufflend de wereld door" (1.620)

is lightly disturbing stylistically, but does certainly recapture the full import of the original:

"... prowling around the world"

used, as it is here, in connection with search for prey.

The stage is now set for the poet's death; the "silent nook" awaits him in its restful calm; Death stands ready to receive him. In the twenty-first, the final section describing the poet's journeyings, the poet briefly reviews once more his life, but now in complete calm and without passion. Weary now with his wandering and completely resigned, he meets death "at peace, and faintly smiling" (1.645). His former passion has faded with his failing strength. He dies at one with nature, with all conflict over, and in complete harmony with his surroundings.

This passage, both in the original and in the translation, is remarkable for its harmony and air of calm resignation. The restrained rhythm and the subdued vowels and consonants which predominate, form a perfect background for the images evoked by the words.

There are certain, mainly slight, deviations in the translation of this section,¹⁾ but the general effect

1) In "'t vlotgeworden leven" (1.639) Verwey employed a different image from that used by Shelley in "The hovering powers of life". It is, however, equally expressive of "life" or "the powers of life" on the point of departure.

"Ijle stralen" (1.648) is not a literal translation of "dun beams" but the image it evokes is so similar that nothing is lost and the word "ijl" is itself quite in keeping with the general tone of this section.

achieved is such that one could not wish for greater accuracy in translation if it must be at its expense.

There is another example of a juxtaposition frequently used by Verwey in:

"... Wanhoop, hoop,
De pijngers, sluimerden: ..." (11.639-640)

The contrast is less striking in the original:

"... Hope and despair,"

where the words used differ so greatly in form that their connection is less obvious.

The revisions in this section include some actual corrections;¹⁾ other revisions are (as Verwey observed in the Preface to the revised translation) improvements "in verse and diction".²⁾

1) As for example in line 634: "Van ouden eik", which was corrected to "Van de oude pijn", and in line 635: "zijn leden rustten", where "rustten" was needed to complete the sense and the rhythm.

2) As for example:

"... Hij ontspande
Zijn bleeke maagre hand op ruige tronk
Van ouden eik." (11.632-634)

which was revised to read:

"... Hij ontspande
Zijn bleeke en maagre hand op 't schorsige hout
Van de oude pijn. ..."

Also an improvement poetically is:

"... Doch toen 't hemelwelf
Volslagen zwart bleef hing de nachtschafuw over
Een beeld, koud, zwijgend en bewegingloos," (659-661)

for the earlier version:

"... Maar toen hemel bleef
Volslagen zwart, besloot zijn schaduwnacht
Een beeld, koud, zwijgend en bewegingloos,"

although "besloot" is literally a closer translation of

Verwey felt the poem should have ended here, with the death of the poet. The last section he felt to be almost in the nature of an anticlimax. With the death of the poet the winged flight comes to an end, the tone becomes one of conscious reflection rather than of inspired movement. When the inspired flight is over one is made aware again of the thought and repeated allusion, which is frequently obscure. The contrast is made more marked, in Verwey's opinion, by the first line of this section:

"O, for Medea's wondrous alchemy," (l.672)

which he felt was more in the style of Keats than of Shelley. Verwey expressed his opinion on this in both the "Preface" to the later version and the "Naschrift" to the earlier version, but more extensively in the latter.

"De heldere gang van de volzinnen die in het geheele gedicht de eigenlijke verstaanbaarheid uitmaakt, wordt vervangen door een donkeren stilstand, waarin men de beteekenis van de gedachten raadpleegt, en dan vindt dat ook die, met toespeling op toespeling, niet helder is.

Het schijnt of de dichter vreesde dat de lezer het ophouden van den zang als een leegte ondervinden zou, en die nu vullen wou met bespiegeling.

Wij wenschen in die leegte den zang te hooren natrillen en hebben alleen terwille van de volledigheid de bespiegeling aan den hollandschen "Alastor" toegevoegd."1)

The last section does indeed come almost as a rude awakening after the preceding one which dies away almost to breathless silence. The style is also (as Verwey observed) entirely different. It is not without beauty,

"involved" than "hing over".

- 1) Verwey : "Naschrift bij de vertaling van "Alastor"
(De Beweging", July 1909)

but one is more conscious of an effort to achieve certain effects. Whereas in the preceding sections sound and rhythm merged unobtrusively to form the background or general tone, here they are more obvious. One is now aware of a frequent and conscious use of alliteration, which has a certain emphatic effect.

The translation also makes frequent use of what appears to be conscious alliteration and assonance, which sometimes seems to have been of influence in the choice of words.¹⁾

There are fewer revisions in this section. There is, however, a correction in line 695 from "hun" to "haar" where "hun" in the earlier translation:

"... en de machtige Aard
Heft van zee, berg, van stad en wildernis
In zachten vesper of blijde' ochtendzang
Aldoor hun plechtige tonen:" (ll.692-695)

was probably an uncorrected printer's error.²⁾

The earlier translation:

"Van deez' zoo schoone wereld",

although nearer to the original:

"Of this so lovely world" (l.686)

then the revised version, was probably discarded for its

1) As for example: "Mild met vergiften" (l.676) for "Profuse of poisons", where Shelley's alliteration is replaced by assonance; "Gedroomd tooneel" (l.697) for "phantasmal scene", and "hemelsch wezen" (l.704) for "divinest lineaments".

2) Original reads:

"... and mighty Earth
From sea and mountain, city and wilderness,
In vesper low or joyous orison,
Lifts still its solemn voice: ..."

somewhat stilted diction in favour of the more natural:

"Van de zoo schoone wereld".

The revision in line 717 is of interest in that, although the earlier version:

"'t Rumoer van hoop die zich hartstochtlijk hecht,"
is nearer the original:

"The passionate tumult of a clinging hope"
literally, the revised version:

"'t Verzet van hoop die zich hartstochtlijk hecht, - "
is nearer to it in spirit.

Although "Alastor" is written in blank verse, there are occasional rhymes or near-rhymes.¹⁾ In the translation there are also some instances of rhyme or near-rhyme, but they do not appear to correspond to anything in the original.²⁾

1) As for example:

"... Evening came on,
The beams of sunset hung their rainbow hues
High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted spray
That canopied his path o'er the waste deep;
Twilight, ascending slowly from the east,
Entwined in duskier wreaths her braided locks
O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of day;
Night followed, clad with stars. On every side
More horribly the multitudinous streams
Of ocean's mountainous waste to mutual war
Rushed in dark tumult thundering, as to mock
The calm and spangled sky. ..." (ll.333-344)

2) As for example:

"Verschrikt door zijn gedachten, zeg hij op.
Geen schoone duivel was nabij, geen klank
Of beeld ontzette 'm dan in de eigen geest.
Een kleine sloep die de oever nader dreef
Trof 't ongedurig dwalen van zijn oog.
Ze was al lang verlaten, want haar zijden
Gaapten van meenge scheur, haar kranke binten
Bewogen met de golvingen van 't tij.
De onrustige drang noopte hem sloop te gaan,

In this, the last of his translations from Shelley's Poetical Works, Verwey achieved what is probably the greatest measure of success possible in the translation of a poem of this kind. In the revised version (and it is on the merits of the revised version that this translation must be judged) there is a beauty approaching, if not equalling that of Shelley's poem. The occasional slight weaknesses are inevitable in a work of this kind and do not disturb the "winged flight" that is also unmistakable in the translation. With considerable skill and feeling Shelley's crowded imagery and the wealth of sound harmony and rhythm surrounding that imagery are re-created in the Dutch version. "English Studies" could not have published a finer tribute to Shelley than this translation of one of his major poems.

De Dood te ontmoeten op de sombre zee.
 Die machtige Schaduw, wist hij toch, bemint
 De slijmige holen van 't bevolkte diep.
 De dag was blank en zonnig, zee en lucht
 Dronk zijn bezielend stralen, en de wind
 Woef krachtig van de kust, de golven zwartend.
 Zijn grage ziel gehoorzaam, sprong de zwerver
 De boot in, spreidde in top van naakte mast
 Zijn mantel uit en zat dan eenzaam neer.
 De boot schoot over 't water en hij voelde
 Maar gaan gelijk een wolkflard voor de orkaan."
 (11.296-315)

V

CONCLUSION

In these translations it will be seen that there is a definite development to be traced from the early translations of 1881, through the translations of 1903 to the two translations of "Alastor", the revised version of which in 1922 forms the climax. A comparison of these translations with Verwey's original work of the same period will show that this development runs parallel to some extent to the development in his original work.

The early translations, like the early original poems of the same period, are still very much in the traditional style of Dutch poetry immediately prior to 1880. The language tends to be stilted and rhetorical, lapsing at times into a more familiar style, which is out of keeping with the rest of the poem. The rhythm is regular, sometimes even to the point of monotony. These defects are, for obvious reasons, less noticeable in the early poems included in the collected edition than in the unpublished poems and the early translations, for only the better poems of this period were included in the two volumes of "Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk" and Verwey himself never considered the early translations worthy of publication.

These early translations are undoubtedly immature renderings of Shelley's poems in Dutch and are unworthy of the later Verwey. There would therefore seem to be some grounds for the fear that their publication now would add nothing to Verwey's reputation as a poet, and

might even detract from it. Yet, seen in conjunction with the later translations and also with Verwey's original poems of the same period they form a link which is not without importance in the development of Verwey's poetry. A detailed discussion of these translations in relation to Verwey's original work is beyond the scope of this thesis, but the following remarks may perhaps serve to point out their importance in this respect.

The original poems can only be judged by the results actually achieved. Where Verwey tried to achieve a certain effect in an original poem but was unsuccessful the aim itself remains unknown to us. In the translations, on the other hand, we can turn to the original for the effect Verwey was probably seeking to produce and his efforts can be seen for what they are: experiments in achieving a similar effect with the means at his disposal. For these early translations are on the whole, as has been seen, very close to the original; too close at times perhaps for their success as poems. Certain alliterative or rhythmic effects are sometimes achieved only by resorting to a style quite out of keeping with the original poem, or a literal translation of an image may result in a clumsy turn of phrase. But the aim is frequently clear, and Verwey's efforts in this direction in the early translations are by no means without success.

The revisions in the manuscript are frequently valuable indications that Verwey was primarily concerned with making a close copy of the original rhythmically and acoustically. This is most striking in the translation of "The Fugitives", which is in itself little more than

rhythmic and acoustic play. The most successful of the early translations, poetically, is the lyrical passage from "Queen Mab", in which a beauty is attained that is surprising in one so young and inexperienced. Verwey's interest, first and foremost, in the rhythmic and acoustic effect of the poems probably influenced him in his choice of lyrics for translation at that period.

The function of the actual sounds in poetry has long been recognised. A detailed investigation into this subject is the article by Heinrich Lützel, written in 1935, "Die Lautgestaltung in der Lyrik"¹⁾ Shelley referred to it in "A Defence of Poetry", written in 1821.

"Sounds as well as thoughts have relation both between each other and towards that which they represent, and a perception of the order of those relations has always been found connected with a perception of the order of the relation of thoughts. Hence the language of poets has ever affected a sort of uniform and harmonious recurrence of sound, without which it were not poetry, and which is scarcely less indispensable to the communication of its influence, than the words themselves, without reference to that peculiar order." 2)

In 1891 Verwey translated Shelley's "A Defence of Poetry", so by then at least was familiar with Shelley's views. As early as 1883, however, (only two years after his early translations from Shelley's Poetical Works) Verwey's article on Potgieter's "Florence" suggests that he then already fully appreciated the function of sounds in

1) Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft, Band 29 (1935) pp. 193-216.

2) Shelley : A Defence of Poetry. p.73

poetry and in fact attached great importance to it.¹⁾ Verwey's early preoccupation with the sounds in poetry provides us, as it were, with a key to much of his own poetry and also his translations.

By 1903 Verwey's interest in poetry had acquired a new depth. Although still considering rhythmic and acoustic effects of great importance, he was now deeply concerned with a philosophical idea, the development and expression of which was to pervade most of his original work. Small wonder, therefore, that his next translations from Shelley (apart from the prose work "A Defence of Poetry" in 1891) should be of three poems dealing so closely with Shelley's own philosophical idea. In these translations, in addition to reproducing the rhythmic and acoustic effect of the poems, Verwey also had to seek to understand and re-express Shelley's philosophical thought. How well he succeeded will, it is hoped, have been clear from the discussion of these translations.

In translating "Alastor" in 1916 Verwey was faced with a still greater task. Apart from "Queen Mab" (which Shelley himself in later years considered unworthy of publication) and the revised sections of that poem which, under the title "The Daemon of the World", were published with "Alastor", this was Shelley's first long poem, and was in fact his first long poem of importance. It was, as Mary Shelley says:

"... the outpouring of his own emotions, embodied in the purest form he could conceive, painted in the ideal hues which his brilliant imagination

1) See pages 24-25

inspired, and softened by the recent anticipation of death." 1)

It was as if in "Alastor" the gates were flung open, for, freed from the restriction and discipline imposed by the form and rhyme of the shorter poems, image followed image in rapid succession, swept into stanzas as into paragraphs. Verwey was aware of the sweeping movement of this poem, as can be seen from his "Nachschrift" to the earlier version and the "Preface" to the later version.²⁾ His task was now threefold: to translate the text; to reproduce the rhythmic and acoustic effect, and particularly the general sound pattern of the poem; but also to achieve a similar sweeping movement. This, in view of the crowded imagery and sometimes vague or obscure train of thought of the original, was no mean task. Yet the result, even in the earlier version, was remarkable, and the revised version some years later crowned Verwey's translations from Shelley's Poetical Works.

All the translations are meticulous, from the early ones, where the main emphasis seemed to be on the outward form, to the final revision of "Alastor", in which, to a greater extent than in the "Poems Written in 1816", accuracy in detail is balanced by a feeling for and an attempt to reproduce the "spirit" or "soul" of the poem. In all the translations Verwey shows his great concern for rhythmic and acoustic effect and the revisions made frequently point to this. On several occasions in

1) Mary Shelley : Note on "Alastor". Oxford edition of Shelley's Poetical Works. p.31

2) See also page 166

revising his translation Verwey appears to have chosen to deviate from the actual meaning of the original in order to achieve a desired acoustic effect, sometimes, but not always, similar to that in the original. But in none of the translations does Verwey attain the degree of unity of form (in its wider sense, embracing rhythmic and acoustic effect) and content achieved in the revised translation of "Alastor".

Two reasons are often given for translating poetry: practice or exercise in handling the technical devices at the disposal of a poet; and, what is undoubtedly the best possible reason and, according to Rossetti, "the only true motive for putting poetry into a fresh language", namely, "to endow a fresh nation, so far as possible, with one more possession of beauty."¹⁾

It is probable that the early translations were undertaken with the first motive in mind, but there is little doubt that the purpose of the translation of "Alastor" and probably also of the "Poems of 1816" was, in the words of Rossetti: "to endow a fresh nation ... with one more possession of beauty".

