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Byron: Poetry and Prose.

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1940

BYRON

Poetry & Prose

With Essays by

SCOTT, HAZLITT, MACAULAY

ETC.

With an Introduction by

SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH

and Notes by

D. NICHOL SMITH

O X F O R D

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

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George Gordon, Lord Byron *frontispiece*
 Reproduced, by permission, from the portrait by Thomas
 Phillips, R. A., in the possession of Sir John Murray, K.C. V.O.,
 D.S.O.

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INTRODUCTION

As generations are counted, more than a generation has passed since Matthew Arnold made bold to prophesy, of Wordsworth and Byron, that 'when the year 1900 is turned, and our nation comes to recount her poetic glories in the century which has then just ended, the first names with her will be these.'

Even when we have consented with George Eliot that of all forms of human error prophesy is the most gratuitous, and have asked ourselves in vain what profit can come of constructing a hierarchy among the poets of any given century (which, after all, is no more than a conventional division of arithmetic), there remains the question why Arnold should have chosen to hit on two men rather than on one, or on three, or more. He had no need to consider Westminster Abbey, where the space for interment is limited, and where in fact neither Wordsworth nor Byron reposes; no need to practise any such frugal anxiety as William Basse's for Shakespeare:

Renowned Spenser, lye a thought more nye
To learned Chaucer, and, rare Beaumont, lye
A little neerer Spenser, to make roome

For Shakespeare in your threefold, fowerfold Tombe.

Poets live in memory, which neither calculates room nor assigns marks for competition. For their corporal dust—Wordsworth rests now in Grasmere churchyard, Byron at Missolonghi, and Arnold himself by the Thames at Laleham—
—ἀνδρῶν ἐπιφανῶν πᾶσα γῆ τάφος.

For the prophecy, it came true—or, rather, remained true—of Wordsworth: but the year 1900 has long since been turned, and yet where on the sea is the returning sail of Byron?

He died in exile: and those of us who would bring Byron's

fame back among his countrymen must, first of all, recognize their neglect of it for an obstinate neglect, a positive reluctance to readmit him. For this we must give most honourable acquittal to his English publishers. No publishers have ever done more for an author than John Murray, his sons, and his grandsons have done for Byron: and, as though to be punctual at the advent foretold by Arnold, they began to issue in 1898, and completed in 1904, a magnificent edition of the Letters and Journals as well as of the Poems. Moore's 'Life', whatever else may be said of it, was an ample monument: the literature of personal curiosity has been copious, and from time to time provokingly scandalous. Yet every attempt hitherto made to bring Byron back from exile has been met, in his own country, with no Prodigal Son's welcome.

This reluctance begins and ends at home. On the continent of Europe, through which his poetry first ran as a flame, the admiration it kindled has never died out. In the estimation of all but his countrymen he ranks to-day as a greater poet than Shelley. Execrated at home, he died at Missolonghi on the 19th of April 1824, and the Greek Provisional Government closed all shops and proclaimed with salute of guns a public mourning for twenty-one days. Over a hundred years later, after British denunciation had long given place to neglect, one opens a volume by an eminent foreign critic surveying the field of nineteenth-century literature and finds him assigning 33 of his pages to Wordsworth, no fewer than 119 to Byron! What, then, is the matter with Byron, or with the faithful foreigner, or with *us*? Easy talk about 'reaction' will not carry us far; or will carry us in a direction clean contrary to the truth: for any one who seeks to re-establish Byron's fame will find himself not only forced to rely for his brief—and to rely almost exclusively—on the later poems, but forced also to

recognize that Byron's true work took its start from the social disaster of 1815-16; that he fell then, in some ways like *Lucifer*, but, as a poet, most certainly not like *Lucifer*, 'never to hope again'. Indeed I believe it to be substantially true that if we take 25 April 1816—the day on which he sailed from England for ever—and set it in our 'Byron' for a book-marker, by that simple expedient we can divide his false from his true contributions to literature. Technically he never, to the end, took the trouble to equip himself. He had abundance of wit, and with the aid of it developed (as *Don Juan* throughout bears witness) an amazing command over mere rhyme. But wit will never teach rhythm to a naturally defective ear; and, set beside Shelley's, for instance, Byron's rhythms are performances on the banjo. Also he lacked sense of the poise and pause of blank decasyllabic verse: while, strange to say, this revolutionary, with his own amateurishness of scansion, chose to parade himself as a true-blue disciple of Pope! At all these joints Byron's poetical armour gaped to receive the barbed arrows of Swinburne's later criticism, which have possibly killed his claim to be an artist in song. Nor are these arrows of Swinburne's criticism any the less deadly because foreigners are congenitally doomed to miss the nuances of form in English rhythm and diction, as we no doubt are as heavily handicapped as critics of *their* native strains. I can only make what I believe to be a fair statement—that our national neglect of Byron to-day has next to nothing to do with his ~~poorly written and~~ poorly written and opinions, everything to do with his carelessness as an artist. It weighs not, at this distance of time, that for three heady years Byron poured out such tales as *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, *Lara*—written 'while undressing after coming home from balls and masquerades in the year of revelry 1814', written and admired for being written 'with the careless and negligent ease of a man of quality'.

Snobbery, in criticism prevails in its day, but nothing in criticism suffers more cruelly from exposure to time and weather. As Crabbe gave warning—Crabbe, Byron's favourite—in his preface to *Tales of the Hall*:

" Our estimation of title also in a writer has materially varied from that of our predecessors; " Poems by a Nobleman " would create a very different sensation in our minds from that which was formerly excited when they were so announced."

For three years Byron enjoyed a wild popularity, and played up to it with an insolence apparently negligent, actually self-conscious, and in its carefulness of affectation artistically ignoble. But when disaster fell, Byron found his soul. Abandoned by the world on whose adulation he had floated, he caught at the real thing valuable in his ancestry, its tradition of indomitable courage, and, with that courage, the gift of sincerity, without which no poetry can be better than flashy.¹ Genuine anguish in the winter and spring of 1815-16 probed Byron and found the man. The first two Cantos of *Childe Harold* on which society had heaped applause, simply fade from our minds as we open Canto III (read the exordium composed in the first hours of disillusion with its apnuish), pass the stirring account of Bruasels before Waterloo, and turn, with hearts swelled as by a trumpet, back upon such a recessional as the stanza which commemorates young Howard, killed and carried from the field:

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee;
And mine were nothing, had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring

¹ Compare the insincerity, e.g. of the poem to *Thyrza* (1811) with the real poignancy of 'So we'll go no more a roving'; in which, moreover, his heart dictates a true rhythm.

Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
 With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
 I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not bring.

If that stanza be not poetry, I say, with all submission to his critics, that neither they nor I know yet what poetry is. One has but to turn back to Canto I and read

For who would trust the seeming sighs
 Of wife or paramour?
 Fresh feeres will dry the bright blue eyes
 We late saw streaming o'er, (etc.)

to feel that the Rubicon of poetry has been crossed. The reader will find in this volume Macaulay's famous passage appraising at their true worth the impulses on which his countrymen denounced Byron and drove him into exile. Yet the late M. Scherer was utterly mistaken in his dictum that 'this beautiful and ~~glorified being is at the bottom a coxcomb~~. He posed all his life long.' It is, at any rate, far nearer the truth to say that in its surgery the knife cut down through a fop and found a man. He screamed under the operation—as how should he not, usingg Byron? It converted him into the fiercest of egoists but a sincerer egoist can hardly be found in our literature. He was utterly, recklessly unrepentant—as *Manfred* testifies, if we recall the circumstances under which it was thrown at the public. Tribulation and evil fame had not power to convert* the spoilt child, the ingrained self-worshipper and idolater of his own rank and title; no power to abase his disproportionate sense of his own importance. Outcast from England, he 'trailed' through Europe 'the pageant of a bleeding heart'. But he had the ferocious power to make a real pageant of it; and posterity cannot deny that the heart bled proudly, or that it was quenched at last in a noble cause.

With his doom upon him he wrote, but did not live to finish, *Don Juan*. Critics who frame their definition of an Epic upon a few specimens acknowledged as best, and demand conformity to rules constructed upon these, may easily deny the title of Epic to this poem. Certainly it is extremely unlike *Paradise Lost* or even the *Odyssey*. But it has the great undulating flow which some of us recognize as the quality above qualities in Homer and Milton; it flows because all things within his ken are seized upon, liquefied, and made malleable by the combined heat of indignation, wit, genius; it belongs, heart and soul, to its period in human history; and it paints that age with such lively intensity, with such a sweep of power, that no generation to come will ever be able to dispute the picture. As the late Professor Nichol puts it, In writing *Don Juan* Byron attempted something that had never been done before, and his genius so chimed with his enterprise that it need never be done again'.

In face of their achievements in poetry—huge in the mass, frequent in eminence, with peaks super-eminent over all literature of the modern world—the inhabitants of this small island are often charged with a general indifference to verse, and in particular with indifference to poetic artistry, concerning which (I have heard it argued) our carelessness amounts almost to proof of a congenitally defective ear. The charge is baseless in fact: but it has a root—in the very anxiety which accuses us of lacking anxiety. Poetry in England, as in every other nation, has always been the treasure of a few amid the populace. These few do well to be anxious for it; but it might easily be maintained, rather, that the countrymen of Shakespeare have too often, in despite of his example, surrendered themselves to the slavery of 'form'; of poetic 'laws' and 'rules'. We admit this of the Eighteenth Century, and blame that century for its formalism. Yet

nine-tenths of Swinburne's depreciation of Byron will be found, when examined, to resolve itself into cavil against his technical faults, against his defect of ear. We allow ourselves to be irritated by hasty workmanship which the foreigner has no skill to detect. That is an error on the right side; and yet it turns into a serious error when it blinds our vision to the fine power in the man, or deadens our sense of the daemonic brain out of which verses teemed like armed men and stanzas in troops, a revolutionary host. Be it granted that to the end he could never surely separate poetry from rhetoric. Yet who can recite the roll—*Childe Harold, Chilton, The Dream, Prometheus, Manfred, The Lament of Tasso, The Prophecy of Dante, Cain, The Vision of Judgment, Heaven and Earth, Beppo*, and (feat above all) *Don Juan*—and deny Byron the title of 'maker', a strong 'man of his hands'?

He himself, during those years, dreamed of action, of embattled war against the enemies of freedom:

And I will war, at least in words (and—should
My chance so happen—deeds), with all who war
With Thought: and of Thought's foes by far most rude
Tyrants and sycophants have been and are.

That chance came with the revolutionary uprising of Greece, and he took it. For a brief while he shone as the bright particular star of that dawn, until death quenched the light with a miasma from the marshes by Missolonghi. His last utterance was Δεῖ με νῦν καθεύδειν 'it is time for me to sleep'. As Swinburne has written—and no recantation can cover the words—'With all things unfinished before him and behind, he fell asleep after many troubles and triumphs. Few can ever have gone wearier to the grave; none with less fear....He had seen and borne and achieved more than most men on record. He was a great man, good at many things, and now he had attained his rest.'

BYRON'S LIFE

1788. George Gordon Byron born in London, 22 January.
 1798. Succeeds his grand-uncle as the sixth Lord Byron.
 1790-98. In Aberdeen, where he attends the Grammar School,
 1796-98.
 1801-5. At Harrow School.
 1805-8. At Trinity College, Cambridge. M.A. 1808.
 1807. *Hours of Idleness*.
 1808. Takes up residence at Newstead Abbey (September).
 1809. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (March).
 Takes his seat in the House of Lords (March).
 Sails from Falmouth (2 July) for Lisbon, rides through S.
 Portugal and S. Spain to Cadiz, sails to Gibraltar, and
 thence (16 August) to Malta and Greece.
 1811. Returns to England (17 July).
 1812. *Childe Harold*, Cantos I and II (March).
 1813. *The Giaour* (September).
The Bride of Abydos (November).
 1814. *The Corsair* (February)
Lara (August).
 1815. Marriage to Anna Isabella, only daughter of Sir Ralph Mil-
 banke, 2 January.
Hebrew Melodies (June?).
 1816. *The Siege of Corinth*. *Parisina* (February).
 Separation from Lady Byron (deed signed 21 April). Sails
 from Dover (25 April) for Ostend, and travels by Brussels
 and the Rhine to Switzerland. Begins his residence in Italy
 (October).
Childe Harold, Canto III (November).
The Prisoner of Chillon, and other Poems ('Darkness', 'The
 Dream', 'Prometheus' &c).
 1817. Lives in Venice or the neighbourhood till December 1819.
Manfred (June).
The Lament of Tasso (July).
 1818. *Beppo* (February).
Childe Harold, Canto IV (April).
Mazeppa (June).
 1819. *Don Juan*, Cantos I, II (July).
 Moves to Ravenna (December).
 1820. *Marino Faliero*. *The Prophecy of Dante* (April).
 1821. *Don Juan*, Cantos III-V (August).
 Leaves Ravenna for Pisa (October).
Sardanapalus. *The Two Foscari*. *Cain* (December).

BYRON'S LIFE

1822. *The Vision of Judgment*, published in *The Liberal*, No. 1 (October).
Leaves Pisa for Genoa (September).
Werner (November; dated 1823).
1823. *Heaven and Earth*, published in *The Liberal*, No. 2 (January).
The Age of Bronze (April).
The Island (June).
Sails from Genoa for Greece (16 July).
Translation of *The Morgante Maggiore* of Pulci published in *The Liberal*, No. 4 (July).
Don Juan, Cantos VI - VIII (July).
Don Juan, Cantos IX - XI (August).
Don Juan, Cantos XII - XIV (December).
1824. *The Deformed Transformed* (February).
Don Juan, Cantos XV - XVI (March).
Dies at Missolonghi; 19 April.

WORKS OF REFERENCE

Editions

- Letters and Journals of Lord Byron; with Notices of his Life.* By Thomas Moore. 2 vols., 1830.
- The Works of Lord Byron: with his Letters and Journals, and his Life* by Thomas Moore, 17 vols., 1832-3.
- The Works of Lord Byron. Letters and Journals*, edited by Rowland E. Prothero, 6 vols., 1898-1901. *Poetry*, edited by Ernest Hartley Coleridge, 7 Vols., 1903-4.
- Lord Byron's Correspondence.* Edited by John Murray, 2 vols., 1922.
- Childe Harold.* Edited by H. F. Tozer, 1886.

Criticism

(not represented in this volume)

- Byron.* By John Nichol, in the 'English Men of Letters' Series, 1880.
- 'Lord Byron: Arnold and Swinburne'. By H. J. C. Grierson, in *the Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. ix (Warton Lecture on English Poetry), 1920; reprinted in *The Background of English Literature*, 1925, with 'Byron and English Society'.
- 'Byron: 1824-1924.' By H. W. Garrod, in *The Profession of Poetry and other Lectures*, 1929.
- 'The Present Value of Byron.' By Oliver Elton, in *Essays and Addresses*, 1939.

SCOTT

Review of *Childe Harold*, Canto III

The Quarterly Review, October 1816

IT was in 1812, when Lord Byron returned to England, that *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* made its first appearance, producing an effect upon the public at least equal to any work which has appeared within this or the last century. Reading is indeed so general among all ranks and classes, 5 that the impulse received by the public mind on such occasions is instantaneous through all but the very lowest classes of society, instead of being slowly communicated from one set of readers to another, as was the case in the days of our fathers. 'The Pilgrimage,' acting on such an 10 extensive medium, was calculated to rouse and arrest the attention in a peculiar degree. The fictitious personage, whose sentiments, however, no one could help identifying with those of the author himself, presented himself with an avowed disdain of all the attributes which most men 15 would be gladly supposed to possess. Childe Harold is represented as one satiated by indulgence in pleasure, and seeking in... change of place and clime a relief from the tedium of a life which glided on without an object. The assuming of such a character as the medium of communi- 20 cating his poetry and his sentiments indicated a feeling towards the public, which, if it fell short of contemning their favour, disdained, at least, all attempt to propitiate them. Yet the very audacity of this repulsive personification, joined to the energy with which it was supported, and 25 to the indications of a bold, powerful, and original mind which glanced through every line of the poem, electrified the mass of readers, and placed at once upon Lord Byron's head the garland for which other men of genius have toiled

BYRON'S LIFE

1822. *The Vision of Judgment*, published in *The Liberal*, No. x (October).
Leaves Pisa for Genoa (September).
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long, and which they have gained late. He was placed pre-
 eminent among the literary men of his country by "general
 acclamation. Those who had so rigorously censured his
 juvenile essays, and perhaps 'dreaded such another field,'
 5 were the first to pay warm and, we believe, sincere homage
 to his matured efforts; while others, who saw in the senti-
 ments of Childe Harold much to regret and to censure, did
 not withhold their tribute of applause to the depth of
 thought, the power and force of expression, the beauty of
 10 description, and the energy of sentiment which animated
 the 'Pilgrimage.' If the volume was laid aside for a moment,
 under the melancholy and unpleasing impression that it
 seemed calculated to chase hope from the side of man, and
 to dim his prospects both of this life and of futurity, it was
 15 immediately and almost involuntarily assumed again, as
 our feeling of the author's genius predominated over our
 dislike to contemplate the gloomy views of human nature
 which it was his pleasure, to place before us. Something
 was set down to the angry recollection of his first failure,
 20 which might fairly authorize so high a mind to hold the
 world's opinion in contempt; something was allowed for
 the recent family losses to which the poem alluded, and
 under the feeling of which it had been partly written: and
 it seemed to most readers as if gentler and more kindly
 25 features were, at times, seen to glance from under the cloud
 of misanthropy, which the author had flung, around his
 hero. Thus, as all admired the Pilgrimage of Childe Harold,
 all were prepared to greet the author with that fame which
 is the poet's best reward, and which is chiefly and most
 30 justly due to one who, in these exhausted days, strikes out
 a new and original line of composition,

It was amidst such feelings of admiration that Lord Byron
 entered, we may almost say for the first time, the public
 stage on which he has, for four years, made so distinguished

a figure. Every thing in his manner, person, and conversation, tended to maintain the charm which his genius had flung around him; and those admitted to his conversation, far from finding that the inspired poet sunk into ordinary mortality, felt themselves attached to him, not 5 only by many noble qualities, but by the interest of a mysterious, undefined, and almost painful curiosity. . . .

The rapidity with which Lord Byron's poems succeeded each other, during four years, served to arrest as well as to dazzle and delight the public; nor did there appear room 10 to apply to him, in the height of his fame and the flower of his age, the caution which we might whisper to other bards of popular celebrity. *The Giaour, The Bride of Abydos, The Corsair, Lara, The Siege of Corinth*, followed each other with a celerity, which was only rivalled by their 15 success; and if at times the author seemed to pause in his poetic career, with the threat of forbearing further adventure for a time, the public eagerly pardoned the breach of a promise by keeping which they must have been sufferers. Exquisitely beautiful in themselves, these tales received a 20 new charm from the romantic climes into which they introduced us, and from the oriental costume so strictly preserved and so picturesquely exhibited. Greece, the cradle of the poetry with which our earliest studies are familiar, was presented to us among her ruins and her sorrows. Her 25 delightful scenery, once dedicated to those deities who, though dethroned from their own Olympus, still preserve a poetical empire, was spread before us in Lord Byron's poetry, varied by all the moral effect derived from what Greece is and what she has been, while it was doubled by 30 comparisons, perpetually excited, between the philosophers and heroes who formerly inhabited that romantic country, and their descendents, who either stoop to their Scythian conquerors, or maintain, among the recesses of their classical

mountains, an independence as wild and savage as it is precarious. The oriental manners also and diction, so peculiar in their picturesque effect that they can cast a charm even over the absurdities of an eastern tale, had here the more honourable occupation of decorating that which in itself was beautiful, and enhancing by novelty what would have been captivating without its aid. The powerful impression produced by this peculiar species of poetry confirmed us in a principle, which, though it will hardly be challenged when stated as an axiom, is very rarely complied with in practice. It is, that every author should, like Lord Byron, form to himself, and communicate to the reader, a precise, defined and distinct view of the landscape, sentiment, or action which he intends to describe to the reader. . 7 .

It is another remarkable property of the poetry of Lord Byron, that although his manner is frequently varied, although he appears to have assumed for an occasion the characteristic stanza and style, of several contemporaries, yet not only is his poetry marked in every instance by the strongest cast of originality, but in some leading particulars, and especially in the character of his heroes, each story so closely resembled the other that managed by a writer of less power, the effect would have been an unpleasing monotony. All, or almost all, his heroes, have somewhat the attributes of Childe Harold:—all, or almost all, have minds which seem at variance with their fortunes, and exhibit high and pigant feelings of pain and pleasure; a keen sence of what is noble and honourable, and an equally keen succceptibility of injustice or injury, under the garb of stoicism or contempt of mankind. The strength of early passion, and the glow of youthful feeling, are uniformly painted as chilled or subdued by a train of early imprudences or of darker guilt, and the sence of enjoyment

tarnished, by too intimate and experienced an acquaintance with the vanity of human wishes. These general attributes mark the stern features of 131 Lord Byron's heroes, from those which are shaded by the scalloped hat of the illustrious Pilgrim, to those which lurk under the 5 turban of Alp, the Renegade. . . .

To what, then, are we to ascribe the singular peculiarity which induced an author of such talent, and so well skilled in tracing the darker impressions which guilt and remorse leave on the human character, so frequently to affix features x0 peculiar to himself to the robbers and corsairs which he sketched with a pencil as forcible as that of Salvator?—More than one answer may be returned to this question; nor do we pretend to say which is best warranted by the facts. The practice may arise from a temperament which 15 radical and constitutional melancholy has, as in the case of Hamlet, predisposed to identify its owner with scenes of that deep and arousing interest ~~lowest which arises from the~~ stings of conscience contending with the stubborn energy of pride, and delighting to be placed in supposed 20 of guilt and danger, as some men love instinctively to tread the giddy edge of a precipice, or, holding by some frail twig, to stoop forward over the abyss into which the dark torrent discharges itself. Or it may be that these disguises were assumed capriciously as a man might chuse the cloak, 25 poniard, and dark-lantern of a bravo, for his disguise at a masquerade. Or feeling his own powers in painting the sombre and the horrible, LORD BYRON assumed in his fervour the very semblance of the characters he describes, like an actor who presents on the stage at once his own person and 30 the tragic character with which for the time he is invested; Nor is it altogether incompatible with his character to believe that, in contempt of the criticisms which on this account had attended Childe Harold, he was determined

to shew to the public how little he was affected by them, and how effectually it was in his power to compel attention and respect, even when imparting a portion of his own likeness and his own peculiarities to pirates, and outlaws.

5 But although we do not pretend to ascertain the motive on which Lord Byron acted in bringing the peculiarities of his own sentiments and feeling so frequently before his readers, it is with no little admiration that we regard these
10 extraordinary powers, which, amidst this seeming uniformity, could continue to rivet the public attention, and secure general and continued applause. The versatility of authors who have been able to draw and support characters as different from each other as from their own, has given to their productions the inexpressible charm of variety,
15 and has often secured them against that neglect which in general attends what is technically called mannerism. But it was reserved to Lord Byron to present the same character on the public stage again and again, varied only by the exertions of that powerful genius, which searching the
20 springs of passion and of feeling in their innermost recesses, knew how to combine their operation, so that the interest was eternally varying, and never abated, although the most important personage of the drama retained the same lineaments. It will one day be considered as not the least re-
25 markable literary phenomenon of this age, that during a period of four years, notwithstanding the quantity of distinguished poetical talent of which we may be permitted to boast, a single author, and he managing his pen with the careless and negligent ease of a man of quality, and
30 choosing for his theme subjects so very similar, and personages bearing so close a resemblance to each other,—did, in despite of these circumstances, of the unamiable attributes with which he usually invested his heroes, and of the proverbial fickleness of the public, maintain the ascendancy

in their favour, which he had acquired by his first matured production. So however it indisputably has been; and those comparatively small circles of admirers excepted, which assemble naturally around individual poets of eminence, Lord Byron has been for that time, and may for some time continue to be, the Champion of the English Parnassus. 5

HAZLITT

The Spirit of the Age

1825

(*INTENSITY* is the great and prominent distinction of Lord Byron's writings.) He seldom gets beyond force of style, nor has he produced any regular work or masterly whole. He does not prepare any plan beforehand, nor 10 revise and retouch what he has written with polished accuracy. His only object seems to be to stimulate himself and his readers for the moment—to keep both alive, to drive away *ennui*, to substitute a feverish and irritable state of excitement for listless indolence or even calm enjoy- 15 ment. For this purpose he pitches on any subject at random without much thought or delicacy. He is only impatient to begin, and takes care to adorn and enrich it as he proceeds with thoughts that breathe and words that burn. He composes (as he himself has said) whether he is in the 20 bath, in his study, or on horseback; he writes as habitually as others talk or think; and whether we have the inspiration of the Muse or not, we always find the spirit of the man of genius breathing from his verse. He grapples with his *SuTtJel^umtr^* oves, penetrates, and, as it by the 25 electric force of his own feelings. He is often monotonous, extravagant, offensive; but he is never dull or tedious, but when he writes prose.

Lord Byron does not exhibit a new view of nature, or raise insignificant objects into importance by the romantic associations with which he surrounds them, but generally (at least) takes common-place thoughts and events, and 5 endeavours to express them in stronger and statelier language than others. His poetry stands like a Martello tower by the side of his subject. He does not, like Mr. Wordsworth, lift poetry from the ground, or create a sentiment out of nothing. He does not describe a daisy or a 10 periwinkle, but the cedar or the cypress: not 'poor men's cottages, but princes' palaces.' His *Childe Harold* contains a lofty and impassioned review of events of history, of the mighty objects left as wrecks of time; but he dwells chiefly on what is familiar to the mind of every 15 school-boy, has brought out few new traits of feeling or thought, and has done no more than justice to the reader's preconceptions by the sustained force and brilliancy of his style and imagery. . . .

The *Don Juan* indeed has great power; but its power is so owing to the force of the serious writing, and to the oddity of the contrast between that and the flashy passages with which it is interlarded. From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step. You laugh and are surprised that any one should turn round and *travestie* himself: the drollery is 25 in the utter discontinuity of ideas and feelings. He makes virtue serve as a foil to vice; *dandyism* is (for want of any other) a variety of genius. A classical intoxication is followed by the splashing of soda-water, by frothy effusions of ordinary bile. After the lightning and the hurricane, we are 30 introduced to the interior of the cabin and the contents of the wash-hand basins. The solemn hero of tragedy plays *Scrub* in the farce. This is 'very tolerable and not to be endured.' T. J. S. is almost the only writer who has prostituted his talents in this way. He hallows in order to dese-

crate, takes a pleasure in defacing the images of beauty his hands have wrought, and raises our Hopes and bur belief in goodness to Heaven only to dash them to the earth again, and break them in pieces the more effectually from the very height they have fallen. Our enthusiasm for genius or virtue is thus turned into a jest by the very person who has kindled it, and who thus fatally quenches the sparks of both. It is not that Lord Byron is sometimes serious and sometimes trifling, sometimes profligate and sometimes moral; but when he is most serious and most moral, he is only preparing "to mortify the unsuspecting reader by puffing a pitiful *hoax* upon him. This is a most unaccountable anomaly. It is as if the eagle were to build its eyry in a common sewer, or the owl were seen soaring to the mid-day sun. Such a sight might make one laugh, but one would not wish or expect it to occur more than once.¹

In fact, Lord Byron is the spoiled child of fame as well as fortune. He has taken a surfeit of popularity, and is not contented to delight, unless he can shock, the public. He would force them to admire in spite of decency and common sense; he would have them read what they would read in no one but himself, or he would not give a rush for their applause. He is to be 'a chartered libertine.' from whom insults are favours, whose contempt is to be a new incentive to admiration. His Lordship is hard to please: he is equally averse to notice or neglect, enraged at censure and scorning praise. He tries the patience of the town to the very utmost, and when they show signs of weariness or disgust, threatens to *discard* them. He says he will write on, whether he is read or not. He would never write another page, if it were not to court popular applause, or

¹ This censure applies to the first Cantos of *Don Juan* much more than to the last. It has been called a *Tristram Shandy* in rhyme: it is rather a poem written about itself.

to affect a superiority over it. In this respect also, Lord Byron presents a striking contrast to Sir Walter Scott. The latter takes what part of the public favour falls to his share, without grumbling (to be sure, he has no reason to
5 complain); the former is always quarrelling with the world about his *modicum* of applause, the *spolia opima* of vanity, and ungraciously throwing the offerings of incense heaped on his shrine back in the faces of his admirers.

Again, there is no taint in the writings of the Author of
10 *Waverley*; all is fair and natural and *above-board*; he never outrages the public mind. He introduces no anomalous character, broaches no staggering opinion. If he goes back to old prejudices and superstitions as a relief to the modern reader, while Lord Byron floats on swelling paradoxes—

15 'Like proud seas under him*;

if the one defers too much to the spirit of antiquity, the other panders to the spirit of the age, goes to the very edge of extreme and licentious speculation, and breaks his neck over it. ^Grossness and levity are the playthings of his pen.^t
20 It is a ludicrous circumstance that he should have dedicated his *Cain* to the worthy Baronet! Did the latter ever acknowledge the obligation? We are not nice, not very nice; but we do not particularly approve those subjects that shine chiefly from their rottenness: nor do we wish to
25 see the Muses drest out in the flounces of a false or questionable philosophy, like Portia and Nerissa in the garb of Doctors of Law. We like metaphysics as well as Lord Byron; but not to see them making flowery speeches, nor
- dancing a measure in the fetters of verse. We have as good
30 as hinted, that his Lordship's poetry consists mostly of a tissue of superb Common-places; even his paradoxes are *common-place*. They are familiar in the schools: they are only new and striking in his dramas and stanzas by being

out of place. In a word, we think that poetry moves best within the circle of nature and received opinion: speculative theory and subtle casuistry are forbidden ground to it. But Lord Byron often wanders into this ground wantonly, wilfully, and unwarrantably. The only apology we can conceive for the spirit of some of Lord Byron's writings, is the spirit of some of those opposed to him. They would provoke a man to write anything. 'Farthest from them is best.' The extravagance and license of the one seems a proper antidote to the bigotry and narrowness of the other. The first *Vision of Judgment* was a set-off to the second, though

'None but itself could be its parallel.'

We had written thus far when news came of the death of Lord Byron, and put an end at once to a strain of somewhat peevish invective, which was intended to meet his eye, not to insult his memory. Had we known that we were writing his epitaph, we must have done it with a different feeling. As it is, we think it better and more like himself, to let what we had written stand, than to take up our leaden shafts, and try to melt them into 'tears of sensibility,' or mould them into dull praise and an affected show of candour. We were not silent during the author's life-time, either for his reproof or encouragement (such as we could give, and *he* did not disdain to accept) nor can we now turn undertakers' men to fix the glittering plate upon his coffin, or fall into the procession of popular woe. (Death cancels every thing but truth, and strips a man of every thing but genius and virtue. It is "a sort of natural canonization. It makes the meanest of us sacred; it installs the poet in his immortality, and lifts him to the skies. Death is the great assayer of the sterling ore of talent. At his touch the drossy particles fall off, the irritable, the personal, the gross, and mingle with the dust—the finer and more ethereal part

mounts with the winged spirit to watch over our latest memory, and protect our bones from insult. We consign the least worthy qualities to oblivion, and cherish the nobler and imperishable nature with double pride and fondness)

5 Nothing could show the real superiority of genius in a more striking point of view than the idle contests and the public indifference about the place of Lord Byron's interment, whether in Westminster Abbey or his own family vault. A king must have a coronation—a nobleman a
10 funeral-procession. The man is nothing without the pageant. The poet's cemetery is the human mind, in which he sows the seeds of never-ending thought—his monument is to be found in his works:

15 'Nothing can cover his high fame but Heaven;
 No pyramids set off his memory,
 But the eternal substance of his greatness.'

