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Byron's
VISION OF
JUDGMENT

Edited by
E. M. EARL

With SOUTHEY'S *vision of
Judgment* as an Appendix

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INTRODUCTION

IN 1820 George III died, after more than eighty years of life and sixty of these as King of England. It was an occasion that could not pass without notice from the Poet Laureate, and Southey paid the official tribute in his *Vision of Judgment*. The poem has no distinction whatever, and would have been forgotten when the immediate interest in the King's death ceased, had it not been for Byron's brilliant parody.

The two poets had met in 1813, and although very different in temperament and interests each had found something to admire in the other. But Byron's life in London until he left England in 1816, and his subsequent adventures on the continent, were regarded with the severest disapproval by Southey, whose ways were well-ordered, serene, and dignified. In his personal relations Southey was generous and appreciative; he never cherished rancour; those whose outlook was widely different from his he received graciously. But he had no tolerance for opinions which attacked the sacredness of home-life. All his happiness was bound up with his home; he bore with equanimity the disappointments that came to him in his literary work, but when, in later life, death and suffering broke in upon the family circle his fortitude failed. In 1819 Byron was about to issue Cantos i and 2 of *Don Juan*, and he wrote a mocking dedication of it to Southey. The dedication was suppressed when the poem was printed, but it had been freely passed round in manuscript, and its existence was an open secret. Southey could not leave such a challenge unanswered. In the Preface to his *Vision of Judgment* he inserted an indictment of 'those monstrous combinations of horrors and mockery, lewdness and impiety, with which English poetry has, in our day, first been polluted'. 'What', he asks, 'should be said of those for whom the thoughtlessness and inebriety of wanton youth can no longer be pleaded, but who have written in sober manhood, and with deliberate purpose?—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 horror 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.*

Byron retorted with his own *Vision of judgment*. It was refused by both Murray and Longman. When it appeared in Leigh Hunt's periodical, *The Liberal*, George IV made a display of filial resentment, and the publisher was prosecuted and fined. But, except for official disapproval, the poem has from the first been enjoyed for its daring wit and lightning-like satire. Miltonic suggestion is cleverly used; in part it serves to heighten the burlesque, in part to create a genuine dignity, as in the figure of Michael. Whether regarded as a travesty of the original *Vision* or considered by itself, apart from the companion piece, Byron's poem is in the very highest rank of the poetry of wit.

Southey is arraigned by Byron on several points, and in all the charges, except one, there is enough truth to justify the satire. Southey certainly produced a great bulk of writing. Some of his work was done not because he felt any strong impulse to deal with the subject, but in order to earn money. Unremitting toil was necessary to provide enough to support the many people dependent on him. He was most ready to accept responsibilities he might not unfairly have refused; Coleridge's family shared his home, and he showed to many other people a generous care that would have been noble in a far wealthier man. But though he wrote to earn bread, he had not as yet succeeded in buttering it on both sides. The Laureateship brought him in only about £90 a year. This was later

supplemented by a pens'Dn of £300, but not till a good many years after Byron had written of Southey. Considerations of worldly honour meant nothing to him, and money he only prized when it secured domestic happiness or was a means to help others. Work that would bring him in £2,000 a year was on one occasion lightly refused because to accept it meant up-rooting his home and removing to London.

Southey was not disposed to underestimate the value of his work, and on this serenity of self-approval Byron has turned the searching light of his ridicule. The poet's appearance, however, is described with approbation. Sensitive to physical beauty, Byron was struck when he saw Southey by his 'epic appearance'. He declared, * To have that poet's head and shoulders I would have written his Sapphics'. So he greets the entrance of Southey in the poem with praise of his good looks.

The point on which Southey was most vulnerable was the change that had taken place in his political views. Like all ardent young poets at the time, he hailed with joy the outbreak of the Revolution in France. Neither had his faith been easily daunted. The poems of his youth voice this enthusiasm, and it suited Byron's purpose very well to contrast the early sentiments of the Poet Laureate with his later support of Church and State.