In this connection it should be pointed out that the four philosophical poems Verwey translated: the "Poems Written in 1816" and "Alastor", were all early poems of Shelley's. In these translations, therefore we have the combination of a mature translator-poet and a possibly immature original poet. These poems present difficulties of translation which could only be met successfully by

1) Quoted in the Times Literary Supplement, October 1. 1954
Leading Article p.625.

Verwey in his maturity and after much revision, for the crowded imagery and the involved train of thought do not make it an easy task for a translator to reproduce the detail without losing the spirit of the poem. The shorter poems and fragments, on the other hand, which were translated in Verwey's early youth and during his own poetic immaturity are, with the exception of the fragments from "Queen Mab" and "The Daemon of the World", some of Shelley's most mature poems. In them he is master of his art, and they therefore present an easier task for the translator. Verwey's translations of these, as has been seen, show an appreciation of their poetic beauty and an attempt to reproduce it. That he was not entirely successful is not surprising when one considers his own youth and poetic immaturity. One cannot help feeling, however, that, had these early translations been revised after Verwey had himself reached maturity they might have become, like the later translations, worthy representatives of Shelley's poetry in the Netherlands. That he did not revise them can probably be explained by the change which came over Verwey's poetical work with the realisation of his poetic and philosophic idea. The later Verwey demanded more than the "beauty" sought by the "Tachtigers". Beauty of form was no longer important to him for itself alone, but only as a means of expressing the "Idea", which now pervaded his work. The "Poems Written in 1816" to a certain extent, but particularly "Alastor", were now nearer to him in spirit. This feeling of affinity no doubt accounted in the first place for Verwey's long preoccupation with "Alastor", a preoccupation which resulted

in what is undoubtedly the best of his translations from Shelley's Poetical Works.

Of the translation of poetry Shelley wrote:

"... it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principles of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower. - "1)

Can it perhaps be said of the translation of "Alastor" that in this case the plant did indeed "spring again from its seed"?

1) Shelley : A Defence of Poetry. pp.73-74

APPENDIX

A. Text of the early translations. (Not published.)Aan den Nacht.("Lentebloemen")
(No.3.)

Zweef door des hemels westerpoort,
 Geest van den nacht!
 Komt uit het neevlig Oosten voort
 Waar gij zoolang het zonlicht gloort
 Uw droomen weeft van vrees en vreugd
 Waardoor gij afschrikt en verheugt -
 Kom nu, ik wacht.

Sla uwen grauwen mantel om
 't Sterrige kleed
 Verblind' uw haar den dag, o kom
 Kus met uw aâm hem mat en stom
 Ga dan door stad en zee en land
 Bedwelm hen met uw staf en hand 1)
 Lenig er leed!

Toen ik den uchtendschemer zag
 Hijgde ik naar u
 Toen Dauw verdween bij vollen dag
 En Middag op de velden lag
 En als een ongewenschte gast
 De dag nog dralend ging ter rust
 Hijgde ik naar u

De Dood uw broeder kwam nabij:
 Wilt ge mij?
 Uw zoet kind Slaap kwam mij terzij
 Me omgondend als een middagbij:
 Verlangt gij mij 'k daal tot u neer
 Verlangt ge mij? En ik zei weer:
 Neen niet gij!

1) An earlier version of this line had "roede" for "staf".

De Vluchtelingen

I

De wateren plettren,
 Bij 't hagelsteen klettren,
 En rijmtakjes dansen,
 Bij 't bliksemlichtglanzen,
 Daarheen!

De dwarlwinden gonzen ¹⁾
 Bij 't donderslag bonzen ²⁾
 De woudreuzen kraken,
 De klokken ontwaken -
 Kom mee!

De vlakten zijn zeeën
 Met wrakken bespreeën,
 Mensch vogel en wormen, ³⁾
 Gevlucht voor de stormen - ⁴⁾
 Kom mee!

II

"Een zeil heeft de boot
 En de stuurman ontvlood
 En geen zeeman zoo reê
 Die ons volgt op de zee, -
 Kreet hij

"Aan de riemen" riep zij
 Op zee zijn we vrij!"
 En de hagel sloeg 't nat
 En de bliksem, hun pad
 Over zee

-
- 1) Earlier versions of this line had for "gonzen"
 "raatlen" and "schaatren".
- 2) An earlier version had "klaatren" for "bonzen".
- 3) An earlier version of this line read:
 "En vogel mensch en wormen"
- 4) An earlier version had "Gevloen" for "Gevlucht".

En van 't eiland rees hoog
 De baken voor 't oog
 En verdoofd door d'orkaan
 Rolt de noodgalm daar van
 Van lij

III

"En, vreest gij en zucht gij?
 En, hoort gij en ducht gij?
 En zijn we niet vrij
 Op de zee, gij met mij.
 Op de zee?"

Een mantel lag daar
 Over hem en op haar
 Wijl eézelfde weelde
 Hun aderen streelde
 Zoet en zacht

En om hen de golven¹⁾
 Weer golven bedolven
 En rezen tot bergen
 En zonken tot dwergen
 Op en neer

IV

Als een bloedhond, dien schaamte
 Verteert tot 't geraamte
 Staat de bruidegom, hij
 De portierster terzij
 Die beeft.

Op den torentop staat
 Met doodspellend gelaat
 De tyrannische vader
 Overstemmend te gader
 Aard' en zee.

1) An earlier version of this line had "Wijl" for
 "En".

En met vloekroepend weê
 Geeft hij daar aan de zee
 Aan de stormen ten beste
 De liefste en leste
 Van zijn naam.

Muziek

("Lentebloemen")
 (No.4.)

Ik hijg naar muziek, naar die hemelsche taal
 En mijn dorstende ziel is een stervende roze
 Laat vloeien als wijn het verrukkend koraal
 Opdat 'k in dien zilveren stroom mij verpooze;
 Als een vlakte die hijgt naar den milden regen
 Zoo kwijn ik en wacht van die tonen een zegen.

O, laat mij zwelgen den zaligen zang
 Meer o meer! 'k moet meer nog vragen
 't Drijft van mijn hart den verkillenden slang
 Die mij de zorge daarom heeft geslagen
 Die stervende toon van die trillende snaren
 Stroomt door mijn harte, mijn hoofd en mijn âren.

Als aan den oever van 't zilveren meer
 De geur van 't viooltje dat snel ging verflensen;
 Toen 't kelkje dat wiegelde heen en weer
 Geen dauw meer ontving om zijn dorst te lesschen
 En 't bloemeken stierf en de geuren vervlogen 1)
 Op de wicken van 't koeltje over 't water getogen.

Als een die daar drinkt uit betooverden kroes
 Den vonklenden wijn in bedwelmende togen 2)
 Wijl de toovenares hem, in zaligen roes
 Tot liefde verleidt, met den kus harer oogen.

P.B. Shelley

-
- 1) The manuscript actually has "vervolgen", which is presumably a writing error.
 2) Earlier versions of this line had for "vonklenden" "bruisenden", and "gloeïenden".

Vrijheid

De trotsende bergen, zij roepen elkander
 En d'echo huns donders rolt galmende voort
 En de stormende golven verschrikken elkander
 De rust van die rotsen van ijs is gestoord:
 De klaroen van den Typhoon is luide gehoord.

Van een eenzame wolk is de bliksem geslagen
 Verlichtende d'eilanden verre in het rond
 Eén stad ligt in puin, dat de winden verjagen
 En honderden schudden en beven, de grond
 Verbergt het geluid in des afgronden mond.

Maar uw blik is nog scherper dan 't bliksemlichtglansen
 En sneller uw stap dan der aarde gestamp 1)
 Gij spot met de zee in haar stormende dansen
 Volkanen verblindt ge en der hemelen lamp
 Is bij d'uwe een dwaallicht in nevel en damp.

Van golven en bergen en heemlen en wolken
 Is 't zonlicht geworpen door mist en orkaan 2)
 Van ver en nabij, en van volken tot volken
 Van hutten tot steen is uw scheemring gegaan
 En tyrannen én slaven als schauwen der Nacht
 Zijn gelijk in het licht dat de morgen ons bracht. -

P.B. Shelley

De Twee Geesten

Een Allegorie

1e Geest

O, gij, die met gloeiend verlangen bevreugeld
 Wilt drijven omhoog der Aarde uit 't gezicht,
 Een schaduw rijst op die uw vuurvlucht beteugelt -
 Dear nadert de Nacht.

1) An earlier version had "der aardbeving" for "der aarde gestamp".

2) An earlier version had "nevel" for "mist".

Schoon zijn de onzichtbare dreven der luchten
 En verruklijk zou 't zijn tusschen winden en licht
 Daarheen te rijzen, te zweven, te vluchten -
 Daar nadert de Nacht.

2e Geest

't Eeuwig gesternt', zie het vonklen daarboven
 En of 'k ook het duister doorvleugelen woud'
 Niets kan de Liefde in mijn harte verdooven
 En die is mij dag!
 En het teedere maanlicht zal lachend me omzweven
 En drukken een kus op mijn veedren van goud
 De vallende sterren ook zullen me omgeven
 En Nacht wordt er dag!

1e Geest

Maar als de stormen van 't duister ontwaken
 Hagel en bliksem en regengeplas;
 Zie, de grendels der hemelen schudden en kraken -
 Daar nadert de Nacht!
 De vliegende wolken gezweept door de vlagen
 Bedekken de zon die aan 't dalen was,
 Hoort ge over de vlakte den hagel niet jagen -
 Daar nadert de Nacht!

2e Geest

Ja 'k zie het licht en den wind hoor ik fluiten;
 'k Drijf op den stroom van den storm naar omhoog
 Met de kalme in het hart en den lichtglans daarbuiten
 Die nacht maakt tot dag
 En gij, als de duisternis diep is en donker
 Hef dan van uw sluimerende aarde eens uw oog
 En ziet dan mijn vlucht boven starrengeflonker,
 Omhoog, verre weg.

P.B. Shelley

De Demon der Wereld.

Quantum scire licet. Nec tantum prodere vati,
 Venit aetas omnis in unam
 Congeriem, miserumque premunt tot saecula pectus.

Lucan Phars. v. 176.

Hoe vreemd toch is de Dood,
 Hoe vreemd de Slaap, zijn broeder!
 D'een bleek als gindsche maan,
 Gehoornd en matgetint;
 Met lippen wassig blauw,
 Wijl d'ander gloeit gelijk
 Het licht van 't morgenblozen
 Als 't op de wolken troont
 En ademt over d'aard:

En toch zoo vluchtig bei, zoo vreemd en wondervol

Heeft dan 't Geraamt' dat in de vunze graven
 Zijn ijs'ren scepter zwaait

Die schoone prooit den honden voorgeworpen
 Die leegren om zijn troon?

Moet dan die englenvorm, die liefde en hulde
 Niet zonder kloppend hart vermag te aanschouwen,
 Wiens âren van azuur

Als donkre stroomen zijn in velden sneeuw
 Wiens golvenlijn als marmer schoon, in 't licht
 Gekleed van een verheven geest, verderven?

Mag der verrotting aâm
 Niets van dit beeld der reinheid overlaten
 Dan walglijkheid en stof?

Een duister onderwerp,
 Waar 't zwakste hart een zedeles uit trekt?
 Of hebben slechts de dons-gewiekte droomen
 De schuwe Stilt', hun voedster bij haar wimpers
 Gelokt, om voor hun eigen rust te waken?

En zullen zij bij d'eersten blijden straal,
 Die d'uchtend door die lichtfonteynen zendt,
 Van licht en leven ver, in 't Westerland
 Waar bosch en stroom met zacht gestuwden wind 1)
 Een wieglend ruischen weven, -
 Vreesachtig schuilen gaan?

1) An earlier version had "koeltjes" for "wind". The last four lines of this section were also in an earlier version in the order: 1, 4, 2, 3.

Ianthe slaapt den slaap,
 Den stillen doodslaap niet;
 En ook hoort Henry niet,
 In 't maanverlicht vertrek,
 't Geregeld kloppen van haar polsen;
 Of ziet haar teedre wang
 In wisseling van tint het maanlicht tarten,
 Dat d'uitgeputten nacht
 Doorwaakt, van dank noch loon verzekerd.
 Haar oogen, rein als dauw zijn zachtgeloken:
 Op hun doorschijnend blanke leên, wier weefsel 1)
 De bollen nauw verbergt, wier donker blauw
 Daaronder brandt met nauw waarneembre vlam,
 Licht zuigling Slaap te ruste.
 Haar gouden lokken dekken
 Dien boezem onbevlekt,
 Als woekerplanten ranken
 Om marmren zuilenschaft. -

Maar hoor! van waar van waar die toon? 2)
 't Is als een tooverklank die om
 Een stomme bouwval trilt,
 Als d'avondgolven aan de kust
 De westerzuchtjes antwoord geven:
 Hij 's wilder nog dan d'ongedwongen noten
 Die van d'onzichtbre harpen vloeien
 Van hol en rotsenkloof,
 Besnaard door storm en onweergeesten.
 Op golven van muziek en lichtglans drijvend'
 Daalt neer in stille macht:
 De wagen van den Grooten Geest der Wereld. 3)
 Hij rust daar: licht gelijk een wolk,
 Die 't fijnste purpertintje ontvangt der zon,
 Als de avond 't duister wijkt,
 Doch schittrend ook gelijk dat veedrig kleed,
 Als gulden sterren door
 Zijn vluchtig weefsel schijnen.

-
- 1) An earlier version of this line had "oogenleên" for "blanke leên".
- 2) This line originally read: "Maar hoor! van waar die toon?" the second "wan waar" being added later.
- 3) An earlier version had "Boozen" for "Grooten" in this line.

Vier schauwen zonder vorm, verlicht en schoon,
Gaan voor dien vreemden zegewagen;

Een band uit licht geweeft
Bedwingt hun bovenaardsche vlucht.

Zij staan en vouwen saam
Hun vleuglen van dooreengevlochten lucht: 1)
Van zijn etherisch voertuig zag de Demon 1)

De sluimerende maagd.
Nooit heeft een menschlijk oog een vorm
Aanschouwd, zoo wild, zoo schoon en glanzend,
Als die gelijk een wolk van licht,
Een goudbesterde roede zwaaiend,
Den tooverslaap der maagd omgaf.