Lord Byron is dead: he also died a martyr to his zeal in the cause of freedom, for the last, best hopes of man. Let that be his excuse and his epitaph I

MACAULAY

Essay on Byron

The Edinburgh Review, June 1831

20 WE know no spectacle so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodical fits of morality. In general, elopements, divorces, and family quarrels, pass with little notice. We read the scandal, talk about it for a day, and forget it. But once in six or seven years our virtue becomes out-
25 rageous. We cannot suffer the laws of religion and decency to be violated. We must make a stand against vice. We must teach libertines that the English people appreciate the importance of domestic ties. Accordingly some un-

fortunate man, in no respect more depraved than hundreds whose offences have been treated with lenity, is singled out as an expiatory sacrifice. If he has children, they are to be taken from him. If he has a profession, he is to be driven from it. He is cut by the higher orders, and hissed by the lower. He is, in truth, a sort of whipping-boy, by whose vicarious agonies all the other transgressors of the same class are, it is supposed, sufficiently chastised. We reflect very complacently on our own severity, and compare with great pride the high standard of morals established in England with the Parisian laxity. At length our anger is satiated. Our victim is ruined and heart-broken. And our virtue goes quietly to sleep for seven years more. 5 10

It is clear that those vices which destroy domestic happiness ought to be as much as possible repressed. It is equally clear that they cannot be repressed by penal legislation. It is therefore right and desirable that public opinion should be directed against them. But it should be directed against them uniformly, steadily, and temperately, not by sudden fits and starts. There should be one weight and one measure. Decimation is always an objectionable mode of punishment. It is the resource of judges too indolent and hasty to investigate facts and to discriminate nicely between shades of guilt. It is an irrational practice, even when adopted by military tribunals. When adopted by the tribunal of public opinion, it is infinitely more irrational. It is good that a certain portion of disgrace should constantly attend on certain bad actions. But it is not good that the offenders should merely have to stand the risks of a lottery of infamy, that ninety-nine out of every hundred should escape, and that the hundredth, perhaps the most innocent of the hundred, should pay for all. . . . 15 20 25 30

In these cases the punishment was excessive; but the offence was known and proved. The case of Lord Byron

was harder. True Jedwood justice was dealt out to him. First came the execution, then the investigation; and last of all, or rather not at all, the accusation. The public, without knowing anything whatever about the transactions in his family, flew into a violent passion with him, and proceeded to invent stories which might justify its anger. Ten or twenty different accounts of the separation, inconsistent with each other, with themselves, and with common sense, circulated at the same time. What evidence there might be for any one of these, the virtuous people who repeated them neither knew nor cared. For in fact these stories were not the causes, but the effects of the public indignation? They resembled those loathsome slanders which Lewis Goldsmith, and other abject libellers of the same class, were in the habit of publishing about Bonaparte; such as that he poisoned a girl with arsenic when he was at the military school, that he hired a grenadier to shoot Dessaix at Marengo, that he filled St. Cloud with all the pollutions of Capreae. There was a time when anecdotes like these obtained some credence from persons who, hating the French Emperor without knowing why, were eager to believe anything which might justify their hatred. Lord Byron fared in the same way. His countrymen were in a bad humour with him. His writings and his character had lost the charm of novelty. He had been guilty of the offence which, of all offences, is punished most severely; he had been overpraised; he had excited too warm an interest; and the public, with its usual justice, chastised him for its own folly. The attachments of the multitude bear no small resemblance to those of the wanton enchantress in the Arabian Tales, who, when the forty days of her fondness were over, was not content with dismissing her lovers, but condemned them to expiate, in loathsome shapes, and under cruel penances, the crime of having once pleased her too well.

The obloquy which Byron had to endure was such as might well have shaken a more constant mind. The newspapers were filled with lampoons. The theatres shook with execrations. He was excluded from circles where he had lately been the observed of all observers. All those creeping 5 things that riot in the decay of nobler natures hastened to their repast; and they were right; they did after their kind. It is not every day that the savage envy of aspiring dunces is gratified by the agonies of such a spirit, and the degradation of such a name. 10

The unhappy man left his country for ever. The howl of contumely followed him across the sea, up the Rhine, over the Alps; it gradually waxed fainter; it died away; those who had raised it began to ask each other, what, after all, was the matter about which they had been so 15 clamorous, and wished to invite back the criminal whom they had just chased from them. His poetry became more popular than it had ever been; and his complaints were read with tears by thousands and tens of thousands who had never seen his face. 20

.

It was in description and meditation that Byron excelled. 'Description,' as he said in *Don Juan*, 'was his forte.') His manner is indeed peculiar, and is almost unequalled; rapid, sketchy, full of vigour; the selection happy; the strokes few and bold. In spite of the reverence which we feel for 25 the genius of Mr. Wordsworth, we cannot but think that the minuteness of his description often diminishes their effect. He has accustomed himself to gaze on nature with the eye of a lover, to dwell on every feature, and to mark every change of aspect. Those beauties which strike the 30 most negligent observer, and those which only a close attention discovers, are equally familiar to him and are equally prominent in his poetry. The proverb of old Hesiod,

that half is often more than the whole, is eminently applicable to description. The policy of the Dutch, who cut down most of the precious trees in the Spice Islands, in order to raise the value of what remained, was a policy which poets would do well to imitate. It was a policy which no poet understood better than Lord Byron. Whatever his faults might be, he was never, while his mind retained its vigour, accused of prolixity.

His descriptions, great as was their intrinsic merit, derived their principal interest from the feeling which always mingled with them. He was himself the beginning, the middle, and the end, of all his own poetry, the hero of every tale, the chief object in every landscape. Harold, Lara, Manfred, and a crowd of other characters, were universally considered merely as loose incognitos of Byron. and there is every reason to believe that he meant them to be so considered. The wonders of the outer world, the Tagus, with the mighty fleets of England riding on its bosom, the towers of Cintra overhanging the shaggy forest of cork-trees and willows, the glaring marble of Pentelicus, the banks of the Rhine, the glaciers of Clarens, the sweet Lake of Lemán, the dell of Egeria with its summer-birds and rustling lizards, the shapeless ruins of Rome overgrown with ivy and wall-flowers, the stars, the sea, the mountains, all were mere accessories, the background to one dark and melancholy figure.

Never had any writer so vast a command of the whole eloquence, of scorn, misanthropy, and despair. That Marah was never dry. No art could sweeten, no draughts could exhaust, its perennial waters of bitterness. Never was there such variety in monotony as that of Byron. From maniac laughter to piercing lamentation, there was not a single note of human anguish of which he was not master. Year after year, and month after month, he continued to repeat that to be wretched is the destiny of all; that to be

eminently wretched is the destiny of the eminent that all the desires by which we are cursed lead alike to misery, if they are not gratified, to the misery of disappointment, if they are gratified, to the misery of satiety. is heroes are men who have arrived by different roads to the same goal 5 of despair, who are sick of life, who are at war with society, who are supported in their anguish only by an unconquerable pride resembling that of Prometheus on the rock or of Satan in the burning marl, who can master their agonies by the force of their will, and who, to the last, defy the whole power 10 of earth and heaven. He always described himself as a man of the same kind with his favourite creations, as a man whose heart had been withered, whose capacity for happiness was gone and could not be restored, but whose invincible spirit dared the worst that could befall him here or hereafter. 15

How much of this morbid feeling sprang from an original disease of the mind, how much from real misfortune, how much from the nervousness of dissipation, how much was fanciful, how much was merely affected, it is impossible for us, and would probably have been impossible for the most 20 intimate friends of Lord Byron, to decide. Whether there ever existed, or can ever exist, a person answering to the description which he gave of himself, may be doubted: but that he was not such a person is beyond all doubt. It is ridiculous to imagine that a man whose mind was really 25 imbued with scorn of his fellow-creatures would have published three or four books every year in order to tell them so; or that a man who could say with truth that he neither sought sympathy nor needed it would have admitted all Europe to hear his farewell to his wife, and his blessings 30 on his child. In the second canto of *Childe Harold*, he tells us that he is insensible to fame and obloquy:

'I'll may such contest now the spirit move,
Which heeds nor keen reproof nor partial praise.'

Yet we know on the best evidence that a day or two before he published these lines, he was greatly, indeed childishly, elated by the compliments paid to his maiden speech in the House of Lords.

5 We are far, however, from thinking that his sadness was altogether feigned. He was naturally a man of great sensibility; he had been ill-educated; his feelings had been early exposed to sharp trials; he had been crossed in his boyish love; he had been mortified by the failure of his first
10 literary efforts; he was straitened in pecuniary circumstances; he was unfortunate in his domestic relations; the public treated him with cruel injustice; his health and spirits suffered from his dissipated habits of life: he was, on the whole, an unhappy man. He early discovered that, by
15 parading his unhappiness before the multitude, he produced an immense sensation. The world gave him every encouragement to talk about his mental sufferings. The interest which his first confessions excited induced him to affect much that he did not feel; and the affectation
20 probably reacted on his feelings. How far the character in which he exhibited himself was genuine, and how far theatrical, it would probably have puzzled himself to say.

There can be no doubt that this remarkable man owed the vast influence which he exercised over his contemporaries at least as much to his gloomy egotism as to the
25 real power of his poetry. We never could very clearly understand how it is that egotism, so unpopular in conversation, should be so popular in writing; or how it is that men who affect in their compositions qualities and
30 feelings which they have not impose so much more easily on their contemporaries than on posterity. The interest which the loves of Petrarch excited in his own time, and the pitying fondness with which half Europe looked upon Rousseau, are well known. To readers of our age, the love

of Petrarch seems to have been love of that kind which breaks no hearts, and the sufferings of Rousseau to have deserved laughter rather than pity, to have been partly counterfeited, and partly the consequences of his own perverseness and vanity.

5

What our grandchildren may think of the character of Lord Byron, as exhibited in his poetry, we will not pretend to guess. It is certain, that the interest which he excited during his life is without a parallel in literary history. The feeling with which young readers of poetry 10 regarded him can be conceived only by those who have experienced it. To people who are unacquainted with real calamity, 'nothing is so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy.' This faint image of sorrow has in all ages been considered by young gentlemen as an agreeable excitement. Old 15 gentlemen and middle-aged gentlemen have so many real causes of sadness that they are rarely inclined 'to* be as sad as night only for wantonness.' Indeed they want the power almost as much as the inclination. We know very few persons engaged in active life who, even if they were 20 to procure stools to be melancholy upon, and were to sit down with all the premeditation of Master Stephen, would be able to enjoy much of what somebody calls the 'ecstasy of woe.'

Among that large class of young persons whose reading 25 is almost entirely confined to works of imagination, the popularity of Lord Byron was unbounded. They bought pictures of him; they treasured up the smallest relics of him; they learned his poems by heart, and did their best to write like him, and to look like him. Many of them 30 practised at the glass in the hope of catching the curl of the upper lip, and the scowl of the brow, which appear in some of his portraits. A few discarded their neckcloths in imitation of their great leader. For some years the

Minerva press sent forth no novel without a mysterious, unhappy, Lara-like peer. The number of hopeful undergraduates and medical students who became things of dark imaginings, on whom the freshness of the heart
 5 ceased to fall like dew, whose passions had consumed themselves to dust, and to whom the relief of tears was denied, passes all calculation. This was not the worst. There was created in the minds of many of these enthusiasts a pernicious and absurd association between intellectual power
 10 and moral depravity. From the poetry of Lord Byron they drew a system of ethics, compounded of misanthropy and voluptuousness, a system in which the two great commandments were, to hate your neighbour, and to love your neighbour's wife.

15 This affectation has passed away; and a few more years will destroy whatever yet remains of that magical potency which once belonged to the name of Byron. To us he is still a man, young, noble, and unhappy. To our children he will be merely a writer; and their impartial judgement
 20 will appoint his place among writers, without regard to his rank or to his private history. That his poetry will undergo a severe sifting, that much of what has been admired by his contemporaries will be rejected as worthless, we have little doubt. But we have as little doubt that, after the
 25 closest scrutiny, there will still remain much that can only perish with the English language.

SWINBURNE

Preface to Selection from the Works of Byron, 1866

Essays and Studies, 1875

THE time was when all boys and girls who paddled in rhyme and dabbled in sentiment were wont to adore the presence or the memory of Byron with foolish faces of

praise. It is of little moment to him or to us that they have long since ceased to cackle and begun to hiss. They have become used to better verse and carefuller workmen; and must be forgiven if after such training they cannot at once appreciate the splendid and imperishable excellence 5 which covers all his offences and outweighs all his defects: the excellence of sincerity and strength. Without these no poet can live; but few have ever had so much of them as Byron. His sincerity indeed is difficult to discover and define; but it does in effect lie at the root "of all his good 10 works: deformed by pretension and defaced by assumption, masked by folly and veiled by affection; but perceptible after all, and priceless,

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Preface to *Poetry of Byron*, 1881

Essays in Criticism, 1888

WE talk of Byron's *personality*, 'a personality in eminence such as has never been yet, and is not likely to come again;' 15 and we say that by this personality Byron is 'different from all the rest of English poets, and in the main greater.' But can we not be a little more circumstantial, and name that in which the wonderful power of this personality consisted? We can; with the instinct of a poet Mr. Swinburne has seized 20 upon it and named it for us. The power of Byron's personality lies in 'the splendid and imperishable excellence which covers all his offences and outweighs all his defects: *the excellence of sincerity and strength.*]

Byron found our nation, after its long and victorious 25 struggle with revolutionary France, fixed in a system of established facts and dominant ideas which revolted him. The mental bondage of the most powerful part of our nation,

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of its strong middle-class, to a narrow and false system of this kind, is what we call British Philistinism. That bondage is unbroken to this hour, but in Byron's time it was even far more deep and dark than it is now. Byron was an 5 aristocrat, and it is not difficult for an aristocrat to look on the prejudices and habits of the British Philistine with scepticism and disdain. Plenty of young men of his own class Byron met at Almack's or at Lady Jersey's, who regarded the established facts and reigning beliefs of the 10 England of that day with as little reverence as he did. But these men, disbelievers in British Philistinism in private, entered English public life, the most conventional in the world, and at once they saluted with respect the habits and ideas of British Philistinism as if they were a part of 15 the order of creation, and as if in public no sane man would think of warring against them. With Byron it was different. What he called the *cant* of the great middle part of the English nation, what we call its Philistinism, revolted him; but the cant of his own class, deferring to this Philistinism 20 and profiting by it, while they disbelieved in it, revolted him even more. 'Come what may.' are his own words, 'I will never flatter the million's canting in any shape.' His class in general, on the other hand, shrugged their shoulders at this cant, laughed at it, pandered to it, and ruled by it. 25 The falsehood, cynicism, insolence, misgovernment, oppression, with their consequent unfailing crop of human misery, which were produced by this state of things, roused Byron to irreconcilable revolt and battle. They made him indignant, they infuriated him; they were so strong, so 30 defiant, so maleficent,—and yet he felt that they were doomed. 'You have seen every trampler down in turn.' he comforts himself with saying, 'from Buonaparte to the simplest individuals.' The old order, as after 1815 it stood victorious, with its ignorance and misery below, its cant,

selfishness, and cynicism above, was at home and abroad equally hateful to him. 'I have simplified my politics.' he writes, 'into an utter detestation of all existing governments.' And again: 'Give me a republic. The king-times are fast finishing; there will be blood shed like, water and tears like mist, but the peoples will conquer in the end. I shall not live to see it, but I foresee it.'

Byron himself gave the preference, he tells us, to politicians and doers, far above writers and singers. But the politics of his own day and of his own class,—even of the 10 Liberals of his own class,—were impossible for him. Nature had not formed him for a Liberal peer, proper to move the Address in the House of Lords, to pay compliments to the energy and self-reliance of British middle-class Liberalism, and to adapt his politics to suit it. Unlitted for such politics, 15 he threw himself upon poetry as his organ; and in poetry his topics were not Queen Mab, and the Witch of Atlas, and the Sensitive Plant—they were the upholders of the old order, George the Third and Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington and Southey, and they were the canters 20 and trampers of the great world, and they were his enemies and himself. . . .

True, as a man, Byron could not manage himself, could not guide his ways aright, but was all astray. True, he has no light, cannot lead us from the past to the future; 'the 25 moment he reflects, he is a child.' The way out of the false state of things which enraged him(he did not see—the slow and laborious way upward; he had not the patience, knowledge, self-discipline, virtue, requisite for seeing it. True, also, as a poet, he has no fine and exact sense for word and 30 structure and rhythm; he has not the artist's nature and *gifts*.) Yet a personality of Byron's force counts for so much in life, and a rhetorician of Byron's force counts for so much in literature! Along with this astounding power and passion

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he had a strong and deep sense for what is beautiful in nature, and for what is beautiful in human action and suffering. When he warms to his work, when he is inspired, Nature herself seems to take the pen from him as she took
5 it from Wordsworth, and to write for him as she wrote for Wordsworth, though in a different fashion, with her own penetrating simplicity.

Selections from
LORD BYRON

CHILDE HAROLD

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Spain—The Peninsular War

1. 37-42

AWAKE, ye sons of Spain! awake! advance!
 Lo! Chivalry, your ancient goddess, cries,
 But wields not, as of old, her thirsty lance,
 Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the skies :
 Now on the smoke of blazing bolts she flies, 5
 And speaks in thunder through yon engine's roar:
 In every peal she calls—'Awake! arise!'
 Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,
 When her war-song was heard on Andalusia's shore ?

 Hark! heard you not those hoofs of dreadful note? 10
 Sounds not the clang of conflict on the heath?
 Saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote,
 Nor saved your brethren ere they sank beneath
 Tyrants and tyrants' slaves ? the fires of death,
 The bale-fires flash on high:—from rock to rock 15
 Each volley tells that thousands cease to breathe;
 Death rides upon the sulphury Siroc,
 Red Battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock.

 Lo! where the Giant on the mountain stands,
 His blood-red tresses deep'ning in the sun, 20
 With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands,
 And eye that scorcheth all it glares upon;
 Restless it rolls, now fix'd, and now anon
 Flashing afar,—and at his iron feet
 Destruction cowers, to mark what deeds are done; 25
 For on this morn three potent nations meet,
 To shed before his shrine the blood he deems most sweet.

By Heaven! it is a splendid sight to see
 (For one who hath no friend, no brother there)
 Their rival scarfs of mix'd embroidery, 30
 Their various arms that glitter in the air!
 What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair,
 And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey!
 All join the chase, but few the triumph share;
 The Grave shall bear the chiefest prize away, 35
 And Havoc scarce for joy can number their array.

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice;
 Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high ;
 Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies ;
 The shouts are France, Spain, Albion, Victory! 40
 The foe, the victim, and the fond ally
 That fights for all, but ever fights in vain,
 Are met—as if at home they could not die—
 To feed the crow on Talavera's plain,
 And fertilize the field that each pretends to gain. 45

There shall they rot—Ambition's honour'd fools!
 Yes, Honour decks the turf that wraps their clay!
 Vain sophistry! in these behold the tools,
 The broken tools, that tyrants cast away
 By myriads, when they dare to pave their way 50
 With human hearts—to what ?—a dream alone.
 Can despots compass aught that hails their sway ?
 Or call with truth one span of earth their own,
 Save that wherein at last they crumble bone by bone ?

Converse with Nature

II. 23-6, 37

'T is night, when Meditation bids us feel
 We once have loved, though love is at an end:
 The heart, lone mourner of its baffled zeal,
 Though friendless now, will dream it had a friend.
 Who with the weight of years would wish to bend, 5
 When Youth itself survives young Love and Joy?
 Alas! when mingling souls forget to blend,
 Death hath but little left him to destroy!
 Ah! happy years! once more who would not be a boy?

Thus bending o'er the vessel's laving side, 14
 To gaze on Dian's wave-reflected sphere,
 The soul forgets her schemes of hope and pride]
 And flies unconscious o'er each backward year;
 None are so desolate but something dear,
 Dearer than self, possesses or possess'd 15
 A thought, and claims the homage of a tear;
 A flashing pang! of which the weary breast
 Would still, albeit in vain, the heavy heart divest.

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
 To slowly trace the forest's shady scene, 20
 Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
 And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
 To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
 With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
 Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean; 25
 This is not Solitude; 't is but to hold
 Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unroll'd.

But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
 To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
 And roam along, the world's tired denizen, 30
 With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;
 Minions of splendour shrinking from distress!
 None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
 If we were not, would seem to smile the less,
 Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and sued; 35
 This is to be alone; this, this is Solitude!

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Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,
 Though always changing in her aspect mild;
 From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
 Her never-wean'd, though not her favour'd child. 40
 Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
 Where nothing polish'd dares pollute her path:
 To me by day or night she ever smiled,
 Though I have mark'd her when none other hath,
 And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.

Greece

II. 73-6, 85-8

FAIR Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
 Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!
 Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth,
 And long accustom'd bondage uncreate?
 Not such thy sons who whilome did await, 5
 The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
 In bleak Thermopylae's sepulchral strait—
 Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
 Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the tomb?

Spirit of Freedom! when on Phyle's brow 10
 Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
 Couldst thou forebode the dismal hour which now
 Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?
 Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
 But every carle can lord it o'er thy land; 15
 Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
 Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand;
 From birth till death enslaved; in word, in deed, unmann'd.

In all save form alone, how changed! and who
 That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye, 20
 Who would but deem their bosoms burn'd anew
 With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!
 And many dream withal the hour is nigh
 That gives them back their fathers' heritage:
 For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh, 25
 Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
 Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful page.

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
 Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?
 By their right arms the conquest must be wrought? 30
 Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? No!
 True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
 But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.
 Shades of the Helots! triumph o'er your foe!
 Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the same; 35
 Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thy years of shame.

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 And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
 Land of lost gods and godlike men, art thou!
 Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow,
 Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite now: 40
 Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,

Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
 Broke by the share of every rustic plough:
 So perish monuments of mortal birth,
 So perish all in turn, save well-recorded Worth; 45

Save where some solitary column mourns
 Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;
 Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
 Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave ;
 Save oer some warrior's half-forgotten grave, 50
 Where the gray stones and unmolested grass
 Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave ;
 While strangers, only, not regardless pass,
 Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh 'Alas!'

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild; 55
 Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,
 Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
 And still his honey'd wealth Hymettus yields;
 There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
 The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-air; 60
 Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,
 Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare;
 Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

Where'er we tread 't is haunted, holy ground;
 No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould, 65
 But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
 And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
 Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
 The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon;
 Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold 70
 Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone:
 Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

Once more upon the Waters

III. 1~4

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!
 A D A! sole daughter of my house and heart?
 When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
 And then we parted,—not as now we part,
 But with a hope.—

Awaking with a start, 5

The waters heave around me; and on high
 The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
 Whither I know not; but the hour 's gone by,
 When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine
 eye.

Once more upon the waters! yet once more! 10

And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
 That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar!
 Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
 Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
 And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale, 15
 Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
 Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail
 Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One, 20

The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;
 Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
 And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
 Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find
 The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
 Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind, 25
 O'er which all heavily the journeying years
 Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

Since my young days of passion—joy, or pain,
 Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
 And both may jar: it may be, that in vain 30
 I would essay as I have sung to sing.
 Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;
 So that it wean me from the weary dream
 Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling
 Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem 35
 To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

Waterloo

III. 21-30

THERE was a sound of revelry by night,
 And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
 Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
 A thousand hearts beat happily; and when 5
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
 Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
 And all went merry as a marriage bell;
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 't was but the wind, 10
 Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
 On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
 No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
 To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
 But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more, 15
 As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
 Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
 Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear 20
 That sound the first amidst the festival,
 And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
 And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
 His heart more truly knew that peal too well
 Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier, 25
 And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;
 He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
 And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
 And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago 30
 Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
 And there were sudden partings, such as press
 The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
 Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
 If ever more should meet those mutual eyes, 35
 Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste—the steed,
 The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
 Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war— 40
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
 While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
 Or whispering, with white lips—'The foe! they come!
 they come!' 45

And wild and high the 'Cameron's gathering' rose!
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
 Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
 How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
 Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills 50

Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
 With the fiercer native daring which instils
 The stirring memory of a thousand years,
 And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves, 55
 Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they pass,
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
 Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
 Which now beneath them, but above shall grow 60
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay, 65
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in' arms,—the day
 Battle's magnificently stern array!
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
 The earth is cover'd thick with other clay, 70
 Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
 Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine;
 Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
 Partly because they blend me with his line, 75
 And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
 And partly that bright names will hallow song ;
 And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd
 The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,
 Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd, 80
 They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young gallant
 Howard!

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
 And mine were nothing, had I such to give;
 But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
 Which living waves where thou didst cease to live, 85
 And saw around me the wide field revive
 With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
 Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
 With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
 I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not bring. 90

Body and Soul

III. 72-5

I LIVE not in myself, but I become
 Portion of that around me; and to me
 High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
 Of human cities torture: I can see
 Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be 5
 A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
 Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,
 And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
 Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

 And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life: 10
 I look upon the peopled desert past,
 As on a place of agony and strife,
 Where, for some sin, to Sorrow I was cast,
 To act and suffer, but remount at last
 With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring, 15
 Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the blast
 Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
 Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being
 cling.

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
 From what it hates in this degraded form, 20
 Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
 Existent happier in the fly and worm,—
 When elements to elements conform,
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not
 Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm ? 25
 The bodiless thought ? the Spirit of each spot ?
 Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot ?
 Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
 Of me and of my soul, as I of them ?
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart 30
 With a pure passion ? should I not condemn
 All objects, if compared with these ? and stem
 A tide of suffering, rather than forego
 Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
 Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below, 35
 Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not
 glow ?

The Lake of Geneva in Calm and Storm

III. 85-98

CLEAR, placid Leman I thy contrasted lake,
 With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
 Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
 Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
 This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing 5
 To waft me from distraction; once I loved
 Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
 Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reprov'd,
 That I with stern delights should e'er have been so
 moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between 10
 Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
 Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
 Save darken'd Jura, whose cap heights appear
 Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
 There breathes a living fragrance from the shore, 15
 Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
 Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
 Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.

He is an evening reveller, who makes
 His life an infancy, and sings his fill; 20
 At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
 Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
 There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
 But that is fancy, for the starlight dew
 All silently their tears of love instil, 25
 Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
 Deep into nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
 If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
 Of men and empires,—'t is to be forgiven, 30
 That in our aspirations to be great,
 Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
 And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
 A beauty and a mystery, and create
 In us such love and reverence from afar, 35
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a
 star.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
 But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—
 All heaven and earth are still: From the high host 40

Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
 All is concenter'd in a life intense,
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
 But hath a part of being, and a sense
 Of that which is of all Creator and Defence. 45

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
 In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
 A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
 And purifies from self: it is a tone,
 The soul and source of music, which makes known 50
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
 Binding all things with beauty;—'t would disarm
 The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

Not vainly did the early Persian make 55
 His altar the high places, and the peak
 Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
 A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
 The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak
 Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare 60
 Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
 With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
 Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy pray'r!

The sky is changed!—and such a change! Oh night,
 And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong, 65
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
 Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
 From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
 Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
 But every mountain now hath found a tongue, 70
 And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
 Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!
 Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
 A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,— 75
 A portion of the tempest and of thee!
 How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
 And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
 And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
 Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth, 80
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
 Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
 In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
 That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted; 85
 Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
 Love was the very root of the fond rage
 Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:
 Itself expired, but leaving them an age
 Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage. 90

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
 The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:
 For here, not one, but many, make their play,
 And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,
 Flashing and cast around; of all the band, 95
 The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
 His lightnings,—as if he did understand,
 That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
 There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye! 100
 With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
 To make these felt and feeling, well may be
 Things that have made me watchful; the far roll

Of your departing voices, is the knoll
 Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest. 105
 But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
 Are ye like those within the human breast?
 Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

Could I embody and unbosom now
 That which is most within me,—could I wreak 110
 My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
 Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
 All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
 Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word,
 And that one word were Lightning, I would speak; 115
 But as it is, I live and die unheard,
 With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
 With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,
 Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn, 120
 And living as if earth contain'd no tomb,—
 And glowing into day: we may resume
 The march of our existence: and thus I,
 Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find room
 And food for meditation, nor pass by 125
 Much, that may give us pause, if ponder'd fittingly.



Gibbon and Voltaire

III. 105-7

LAUSANNE! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes
 Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name;
 Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
 A path to perpetuity of fame:

They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim 5
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the flame
Of Heaven again assail'd,—if Heaven the while
On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

The one was fire and fickleness, a child 10
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or wild,—
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents: But his own 15
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,—
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought,
And hiving wisdom with each studious year, 20
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony,—that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear, 25
And doom'd him to the zealot's ready Hell,
Which answers *to* all doubts so eloquently well.

Venice

iv. 1-5

I STOOD in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:

A thousand years their cloudy wings expand 5
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean, 10
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers:
And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East 15
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.

In Venice lasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier; 20
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear
Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear, 25
The pleasant place of all festivity,

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond 30
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway ;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er, 35

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;
 Essentially immortal, they create
 And multiply in us a brighter ray
 And more beloved existence: that which Fate 40
 Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
 Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,
 First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
 Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
 And with a fresher growth replenishing the void. 45

Byron's Hopes

iv. 8-10

I'VE taught me other tongues, and in strange eyes
 Have made me not a stranger; to the mind
 Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;
 Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
 A country with—ay, or without mankind; 5
 Yet was I born where men are proud to be,
 Not without cause; and should I leave behind
 The inviolate island of the sage and free,
 And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

 Perhaps I loved it well: and should I lay 10
 My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
 My spirit shall resume *it*—if we may
 Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
 My hopes of being remember'd in my line
 With my land's language: if too fond and far 15
 These aspirations in their scope incline,—
 If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
 Of **hasty** growth and blight, and dull ObHvion bar

My name from out the temple where the dead
 Are honour'd by the nations—let it be— 20
 And light the laurels on a loftier head!
 And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
 'Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.'
 Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
 The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree 25
 I planted: they have torn me, and I bleed:
 I should have known what fruit would spring from such a
 seed.

Tasso and Ariosto

iv. 39, 40

PEACE to Torquato's injured shade! 't was his
 In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
 Aim'd with her poison'd arrows,—but to miss.
 Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!
 Each year brings forth its millions; but how long 5
 The tide of generations shall roll on,
 And not the whole combined and countless throng
 Compose a mind like thine? though all in one
 Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun.

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those, 10
 Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
 The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose
 The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
 Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
 The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth 15
 A new creation with his magic line,
 And, like the Ariosto of the North,
 Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

Rome

iv. 78-80, 82

OH Rome! my country! city of the soul!
 The orphans of the heart must turn to thee.
 Lone mother of dead empires! and control
 In their shut breasts their petty misery.
 What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see 5
 The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
 O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!
 Whose agonies are evils of a day—
 A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands, 10
 Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
 An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
 Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
 The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
 The very sepulchres lie tenantless 15
 Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
 Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
 Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress!

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
 Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride; 20
 She saw her glories star by star expire,
 And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
 Where the car climb'd the Capitol; far and wide
 Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:
 Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void, 25
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
 And say, 'here was, or is,' where all is doubly night?

47

Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
 The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
 When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass 30
 The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
 Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
 And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be
 Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
 Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see 35
 That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

The Coliseum

iv. 128-9, 139~45

ARCHES on arches! as it were that Rome,
 Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
 Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
 Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine
 As 't were its natural torches, for divine 5
 Should be the light which streams here to illumine
 This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
 Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
 Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

 Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven, 10
 Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
 And shadows forth its glory. There is given
 Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,
 A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
 His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power 15
 And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
 For which the palace of the present hoilr
 Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
 In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause, 20
 As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man.
 And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore, but because
 Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
 And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not?
 What matters where we fall to fill the maws 25
 Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?
 Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
 He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
 Consents to death, but conquers agony, 30
 And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
 The arena swims around him—he is gone, 35
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who
 won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
 Were with his heart, and that was far away;
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay, 40
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
 All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
 And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire! 45

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;
 And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
 And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
 Bashing or winding as its torrent strays;

Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise 50
 Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
 My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
 On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass 55
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
 And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.
 Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
 Alas! developed, opens the decay, 60
 When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,
 Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there; 65
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air
 The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
 Like laurels on the bald first Caesar's head;
 When the light shines serene but doth not glare, 70
 Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
 Heroes have trod this spot—'t is on their dust ye tread.

'While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
 'When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall; 74
 'And when Rome falls—the World.' From our own land
 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
 Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
 On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill, 80
 The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

Conclusion

iv. 175-86

B U T I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
 And he and I must part,—so let it be,—
 His task and mine alike are nearly done;
 Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
 The midland ocean breaks on him and me, 5
 And from the Alban Mount we now behold
 Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we
 Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
 Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years— 10
 Long, though not very many—since have done
 Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
 Have left us nearly where we had begun:
 Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run;
 We have had our reward, and it is here,— 15
 That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
 And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
 As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,
 With one fair Spirit for my minister, 20
 That I might all forget the human race,
 And, hating no one, love but only her!
 Ye Elements!—in whose ennobling stir
 I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
 Accord me such a being? Do I err 25
 In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
 Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
 There is society, where none intrudes, 30
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
 From these our interviews, in which I steal
 From all I may be, or have been before,
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel 35
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
 Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
 Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain 40
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
 Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown. 45

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
 Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
 And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
 Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies, 50
 And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
 And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
 His petty hope in some near port or bay,
 And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls 55
 Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
 And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make

Their clay creator the vain title take
 Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war— 60
 These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
 They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
 Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they? 65
 Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,
 And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
 The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
 Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
 Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play:— 70
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow:
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
 Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
 Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm, 75
 Icing the-pole, or in the torrid clime
 Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime—
 The image of Eternity—the throne
 Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
 The monsters of the deep are made; each zone 80
 Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
 I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me 85
 Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
 Made them a terror—'t was a pleasing fear,
 For I was as it were a child of thee,
 And trusted to thy billows far and near,
 And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here. 90

My task is done, my song hath ceased, my theme
 Has died into an echo; it is fit
 The spell should break of this protracted dream.
 The torch shall be extinguished which hath lit
 My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ; 95
 Would it were worthier! but I am not now
 That which I have been—and my visions flit
 Less palpably before me—and the glow
 Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been— 100
 A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
 Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
 Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
 A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
 A single recollection, not in vain 105
 He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell;
 Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
 If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain!

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

1816

SONNET ON CHILLON

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!

Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,

For there thy habitation is the heart—

The heart which love of thee alone can bind;

And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd— 5

To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,

Their country conquers with their martyrdom,

And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,

And thy sad floor an altar—for 't was trod, 10

Until his very steps have left a trace

Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,

By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!

For they appeal from tyranny to God.

1

MY hair is grey, but not with years,

Nor grew it white

In a single night,

As men's have grown from sudden fears:

My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil, 5

But rusted with a vile repose,

For they have been a dungeon's spoil,

And mine has been the fate of those

To whom the goodly earth and air

Are bann'd and barr'd—forbidden fare: 10

But this was for my father's faith

I suffer'd chains and courted death;

That father perish'd at the stake

For tenets he would not forsake;

And for the same his lineal race 35
 In darkness found a dwelling-place;
 We were seven—who now are one,
 Six in youth, and one in age,
 Finish'd as they had begun,
 Proud of Persecution's rage;
 One in fire, and two in field,
 Their belief with blood have seal'd,
 Dying as their father died,
 For the God their foes denied;
 Three were in a dungeon cast,
 Of whom this wreck is left the last.

11

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
 In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
 There are seven columns, massy and grey,
 Dim with a dull imprison'd ray, 30
 A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
 And through the crevice and the cleft
 Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
 Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
 Like a marsh's meteor lamp: 35
 And in each pillar there is a ring,
 And in each ring there is a chain;
 That iron is a cankering thing,
 For in these limbs its teeth remain,
 With marks that will not wear away, 40
 Till I have done with this new day,
 Which now is painful to these eyes,
 Which have not seen the sun so rise
 For years—I cannot count them o'er,
 I lost their long and heavy score, 45

56

When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace, 50
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together—yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, but join'd in heart, 55
'T was still solace, in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech.
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old, 60
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound, not full and free, 65
As they of yore were wont to be:
It might be fancy, but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest 70
I ought to do, and did, my best—
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him, with eyes as blue as heaven— 75
For him my soul was sorely moved;

(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer 's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flow'd like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

The other was as pure of mind,
But form'd to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood, 95
And perish'd in the foremost rank
 With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
His spirit wither'd with their clank,
 I saw it silently decline—
 And so perchance in sooth did mine: 100
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
 Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;
 To him his dungeon was a gulf, 105
And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

VI

Lake Lemman lies by Chilton's walls:
 A thousand feet in depth below
 Its massy waters meet and flow;
 Thus much the fathom-line was sent 110
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
 Which round about the wave intrals:
 A double dungeon wall and wave
 Have made—and like a living grave
 Below the surface of the lake 115
 The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
 We heard it ripple night and day;
 Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
 And I have felt the winter's spray
 Wash through the bars when winds were high 120
 And wanton in the happy sky;
 And then the very rock hath rock'd,
 And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
 Because I could have smiled to see
 The death that would have set me free. 125

VII

I said my nearer brother pined,
 I said his mighty heart declined,
 He loathed and put away his food;
 It was not that't was coarse and rude,
 For we were used to hunter's fare, 130
 And for the like had little care:
 The milk drawn from the mountain goat
 Was changed for water from the moat,
 Our bread was such as captives' tears
 Have moisten'd many a thousand years, 135
 Since man first pent his fellow men
 Like brutes within an iron den;

But what were these to us or him ?
 These wasted not his heart or limb;
 My brother's soul was of that mould 140
 Which in a palace had grown cold,
 Had his free breathing been denied
 The range of the steep mountain's side;
 But why delay the truth ?—he died.
 I saw, and could not hold his head, 145
 Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
 Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
 He died, and they unlock'd his chain,
 And scoop'd for him a shallow grave 150
 Even from the cold earth of our cave.
 I begg'd them as a boon to lay
 His corse in dust whereon the day
 Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
 But then within my brain it wrought, 355
 That even in death his freeborn breast
 In such a dungeon could not rest.
 I might have spared my idle prayer—
 They coldly laugh'd, and laid him there:
 The flat and turfless earth above 160
 The being we so much did love;
 His empty chain above it leant,
 Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII

But he, the favourite and the flower,
 Most cherish'd since his natal hour, 165
 His mother's image in fair face,
 The infant love of all his race,
 His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
 My latest care, for whom I sought

To hoard my life, that his might be	170
Less wretched now, and one day free;	
He, too, who yet had held untired	
A spirit natural or inspired—	
He, too, was struck, and day by day	
Was wither'd on the stalk away.	175
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing	
To see the human soul take wing	
In any shape, in any mood:	
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,	
I've seen it on the breaking ocean	180
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,	
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed	
Of Sin delirious with its dread;	
But these were horrors—this was woe	
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow:	185
He faded, and so calm and meek,	
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,	
So tearless, yet so tender, kind,	
And grieved for those he left behind;	
With all the while a cheek whose bloom	190
Was a mockery of the tomb,	
Whose tints as gently sunk away	
As a departing rainbow's ray;	
An eye of most transparent light,	
That almost made the dungeon bright,	195
And not a word of murmur, not	
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—	
A little talk of better days,	
A little hope my own to raise,	
For I was sunk in silence—lost	200
In this last loss, of all the most;	
And then the sighs he would suppress	
Of fainting nature's feebleness,	

More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
 I listen'd, but I could not hear; 205
 I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
 I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread
 Would not be thus admonished;
 I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
 I burst my chain with one strong bound, 210
 And rush'd to him:—I found him not,
 I only stirr'd in this black spot,
 I only lived, . ' only drew
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
 The last, the sole, the dearest link 215
 Between me and the eternal brink,
 Which bound me to my failing race,
 Was broken in this fatal place.
 One on the earth, and one beneath—
 My brothers—both had ceased to breathe: 220
 I took that hand which lay so still,
 Alas! my own was full as chill;
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,
 But felt that I was still alive—
 A frantic feeling, when we know 225
 That what we love shall ne'er be so,
 I know not why
 I could not die,
 I had no earthly hope but faith,
 And that forbade a selfish death. 230

IX

What next befell me then and there
 I know not well—I never knew—
 First came the loss of light, and air,
 And then of darkness too:

I had no thought, no feeling—none— 235
 Among the stones I stood a stone,
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
 As shrubless crags within the mist;
 For all was blank, and bleak, and grey;
 It was not night, it was not day; 240
 It was not even the dungeon-light,
 So hateful to my heavy sight,
 But vacancy absorbing space,
 And fixedness without a place;
 There were no stars, no earth, no time, 245
 No check, no change, no good, no crime,
 But silence, and a stirless breath
 Which neither was of life nor death;
 A sea of stagnant idleness,
 Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless! 250

x

A light broke in upon my brain,—
 It was the carol of a bird;
 It ceased, and then it came again,
 The sweetest song ear ever heard,
 And mine was thankful till my eyes 255
 Ran over with the glad surprise,
 And they that moment could not see
 I was the mate of misery;
 But then by dull degrees came back
 My senses to their wonted track; 260
 I saw the dungeon walls and floor
 Close slowly round me as before,
 I saw the glimmer of the sun
 Creeping as it before had done,
 - But through the crevice where it came 265

That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
 And tamer than upon the tree;
 A lovely bird, with azure wings,
 And song that said a thousand things,
 And seem'd to say them all for me! 270
 I never saw its like before,
 I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
 It seem'd like me to want a mate,
 But was not half so desolate,
 And it was come to love me when 275
 None lived to love me so again,
 And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
 Had brought me back to feel and think.
 I know not if it late were free,
 Or broke its cage to perch on mine, 280
 But knowing well captivity,
 Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
 Or if it were, in winged guise,
 A visitant from Paradise;
 For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while 285
 Which made me both to weep and smile—
 I sometimes deem'd that it might be
 My brother's soul come down to me;
 But then at last away it flew,
 And then 't was mortal well I knew, 290
 For he would never thus have flown,
 And left me twice so doubly lone,
 Lone as the corse within its shroud,
 Lone as a solitary cloud,—
 A single cloud on a sunny day, 295
 While all the rest of heaven is clear,
 A frown upon the atmosphere,
 That hath no business to appear
 When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI

A kind of change came in my fate, 300
 My keepers grew compassionate;
 I know not what had made them so,
 They were inured to sights of woe,
 But so it was:—my broken chain
 With links unfasten'd did remain, 305
 And it was liberty to stride
 Along my cell from side to side,
 And up and down, and then athwart,
 And tread it over every part ;
 And round the pillars one by one, 310
 Returning where my walk begun,
 Avoiding only, as I trod,
 My brothers' graves without a sod;
 For if I thought with heedless tread
 My step profaned their lowly bed, 315
 My breath came gaspingly and thick,
 And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

XII

I made a footing in the wall,
 It was not therefrom to escape,
 For I had buried one and all 320
 Who loved me in a human shape;
 And the whole earth would henceforth be
 A wider prison unto me:
 No child, no sire, no kin had I,
 No partner in my misery; 325
 I thought of this, and I was glad,
 For thought of them had made me mad;
 But I was curious to ascend
 To my barr'd windows, and to bend

Once more, upon the mountains high, 330
 The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII

I saw them, and they were the same,
 They were not changed like me in frame;
 I saw their thousand years of snow
 On high—their wide long lake below, 335
 And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
 I heard the torrents leap and gush
 O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
 I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
 And whiter sails go skimming down; 340
 And then there was a little isle,
 Which in my very face did smile,
 The only one in view;
 A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
 Scarce broader than my dungeon floor, 345
 But in it there were three tall trees,
 And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
 And by it there were waters flowing,
 And on it there were young flowers growing,
 Of gentle breath and hue. 350
 The fish swam by the castle wall,
 And they seem'd joyous each and all;
 The eagle rode the rising blast,
 Methought he never flew so fast
 As then to me he seem'd to fly; 355
 And then new tears came in my eye,
 And I felt troubled—and would fain
 I had not left my recent chain;
 And when I did descend again,
 The darkness of my dim abode 360
 Fell on me as a heavy load;

It was as is a new-dug grave,
 Closing o'er one we sought to save,—
 And yet my glance, too much opprest,
 Had almost need of such a rest. 365

XIV

It might be months, or years, or days,
 I kept no count, I took no note,
 I had no hope my eyes to raise,
 And clear them of their dreary mote;
 At last men came to set me free; 370
 I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where;
 It was at length the same to me,
 Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
 I learn'd to love despair.
 And thus when they appear'd at last, 375
 And all my bonds aside were cast,
 These heavy walls to me had grown
 A hermitage—and all my own!
 And half I felt as they were come
 To tear me from a second home: 380
 With spiders I had friendship made,
 And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
 Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
 And why should I feel less than they?
 We were all inmates of one place, 385
 And I, the monarch of each race,
 Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
 In quiet we had learn'd to dwell;
 My very chains and I grew friends,
 So much a long communion tends 390
 To make us what we are:—even I
 Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

PASSAGES FROM THE TALES

From *The Giaour*

1813

HE who hath bent him o'er the dead
 Ere the first day of death is fled,
 The first dark day of nothingness,
 The last of danger and distress,
 (Before Decay's effacing fingers 5
 Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,)
 And mark'd the mild angelic air,
 The rapture of repose that's there,
 The fix'd yet tender traits that streak
 The languor of the placid cheek, 10
 And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
 That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
 And but for that chill, changeless brow,
 Where cold Obstruction's apathy
 Appals the gazing mourner's heart, 15
 As if to him it could impart
 The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
 Yes, but for these and these alone,
 Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
 He still might doubt the tyrant's power; 20
 So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,
 The first, last look by death reveal'd!
 Such is the aspect of this shore;
 'T is Greece, but living Greece no more!
 So coldly sweet, so deadly fair, 25
 We start, for soul is wanting there.
 Hers is the loveliness in death,
 That parts not quite with parting breath;

But beauty with that fearful bloom,
 That hue which haunts it to the tomb, 30
 Expression's last receding ray,
 A gilded halo hovering round decay,
 The farewell beam of Feehng pass'd away!
 Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,
 Which gleams, but warms no more its cherish'd earth! 35

Clime of the unforgotten brave!
 Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
 Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave!
 Shrine of the mighty! can it be,
 That this is all remains of thee? 40
 Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
 Say, is not this Thermopylae?
 These waters blue that round you lave,—
 Oh servile offspring of the free,
 Pronounce what sea, what shore is this? 45
 The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
 These scenes, their story not unknown,
 Arise, and make again your own;
 Snatch from the ashes of your sires
 The embers of their former fires; 50
 And he who in the strife expires
 Will add to theirs a name of fear
 That Tyranny shall quake to hear,
 And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
 They too will rather die than shame: 55
 For Freedom's battle once begun,
 Bequeathed by bleeding Sire to Son,
 Though baffled oft is ever won.
 Bear witness, Greece, thy living page!
 Attest it many a deathless age! 60

While kings, in dusty darkness hid,
 Have left a nameless pyramid,
 Thy heroes, though the general doom
 Hath swept the column from their tomb,
 A mightier monument command, 65
 The mountains of their native land!
 There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
 The graves of those that cannot die!
 'T were long to tell, and sad to trace,
 Each step from splendour to disgrace; 70
 Enough—no foreign foe could quell
 Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
 Yes! Self-abasement paved the way
 To villain-bonds and despot sway.

From *The Corsair*

1814

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
 Along Morea's hills the setting sun;
 Not, as in Northern climes, obscurely bright,
 But one unclouded blaze of living light!
 O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws, 5
 Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
 On old Ægina's rock and Idra's isle,
 The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
 O'er his own regions lingering, loves to shine,
 Though there his altars are no more divine. 10
 Descending fast the mountain shadows kiss
 Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis!
 Their azure arches through the long expanse
 More deeply purpled meet his mellowing glance,
 And tenderest tints, along their summits driven, 15
 Mark his gay course, and own the hues of heaven;

Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
Behind his Delphian cliff he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve, his palest beam he cast,
When—Athens! here thy Wisest look'd his last. 20
How watch'd thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murder'd sage's latest day!
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill—
The precious hour of parting lingers still;
But sad his light to agonising eyes, 25
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes:
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,
The land, where Phcebus never frown'd before;
But ere he sank below Cithaeron's head,
The cup of woe was quaff'd—the spirit fled; 30
The soul of him who scorn'd to fear or fly—
Who lived and died, as none can live or die!

But lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
The queen of night asserts her silent reign.
No murky vapour, herald of the storm, 35
Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form;
With cornice glimmering as the moonbeams play,
There the white column greets her grateful ray,
And, bright around with quivering beams beset,
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret: 40
The groves of olive scatter'd dark and wide
Where meek Cephissus pours his scanty tide,
The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay kiosk,
And, dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm, 45
Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm,
All tinged with varied hues arrest the eye—
And dull were his that pass'd them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
 Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war; 50
 Again his waves in milder tints unfold
 Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
 Mix'd with the shades of many a distant isle,
 That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.

From *Lara*

1814

THERE was in him a vital scorn of all:
 As if the worst had fall'n which could befall,
 He stood a stranger in this breathing world,
 An erring spirit from another hurl'd ;
 A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped 5
 By choice the perils he by chance escaped ;
 But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory yet
 His mind would half exult and half regret:
 With more capacity for love than earth
 Bestows on most of mortal mould and birth, 10
 His early dreams of good outstripp'd the truth,
 And troubled manhood follow'd baffled youth ;
 With thought of years in phantom chase mis-spent,
 And wasted powers for better purpose lent;
 And fiery passions that had pour'd their wrath 15
 In hurried desolation o'er his path,
 And left the better feelings all at strife
 In wild reflection o'er his stormy life;
 But haughty still, and loth himself to blame,
 He call'd on Nature's self to share the shame, 20
 And charged all faults upon the fleshly form
 She gave to clog the soul, and feast the worm;
 Till he at last confounded good and ill,
 And half mistook for fate the acts of will:

Too high for common selfishness, he could 25
 At times resign his own for others' good,
 But not in pity, not because he ought,
 But in some strange perversity of thought,
 That sway'd him onward with a secret pride
 To do what few or none would do beside; 30
 And this same impulse would, in tempting time,
 Mislead his spirit equally to crime;
 So much he soar'd beyond, or sunk beneath,
 The men with whom he felt condeimYd to breathe,
 And long'd by good or ill to separate 35
 Himself from all who shared his mortal state;
 His mind abhorring this, had flx'd her throne
 Far from the world, in regions of her own:
 Thus coldly passing all that pass'd below,
 His blood in temperate seeming now would flow: 40
 Ah! happier if it ne'er with guilt had glow'd,
 But ever in that icy smoothness flow'd!
 'Tis true, with other men their path he walk'd,
 And like the rest in seeming did and talk'd,
 Nor outraged Reason's rules by flaw nor start, 45
 His madness was not of the head, but heart;
 And rarely wander'd in his speech, or drew
 His thoughts so forth as to offend the view.

With all that chilling mystery of mien,
 And seeming gladness to remain unseen, 50
 He had (if 'twere not nature's boon) an art
 Of fixing memory on another's heart:
 It was not love perchance, nor hate, nor aught
 That words can image to express the thought;
 But they who saw him did not see in vain, 55
 And once beheld, would ask of him again:

And those to whom he spake remember'd well,
 And on the words, however light, would dwell:
 None knew nor how, nor why, but he entwined
 Himself perforce around the hearer's mind; 60
 There he was stamp'd, in liking, or in hate,
 If greeted once; however brief the date
 That friendship, pity, or aversion knew,
 Still there within the inmost thought he grew.
 You could not penetrate his soul, but found, 65
 Despite your wonder, to your own he wound;
 His presence haunted still; and from the breast
 He forced an all unwilling interest:
 Vain was the struggle in that mental net,
 His spirit seem'd to dare you to forget! 70

From *The Island*

1823

HE who first met the Highlands' swelling blue
 Will love each peak that shows a kindred hue,
 Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
 And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace.
 Long have I roamed through lands which are not mine, 5
 Adored the Alp, and loved the Apennine,
 Revered Parnassus, and beheld the steep
 Jove's Ida and Olympus crown the deep:
 But 't was not all long ages' lore, nor all
 Their nature held me in their thrilling thrall; 10
 The infant rapture still survived the boy,
 And Loch-na-gar with Ida look'd o'er Troy,
 Mix'd Celtic memories with the Phrygian mount,
 And Highland linhs with Castalie's clear fount.

Forgive me, Homer's universal shade! 15
 Forgive me, Phoebus! that my fancy stray'd;
 The north and nature taught me to adore
 Your scenes sublime, from those beloved before.

PROMETHEUS

Published with *The Prisoner of Chillon*, 1816

I

TITAN ! to whose immortal eyes
 The sufferings of mortality,
 Seen in their sad reality,
 Were not as things that gods despise;
 What was thy pity's recompense ? 5
 A silent suffering, and intense;
 The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
 All that the proud can feel of pain,
 The agony they do not show,
 The suffocating sense of woe, 10
 Which speaks but in its loneliness,
 And then is jealous lest the sky
 Should have a listener, nor will sigh
 Until its voice is echoless.

II

Titan! to thee the strife was given 15
 Between the suffering and the will,
 Which torture where they cannot kill;
 And the inexorable Heaven,
 And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
 The ruling principle of Hate, 20
 Which for its pleasure doth create

The things it may annihilate,
 Refused thee even the boon to die:
 The wretched gift eternity
 Was thine—and thou hast borne it well. 25
 All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
 Was but the menace which flung back
 On him the torments of thy rack;
 The fate thou didst so well foresee
 But would not to appease him tell; 30
 And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
 And in his Soul a vain repentance,
 And evil dread so ill dissembled,
 That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

III

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind, 35
 To render with thy precepts less
 The sum of human wretchedness,
 And strengthen Man with his own mind;
 But baffled as thou wert from high,
 Still in thy patient energy, 40
 In the endurance, and repulse
 Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
 Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
 A mighty lesson we inherit:
 Thou art a symbol and a sign 45
 To Mortals of their fate and force;
 Like thee, Man is in part divine,
 A troubled stream from a pure source;
 And Man in portions can foresee
 His own funereal destiny; 50
 His wretchedness, and his resistance,
 And his sad unallied existence:

Cantos I, II, 1819; III, IV, V, 1821; VI-XIV, 1823; XV, XVI, 1824

Canto I, stanzas 1, 4-10, 22

I WANT a hero: an uncommon want,
 When every year and month sends forth a new one,
 Till, after cloying the gazettes with cant,
 The age discovers he is not the true one:
 Of such as these I should not care to vaunt, 5
 I 'll therefore take our ancient friend Don Juan—
 We all have seen him, in the pantomime,
 Sent to the devil somewhat ere his time.

Nelson was once Britannia's god of war,
And still should be so, but the tide is turn'd; 10
There's no more to be said of Trafalgar,
'Tis with our hero quietly inurn'd;
Because the army's grown more popular,
At which the naval people are concern'd;
Besides, the prince is all for the land-service, 15
Forgetting Duncan, Nelson, Howe, and Jervis.

Brave men were living before Agamemnon
 And since, exceeding valorous and sage,
 A good deal like him too, though quite the same none;
 But then they shone not on the poet's page, 20
 And so have been forgotten:—I condemn none,
 But can't find any in the present age
 Fit for my poem (that is, for my new one) ;
 So, as I said, I'll take my friend Don Juan.

Most epic poets plunge 'in medias res' 25
 (Horace makes this the heroic turnpike road),
 And then your hero tells, whene'er you please,
 What went before—by way of episode,
 While seated after dinner at his ease,
 Beside his mistress in some soft abode, 3°
 Palace, or garden, paradise, or cavern,
 Which serves the happy couple for a tavern.

That is the usual method, but not mine—
 My way is to begin with the beginning;
 The regularity of my design 35
 Forbids all wandering as the worst of sinning,
 And therefore I shall open with a line
 (Although it cost me half an hour in spinning)
 Narrating somewhat of Don Juan's father,
 And also of his mother, if you'd rather. 40

In Seville was he born, a pleasant city,
 Famous for oranges and women—he
 Who has not seen it will be much to pity,
 So says the proverb—and I quite agree;
 Of all the Spanish towns is none more pretty, 45
 Cadiz, perhaps—but that you soon may see:—
 Don Juan's parents lived beside the river,
 A noble stream, and call'd the Guadalquivir.

His father's name was Jos6—*Don*, of course,
 A true Hidalgo, free from every stain 50
 Of Moor or Hebrew blood, he traced his source
 Through the most Gothic gentlemen of Spain;
 A better cavalier ne'er mounted horse,
 Or, being mounted, e'er got down again,
 Than José, who begot our hero, who 55
 Begot—but that's to come——Well, to renew:

His mother was a learned lady, famed
 For every branch of every science known—
 In every Christian language ever named,
 With virtues equall'd by her wit alone: 60
 She made the cleverest people quite ashamed,
 And even the good with inward envy groan,
 Finding themselves so very much exceeded
 In their own way by all the things that she did.

'Tis pity learned virgins ever wed 65
 With persons of no sort of education,
 Or gentlemen, who, though well born and bred,
 Grow tired of scientific conversation;
 I don't choose to say much upon this head,
 I'm a plain man, and in a single station, 70
 But—Oh! ye lords of ladies intellectual,
 Inform us truly, have they not hen-peck'd you all?

The Poem

1. 200-5

MY poem's epic, and is meant to be
 Divided in twelve books; each book containing,
 With love, and war, a heavy gale at sea,
 A list of ships, and captains, and kings reigning,

New characters; the episodes are three: 5

A panoramic view of hell's in training,
After the style of Virgil and of Homer,
So that my name of Epic's no misnomer.

All these things will be specified in time,
With strict regard to Aristotle's rules, 10

The *Vade Mecum* of the true sublime,
Which makes so many poets, and some fools:
Prose poets like blank-verse, I'm fond of rhyme,
Good workmen never quarrel with their tools;
I've got new mythological machinery, 15
And very handsome supernatural scenery.

There's only one slight difference between
Me and my epic brethren gone before,
And here the advantage is my own, I ween
(Not that I have not several merits more, 20
But this will more peculiarly be seen);

They so embellish, that 't is quite a bore
Their labyrinth of fables to thread through,
Whereas this story's actually true.

If any person doubt it, I appeal 25

To history, tradition, and to facts,
To newspapers, whose truth all know and feel,
To plays in five, and operas in three acts;
All these confirm my statement a good deal,

But that which more completely faith exacts 30
Is, that myself, and several now in Seville,
Saw Juan's last elopement with the devil.

If ever I should condescend to prose,
I'll write poetical commandments, which
Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those 35
That went before: in these I shall enrich

My text with many things that no one knows,
 And carry precept to the highest pitch:
 I'll call the work 'Longinus o'er a Bottle,
 Or, Every Poet his *own* Aristotle.' 40

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope;
 Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey;
 Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,
 The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthy:
 With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope, 45
 And Campbell's Hippocrene is somewhat drouthy:
 Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers, nor
 Commit—flirtation with the muse of Moore.

The Illusion's gone

1. 213-15, ... 218

BUT now at thirty years my hair is gray—
 (I wonder what it will be like at forty ?
 I thought of a peruke the other day—)
 My heart is not much greener; and, in short, I
 Have squander'd my whole summer while 'twas May, 5
 And feel no more the spirit to retort; I
 Have spent my life, both interest and principal,
 And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul invincible.

No more—no more—Oh! never more on me
 The freshness of the heart can fall like dew, 10
 Which out of all the lovely things we see
 Extracts emotions beautiful and new;
 Hived in our bosoms like the bag O' the bee.
 Think'st thou the honey with those objects grew?
 Alas! 'twas not in them, but in thy power
 To double even the sweetness of a flower.

No more—no more—Oh! never more, my heart,
 Canst thou be my sole world, my universe!
 Once all in all, but now a thing apart,
 Thou canst not be my blessing or my curse: 20
 The illusion's gone for ever, and thou art
 Insensible, I trust, but none the worse.
 And in thy stead I've got a deal of judgment,
 Though heaven knows how it ever found a lodgment.

 What is the end of fame? 't is but to fill 25
 A certain portion of uncertain paper:
 Some liken it to climbing up a hill,
 Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in vapour;
 For this men write, speak, preach, and heroes kill,
 And bards burn what they call their 'midnight taper.' 30
 To have, when the original is dust,
 A name, a wretched picture, and worse bust.

Shipwreck

Canto 11, 24-7, 30-4, 38-42, 49-53

T H E ship, call'd the most holy 'Trinidad.'
 Was steering duly for the port Leghorn;
 For there the Spanish family Moncada
 Were settled long ere Juan's sire was born:
 They were relations, and for them he had a 5
 Letter of introduction, which the morn
 Of his departure had been sent him by
 His Spanish friends for those in Italy.

 His suite consisted of three servants and
 A tutor, the licentiate Pedrillo, 10
 Who several languages did understand,
 But now lay sick and speechless on his pillow,

And, rocking in his hammock, long'd for land,
 His headache being increased by every billow;
 And the waves oozing through the port-hole made 15
 His berth a little damp, and him afraid.

'T was not without some reason, for the wind
 Increased at night, until it blew a gale;
 And though 't was not much to a naval mind,
 Some landsmen would have look'd a little pale, 20
 For sailors are, in fact, a different kind:
 At sunset they began to take in sail,
 For the sky show'd it would come on to blow,
 And carry away, perhaps, a mast or so.

At one o'clock the wind with sudden shift 25
 Threw the ship right into the trough of the sea,
 Which struck her aft, and made an awkward rift,
 Started the stern-post, also shattered the
 Whole of her stern-frame, and, ere she could lift
 Herself from out her present jeopardy, 30
 The rudder tore away: 't was time to sound
 The pumps, and there were four feet water found. . . .

As day advanced the weather seem'd to abate,
 And then the leak they reckon'd to reduce,
 And keep the ship afloat, though three feet yet 35
 Kept two hand and one chain-pump still in use.
 The wind blew fresh again: as it grew late
 A squall came on, and while some guns broke loose,
 A gust—which all descriptive power transcends—
 Laid with one blast the ship on her beam ends. 40

There she lay, motionless, and seem'd upset;
 The water left the hold, and wash'd the decks,
 And made a scene men do not soon forget;
 For they remember battles, fires, and wrecks,

Or any other thing that brings regret, 45

Or breaks their hopes, or hearts, or heads, or necks;
Thus drownings are much talk'd of by the divers,
And swimmers, who may chance to be survivors.

Immediately the masts were cut away,
Both main and mizen: first the mizen went, 50

The main-mast follow'd; but the ship still lay
Like a mere log, and baffled our intent.
Foremast and bowsprit were cut down, and they

Eased her at last (although we never meant
To part with all till every hope was blighted), 55
And then with violence the old ship righted.

It may be easily supposed, while this
Was going on, some people were unquiet,
That passengers would find it much amiss
To lose their lives, as well as spoil their diet; 60
That even the able seaman, deeming his

Days nearly o'er, might be disposed to riot,
As upon such occasions tars will ask
For grog, and sometimes drink rum from the cask.

There 's nought, no doubt, so much the spirit calms 65

As rum and true religion: thus it was,
Some plunder'd, some drank spirits, some sung psalms,
The high wind made the treble, and as bass
The hoarse harsh waves kept time; fright cured the qualms
Of all the luckless landsmen's sea-sick maws: 70

Strange sounds of wailing, blasphemy, devotion,
Clamour'd in chorus to the roaring ocean. . . .

But now there came a flash of hope once more;
Day broke, and the wind lull'd: the masts were gone;
The leak increased; shoals round her, but no shore, 75
The vessel swam, yet still she held her own.

They tried the pumps again, and though before
 Their desparate efforts seem'd all useless grown,
 A glimpse of sunshine set some hands to bale—
 The stronger pump'd, the weaker thrumm'd a sail. 80

Under the vessel's keel the sail was pass'd,
 And for the moment it had some effect;
 But with a leak, and not a stick of mast,
 Nor rag of canvas, what could they expect ?
 But still 't is best to struggle to the last, 85
 'Tis never too late to be wholly wreck'd:
 And though 't is true that man can only die once,
 'Tis not so pleasant in the Gulf of Lyons.

There winds and waves had hurl'd them, and from thence,
 Without their will, they carried them away; 90
 For they were forced with steering to dispense,
 And never had as yet a quiet day
 On which they might repose, or even commence
 A jurymast or rudder, or could say
 The ship would swim an hour, which, by good luck, 95
 Still swam—though not exactly like a duck.

The wind, in fact, perhaps, was rather less,
 But the ship labour'd so, they scarce could hope
 To weather out much longer; the distress
 Was also great with which they had to cope 100
 For want of water, and their solid mess
 Was scant enough: in vain the telescope
 Was used—nor sail nor shore appear'd in sight,
 Nought but the heavy sea, and coming night.

Again the weather threaten'd,—again blew 105
 A gale, and in the fore and after hold
 Water appear'd; yet, though the people knew
 All this, the most were patient, and some bold,

Until the chains and leathers were worn through
 Of all our pumps:—a wreck complete she roll'd, 110
 At mercy of the waves, whose mercies are
 Like human beings during civil war. . . .

'Twas twilight, and the sunless day went down
 Over the waste of waters; like a veil,
 Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose the frown 115
 Of one whose hate is mask'd but to assail.
 Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was shown,
 And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,
 And the dim desolate deep: twelve days had Fear
 Been their familiar, and now Death was here. 120

Some trial had been making at a raft,
 With little hope in such a rolling sea,
 A sort of thing at which one would have laugh'd,
 If any laughter at such times could be,
 Unless with people who too much have quaff'd, 125
 And have a kind of wild and horrid glee,
 Half epileptical, and half hysterical:—
 Their preservation would have been a miracle.

At half-past eight o' clock, booms, hencoops, spars,
 And all things, for a chance, had been cast loose 130
 That still could keep afloat the struggling tars,
 For yet they strove, although of no great use:
 There was no light in heaven but a few stars,
 The boats put off o'ercrowded with their crews;
 She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port, 135
 And, going down head foremost—sunk, in short.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell—
 Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave—
 Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful yell, 140
 As eager to anticipate their grave;

And the sea yawn'd around her like a hell,
 And down she suck'd with her the whirling wave,
 Like one who grapples with his enemy,
 And strives to strangle him before he die.

And first one universal shriek there rush'd, 145
 Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash
 Of echoing thunder; and then all was hush'd,
 Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash
 Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,
 Accompanied with a convulsive splash, 150
 A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry
 Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

Juan's Escape

11. 108-16

THERE, breathless, with his digging nails he clung
 Fast to the sand, lest the returning wave,
 From whose reluctant roar his life he wrung,
 Should suck him back to her insatiate grave:
 And there he lay, full length, where he was flung, 5
 Before the entrance of a cliff-worn cave,
 With just enough of life to feel its pain,
 And deem that it was saved, perhaps in vain.

With slow and staggering effort he arose,
 But sunk again upon his bleeding knee 10
 And quivering hand; and then he look'd for those
 Who long had been his mates upon the sea;
 But none of them appeared to share his woes,
 Save one, a corpse, from out the famish'd three,
 Who died two days before, and now had found 15
 An unknown barren beach for burial-ground.

And as he gazed, his dizzy brain spun fast,
 And down he sunk; and as he sunk, the sand
 Swam round and round, and all his senses pass'd:
 He fell upon his side, and his stretch'd hand 20
 Droop'd dripping on the oar (their jury-mast),
 And, like a wither'd lily, on the land
 His slender frame and pallid aspect lay,
 As fair a thing as e'er was form'd of clay.

