

palace, on bridge or gondola on the vague and dreamy surface he had produced.

The Argosy, 49 (January–June 1890), p. 112

Notes

Bridell-Fox (c. 1822–1904) was the daughter of Browning's early encourager Rev. W. J. Fox.

1 Browning was in Venice in June 1838. He reached home in mid-July.

'Long ringlets and no neckcloth'

Mary Russell Mitford

I saw Mr Browning once¹ and remember thinking how exactly he resembled a girl drest in boy's clothes – and as to his poetry I have just your opinion of it. It is one heap of obscurity confusion and weakness. Let me add to this that many of his friends and mine – William Harness, John Kenyon, Henry Chorley speak very highly of him – I suppose he is an accomplished man and if he makes his angelic wife happy I shall of course learn to like him. But he ought not to have persuaded her to take such a step. This of course is quite between ourselves. Do you know him personally? Did you ever see him? I met him once as I told you when he had long ringlets and no neckcloth – and when he seemed to me about the height and size of a boy of twelve years old – *Femmelette* – is a word made for him. A strange sort of person to carry such a woman as Elizabeth Barrett off her feet. He is a great musician and so forth – But I come back to the conceit of writing book upon book all bad – and being at this point engaged in preparing a new edition of his works – the first edition of each having gone off in the form of waste paper.

Letter to Charles Boner, 22 February 1847 (*Correspondence*, xiv.370)

Notes

1 At the supper-party, at Covent Garden Theatre, to celebrate the first night of Thomas Noon Talfourd's tragedy *Ion* on 26 May 1836.

Browning's 'lion-like ruff'

William Harrison Ainsworth

I had yesterday, as I anticipated, the pleasure of making your new Poet's acquaintance, and from what I saw of him – I am induced

M. Garrett (ed.), *Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Robert Browning*

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