En nimmer hebben menschenooren
Zoo zoeten toonendans gehoord,
Als daar als jonge lentegeuren, 2)
Den kamer door ten hemel voeren, 2)
Door 't zilvren maanlicht niet gestoord. 3)

Der wereld hoogste geest, o maagd!
Vouwt in den schaduw harer veeren
Al wat uit hooger hemelsferen, 4)
Uw geest als erfnis met zich draagt.

Gevoelens tuk u te verraân
Gedachtevlammen die vergaan.

Want gij verdient een machtge gift,
Wat duister is den wijsten Dichter
Worde in uw ziel als loonend richter
Van eigen majesteit gegrift,
In reiner stoffe neergeleid
Van zichvergetende eenzaamheid.

1) An earlier version had "Geest" for "Demon" in this line.

2) This line originally read:

"Den kamer en den hemel vulden"

3) Originally:

"Den hemel waar het maanlicht scheen"

4) An earlier version of this line read:

"Alwat uw Geest uit hooger sferen"

Gewoont', geloof en Macht verfoeit gij;
 Uw hart's van haat en vrees bevrijd;
 Als 't zonlicht rein en warm ontgloeit gij, 1)
 Voor duistere en koude sterfelijkheid

(niet begrepen) 2)

Aan u alleenig zij 't daarom,
 Verheven geest! van 't heiligdom,
 Waar Goden nevens duivlen bukken,
 De vlam te grijpen, 't kleed te ontrukken,
 Waar nog de slang der Eeuwigheid 3)
 In zoeten tooversluimer leit.

Al wat uw liefdestem bezielt,
 Spreekt in uw ongesloten oog,
 Door uw gestalte brandt en wielt,
 Of denkt of voelt, het rijz' omhoog!
 Verlaat o geest voor 't mijne en mij
 Der aarde laffe mommerij!

't Verstomde en van dat lichaam stom en koud,
 Verrees een schittrend wezen,
 In naakte reinheid als volkomen schoon.
 't Steeg op gehuld in menschelijke verf;
 En rees de zilveren wolken scheidend 4)
 Naar 't voertuig waar zij plaats nam naast
 Den Demonvorm.

Gehoorzaam op den toon van 't zwevend tokklend lied,
 Ontplooiden de eeuwge geesten
 Hun teedre vleugelen.
 Voort ging de tooverwagen: 5)
 De nacht was godlijkschoon,

-
- 1) An earlier version had "vurig" for "warm" in this line.
 2) The words "niet begrepen" were inserted at this point
 in pencil.
 3) Originally: "Aan 't perk waar die Eeuwigheid"
 4) Originally: "En rees bij het verdergaande"
 5) Originally: "De tooverkar ging voort:"

En starren zonder tal,
 Bedekte (sic) 't hemelblauw;
 Reeds bleekte d'oostergolf
 Bij d'eersten morgenlach. -

(Zie bijliggend stukje:) 1)

Ver, ver beneên des wagens stormenvaart
 Lag, als een kind in sluimer,
 De trillende Oceaan.
 Zijn breedewen stille spiegel kaatste zwiĳgend,
 De bleeke sterren weer,
 Het vuurspoor van den wagen,
 En 't grijze morgenlicht,
 Dat ginds de vlokke wolkjes tintte,
 Die scheemring wiegden in hun vouwen.

De wagen vloog, naar 't scheen,
 Door d'afgrond heen van een onmeetlijk wulfeel,
 Met millioenen van gesternten schittrend,
 Met schaduwen getint oneindiger kleuren,
 En half omgeven door een vonken-gordel
 Van telkens vlamme meteorenvuur.

De lichtgewiekte schauwen schenen
 Spoed te vergaren bij het naadren van hun doel;
 Onzichtbaar was de zee en d'aarde scheen
 Een uitgestrekte sfeer in 't zwart verwulfsel
 Der heemlen opgehangen, 2)
 Met d'onbewolkten klood
 Der zon; wier snelle stralen
 Om den nog sneller loop van 't voertuig dreven;
 En vielen als 't geveederd schuim der waatren, 3)
 Dat afspringt van de baar
 En 's vaartuigs steven lekt.

De tooverkar ging voort:
 De verre klood der aard
 Scheen 't kleinste flikkerlicht,
 Gehangen in de heemlen;

-
- 1) No trace has been found of the "bijliggend stukje".
 2) An earlier version had "neergehangen" for "opgehangen".
 3) Originally: "En als het veedrig schuim der waatren, vielen"

Wijl om den wagen heen
 Ontelbre stelsels vrij de ruimt' doorrolden
 En bollen, ongeteld,
 Een glorie om zich spreidden,
 Die niet éen oogenblik dezelfde was.

Het was een wonder Schouwspel!
 Daar waren er gehoornd
 Die hingen als de zilveren schijf der maan
 In 't donker koepeldak der heemlen; andre
 Verspreidden helder licht als Hesperus 1)
 Terwijl de zee in 't wijkend zonlicht gloorde.
 Weer andere ijden dwars door 't duister voort
 Met staarten wijflend licht als werelden
 Ten ondergang gedreven.
 Ook eengen schenen, sterren,
 En waar de wagen kwam
 Wordt alle licht verduisterd. -

Geest der Nature! hier
 Slechts hier, in deez' oneindige woestenij 2)
 Van werelden, bij wier onmeetlijkheid
 Verbeelding zelfs terugdeinst,
 Hier is uw heilige tempel!
 En nochtans, 't minste blad,
 Dat met 't voorbijgaand windje lispelt,
 Voelt uw nabijheid, -
 En toch de kleinste worm,
 Die in de graven woont en teert op doôn,
 Geniet uw eeuwgen adem.
 Geest der Natuur! o, gij,
 Als dit verheven schouwspel, eeuwig;
 Hier is uw heilige tempel!

Als Eenzaamheid ooit naar de kust der zee,
 Der ongemeetne, uw stap heeft heengeleid,
 En gij daar hebt vertoeft
 Tot dat de zonneshijf
 Op 't vurig vlak der waatren scheen te rusten,
 Dan zagst ge 't weefsel ook uit goud gewerkt

1) Original version of this line read:

"Een helder zacht een licht als Hesperus"

2) Originally: "In deze wildernis, begin als eindloos"

Dat onbewogen om de zonne hangt;
 Dan zaagt ge daar hoog golvende gebergten
 Van wolken breed onboord met d'avondstralen,
 Als gitten rots er trotsend.
 Hoog boven 't brandend diep:
 En nog is daar een oogenblik, ("Lentebloemen")
 Als 't hoogste punt des Dags, (No.5)

Gelijk een ster den westerzooom der zee
 Bestraalt, die wolken ginds in veedrig purpur glanzen
 Als tooverlanden, door een hemel zee omgordeld;
 Ook uw Verbeelding steeg dan vlug gewiekt omhoog
 Waar, als het middelpunt van al 't bestaande,
 De tempel van den grootsten Demon staat.
 Die eilanden nochtans van goud, die glinstren
 Te midden van dien stroom van purpur licht,
 Noch die gordijnen veedrig

Die 't luisterrijke bed der zonne omgeven,
 Noch 't brandend goud der baren,
 Dat prachtgewelf ten vloer,
 Vertoonden u een beeld zoo wondervol
 En schoon - als d'eeuwge tempel.
 Al wat des menschen geest tot stand kan brengen,
 't Zij lieflijk of verheven,
 Om 't samenstel eens tempels op te richten,
 Noch iets van d'aard vermag een schaduw slechts
 Te zijn dier majesteit.

Maar d'avondhemel toch gelijkt dat toovertempel
 Hij spreidde als 't hemelwelf op 't water rustend 1)
 Zijn vloeren schittrend licht,
 Zijn welfsels van azuur;

En op de grens van dien stikdonkren afgrond;
 Waar tinnen van kristal ten kloof ahangen
 Der duistere wereld, spreidden duizend bollen
 Hun gloor door poorten heen van diamant. -

De Demon en de Geest

Bereikten dra de hangende kanteelen.
 't Grensloos heelal lag voor hen uitgestrekt!
 Daar, verder dan de verste lijn,
 Die der Verbeelding vlucht begrenst, 2)
 Verwarden zich de kronkelbanen

1) An earlier version of this line read:

"Als hij laag rustend, op de rotsen (?) hangend"

2) An earlier version had "beteugelt" for "begrenst".

Van bollen, zonder naam of tal,
 Die onveranderend, d'eeuwge wet
 Vervulden, door natuur gegeven.
 Omhoog, omlaag en ver in 't rond;
 Daar vormden zonnestelsels
 Een wildernis van harmonie: 1)
 En iedre (sio) volgde d'eigen baan
 Welsprekend stil door 't ruim der heemlen
 Naar 't nimmer wijkend, wachtend doel.

De Geest hield vol verrukking even stil.
 En spoedig zag ze als de uitgestrekte sferen
 Daar dreven, binnen hun gegorde bollen
 Veel vreemds verschijnen. Als gejaagde furies
 Bewogen schaduwen, gerasnten ook,
 En duivelsche gestalten zich om graven
 Van menschen, ter gedachtenis woorden bijtlend
 In verzen als ze booze Goden spreken,
 Der menschen hoop ten vloek, als hel en hemel,
 Vereend, ter dood de wereld overstromen:
 Zij bouwden ook tropheeën, marteltuig,
 En menschenbeendren; ook nog uitheemsch goud,
 Huiden van levenden gescheurd, doodshoofden
 Met holten zonder licht. Dan myters, kronen 2)
 En wagens, koper maar met bloed bevlekt
 En lysten met geheime boosheid, bloedge
 Wetboeken van vereerenswaarden misdaad.
 Toen die verdwenen, kwam de schaduw nader
 Van een gekroonden vorst, 'n drievuldgen kroon
 Op 't voorhoofd dragend'; zijn gelaat was kalm,
 Zijn oog stond streng en koud; maar bloedig geld
 Was in zijn rechter hand, wijl hij bij poozen,
 Met stillen lach, kauwde op een menschenhart,
 Verborgen in de plooiën van zijn purpren kleed;
 Rondom hem knielde een heer van bonte schimmen,
 De borst ontbloot, het hoofd gebukt, in 't oog 3)

-
- 1) An earlier version had "tonen" for "harmonie" in this line.
 2) This was actually the original version of this line. It
 was then altered to:
 "Met holten zonder ooge. Dan myters, kronen"
 after which it was changed back to the original version.
 3) An earlier version had "gebogen" for "gebukt".

Door Liefde zelf gespreid haar stille wereld 1)
 Ten nachtgewaad. Die heuveln zachjens glooiend, 2)
 Gemanteld in een kleed van blanke sneeuw,
 Nog door geen voet bevlekt; die donkre rotsen, 3)
 Omkranst met kegels ijs, zoo vlekloos rein, 4)
 Dat zelfs de zuivre straal van 't maanlicht niet 5)
 Getint wordt door hun spitsen blank en glanzend';
 Die bergwand waar 't kasteel op trotst, welks vaandel
 Zoo stil den toren dekt, door Tijd verbrokkeld, 6)
 Als waar' 't een metaphoor van rust en vrede;
 Zij allen vormen saam een paradijs,
 Waar mijmrende Eenzaamheid wel gaarn haar ziel
 Zou heffen, d'aardsche sfeer voor goed ontvlogen,
 Waar stilt', door niets gestoord, alleen wou zijn 7)
 Zoo koud, zoo kalm, zoo schoon. 8)

Met zachten lach 9)
 Daalt ginds in zuider streek op 't golfloos vlak
 Der zee de ster des daags: geen adem zweeft
 Langs 't ongerimpeld diep, wijl d'avondwolken
 Gerust het dralend licht der zon weerkaatsen,
 En 't beeld der avondster ter westerzij
 Nog lieflijk straalt. De morgen nadert: wolk
 Op wolk rolt boven 't vlak der zwarte waatren 10)
 In massaas dicht en diep; de schorre galm 11)

-
- 1) Originally: "Door Liefde zelf gespreid ten nachtgewaad"
 2) Originally: "Haar sluimrende aard."
 3) An earlier version had "duistre" for "donkre".
 4) An earlier version read: "Met kegels ijs omkranst, ..."
 5) An earlier version read: "... van 't licht der maan niet"
 6) An earlier version had "kalm" for "stil" in this line.
 7) An earlier version had "waken" for "zijn" in this line.
 8) An earlier version had "stil" for "kalm".
 9) An earlier version read: "Met zachten glimlach".
 10) An earlier version of this line read:
 "Op wolk rolt langs de nachtelijk zwarte waatren"
 11) An earlier version had "zwart" for "dicht" in this
 line.

En dansende golven 't omblauwen
Waar de wolken en bergen mee bouwen 1)
Het blauwe vlak van een meer.

-
- 1) There are traces of correction in the manuscript in this and the preceding line. Above the word "omblauwen" (in the preceding line) is written "rijen", and above "bouwen" the word "plaveien". The final version, however, is uncertain as in neither case was the original crossed out. In the second of these lines the word "van" was also inserted between "waar" and "de" and slightly above them.

B. Text of the translation of "Alastor".

(As published in "English Studies", Shelley
Centenary Number, 1922)

ALASTOR

OF DE GEEST VAN DE EENZAAMHEID

Lucht, aarde en zee, mij dierbre broederbond!
Zoo in mijn ziel de almachtige Moeder stortte
Een vleug maar van natuurlijk meegevoel,
En liefde waarmee 'k uwe liefde loon';
Zoo dauwige uchtend, geurge noen, en avond
Met pronk-omstoete zonnenondergang,
En 't tinklend zwijgen van de plechtige nacht;
Zoo 't hol gezocht van herfst in 't dorre woud,
En winters witte sneeuw en sterrige kronen
Van ijs om 't grauwe gras en 't naakt geboomt;
Zoo 't weeldrig hijgen van de Lent, haar eerste
En zoete zoenen-aëm, me ooit dierbaar waren;
Zoo vogel, klein insekt, zachtsaardig dier
Ik nooit bewust gekrenkt heb, maar altijd
Liefhad en koesterde als mijn maagschap; - duldt,
Beminde broedren, dan die lof en laat
Me ook thans geen deel van de oude gunst ontgaan.