How long in his damp trance young Juan lay 25
 He knew not, for the earth was gone for him,
 And time had nothing more of night nor day
 For his congealing blood, and senses dim;
 And how this heavy faintness pass'd away
 He knew not, till each painful pulse and limb, 30
 And tingling vein, seem'd throbbing back to life,
 For Death, though vanquish'd, still retired with strife.

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,
 For all was doubt and dizziness; he thought
 He still was in the boat, and had but dozed, 35
 And felt again with his despair o'erwrought,
 And wish'd it death in which he had reposed,
 And then once more his feelings back were brought,
 And slowly by his swimming eyes was seen
 A lovely female face of seventeen. 40

'T was bending close o'er his, and the small mouth
 Seem'd almost, prying into his for breath;
 And chafing him, the soft warm hand of youth
 Recall'd his answering spirits back from death;
 And, bathing his chill temples, tried to soothe 45
 Each pulse to animation, till beneath
 Its gentle touch and trembling care, a sigh
 To these kind efforts made a low reply.

Then was the cordial pour'd, and mantle flung
 Around his scarce-clad limbs; and the fair arm 50
 Raised higher the faint head which o'er it hung;
 And her transparent cheek, all pure and warm,
 Pillow'd his death-like forehead; then she wrung
 His dewy curls, long drench'd by every storm;
 And watch'd with eagerness each throb that drew 55
 A sigh from his heaved bosom—and hers, too.

And lifting him with care into the cave,
 The gentle girl, and her attendant,—one
 Young, yet her elder, and of brow less grave,
 And more robust of figure—then begun 60
 To kindle fire, and as the new flames gave
 Light to the rocks that roof'd them, which the sun
 Had never seen, the maid, or whatsoever
 She was, appear'd distinct, and tall, and fair.

Her brow was overhung with coins of gold, 65
 That sparkled o'er the auburn of her hair,
 Her clustering hair, whose longer locks were roll'd
 In braids behind; and though her stature were
 Even of the highest for a female mould,
 They nearly reach'd her heel; and in her air 70
 There was a something which bespoke command,
 As one who was a lady in the land.

English Poets

Canto III. 91-4, 98-100

MILTON 'S the prince of poets—so we say;
 A little heavy, but no less divine:
 An independent being in his day—
 Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and wine;

But his life falling into Johnson's way, 5

We 're told this great high priest of all the Nine
Was whipt at college—a harsh sire—odd spouse,
For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

All these are, *certes*, entertaining facts,

Like Shakspeare's stealing deer, Lord Bacon's bribes; 10
Like Titus' youth, and Caesar's earliest acts;

Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well describes);
Like Cromwell's pranks;—but although truth exacts

These amiable descriptions from the scribes,
As most essential to their hero's story, 15
They do not much contribute to his glory.

All are not moralists, like Southey, when

He prated to the world of 'Pantisocracy';
Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who then
Season'd his pedlar poems with democracy; 20
Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen

Let to the Morning Post its aristocracy;
When he and Southey, following the same path,
Espoused two partners (milliners of Bath).

Such names at present cut a convict figure, 25

The very Botany Bay in moral geography;
Their loyal treason, renegado rigour,
Are good manure for their more bare biography;
Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is bigger

Than any since the birthday of typography; 30
A drowsy frowsy poem, call'd the 'Excursion,'
Writ in a manner which is my aversion. . . .

We learn from Horace, 'Homer sometimes sleeps';

We feel without him, Wordsworth sometimes wakes,—
To show with what complacency he creeps, 35
With his dear ! *Waggoners*, ' around his lakes.

go

He wishes for 'a boat' to sail the deeps—

Of ocean?—No, of air; and then he makes
Another outcry for 'a little boat.'

And drivels seas to set it well afloat. 40

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,

And Pegasus runs restive in his 'Waggon.'

Could he not beg the loan of Charles's Wain?

Or pray Medea for a single dragon?

Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain, 45

He fear'd his neck to venture such a nag on,

And he must needs mount nearer to the moon,

Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

'Pedlars.' and 'Boats.' and 'Waggons!' Oh! ye shades

Of Pope and Dry den, are we come to this? 50

That trash of such sort not alone evades

Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss

Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack Cades

Of sense and song above your graves may hiss—

The 'little boatman' and his 'Peter Bell' 55

Can sneer at him who drew 'Achitophel!'

Ave Maria

iii. 102-9

A V E Maria! blessed be the hour!

The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power

Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,

While swung the deep bell in the distant tower, 5

Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,

And not a breath crept through the rosy air,

And yet the forest leaves seem'd stirr'd with prayer.

Ave Maria! 't is the hour of prayer!
 Ave Maria! 't is the hour of love! 10
 Ave Maria! may our spirits dare
 Look up to thine and to thy Son's above!
 Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!
 Those downcast eyes beneath the Almighty dove—
 What though 't is but a pictured image strike?— 15
 That painting is no idol, 't is too like.

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,
 In nameless print—that I have no devotion ;
 But set those persons down with me to pray,
 And you shall see who has the properest notion 20
 Of getting into heaven the shortest way ;
 My altars are the mountains and the ocean,
 Earth, air, stars,—all that springs from the great Whole,
 Who hath produced, and will receive the soul.

Sweet hour of twilight!—in the solitude 25
 Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
 Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
 Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,
 To where the last Caesarean fortress stood,
 Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore 30
 And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,
 How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
 Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
 Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine, 35
 And vesper bell's that rose the boughs along;
 The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
 His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng
 Which learn'd from this example not to fly
 From a true lover,—shadow'd my mind's eye. 40

Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good things—
 Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,
 To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,
 The welcome stall to the o'erlabour'd steer;
 What e'er of peace about our hearthstone clings, 45
 Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,
 Are gather'd round us by thy look of rest;
 Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast.

Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts the heart
 Of those who sail the seas, on the first day 50
 When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;
 Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way
 As far the bell of vesper makes him start,
 Seeming to weep the dying day's decay ;
 Is this a fancy which our reason scorns ? 55
 Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns!

When Nero perish'd by the just est doom
 Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,
 Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
 Of nations freed, and the world overjoy'd, 60
 Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb:
 Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void
 Of feeling for some kindness done, when power
 Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

Fame

Canto iv. 100-7

OF poets who come down to us through distance
 Of time and tongues, the foster-babes of Fame,
 Life seems the smallest portion of existence;
 Where twenty ages gather o'er a name,

'T is as a snow-ball which derives assistance 5
 From every flake, and yet rolls on the same,
 Even till an iceberg it may chance to grow ;
 But, after all, 't is nothing but cold snow.

And so great names are nothing more than nominal,
 And love of glory's but an airy lust, 10
 Too often in its fury overcoming all

Who would as 't were identify their dust
 From out the wide destruction, which, entombing all,
 Leaves nothing till 'the coming of the just'—
 Save change: I've stood upon Achilles' tomb, 15
 And heard Troy doubted; time will doubt of Rome.

The very generations of the dead
 Are swept away, and tomb inherits tomb,
 Until the memory of an age is fled,
 And, buried, sinks beneath its offspring's doom: 20
 Where are the epitaphs our fathers read ?

Save a few glean'd from the sepulchral gloom
 Which once-named myriads nameless lie beneath,
 And lose their own in universal death.

I canter by the spot each afternoon 25

Where perish'd in his fame the hero-boy,
 Who lived too long for men, but died too soon
 For human vanity, the young De Foix!
 A broken pillar, not uncouthly hewn,

But which neglect is hastening to destroy, 30
 Records Ravenna's carnage on its face,
 While weeds and ordure rankle round the base.

I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid:
 A little cupola, more neat than solemn,
 Protects his dust, but reverence here is paid 35
 To the bard's tomb, and not the warrior's column:

The time must come, when both alike decay'd,
 The chieftain's trophy, and the poet's volume,
 Will sink where lie the songs and wars of earth,
 Before Pelides' death, or Homer's birth. 40

With human blood that column was cemented,
 With human filth that column is defiled,
 As if the peasant's coarse contempt were vented
 To show his loathing of the spot he soil'd:
 Thus is the trophy used, and thus lamented 45
 Should ever be those blood-hounds, from whose wild
 Instinct of gore and glory earth has known
 Those sufferings Dante saw in hell alone.

Yet there will still be bards: though fame is smoke,
 Its fumes are frankincense to human thought; 50
 And the unquiet feelings, which first woke
 Song in the world, will seek what then they sought:
 As on the beach the waves at last are broke,
 Thus to their extreme verge the passions brought
 Dash into poetry, which is but passion, 55
 Or at least was so ere it grew a fashion.

If in the course of such a life as was
 At once adventurous and contemplative,
 Men who partake all passions as they pass
 Acquire the deep and bitter power to give 60
 Their images again as in a glass,
 And in such colours that they seem to live;
 You may do right forbidding them to show 'em,
 But spoil (I think) a very pretty poem.

Wellington

Canto ix. I, . . . 3-5, . . . 9

OH, Wellington! (or 'Villainton')—for Fame

Sounds the heroic syllables both ways;

France could not even conquer your great name,

But punn'd it down to this facetious phrase—

(Beating or beaten she will laugh the same,) 5

You have obtain'd great pensions and much praise:

Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,

Humanity would rise, and thunder 'Nay!' . . .

Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so much

Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly more: 10

You have repaired Legitimacy's crutch,

A prop not quite so certain as before;

The Spanish, and the French, as well as Dutch,

Have seen, and felt, how strongly you *restore*;

And Waterloo has made the world your debtor 15

(I wish your bards would sing it rather better).

You are 'the best of cut-throats:'—do not start;

The phrase is Shakspeare's, and not misapplied:—

War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art,

Unless her cause by right be sanctified. 20

If you have acted *once* a generous part,

The world, not the world's masters, will decide,

And I shall be delighted to learn who,

Save you and yours, have gain'd by Waterloo ?

I am no flatterer—you've supp'd full of flattery: 25

They say you like it too—'tis no great wonder.

He whose whole life has been assault and battery.

At last may get a little tired of thunder;

And swallowing eulogy much more than satire, he
 May like being praised for every lucky blunder, 30
 Call'd 'Saviour of the Nations'—not yet saved,
 And 'Europe's Liberator'—still enslaved. . . .

Never had mortal man such opportunity,
 Except Napoleon, or abused it more:
 You might have freed fallen Europe from the unity 35
 Of tyrants, and been blest from shore to shore:
 And *now*—what *is* your fame? Shall the muse tune it ye?
Now—that the rabble's first vain shouts are o'er ?
 Go! hear it in your famish'd country's cries!
 Behold the world! and curse your victories! 40

Auld Lang Syne

Canto x. 16-9

AND all our little feuds, at least all *mine*,
 Dear Jeffrey, once my most redoubted foe
 (As far as rhyme and criticism combine
 To make such puppets of us things below),
 Are over: Here's a health to 'Auld Lang Syne!' 5

I do not know you, and may never know
 Your face—but you have acted on the whole
 Most nobly, and I own it from my soul.

And when I use the phrase of 'Auld Lang Syne!'
 'Tis not address'd to you—the more 's the pity 10
 For me, for I would rather take my wine

With you, than aught (save Scott) in your proud city.
 But somehow—it may seem a schoolboy's whine,

And yet I seek not to be grand nor witty,
 But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred 15
 A whole one, and my heart flies to my head,—

As 'Auld Lang Syne' brings Scotland, one and all,
 Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue hills, and clear
 streams,
 The Dee, the Don, Balgounie's brig's *black wall*,
 All my boy feelings, all my gentler dreams 20
 Of what I *then dreamt*, clothed in their own pall,
 Like Banquo's offspring:—floating past me seems
 My childhood in this childishness of mine:
 I care not—'tis a glimpse of 'Auld Lang Syne.'

And though, as you remember, in a fit 25
 Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly,
 I rail'd at Scots to show my wrath and wit,
 Which must be own'd was sensitive and surly,
 Yet 't is in vain such sallise to permit,
 They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early: 30
 I '*scotch'd* not kill'd' the Scotchman in my blood,
 And love the land of 'mountain and of flood.'

London

Canto x. 82

A MIGHTY mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,
 Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye
 Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping
 In sight, then lost amidst the forestry
 Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping
 On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy;
 A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown
 On a fool's head—and there is London Town.

Contemporary Poets

Canto xi. 55-63

IN twice five years the 'greatest living poet,'
 Like to the champion in the fisty ring,
 Is call'd on to support his claim, or show it,
 Although 't is an imaginary thing.
 Even I—albeit I 'm sure I did not know it, 5
 Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king,—
 Was reckon'd, a considerable time,
 The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero
 My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean seems Cain: 10
 'La Belle Alliance' of dunces down at zero,
 Now that the Lion 's fall'n, may rise again:
 But I will fall at least as fell my hero;
 Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign;
 Or to some lonely isle of gaolers go, 15
 With turncoat Southey for my turnkey Lowe.

Sir Walter reign'd before me; Moore and Campbell
 Before and after: but now grown more holy,
 The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble
 With poets almost clergymen, or wholly: 20
 And Pegasus has a psalmodic amble
 Beneath the very Reverend Rowley Powley,
 Who shoes the glorious animal with stilts,
 A modern Ancient Pistol—by the hilts!

Still he excels that artificial hard 25
 Labourer in the same vineyard, though the vine
 Yields him but vinegar for his reward,—
 That neutralised dull Dorus of the Nine;

That swarthy Sporus, neither man nor bard;
 That ox of verse, who *ploughs* for every line:— 30
 Cambyzes' roaring Romans beat at least
 The howling Hebrews of Cybele's priest.

Then there 's my gentle Euphues; who, they say,
 Sets up for being a sort of *moral me*;
 He'll find it rather difficult some day 35
 To turn out both, or either, it may be.
 Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway;
 And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;
 And that deep-mouth'd Boeotian 'Savage Lander'
 Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander. 40

John Keats, who was kill'd off by one critique,
 Just as he really promised something great,
 If not intelligible, without Greek
 Contrived to talk about the Gods of late,
 Much as they might have been supposed to speak. 45
 Poor fellow! His was an untoward fate;
 'T is strange the mind, that fiery particle,
 Should let itself be snuff'd out by an article.

The list grows long of live and dead pretenders
 To that which none will gain—or none will know 50
 The conqueror at least; who, ere Time renders
 His last award, will have the long grass grow
 Above his burnt-out brain, and sapless cinders.
 If I might augur, I should rate but low
 Their chances;—they 're too numerous, like the thirty 55
 Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd but dirty.

This is the literary *lower* empire,
 Where the praetorian bands take up the matter;—
 A 'dreadful trade.' like his who 'gathers samphire,'
 The insolent soldiery to soothe and flatter, 60

With the same feelings as you 'd coax a vampire.

Now, were I once at home, and in good satire,
I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries,
And show them *what* an intellectual war is.

I think I know a trick or two, would turn 65

Their flanks;—but it is hardly worth my while
With such small gear to give myself concern:

Indeed I 've not the necessary bile;
My natural temper's really aught but stern,
And even my Muse's worst reproof's a smile; 70
And then she drops a brief and modern curtsy,
And glides away, assured she never hurts ye.

Norman Abbey

Canto XIII. 55-72

To Norman Abbey whirl'd the noble pair,—

An old, old monastery once, and now

Still older mansion, of a rich and rare

Mix'd Gothic, such as artists all allow

Few specimens yet left us can compare 5

Withal: it lies perhaps a little low,

Because the monks preferr'd a hill behind,

To shelter their devotion from the wind.

It stood embosom'd in a happy valley,

Crown'd by high woodlands, where the Druid oak 10

Stood like Caractacus in act to rally

His host, with broad arms 'gainst the thunder-stroke;

And from beneath his boughs were seen to sally

The dappled foresters; as day awoke,

The branching stag swept down with all his herd, 15

To quaff a brook which murmur'd like a bird.

Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,
 Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
 By a river, which its soften'd way did take
 In currents through the calmer water spread 20
 Around: the wildfowl nestled in the brake
 And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed:
 The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood
 With their green faces fix'd upon the flood.

Its outlet dash'd into a deep cascade, 25
 Sparkling with foam, until, again subsiding,
 Its shriller echoes—like an infant made
 Quiet—sank into softer ripples, gliding
 Into a rivulet: and thus allay'd,
 Pursued its course, now gleaming, and now hiding 30
 Its windings through the woods; now clear, now blue,
 According as the skies their shadows threw.

A glorious remnant of the Gothic pile
 (While yet the church was Rome's) stood half apart
 In a grand arch, which once screen'd many an aisle. 35
 These last had disappear'd—a loss to art:
 The first yet frown'd superbly o'er the soil,
 And kindled feelings in the roughest heart,
 Which mourn'd the power of time's or tempest's march,
 In gazing on that venerable arch. 40

Within a niche, nigh to its pinnacle,
 Twelve saints had once stood sanctified in stone;
 But these had fallen, not when the friars fell,
 But in the war which struck Charles from his throne,
 When each house was a fortalice—as tell 45
 The annals of full many a line undone,—
 The gallant Cavaliers, who fought in vain
 For those who knew not to resign or reign.

But in a higher niche, alone, but crown'd,
The Virgin-Mother of the God-born Child, 50
With her Son in her blessed arms, look'd round,
Spared by some chance when all beside was spoil'd;
She made the earth below seem holy ground.
This may be superstition, weak or wild,
But even the faintest relics of a shrine 55
Of any worship wake some thoughts divine.

A mighty window, hollow in the centre,
 Shorn of its glass of thousand colourings,
 Through which the deepen'd glories once could enter,
 Streaming from off the sun like seraph's wings, 60
 Now yawns all desolate: now loud, now fainter,
 The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft sings
 The owl his anthem, where the silenced quire
 Lie with their hallelujahs quench'd like fire.

But in noontide of the moon, and when 65
The wind is winged from one point of heaven,
There moans a strange unearthly sound, which then
Is musical—a dying accent driven
Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again.
Some deem it but the distant echo given 70
Back to the night wind by the waterfall,
And harmonized by the old choral wall:

Others, that some original shape, or form
 Shaped by decay perchance, hath given the power
 (Though less than that of Memnon's statue, warm 75
 In Egypt's rays, to harp at a fix'd hour)
 To this grey ruin, with a voice to charm.
 Sad, but serene, it sweeps o'er tree or tower;
 The cause I know not, nor can solve; but such
 The fact:—I've heard it,—once perhaps too much. 80

Amidst the court a Gothic fountain play'd,
 Symmetrical, but deck'd with carvings quaint—
 Strange faces, like to men in masquerade,
 And here perhaps a monster, there a saint:
 The spring gush'd through grim mouths of granite made, 85
 And sparkled into basins, where it spent
 Its little torrent in a thousand bubbles,
 Like man's vain glory, and his vainer troubles.

The mansion's self was vast and venerable,
 With more of the monastic than has been 90
 Elsewhere preserved: the cloisters still were stable,
 The cells too and refectory, I ween:
 An exquisite small chapel had been able,
 Still unimpair'd, to decorate the scene;
 The rest had been reform'd, replaced, or sunk, 95
 And spoke more of the baron than the monk.

Huge halls, long galleries, spacious chambers, join'd
 By no quite lawful marriage of the arts,
 Might shock a connoisseur; but when combined,
 Form'd a whole which, irregular in parts, 100
 Yet left a grand impression on the mind,
 At least of those whose eyes are in their hearts:
 We gaze upon a giant for his stature,
 Nor judge at first if all be true to nature.

Steel barons, molten the next generation 105
 To silken rows of gay and garter'd earls,
 Glanced from the walls in goodly preservation:
 And Lady Marys blooming into girls,
 With fair long locks, had also kept their station:
 And countesses mature in robes and pearls: 110
 Also some beauties of Sir Peter Lely,
 Whose drapery hints we may admire them freely.

Judges in very formidable ermine
 Were there, with brows that did not much invite
 The accused to think their lordships would determine 115
 His cause by leaning much from might to right:
 Bishops, who had not left a single sermon;
 Attorneys-general, awful to the sight,
 As hinting more (unless our judgments warp us)
 Of the 'Star Chamber' than of 'Habeas Corpus,' 120
 Generals, some all in armour, of the old
 And iron time, ere lead had ta'en the lead;
 Others in wigs of Marlborough's martial fold,
 Huger than twelve of our degenerate breed:
 Lordlings, with staves of white or keys of gold: 125
 Nimrods, whose canvas scarce contain'd the steed;
 And here and there some stern high patriot stood,
 Who could not *get* the place for which he sued.
 But ever and anon, to soothe your vision,
 Fatigued with these hereditary glories, 130
 There rose a Carlo Dolce or a Titian,
 Or wilder group of savage Salvatore's:
 Here danced Albano's boys, and here the sea shone
 In Vernet's ocean lights; and there the stories
 Of martyrs awed, as Spagnoletto tainted 135
 His brush with all the blood of all the sainted.
 Here sweetly spread a landscape of Lorraine;
 There Rembrandt made his darkness equal light,
 Or gloomy Caravaggio's gloomier stain
 Bronzed o'er some lean and stoic anchorite:— 140
 But lo! a Teniers woos, and not in vain,
 Your eyes to revel in a livelier sight:
 His bell-mouth'd goblet makes me feel quite Danish
 Or Dutch with thirst—What ho! a flask of Rhenish.

A House-party

Canto xiii, 101-11

THE gentlemen got up betimes to shoot,
 Or hunt: the young, because they liked the sport—
 The first thing boys like after play and fruit;
 The middle-aged, to make the day more short;
 For *ennui* is a growth of English root, 5
 Though nameless in our language:—we retort
 The fact for words, and let the French translate
 That awful yawn which sleep cannot abate.

The elderly walk'd through the library,
 And tumbled books, or criticised the pictures, 10
 Or saunter'd through the gardens piteously,
 And made upon the hot-house several strictures,
 Or rode a nag which trotted not too high,
 Or on the morning papers read their lectures,
 Or on the watch their longing eyes would fix, 15
 Longing at sixty for the hour of six.

But none were 'gêné:' the great hour of union
 Was rung by dinner's knell; till then all were
 Masters of their own time—or in communion,
 Or solitary, as they chose to bear 20
 The hours, which how to pass is but to few known.
 Each rose up at his own, and had to spare
 What time he chose for dress, and broke his fast
 When, where, and how he chose for that repast.

The ladies—some rouged, some a little pale— 25
 Met the morn as they might. If fine, they rode,
 Or walk'd; if foul, they read, or told a tale,
 Sung, or rehearsed the last dance from abroad;

Discuss'd the fashion which might next prevail,
 And settled bonnets by the newest code, 30
 Or cramm'd twelve sheets into one little letter,
 To make each correspondent a new debtor.

For some had absent lovers, all had friends.
 The earth has nothing like a she epistle,
 And hardly heaven—because it never ends. 35
 I love the mystery of a female missal,
 Which, like a creed, ne'er says all it intends,
 But full of cunning as Ulysses' whistle,
 When he allured poor Dolon:—you had better
 Take care what you reply to such a letter. 40

Then there were "billiards; cards, too, but *no* dice;—
 Save in the clubs no man of honour plays;—
 Boats when 't was water, skating when 't was ice,
 And the hard frost des troy'd the scenting days:
 And angling, too, that solitary vice, 45
 Whatever Izaak Walton sings or says:
 The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet
 Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it.

With evening came the banquet and the wine;
 The conversazione; the duet, 50
 Attuned by voices more or less divine
 (My heart or head aches with the memory yet).
 The four Miss Rawbolds in a glee would shine;
 But the two youngest loved more to be set
 Down to the harp—because to music's charms 55
 They added graceful necks, white hands and arms.

Sometimes a dance (though rarely on field days,
 For then the gentlemen were rather tired)
 Display'd some sylph-like figures in its maze;
 Then there was small-talk ready when required; 60

Flirtation—but decorous; the mere praise
 Of charms that should or should not be admired.
 The hunters fought their fox-hunt o'er again,
 And then retreated soberly—at ten.

The politicians, in a nook apart, 65
 Discuss'd the world, and settled all the spheres;
 The wits watch'd every loophole for their art,
 To introduce a bon-mot head and ears;
 Small is the rest of those who would be smart,
 A moment's good thing may have cost them years 70
 Before they find an hour to introduce it;
 And then, even *then*, some bore may make them lose it.

But all was gentle and aristocratic
 In this our party; polish'd, smooth, and cold,
 As Phidian forms cut out of marble Attic. 75
 There now are no Squire Westerns as of old;
 And our Sophias are not so emphatic,
 But fair as then, or fairer to behold.
 We have no accomplish'd blackguards, like Tom Jones,
 But gentlemen in stays, as stiff as stones. 80

They separated at an early hour;
 That is, ere midnight—which is London's noon;
 But in the country ladies seek their bower
 A little earlier than the waning moon.
 Peace to the slumbers of each folded flower— 85
 May the rose call back its true colour soon!
 Good hours of fair cheeks are the fairest tinters,
 And lower the price of rouge—at least some winters.

Life

Canto xv. 99

BETWEEN two worlds life hovers like a star,

Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge.
How little do we know that which we are!

How less what we may be! The eternal surge
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar 5

Our bubbles; as the old burst, new emerge,
Lash'd from the foam of ages; while the graves
Of Empires heave but like some passing waves.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT

1

SAINT Peter sat by the celestial gate:

His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era 'eighty-eight' 5

The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,
And 'a pull altogether.' as they say
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

11

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do, 10
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,

Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail, 15
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

III

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,
 Finding their charges past all care below;
 Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky
 Save the recording angel's black bureau; 20
 Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
 With such rapidity of vice and woe,
 That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,
 And yet was in arrear of human ills.

IV

His business so augmented of late years, 25
 That he was forced, against his will no doubt,
 (Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,)
 For some resource to turn himself about,
 And claim the help of his celestial peers,
 To aid him ere he should be quite worn out 30
 By the increased demand for his remarks:
 Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

V

This was a handsome board—at least for heaven ;
 And yet they had even then enough to do,
 So many conquerors' cars were daily driven, 35
 So many kingdoms fitted up anew;
 Each day too slew its thousands six or seven,
 Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,
 They threw their pens down in divine disgust—
 The page was so besmear'd with blood and dust. 40

VI

This by the way; 't is not mine to record
 What angels shrink from: even the very devil
 On this occasion his own work abhorr'd,
 So surfeited with the infernal revel:

no

Though he himself had sharpened every sword, 45

It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—
Tis, that he has both generals in reversion.)

VII

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont, 50
And heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease,
With nothing but new names subscribed upon't;
'T will one day finish: meantime they increase,
'With seven heads and ten horns,' and all in front,
Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born 55
Less formidable in the head than horn.

VIII

In the first year of freedom's second dawn
Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn
Left him nor mental nor external sun: 60
A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,
A worse king never left a realm undone!
He died—but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad—and t' other no less blind.

IX

He died!—his death made no great stir on earth; 65
His burial made some pomp; there was profusion
Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth
Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion.
For these things may be bought at their true worth;
Of elegy there was the due infusion— 70
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,
Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

III

X

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all
 The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,
 Who cared about the corpse? The funeral 75
 Made the attraction, and the black the woe.
 There throb'd not there a thought which pierced the pall;
 And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,
 It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold
 The rottenness of eighty years in gold. 80

XI

So mix his body with the dust! It might
 Return to what it *must* far sooner, were
 The natural compound left alone to fight
 Its way back into earth, and fire, and air;
 But the unnatural balsams merely blight 85
 What nature made him at his birth, as bare
 As the mere million's base unummied clay—
 Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

XII

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done;
 He's buried; save the undertaker's bill, 90
 Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone
 For him, unless he left a German will:
 But where's the proctor who will ask his son?
 In whom his qualities are reigning still,
 Except that household virtue, most uncommon, 95
 Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

XIII

'God save the King!' It is a large economy
 In God to save the like; but if he will
 Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
 Of those who think damnation better still: 100

I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
 In this small hope of bettering future ill
 By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,
 The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

XIV

I know this is unpopular; I know 103
 T is blasphemous; I know one may be damn'd
 For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
 I know my catechism; I know we are cramm'd
 With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
 I know that all save England's church have shamm'd, no
 And that the other twice two hundred churches
 And synagogues have made a *datnrid* bad purchase.

XV

God help us all! God help me too! I am,
 God knows, as helpless as the devil can wish,
 And not a whit more difficult to damn, 115
 Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd fish,
 Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;
 Not that I 'm fit for such a noble dish,
 As one day will be that immortal fry
 Of almost everybody born to die. 120

XVI

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
 And nodd'd o'er his keys; when, lo! there came
 A wondrous noise he had not heard of late—
 A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame;
 In short, a roar of things extremely great, 125
 Which would have made aught save a saint exclaim;
 But he, with first a start and then a wink,
 Said, 'There's another star gone out, I think!'

XVII

But ere he could return to his repose,
 A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er his eyes— 130
 At which St. Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd his nose:
 'Saint porter.' said the angel, 'prithee rise!'
 Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd, as glows
 An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes:
 To which the saint replied, 'Well, what's the matter? 135
 'Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?'

XVIII

'No,' quoth the cherub; 'George the Third is dead.'
 'And who is George the Third?' replied the apostle:
 '*What George? what Third?* ' 'The king of England.' said
 The angel. 'Well! he won't find kings to jostle 140
 Him on his way; but does he wear his head?
 Because the last we saw here had a tussle,
 And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,
 Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

XIX

'He was, if I remember, king of France; 145
 That head of his, which could not keep a crown
 On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
 A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:
 If I had had my sword, as I had once
 When I cut ears off, I had cut him down; 150
 But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
 I only knock'd his head from out his hand.

XX

'And then he set up such a headless howl,
 That all the saints came out and took him in;
 And there he sits by St. Paul, cheek by jowl; 155
 That fellow Paul—the parvenu! The skin

Of St. Bartholomew, which makes his cowl
 In heaven, and upon earth redeem'd his sin,
 So as to make a martyr, never sped
 Better than did this weak and wooden head. 160

XXI

'But had it come up here upon its shoulders,
 There would have been a different tale to tell:
 The fellow-feeling in the saints beholders
 Seems to have acted on them like a spell,
 And so this very foolish head heaven solders 165
 Back on its trunk: it may be very well,
 And seems the custom here to overthrow
 Whatever has been wisely done below.'

XXII

The angel answer'd, 'Peter! do not pout:
 The king who comes has head and all entire, 170
 And never knew much what it was about—
 He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,
 And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:
 My business and your own is not to inquire
 Into such matters, but to mind our cue— 175
 Which is to act as we are bid to do.'

XXIII

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,
 Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
 Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan
 Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or Inde, 180
 Or Thames, or Tweed), and 'midst them an old man
 With an old soul, and both extremely blind,
 Halted before the gate, and in his shroud
 Seated their fellow-traveller on a cloud.

XXIV

But bringing up the rear of this bright host 185
 A Spirit of a different aspect waved
 His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast
 Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved;
 His brow was like the deep when tempest-tost;
 Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved 190
 Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
 And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

XXV

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
 Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or Sin,
 With such a glance of supernatural hate, 195
 As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
 He potter'd with his keys at a great rate,
 And sweated through his apostolic skin:
 Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
 Or some such other spiritual liquor. 200

XXVI

The very cherubs huddled all together,
 Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt
 A tingling to the tip of every feather,
 And form'd a circle like Orion's belt
 Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither 205
 His guards had led him, though they gently dealt
 With royal *manes* (for by many stories,
 And true, we learn the angels all are Tories).

XXVII

As things were in this posture, the gate flew
 Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges 210
 Flung over space an universal hue
 Of many-colour'd flame, until its tinges

Reach'd even our speck of earth, and made a new
 Aurora borealis spread its fringes
 O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound, 215
 By Captain Parry's crew, in 'Melville's Sound.'

XXVIII

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming
 A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,
 Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
 Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight: 220
 My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
 With earthly likenesses, for here the night
 Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
 Johanna Southcote, or Bob Southey raving.

XXIX

'T was the archangel Michael; all men know 225
 The make of angels and archangels, since
 There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
 From the fiends' leader to the angels' prince.
 There also are some altar-pieces, though
 I really can't say that they much evince 230
 One's inner notions of immortal spirits;
 But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

XXX

Michael flew forth in glory and in good ;
 A goodly work of him from whom all glory
 And good arise; the portal past—he stood; 235
 Before him the young cherubs and saints hoary—
 (I say *young*, begging to be understood
 By looks, not years; and should be very sorry
 To state, they were not older than St. Peter,
 But merely that they seem'd a little sweeter). 240

XXXI

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down before
 That arch-angelic hierarchy, the first
 Of essences angelical, who wore
 The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nurst
 Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core 245
 No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst
 Intrude, however glorified and high;
 He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

XXXII

He and the sombre, silent Spirit met—
 They knew each other both for good and ill; 250
 Such was their power, that neither could forget
 His former friend and future foe; but still
 There was a high, immortal, proud regret
 In either's eye, as if 't were less their will
 Than destiny to make the eternal years 255
 Their date of war, and their 'champ clos' the spheres.

