

from the effects of which she would escape as the wife of a citizen of the United States. But she did not marry. She witnessed many of the horrors that came of the loosened passions of an untaught populace. A child was born to her—a girl whom she named after the dead friend of her own girlhood. And then she found that she had leant upon a reed. She was neglected; and was at last forsaken. Having sent her to London, Inlay there visited her, to explain himself away. She resolved on suicide, and in dissuading her from that he gave her hope again. He needed somebody who had good judgment, and who cared for his interests, to represent him in some business affairs in Norway. She undertook to act for him, and set out on the voyage only a week after she had determined to destroy herself.

The interest of this book which describes her travel is quickened by a knowledge of the heart-sorrow that underlies it all. Gilbert Inlay had promised to meet her upon her return, and go with her to Switzerland. But the letters she had from him in Sweden and Norway were cold, and she came back to find that she was wholly forsaken for an actress from a strolling company of players. Then she went up the river to drown herself. She paced the road at Putney on an October night, in 1795, in heavy rain, until her clothes were drenched, that she might sink more surely, and then threw herself from the top of Putney Bridge.

She was rescued, and lived on with deadened spirit. In 1796 these "Letters from Sweden and Norway" were published. Early in 1797 she was married to William Godwin. On the 10th of September in the same year, at the age of thirty-eight, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin died, after the birth of the daughter who lived to become the wife of Shelley. The mother also would have lived, if a womanly feeling, in itself to be respected, had not led her also to unwise departure from the customs of the world. Peace be to her memory. None but kind thoughts can dwell upon the life of this too faithful disciple of Rousseau.

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