Moeder van dit onpeilbare heelal!
Begunstig mijn gewijde zang, want ik
Minde u altijd en u alleen; ik nam
Uw schaduw waar en 't donker van uw gang
En mijn hart staart gedurig op het diep
Van uw diepe geheimen. 'k Spreidde mij
Een bed in 't knekelhuis op kisten, waar
De Dood de aan u ontwonen buiten telt,
Hopend dat ik de onstilbre vragen stil
Naar u en 't uwe, - een eenzaam geest, uw bô,
Nopend dat hij 't verhaal mij overgeeft
Van wat wij zijn. In stil, verlaten uur,
Als nacht betooverd klinkt van eigen zwijgen,
Mengde ik, als een bezeten alchimist
Die 't leven zelf stelt op een donkre hoop
- Wan-hopig - , gruwbre praet en vraag-gestaar

Met mijn onschuldige lief, tot vreemd geweest
 Vereend met ademlooze kussen, schiep
 Zoodaenge toever als de ontkrachte nacht
 Dwingt uw geheim te toonen, - en schoon nooit
 Ge uw innigst heiligdom ontsluit, scheen
 Genceg van nimmer mededeelbre droom,
 Schemer-gedaante, diepe middag-peins
 In mij, zoodat ik nu volkomen klaar
 En roerloos, als een langvergeten lier
 Omhoog gehangen in de ledige dom
 Van tempel eenzaam en geheimnisvol,
 Uw aëm wacht, Grootte Moeder, die mijn snaar
 Mag deinen doen met murming van de lucht,
 En golving van de wouden en de zee,
 Stem van bezielde wezens, zang-geweef
 Van nacht en dag, en 't diep hart van de mensch.

Er was een dichter wiens ontijdig graf
 Geen mensch-hand vroom-eerbiedig heeft gebouwd,
 Maar herfstwind-vlagen door zijn lijk bekoord,
 Hoopten een pyramide eroverheen
 Van blader-lijken in de wildernis.
 Lieflijke knaap - geen rouwend meisje hulde
 Met treurgebloemt of wijkrans van cypres
 De eenzame sponde van zijn eeuwge slaap: -
 Zachte, edelmoedige, dappre - een dwalend bard
 Aemde om zijn donker lot geen zucht en zang.
 Hij leefde en stierf en zong in eenzaamheid.
 Vreemdingen weenden bij zijn hartstocht-toon,
 En maagden, als hij naamloos langs kwam, kwijnden,
 Naar zijn wilde oogen door verlangst verteerd.
 't Vuur van die zachte bollen brandt niet meer
 En Stilte, als ook verliefd op dat geluid,
 Sluit zijn muziek, nu stom, in ruige eel.

Gewijd vizioen en schittrend zilvren droom
 Voedden zijn kindertijd. Tafreel en klank
 Van de wijde aarde en de ommegeande lucht
 Zonden zijn hart hem-dierste werkingen.
 Bronnen van godlijke wijsgeerigheid
 Vloden zijn dorstige lippen niet: al 't groote
 Of goede of lieflijke, uit eerwaard verleên
 Heilig als feit of fabel, voelde hij
 En kende 't. De eerste jeugd voorbij, weerhouden
 Door koude hard noch vreemd geworden thuis,

Zocht hij in vreemde streken nieuw geheim.
 Menige woestijn en warrige wildernis
 Lokte zijn vreesloos gaan; hij wierf er zich
 Met stem zoo zoet, en oogen, van wild volk
 Zijn rust en mael. Natuurs geheimete tred
 Volgde hij als haar schaduw, overal
 Waar de vulkaan, vuurrood, met brandend smook,
 Velden van sneeuw en rotstoppen van ijs
 Een hemel spant, of waar meren van teer
 Op zwart naaktpuntig eiland aldoor slaan
 Met loomig schuim, of waar verborgen grotten,
 Duister en ruig, windend de bronnen langs
 Van gif en aardvuur, ontoegankelijk
 Voor gierigheid of trots, hun sterrige daken
 Van diamant en goud uitwelfen boven
 Tallooze en ongemeten ruimten, rijk
 Aan zuilen van kristal en nissen, klaar
 Van paarl, en tronen: stralend chrysoliet.
 Noch had dat veld van weidscher majesteit
 Dan goud of steenen, 't wisselend hemeldak,
 Noch 't groen van de aard geringere aanspraak op
 Liefde en bewondring: lang verwijlde hij
 In onbewoonde dalen, had voor huis
 De wildernis: duiven en eekhoorns namen
 Hun bloedloos voedsel uit zijn veilige hand,
 Door 't zacht bedoelen van zijn blik gelokt;
 En de wilde antiloop die opschrikt, als
 Een dor blad ritselt in 't gestruik, hield even
 De bloede stappen in, ziende op een vorm
 Bevalliger dan haar eigne.

In ver gedwaal

Hooge gedachten volgend, zocht zijn voet
 De ontzachtbre puinen van een doode tijd:
 Athene en Tyrus, Baalbec, 't woeste veld
 Waar stond Jeruzalem, gezonken torens
 Van Babylon, de eeuwige pyramiden,
 Memphis en Thebe en zooveel zeldzaams als
 Gebeeldhouwd op albasten obelisk,
 Of jaspis-tombe of lang-verainkte sfinx
 Donker Ethiopië in haar zandige heuvels
 Verbergt. Tusschen de in gruis gestorte tempels,
 Reusachtige zuilen, wilde afbeeldselen
 Van meer dan mensch, waar marmren demons waken
 Bij 't koopren zodiacs-geheim, en dooden

't Stom denken hangen langs de stomme wand,
 Draalde hij, broedende op gedachtnisteevens
 Van 's werelds jeugd, brandende dagen lang
 Dat spraakloos volk beturend; noch, wen maan
 't Geheimvol ruim met schaduwen bedreef,
 Staakte die taak hij, maar betuurde aldoor
 En tuurde, tot zijn ledige geest een zin
 Doorbliksemde als inblazing sterk: hij zag
 Trillen 't geboortgeheim van de aardische tijd.

Zijn voedsel bracht hem een Araber-maagd,
 Haar daaglijksch aandeel, uit haar vaders tent,
 En spreidde tot zijn bed haar mat, en sloop
 Van rust en plichten om hem nategaan:
 Verliefd, maar vol ontzag niet wagende
 Van min te spreken: waakte als hij 's nachts sliep,
 Slaaploos zijzelf, om naar zijn mond te zien
 In slaap half open, waar zijn adem kalm
 Rees in onschuldige droomen: 't roode licht
 Bleekte de bleeke maan, als haar koud huis,
 Angstig en mat en hijgend, zij hervond.

De Dichter, zwerfend, heel Arabië door,
 Perzië en de woeste Carmaniaansche streek,
 Over de hooge bergen die uit hollen
 Van ijs d'Indus en Oxus nederstorten,
 Wandelde vreugdevol, opgetogen, voort.
 Tot in het dal van Cashmir, binnen in
 Zijn stilste del, waar geurge planten onder
 De holle rots een wild prieel omwinden
 Neven een flonkrend beekje, hij vermoed
 Zijn leden strekte. Een vizioen beving
 Zijn slaap, droom van verwachting, die nog nooit
 Zijn wang deed blozen. Een gesluierd meisje
 Zat naast hem, sprak tot hem, zacht en als plechtig.
 Haar stem geleek die van zijn eigen ziel
 In een gedachten-kalmte; haar geluid
 Een lang muziek-geweef van wind en stroom,
 Hield zijn diepst wezen in een web van veel-
 Kleurige draden en tint-wisslend licht.
 Haar onderwerp was kennis, waarheid, deugd,
 Van hemelsch vrijzijn de verheven hoop,
 Gedachten hem meest lief, en poëzie,
 Poëet zijzelf. De plechtige stemming van
 Haar reine geest ontstak door heel haar lijf
 Een vuur dat doorscheen, wilde maten hief ze

Met stem, verstikt in sidderend gesnik,
 Bedwongen door haar pathos: naakte handen
 Alleen, bewogen, slaand van vreemde harp
 Vreemde muziek, en in hun aadren-tak
 Sprak 't bloed zijn onuitsprekelijk verhaal.
 Het kloppen van haar hart was hoorbaar tijdens
 De pauzen in haar spel, terwijl haar adem
 Heviglijk in akkoord klonk met die vlagen
 Van tusschenpoozige zang. Zij rees opeens
 Alsof haar hart de last die uitborst, droeg
 Met ongeduld: hij wendde op dat geluid
 En zag bij 't warm licht van haar eigen leven
 Haar lijf dat gloeide onder de leenge sluier
 Van winde-weefsel, de opene armen bloot,
 De donkre lokken drijvende op de nacht,
 Haar buigende oogen stralend, mond ontsloten,
 Gereikt-en bleek, en heftig siddrende.
 Zijn sterk hart zonk en kwijnde in overmaat
 Van liefde. 't Schokkend lichaam hief hij, hield
 Zijn stokkende adem in, wenschte in zijn armen
 Haar borst die hijgde: - zij deinsde even weg;
 Toen, zwichtend voor de onteugelbare vreugd,
 Met waanzinsgwaai en korte aemlooze kreet
 Omving zijn lijf ze in arremen van damp.
 Zijn duizlende oogen zwart omsluierd, nam
 Nacht het vizioen op en verzwolg het: slaap,
 Een duistere vloed met kort weerhouden loop,
 Rolde zijn golf weer door zijn ledig brein.

De schok hem wekkend schrok hij uit zijn droom.
 't Koud-witte morgenlicht, de blauwe maan
 Laag in het westen, heuvels kleurig-klaar,
 Het duidelijk dal en 't onbewoonde bosch
 Spreidden rondom hem waar hij stond. Hoe vloten
 De hemeltinten die eerst gisternacht
 Zijn grot bespanden? 't Slaapwekkend geluid,
 't Geheimnis en de majesteit van de Aard,
 De vreugde, 't opgetoogne? Zijn moede oogen
 Staren op 't leeg tooneel zoo leeg van blik
 Als de zee-maan staart op de maan omhoog.
 De geest van zoete mensch-liefde beschoor
 Een nachtgezicht aan hem die tot die tijd
 Haar kostbre gaven smaadde. Heftig volgt hij
 Buiten het droomenrijk die schim die vliedt;
 En springt de grenzen over. Leas! helaas!

Voltrok zich lichaams-, aëm-, en ziele-mengling
 Ooit zóó bedrieglijk? Weg, weg, eeuwig weg,
 In padenlooze hei van duistre slaap,
 Dat schoone wezen! Leidt doods donkre poort
 Naar uw geheimnisvolle paradijs,
 O slaap? Voert flonkerboog in regenwolken
 En hangend bergland onder 't effen meer,
 Alleenig naar een zwart en waatrig diep,
 Terwijl doods blauw gewelf, walglijk bedampt,
 Waar iedre schim die rijst uit rottend graf
 Zijn dood oog bergt voor de verfoeide dag,
 Zal leiden, Slaap, naar uw verruklijk rijk?
 Die twijfel overstroemde als vloed zijn hart.
 De onzadigbare hoop ontwaakte en stak
 Zijn brein als was ze wanhoop.

Daglang hield

De dichter woordlooze gemeenschap met
 Zijn stille ziel. De hartstocht kwam bij nacht
 - De felle geest van een verstoorde droom -
 En schudde hem uit zijn slaap en leidde 'm uit
 In 't duister. Als een aadlaar die, gegrepen
 In ringen van de groene slang, haar borst
 Van 't gif voelt branden en zich voorwaarts stort
 Door nacht en dag, door storm en kalme en wolk,
 Dol-duizelig van doodsnoed: blinde vlucht
 Over de wijde luchtwoestijn: zóó jachtend
 Voor schitter-schaduw van die minnige droom,
 Onder 't koud blikken van de nare nacht,
 Door warrige poelen, diepe hole-kloven,
 De slang in 't maanlicht schrikkend door zijn voet,
 Vlood hij. De roode zon daagde op zijn vlucht
 En wierp het spotlicht van haar levenskleuren
 Over zijn doodswang. Verder liep hij, tot
 Aornos bouw gezien van Petra's steilt
 Gelijk een wolk hong op de lage kim;
 Door Balk, en waar de halfvergane tomben
 Van Parthen-koningen op iedre wind
 Hun dunnend stof verstrooiden. Verder liep hij
 Verdwaasd, een moeizame woestijn van uren
 En dagen, binnen zich 't broedend leed
 Dat teerde op zijn versmeulde levensvlam.
 Vermagerd was hij nu; zijn wapprend haar,
 Verdord door heffst van vreemde smarten zong
 Rouwklachten in de wind; zijn matte hand

Hing als dood been in zijn verdroogde huid.
 Leven, en gloed die het verteerde, scheen
 Als in fornuis verborgen brandende,
 Alleen uit zijn donkre oogen. Hutbewoners,
 Menschlievend in zijn menschlijke behoeften
 Voorziende, zagen wondrend met ontzag
 Hun snelle gast. De bergbewoner, die
 Zijn spookgestalte aan duizlingwekkende afgrond
 Op eens zag staan, dacht dat de Windgeest zelf
 Met bliksemoogen, hijgende adem, voet
 Die op de sneeuw geen spoor liet, van zijn vaart
 Verpoosde: kindren borgen als hij kwam
 't Ontdaan gezichtjen in hun moeders kleed,
 Beängst door 't glariën van die wilde blik,
 Waarvan 't vreemd licht in meenge laatre droom
 Hen plaagde; jonge meisjes echter, door
 Natuur geleerd, begrepen half het leed
 Dat hem verteerde, noemden - valsche troost -
 Hem broer en vriend, drukten zijn bleeke hand
 Bij 't afscheid, zagen, vaag door tranen, 't pad
 Waarlangs hij heenging van hun vaders deur.

Hij poosde op 't laatst aan het Chorasmissch strand, -
 Eenzaam en wijd, zwaarmoedige woestijn
 Van moer en veen. Een innige aandrif drong
 Zijn voet naar de oever van de zee. Een zwaan
 Stond tusschen 't riet nabij een trage stroom,
 Rees bij zijn nadring, en met krachtige vleugels
 Stijgend ten hemel, boog zijn heldre vlucht hij
 Hoog over het onmeetlijk vasteland.
 Zijn oogen volgden hem: "Gij hebt een thuis,
 Gij schoone vogel; gij reist naar uw thuis;
 Daar zal uw zoete maat haar donzige nek
 Om de uwe slingren en uw weêrkomst vieren
 Met oogen glanzend van hun diepe vreugd.
 En wat ben ik dat ik hier dralen blijf,
 Met stem veel zoeter dan uw stervens-toon,
 Met weidscher geest dan de uwe, en lijf geschikter
 Tot schoonheid, heerlijkste vermogens spillend
 Aan doove lucht, aan een blinde aarde, en hemel
 Die op mijn mijnen zwijgt?" Een sombre glimlach
 Van hoop die wanhoopt plooit zijn trillende mond.
 Want slaap, dat wist hij, hield ontfermingloes
 't Kostbre bezit, en stille dood, misschien
 Trouwloos als slaap, bood schaduw-lokaas aan,

't Eigen vreemd schoon hoonend met twijfellaach.