XXXIII

But here they were in neutral space: we know
 From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay
 A heavenly visit thrice a year or so;
 And that 'the Sons of God.' like those of clay, 260
 Must keep him company; and we might show
 From the same book, in how polite a way
 The dialogue is held between the Powers
 Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

XXXIV

And this is not a theologic tract, 265
 To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic
 If Job be allegory or a fact,
 But a true narrative; and thus I pick

From out the whole but such and such an act
 As sets aside the slightest thought of trick. 270
 'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
 And accurate as any other vision.

XXXV

The spirits were in neutral space, before
 The gate of heaven; like eastern thresholds is
 The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er, 275
 And souls despatched to that world or to this;
 And therefore Michael and the other wore
 A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
 Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
 There pass'd a mutual glance of great politeness. 280

xxxvi

The Archangel bow'd, not like a modern beau,
 But with a graceful Oriental bend,
 Pressing one radiant arm just where below
 The heart in good men is supposed to tend;
 He turn'd as to an equal, not too low, 285
 But kindly; Satan met his ancient friend
 With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
 Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

XXXVII

He merely bent his diabolic brow
 An instant; and then raising it, he stood 290
 In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
 Cause why King George by no means could or should
 Make out a case to be exempt from woe
 Eternal, more than other kings endued
 With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions, 295
 Who long have 'paved hell with their good intentions.'

XXXVIII

Michael began: 'What wouldst thou with this man,
 Now dead, and brought before the Lord? What ill
 Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,
 That thou canst claim him? Speak! and do thy will, 300
 If it be just: if in this earthly span
 He hath been greatly failing to fulfil
 His duties as a king and mortal, say,
 And he is thine; if not, let him have way.'

XXXIX

'Michael!' replied the Prince of Air, 'even here, 305
 Before the gate of him thou servest, must
 I claim my subject; and will make appear
 That as he was my worshipper in dust,
 So shall he be in spirit, although dear
 To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust 310
 Were of his weaknesses; yet on the throne
 He reign'd o'er millions to serve me alone.

XL

'Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine*; it was,
Once, more thy master's: but I triumph not
 In this poor planet's conquest; nor, alas! 315
 Need he thou servest envy me my lot:
 With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass
 In worship round him, he may have forgot
 Yon weak creation of such paltry things:
 I think few worth damnation save their kings,— 320

XLI

'And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
 Assert my right as lord: and even had
 I such an inclination, 'twere (as you
 Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,

That hell has nothing better left to do 325
 Than leave them to themselves: so much more mad
 And evil by their own internal curse,
 Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

XLII

'Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
 When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor worm 33°
 Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,
 The world and he both wore a different form,
 And much of earth and all the watery plain
 Of ocean call'd him king: through many a storm
 His isles had floated on the abyss of time; 335
 For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

XLIII

'He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it old:
 Look to the state in which he found his realm,
 And left it; and his annals too behold,
 How to a minion first he gave the helm; 340
 How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
 The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
 The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance
 Thine eye along America and France.

XLIV

'T is true, he was a tool from first to last 345
 (I have the workmen safe); but as a tool
 So let him be consumed. From out the past
 Of ages, since mankind have known the rule
 Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amass'd
 Of sin and slaughter—from the Caesar's school, 350
 Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
 More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd with the slain.

XLV

'He ever warr'd with freedom and the free:
 Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
 So that they utter'd the word " Liberty !" 355
 Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose
 History was ever stain'd as his will be
 With national and individual woes ?
 I grant his household abstinence; I grant
 His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want; 360

XLVI

' I know he was a constant consort; own
 He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
 All this is much, and most upon a throne;
 As temperance, if at Apicius' board,
 Is more than at an anchorite's supper shown. 365
 I grant him all the kindest can accord;
 And this was well for him, but not for those
 Millions who found him what oppression chose.

XLVII

' The New World shook him off; the Old yet groans
 Beneath what he and his prepared, if not 370
 Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones
 To all his vices, without what begot
 Compassion for him—his tame virtues; drones
 Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot
 A lesson which shall be re-taught them, wake 375
 Upon the thrones of earth; but let them quake!

XLVIII

' Five millions of the primitive, who hold
 The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored
 A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—
 Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord, 380

Michael, but **you**, and you, **Saint Peter I Cold**
 Must be your souls, if you have not abhorr'd
 The foe to Catholic participation
 In all the license of a Christian nation.

XLIX

'True! he allow'd them to pray God; but as 385
 A consequence of prayer, refused the law
 Which would have placed them upon the same base
 With those who did not hold the saints in awe.'
 But here Saint Peter started from his place,
 And cried, 'You may the prisoner withdraw: 390
 Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,
 While I am guard, may I be damn'd myself!

L

'Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange
 My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
 Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range 395
 The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!'
 'Saint!' replied Satan, 'you do well to avenge
 The wrongs he made your satellites endure;
 And if to this exchange you should be given,
 I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven!' 400

LI

Here Michael interposed: 'Good saint! and devil!
 Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.
 Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil!
 Satan! excuse this warmth of his expression,
 And condescension to the vulgar's level: 405
 Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.
 Have you got more to say?'—'No.'—'If you please,
 I'll trouble you to call your witnesses.'

LII

Then Satan turn'd and waved his swarthy hand,
 Which stirr'd with its electric qualities 410
 Clouds farther off than we can understand,
 Although we find him sometimes in our skies;
 Infernal thunder shook both sea and land
 In all the planets, and hell's batteries
 Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions 415
 As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

LUI

This was a signal unto such damn'd souls
 As have the privilege of their damnation
 Extended far beyond the mere controls
 Of worlds past, present, or to come; no station 420
 Is theirs particularly in the rolls
 Of hell assign'd; but where their inclination
 Or business carries them in search of game,
 They may range freely—being damn'd the same.

LIV

They are proud of this—as very well they may, 425
 It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
 Stuck in their loins; or like to an 'entré'
 Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.
 I borrow my comparisons from clay,
 Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be 430
 Offended with such base low likenesses;
 We know their posts are nobler far than these.

LV

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell—
 About ten million times the distance reckon'd
 From our sun to its earth, as we can tell 435
 How much time it takes up, even to a second,

For every ray that travels to dispel
 The fogs of London, through which, dimly beacon'd,
 The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year,
 If that the *summer* is not too severe:— 440

LVI

I say that I can tell—'t was half a minute;
 I know the solar beams take up more time
 Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;
 But then their telegraph is less sublime,
 And if they ran a race, they would not win it 445
 'Gainst Satan's couriers bound for their own clime.
 The sun takes up some years for every ray
 To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

LVII

Upon the verge of space, about the size
 Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd 450
 (I've seen a something like it in the skies
 In the Ægean, ere a squall); it near'd,
 And, growing bigger, took another guise;
 Like an ærial ship it tack'd, and steer'd,
 Or was steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar 455
 Of the last phrase, wliich makes the stanza stammer;—

LVIII

But take your choice): and then it grew a cloud;
 And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.
 But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a crowd
 Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these; 460
 They shadow'd with their myriads space; their loud
 And varied cries were like those of wild geese
 (If nations may be liken'd to a goose),
 And realised the phrase of 'hell broke loose.'

LIX

Here crashed a sturdy oath of stout John Bull, 465
 Who damn'd away his eyes as heretofore:
 There Paddy brogued 'By Jasus!'—'What's your wull?'
 The temperate Scot exclaim'd: the French ghost swore
 In certain terms I shan't translate in full,
 As the first coachman will; and 'midst the war 470
 The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
 'Our president is going to war, I guess.'

LX

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;
 In short, an universal shoal of shades,
 From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain, 475
 Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
 Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
 Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:
 All summon'd by this grand 'subpoena,' to
 Try if kings mayn't be damn'd like me or you. 480

LXI

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,
 As angels can; next, like Italian twilight,
 He turn'd all colours—as a peacock's tail,
 Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight
 In some old abbey, or a trout not stale, 485
 Or distant lightning on the horizon *by* night,
 Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
 Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

LXII

Then he address'd himself to Satan: 'Why—
 My good old friend, for such I deem you, though 490
 Our different parties make us fight so shy,
 I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;

Our difference is *political*, and I

Trust that, whatever may occur below,
You know my great respect for you; and this 495
Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

LXIII

'Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse
My call for witnesses? I did not mean
That you should half of earth and hell produce;
Tis even superfluous, since two honest, clean, 500
True testimonies are enough: we lose
Our time, nay, our eternity, between
The accusation and defence: if we
Hear both, 'twill stretch our immortality.'

LXIV

Satan replied, 'To me the matter is 505
Indifferent, in a personal point of view:
I can have fifty better souls than this
With far less trouble than we have gone through
Already; and I merely argued his
Late Majesty of Britain's case with you 510
Upon a point of form: you may dispose
Of him; I've kings enough below, God knows!'

LXV

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd 'multifaced'
By multo-scribbling Southey). 'Then we'll call
One or two persons of the myriads placed 515
Around our congress, and dispense with all
The rest.' quoth Michael: 'Who may be so graced
As to speak first? there's choice enough—who shall
It be? Then Satan answer'd, 'There are many;
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any.' 520

LXVI

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking sprite
 Upon the instant started from the throng,
 Dress'd in a fashion now forgotten quite;
 For all the fashions of the flesh stick long
 By people in the next world; where unite 525
 All the costumes since Adam's, right or wrong,
 From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,
 Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

LXVII

The spirit look'd around upon the crowds
 Assembled, and exclaim'd, 'My friends of all 530
 The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds;
 So let's to business: why this general call ?
 If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,
 And 't is for an election that they bawl,
 Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat! 535
 Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote ?'

LXVIII

'Sir,' replied Michael, 'you mistake; these things
 Are of a former life, and what we do
 Above is more august; to judge of kings
 Is the tribunal met: so now you know.' 540
 'Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,'
 Said Wilkes, 'are cherubs; and that soul below
 Looks much like George the Third, but to my mind
 A good deal older—Bless me! is he blind ?'

LXIX

'He is what you behold him, and his doom 545
 Depends upon his deeds.' the Angel said;
 'If you have aught to arraign in him, the tomb
 Gives license to the humblest beggar's head

To lift itself against the loftiest.'—'Some,'
 Said Wilkes, 'don't wait to see them laid in lead, 550
 For such a liberty—and I, for one,
 Have told them what I thought beneath the sun.'

LXX

'Above the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
 To urge against him,' said the Archangel. 'Why,'
 Replied the spirit, 'since old scores are past, 555
 Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
 Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,
 With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky
 I don't like ripping up old stories, since
 His conduct was but natural in a prince. 560

LXXI

'Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
 A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
 But then I blame the man himself much less
 Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be unwilling
 To see him punish'd here for their excess, 565
 Since they were both damn'd long ago, and still in
 Their place below: for me, I have forgiven,
 And vote his 'habeas corpus' into heaven.'

LXXII

'Wilkes,' said the Devil, 'I understand all this;
 You turn'd to half a courtier ere you died, 570
 And seem to think it would not be amiss
 To grow a whole one on the other side
 Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*
 Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,
 He won't be sovereign more: you've lost your labour, 575
 For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

LXXIII

' However, I knew what to think of it,
 When I beheld you in your jesting way
 Flitting and whispering round about the spit
 Where Belial, upon duty for the day, 580
 With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,
 His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
 That fellow even in hell breeds farther ills;
 I'll have him *gagg'd*—'twas one of his own bills.

LXXIV

' Call Junius!' From the crowd a shadow stalk'd, 585
 And at the name there was a general squeeze,
 So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd
 In comfort, at their own ærial ease,
 But were all ramm'd, and jamm'd (but to be balk'd,
 As we shall see), and jostled hands and knees, 590
 Like wind compress'd and pent within a bladder,
 Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

LXXV

The shadow came—a tall, thin, grey-hair'd figure,
 That look'd as it had been a shade on earth;
 Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour, 595
 But nought to mark its breeding or its birth;
 Now it wax'd little, then again grew bigger,
 With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth ;
 But as you gazed upon it features, they
 Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say. 600

LXXVI

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less
 Could they distinguish whose the features were;
 The Devil himself seem'd puzzled even to guess;
 They varied like a dream—now here, now there;

And several people swore from out the press, 605
 They knew him perfectly; and one could swear
 He was his father: upon which another
 Was sure he was his mother's cousin's brother:

LXXVII

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
 An orator, a lawyer, or a priest, 610
 A nabob, a man-midwife; but the wight
 Mysterious changed his countenance at least
 As oft as they their minds; though in full sight
 He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
 The man was a phantasmagoria in 615
 Himself—he was so volatile and thin.

LXXVIII

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,
 Presto! his face changed, and he was another;
 And when that change was hardly well put on,
 It varied, till I don't think his own mother 620
 (If that he had a mother) would her son
 Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other;
 Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
 At this epistolary 'Iron Mask.'

LXXIX

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem— 625
 'Three gentlemen at once' (as sagely says
 Good Mrs. Malaprop); then you might deem
 That he was not even *one*; now many rays
 Were flashing round him; and now a thick steam
 Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days: 630
 Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's fancies,
 And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

LXXX

I've an hypothesis—'t is quite my own;
 I never let it out till now, for fear
 Of doing people harm about the throne, 635
 And injuring some minister or peer
 On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown;
 It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear!
 T is, that what Junius we are wont to call
 Was *really, truly*, nobody at all. 640

LXXXI

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
 Written without hands, since we daily view
 Them written without heads; and books, we see,
 Are filTd as well without the latter too:
 And really till we fix on somebody 645
 For certain sure to claim them as his due,
 Their author, like the Niger's mouth, will bother
 The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

LXXXII

'And who and what art thou?' the Archangel said.
 'For *that* you may consult my title-page.' 650
 Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:
 'If I have kept my secret half an age,
 I scarce shall tell it now.'—'Canst thou upbraid.'
 Continued Michael, 'George Rex, or allege
 Aught further?' Junius answer'd, 'You had better 655
 First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

LXXXIII

'My charges upon record will outlast
 The brass of both his epitaph and tomb.'
 'Repent'st thou not.' said Michael, 'of some past
 Exaggeration? something which may doom 66a

Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou wast
 Too bitter—is it not so?—in thy gloom
 Of passion?'—'Passion!' cried the phantom dim,
 'I loved my country, and I hated him.

LXXXIV

'What I have written, I have written: let 665
 The rest be on his head or mine!' So spoke
 Old 'Nominis Umbra;' and while speaking yet,
 Away he melted in celestial smoke.
 Then Satan said to Michael, 'Don't forget
 To call George Washington, and John Home Tooke, 670
 And Franklin;'—but at this time there was heard
 A cry for room, though not a phantom stirr'd.

LXXXV

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
 Of cherubim appointed to that post,
 The devil Asmodeus to the circle made 675
 His way, and look'd as if his journey cost
 Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,
 'What's this?' cried Michael; 'why, 't is not a ghost?'
 'I know it.' quoth the incubus; 'but he
 Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me. 680

LXXXVI

'Confound the renegado! I have sprain'd
 My left wing, he's so heavy; one would think
 Some of his works about his neck were chain'd.
 But to the point: while hovering o'er the brink
 Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still rain'd), 685
 I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
 And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel—
 No less on History than the Holy Bible.

LXXXVII

'The former is the devil's scripture, and
 The latter yours, good Michael: so the affair 690
 Belongs to all of us, you understand.

I snatch'd him up just as you see him there,
 And brought him off for sentence out of hand:
 I've scarcely been ten minutes in the air—
 At least a quarter it can hardly be: 695
 I dare say that his wife is still at tea.'

LXXXVIII

Here Satan said, 'I know this man of old,
 And have expected him for some time here;
 A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,
 Or more conceited in his petty sphere: 700
 But surely it was not worth while to fold
 Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus dear!
 We had the poor wretch safe (without being bored
 With carriage) coming of his own accord.

LXXXIX

'But since he's here, let's see what he has done.' 705
 'Done!' cried Asmodeus, 'he anticipates
 The very business you are now upon,
 And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.
 Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
 When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates?' 710
 'Let's hear.' quoth Michael, 'what he has to say:
 You know we're bound to that in every way.'

xc

Now the bard, glad to get an audience, which
 By no means often was his case below,
 Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch 715
 His voice into that awful note of woe

To all unhappy hearers within reach
 Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;
 But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
 Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir. 720

xci

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be spurr'd
 Into recitative, in great dismay
 Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
 To murmur loudly through their long array;
 And Michael rose ere he could get a word 725
 Of all his founder'd verses under way,
 And cried, 'For God's sake stop, my friend I 'twere best—
Non Di, non homines—you know the rest.'

XCII

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,
 Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation; 730
 The angels had of course enough of song
 When upon service; and the generation
 Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long
 Before, to profit by a new occasion:
 The monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd, 'What! what! 735
Pye come again? No more—no more of that!'

XCIII

The tumult grew; an universal cough
 Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
 When Castlereagh has been up long enough
 (Before he was first minister of state, 740
 I mean—the *slaves hear now*); some cried 'Off, off!'
 As at a farce; till, grown quite desperate,
 The bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose
 (Himself an author) only for his prose.

XCIV

The varlet was not an ill-favour'd knave; 745
 A good deal like a vulture in the face,
 With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
 A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace
 To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
 Was by no means so ugly as his case; 750
 But that indeed was hopeless as can be,
 Quite a poetic felony '*de se*.'

XCV

Then Michael blew his trump, and still'd the noise
 With one still greater, as is yet the mode
 On earth besides; except some grumbling voice, 755
 Which now and then will make a slight inroad
 Upon decorous silence, few will twice
 Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrow'd;
 And now the bard could plead his own bad cause,
 With all the attitudes of self-applause. 760

xcvi

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
 He meant no harm in scribbling; 't was his way
 Upon all topics; 't was, besides, his bread,
 Of which he butter'd both sides; 't would delay
 Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread), 765
 And take up rather more time than a day,
 To name his works—he would but cite a few—
 'Wat Tyler'—'Rhymes on Blenheim'—'Waterloo,'

xcvn

He had written praises of a regicide;
 He had written praises of all kings whatever; 770
 He had written for republics far and wide,
 And then against them bitterer than ever;

For pantisocracy he once had cried
 Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;
 Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin— 775
 Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

xcvin

He had sung against all battles, and again
 In their high praise and glory; he had call'd
 Reviewing 'the ungentle craft,' and then
 Become as base a critic as e'er crawl'd— 780
 Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
 By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd:
 He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,
 And more of both than anybody knows.

xcix

He had written Wesley's life:—here, turning round 785
 To Satan, 'Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
 In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
 With notes and preface, all that most allures
 The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
 For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers: 790
 So let me have the proper documents,
 That I may add you to my other saints.'

c

Satan bow'd, and was silent. 'Well, if you,
 With amiable modesty, decline
 My offer, what says Michael? There are few 795
 Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.
 Mine is a pen of all work; not so new
 As it was once, but I would make you shine
 Like your own trumpet. By the way, my own
 Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown. 809

CI

' But talking about trumpets, here's my Vision!
 Now you shall judge, all people; yes, you shall
 Judge with my judgment! and by my decision
 Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall!
 I settle all these things by intuition, 805
 Times present, past, to come, heaven, hell, and all,
 Like King Alfonso. When I thus see double,
 I save the Deity some worlds of trouble.'

CH

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
 Persuasion on the part of devils, or saints, 810
 Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so
 He read the first three lines of the contents;
 But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
 Had vanished, with variety of scents,
 Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang, 815
 Like lightning, off from his 'melodious twang.'

cm

Those grand heroics acted as a spell:
 The angels stopp'd their ears and plied their pinions;
 The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down to hell;
 The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions— 820
 (For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,
 And I leave every man to his opinions);
 Michael took refuge in his trump—but, lo!
 His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

civ

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known 825
 For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
 And at the fifth line knock'd the poet down;
 Who fell like Phaeton, but more- at ease,

Into his lake, for there he did not drown;
 A different web being by the Destinies 830
 Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, whene'er
 Reform shall happen either here or there.

cv

He first sank to the bottom—like his works,
 But soon rose to the surface—like himself;
 For all corrupted things are buoy'd, like corks, 835
 By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
 Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,
 It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,
 In his own den, to scrawl some 'Life' or 'Vision,'
 As Welborn says—'the devil turn'd precisian.' 840

cvi

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion
 Of this true dream, the telescope is gone
 Which kept my optics free from all delusion,
 And show'd me what I in my turn have shown;
 All I saw farther, in the last confusion, 845
 Was, that King George slipp'd into heaven for one;
 And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
 I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

SONGS AND SHORTER POEMS

Written after swimming from Sestos to Abydos

Published with *Childe Harold*, 1812

IF, in the month of dark December,
 Leander, who was nightly wont
 (What maid will not the tale remember ?)
 To cross the stream, broad Hellespont!

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd, 5
 He sped to Hero, nothing loth,
 And thus of old thy current pour'd,
 Fair Venus! how I pity both!

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
 Though in the genial month of May, 10
 My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
 And think I've done a feat to-day.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,
 According to the doubtful story,
 To woo,—and—Lord knows what beside, 15
 And swam for Love, as I for Glory;

Twere hard to say who fared the best:
 Sad mortals! thus the gods still plague you!
 He lost his labour, I my jest;
 For he was drown'd, and I've the ague. 20
 May 9, 1810.

She Walks in Beauty

Hebrew Melodies, 1815

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
 Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
 And all that's best of dark and bright
 Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
 Thus mellow'd to that tender light 5
 Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

II

One shade the more, one ray the less,
 Had half impair'd the nameless grace
 Which waves in every raven tress,
 Or softly lightens o'er her face; 10
 Where thoughts serenely sweet express
 How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

in

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
 So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
 The smiles that win, the tints that glow, 15
 But tell of days in goodness spent,
 A mind at peace with all below,
 A heart whose love is innocent!

Oh! snatch'd away in Beauty's Bloom

Hebrew Melodies, 1815; first published in *The Examiner*,
 23 April, 1815

I

O H! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
 On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
 But on thy turf shall roses rear
 Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
 And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom: 5

11

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
 Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
 And lingering pause and lightly tread;
 Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead! 10

III

Away! we know that tears are vain,
 That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
 Will this unteach us to complain?
 Or make one mourner weep the less?
 And thou—who tell'st me to forget, 15
 Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

The Destruction of Sennacherib
Hebrew Melodies, 1815

I

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
 And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
 And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
 When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

11

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green, 5
 That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
 Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
 That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

III

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
 And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd; 10
 And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
 And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

IV

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
 But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride;
 And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf, 15
 And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
 With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
 And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
 The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown. 20

VI

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
 And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
 And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
 Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord !
 Seaham, P'ebruary 17, 1815.

There's not a Joy the World can give

Poems, 1816

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it takes
 away,
 When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull
 decay;
 Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which
 fades so fast,
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be
 past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of
 happiness 5
 Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
 The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in
 vain
 The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch
 again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes
down; 9

It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice
appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract
the breast,

Through midnight hours that yield no more their former
hope of rest;

'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath, 15
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and grey
beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a vanish'd
scene;

As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though
they be,

So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would flow
to me. 20

March, 1815.

There be none of Beauty's Daughters

Poems, 1816

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters

With a magic like thee;

And like music on the waters

Is thy sweet voice to me:

When, as if its sound were causing 5

The charmed ocean's pausing,

The waves lie still and gleaming,

And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep; 10
 Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's asleep:
 So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee;
 With a full but soft emotion, 15
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

March 28 [1816].

So we'll go no more a-roving

Published in *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*, 1830

I

So we'll go no more a-roving
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as loving,
 And the moon be still as bright.

11

For the sword outwears its sheath, 5
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And love itself have rest.

III

Though the night was made for loving,
 And the day returns too soon, 10
 Yet we'll go no more a roving
 By the light of the moon.

February 28, 1817.

*To Thomas Moore*Published with the *Waltz*, 1821

|

MY boat is on the shore,
 And my bark is on the sea;
 But, before I go, Tom Moore,
 Here's a double health to thee!

11

Here's a sigh to those who love me, 5
 And a smile to those who hate;
 And, whatever sky's above me,
 Here's a heart for every fate.

III

Though the ocean roar around me,
 Yet it still shall bear me on; 10
 Though a desert should surround me,
 It hath springs that may be won.

IV

Were't the last drop in the well,
 As I gasp'd upon the brink,
 Ere my fainting spirit fell, 15
 'Tis to thee that I would drink.

V

With that water, as this wine,
 The libation I would pour
 Should be—peace with thine and mine,
 And a health to thee, Tom Moore. 20

July, 1821.

*The Isles of Greece****Don Juan, III. 1821***

I

THE isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
 Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
 Where grew the arts of war and peace,
 Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung!
 Eternal summer gilds them yet, 5
 But all, except their sun, is set.

2

The Scian and the Teian muse,
 The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
 Have found the fame your shores refuse:
 Their place of birth alone is mute 10
 To sounds which echo further west
 Than your sires' ' Islands of the Blest.'

3

The mountains look on Marathon—
 And Marathon looks on the sea;
 And musing there an hour alone, 15
 I dream'd that Greece might still be free;
 For standing on the Persians' grave,
 I could not deem myself a slave.

4

A king sate on the rocky brow
 Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis; 20
 And ships, by thousands, lay below,
 And men in nations;—all were his!
 He counted them at break of day—
 And when the sun set where were they?

5

And where are they ? and where art thou, 25
 My country ? On thy voiceless shore
 The heroic lay is tuneless now—
 The heroic bosom beats no more!
 And must thy lyre, so long divine,
 Degenerate into hands like mine ? 30

6

Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
 Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
 To feel at least a patriot's shame,
 Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
 For what is left the poet here ? 35
 For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

7

Must we but weep o'er days more blest ?
 Must we but blush ?—Our fathers bled.
 Earth! render back from out thy breast
 A remnant of our Spartan dead! 40
 Of the three hundred grant but three,
 To make a new Thermopylae!

8

What, silent still ? and silent all ?
 Ah ! no;—the voices of the dead
 Sound like a distant torrent's fall, 45
 And answer, ' Let one living head,
 But one arise,—we come, we come !'
 Tis but the living who are dumb.

9

In vain—in vain: strike other chords;
 Fill high the cup with Samian wine! 50
 Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
 And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
 Hark! rising to the ignoble call—
 How answers each bold Bacchanal!

10

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet; 55
 Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
 Of two such lessons, why forget
 The nobler and the manlier one?
 You have the letters Cadmus gave—
 Think ye he meant them for a slave? 60

11

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 We will not think of themes like these 1
 It made Anacreon's song divine:
 He served—but served Polycrates—
 A tyrant; but our masters then 65
 Were still, at least, our countrymen.

12

The tyrant of the Chersonese
 Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
 Oh! that the present hour would lend 70
 Another despot of the kind!
 Such chains as his were sure to bind.

13

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
 Exists the remnant of a line 75
 Such as the Doric mothers bore;
 And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
 The Heracleidan blood might own.

14

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
 They have a king who buys and sells; 80
 In native swords, and native ranks,
 The only hope of courage dwells:
 But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
 Would break your shield, however broad.

15

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine! 85
 Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
 I see their glorious black eyes shine;
 But gazing on each glowing maid,
 My own the burning tear-drop laves,
 To think such breasts must suckle slaves. 90

16

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
 Where nothing, save the waves and I,
 May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
 There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
 A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine— 95
 Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

*Oh, talk not to me of a Name great in Story*Published in *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*, 1830

OH, talk not to me of a name great in story ;
 The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
 And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
 Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled ?
 Tis but as a dead-flower with May-dew be-sprinkled.
 Then away with all such from the head that is hoary!
 What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give glory!

Oh FAME!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
 'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases, 10
 Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover,
 She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;
 Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
 When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story, 15
 I knew it was love, and felt it was glory.

I composed these stanzas (except the fourth added now) a few days
 ago, on the road from Florence to Pisa.

Pisa, Nov. 7th, 1821.

*On this Day I complete my thirty-sixth Year*Published in *The Morning Chronicle*, 29 October, 1824

'T is time this heart should be unmoved,
 Since others it hath ceased to move:
 Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
 Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf; 5
 The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
 The worm, the canker, and the grief
 Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
 Is lone as some volcanic isle; 10
 No torch is kindled at its blaze—
 A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
 The exalted portion of the pain
 And power of love, I cannot share, 15
 But wear the chain.

But 't is not *thus*—and 't is not *here*—
 Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
 Where glory decks the hero's bier,
 Or binds his brow. 20

The sword, the banner, and the field,
 Glory and Greece, around me see!
 The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
 Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!) 25
 Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
 Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
 And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
 Unworthy manhood!—unto thee 3°
 Indifferent should the smile or frown
 Of beauty be.

If thou regrettest thy youth, *why live?*

The land of honourable death

Is here:—up to the field, and give

35

Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—

A soldier's grave, for thee the best;

Then look around, and choose thy ground,

And take thy rest.

40

Missolonghi, January 22, 1824.

LETTERS

TO HIS MOTHER

Athens, January 14, 1811.

My dear Madam,—I seize an occasion to write as usual, shortly, but frequently, as the arrival of letters, where there exists no regular communication, is of course very precarious. I have lately made several small tours of some hundred or two miles about the Morea, Attica, etc., as I 5 have finished my Grand Gyro by the Troad, Constantinople, etc., and am returned down again to Athens. I believe I have mentioned to you more than once that I swam (in imitation of Leander, though without his lady) across the Hellespont, from Sestos to Abydos. Of this, and all other 10 particulars, Fletcher, whom I have sent home with papers, etc., will apprise you. I cannot find that he is any loss; being tolerably master of the Italian and modern Greek languages, which last I am also studying with a master, I can order and discourse more than enough for a reasonable 15 man. Besides, the perpetual lamentations after beef and beer, the stupid, bigoted contempt for every thing foreign, and insurmountable incapacity of acquiring even a few words of any language, rendered him, like all other English servants, an incumbrance. I do assure you, the plague of 20 speaking for him, the comforts he required (more than myself by far), the pilaws (a Turkish dish of rice and meat) which he could not eat, the wines which he could not drink, the beds where he could not sleep, and the long list of calamities, such as stumbling horses, want of *teal* 11 etc., 25 which assailed him, would have made a lasting source of laughter to a spectator, and inconvenience to a master. After all, the man is honest enough, and, in Christendom, capable enough; but in Turkey, Lord forgive me! my

Albanian soldiers, my Tartars and Janissary, worked for him and us too, as my friend Hobhouse can testify.

It is probable I may steer homewards in spring; but to enable me to do that, I must have remittances. My own funds would have lasted me very well; but I was obliged to assist a friend, who, I know, will pay me; but, in the meantime, I am out of pocket. At present I do not care to venture a winter's voyage, even if I were otherwise tired of travelling; but I am so convinced of the advantages of looking at mankind instead of reading about them, and the bitter effects of staying at home with all the narrow prejudices of an islander, that I think there should be a law amongst us, to set our young men abroad, for a term, among the few allies our wars have left us.

Here I see and have conversed with French, Italians, Germans, Danes, Greeks, Turks, Americans, etc., etc., etc.; and without losing sight of my own, I can judge of the countries and manners of others. Where I see the superiority of England (which, by the by, we are a good deal mistaken about in many things), I am pleased, and where I find her inferior, I am at least enlightened. Now I might have stayed, smoked in your towns, or fogged in your country a century, without being sure of this, and without acquiring anything more useful or amusing at home. I keep no journal, nor have I any intention of scribbling my travels. I have done with authorship, and if, in my last production, I have convinced the critics-or the world I was something more than they took me for, I am satisfied; nor will I hazard *that reputation* by a future effort. It is true I have some others in manuscript, but I leave them for those who come after me; and, if deemed worth publishing, they may serve to prolong my memory when I myself shall cease to remember. I have a famous Bavarian artist taking some views of Athens, etc., etc., for me. This will be better

than scribbling, a disease I hope myself cured of. I hope on my return to lead a quiet, recluse life, but God knows and does best for us all; at least so they say, and I have nothing to object, as on the whole I have no reason to complain of my lot. I am convinced, however, that men 5 do more harm to themselves than ever the devil could do to them. I trust this will find you well, and as happy as we can be; you will at least be pleased to hear I am so, and
Yours ever.

TO LEIGH HUNT

Feb. 9, 1814.

My dear Sir,—I have been snow-bound and thaw-swamped (two compound epithets for you) in the 'valley 10 of the shadow' of Newstead Abbey for nearly a month, and have not been four hours returned from London. Nearly the first use I make of my benumbed fingers is to thank you for your very handsome note in the volume you have just put forth, only, I trust, to be followed by others 15 on subjects more worthy your notice than the works of contemporaries. Of myself you speak only too highly, and you must think me strangely spoiled, or perversely peevish, even to suspect that any remarks of yours, in the spirit of candid criticism, could possibly prove unpalatable. Had 20 they been harsh, instead of being written as they are in the indelible ink of friendly admonition, had they been the harshest—as I knew and know that you are above any personal bias, at least *against* your fellow-bards, believe me they could not have caused a remembrance, nor a moment 25 of rankling on my part. Your poem I read long ago in the *Reflector*, and it is not too much to say it is the best 'Session' we have, and with a more difficult subject, for we are neither so good nor so bad (taking the best and worst) as the wits of the olden time.

To your smaller pieces I have not yet had time to do justice by perusal, and I have a quantity of unanswered, and I hope unanswerable, letters to wade through before I sleep, but to-morrow will see me through your volume.