One of these youthful productions was *yoatiof Arc*, published in 1796, an epic poem dealing with the Maid's success in driving off the English. There are many passages which contrast the oppressions which the peasants of France were enduring with an idyllic past of simplicity and brotherly love; others contain hints of an emancipation to be realized in the future. The Maiden, who is looking round on the beauty of the countryside, exclaims:

Oh, what a blessed world were this
But that the great and honourable men
Have seized the earth, and of the heritage
Which God, the sire of all, to all had given,
Disherited their brethren! Happy those
Who in the after-days shall live, when Time
Hath spoken, and the multitude of years
Taught wisdom to mankind l

Southey also found occasion in the poem to expose some of the evils he saw in his own country. He speaks ironically of the drunkenness at general elections—

When the sons
Of England meet, with watchful care to choose
Their delegates,—wise, independent men,
Unbribing and unbribed.

He attacked military pomp, and Henry V is shown as nothing better than a cruel butcher.

Wat Tyler, another effusion of the same time, is frankly an aspiration towards republican purity. The king, mean-spirited and treacherous, is seen panic-stricken at the menace of the people's rising. He decides to delude them with empty promises of redress, and the Archbishop undertakes he shall have absolution when he breaks his word. Wat Tyler having been treacherously stabbed, his murderer is knighted by the king. On the other hand, the people's leaders are noble-minded men who seek only the good of the community. John Ball, on trial for his part as a leader in the rising, states the case against the oppressor as follows:

Sir Judge, why sit you there, clad in your furs ?
Why are your cellars stored with choicest wines,
Your larders hung with dainties, while your vassal,
As virtuous, and as able too by nature,
Though by your selfish tyranny deprived
Of mind's improvement, shivers in his rags,
And starves amid the plenty he creates ?
I have said this is wrong, and I repeat it !
And there will be a time when this great truth
Shall be confessed,—be felt by all mankind,
The electric truth shall run from man to man,
And the blood-cemented pyramid of greatness
Shall fall before the flash.

Such words written at the end of the eighteenth century referred clearly to the doings in France—too clearly, Southey knew, and he did not publish his revolutionary drama. In 1817, however, to his amazement, he saw announced the issue of *Wat Tyler*, by *Robert Southey*. The work had been brought out surreptitiously

to embarrass the Laureate ~nd was eagerly read. Sixty thousand copies are said to have been sold, and passages from the poem were even read aloud, with malicious intent, in the House of Commons. Southey defended himself with dignity: ' I wrote *Wat Tyler* ', he declared, * as one who was impatient of all the oppressions that are done under the sun. The subject was injudiciously chosen, and it was treated as might be expected by a youth of twenty in such times who regarded only one side of the question.' Later on he republished *Wat Tyler* himself, ' that it may not be supposed I am more ashamed of having been a republican than of having been a boy '.

In 1822, when Byron brought out his *Vision of Judgment*, the joke against the Laureate was still not forgotten.

It was a natural progression Southey had gone through. With time and growing experience he was prepared to see the redemption of society come gradually. Yet the reforms he advocated in the *Quarterly Review* were many and far-reaching. Though opposed to Catholic Emancipation and the Reform Bill, he saw clearly the injustice of the factory system as it then was, and he strove hard to check the growth of pauperism. His views were never dictated by considerations of worldly prudence, although they often lacked logical coherence. But it was good sport to make fun of the man who in youth had been an ardent republican, and then, when chance offered, became a regular contributor to the *Quarterly Review*, avowedly Tory, and was made Poet Laureate; Byron gleefully sets up the old Southey to confound the new.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT,

BY

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED BY THE
AUTHOR OF 'WAT TYLER.'

'A Daniel come to judgment I yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.'

PREFACE

IT hath been wisely said, that ' One fool makes many,' and it hath been poetically observed—

' That fools rush in where angels fear to tread.'—POPE.

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegado intolerance, and impious cant, of the poem by the author of ' Wat Tyler,' are something so stupendous as to form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed ' Satanic School,' the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature; thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere, except in his imagination, such a School, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have ' talked of *him*;' for they laughed consumedly.'