Verschrikt door zijn gedachten, zag hij op.
 Geen schoone duivel was nabij, geen klank
 Of beeld ontzette 'm dan in de eigen geest.
 Een kleine sloep die de oever nader dreef
 Trof 't ongedurig dwalen van zijn oog.
 Ze was al lang verlaten, want haar zijden
 Gaapten van meenge scheur, haar kranke binten
 Bewogen met de golvingen van 't tij.
 De onrustige drang noopte hem sloop te gaan,
 De Dood te ontmoeten op de sombre zee.
 Die machtige Schaduw, wist hij toch, bemint
 De slijmige holen van 't bevolkte diep.
 De dag was blank en zonnig, zee en lucht
 Dronk zijn bezielend stralen, en de wind
 Woei krachtig van de kust, de golven zwartend.
 Zijn grage ziel gehoorzaam, sprong de zwerver
 De boot in, spreidde in top van naakte mast
 Zijn mantel uit en zat dan eenzaam neer.
 De boot schoot over 't water en hij voelde
 Haar gaan gelijk een wolkflard voor de orkaan.

Als een die in een zilver vizioen
 En voor de vaart van geurge winden, drijft
 Op schitterende wolken, zoo gezwind
 Vlood langs het donkere en bewogen vlak
 Het krakend vaartuig. Warlwind zweepte 't voort,
 Met heftige vlag en aanstortend geweld,
 Door 't kokend branden van het blanke schuim.
 De golven rezen. Hooger, hooger nog
 Wrongen hun nekken onder stormroê, woest,
 Als slangen worstlend in een giere-greep.
 Kalm, en genietende in het strijdgewoel
 Van golf stroomende op golf, en vlag die zonk
 Op vlag, en zwarte vloed op draaikolk stortend
 Met donkre en meesleurende loop, zat hij:
 Alsof hun geesten hem als dienaars waren
 Gegeven, dat ze 'm leidden tot het licht
 Van de oogen die hij liefhad, zat de Dichter,
 De hand aan 't roer. En de avond kwam nabij;
 De stralen van zoneinde regenboogden
 Hoog in schuim-vlagige fonteingewelven
 Die over 't woeste diep zijn pad bespanden;
 Schemering, langzaam stijgend uit het Oost,

Wond in donkerder wrong haar lokkenvlechten
 Over Dags stralende oogen en blond voorhoofd.
 Nacht kwam, in 't sterrekleed. Aan iedere kant
 Stormden vreeslijker de veelvoudige
 Stroomen van de oceaansche bergwoestijn
 Ten strijd, dondrend in donkre drang, - ten spot
 Van 't kalme sterrenheir. De kleine boot
 Vlood nog de storm, vlood nog als schuimvlok vliedt
 Langs steile val van wintrige rivier;
 Poozend op 't scherp van de gespleten golf;
 Dan achterlatend de uitgeborsten vracht,
 Die, vallend, de oceaen doorgroef; - vlood veilig,
 Alsof die breekbre en uitgeteerde mensch
 Een god van de elementen was.

Te midnacht

Klaarde de maan; en zie! 't luchthoog getop
 Van Caucasus, dat ijze-spitsig blonk
 Onder 't gestarnt als zonlicht, en rondom
 Wiens holenvoet draaipoel en golleven
 Brekende en kolkend dat geen weerstand baat,
 Schallen en woën voortdurend. - Wie behoudt?
 De boot vlood voort, - de stroom joeg kokend door, -
 De rotsen sloten zwart, zaag-armig zich,
 De berg, doorkloofd, hing over op de zee,
 En haastiger nog, en meer dan menschlijk snel,
 Geheven op de boog van effen golf
 Jaagde de kleine boot. Een open hol
 Gaapte, en zijn smalle en diepe winding in,
 Gulpte de woelge zee. De boot vlood voort
 Haar vaart niet mindrend. "Vizioen en Liefde!"
 Kreet luid de dichter. "Nu heb ik gezien
 Het pad waarlangs gij heentooft. Slaap en Dood
 Scheiden ons nu niet lang!"

De boot doordreef

De winding van de grot. Het daglicht scheen
 Ten laatste op 't vloeien van die sombre stroom;
 Nu, waar de felste strijd van golf met golf
 Bedaart, over de onpeilbare rivier,
 Bewoog zij langzaam. Waar de berg, gespleten,
 Die zwarte diepten blootlei voor 't azuur,
 Eer nog 't reusachtige lichaam van de stroom
 Viel tot de voet van Caucasus met klank
 Die de eeuwge rotsen schokte, - vulde hij
 Met ééne draaikolk heel die wijde kloof.

Trede na treë rees 't cirkelend water op,
 Draaiende met onmeetbre vaart, en spoelde
 Met haastige slag op slag de knoestige wortels
 Van machtge boomen die hun reuzenarmen
 In donker strekten. Middenin verbleef,
 Weerspieglend, maar misvormend iedre wolk,
 Een poel, bedrieglijk en vreeswekkend kalm.
 Aangevat door de opgaande stroom, gevoerd
 Tot duizlens snel, rond, rond, en nog weer rond,
 Rees trap na trap de straf-gespannen boot,
 Tot, op de top van de allerhoogste bocht,
 Waar door een oopning van die oeverrots
 De waatren óverstromen en een plek
 Van glassige rust midden dat golfgevecht
 Ontstond, de hulk poost, siddrend. Zal zij zinken
 Waar de afgrond dreigt? Zal de aflopende stroom
 Van de onweerstaanbre kolk zich om haar slaan?
 Valt zij nu? - Wind, een dwaalsche vlaag van 't west,
 Hierheen geëdemd, vult het open zeil,
 En kijk, met zacht bewegen, tusschen mos
 Van oeverglooiing, op een kalme stroom
 Onder een loovergrot, zeilt zij, en hoor!
 De gruwbre val vermengt zijn ver gedreun
 Met murmelkoelte in 't muzikale woud.
 Waar 't boomprieel terugwijkt en een kleine
 Ruimte van effen groen laat, wordt de kreek
 Gesloten door saamvattende oevers: gele
 Bloemen zien daar hun neergeslagen oogen
 Weerspiegeld in het kalm kristal. De deining
 Die de boot maakte brak die mijmertak,
 Voorheen door dwaalsche vogel, dartle wind
 Of vallend speergras of hun eigen sterven
 Alleen, gestoord. De zwerfling voelde lust
 Hun schitter-kleur door 't dorre haar te winden,
 Maar dan beving verlatenheid opnieuw
 Zijn hart en hij weerhield zich. Nog had niet
 De sterke drang, die bleek uit blos, strakke oogen
 En schimmig lijf zijn dienst verricht: hij hing
 Over zijn leven, zoals bliksem wolk
 Doorstraalt, hangt eer hij dooft, eer vloeden
 Van donker hem omsluiten.

Middagzon

Scheen nu op 't bosch, één uitgestrekte groep
 Van mengel-schaduw welker bruine pracht

Een eng dal overwelft. Geweldige helen,
 Gehold in donkre voet van hooge rotsen
 Die spotten met zijn klacht, brullen en galmen.
 De takkenbogen en vervlochten blaren
 Weefden op 't pad een schemer, waar geleid
 Door liefde of droom, of god, of machtiger Dood,
 De Dichter in Natuurs bemindste wijk
 Zocht naar een plek, haar wieg, zijn graf. Al donkrer
 En donkrer hoopt schaduw op schaduw. De eik
 Breidt zijn reusachtge en knoestige armen uit,
 Omhelst de heldre beuk. De pyramiden
 Van hooge ceder, nederwelvend, vormen
 Plechtige koepels: onder ze en veel lager,
 Als wolken zwevende in een groene lucht,
 Hangen de esch en de accacia, drijvende
 Bevend en bleek. Rustlooze slangen lijkend
 In huid van vuur en kleurboog, kronklen kruipers
 Besterd met tienduizenden bloesems, rond
 De grijze stammen, en als kinderoogen
 Met lief bedoel en speelsche onschuldige list
 Om 't hart van wie hen liefheeft stralen slingren,
 Omranken deze de gehuwde twijgen,
 Hun innige bond nog nauwend; bladerweefsels
 Maken een net van de diep blauwe dag
 En 't middagheldre van de nacht, veelvormig
 Als tooverige wolken. Mossige zoomen
 Heuveln zich voort onder die welvingen
 Riekend met geurge kruiden, beoogd met bloeisels,
 Heel klein maar schoon. Een donkrer delling zendt
 Uit muskus-roos doervlochten met jasmijn
 Een geur die ziel doet smelten en haar noot
 Op lieflijker geheim. Door deze kloof
 Houden de tweeling-zusters Stilte en Schemer
 Hun middagwaak, zeilende door de schaadwen,
 Als dampgedaanten, vaag; verder, een wel
 Duister en glanzend vol doorschijnend nat,
 Die 't takkenweefsel van daarboven beeldt,
 En elk afhangend blad en iedere plek
 Van blauw dat door een tijdljke oopning springt;
 En anders niets wascht in dat spiegelvocht
 Zijn aanschijn, dan een onstandvastige ster,
 Die schoon, als door beblaarde tralie, blinkt,
 Of vogel, als gemaald, in 't maanlicht slapend,
 Of veelkleurig insekt beweegloos drijvend,
 Onbewust van de dag, eer nog zijn vleugels

Hun pronk uitspreidden voor de middagblik.

Hier kwam de Dichter heen. Zijn oogen zagen
't Eigen moe licht door de weerkaatste strepen
Van zijn dun haar, duidelijk in donker diep
Van 't stille water; zooals 't menschehart
In droomen starende in het somber graf
Daar zijn bedrieglijk beeld ziet. Hij vernam
't Bewegen van de blaadren; 't gras dat sproot,
En schrikte en blikte en beefde door 't besef
Van ongewoon nabijzijn, en 't geluid
Van de effen beek die uit geheime sprongen
Van die donkre fontein rees. Naast hem scheen
Een geest te staan - niet in een blinkend kleed
Van schaduwig zilver of omlijstend licht,
Ontleend aan wat de zichtbre wereld biedt,
Bevallig, heerlijk of geheimnisvol; -
Maar woudeggolf en woordelooze bron,
En vliet die springt, en avondsomberheid
Die 't donker nog verdiepte, was de taal
Waarin hij sprak met hem, alsof zij bei
Alles wat was waren, alleen ... zijn blik
Rijzende in diepste mijmring ... zag twee oogen,
Ster-oogen, hangende in nacht van zijn denken,
Die met azure' en klare glimlach hem
Te wenken leken.

Volgzaam voor het licht
Dat in zijn ziel scheen, ging hij, houdende
De winding van de del. Het vlietwater,
Dartel en wild, vloeide door menig groen
Ravijn onder het woud. Het viel somtijds
Temidden 't mos met een hol murmelen,
Donker en diep; dan danste 't op de gladde
Steenen; als kindsheid lachte 't wijl het ging:
Dan kroop het vlakten door in kalm gedwaal
En kaatste elk gras en zinkend knopje weer
Dat neerhing op zijn helderheid. - "O stroom! -
Die komt uit ontoegankelijk-diepe bron,
Waar wil uw geheimzinnige water heen?
Gij beeldt mijn leven. Uw doodstille nacht,
Uw flikkrend golven, luide en holle kolk,
Onvindbre bron en onnaspeurbre loop,
Zijn elke in mij verbeeld: en 't wijde ruim
En de ongemeten zee zeggen niet eer

Wat slijmige grot, welke afgedwaalde wolk
 Uw waatren inhoudt, als 't heelal zegt, waar
 Mijn levende gedachten wonen, wijl
 Mijn bloedloos lijf op bloemen wegteert in
 De haastige wind."

Het gras langs, aan de zoom
 Van 't smalle water, ging hij; en hij prentte
 Op 't groene mos zijn voeten, bevend door
 Het schudden van zijn brandend lijf. Als een,
 Door vroelke waanzin opgestooten uit
 Zijn koortsbed, schreed hij; niet, gelijk zulk een,
 Het graf vergetend, waar, wanneer de vlam
 Van krachtlooze verrukking is gespild,
 Hij nederdaalt. Met snelle schreden liep hij
 In schaduw van geboomte, naast het vlieten
 Van 't wild babblende beekje voort; en nu
 Werden de plechtige boschswelvingen
 Vervangen door 't ééntintige avondlicht.
 Grauw rots keek uit schaarsch mos, en stiet op beek
 Die schuimend bruiste: sprietig rietgerank
 Wierp langs de ruige glooiing dunne schaduw,
 En enkel knoestge en oude sparretronken,
 Verweerd en kaal, grepen in wortelklauw
 De onwillige grond. Verandering kwam allenge,
 Toch ijslijk. Want, gelijk, als jaren gaan,
 Het voorhoofd rimpelt en 't haar dunner wordt
 En grijs; en waar spranklende dauwige oogen
 Schenen, steenbollen blinken; zoo, terwijl hij schreed,
 Verdwenen kleurge bloemen, warme schaduw
 Van groene holen, met hun geurge wind
 En muzikaal bewegen. Rustig toog hij
 Langs stroom, die met een zwaarder massa thans
 De doolhof diep doorwentelde en zich daar
 Een pad knaagde door dalende boog op boog
 Met vreugdloos haasten. Weerzijds rezen nu
 Rotsen, die onverbeeldbaar van gedaant
 Hun zwarte en naakte toppespitsen staken
 In 't licht van d'avond, en, de steile wand
 't Ravijn verduistrend, openden ze omhoog
 In kantelblokken zwart-gapende holen
 Wier windingen tienduizend stemmen gaven
 Aan 't stroomgeschal. Zie, waar zijn steenen kaken
 De pas verbreedt, breekt bruusk de berg en schijnt

Met zijn opeengehoopte rotsgevaarten
 Te hangen over de aard: want onder 't bleeke
 Gesternte en maan die daalt, spreiden zich wijd
 Beëilande zeeën, blauwe bergen, stroomen,
 Scheemrige en breede streken, glanzig-donker
 Van een loodkleurige avond. Vuurge heuvels
 Menglen met schemer vlammen, op de rand
 Van verre horizon. Het naast tafreel
 Was, in zijn naakte en strenge eenvoudigheid,
 Een tegenbeeld van dat heelal. Een pijn,
 Geworteld in de rots, strekte in het ruim
 Zwaaiende takken, elke ontstadige vlaag
 Eén antwoord gevend, bij elk rustverwijn
 Trouwlijk in de eigen maat, met het gehuil,
 De donder en 't gestoom van 't huisloos water
 Zijn plechtige zang vereenend, daar de stroom,
 Breed, schuimend, jagend langs zijn steenige baan,
 Zich neerstortte in dat matelooze leeg,
 Zijn golven strooiende in de haastge wind.