5 I am glad to see you have tracked Gray among the Italians. You will perhaps find a friend or two of yours there also, though not to the same extent; but I have always thought the Italians the most poetical moderns; our Milton and Spenser and Shakespeare (the last through translations of

10 their Tales) are very Tuscan, and surely it is far superior to the French School. You are hardly fair enough to Rogers. Why *teal* You might surely have given him supper, if only a sandwich. Murray has, I hope, sent you my last bantling, *The Corsair*. I have been regaled at

15 every inn on the road by lampoons and other merry conceits on myself in the ministerial gazettes, occasioned by the republication of two stanzas, inserted in 1812 in Perry's paper. The hysterics of the *Morning Post* are quite interesting; and I hear (but have not seen) of something terrific in

20 a last week's *Courier*; all which I take with the 'calm indifference' of Sir Fretful Plagiary. The *Morning Post* has one copy of devices upon my deformity, which certainly will admit of no 'historic doubt,' like 'Dickon my master's;' another upon my atheism, which is not quite so clear; and

25 another very downrightly says, 'I am the *devil*' (*boiteux* they might have added), and a rebel, and what not; possibly my accuser of diabolism may be Rosa Matilda, and if so, it would not be difficult to convince her that I am a mere man. I shall break in upon you in a day or two:

30 distance has hitherto detained me; and I hope to find you well, and myself welcome.

Ever your obliged and sincere,

BYRON.

PS.—Since this letter was written, I have been at your

text, which has much *good* humour in every sense of the word. Your notes are of a very high order indeed, particularly on Wordsworth.

TO THOMAS MOORE

Venice, February 28, 1817.

You will perhaps complain as much of the frequency of my letters now, as you were wont to do of their rarity. I think this is the fourth within as many moons. I feel anxious to ~~hear~~ from you, even more than usual, because your last indicated that you were unwell. At present I am on the invalid regimen myself. The Carnival—that is, the latter part of it, and sitting up late o' nights, had knocked me up a little. But it is over—and it is now Lent, with all its abstinence and sacred music.

The mumming closed with a masked ball at the Fenice, where I went, as also to most of the ridottos, etc., etc.; and, though I did not dissipate much upon the whole, yet I find 'the sword wearing out the scabbard.' though I have but just turned the corner of twenty-nine.

So we'll go no more a-roving
So late into the night,
[See p. 144]

I have lately had some news of *littevaloor*, as I heard the editor of the *Monthly* pronounce it once upon a time. I hear that W. W. has been publishing and responding to the attacks of the *Quarterly*, in the learned Perry's *Chronicle*. I read his poesies last autumn, and amongst them found an epitaph on his bull-dog, and another on *myself*. But I beg leave to assure him (like the astrologer Partridge) that I am not only alive now, but was alive also at the time he wrote it. Hobhouse has (I hear, also) expectorated

a letter against the *Quarterly*, addressed to me. I feel awkwardly situated between him and Gifford, both being my friends.

And this is your month of going to press—by the body
5 of Diana! (a Venetian oath) I feel as anxious—but not
fearful for you—as if it were myself coming out in a work
of humour, which would, you know, be the antipodes of
all my previous publications. I don't think you have any-
thing to dread but your own reputation. You must keep
10 up to that. As you never showed me a line of your work,
I do not even know your measure; but you must send me
a copy by Murray forthwith, and then you shall hear what
I think. I dare say you are in a pucker. Of all authors,
you are the only really *modest* one I ever met with,—which
15 would sound oddly enough to those who recollect your
morals when you were young—that is, when you were
extremely young—I don't mean to stigmatise you either
with years or morality.

I believe I told you that the *Edinburgh Review* had
20 attacked me, in an article on Coleridge (I have not seen
it)—'Et tu, Jeffrey?—'there is nothing but roguery in
villainous man.' But I absolve him of all attacks, present
and future; for I think he had already pushed his clemency
in my behoof to the utmost, and I shall always think well
25 of him. I only wonder he did not begin before, as my
domestic destruction was a fine opening for all the world,
of which all who could did well to avail themselves.

If I live ten years longer, you will see, however, that it
is not over with me—I don't mean in literature, for that
30 is nothing; and it may seem odd enough to say, I do not
think it my vocation. But you will see that I shall do
something or other—the times and fortune permitting—
that, 'like the cosmogony, or creation of the world, will
puzzle the philosophers of all ages.'¹ But I doubt whether

my **constitution will hold** out. I have, at intervals, exorcised it most devilishly.

I have not yet fixed a time of return, but I think of the spring. I shall have been away a year in April next. You never mention Rogers, nor Hodgson, your clerical neighbour, who has lately got a living near you. Has he also got a child yet—his desideratum, when I saw him last? 5

Pray let me hear from you, at your time and leisure, believing me ever and truly and affectionately, etc.

TO THOMAS MOORE

La Mira. Venice, July 10, 1819.

Murray, the Mokanna of booksellers, has contrived to 10 send me extracts from *Lalla Rookh* by the post. They are taken from some magazine, and contain a short outline and quotations from the two first Poems. I am very much delighted with what is before me, and very thirsty for the rest. You have caught the colours as if you had been in 15 the rainbow, and the tone of the East is perfectly preserved. I am glad you have changed the title from 'Persian Tale.'

I suspect you have written a devilish fine composition, and I rejoice in it from my heart; because 'the Douglas 20 and the Percy both together are confident against a world in arms.' I hope you won't be affronted at my looking on us as 'birds of a feather;' though, on whatever subject you had written, I should have been very happy in your success. 25

There is a simile of an orange-tree's 'flowers and fruits.' which I should have liked better if I did not believe it to be a reflection on * * *.

Do you remember Thurlow's poem to. Sam—'When Rogers;' and that damned supper at Rancliffe's that ought 30

to have been a *dinner*? 'Ah, Master Shallow, we have heard the chimes at midnight.' But,

My boat is on the shore,
 And my bark is on the sea;
 5 But, before I go, Tom Moore,
 Here's a double health to thee!
 [See p. 145]

This should have been written fifteen moons ago—the first stanza was. I am just come out from an hour's swim in the Adriatic; and I write to you with a black-eyed Venetian
 10 girl before me, reading Boccaccio.

Last week I had a row on the road (I came up to Venice from my casino, a few miles on the Paduan road, this blessed day, to bathe) with a fellow in a carriage, who was impudent to my horse. I gave him a swinging box on the
 15 ear, which sent him to the police, who dismissed his complaint. Witnesses had seen the transaction. He first shouted, in an unseemly way, to frighten my palfrey. I wheeled round, rode up to the window, and asked him what he meant. He grinned, and said some foolery, which produced
 20 him an immediate slap in the face, to his utter discomfiture. Much blasphemy ensued, and some menace, which I stopped by dismounting and opening the carriage door, and intimating an intention of mending the road with his immediate remains, if he did not hold his tongue. He
 25 held it.

Monk Lewis is here—'how pleasant!' He is a very good fellow, and very much yours. So is Sam—so is every body—and amongst the number,

Yours ever,
 B.

PS.—What think you of *Manfred*?

To JOHN MURRAY

September 25, 1817.

Dear Sir,—I enclose a sheet for correction, if ever you *get* to another edition. You will observe that the blunder in printing makes it appear as if the Château was *over* St. Gingo, instead of being on the opposite shore of the Lake, over Clarens. So separate the paragraphs, otherwise my topography will seem as inaccurate as your typography on this occasion.

The other day I wrote to convey my proposition with regard to the 4th and concluding canto. I have gone over and extended it to one hundred and fifty stanzas, which is almost as long as the two first were originally, and longer by itself than any of the smaller poems except *The Corsair*. Mr. Hobhouse has made some very valuable and accurate notes of considerable length, and you may be sure I will do for the text all that I can to finish with decency. I look upon *Childe Harold* as my best; and as I began, I think of concluding with it. But I make no resolutions on that head, as I broke my former intention with regard to *The Corsair*. However, I fear that I shall never do better; and yet, not being thirty years of age, for some moons to come, one ought to be progressive as far as Intellect goes for many a good year. But I have had a devilish deal of wear and tear of mind and body in my time, besides having published too often and much already. God grant me some judgment! to do what may be most fitting in that and every thing else, for I doubt my own exceedingly.

I have read *Lallah Rookh*, but not with sufficient attention yet, for I ride about, and lounge, and ponder, and—two or three other things; so that my reading is very desultory, and not so attentive as it used to be. I am very glad to hear of its popularity, for Moore is a very noble fellow in all

respects, and will enjoy it without any of the **bad** feeling which success—good or evil—sometimes engenders in the men of rhyme. Of the poem itself, I will tell you my opinion when I have mastered it; I say of the *poem*, for I don't like
 5 the *prose* at all—at all; and in the mean time, the 'Fire worshippers' is the best, and the 'Veiled Prophet' the worst, of the volume.

With regard to poetry in general, I am convinced, the more I think of it, that he and *all* of us—Scott, Southey,
 10 Wordsworth, Moore, Campbell, I,—are all in the wrong, one as much as another; that we are upon a wrong revolutionary poetical system, or systems, not worth a damn in itself, and from which none but Rogers and Crabbe are free; and that the present and next generations will finally
 15 be of this opinion. I am the more confirmed in this by having lately gone over some of our classics, particularly *Pope*, whom I tried in this way,—I took Moore's poems and my own and some others, and went over them side by side with Pope's, and I was really astonished (I ought not to
 20 have been so) and mortified at the ineffable distance in point of sense, harmony, effect, and even *Imagination*, passion, and *Invention*, between the little Queen Anne's man, and us of the Lower Empire. Depend upon it, it is all Horace then, and Claudian now, among us; and if I had to
 25 begin again, I would model myself accordingly. Crabbe's the man, but he has got a coarse and impracticable subject, and Rogers, the Grandfather of living Poetry, is retired upon half-pay, (I don't mean as a Banker),—

30 Since pretty Miss Jacqueline,
 With her nose aquiline,

and has done enough, unless he were to do as he did formerly.

To JOHN MURRAY

Venice, April 6, 1819.

Dear Sir,—The Second Canto of *Don Juan* was sent, on Saturday last, by post, in four packets, two of four, and two of three sheets each, containing in all two hundred and seventeen stanzas, octave measure. But I will permit no curtailments, except those mentioned about Castlereagh and the two *Bobs* in the Introduction. You sha'n't make 5 *Canticles* of my Cantos. The poem will please, if it is lively; if it is stupid, it will fail; but I will have none of your damned cutting and slashing. If you please, you may publish *anonymously*; it will perhaps be better; but I will battle my way against them all, like a porcupine. 10

So you and Mr. Foscolo, etc., want me to undertake what you call a 'great work'—an Epic poem, I suppose, or some such pyramid. I'll try no such thing; I hate tasks. And then 'seven or eight years!' God send us all well this day three months, let alone years. If one's years can't be 15 better employed than in sweating poesy, a man had better be a ditcher. And works, too!—is *Childe Harold* nothing? You have so many '*divine*' poems, is it nothing to have written a *Human* one without any of your worn-out machinery? Why, man, I could have spun the thoughts of 20 the four cantos of that poem into twenty, had I wanted to book-make, and its passion into as many modern tragedies. Since you want *length*, you shall have enough of *Juan*, for I'll make 50 cantos.

And Foscolo, too! Why does *he* not do something more 25 than the *Letters of Ortis*, and a tragedy, and pamphlets? He has good fifteen years more at his command than I have: what has he done all that time?—proved his Genius, doubtless, but not fixed its fame, nor done his utmost.

Besides, I mean to write my best work in *Italian*, and 30

it will take me nine years more thoroughly to master the language; and then if my fancy exist, and I exist too, I will try what I *can* do *really*. As to the Estimation of the English which you talk of, let them calculate what it is 5 worth, before they insult me with their insolent condescension.

I have not written for their pleasure. If they are pleased, it is that they chose to be so; I have never flattered their opinions, not their pride; nor will I. Neither will I 10 make 'ladies' books' *al dilettar le femine e la plebe*. I have written from the fullness of my mind, from passion, from impulse, from many motives, but not for their 'sweet voices.'

I know the precise worth of popular applause, for few 15 scribblers have had more of it; and if I chose to swerve into their paths, I could retain it, or resume it, or increase it. But I neither love ye, nor fear ye; and though I buy with ye and sell with ye, and talk with ye, I will neither eat with ye, drink with ye, nor pray with ye. They made 20 me, without my search, a species of popular Idol; they, without reason or judgment, beyond the caprice of their good pleasure, threw down the Image from its pedestal; it was not broken with the fall, and they would, it seems, again replace it—but they shall not.

25 You ask about my health: about the beginning of the year I was in a state of great exhaustion, attended by such debility of stomach that nothing remained upon it; and I was obliged to reform my 'way of life.' which was conducting me from the 'yellow leaf to the ground, with all 30 deliberate speed. I am better in health and morals, and very much yours ever,

B.

PS.—Tell Mrs. Leigh I have never had 'my Sashes.' and I want some tooth-powder, the red, by all or any means.

TO JOHN MURRAY

Ravenna, Oct. 16, 1820.

Dear Moray,—*The Abbot* has just arrived: many thanks; as also for the *Monastery*—*when you send it!!!*

The Abbot will have a more than ordinary interest for 5
me; for an ancestor of mine by my mother's side, Sir J.
Gordon of Gight, the handsomest of his day, died on a
Scaffold at Aberdeen for his loyalty to Mary, of whom he
was an imputed paramour as well as her relation. His fate
was much commented on in the *Chronicles* of the times. 10
If I mistake not, he had something to do with her escape
from Loch Leven, or with her captivity there. But this
you will know better than I.

I recollect Loch Leven as it were but yesterday: I saw it
in my way to England in 1798, being then ten years of age. 15
My Mother (who was as haughty as Lucifer with her
descent from the Stuarts, and her right line, from the *old*
Gordons, not the *Seyton Gordons*, as she disdainfully termed
the Ducal branch) told me the Story, always reminding me
how superior *her* Gordons were to the Southron Byrons, 20
notwithstanding our Norman, and always direct masculine
descent, which has never lapsed into a female, as my
mother's Gordons had done in her own person.

I have written to you so often lately that the brevity of
this will be welcome. 25

Yours ever and truly,

BYRON.

TO JOHN MURRAY

Ravenna, February 21, 1821.

Dear Sir,—In the 44th page, vol. I^{s^t}, of Turner's travels (which you lately sent me), it is stated that 'Lord Byron, when he expressed such confidence of its practicability, seems to have forgotten that Leander swam both ways, 5 with and *against* the tide, whereas *he* (L^d. B.) only performed the easiest part of the task by swimming *with* it from Europe to Asia.' I certainly could not have forgotten what is known to every schoolboy, that Leander crossed in the night and returned towards the morning. My object 10 was to ascertain that the Hellespont could be crossed *at all* by swimming, and in this Mr. Ekenhead and myself both succeeded, the one in an hour and ten minutes, and the other in one hour and five minutes. The *tide* was *not* in our favour: on the contrary, the great difficulty was to bear up 15 against the current, which, so far from helping us to the Asiatic side, set us down right towards the Archipelago. Neither Mr. Ekenhead, myself, nor, I will venture to add, any person on board the frigate, from Captain (now Admiral) Bathurst downwards, had any notion of a difference of the 20 current on the Asiatic side, of which Mr. Turner speaks. I never heard of it till this moment, or I would have taken the other course. Lieutenant Ekenhead's sole motive, and mine also, for setting out from the European side was, that the little Cape above Sestos was a more prominent starting 25 place, and the frigate, which lay below, close under the Asiatic castle, formed a better point of view for us to swim towards, and in fact we landed immediately below it.

Mr. Turner says, 'Whatever is thrown into the stream on this part of the European bank *must* arrive at the Asiatic 30 shore.' This is so far from being the case, that it *must* arrive in the Archipelago, if left to the current, although a strong

wind in the Asiatic direction might have such an effect occasionally.

Mr. Turner attempted the passage from the Asiatic side, and failed, 'After five and twenty minutes, in which he did not advance a hundred yards, he gave it up from complete exhaustion.' This is very possible, and might have occurred to him just as readily on the European side. He should have set out a couple of miles higher, and could then have come out below the European castle. I particularly stated, and Mr. Hobhouse has done so also, that we were 10 obliged to make the real passage of one mile extend to between *three* and *four*, owing to the force of the stream. I can assure Mr. Turner that his success would have given me 5 great pleasure, as it would have added one more instance to the proofs of the practicability. It is not quite fair in him to 15 infer, that because *he* failed, Leander could not succeed. There are still four instances on record: a Neapolitan, a young Jew, Mr. Ekenhead, and myself; the two last done in the presence of hundreds of *English* witnesses.

With regard to the difference of the *current*, I perceived 20 none: it is favourable to the swimmer on neither side, but may be stemmed by plunging into the sea a considerable way above the opposite point of the coast which the swimmer wishes to make, but still bearing up against it: it is strong, but if you *calculate* well, you may reach land. 25 My own experience and that of others bids me pronounce the passage of Leander perfectly practicable; any young man in good health and [of] tolerable skill in swimming might succeed in it from *either* side. I was three hours in swimming across the Tagus, which is much more hazardous, 30 being two hours longer than the passage of the Hellespont. Of what may be done in swimming, I will mention one more instance. In 1818 the Chevalier Mengaldo (a Gentleman of Bassano), a good swimmer, wished to swim with

my friend Mr. Alexander Scott and myself. As he seemed particularly anxious on the subject, we indulged him. We all three started from the Island of the Lido and swam to Venice. At the entrance of the Grand Canal Scott and I
5 were a good way ahead, and we saw no more of our foreign friend, which however was of no consequence, as there was a Gondola to hold his clothes and pick him up. Scott swam in till past the Rialto, where he got out, less from fatigue than from *chill*, having been *four hours* in the water,
10 without rest or stay, except what is to be obtained by floating on one's back—this being the *condition* of our performance. I continued my course on to Santa Chiara, comprising the whole of the Grand Canal (besides the distance from the Lido), and got out where the Laguna
15 once more opens to Fusina. I had been in the water, by my watch, without help or rest, and never touching ground or boat, *four hours and twenty minutes*. To this match, and during the greater part of its performance, Mr. Hoppner, the Consul General, was witness; and it is well known to
20 many others. Mr. Turner can easily verify the fact, if he thinks it worth while, by referring to Mr. Hoppner. The distance we could not *accurately* ascertain; it was of course considerable.

I crossed the *Hellespont* in *one hour and ten minutes* only.
25 I am now ten years older in time, and twenty in constitution, than I was when I passed the Dardanelles; and yet two years ago I was capable of swimming four hours and twenty minutes; and I am sure that I could have continued two hours longer, though I had on a pair of trousers, an
30 accoutrement which by no means assists the [swimmer]. My two companions were also *four hours* in the water. Mengaldo might be about thirty years of age; Scott about six and twenty.

With this experience in swimming at different periods

of life, not only upon the *Spot*, but elsewhere, of various persons, what is there to make me doubt that Leander's exploit was perfectly practicable? If three individuals did more than the passage of the Hellespont, why should he [have done] less? But Mr. Turner failed, and, naturally seeking a plausible reason for his failure, lays the blame on the *Asiatic* side of the Strait. To me the cause is evident. He tried to swim *directly* across, instead of going higher up to take the vantage. He might as well have tried to fly over Mount Athos. 5

That a young Greek of the heroic times, in love, and with his limbs in full vigour, might have *succeeded* in such an attempt is neither wonderful nor doubtful. Whether he *attempted* it or *not* is another question, because he might have had a small *boat* to save him the trouble. 10 15

I am yours very truly,

BYRON.

PS.—Mr. Turner says that the swimming from Europe to Asia was 'the *easiest* part of the task.' I doubt whether Leander found it so, as it was the return; however, he had several hours between the intervals. The argument of Mr. T., 'that higher up or lower down, the strait widens so considerably that he would save little labour by his starting.' is only good for indifferent swimmers: a man of any practice or skill will always consider the distance less than the strength of the stream. If Ekenhead and myself had thought of crossing at the *narrowest point*, instead of going up to the Cape above it, we should have been swept down to Tenedos. The strait is, however, not extremely wide, even where it broadens above and below the forts. As the frigate was stationed some time in the Dardanelles waiting for the firman, I bathed often in the strait subsequently to our traject, and generally on the Asiatic side, without perceiving the greater strength of the 20 25 30

opposing stream by which the diplomatic traveller palliates his own failure. An amusement in the small bay which opens immediately below the Asiatic fort was to *dive* for the *Land* tortoises, which we flung in on purpose, as they
 5 amphibiously crawled along the bottom. *This* does not argue any vaster violence of current than on the European shore. With regard to the modest insinuation that we chose the European side as 'easier,' I appeal to Mr. Hobhouse and Admiral Bathurst if it be true or no (poor Ekenhead
 10 being since dead): had we been aware of any such difference of current as is asserted, we would at least have proved it, and were not likely to have given it up in the twenty-five minutes of Mr. T.'s own experiment. The secret of all this is, that Mr. Turner failed, and that we succeeded; and he is
 15 consequently disappointed, and seems not unwilling to overshadow whatever little merit there might be in our success. Why did he not try the European side? If he had succeeded there after failing on the Asiatic, his plea would have been more graceful and gracious. Mr. T. may find
 20 what fault he pleases with my poetry, or my politics; but I recommend him to leave aquatic reflections, till he is able to swim 'five and twenty minutes' without being '*exhausted*.' though I believe he is the first modern Tory who ever swam
 1 *against* the stream' for half the time.

TO PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Ravenna, April 26, 1821.

25 The child continues doing well, and the accounts are regular and favourable. It is gratifying to me that you and Mrs. Shelley do not disapprove of the step which I have taken, which is merely temporary.

I am very sorry to hear what you say of Keats—is it
 30 *actually* true? I did not think criticism had been so killing.

Though I differ from you essentially in your estimate of his performances, I so much abhor all unnecessary pain, that I would rather he had been seated on the highest peak of Parnassus than have perished in such a manner. Poor fellow! though with such inordinate self-love he would 5 probably have not been very happy. I read the review of *Endymion* in the *Quarterly*. It was severe—but surely not so severe as many reviews in *the Tatler* and other journals upon others.

I recollect the effect on me of the *Edinburgh* on my first 10 poem; it was rage, and resistance, and redress—but not despondency nor despair. I grant that those are not amiable feelings; but in this world of bustle and broil, and especially in the career of writing, a man should calculate upon his powers of *resistance* before he goes into the arena. 15

Expect not life from pain nor danger free,
Nor deem the doom of man reversed for thee.

You know my opinion of *that second-hand* school of poetry. You also know my high opinion of your own poetry, —because it is of *no* school. I read *Cenci*—but, besides that 20 I think the *subject* essentially *undramatic*, I am not an admirer of our old dramatists *as models*. I deny that the English have hitherto had a drama at all. Your *Cenci*, however, was a work of power, and poetry. As to *my* drama, pray revenge yourself upon it, by being as free as 25 I have been with yours.

I have not yet got your *Prometheus*, which I long to see. I have heard nothing of mine, and do not know that it is yet published. I have published a pamphlet on the Pope controversy, which you will not like. Had I known that 30 Keats was dead—or that he was alive and so sensitive—I should have omitted some remarks upon his poetry, to which I was provoked by his *attack* upon *Pope*, and my disapprobation of *his own* style of writing.

You want me to undertake a great poem—I have not the inclination nor the power. As I grow older, the indifference—*not* to life, for we love it by instinct—but to the stimuli of life, increases. Besides, this late failure of the 5 Italians has latterly disappointed me for many reasons—some public, some personal. My respects to Mrs. S.

Yours ever,
B.

PS.—Could not you and I contrive to meet this summer? Could not you take a run here *alone*?

TO JOHN MURRAY

Ravenna, July 6th, 1821.

Dear Sir,—In agreement with a wish expressed by Mr. 10 Hobhouse, it is my determination to omit the Stanza upon the *horse* of *Semiramis* in the fifth Canto of *Don Juan*. I mention this in case you are, or intend to be, the publisher of the remaining Cantos.

By yesterday's post I ought in point of time to have 15 had an acknowledgement of the arrival of the MS. of *Sardanapalus*. If it *has* arrived, and you have delayed the few lines necessary for this, I can only say that you are keeping two people in hot water—the postmaster here, because the packet was insured, and myself, because I had 20 but that one copy.

I am in the *fifth* act of a play on the subject of the Foscari, father and son: Foscolo can tell you their story.

I am, yours, etc.,
B.

PS.—At the particular request of the Contessa Guiccioli I have promised *not* to continue *Don Juan*. You will 25 therefore look upon these 3 cantos as the last of that poem. She had read the two first in the French translation, and

never ceased beseeching me to write no more of it. The reason of this is not at first obvious to a superficial observer of FOREIGN manners; but it arises from the wish of all women to exalt the *sentiment* of the passions, and to keep up the illusion which is their empire. Now *Don Juan* 5 strips off this illusion, and laughs at that and most other things. I never knew a woman who did *not* protect *Rousseau*, nor one who did not dislike de Grammont, Gil Bias, and all the *comedy* of the passions, when brought out naturally. But 'King's blood must keep word.' as Serjeant Bothwell 10 says.

Write, you Scamp.

Your parcel of *extracts* never came and never will: you should have sent it by the post; but you are growing a sad fellow, and some fine day we shall have to dissolve partner- 15 ship.

Send some soda powders.

TO JOHN MURRAY

Ravenna, September 24th, 1821.

Dear Murray,—I have been thinking over our late correspondence, and wish to propose to you the following articles for our future:— 20

1sty. That you shall write to me of yourself, of the health, wealth, and welfare of all friends; but of *me* {*quoad me*) little or nothing.

2^dy. That you shall send me soda powders, tooth-powder, tooth-brushes, or any such anti-odontalgic or 25 chemical articles, as heretofore, *ad libitum*, upon being reimbursed for the same.

3^d 1str. That you shall *not* send me any modern, or (as they are called) *new*, publications in *English whatsoever*, save and excepting any writing, prose or verse, of (or reasonably 30

presumed to be of) Walter Scott, Crabbe, Moore, Campbell, Rogers, Gifford, Joanna Baillie, Irving (the American), Hogg, Wilson (*Isle of Palms* Man), or *any* especial *single* work of fancy which is thought to be of considerable merit ;
 5 *voyages* and *travels*, provided that they are *neither in Greece, Spain, Asia Minor, Albania, nor Italy*, will be welcome: having travelled the countries mentioned, I know that what is said of them can convey nothing further which I desire to know about them. No other English works what-
 io soever.

4thly. That you send me *no periodical works whatsoever—no Edinburgh, Quarterly, Monthly*, nor any Review, Magazine, Newspaper, English or foreign, of any description,

j-thly That you send me *no* opinions whatsoever, either
 15 *good, bad, or indifferent*, of yourself, or your friends, or others, concerning any work, or works, of mine, past, present, or to come.

6thly. That all negotiations in matters of business between you and me pass through the medium of the Hon.
 20 Douglas Kinnaird, my friend and trustee, or Mr. Hobhouse, as *Alter Ego*, and tantamount to myself during my absence, or presence.

Some of these propositions may at first seem strange, but they are founded. The quantity of trash I have received
 25 as books is incalculable, and neither amused nor instructed. Reviews and Magazines are at the best but ephemeral and superficial reading: *who thinks* of the *grand article* of *last year* in any *given review* ? In the next place, if they regard *myself*, they tend to increase *Egotism*; if favourable, I do
 30 not deny that the praise *elates*, and if unfavourable, that the abuse *irritates*—the latter may conduct me to inflict a species of satire which would do good neither to you nor to your friends: *they* may smile *now*, and so may *you*; but if I took you all in hand, it would not be difficult to cut you

up like gourds. I did as much by as powerful people at nineteen years old, and I know little as yet, in three and thirty, which should prevent me from making all your ribs gridirons for your hearts, if such were my propensity. But it is *not*. Therefore let me hear none of your provocations. 5 If any thing occurs so very *gross* as to require my notice, I shall hear of it from my personal friends. For the rest, I merely request to be left in ignorance.

The same applies to opinions, *good, bad, or indifferent*, of persons in conversation or correspondence: these do not 10 *interrupt*, but they *soil* the *current* of my *Mind*. I am sensitive enough, but *not* till I am *touched*) and *here* I am beyond the touch of the short arms of literary England, except the few feelers of the polypus that crawl over the Channel in the way of extract. 15

All these precautions *in* England would be useless—the libeller or the flatterer would there reach me in spite of all; but in Italy we know little of literary England, and think less, except what reaches us through some garbled and brief extract in some miserable gazette. For *two years* 20 (excepting two or three articles cut out and sent to *you*, by the post) I never read a newspaper which was not forced upon me by some accident, and know, upon the whole, as little of England as you all do of Italy, and God knows *that* is little enough, with all your travels, etc., etc., etc. The 25 English travellers *know Italy* as you know Guernsey: how much is *that*?

If any thing occurs so violently gross or personal as to require notice, Mr. D. Kinnaird will let me *know*; but of *praise* I desire to hear *nothing*. 30

You will say, 'to what tends all this?' I will answer THAT—to keep my mind *free and unbiassed* by all paltry and personal irritabilities of praise or censure—to let my Genius take its natural direction, while my feelings are

like the dead, who know nothing and feel nothing of all or aught that is said or done in their regard.

If you can observe these conditions, you will spare yourself and others some pain: let me not be worked upon to
5 rise up; for if I do it will not be for a little: if you can *not* observe these conditions, we shall cease to be correspondents, but *not friends*; for I shall always be

Yours ever and truly,

BYRON.

PS.—I have taken these resolutions not from any irritation against *you* or *yours*, but simply upon reflection that
10 all reading, either praise or censure, of myself has done me harm. When I was in Switzerland and Greece, I was out of the way of hearing either, and *how I wrote there!* In Italy I am out of the way of it too; but latterly, partly through my fault, and partly through your kindness in
15 wishing to send me the *newest* and most periodical publications, I have had a crowd of reviews, etc., thrust upon me, which have bored me with their jargon, of one kind or another, and taken off my attention from greater objects. You have also sent me a parcel of trash of poetry, for no
20 reason that I can conceive, unless to provoke me to write a new *English Bards*. Now *this* I wish to avoid; for if ever I *do*, it will be a strong production; and I desire peace, as long as the fools will keep their nonsense out of my way.

TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

Pisa, January 12, 1822.

My Dear Sir Walter,—I need not say how grateful I am
25 for your letter, but I must own my ingratitude in not having written to you again long ago. Since I left England (and it is not far off the usual term of transportation) I have scribbled to five hundred blockheads—on business, etc.,

without difficulty, though with no great pleasure; and yet, with the notion of addressing you a hundred times in my head, and always in my heart, I have not done what I ought to have done. I can only account for it on the same principle of tremulous anxiety with which one sometimes makes love 5 to a beautiful woman of our own degree, with whom one is enamoured in great earnest; whereas we attack a fresh-coloured housemaid without (I speak of course of earlier times) any sentimental remorse or mitigation of our virtuous purpose. 10

I owe to you far more than the usual obligation for the courtesies of literature and common friendship—for you went out of your way in 1817 to do me a service, when it required not merely kindness, but courage to do so; to have been recorded by you in such a manner would have 15 been a proud memorial at any time, but at such a time, when 'all the world and his wife' (or rather *mine*), as the proverb goes, were trying to trample upon me, was something still higher to my self-esteem. I allude to the *Quarterly* review of the Third Canto of *Childe Harold*, which Murray told me was 20 written by you—and indeed I should have known it without his information, as there could not be *two* who *could* and *would* have done this at the time. Had it been a common criticism, however eloquent or panegyric, I should have felt pleased undoubtedly and grateful, but not to 25 the extent which the extraordinary good-heartedness of the whole proceeding must induce in any mind capable of such sensations. The very *tardiness* of this acknowledgement will at least show that I have not forgotten the obligation; and I can assure you that my sense of it has been out at 30 compound interest during the delay. I shall only add one word upon the subject, which is—that I think that you and Jeffrey and Leigh Hunt were the only literary men, of numbers whom I know (and some of whom I had served),

who dared venture even an anonymous word in my favour just then—and that of those three I had never seen *one* at all—of the second much less than I desired—and that the third was under no kind of obligation to me whatever; 5 while the other *two* had been actually attacked by me on a former occasion—*one* indeed with some provocation, but the other wantonly enough. So you see you have been heaping 'coals of fire, etc.' in the true gospel manner, and I can assure you that they have burnt down to my very heart.

10 I am glad that you accepted the Inscription. I meant to have inscribed *The Foscari* to you instead; but firstly I heard that *Cain* was thought the least bad of the two as a composition; and secondly I have abused Southey like a pickpocket in a note to *The Foscari*, and I recol- 15 lected that he is a friend of yours (though not of mine), and that it would not be the handsome thing to dedicate to one friend any thing containing such matters about another. However I'll work the Laureate before I have done with him, as soon as I can muster Billingsgate there- 20 for. I like a row—and always did from a boy—in the course of which propensity I must needs say that I have found it the most easy of all to be gratified, personally and poetically. You disclaim 'jealousies;' but I would ask, as Boswell did of Johnson, 'of *whom could* you be *jealous*?'— 25 of none of the living certainly, and (taking all and all into consideration) of which of the dead? I don't like to bore you about the Scotch novels (as they call them, though two of them are wholly English, and the rest half so), but nothing can or could ever persuade me, since I was the first 30 ten minutes in your company, that you are *not* the Man. To me those novels have so much of 'Auld lang syne' (I was bred a canny Scot till ten years old), that I never move without them; and when I removed from Ravenna to Pisa the other day, and sent on my library before, they were the

only books that I kept by me, although I already have them by heart.

January 27, 1822.

I delayed till now concluding in the hope that I should have got *The Pirate*, who is under way for me, but has not yet hove in sight. I hear that your daughter is married. 5 and I suppose by this time you are half a grandfather—a young one, by the way. I have heard great things of Mrs. Lockhart's personal and mental charms, and much good of her lord. That you may live to see as many novel Scotts as there are Scott's novels, is the very bad pun, 10 but sincere wish of

Yours ever most affectionately, etc.

PS.—Why don't you take a turn in Italy? You would find yourself as well known and as welcome as in the Highlands among the natives. As for the English, you would be with them as in London; and I need not add, 15 that I should be delighted to see you again, which is far more than I shall ever feel or say for England, or (with a few exceptions 'of kith, kin, and allies') any thing that it contains. But my 'heart warms to the tartan,' or to anything of Scotland which reminds me of Aberdeen and 20 other parts not so far from the Highlands or that town, about Invercauld and Braemar, where I was sent to drink goat's *fey* in 1795-6, on a threatened decline after the scarlet fever. But I am gossiping, so good night—and the gods be with your dreams! 25

Pray present my respects to Lady Scott, who may perhaps recollect having seen me in town in 1815.

I see that one of your supporters (for, like Sir Hildebrand, I am fond of Guillim) is a *mermaid*; it is my *crest* too, and with precisely the same curl of tail. There's concatenation 30 for you. I am building a little cutter at Genoa, to go a-cruising in the summer. I know *you* like the sea too.

NOTES

PAGE 1. SCOTT. For Byron's comments on Scott's review of *Childe Harold*, Canto in, see his letter to Scott, p. 177. *The Quarterly Review* for October 1816 was not published till February 1817.

PAGE 5, 1. 6. 'Alp, the Adrian renegade', *The Siege of Corinth*, 1. 114.

PAGE 7. HAZLITT. *The Spirit of the Ageism* series of essays on representative contemporaries. Hazlitt applied to himself Iago's words, 'I am nothing if not critical'.

PAGE 8, 1. 10. *poor men's cottages*,—*The Merchant of Venice*, i. iii. 15.

1. 31. *Scrub*, a man of all work in Farquhar's comedy *The Beaux' Stratagem*.

1. 32. *very tolerable*,—*Much Ado about Nothing*, ni. iii. 37.

PAGE 9, 1. 23. *chartered libertine*,—*Henry V*, 1. i. 48.

PAGE 10, 1. 15. *Like proud seas*,—*Two Noble Kinsmen*, n. ii. 20.

1. 21. Byron instructed John Murray, the publisher, to offer to Scott the dedication of *Cain*, and Scott 'acknowledged the obligation' in his letter to Murray of 4 December 1821: 'I accept, with feelings of great obligation, the flattering proposal of Lord Byron to prefix my name to the very grand and tremendous drama of *Cain*.'

PAGE 11, 1. 8. *Farthest from them*,—*Paradise Lost*, i. 247.

1. 12. *None but itself*, Theobald, *Double Falsehood*, III. i. 17.

PAGE 12, 1. 14. *Nothing can cover*, Beaumont and Fletcher, *The False One*, 11. i. 153.

MACAULAY. The occasion of this essay was the publication of Thomas Moore's *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of his Life*, 1830.

PAGE 14, 1. 1. *Jedwood justice*. Jedwood is the district of the Scottish border of which the chief town is Jedburgh. 'Jeddart justice' became proverbial in Scotland from the rigour with which order was enforced, after the accession of James VI to the throne of England, by the Earl of Dunbar, Commissioner for the Borders.

1. 13. *Lewis Goldsmith* (1763-1846), of English birth but of Portuguese-Jewish extraction, was at one time in the service of Napoleon. On his return to England he conducted *The Anti-Gallican Monitor* and wrote *The Secret History of the Cabinet of Bonaparte*, 1811, and *The Secret History of Bonaparte's Diplomacy*, 1812.

PAGE 14, 1. 31. *Arabian Tales*, in the Story of Beder, Prince of Persia, and Jehaun-ara, Princess of Samandal (Jonathan Scott's translation, 1811, iii. 443: probably the translation used by Macaulay).

PAGE 15, 1. 22. *Description is my forte*,—*Don Juan*, v. llii.

1. 33. *Hesiod*,—*Works and Days*, 1. 40.

PAGE 16, 1. 27. *Mar ah*. See Exodus xv. 23.

PAGE 17, 1. 29. *neither sought sympathy*,—*Childe Harold*, iv. 10 (p. 43).

1. 33. *I'll may such contest*,—*Childe Harold*, 11. xciv ('reproof should be 'reproach').

PAGE 19, 1. 13- *lovely melancholy*, Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Nice Valour*, in. i (last line of a song).

1. 18. *sad as night*,—*King John*, iv. i. 15.

1. 22. *Master Stephen*, in *Every Man in his Humour*; e.g. 1. iii. 117, 'I will be more proud, and melancholy, and gentleman-like, than I have been'.

PAGE 20, 1. 1. The Minerva Press was founded by William Lane, at 33 Leadenhall Street, London, and took its name in 1790 from the figure of Minerva over the doorway. *The Minerva Press 1790-1820*, by Dorothy Blakey, 1939, contains a list of over eight hundred publications.

SWINBURNE. This Preface was written at the height of Swinburne's admiration of Byron. His admiration declined, and in his essay on 'Wordsworth and Byron', published in *The Nineteenth Century* for April and May 1884, and reprinted in *Miscellanies*, 1886, he was moved by Matthew Arnold's praise of Byron to point out, with characteristic emphasis, Byron's shortcomings as a poet; but what he had said about 'the excellence of sincerity and strength' remained unaffected.

PAGE 21. ARNOLD. This preface was first printed as an article on Byron in *Macmillan's Magazine* for March 1881, and was reprinted in the same year, with slight alterations, in Arnold's selections from the poetry of Byron in *The Golden Treasury Series*.

PAGE 22, 1. 8. Almack's Assembly Rooms, in King Street, St. James's, were opened in 1765 by William Macall, a retired valet of the Duke of Hamilton, and were called 'Almack's' by a transposition of the letters of his name. They remained a fashionable social centre till the middle of the nineteenth century.

Lady Jersey, Sarah Sophia Fane (1785-1867), daughter of the tenth Earl of Westmorland, wife of George Villiers, fifth Earl of Jersey, a leader of London fashion. She was friendly to Byron at the time of his separation from his wife.

PAGE 23, l. 25. *the moment he reflects*, Goethe's observation, recorded by Eckermann (18 January 1825).

CHILDE HAROLD

Byron set sail from Falmouth on 2 July 1809, and was away from England for almost exactly two years. He landed at Lisbon and rode through Portugal and Spain to Seville and Cadiz. He then went by boat to Gibraltar, and on 16 August sailed for Malta and Albania. The remainder of the two years was spent mostly in Greece, then under Turkish rule.

During these travels he wrote 'a great many stanzas in Spenser's measure, relative to the countries he had visited', and introduced the 'fictitious character' of Childe Harold 'for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece*'. The method of composition explains why many of the passages can easily be taken out of the setting which he gave them. On his return to England he was encouraged to prepare the poem for the press. It was published, in two Cantos, on 10 March 1812. Then, in Byron's own words, 'I awoke one morning and found myself famous'.

Cantos 1 and 11 were a complete poem in themselves. But when in April 1816 Byron left England for good, after his marriage and his separation from his wife, and travelled by Ostend, Brussels, and the Rhine to the Lake of Geneva, he took up the theme which in 1812 he had no intention of continuing, and made his new experiences the subject of a third Canto. It was finished at Ouchy, near Lausanne, by the end of June, and was published in November. Byron thought that it was 'better* than the earlier Cantos which had made his reputation, and its superiority was at once recognized. (See the passages from Scott's review, pp. 1-7.) The descriptions had gained in force and vividness, and the whole poem shows deeper thought and feeling. Byron's experiences in England since his earlier travels had driven him in upon himself, and had helped to reveal his gifts as a poet.

From Switzerland Byron passed on to Italy, where he found the subjects for his Fourth Canto. He began it in June 1817 as a continuation of the Third, and wrote with so great rapidity that on 20 July he was able to announce the completion of the first draft; but many additions were made before the poem was published on 28 April 1818. Though begun as a continuation, it has many points of distinction from the earlier Cantos. It may be read as an independent poem. Byron now speaks in his own person, and only towards the conclusion does he men-

tion the Pilgrim, and not by name. But the main distinction lies in the new subjects. 'It treats', he said, 'more of ~~world of~~ ^{world of} works of art than of nature.' His imagination was fired by the Past greatness of Italy in architecture, and sculpture, and literature. In the dedication of this Canto he described it as 'the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions'. He was yet to write *Don Juan*; but that was a judgement which, when he made it, could not be challenged.

Childe is a youth of gentle birth, a son of a noble family awaiting knighthood; cf. the ballads 'Child Waters', 'Child Maurice' and *King Lear*, in. iv. 187, 'Childe Rowland to the dark tower came'.

PAGES 26, 27. Byron passed through the south of Spain while the Peninsular War was raging. He was not an eye-witness of the battle of Talavera (27 and 28 July 1809); he was at Cadiz when the English and Spanish forces under Wellington won this hard-fought victory over the French.

1. 9. *Andalusia*, southern Spain. Byron alludes to the Spanish romances and songs of chivalry inspired by the fight against the Moors, who were driven from Granada in 1492.

1. 39. Cf. *Macbeth*, 1. ii. 49, 'Where the Norwegian banners flout the sky'.

1. 47. A reminiscence of Collins's Ode 'How sleep the Brave', ll. 9, 10:

There *Honour* comes, a Pilgrim grey,
To bless the Turf that wraps their Clay.

PAGES 29-31. Greece had been conquered by the Turks in 1460, and was still under Turkish rule.

1. 7. *Thermopylae's sepulchral strait*, the pass of Thermopylae where the Spartan Leonidas and his Three Hundred resisted to the death the onslaught of the Persians in 480 B.C. *Eurotas*, the river at Sparta.

1. 10. *Phyle*, the fort commanding the pass from Boeotia into Attica, which was seized by Thrasybulus in 404 B.C. when preparing to expel the Thirty Tyrants from Athens.

1. 34. *Helots*, the serfs of ancient Sparta; their 'shades' were avenged as the descendants of their masters were now enslaved by the Turks.

1. 48. *Tritonia*, Athena; her temple at Sunium, the promontory at the extreme south of Attica, gave rise to the modern name Cape Colonna from its ruined columns. Cf. 'The Isles of Greece', 1. 91 (p. 149), 'Place me on Sunium's marbled steep'.

1. 57. *Thine olive*, the gift of Athena (Minerva) to Attica.

1. 58. *Hymettus*, the mountain to the east of Athens.

1. 62. *Mendeli*, a corruption of the name Pentelicus; the marbles for the temples on the Acropolis were taken from the quarries on the side of this mountain, twelve miles to the north-east of Athens.

1. 72. *Athena's tower*, the Parthenon. *Marathon*, on the east coast of Attica, where the Greeks checked the invasion of the Persians in 490 B.C.

PAGES 32-3. Byron married Anna Isabella Milbanke, only child of Sir Ralph Milbanke, of Halnaby, Yorkshire, and Seaham House, County Durham, on 2 January 1815. Augusta Ada Byron, 'sole daughter of my house and heart', was born on 10 December. Byron and Lady Byron parted in January 1816, a deed of separation was signed on 21 April, and on 24 April he left London for the Continent.

PAGES 33-6. The battle of Waterloo was fought on 18 June 1815, and the preliminary battle of Quatre Bras two days previously. On the evening of the 15th the Duchess of Richmond gave her famous ball in Brussels. Wellington appeared at it, after having given orders for his troops to march on Quatre Bras, and revealed nothing by his manner; but the news spread quickly and the officers gradually left. 'The conflicting emotions of such an occasion were never, in all probability, more finely described' (Tozer).

1. 20. *Brunswick's fated chieftain*, Frederick William, Duke of Brunswick, brother of Caroline, Princess of Wales, fell at Quatre Bras. His father was killed at Auerbach, 1806.

1. 46. *Cameron's gathering*, a pibroch played on the bagpipes; *Lochiel*, the chief of the clan Cameron, S.W. Invernesshire; *Albyn*, Scotland, particularly the Highlands.

1. 54. *Evan's, Donald's fame*. Evan Cameron fought for James II at Killiecrankie. His grandson, Donald Cameron (the Lochiel of Campbell's *Lochiel's Warning*), fought for Prince Charlie at Culloden. Another descendant, John Cameron, commanded the 92nd Highlander's at Quatre Bras, and was killed.

1. 55. *Ardennes*. Byron treats the forest of Soignies, between Brussels and Waterloo, as part of the Ardennes on the frontier of Belgium and France.

1. 73. *loftier harps than mine*. Byron has in mind *The Field of Waterloo* by Scott, published October 1815. But cf. p. 95, 1.16.

IL 74-81. *young, gallant Howard*, Frederick Howard, third son of the fifth Earl of Carlisle. Byron 'did his sire some wrong' by satirizing his verse in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

PAGES 36-41. These two passages give us the best statement of Byron's feeling for external Nature. They are sometimes

said to show Wordsworthian influence; but though Byron had read Wordsworth—and had come into personal contact with Shelley—they are in no sense derivative. They are a personal and sincere expression of what the mountains and lakes of Switzerland had made him feel and think.

PAGE 37, 1. 1. *Leman*, the Lake of Geneva; 'Lac Leman'.

1. 17. *suspended oar*. Cf. Wordsworth, *Remembrance of Collins*, 1. 22, 'The dripping of the oar suspended', itself suggested by 'suspend the dashing oar' in Collins's *Ode on the Death of Thomson*.

1. 29. *your bright leaves*, of the book of fate; the reference is to astrology, the art of predicting or judging the influence of the stars upon human affairs.

1. 52. *Cytherea's zone*, the girdle of Venus; as it made the wearer be loved, so 'the feeling infinite' binds all things with beauty.

1. 55. *the early Persian*, referred to by Herodotus, i. 131. E. H. Coleridge suggests that Byron may have remembered a passage in Wordsworth's *Excursion*, iv. 671:

Whether the Persian—zealous to reject
Altar and image, and the inclusive walls
And roofs of temples built by human hands—
To loftiest heights ascending, from their tops,
With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow,
Presented sacrifice to moon and stars, etc.

1.82. *the swift Rhone*. 'The reference is to the valley in the neighbourhood of the Perte du Rhône at Bellegarde below Geneva' (Tozer). The stanza echoes Coleridge's *Christabel*, 1. 421:

They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Byron admitted that he had 'paraphrased without scruple the same idea in *Childe Harold** (Medwin, *Conversations of Lord Byron*, 1824, p. 263).

PAGES 41, 42. Gibbon lived at Lausanne from 1783 to 1793 and there completed *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Voltaire lived at Ferney, four miles north of Geneva, from 1758 till his death in 1778.

II.10-18. A judicial statement of Voltaire's varied gifts. If he did not plan to 'shake a throne', the freedom of thought which he championed contributed to the French Revolution.

11. 19-27. Gibbon's treatment of early Christianity in the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of *The Decline and Fall* 'stung his foes to wrath', and called forth many replies.

PAGES 42-4. Byron lived in Venice or its neighbourhood during the first two years of his residence in Italy.

1. 1. *the Bridge of Sighs*, the covered bridge between the palace of the Doge and the State prison.

1. 8. *the winged Lion*, the Lion of St. Mark, the emblem of Venice.

1. 10. *Cybele*, the 'Great Mother' of classical mythology, the earth goddess, the goddess of the powers of nature and the arts of cultivation. She was represented as wearing a mural or "turreted crown."

1. 19. 'The well-known song of the gondoliers, of alternate stanzas from Tasso's *Jerusalem*, has died with the independence of Venice' (Hobhouse's note; see p. 161, 1. 13). Venice lost her independence in 1797, when the office of Doge was abolished (hence 'dogeless', 1. 31).

1. 33. *Rialto*, the Exchange of Venice (cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, 1. iii. 20, 108; in i. i. 1); *the Moor*, Othello, 'the Moor of Venice'; *Pierre*, (pronounced 'Peer'), the hero of Otway's *Venice Preserved*, a tragedy which was still often acted in Byron's time.

1. 45. *void*. John Walker, in his *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1775, gives 'bide', 'hide', 'ride' as allowable rhymes to 'void'. Cf. p. 46, 1. 25.

PAGES 44-5. During his exile Byron had many bitter things to say of what he here calls 'the inviolate island of the sage and free'. In a letter of 7 June 1819 he wrote: 'I am sure my bones would not rest in an English grave, or my clay mix with the earth of that country.'

1. 23. *Sparta hath many a worthier son*', the reply of the mother of Brasidas, the Spartan general, when she heard that he had fallen in battle. Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, ch. xxv.

PAGE 45. This passage is notable for the linking of Scott with the great masters of Italian literature.

1. 1. Torquato Tasso, author of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, was imprisoned for several years by the Duke of Ferrara; but 'injured shade' refers to his treatment by later critics, and particularly by Boileau, who in his ninth Satire had said that a fool may prefer 'le clinquant (tinsel) du Tasse à tout Tor de Virgile'. Cf. his *Art poétique*, iii. 209.

1. 12. *The Bards of Hell and Chivalry*, Dante and Ariosto. Dante, the 'father' of Italian poetry, was a native of Florence, the chief city of Tuscany.

PAGES 46-9. Byron saw Rome for the first time on 29 April 1817 and remained there for about four weeks. 'As a *whole, ancient and modern*', he writes in a letter, 'it beats Greece, Constantinople, every thing—at least that I have ever seen. But I can't describe, because my first impressions are always strong and confused, and my Memory *selects* and reduces them to order, like distance in the landscape, and blends them better, although they may be less distinct' (Letter to Murray, 9 May 1817). Rome awakened beyond any other place his sense of history. The dominant note of the descriptions which he was soon to write—when his Memory could 'select'—is struck in these words:

There is given
Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic.

1. 10. *Niobe*, Queen of Thebes, who boasted of her twelve children, and lost them all.

1. 14. *The Scipios' tomb*. It was discovered in 1780, when the relics were removed; the inscriptions are now in the Vatican museum.

1. 22. *the steep*, the *clivus Capitolinus*, by which the chariots of victorious generals ascended the Capitoline Hill.

1. 30. *Brutus*, by the assassination of Julius Caesar, 44 B.C.

PAGES 47-9. The Coliseum, or Colosseum, the great amphitheatre at Rome, was built towards the end of the first century A.D. in the reigns of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. It was designed for gladiatorial combats and other shows, and could hold 80,000 spectators.

II. 28 ff. *the Gladiator lie*. This famous passage was inspired by the statue of the Dying Gladiator in the Capitoline Museum. But Byron's purpose was to describe not so much the statue as the death which the statue represents.

1. 40. *Danube*. The Dying Gladiator of the statue is now believed to represent a Gaul. Dacia was the Roman province to the north of the Danube.

1. 73. *While stands the Coliseum*. 'Quamdiu stabit Colyseus, stabit et Roma; quando cadet Colyseus, cadet Roma; quando cadet Roma, cadet et mundus.' This saying of the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims is recorded by Bede (died 735), and is quoted by Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ch. lxxi.

PAGES 50-3. This is the conclusion to the whole poem; hence the mention of the Pilgrim, who had been forgotten in

this Canto. In a stanza not far off Byron had asked 'But where is he, the Pilgrim of my Song?'

The poem begins with the sea and fittingly ends with it. But on this occasion Byron views it from afar.

1. 6. *the Alban Mount*, Mons Albanus, now Monte Cavo, about fifteen miles south-east of Rome. The 'midland ocean' is the Mediterranean.

1. 8. *Calpe's rock*, Gibraltar; *the dark Euxine*, the Black Sea; *Symplegades*, two small islands at the entrance to the Black Sea.

1. 54. *lay*, an example of Byron's carelessness.

1. 62. *the yeast of waves*. Cf. *Macbeth*, iv. i. 53, 'the yesty waves'.

1. 63. *Trafalgar*. 'The Gale of wind which succeeded the battle of Trafalgar destroyed the greater part (if not all) of the prizes—nineteen sail of the line—taken on that memorable day' (Byron's note).

1. 90. *as I do here*. The point of view has changed from the Alban Mount to the ocean.

1. 106. *sandal-shoon and scallop-shell*, emblems of a pilgrim: cf. Ophelia's song, *Hamlet*, iv. v. 23.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

The Prisoner of Chillon is here given in full as the representative of the verse tales which Byron threw off rapidly after the publication of the first two Cantos of *Childe Harold*. It is not so much a tale as a study of a character influenced by his sufferings and surroundings, and is Byron's nearest approach to the manner and teaching of Wordsworth (cf. note on pp. 36-41). Echoes may occasionally be detected of Coleridge's *Christabel* and *The Ancient Mariner*.

The castle of Chillon is at the east end of the Lake of Geneva, south of Montreux. Byron visited it with Shelley on 26 June 1816 during a week's cruise. 'We passed on to the castle of Chillon', says Shelley, 'and visited its dungeons and towers. These prisons are excavated below the lake; the principal dungeon is supported by seven columns, whose branching capitals support the roof. Close to the very walls, the lake is eight hundred feet deep. . . . Close to this long and lofty dungeon was a narrow cell, and beyond it one larger and far more lofty and dark, supported upon two unornamented arches. Across one of these arches was a beam, now black and rotten, on which prisoners were hung in secret. I never saw a monument more terrible of that cold and inhuman tyranny, which it had been the delight of man to exercise over man' (letter to Peacock, 12 July 1816). Byron and Shelley reached

Ouchy on the following day, and there they were detained for two days by bad weather. When they left, *The Prisoner of Chillon* is said to have been completed.

The prisoner was Francis de Bonivard, a citizen of Geneva and an ardent reformer; he was confined in Chillon from 1530 to 1536 for his determined resistance to the Duke of Savoy.

Sonnet on Chillon. 'This noble Sonnet is worthy to stand near Milton's on the Vaudois massacre' (Palgrave). Swinburne calls it one of Byron's 'noblest and completest poems', and adds that 'his few sonnets are all good' (*Essays and Studies*, 1875, p. 250).

1. 1. *Eternal Spirit.* Cf. Pope, *Eloisa to Abelard*, 209, 'Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind \

PAGE 65, 1. 341. *a little isle.* 'Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees, (I think not above three,) and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view' (Byron's note).

PASSAGES FROM THE TALKS

PAGES 67-9. *The Giaour*, the earliest of Byron's Tales, was suggested by his experiences in the eastern Mediterranean. This passage on the vanished greatness of Greece and his hopes for her emancipation should be compared with the passage given from the second Canto of *Childe Harold* (pp. 29-31).

'*Giaour*' is a term of reproach applied to non-Mussulmans, especially Christians. It is pronounced 'jower'; Byron rhymes it with 'power', 'dower'.

1. 36. 'From this line to the conclusion of the paragraph, the MS. is written in a hurried and almost illegible hand, as if these splendid lines had been poured forth in one continuous burst of poetic feeling, which would hardly allow time for the hand to follow the rapid flow of the imagination' (Note in ed. 1837).

PAGES 69-71. *The Corsair* is another oriental tale, and again Byron speaks of Greece. These lines were 'written on the spot in the Spring of 1811'; they were incorporated in *The Corsair*, which runs to over 1,800 lines and was planned and completed with characteristic speed during the last fortnight of 1813*

1. 20. *thy Wisest, Socrates.*

1. 46. *Theseus' fane*, the Theseion, the best preserved temple of ancient Greece.

PAGES 71-3. *Lara* is a sequel to *The Corsair*, and was written with like speed, 'amidst balls and fooleries, and after coming

home from masquerades and routs' (letter to Moore, 8 June 1822). The interest of the poem lies in the character of Lara—a portrait of Byron as he sometimes saw himself, or wished to be seen.

PAGES 73-4. *The Island*, Byron's last Tale, is founded on the story of the mutiny on H.M.S. *Bounty* and of the life of the mutineers on Tahiti. In this brief but memorable passage Byron's fancy strays to the scenes of his boyhood in Scotland.

1. 12. *Loch-na-gar*, a mountain of the Aberdeenshire Highlands. Byron's first volume, *Hours of Idleness* (1807), contained a poem on 'Lachin y gair*. C1.pp. 96 and 179.

PROMETHEUS

This impersonal poem is distinguished by its severity of manner, in keeping with its subject. * Of the *Prometheus* of Æschylus', says Byron, 'I was passionately fond as a boy (it was one of the Greek plays we read thrice a year at Harrow). . . . The *Prometheus* . . . has always been so much in my head, that I can easily conceive its influence over all or any thing that I have written' (letter to Murray, 12 Oct. 1817).

The poem was written in July 1816, when Byron was in daily intercourse with Shelley, but *Prometheus Unbound* was not begun till 1818.

DON JUAN

Byron began *Don Juan* in the autumn of 1818, a few months after finishing *Childe Harold*, and the first two Cantos were published in the following year. Others followed steadily till the sixteenth was published in 1824; part of a seventeenth remained in manuscript at the time of his death.

My poem's epic, and is meant to be
Divided in twelve books,

he said in the first Canto; but at the end of the second he hinted that there might be twenty-four. In the twelfth (lv) he proposes 'to canter gently through a hundred'. This twelfth Canto was only 'the twelfth canto of our introduction' (lxxxvii):

The plan at present's simply in concoction.

There was no reason why the poem should not have gone on indefinitely. The hero is sent on a long series of adventures, in Spain, the Aegean, Constantinople, Russia, and England, and might have been sent on many more. 'I meant', says Byron, 'to take him the tour of Europe . . . I meant to have made him a *Cavalier Servente* in Italy, and a cause for a divorce in England, and a Sentimental 'Werther-faced man' in Germany, so as to show

the different ridicules of the society in each of those countries, and to have displayed him gradually *gate* and *blase* as he grew older, as is natural' (letter to Murray, 16 Feb. 1821). No plan was to be allowed to check his purpose of giving a picture of life as he knew it, stripped of its illusions; and the better to fulfil this purpose he indulged in digressions on any subject that occurred to him, responding at once to the mood of the moment. He passes from grave to gay, from gentle to severe, but he always returns to the mood of light-hearted ridicule of the vanities of man's occupations. Nowhere else does Byron exhibit so fully the range of his gifts, or so clearly the different facets of his temperament. In other poems he speaks of himself, directly or indirectly; in *Don Juan* he stands revealed.

The poem divided the critics. It was objected to on the score of morality. In reply, Byron cited

the purer page
Of Smollett, Prior, Ariosto, Fielding,
Who say strange things for so correct an age. (iv. xcvi.)

'*Don Juan*', he said, 'will be known by and by for what it is intended—a *Satire* on *abuses* of the present states of Society, and not an eulogy of vice' (letter to Murray, 25 Dec. 1822). Scott was enthusiastic in its praise, and so was Shelley.

Byron had already found in *Beppo* (1818) the opportunities offered him by a humorous treatment of the *ottava rima*. He told Murray that he had written 'a poem (of 84 octave stanzas), humorous, in or after the excellent manner of Mr. Whistlecraft' (letter of 12 Oct. 1817). He referred to William Hookham Frere's *Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work, by William and Robert Whistlecraft, . . . intended to comprise the most interesting particulars relating to King Arthur and his Round Table*, 1817. Somewhat later he made a translation of part of Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, and announced it to Murray thus: 'I have finished my translation of the first Canto of the *Morgante Maggiore* of Pulci, which I will transcribe and send: it is the parent, not only of *Whistlecraft*, but of all jocose Italian poetry' (letter of 21 Feb. 1820). Similarly he says in *Don Juan*, iv. vi, 'Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme'.

PAGES 76-8. Though Byron says that he takes 'our ancient friend *Don Juan*', he takes little more than the name. His *Don Juan* is too light-hearted and uncalculating to resemble the hero of the Spanish story. Like Childe Harold he serves the function of 'giving some connexion to the piece'.

1. 7. *the pantomime*. *Don Juan, or the Libertine Destroyed*, a tragic pantomimical entertainment, was produced at the Royalty

Theatre on 12 August 1787, and was afterwards performed at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. It was 'very successful whenever performed'. It was based on *The Libertine* of Thomas Shadwell.

1. 17. *Agamemnon*, 'vixere fortes ante Agamemnona multi', Horace, *Odes*, iv. ix. 25.

1. 25. *in medias res*, Horace, *Ars Poetica*, l. 148.

1. 44. *the proverb*, 'Quien no ha visto Sevilla, no ha visto maravilla'.

PAGES 81-6. Much of this description is versified from accounts of shipwrecks in Sir John Graham Dalyell's *Shipwrecks and Disasters at Sea*, 1812. This was pointed out in a letter to *The Monthly Magazine*, August and September 1821. 'With regard to the charges about the Shipwreck', Byron wrote to Murray, 'I think that I told both you and Mr. Hobhouse, years ago, that there was not a *single circumstance* of it not taken from *fact*; not, indeed, from any *single* shipwreck, but all from *actual* facts of different wrecks. Almost all *Don Juan* is *real* life, either my own, or from people I knew. . . . I never meant to conceal this at all, and have only not stated it, because *Don Juan* had no preface nor name to it.' (letter of 23 Aug. 1821). Byron made some use of the *Narrative* by his grandfather, Admiral John Byron, of the wreck of the *Wager*, published 1768.

PAGES 88-90. This digression on English poetry—which follows shortly after 'The Isles of Greece' (see p. 146)—contains Byron's severest criticism of Wordsworth. The third Canto of *Childe Harold* shows that he found much in Wordsworth to admire, but he objected to Wordsworth's attitude to Dryden and Pope.

1. 5. *Johnson*, See the Life of Milton in *The Lives of the Poets*.

1. 12. *Doctor Currie*, James Currie, M.D., the first editor and biographer of Burns, 1800.

1. 18. *Pantisocracy*, the form of government giving equal rights to all which Southey and Coleridge proposed in 1795 to establish in a new community on the banks of the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania.

1. 19. *Wordsworth unexcised, unhired*. Wordsworth was appointed Distributor of Stamps for the County of Westmorland in 1813.—The Wanderer in *The Excursion* is a Pedlar.

1. 22. *the Morning Post*. Coleridge began to contribute to this paper in 1798.

1. 24. *milliners of Bath*. Coleridge married Sarah Fricker in October 1795, and Southey married her sister Edith in November. They had left Bath for Bristol after their father's

death, and had been earning their living, but there appears to be no good evidence that they were ever 'milliners'.

1.33. *Horace*, 'indignor quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus', *AYS Poetica*, 1. 359.

1. 36. *his dear 'Waggoners'*. Wordsworth had brought out in 1819 both *The Waggoner* and *Peter Bell*. The last four lines of this stanza refer to the opening of the latter poem:

There's something in a flying horse,
There's something in a huge balloon;
But through the clouds I'll never float
Until I have a little Boat,
Shaped like a crescent-moon.

1. 56. *Can sneer*. In the 'Essay Supplementary to the Preface' in the edition of 1815 Wordsworth had said that Dryden's lines in the description of Night in *The Indian Emperor* were *vague, bombastic, and senseless'.

PAGES 90-2. 'I have my horses here [Ravenna]—*saddle* as well as carriage—and ride or drive every day in the forest, the *Pineta*, the scene of Boccaccio's novel, and Dryden's fable of Honoria, etc. etc' (letter to Murray, 29 June 1819).

Ravenna was the chief Roman port in the Adriatic under the emperors. 'As early as the fifth or sixth century of the Christian era, the port of Augustus was converted into pleasant orchards, and a lovely grove of pines covered the ground where the Roman fleet once rode at anchor' (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ch. xxx).

Dryden's *Theodore and Honoria* is based on Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Fifth Day, Novel viii. Boccaccio's Onesti (Dryden's Theodore) sees in this wood the phantom of a lady incessantly hunted with hounds by her rejected lover, and at last wins the obdurate lady of his choice by contriving that she should see this phantom.

PAGES 92-4. This is Byron's longest and best passage on the vanity of fame. Cf. p. 81.

1. 28. *De Foix*. 'The pillar which records the battle of Ravenna [1512] is about two miles from the city, on the opposite side of the river to the road towards Forli. Gaston de Foix, who gained the battle, was killed in it; there fell on both sides twenty thousand men' (Byron's note).