Maar grauwe en steile wand en plechtige pijn
 En val, waren niet alles: één stil oord
 Was daar: de rand-zelf van die machtige berg,
 Door wortelknoesten en gevallen rotsen
 Gesteund: uitziende in onaantastbre vree
 Op donkere aarde en buigend stergewelf.
 Een rustige plek die leek te glimlachen
 In de schoot zelf van 't gruwbre. Klimop klemde
 De breukige steenen in zijn vlechtende armen
 En overwies met altijd groen geblaart
 En donkre bezies 't gladde en vlakke ruim
 Van zijn nog onontwijde vloer, en hier
 Droegen de kinderen van herfstdwarrelwind,
 In dartel spel, het schittrend loof, dat welkend,
 Rood, geel of bleek gelijk een avondlucht,
 Met zomerpronk wedijvert. Dit 's de wijk
 Van iedere zachte wind, die door zijn adem
 De woestenij rust minnen leert. Eén stap,
 Eén menschestap alleen heeft ooit de stilte
 Van 't eenzaam oord verbroken: ééne stem
 Bezielde er de echoos; de eigen stem alleen
 Die hierheen kwam aandrijvende op de wind,
 Opdat de lieflijkste van menschedaanten
 Die wilde holen tot de bergplaats maakte

Van al de schoonheid en bevalligheid
 Haar eigen, er haar majesteit aan schonk,
 Muziek strooide op de hartelooze storm,
 En vochtig loof en blauwe grottenaard,
 Voedsters van kleurgebloemt en takkig mos,
 De kleuren gaf van wang die bleekt en bloest,
 Die sneeuwige borst, dat donkre en zinkend oog.

De omfloersde maan, gehoornd, hing laag en goot
 Een zee van glans die op de horizon
 De bergen overvloedde. Gele mist
 Vulde de grenslooze atmosfeer en dronk
 Bleek maanlicht tot hij vol was. Niet een ster
 Scheen, niet een klank verklonk: de winden zelfs,
 Gevaars barsch speelvolk, sliepen op die steilt,
 Vast in zijn arm geklemd. O storm van dood!
 Wat sombre nacht splijt uw onzichtbre spoed!
 En gij, reuzig Geraante, dat aldoor,
 Geleider van haar onweerstaanbre vaart,
 In uw vernietigende almachtigheid
 Vorst op de breeklijke aard zijt, - van het roode
 Slagveld, van 't dampend hospitaal, 't gewijde
 Bed van de vrijheidsheld, de sneeuwige peul
 Van de onschuld, van schavot en tronen roept
 Een machtige stem u aan. Verwoesting roept
 Zijn broeder Dood. Zeldzame koningsprooi
 Heeft hij bereid, snufflend de wereld door;
 Waarmee verzaad gij rusten moogt, en menschen
 Gaan naar hun graven, bloem of worm gelijk,
 Noch offren ooit meer aan uw zwart outaar
 't Roemloos geschenk van een gebroken hart.

Toen op de drempel van dat groen verblijf
 Des zwervers voetstap viel, wist hij dat Dood
 Hem na was. Nog een poos, voordat zij vlood,
 Opende hij zijn hooge en heilge ziel
 Voor beelden van vergane majesteit
 Die in zijn lijdzaam wezen nu verbleven
 Als winden vol van zoet muziek, die aadmen
 Door duistere traliekamer. Hij ontspande
 Zijn bleeke en maagre hand op 't schorsige hout
 Van de oude pijn. Op klimop-groene steen
 Leunde 't vermoeide hoofd; zijn leden rustten
 Ontspierd, bewegingloos op de effen rand

Van die verborgen kloof; - zoo lag hij dan
 En gaf zich op aan laatste werkingen
 Van 't vlotgeworden leven. Wanhoop, hoop,
 De pijngers, sluimerden: geen smart noch vrees
 Stoorde zijn rust; wat invloede in de zinnen,
 En 't eigen wezen ongemengd met leed,
 Maar zwakker, telkens zwakker, voedde kalm
 De stroom van 't denken; tot hij aadmend lag
 Vredig en zacht glimlachend: - laatst zag hij
 De groote maan, die op de westkim van
 De wijde wereld haar machtge hoorn verhief,
 In de ijle stralen ingeweven donker
 Zich menglend. Boven op de klippige heuvels
 Rustte ze, en nog, daar de gedeelde vorm
 Van 't breed gesternte zonk, sloeg 's Dichters pols
 Die in geheime eenheid met Natuur,
 Haar eb en vloed, altijd bewoog, zwak mee.
 En toen twee mindrende lichtpunten maar
 Glansden door 't donker, deed het beurtgehijs
 Van zijn flauwe adem de stilstaande nacht
 Ternood bewegen: tot de laatste straal
 Gedooft was, draalde 't kloppen in zijn hart.
 Het poosde, 't beefde. Doch toen 't hemelwelf
 Volslagen zwart bleef hing de nachtschauw over
 Een beeld, koud, zwijgend en bewegingloos,
 Gelijk haar stemlooze aarde en ledige lucht.
 Zocals een damp met gouden glans gedrenkt,
 Dienaar van 't zonlicht, eer het westen het
 Verbergt, was thans die wondervolle vorm -
 Gevoel, beweging meer, noch godlijkheid;
 Breekbare luit, in samenklank besnaard,
 Waar hemeladem langsvloot; heldre stroom,
 Gevoed eens door veelstemmige golven; droom
 Van jeugd, die nacht en tijd voor altijd dooffen,
 Stil, donker, droog en voortaan onherdacht.

O, thans Medea's wondre tooverkunst,
 Die oovral waar ze viel de aard glansen deed
 Van schitterbloemen en het winterhout
 Van lentebloesem geuren! O dat God,
 Mild met vergiften, mij de kelk vergunde
 Die één slechts dronk en leefde, hij die nu,
 Vat van doodlooze toorn, een slaaf die geen
 Trotsch voorrecht voelt in de rampzalge doem
 Hem opgeladen, eeuwig de aard doorzwerft,

Eenzaam gelijk Dood zelf! O dat de droom
 Die in zijn grot de donkre toovenaar schouwt,
 Als hij in sintels van zijn vizel speurt
 Naar macht en leven, en zijn hand, verzwakt,
 Tilt in haar laatst verval, de wet mocht zijn
 Van de zoo schoone wereld! Maar gij vloodt
 Als een krachtlooze damp, die dageraad
 In gouden stralen kleedt, ai mij, gij vloodt,
 De dappre en schoone en edelaardige,
 Kind van genie en gratie. Hartloosheid
 Doet en spreekt in de wereld, wormen leven,
 Beesten en menschen, en de machtige Aard
 Heft van zee, berg, van stad en wildernis
 In zachte vesper of blijde ochtendzang
 Aldoor haar plechtige tonen: maar gij vloodt,
 Gij kent niet meer noch mint meer de gedaanten
 Van dit gedroomd tooneel, zij die u waren
 De reinste dienaars, zij die zijn, helaas,
 Nu dat gij vloodt. Laat op die bleeke mond,
 Zoo zoet zelfs in zijn zwijgen, op die oogen
 Die slaap in dood afbeelden, op dat lijf
 Nog door geen worm geschonden, niet een traan
 Vallen, niet in gedachte. Ook, als die tinten
 Vergaan zijn en dat hemelsch wezen zelf,
 Op de ongevoelige wind verwaaid, slechts leeft
 In zwakke maten van mijn simple zang,
 Laat dan trotsch vers, gedachtnis vierende
 Van dat wat niet meer leeft, noch verf die treurt,
 Noch beitel, in machtloos verbeelden hun
 Koud pogen toonen. Kunst, welsprekendheid,
 Al de vertooningen van de aard beweenen
 Vergeefs een leed dat nacht maakt van hun licht.
 Want dat is leed "te diep voor tranen", als
 Alles op eens sterft, een verheven Geest
 Wiens licht de wereld tooide, hun die blijven
 Zelfs niet de drang tot snik of kreunen laat,
 't Verzet van hoop die zich hartstochtlijk hecht, -
 Maar bleeke Wanhoop, koude Roerloosheid,
 Natuur een vorm, een web het menschbedrijf,
 Geboorte en graf niet als zij zijn geweest. -

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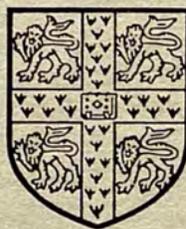
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*With Best Wishes
R. M. Buxton*

THE MODERN LANGUAGE REVIEW

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VERWEY AND SHELLEY

A DISCUSSION OF VERWEY'S TRANSLATIONS FROM SHELLEY'S 'POETICAL WORKS'¹

Much has been said and written about the influence of the English Romantic poets, particularly Shelley and Keats, on the Dutch poets who made their début in the 1880's. There are indeed traces of direct influence in the poetry of the *Tachtigers*, as these poets were called, where the metre, form or imagery is reminiscent of one or other of the English poems, and these have been discussed in detail by Dr G. Dekker in *Die Invloed van Shelley en Keats in Nederland Gedurende die Negentiende Eeu*.²

According to Dekker³ the influence of Shelley and Keats is most marked in the poetry of Albert Verwey (1865–1937) where, especially in the earlier poems, these two different influences are often found side by side. Dekker, however, takes the view that after *Cor Cordium*,⁴ which was written in 1886, there is very little evidence of Shelley's influence in Verwey's poetry.⁵ In Shelley and Keats the *Tachtigers* recognized fellow-worshippers of beauty. But his worship of beauty represented only one aspect of Shelley. He was also a zealous and active reformer. His chief aim was to reform the world; to liberate the slaves, crush the tyrants and oppressors, and create a new and better world of love, beauty and freedom. It is the influence of Shelley the reformer, Shelley the teacher, rather than the mere lover of beauty, that is more in evidence in Verwey's later poems.

Although differing greatly in background, upbringing and education, Verwey and Shelley were in several respects 'kindred spirits'. Both were from an early age assiduous readers, finding their delight in the world of imagination rather than in the world of reality. Such in fact was their power of imagination that the world of imagination, or dream, was as real for them as the world of reality. Both Shelley and Verwey had a great thirst for knowledge, neither being willing to accept doctrines or statements without adequate proof. Both were also ardent champions of liberty. In reading of Verwey's efforts while still at school to raise a subscription for *Multatuli* one is reminded of similar activities by Shelley at Oxford on behalf of Peter Finnerty, the Irish patriot. Young as they were, both were eager to associate themselves in this way with the cause of the oppressed in their struggle for independence: Shelley with the Irish patriots and later with the Greeks; Verwey with the Javanese and with the Boers of Transvaal. Shelley has been likened to Ariel,⁶ and Carlos Baker sees in him a combination of both Prospero and Ariel.⁷ In view of this it is a strange coincidence, if nothing more, that Uyldert in the last of his collected essays on Verwey,⁸

¹ Analysed in greater detail in *Albert Verwey's Translations from Shelley's Poetical Works*. Thesis presented for the degree of M.A. in the University of London, 1956.

² (Groningen and The Hague, 1926.)

³ *Die Invloed*, etc. p. 140

⁴ Verwey, *Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk* (Amsterdam and Santpoort, 1938), I, 63.

⁵ *Die Invloed*, etc. p. 167.

⁶ André Maurois entitled his study of Shelley *Ariel*.

⁷ Carlos Baker, *Shelley's Major Poetry* (London, 1948), pp. 12–13.

⁸ Maurits Uyldert, *Over de Poëzie van Albert Verwey. Verzamelde Opstellen* (Uitgevers-Mij. 'West-Friesland'. Undated).

should take as his motto four lines from one of Verwey's later poems in which the poet refers to himself as:

Ik Tovenaar en Ariel
Ik bond de wereld in mijn spel
En groter fout begingt ge niet
Dan dat ge me op een eiland ziet.¹

A further point of affinity between Verwey and Shelley can be seen in their early reaction to the orthodox religion of their day and immediate environment. Verwey, like Shelley, was brought up as a Christian and, again like Shelley, went through a period of doubt in his early youth which culminated in a definite breakaway from orthodox Christianity. It was a time when he found himself no longer able to accept the Christian conception of God and substituted for it his own personal belief. Verwey referred to this later as a crisis in his life.² This crisis took place when Verwey was about seventeen. He himself dated it as the year preceding the writing of his first good poems.³ When Shelley began to doubt the existence of God he tried, by means of his pamphlet *The Necessity of Atheism* in 1811, to goad eminent Christians and theologians into convincing him of God's existence. This hoped-for reaction was not forthcoming and a short time after the publication of his pamphlet Shelley was expelled from Oxford as an atheist, at the age of eighteen.

Further affinity between Shelley and Verwey is apparent in their attitude towards poetry; also in their respective philosophies, the search for and development of which played such an important part in their poetry.

The young Verwey seems to have been particularly sensitive to Shelley's poetry, and in a letter to Willem Kloos in November 1884 he admitted to an ability to feel and appreciate a poem without fully following the poet's train of thought.⁴

Verwey's translations from Shelley's *Poetical Works* fall into three groups corresponding to three stages in Verwey's poetic activity: early, middle and late. The early period is represented by a group of unpublished translations in 1881;⁵ the middle period by the *Poems Written in 1816*⁶ translated in 1903⁷; and the late

¹ Verwey, *Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk*, II, 545: 'I, magician and Ariel, bound the world in my play, and you would make no greater error than to visualize me on an island.'

² 'Mijn Dichterlijk Levensbedrijf', *Nieuwe Taalgids* (1951), no. 44, p. 66. Translation: 'So my crisis existed only in the fact that I had to acknowledge the discrepancy between my own belief and that of my environment, and destroy the power of that environment over my thoughts.'

³ Verwey's first poem of importance was *Persephone* in 1883, but in 1882 a few of his poems were published in *De Nederlandsche Spectator*.

⁴ See also Verwey, *Proza*, VIII (Amsterdam, 1921), p. 15. Translation: 'It is generally a question of feeling what an author means rather than following his train of thought. That is why the most difficult writers are comprehensible to those who feel as they do.'

⁵ The poems translated in this group are: *To Night, Tomorrow, To the Moon, The Fugitives, Music, Liberty, The Two Spirits—An Allegory, Good Night* (first stanza only), *Time, The Isle, The Daemon of the World*, Part I, Fragment from *Queen Mab* (IV, ll. 1-33). The text of these translations is given in Appendix A of *Albert Verwey's Translations*, etc. by kind permission of the heirs of Albert Verwey. The manuscripts themselves are in the 'Verzameling—Albert Verwey' in the University Library at Amsterdam.

⁶ *The Sunset, Hymn to Intellectual Beauty and Mont Blanc*. Verwey first published this group under the title *Shelley's Gedichten van het Jaar MDCCCXVI*. In some editions of Shelley's works these poems are in fact grouped together under the heading: *Poems Written in MDCCCXVI* or sometimes: *Poems Written in 1816*.