1. 33. *Dante's bones*. Dante died at Ravenna 14 September 1321. His mausoleum, 'more neat than solemn', is attached to the north side of a church, at the end of a street.

PAGES 96-6. During the eight years since Waterloo, Wellington had been showing that he was a better soldier than

politician. With the restoration of Louis XVIII, and the reversal of the principles expressed in the French Revolution, 'the doctrine of Divine Right', in Macaulay's words, 'has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy'.

1. 8. *Nay*. 'Query, Ney?—Printer's Devil' (Byron's note). Marshal Ney, 'le Brave des braves', was accused of treason to Louis XVIII after Waterloo, and shot December 1815.

1. 16. Cf. p. 35 l. 73 and p. 157 l. 20 note.

1. 17. *the best of cut-throats*. See *Macbeth*, III. iv. 17.

PAGES 96, 97. These stanzas were written about the same time as the passage quoted from *The Island*, p. 73.

1. 2. *dear Jeffrey*. Byron wrongly assumed that Francis Jeffrey wrote the unfavourable article on 'Hours of Idleness' in *The Edinburgh Review*, and satirized him in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. But Jeffrey, who never harboured malice, was indifferent to the attack; he wrote in high praise of the first Canto of *Childe Harold*, and regularly reviewed each new poem with enthusiasm mingled with judicious censure till Byron came to look upon him as his 'grand patron' (letter of 10 June 1822). When told that the review of the three dramas was not so favourable, he replied: 'nothing that has or may appear in Jeffrey's review can make me forget that he stood by me for ten good years, without any motive to do so but his own good will' (letter of 17 May 1822).

1. 15. *half a Scot*. His mother, Catherine Gordon, was the last of the Gordons of Gight, descended from James I of Scotland, the author of *The Kingis Quair*.—Byron was born in London, but his mother took him to Aberdeen at the age of two, and there or in the neighbourhood he lived till he was ten.

1. 19. *The Dee, the Don*, the two rivers at Aberdeen.

Balgounie's brig, the bridge over the Don near Old Aberdeen. Byron recalls 'the awful proverb' which had made him pause to cross it. 'The saying as recollected by me was this, but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age:—

Brig o' Balgounie, black's your wa':
Wi' a wife's ae son, and a mear's ae foal,
Doun ye shall fa'.'

1. 22. *Banquo's offspring*. See *Macbeth*, iv. i.

1. 31. *scotch'd not kil'd*. See *Macbeth*, in. ii. 13.

1. 32. *mountain and of flood*. See *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, vi. ii. 4.

PAGES 98-100. In all the editions published during Byron's lifetime, this account of contemporary poetry, and of his

place in it, did not contain lines 21-32; their omission was marked by asterisks.

1.16. *turnkey Lowe*, Sir Hudson Lowe, governor of St. Helena during Napoleon's captivity.

1. 17. *Moore and Campbell*, Neither 'reigned' as Scott had done in the days of *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*; but both enjoyed wide popularity, Campbell for his *Pleasures of Hope* and poems on national events, and Moore for his songs. Campbell's reputation remained stationary after the publication of *Gertrude of Wyoming* in 1809. Byron's 'after' appears to rest largely on Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, 1817.

1. 22. *Rowley Powley*, the Rev. George Croly (1780-1860), a popular preacher, author of *Paris in 1815*, a poem, 1817, *The Angel of the World, an Arabian Poem*, 1820, and *Catiline, a Tragedy*, 1822. E. H. Coleridge records the MS. reading 'Beneath the reverend Cambyzes Croly',—which helps to explain 1. 31. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, IL iv. 425.

1. 25. This difficult and unpleasing stanza—rightly omitted in the original editions—is an attack on the Rev. Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868), Professor of Poetry at Oxford 1821-31 (1. 30 may allude to this), afterwards Dean of St. Paul's. Byron thought well of his *Fall of Jerusalem*, 1820, but resented his criticisms in *The Quarterly* and threatened to give him 'and others of the crew something that shall occupy their dreams' (letter to Murray, 31 Aug. 1821). Milman's *Belshazzar* had appeared in 1822.

1. 33. *my gentle Euphues*, Bryan Waller Procter (1787-1874), 'Barry Cornwall'. E. H. Coleridge points out that *The Edinburgh Review* for January 1820 made this distinction between him and Byron in the review of his *Sicilian Story*.

1. 39. *Landor*. Walter Savage Landor shows his appreciation of Southey best in his *Imaginary Conversations*, which date from 1824. Byron knew that they were friends, and held many views in common; but why he called Landor 'that deep-mouth'd Bceotian' is not clear.

1. 41. *Keats*, Byron wrote thus to Murray, the publisher of *The Quarterly Review*, on 30 July 1821: 'Are you aware that Shelley has written an elegy on Keats, and accuses the *Quarterly* of killing him ?

"Who killed John Keats ?"

" I " , says the *Quarterly*,
So savage and Tartarly;
"'Twas one of my feats"

. . . His *Hyperion* is a fine monument, and will keep his name.

I do not envy the man who wrote the article: your review people have no more right to kill than any other foot pads. However, he who would die of an article in a review would probably have died of something else equally trivial.' The review was of *Endymion* and was by John Wilson Croker. It appeared more than two years before Keats's death. Cf p. 170 l. 29.

1. 59. *dreadful trade . . . samphire*. See *King Lear*, iv. vi. 15.

PAGES 100-4. The 'Norman Abbey' is Newstead, to which Byron succeeded on the death of his grand-uncle. Founded by Henry II by way of atonement for the murder of Becket, it was given by Henry VIII to Sir John Byron at the dissolution of the monasteries. Byron began to live there in 1808, and sold it in 1817 after he had left England for good. It is about eight miles to the north of Nottingham.

1. 132. *Salvatore*, *Salvator Rosa*. Byron admits in a note, quoted by E. H. Coleridge, that 'the wicked necessity of rhyming obliges me to adapt the name to the verse'.

PAGES 105-7. In this picture of an English house-party, Byron employs the gentler methods of social satire.

1. 39. *Dolón*. See *Iliad*, x. 341 ff.; but 'whistle* is Byron's fancy.

1. 46. *Izaak Walton*, author of *The Compleat Angler*, 1653.

1. 76. *Squire Westerns . . . Sophias*, See Fielding's *Tom Jones*.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT

When George III died on 29 January 1820, after a chequered reign of sixty years, it fell to Robert Southey as poet laureate to sing his virtues and his kingship. This he did in *The Vision of Judgement*, a poem remarkable both for the boldness of its matter and the novelty of its metre. George III appears at the Judgement-seat, is accused and defended, and enters heaven 'a glorified monarch'; and all is told in a free adaptation of the Latin hexameter, 'a legitimate and good measure, with which our literature ought to be enriched'. Southey had great facility, in verse as in prose, and many passages, if taken by themselves, may be read with interest and pleasure; but as a whole the poem betrayed a lack of humour and was not immune from the charge of absurdity. It might have attracted no more attention than other laureate lays had not Southey gone out of his way in the Preface to make an attack on Byron, whose *Don Juan* he had read with increasing resentment:

'For more than half a century English literature had been distinguished by its moral purity, the effect, and in its turn

the cause, of an improvement in national manners. . . . It is now no longer so; and woe to those by whom the offence cometh! The greater the talents of the offender, the greater is his guilt, and the more enduring will be his shame. . . . Men of diseased hearts and depraved imaginations, who, forming a system of opinions to suit their own unhappy course of conduct, have rebelled against the holiest ordinances of human society, and hating that revealed religion which, with all their efforts and bravadoes, they are unable entirely to disbelieve, labour to make others as miserable as themselves, by infecting them with a moral virus that eats into the soul! The school which they have set up may properly be called the Satanic school; for though their productions breathe the spirit of Belial in their lascivious parts, and the spirit of Moloch in those loathsome images of atrocities and horrors which they delight to represent, they are more especially characterized by a Satanic spirit of pride and audacious impiety, which still betrays the wretched feeling of hopelessness wherewith it is allied.'

This was unmistakably directed at Byron, though Shelley was also involved in the indictment. The sequel was Byron's *Vision of Judgment*, but before it appeared he had replied in a prose appendix to *The Two Foscari* (Dec. 1821), and Southey had rejoined in a letter to *The Courier* (5 Jan.) which showed no desire to shirk controversy, but ended thus:

'One word of advice to Lord Byron before I conclude. When he attacks me again let it be in rhyme. For one who has so little command of himself, it will be a great advantage that his temper should be obliged to *keep tune*. And while he may still indulge in the same rankness and virulence of insult, the metre will, in some degree, seem to lessen its vulgarity.'

Byron did not need this advice. He had already written his *Vision of Judgment*, and the advice only hastened its appearance. Murray had received the poem in October 1821 but could not bring himself to publish it, and in July 1822 he was told by Byron, somewhat curtly, to give the corrected copy of the proofs to John Hunt, the brother of Leigh Hunt. It at last appeared as the first piece in John Hunt's new periodical, *The Liberal*, on 15 October 1822.

Byron parodies the subject-matter of Southey's poem, but adopts the new measure which he had perfected for the purposes of satire—the *ottava rima* of *Don Juan*. (*Judgement* in Southey's title, *Judgment* in Byron's.)

The poem is here given in full.

1. 48. *both generals*. This was written before Byron had heard of the death of Napoleon, 5 May 1821.

1. 54. *With Seven Heads*. See Revelation xvii. 3.

1. 57. *freedom's second dawn*, alluding to the revolutions in 1820 in Spain, Portugal, and Naples.

1. 142. *the last*, Louis XVI, guillotined 21 January 1793.

1. 149. *my sword*. See St. John xviii. 10.

1. 156. *the parvenu*, because St. Paul was not one of the twelve apostles.

1. 157. *St. Bartholomew*, said to have been flayed alive at Athens.

1. 216. *Captain Parry*. William Edward Parry (1790-1855) commanded the expedition which set out in May 1819 in search of the North-West passage and returned in November 1820. The account of his voyage was published in 1821.

1. 224. *Johanna Southcote* (1750-1814), a notorious fanatic who believed that she was to be the mother of a spiritual man, Shiloh, a second Messiah.

1. 256. *champ dos*, enclosed field of tourney.

1. 296. *good intentions*. 'No saint, however, in the course of his religious warfare, was more sensible of the unhappy failure of pious resolves, than Johnson. He said one day, talking to an acquaintance on this subject, "Sir, Hell is paved with good intentions."' Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, under 14 April, 1775.

1. 340. *a minion*, the Earl of Bute: see 1. 564.

1. 364. *Apicius*, the famous epicure in the time of Augustus and Tiberius who squandered his fortune on luxuries.

1. 377. *Five millions*, the Roman Catholics in Great Britain and Ireland. George III consistently opposed all proposals for Catholic Emancipation.

1. 415. *Milton*. See *Paradise Lost*, vi. 470 ff.

1. 426. *gilt key*, a symbol of office of the Lord Chamberlain and other court officials; worn hanging from the waist.

1. 444. *telegraph*. The word was first used in France in 1792 to describe an invention for conveying messages by means of an upright post with movable arms—the semaphore; and this was presumably the idea which the word first raised in Byron's mind.

1. 458. *cloptd of witnesses*. See Hebrews xii. 1.

1. 464. *hell broke loose*. See *Paradise Lost*, iv. 918.

1. 475. *Otaheite's isle*, Tahiti.

1. 513. *multifaced*. Southey, *Vision of Judgement*, v. 270: 'Caitiffs, are ye dumb?' cried the multifaced Demon in anger.'

1. 520. *Wilkes*. John Wilkes (1727-97), M.P. for Aylesbury, attacked the Government in *The North Briton*, and in No. 45

(23 April 1763) impugned the honesty of the King's Speech. In 1768 he was elected M.P. for Middlesex, but was expelled by the House 'for having printed and published a seditious libel'. He was thrice re-elected, and on the last occasion the House declared the defeated candidate duly elected. The popular cry was for 'Wilkes and Liberty*'. He was again elected in 1774, when he was Lord Mayor of London, and took his seat without opposition. He had asserted and secured political rights on which the Government had been encroaching. Burke in his *Present Discontents*, 1770, says that Wilkes 'is pursued for the spirited dispositions which are blended with his vices; for his unconquerable firmness, for his resolute, indefatigable, strenuous resistance against oppression'.

1. 521. *merry, cock-eyed*. So he appears in the well-known caricature by Hogarth.

1. 564. *Bute and Grafton*. John Stuart, third Earl of Bute (1713-92), George III's chief adviser at the beginning of his reign; he resigned the Prime Ministership in 1763, but retained the King's confidence. Augustus Henry Fitzroy, third Duke of Grafton (1735-1811), Prime Minister 1768-70, at the time of the Middlesex elections.

1. 584. *one of his own bills*. Latterly Wilkes voted against the Whigs, and as City Chamberlain spoke as a loyal supporter of the Crown (cf. 'turn'd to half a courtier', 1. 570); but the allusion here is obscure. In November 1795 Pitt introduced a bill for preventing seditious meetings, which Fox opposed as an attack on liberty; but Wilkes had ceased to sit in parliament in 1790.

1. 585. *Call Junius*. Junius was the name taken by an unknown writer who attacked the Government, and particularly the Duke of Grafton, in a series of letters contributed to *The Public Advertiser* from January 1769 to January 1772. They were distinguished by their fearless invective and general mastery of rhetorical device. The secret of their authorship is still unbroken, but the evidence points to Sir Philip Francis. See Lecky, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. 1892, iii. 447.

1. 624. *Iron Mash*. The 'Man in the Iron Mask' was a State prisoner under Louis XIV, latterly at the Bastille, where he died in 1703. His mask was of black velvet. He was guessed to be a brother of Louis XIV, and many others, but he was probably Count Mattioli, an Italian agent convicted of treason.

1. 626. *Three gentlemen at once*. See Sheridan, *The Rivals*, iv. ii.

1. 631. *Tooke*. John Home Tooke (1736-1812)—best known now for his *Diversions of Purley*—supported Wilkes at the time of the Middlesex elections, and the American colonists.

1. 667. *Nominis Umbra*. These words are on the simple title-page of the first collected edition of the Letters—'Junius. Stat Nominis Umbra. Vol. I (II). London ... MDCCLXXII.'

1. 671. *Franklin*. Benjamin Franklin (1706-90), after failing to adjust the relations of the government to the American colonists, took part in the War of Independence and procured for the colonists the aid of France.

1. 675. *Astnodqus*, the name of an evil spirit in *Tobit* iii. But Byron is thinking of *Le Diable Boiteux* of Lesage, in which Asmodée, the demon companion of Don Cleofas, carries him through the air.

1. 681. *the renegado*. In the House of Commons on 14 March 1817 William Smith, member for Norwich, quoted from *Wat Tyler* (see 1. 768) and spoke of 'the settled, determined malignity of a renegado'. Southey replied in 'A Letter to William Smith, Esq. M.P.'. He reprinted it, along with the report of the speech, in his *Essays, Moral and Political*, 1832, vol. ii.

1. 685. *Skiddaw*. Southey's home was Greta Hall, near Keswick, about four miles from the summit of Skiddaw.

1. 710. *an ass as this, like Balaam's*. See Numbers xxii. 28.

1. 728. *you know the rest*. See Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 372-3:

mediocribus esse poetis

Non homines, non di, non concessere columnae.

1. 735* *What! what!*, a common utterance of George III. Henry James Pye (1745-1813) was Southey's predecessor as poet laureate. Cf. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, 1. 102, 'Better to err with Pope than shine with Pye.'

1. 739. *Castlereagh*, Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh (1769-1822), Foreign Secretary 1812-22.

1. 745. *not an ill-favoured knave*. Byron met Southey in 1813, and was struck with his appearance: 'Yesterday, at Holland House, I was introduced to Southey—the best looking bard I have seen for some time. To have that poet's head and shoulders, I would almost have written his Sapphics. He is certainly a prepossessing person to look on, and a man of talent' (letter to Moore, 27 Sept. 1813). 'He is a person of very *epic* appearance, and has a fine head—as far as the outside goes, and wants nothing but taste to make the inside equally attractive' (letter to J. W. Webster, 30 Sept. 1813).

1. 768. *Wat Tyler*, a play written by Southey in 1794, when he was a republican; it was not published then but was brought out without his knowledge, and to his annoyance, in 1817, when he was poet laureate. He included it afterwards in the

'authentic collection' of his poetical works, for these reasons—'that it may not be supposed I think it any reproach to have written it, or that I am more ashamed of having been a republican, than of having been a boy'.

Rhymes on Blenheim, 'The Battle of Blenheim', published in the *Annual Anthology*, 1800, and reprinted in Southey's *Metrical Tales*, 1805.

Waterloo,—*The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo*, 1816.

1. 769. *praises of a regicide*, the inscription 'For the Apartment in Chepstow-Castle where Henry Marten the Regicide was imprisoned Thirty Years', *Poems*, 1797, p. 59. This poem and 'The Battle of Blenheim' were included in the preface to the unauthorized edition of *Wat Tyler* published by W. Hone in 1817.

1. 773. *pantisocracy*. See p. 89, l. 18.

1. 779. *the ungentle craft*. 'See "Life of H. Kirke White"' (Byron's note); in *The Remains of Henry Kirke White*, 1808, i. 23.

1. 781. *Fed, paid*. Southey was a regular contributor to *The Quarterly Review* from its foundation in 1809; with the approval of Canning and other members of the Government it was set up to counteract the Whig influence of *The Edinburgh Review*. His 'muse and morals had been maul'd' in *The Anti-Jacobin*, 1797-8. Most of *Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin* is by Canning.

1. 785. *Wesley*. Southey's *Life of Wesley, and Rise and Progress of Methodism* had recently appeared, in 1820.

1. 807. *Alfonso*. 'King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said, that "had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities"' (Byron's note). Alfonso X, of Castile (1221-84), astronomer; his remark was a criticism of the Ptolomean system.

1.816. *melodious twang*. 'See Aubrey's account of the apparition which disappeared "with a curious perfume and a melodious twang"; or see the *Antiquary*, vol. i' (Byron's note). Aubrey's *Miscellanies*, 1696, p. 67; *The Antiquary*, ch. ix.

1. 829. *his lake*, Derwentwater; cf. l. 685.

1. 840. *Welborn*. Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, 1. i. 6; *precisian*, puritan.

SONGS AND SHORTER POEMS

PAGE 138. 'This morning I swam from Sestos to Abydos. The immediate distance is not above a mile, but the current renders it hazardous;—so much so that I doubt whether Leander's conjugal afiection must not have been a little chilled in his passage to Paradise. I attempted it a week ago, and failed,—

owing to the north wind, and the wonderful rapidity of the tide,—though I have been from my childhood a strong swimmer. But this morning being calmer I succeeded, and crossed the "broad Hellespont" in an hour and ten minutes' (letter to Henry Drury, 3 May 1810). See p. 166.

PAGE 141. *The Destruction of Sennacherib*. See 2 Kings xviii, xix. Ashur is Assyria.

PAGE 144. *So we'll go no more a-roving*. See p. 157.

PAGE 145. *My boat is on the shore*. See p. 160.

PAGE 146. *The Isles of Greece*. This serious and beautiful song—perhaps the best known of all Byron's songs—is characteristically introduced in *Don Juan* after a humorous stanza (in. lxxxvi):

In France, for instance, he would write a chanson;
In England, a six canto quarto tale;
In Spain, he'd make a ballad or romance on
The last war—much the same in Portugal;
In Germany, the Pegasus he'd prance on
Would be old Goethe's—(see what says de Staël);
In Italy, he'd ape the 'Trecentisti';
In Greece, he'd sing some sort of hymn like this t'ye.

1. 7. *Scian . . . Teian*. Chios (now Scio) was one of the reputed birthplaces of Homer; cf. *The Bride of A by dos*, 11. ii. 8, 'The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle.' Teos, a town in Ionia, was the birthplace of Anacreon.

1. 13. *Marathon*. Cf. p. 31, 1. 72.

1. 20. *Salamis*. Xerxes watched the battle of Salamis, 480 B.C., from Mt. Aegaleos, on the mainland north of Athens. Cf. p. 68, 1. 46 and p. 69, 1. 12.

1. 42. *Thermopylae*. Cf. p. 29, 1. 7.

1. 64. *Poly crates*, tyrant of Samos, to whose court Anacreon migrated to escape the Persian yoke.

1. 69. *Miltiades*, the victor of Marathon; *the Chersonese*, now Gallipoli.

1. 74. *Suit.. . Parga*, a district and a town in west Epirus.

1. 79. *Franks*, the name given in the eastern Mediterranean to men of Western race; hence 'Latin fraud'. Cf. p. 30, 11. 31-3, where the Russians are included in the warning.

1. 91. *Sunium*. Cf. p. 31, 1. 48 note.

PAGES 150-1. Byron's last poem. 'This morning Lord Byron came from his bedroom into the apartment where Colonel Stanhope and some friends were assembled, and said with a smile,—"You were complaining, the other day, that I never write any poetry now:—this is my birthday, and I have

just finished something, which, I think, is better than what I usually write." He then produced those noble and affecting verses on his own birthday, which were afterwards found written in his journal, with only the following introduction: "January 22: on this day I complete my thirty-sixth year." (Count Peter Gamba, *A Narrative of Lord Byron's Last Journey to Greece*, 1825, p. 125.)

LETTERS

PAGE 154, 1. 2. *Hobhouse*, John Cam Hobhouse (1786-1869), created Baron Broughton de Gyfford 1851. He came to know Byron at Trinity College, Cambridge, and accompanied him to the Mediterranean. See also p. 161, 1. 13, and p. 174, 1. 20.

1. 26. *my last production*,—*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

PAGE 155, 1. 14. *the volume*. Leigh Hunt's *Feast of the Poets*, originally contributed to *The Reflector*, No. IV, 1811, was published with other poems in 1814. In it Hunt reverted to the idea of Suckling's *Sessions of the Poets*. He added many pages of notes expanding the comments on his contemporaries; the frank but friendly note on Byron speaks, as the date may suggest, of 'his promise rather than his performance'.

PAGE 156, 1. 5. *Gray*. Byron refers to a footnote to one of Hunt's notes: 'It would really be curious to ascertain, how much would be due to Gray, after a diligent inspection of his obligations to the Greek and Italian poets. I doubt whether fifty lines, if so much,—setting aside his Long Story and one or two little humorous pieces' (ed. 1815, p. 120).

1. 12. *Why tea?*—See *The Feast of the Poets*, 11. 99-102:

Apollo just gave them a glance with his eye,
'Spencer—Rogers—Montgomery',—and putting them by,
Begg'd the landlord to give his respects to all three,
And say he'd be happy to see them to tea.

1. 17. *Perry's paper*. Byron's two stanzas on Princess Charlotte ('Weep, daughter of a royal line') were printed on 7 March 1812 in *The Morning Chronicle*, then edited by James Perry, and were reprinted at the end of *The Corsair*, second issue, 1814.

1. 20. *calm indifference*, Sheridan, *The Critic*, 1. i. *ad fin*.

1. 23. *historic doubt*, alluding to Horace Walpole's *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard the Third*, 1768. 'Diccon my master's'—see *Richard III*, v. iii. 305. The only doubt which has arisen is in which foot Byron was lame.

1. 25. *boiteux*,—*Le Diable Boiteux*, by Lesage.

1. 27. *Rosa Matilda*, the pen-name of Charlotte Dacre, novelist (*The Confessions of the Nun of St. Omer*, 1805 ; *Zofloya*,

or the Moor, 1806; *The Passions*, 1811). She married Nicholas Byrne, owner and editor of *The Morning Post*.

PAGE 157, 1. 3. *Wordsworth*. In *The Feast of the Poets* Wordsworth is termed 'the Prince of the Bards of his Time'. In the long note which Byron praises, Hunt says: 'Mr. Wordsworth is capable of being at the head of a new and great age of poetry; and in point of fact I do not deny that he is so already, as the greatest poet of the present; but in point of effect, in point of delight and utility, he appears to me to have made a mistake unworthy of him, and to have sought by eccentricity and by a turning away from society, what he might have obtained by keeping to his proper and more neighbourly sphere.'

PAGE 157, 1. 13. *the Fenice*, the theatre at Venice, 'The Phoenix', built 1791.

1. 19. *editor of the Monthly*, George Griffiths, son of Ralph Griffiths (1720-1803), who founded *The Monthly Review* in 1749.

1. 20. W. W., James Wedderburn Webster (1789-1840), author of *Waterloo, and other Poems*, which was severely criticized in *The Quarterly Review* for 1816. His reply appeared in *The Morning Chronicle* for 19 December 1816. Cf. p. 95, 1. 16.

1. 24. *Partridge*, John Partridge, the almanac-maker. When Swift in his satirical *Predictions for the Year 1708* foretold that Partridge would die on 29 March, and on 30 March published an account of his death and an Elegy, Partridge replied that 'he is not only now alive, but was also alive upon that very 29th of March which it was foretold he should die on'.

PAGE 158, 1. 2. *Gifford*, William Gifford (1756-1826), first editor of *The Quarterly*.

1. 20. *article on Coleridge*, in *The Edinburgh Review* for September 1816. But Jeffrey did not write it.

1. 21. *nothing but roguery*. See 1 Henry IV, 11. iv. 138.

1. 33. *like the cosmogony*,—*The Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xiv.

PAGE 159, 1. 5. *Hodgson*, Francis Hodgson (1781-1852), fellow of King's College, Cambridge. He married in 1814, vacating his fellowship, and in 1816 was given the living of Bakewell in Derbyshire. In 1840 he became Provost of Eton.

1. 10. *Mokanna*, 'the Prophet-Chief, The Great Mokanna' in Moore's *Lalla Rookh*.

1. 20. *the Douglas and the Percy*. See 1 Henry IV, v. i. 116.

1. 26. *flowers and fruits*. See *Lalla Rookh*, 'Paradise and the Peri', 11. 212-15:

Just then beneath some orange trees,
Whose fruit and blossoms in the breeze
Were wantoning together, free,
Like age at play with infancy.

1. 29. *Thurlow's poem*. Edward Ho veil, second Lord Thurlow, included in his *Poems*, 1813 (second edition, p. 162), a poem beginning 'When Rogers o'er this labour bent'. During a hilarious evening with Samuel Rogers and Moore, Byron began to read it out, but stuck at the second word; he treated 'When' as Rogers's Christian name. See *Letters*, ed. Prothero, ii. 211.

1. 30. *Rancliffe*, George Parkyns, second Lord Rancliffe, M.P. for Nottingham. *lb.* iii. 79.

PAGE 160, 1. 1. *Ah, Master Shallow*. See *Henry IV*, ni. ii. 229.

1. 26. *Monk Lewis*, Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818), author of *The Monk*, 1795.

PAGE 161, 1. 3. *St. Gingo*, St. Gingolph, mentioned in a note to *Childe Harold*, in. xcix.

1. 13. *Hob house*. His learned notes were printed with Canto iv. Cf. p. 154, 1. 2.

PAGE 162, 1. 8. This striking passage gives Byron's considered view of contemporary poetry, and may be read in connexion with the corresponding passages selected from *Don Juan*. In his controversy with Bowles about Pope, 1821, he called Pope 'the most perfect of our poets'.

1. 27. *Rogers* published his *Jacqueline* in 1814, in the same volume as Byron's *Lara*. His *Italy* was to follow in 1822.

PAGE 163, 1. 5. *the two Bobs*, Castlereagh and Southey. The letter to which this is a reply is printed in *Letters*, ed. Prothero, iv. 282. Murray had asked in effect to be allowed to edit the Second Canto; 'suffer Gifford', he wrote, 'to prepare what he thinks worthy of you'. He also described Foscolo as 'deploring that a man of your genius will not occupy some six or eight years in the composition of a work and subject worthy of you'.

1. 11. *Foscolo*, Ugo Foscolo (1778-1827), Italian patriot and a voluminous writer, settled in London in 1816. His *Lettere di Jacopo Ortis*, 1798, expressed his indignation when Venice was given to Austria by the Treaty of Campo Formio.

PAGE 164, 1. 12. *sweet voices*. See *Coriolanus*, n. iii. 119.

1. 17. *buy with ye*. See *Merchant of Venice*, 1. iii. 36.

1. 28. *way of life*. See *Macbeth*, v. iii. 22.

1. 33. *Mrs. Leigh*, Byron's half-sister.

PAGE 165, 1. 5. On Byron's ancestry, see p. 96, U15 note.

PAGES 166-70, Cf. pp. 138-9 and 153. William Turner's *Journal of a Tour in the Levant*, 1820, was published by Murray. Byron's letter is reproduced in facsimile in *A Bibliography of Byron*, by T. J. Wise, 1933, ii. 26.

PAGE 170. 1. 25. *The child*, Allegra, Byron's daughter by Jane Clairmont, step-sister of Mary Shelley. Byron had sent her to a convent; there she died in 1822, aged five.

1. 29. *Keats*. Cf. p. 99, l. 41, and note.

PAGE 171, l. 16. *Expect not life*, Johnson, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, 11. 155-6 (quoted not quite accurately).

L 24. *my drama*,—*Marino Faliero*, published 21 April.

1. 29. *a pamphlet*, Byron's Letter to * * * * *^{p.e.} John Murray] *on the Rev. W. L. Bowles's*⁹ *Strictures on the Life and Writings of Pope* is dated 7 February and was published in March. It is the only 'pamphlet on the Pope controversy' which he had published by the date of this letter, and Keats is not mentioned in it. But he had written about Keats in two other pamphlets. In *Some Observations upon an Article in Blackwood's Magazine*, dated 15 March 1820, but, though set up in type, withheld from publication till 1833 (*Works*, vol. xv), he dealt with the attack on Pope in Keats's *Sleep and Poetry*; and in *Observation upon * Observations \ A Second Letter . . . on . . . the Revd. W. L. Bowles's Strictures*, dated 25 March 1821, but suppressed and not published till 1832 (*Works*, vol. vi), he wrote in the same spirit about 'Mr. John Ketch'. In this letter to Shelley he refers to the second of these pamphlets. Both are reprinted in Prothero's edition of the *Letters*, iv. 474 and v. 567. Byron's opinion of Keats changed after he had read the 1820 volume containing *Hyperion*.

PAGE 172, l. 10. *the Stanza*, Canto v, st. lxi, containing an allusion to Queen Caroline. In the original edition its place is taken by asterisks.

1, 23. *Contessa Guiccioli*, Teresa, daughter of Count Gamba of Ravenna, married in 1818, at the age of sixteen, to Count Guiccioli. 'From this wretched degradation [his life in Venice] he was in some measure rescued by a connexion, culpable indeed, yet such as, if it were judged by the standard of morality established in the country where he lived, might be called virtuous' (Macaulay).

PAGE 173, l. 10. *King's blood*. See *Old Mortality*, ch. xiv.

PAGE 174, l. 20. *Douglas Kinnaird* (1788-1830), son of the seventh Baron Kinnaird, was at Trinity College, Cambridge, with Byron and Hobhouse. A banker by occupation, he was an advanced liberal in politics, and a manager of Drury Lane Theatre. He was a trustee under Byron's marriage settlement.

PAGE 177, l. 13. *out of your way in 1817*. See pp. 1-7.

1- 33- *Jeffrey*- See p. 96, l. 2, and note.

Leigh Hunt. See p. 155 and note. In *The Examiner* for 21 April 1816 Hunt has an article on Byron's separation and the malicious gossip about it: 'our Noble Friend with all his faults, which he is the last man upon earth to deny, possesses qualities

which ought to crumble the consciousness of these men into dust'.

PAGE 178, 1. 2. *those three*. Byron never met Jeffrey. He saw Scott frequently in London during the spring of 1815 (Lockhart, *Life of Scott*, 1839, v. 38). They were attacked in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, Scott 'wantonly', and Jeffrey 'with some provocation'.

1. 11. *The Foscari*, i.e. *The Two Foscari*. It was published, without a dedication, in the same volume as *Cain*. 'The name is a dactyl, "Fōscārī"' (letter to Murray, 14 July 1821).

1. 24* *as Boswell did*—but he makes no record of so doing. Byron may have been thinking of the passage near the beginning of the *Life* on Johnson's 'superiority over his fellows'.

1. 30. *you are not the man*. Scott did not publicly admit his authorship of the *Waverley Novels* till 23 February 1827, at a Theatrical Fund Dinner in Edinburgh.

1. 31. *Auld lang syne*. Cf. p. 96.

PAGE 179, 1. 5. *your daughter*, Sophia, married in 1820 to John Gibson Lockhart, Scott's biographer. Their eldest child, John Hugh, born 1821, was the 'Hugh Littlejohn' of *Tales of a Grandfather*.

1. 19. *heart warms to the tartan*. See *The Heart of Midlothian*, ch. xxxiii (near the end): 'your Grace's heart wad warm to the tartan' (Jeanie Deans to the Duke of Argyle).

1. 23. *fey*, the Aberdeenshire pronunciation of 'whey'.

1. 28. *Sir Hildebrand*. See *Rob Roy*, ch. x: 'even my uncle reads Gwillym of a winter night'. The first edition of *A Display of Heraldrie* by John Guillim appeared in 1610.

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