⁷ These translations were first published in the February number, 1904, of *De Twintigste Eeuw*, later being reprinted, with certain revisions, in Verwey's collection of translated poetry, *Poëzie in Europa* in 1920 (W. Versluys U.M. Amsterdam).

period by the revised version of *Alastor* in 1922.¹ In these translations a definite development can be traced, which runs to some extent parallel to that seen in Verwey's original work.

The early period is that of Verwey's poetic awakening; the period of his first experiments in the field of poetry, when he was, in the words of Maurits Uyldert, 'tuning his instrument',² and the early translations are in fact in some respects experiments in the use of sound and rhythm.

The first poems which Verwey translated from Shelley appear to have been selected for their beauty of sound and rhythm, and his choice might therefore be considered characteristic of the Literary Movement of 1880. The early *Tachtigers*, and especially Jacques Perk (sometimes regarded as the forerunner of the *Tachtigers*) and Willem Kloos were primarily concerned with beauty; not only the beauty which they worshipped as a deity, the Platonic conception of absolute and eternal beauty, but also beauty of form and expression in the poetry itself. But when he translated these poems Verwey had not read Perk's poems, nor had he met Kloos. His friendship with Kloos later may have stimulated Verwey's interest in the works of Shelley, but his admiration for Shelley's poetry existed before this friendship.

It is difficult to say with any degree of certainty whether or not Verwey at the age of sixteen was already conscious of the position and use of sounds in poetry. It is possible at this stage that he noticed the effect of the alliteration and assonance as used by Shelley and merely attempted to imitate it. That two years later he was indeed aware of the importance of the sounds themselves is abundantly clear from his article on Potgieter's *Florence*, which was written in 1883.³ By 1891, and possibly earlier, Verwey was also familiar with Shelley's ideas as expressed in *A Defence of Poetry*, translated by Verwey in 1891.

Even grammar had to take second place to acoustic effect. Verwey expressed his opinion on this as early as 1883 in the article referred to above. In defending his omission of the article where in normal prose this would be impossible, he maintained that in the case in point its omission was fully justified because its inclusion would add a sound which, of necessity, as all sounds do, would alter the impression created by the others. The aim of the artist, he maintained, must be to give by means of words the effect created elsewhere in nature by other means.⁴ Verwey accordingly omitted the article where in his opinion it would disturb the balance of sound. Examples of this are to be found even in these early translations, before the article referred to above was written.

Onder sterren daar omhoog (Aan de Maan, l. 5)

Als een die daar drinkt uit betooverden kroes (Muziek, st. IV, l. 1)

It is also to be found in the later group of translations:

In kalme toovergrot der Poëzie (Mont Blanc, st. II, l. 33)

Men zegt dat glimp van afgelegen sfeer (Mont Blanc, st. III, l. 1)

Over besnaard stil instrument (Hymne aan de Geestelijke Schoonheid, st. III, l. 10)

¹ Published in the Shelley Centenary Number of *English Studies* in 1922. An earlier version was published in *De Beweging* in July 1909.

² *De Jeugd van een Dichter*, p. 59.

³ *De Oude Strijd* (Amsterdam, 1905), pp. 37, 38, 39. Quoted in *Albert Verwey's Translations, etc.*, pp. 24-5, note 1.

⁴ *De Oude Strijd*, pp. 33-4. Quoted in *Albert Verwey's Translations, etc.*, p. 163.

and in the final version of *Alastor*:

Zoo dauwige uchtend, geurge noen, en avond
Met pronk-omstoete zonnenoudergang (ll. 5-6)

Sound plays a prominent part in these early translations, and alterations in the manuscript frequently indicate the young Verwey's great concern to achieve certain acoustic effects. In *De Vluchtelingen (The Fugitives)*, for example, the first two lines of the second stanza were changed from:

De dwarlwinden raatlen [later 'schaatren']
Bij 't donderslag klaatren

to:

De dwarlwinden gonzen
Bij 't donderslag bonzen

A remarkable use of sound effect is to be found in *Vrijheid (Liberty)*.

De trotsende bergen, zij roepen elkander
En d'echo huns donders rolt galmende voort
En de stormende golven verschrikken elkander
De rust van die rotsen van ijs is gestoord:
De klaroen van den Typhoon is luide gehoord.

The sound of the words in the translation, as in the original,¹ forms as it were the background of sound supplementing the meaning of the words themselves, much as an orchestral accompaniment to a song sets the mood for the contents of the song. The second line of the translation of this stanza is very descriptive of the sound of the 'thunderings'.

In the original the sound of the waves breaking can be heard in the word 'tempestuous':

The tempestuous oceans awake one another

In the translation, after the rhythmic rolling of the waves in the first part of the line:

En de stormende golven...

with a vowel harmony that is almost assonance in the stressed syllables, there is a sudden clash and breaking in 'verschrikken', where not only is the stressed vowel, as it were, a discord after the harmony at the beginning of the line, but the plosive consonants add to the sharpness and suddenness of the impact. 'Verschrikken' as used by Verwey in this line has much the same effect in reproducing the clash and breaking of the waves as Shelley's 'tempestuous'. The somewhat unusual choice of 'verschrikken' as a translation of 'awake' is more than justified by the remarkable acoustic effect thereby achieved. Moreover, the action of 'awakening' by 'tempestuous oceans' might well contain an element of fright.

Frequent use is made of alliteration and assonance to link ideas and images, sometimes in imitation of Shelley, as in:

Zweef door des hemels westerpoort
Geest van den Nacht! (*Aan den Nacht*, ll. 1-2)

where the assonance of the vowels in 'zweef', 'hemels' and the closely related vowel in 'wester' replaces the alliteration in 'swiftly', 'walk', 'western' and 'wave' in:

Swiftly walk o'er the western wave
Spirit of Night! (*To Night*, ll. 1-2)

¹ *Liberty*, st. I. See also *Albert Verwey's Translations, etc.*, p. 56 and note 3.

although there is in the Dutch also a limited use of alliteration in 'zweef' and 'wester'. The alliteration and assonance in 'swiftly' and 'spirit' is represented in 'zweef' and 'geest' by assonance alone.

But alliteration and assonance are also used for this purpose where there is no such link in the original as, for example:

Uw droomen weeft van vrees en vreugd
(*Aan den Nacht*, l. 5)

where the use is very felicitous.

Acoustic effect is used successfully in *De Vluchtelingen* (*The Fugitives*) to suggest the sound of the water:

De wateren plettren

and of the hail:

Bij 't hagelsteen klettren

Where the preponderance of liquid and nasal consonants in the lines:

And noon lay heavy on flower and tree
And the weary Day turned to his rest
Lingering like an unloved guest (To *Night*, st. III, ll. 4-6)

helps to emphasize the weariness and languor expressed in the text, a similar effect can also be observed in the translation, albeit in a lesser degree.

En Middag op de velden lag
En als een ongewenschte gast
De dag nog dralend ging ter rust (Aan den *Nacht*, st III,
ll. 4-6)

In the opening lines of the translation of the fragment from *Queen Mab* the rhythm and use of assonance, particularly of short vowels, impart a lilt and an air of lightness worthy of Shelley himself.

Hoe schoon deez' Nacht! het zachtste balsemzuchtje,
Dat lentezephirs d'avond tegenaâmen

The original of these lines, however, is slower and smoother:

How beautiful this night! the balmiest sigh
Which vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's air (*Queen Mab*,
IV, 1-2)

That the use of assonance in the translation was not accidental is apparent from the alteration in the manuscript from 'het zoelste balsemzuchtje' to 'het zachtste balsemzuchtje'.

The contrast between the calm at dawn:

Met zachten lach
Daalt ginds in zuider streek op 't golffloos vlak
Der zee de ster des daags: geen adem zweeft
Langs 't ongerimpeld diep, wijl d'avondwolken
Gerust het dralend licht der zon weerkaatsen,
En 't beeld der avondster ter westerzij
Nog lieflijk straalt...¹

¹ Cf. *Queen Mab*, IV, ll. 19-25.

and the approach of the storm, with its quickening tempo:

...De morgen nadert: wolk
 Op wolk rolt boven 't vlak der zwarte waatren
 In massaas dicht en diep; de schorre galm
 Des verren donders bromt en brult schrikwekkend;
 De storm ontplooit zijn vleuglen over 't duister,
 Dat broeit op 't kokend perk; de geest des storms
 Met vlaag en bliksemvlam, vervolgt zijn prooi;
 't Gescheurde water huilt en 't vaartuig vindt
 Zijn graf beneên de torenhooge golven —¹

is striking and compares favourably with the original. The assonance in 'straalt' and 'nadert', however, is unfortunate, for with the phrase 'Tomorrow comes' begins also a change in sound and subject-matter, the effect of which is weakened when this verb is linked in the translation with a verb in the preceding section.

It is interesting to note, even in these early translations, a use of repetition and parallelism, devices Verwey was to use so effectively in his later poems. An example of this is:

Verlangt gij mij 'k daal tot u neer
 Verlangt ge mij? En ik zei weer: (Aan den Nacht, st. iv, ll. 5-6)

In this particular case the original text gives no occasion for its use.

Effective use of balance and parallelism is to be found in:

Wie steekt op u, o zee, verraderlijk in rust
 Ontzaggelijk in storm, wie steekt zich des bewust
 Een veilge haven uit? (Tijd, ll. 8-10)

where 'wie steekt op u, o zee' is balanced by 'wie steekt zich des bewust' and 'verraderlijk in rust' by 'ontzaggelijk in storm'. This is, as it were, a case of inverted parallelism with a mirror effect. A striking example of this mirror effect occurs in *Muziek* (*Music*).

Als een vlakte die hijgt...
 Zoo kwijn ik en wacht...

Here the two different stressed vowels are used with a mirror effect.

Later uses of balance and repetition in Verwey's original poems, as for example:

Ik ging om u. Ik heb u niet gevonden.
 Ik vind u toch. Om u werd ik gezonden²

and

Ik liep haar na: ik vond haar in een delling,
 Ik nam haar hand, ik trok haar tot de helling.³

are undoubtedly more polished and the mirror effect in the first of these two examples is very subtle. But even from these early examples Verwey's aim is abundantly clear and his efforts are by no means unsuccessful.

These early translations are, as has already been observed, to be regarded in the main as experiments: experiments in the use of acoustic effect, alliteration, assonance and also to some extent form. In *Tijd* (*Time*) Verwey seems to have poured Shelley's poem into a mould of his own, but for the rest the translations usually have the same form as the original and the rhyme scheme is similar if not

¹ Cf. *Queen Mab*, iv, ll. 25-33.

² *Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk*, I, 556.

³ *Ibid.* p. 566.

identical. In *Aan den Nacht* Verwey also attempted to follow the internal structure of Shelley's poem (*To Night*). In the last line but one of the last stanza:

Swift be thine approaching flight

Shelley points back to the last line of the first stanza:

Swift be thy flight!

thus linking the last stanza of the poem with the first. In the translation:

O, kom snel, o kom, ik wacht

likewise links up with the last line of the first stanza:

Kom nu, ik wacht

of which it is an extended version.

Verwey's experiments in the use of rhythm are not very obvious in these early translations. Generally speaking, the rhythm tends to be regular to the point of monotony. Shelley sometimes varies the rhythm to give additional emphasis, as for example:

Thy brother Death came, and cried (*To Night*, st. iv, l. 1)

Here the two consecutive stresses tend to add emphasis to the words 'Death came' with their implied finality. This is missing in the translation, where the regular, flowing iambic rhythm continues without interruption.

De Dood uw broeder kwam nabij

This tendency to maintain strict rhythm, irrespective of any irregularities in the original is characteristic of these early translations and is undoubtedly due partly to the young translator's immaturity and partly to the influence of the work of the older Dutch poets, such as Potgieter, Ten Kate, Bilderdijk and Da Costa, which was still strong at this stage also in Verwey's original poetry. This is particularly noticeable in the translation of *The Daemon of the World*. As Verwey's poetic talent developed the rhythm became freer and less strictly iambic.

In the lyrics there are comparatively few deviations from the original where the young translator apparently did not understand the English.¹ *The Daemon of the World* appears to have presented more difficulty and two lines were omitted altogether, with a note added in pencil to the effect that this passage was 'not understood'. On the whole, however, Verwey appears to have succeeded remarkably well in understanding these poems and in rendering the meaning.

This early group is very unequal in merit. Lines of considerable beauty are found side by side with greatly inferior ones and expressions obviously used for line-filling or to provide the rhyme. The style is frequently awkward and inconsistent, the elevated and the poetic alternating with the commonplace; and the rhythm is all too regular and tends to be monotonous. In themselves they are perhaps not worthy to take their place beside Verwey's published work and this indeed appears to have been his own opinion. As experiments, however, they are of interest and also of value in that they show, even at this early stage, traces of the technical devices used by Verwey so effectively in his later poetry.

By 1903, when Verwey translated his second group of Shelley's poems, his own interest in poetry had acquired a new depth. Although still considering rhythmic

¹ These are discussed in *Albert Verwey's Translations, etc.*

and acoustic effects of great importance, he was now deeply concerned with a philosophy of life which he called 'the Idea', the development and expression of which was to pervade most of his original work. Small wonder, therefore, that his next translations from Shelley (apart from the prose work *A Defence of Poetry* in 1891) should be of three poems dealing so closely with Shelley's own philosophical idea: *The Sunset*, *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* and *Mont Blanc*. In these translations, in addition to reproducing the rhythmic and acoustic effect of the poems, Verwey also had to seek to understand and re-express Shelley's philosophical thought.

These poems were all written by Shelley in 1816, but they were not originally published together and in some editions they appear separately. There is, however, a certain link within them; a common theme runs through all, although the treatment of this theme varies. All are concerned in varying degrees with the Power behind the universe; a Power sometimes seen as the Spirit of Beauty, of Eternal Beauty or Absolute and Eternal Love in the Platonic sense; a Power which remains and is eternal amid the transient things of life; a Power beyond death. *Alastor*, written less than a year earlier, has the same basic theme.

Did Verwey perhaps also feel this underlying motif linking these four poems? If he did not, it seems a strange coincidence that his only mature translations from Shelley's *Poetical Works* should be of these four poems alone, and, moreover, that he should be engaged on them much about the same time. For, although *Alastor* was not actually translated until 1909 (six years after the *Poems written in 1816*) Verwey had long been familiar with it, as is apparent from his correspondence with Willem Kloos in 1884.¹ In this same correspondence there are indications that as early as 1884 he was also familiar with *Mont Blanc*, which Kloos was at that time translating. Yet nine years were to elapse before Verwey attempted his own translation of *Mont Blanc* and fifteen before he ventured on a translation of *Alastor*. Was this perhaps because, although in 1884 he was capable of appreciating these poems (and from his correspondence with Kloos one gathers that he believed he understood them), yet he himself could not at that time experience them? He was as yet too immature to project himself into these poems and make them his own, and without this translation was unthinkable, even if he had possessed the necessary skill. Now, however, Verwey's own poetry had acquired a new depth. In *De Eenzame*² (published in 1901) and also in *De Verlatene*³ (published in 1903, the year in which Verwey translated the *Poems Written in 1816*) there seem to be echoes of *Alastor* and also of *The Sunset*. Yet these are by no means translations or adaptations of Shelley's poems. Where similar images are used it is because Verwey has now made them his own. They represent his own feelings at that moment, not Shelley's. Similarity in subject-matter is to a great extent a question of similar experience, although the possibility of unconscious borrowing cannot altogether be ruled out.⁴

The translations in this second group are, as one would expect, technically

¹ Unfortunately, after his estrangement with Verwey, Kloos destroyed Verwey's letters to him. Letters written by Kloos to Verwey in 1884, however, refer to points raised by Verwey in his letters. These letters are to be found in the 'Verzameling—Albert Verwey' in the University library at Amsterdam. Quotations from these letters are given in *Albert Verwey's Translations*, etc. on p. 144, also notes 1 and 2 (re *Mont Blanc*), p. 165, note 3 (re *Alastor*) and p. 167. Further references to their contents can be found on pp. 165 and 197.

² *Oorspronkelijk Dichtwerk*, I, 361.

³ *Ibid.* p. 440.

⁴ See also *Albert Verwey's Translations*, etc., p. 9 and note 1.

superior to the early translations. The regularity of the iambic rhythm of the early translations has given way to greater freedom, which is more expressive and less monotonous, and the use of sound is for the most part successful and unobtrusive. Both sound and rhythm are subordinate to the 'Idea' in whose service they are.

The vowel harmony in the lines:

De zon ging onder, doch gesmolten goud
Bevloeide 't grauwwolk, zonk op de punten
Van 't ver vlak gras...¹

is remarkable, changing from a predominance of dark vowels and diphthongs, suggestive of depth, in the first two lines to lighter vowels in the third line. Alterations in the manuscript were undoubtedly made with this end in view, for 'maar' in the first of these lines was altered to 'doch' and 't ver laag gras' to 't ver vlak gras', which also provides both alliteration and assonance and, moreover, helps to create an impression of flatness in contrast to the depth suggested by the preceding lines. The harmony is not so striking in the original, although there is a certain amount of assonance.

There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold
Hung on the ashen clouds and on the points
Of the far level grass... (ll. 12-14)

It will be noticed that, although effective, the image in the translation differs somewhat from that of the original in that it describes the action rather than the result as does Shelley's image.

An even closer imitation of Shelley's use of vowel harmony is to be found in the first stanza of *Hymne aan de Geestelijke Schoonheid* (*Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*). The original poem opens with a phrase in which dark vowels predominate in stressed or semi-stressed positions. There are but three exceptions: 'shadow' and 'unseen', which occurs twice.

The awful shadow of some unseen power
Floats though unseen among us... (ll. 1-2)

In this way these words, which are also key words, are made to stand out from the rest. It is the *shadow* floating among us, not the power itself, and, as the power is *unseen* so also is the shadow of that power *unseen*. After some alternation of images illustrating (both in acoustic effect and in meaning) the variableness and inconstancy of the universe with images of more lasting things, the final couplet reverts to the sounds introduced in the opening phrase:

Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery (ll. 11-12)

In 'aught' there occurs again the vowel of 'awful' in the first line; 'that', although not bearing full stress, echoes the vowel of 'shadow', and the stressed vowel in 'unseen' now reappears in the rhyme position in 'may be' and 'mystery'. A similar sequence is to be found in the translation. In the first phrase the key words are linked even more closely by alliteration and assonance than in the original.

De ontzachtbre schim van een onzichtbre macht
Drijft ongezien rondom ons;...

Syntactically 'ontzachtbre' is linked with 'schim' and 'onzichtbre' with 'macht', but 'onzichtbre' and 'schim', and 'ontzachtbre' and 'macht' are also linked by

¹ Cf. *The Sunset*, ll. 12-14.

assonance. Moreover, the two qualities 'ontzachbre' and 'onzichtbre' are very closely linked by multiple alliteration. The vowel of 'schim' and 'onzichtbre' is followed in 'ongezien' by a vowel of a similar quality. Thus the emphasis as in the original, is on the invisibility of the shadow, this key word even having approximately the same stressed vowel as its English equivalent 'unseen'. The key vowels of the first phrase also recur in the final couplet, as in the original.

Als al wat door zijn gratie mij
Lief, liever nog door zijn mysterie zij.

The stressed vowel of 'ontzachbre' (and of 'macht') reappears in 'al' (and also in 'als' and 'wat'); and the closely related vowels of 'schim', 'onzichtbre' and 'ongezien' are represented by 'lief, liever'. It will be noticed that the words linked in this way in the translation are in most cases the equivalents of the words so linked in the original text: 'ontzachbre' and 'al' representing 'awful' and 'ought', 'onzichtbre' and 'ongezien' representing 'unseen'.

Deviations from the original text in this group of translations, where they are not obviously for reasons of rhyme or acoustic effect, sometimes point to a difference in conception. When Shelley, who was a keen scientist and frequently expressed his philosophy by means of images taken from the field of science or from natural phenomena, writes:

... there is a harmony
In autumn, and a lustre in its sky
Which through the summer is not heard or seen
As if it could not be, as if it had not been! (*Hymn*, ll. 74-7)

he seems to be thinking of the continual rotation of the seasons: the harmony and lustre of autumn which is not heard or seen during the summer 'as if it could not be' in the future (the autumn which is approaching), 'as if it had not been' in the past (the previous autumn). The somewhat free translation:

... in zijn lucht een luister die
De heele zomer door ver blijft, zo ver
Alsof hij nooit kon zijn dan op een andre ster

appears to indicate a difference in conception, namely that this harmony can only exist in another sphere or on another planet, although in an earlier version the poet also looks forward to the coming autumn: 'alsof hij nooit kon zijn', and back to the past: 'nooit blonk en glimlachte er'. Another slight difference in conception can be seen in Verwey's translation of the phrase 'the truth of nature' (*Hymn*, ll. 78-9) by the more orthodox philosophical term: 'de zin van 't zijn' which embraces all forms of being, not only those of nature.

In these early poems of Shelley's the crowded imagery and the sometimes vague or involved train of thought, signs perhaps of Shelley's own immaturity and uncertainty,¹ do not present an easy task for a translator. Yet, to a remarkable degree, Verwey appears to have followed Shelley through many an involved and obscure passage.

¹ See also Peter Butter's comments on *Mont Blanc* in *Shelley's Idols of the Cave*, pp. 109 and 118.

Various interpretations have been submitted for *Mont Blanc*.¹ One passage in particular is rather obscure and seemingly paradoxical:

The wilderness has a mysterious tongue
Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so mild
So solemn, so serene, that man may be
But for such faith, with nature reconciled (*Mont Blanc*, ll. 76-9)

This passage was translated quite literally by Verwey.

De streek heeft een geheimnisvolle tong
Die twijfel leert, ontzaglijk, òf geloof
Zoo mild, zoo kalm, zoo vredig, dat de Mensch,
Was dat geloof niet, vree had met Natuur.

On the face of it this appears to suggest that the faith referred to prevents man from being reconciled with nature. It is interesting to note that Verwey's original translation of line 79 read:

Door zulk geloof slechts vree kreeg met Natuur

but was altered in the manuscript to the present reading, thus retaining the original obscurity of meaning.² It is as if Verwey after his original flash of insight hesitated to give what he felt was perhaps a personal interpretation of the text and preferred to translate Shelley's phrase literally, in all its ambiguity.

Verwey's early opinion of *Mont Blanc* was poor; he considered it bad poetry. Nevertheless he realized even then its deep philosophical content, although he was not at that time capable of appreciating it.³ Only when he had himself reached maturity and discovered a new depth within himself could Verwey appreciate fully the depth and import of Shelley's *Mont Blanc*. Here beauty of form, which could be seen and appreciated superficially, was no longer important for itself alone but only in so far as it gave access to the realm of Shelley's philosophical thought, rendering it, as it were, visible. Verwey succeeded to a remarkable degree in recapturing the deeper beauty of Shelley's philosophical poems and particularly of *Mont Blanc*.

Verwey's last translation from Shelley's *Poetical Works* was of the poem *Alastor*. In translating this poem in 1909 Verwey was faced with a still greater task. *Alastor* was, as Mary Shelley described it:

... the outpouring of his own emotions, embodied in the purest form he could conceive, painted in the ideal hues which his brilliant imagination inspired and softened by the recent anticipation of death.⁴

It was as if in *Alastor* the gates were flung open, for, freed from the restriction and discipline imposed by the form and rhythm of the shorter poems, image followed image in rapid succession, swept into stanzas as into paragraphs. Verwey was well aware of the sweeping movement or 'winged flight' of this poem, as can be seen from his 'Naschrift' to the earlier version and the 'Preface' to the later version. His task was now threefold: to translate the text; to reproduce the rhythmic and

¹ For Verwey's early opinion of *Mont Blanc* see *Albert Verwey's Translations*, etc., p. 144 and also notes 1 and 2.

² The earlier version coincides with the interpretation suggested by Charles H. Vivian in 'The One *Mont Blanc*', *Keats-Shelley Journal*, iv (Winter, 1955), 62.

³ See letter from Kloos to Verwey, 27 November 1884, quoted in *Albert Verwey's Translations*, etc. p. 144.

⁴ Note on *Alastor*. Oxford edition of Shelley's *Poetical Works*, p. 31.

acoustic effect, and particularly the general sound pattern of the poem; but also at the same time to achieve a similar sweeping movement. The result, even in the earlier version, was remarkable, and the revised version some years later crowned Verwey's translations from Shelley's *Poetical Works*. This was a product of Verwey's poetic maturity and in it we find a successful blending of subject-matter, acoustic and rhythmic effect and movement approaching that of the original.

The following are a few examples of Verwey's handling of the reproduction of movement and changes in speed. The stormy effect is very successful in the lines:

...in het strijdgewoel
Van golf stroomende op golf, en vlaag die zonk
Op vlaag, en zwarte vloed op draaikolk stortend
Met donkre en meesleurende loop, . . . (ll. 326-9)

The approach of evening and the calm of the night sky is described with a tranquillity which is in marked contrast to both the preceding and following descriptions of the turbulent water. In the first part of this passage the movement of the water can still be felt in the rhythm.

...en de avond kwam nabij;
De stralen van zoneinde regenboogden
Hoog in schuim-vlagige fonteingewelven
Die over 't woeste diep zijn pad bespanden; (ll. 333-6)

With the description of the coming twilight the rhythm becomes slower and the water is forgotten. One is only aware of the growing peace of the evening sky.

Schemering langzaam stijgend uit het Oost,
Wond in donkerder wrong haar lokkenvlechten
Over Dags stralende oogen en blond voorhoofd.
Nacht kwam, in 't sterrekleed. . . . (ll. 337-40)

In contrast to the apparent calm above, the storm continues to rage below.

...Aan iedre kant
Stormden vreeslijker de veelvoudige
Stroomen van de oceaansche bergwoestijn
Ten strijd, dondrend in donkren drang, . . . (ll. 340-3)

A climax is reached when, with breath-taking speed, the little boat is swept into a cavern. The effect of ever-increasing speed conveyed by Shelley's lines is very successfully reproduced in the translation.

De boot vlood voort, — de stroom joeg kokend door, —
De rotsen sloten zwart, zaag-armig zich,
De berg, doorkloofd, hing over op de zee,
En haastiger nog, en meer dan menschlijk snel,
Geheven op de boog van effen golf
Jaagde de kleine boot. Een open hol
Gaapte, en zijn smalle en diepe winding in,
Gulpte de woelge zee. De boot vlood voort
Haar vaart niet mindrend. . . . (ll. 358-66)

Thus, the development can be traced from the early experiments in acoustic and rhythmic effect (often too obvious to be completely successful) to the more subtle use of these devices in the philosophical poems. But in none of these translations does Verwey attain the degree of unity of form (in its wider sense embracing rhythmic and acoustic effect) and content achieved in the revised version of *Alastor*.

Two reasons are often given for translating poetry: practice or exercise in handling the technical devices at the disposal of a poet; and, what is undoubtedly the best possible reason and, according to Rossetti, 'the only true motive for putting poetry into a fresh language', namely, 'to endow a fresh nation, so far as possible, with one more possession of beauty'.¹

It is probable that the early translations were undertaken with the first motive in mind, but there is little doubt that the purpose of the translation of *Alastor* and probably also of the *Poems Written in 1816* was, in the words of Rossetti: 'to endow a fresh nation . . . with one more possession of beauty.'

In this connexion it should be pointed out that the four philosophical poems Verwey translated were all early poems of Shelley's. In these translations, therefore, we have the combination of a mature translator-poet and a possibly immature original poet. These poems present difficulties of translation which could only be met successfully by Verwey in his maturity and after much revision, for the crowded imagery and the involved train of thought do not make it an easy task for a translator to reproduce the detail without losing the spirit of the poem. The shorter poems and fragments, on the other hand, translated in Verwey's early youth and thus during his own poetic immaturity are, with the exception of the fragments from *Queen Mab* and *The Daemon of the World*, some of Shelley's most mature poems, and they therefore present an easier task for the translator. Verwey's translations of these, as has been seen, show an appreciation of their poetic beauty and an attempt to reproduce it. That he was not entirely successful is not surprising when one considers his own youth and poetic immaturity. One cannot help feeling, however, that, had these early translations been revised after Verwey had himself reached maturity they might have become, like the later translations, worthy renderings of Shelley's poetry. That he did not revise them can probably be explained by the change which took place in Verwey's poetical work with the realization of his poetic and philosophic idea. The later Verwey demanded more than the 'beauty' sought by the *Tachtigers*; beauty of form was no longer important to him for itself alone, but only as a means of expressing the 'Idea' which now pervaded his work. The *Poems Written in 1816* to a certain extent, but particularly *Alastor*, were now nearer to him in spirit. This feeling of affinity no doubt accounted in the first place for Verwey's long preoccupation with *Alastor*, a preoccupation which resulted in what is undoubtedly the best of his translations from Shelley's *Poetical Works*.

Of the translation of poetry Shelley wrote:

...it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principles of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower.²

Can it perhaps be said of the translation of *Alastor* that in this case the plant did indeed 'spring again from its seed'?

B. M. BAXTER

OEGSTGEEST, THE NETHERLANDS

¹ Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Poems and Translations* (Oxford University Press, 1913), p. 176.

² *A Defence of Poetry* (Ginn & Co. Ltd., London. Undated), pp. 73-4.

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