I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert, that they, in their individual capacities, have done more good, in the charities of life, to their fellow-creatures, in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

1stly, Is Mr. Southey the author of ' Wat Tyler '?

2ndly, Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?

3rdly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full Parliament, ' a rancorous renegado?'

4thly, Is he not Poet Laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?

And, 5thly, Putting the four precc ding items together, with what conscience dare *he* call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may ?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the 'Anti-Jacobin,' by his present patrons. Hence all this 'skimble-scamble stuff' about 'Satanic,' and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—'*qualis ab incepto.*'

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared—had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonise a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king,—inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France,—like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new 'Vision,' his *public* career will not be more favourably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them, than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present.

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P.S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this 'Vision'. But, for precedents upon such points, I must refer them to Fielding's * Journey from this World to the next,' and to the Visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated. The reader is also requested to observe, that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity

is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make Him talk, not 'like a school-divine,' but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven"; "and Chaucer's 'Wife of Bath,' Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore,' Swift's 'Tale of a Tub,' and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, &c. may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.

Q. R.

*** Mr. Southey being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the mean time have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate Jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously' one Mr. Landor,' who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the poet laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called '*Gebir*.' Who could suppose, that in this same Gebir the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven,—yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign:

(Prince Gebir having descended into the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view; and he exclaims to his ghostly guide)—

'Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-hung.
He too amongst my ancestors! I hate
The despot, but the dastard I despise.
Was he our countryman?'

'Alas, O king!

Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east.'
'He was a warrior then, nor fear'd the gods?'
'Gebir, he fear'd the demons, not the gods,
Though them indeed his daily face adored;

And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
Squander'd, as stones to exercise a sling,
And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—
Oh madness of mankind! address'd, adored! '

Gebir, p. 28.

I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics of Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat indiscreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of ' great moral lessons ' are apt to be found in strange company.

BYRON'S VISION OF JUDGMENT.

I

1 SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate:
His Eeys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
5 But since the Gallic era ' eighty-eight'
The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,
And ' a pull altogether/ as they say
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

II

The angels all were singing out of tune,
10 Anohorse with having little else to do,
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 th' ethereal blue,
15 Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
A? 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
20 Save the recording angel's black bureau;
Who found, Indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,
That he had stripped off both his wings in quills,
And yefwas 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; 'tis 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:
 Though he himself had sharpen'd 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
 60 Left him nor mental nor external sun:
 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

65 He died! his death made no great stir on earth:
 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.
 70 Of elegy there was the due infusion—•
 Bought also; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,
 Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

X

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all
 The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,
 75 Who cared about the corpse? The funeral
 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
 80 The rottenness of eighty years in gold

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;
 85 But the unnatural balsams merely blight
 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 105
 'Tis 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're 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 *damn'd* 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 guryey 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 nodded 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;
 125 In short, a roar of things extremely great,
 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,
 130 A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er his eyes—
 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:
 135 To which the saint replied, ' Well, what 's the matter ?
 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
 140 The angel. ' Well! he won't find kings to jostle
 Him on his way; but does he wear his head ?
 Because the last we saw here had a tustle,
 And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,
 Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

XIX

145 ' He was, if I remember, king of France;
 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
 150 When I cut ears off, I had cut him down;
 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

185 But bringing up the rear of this bright host
 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-toss'd;
 190 Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
 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,
 195 With such a glance of supernatural hate,
 As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
 He jDatter'd with his keys at a great rate,
 And sweated through his apostolic skin:
 Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
 200 Or some such other spiritual liquor.

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
 205 Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither
 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
 210 Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
 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
 215 O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,
 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 hierarch, the first
 Of essences angelical, who wore
 The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nursed
 Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core 245
 No thought, save for his Master'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—
 250 They knew each other both for good and ill;
 Such was their power, that neither could forget
 His former friend and future foe; but still
 There was a high, immortal, proud regret
 In cither's eye, as if 't were less their will
 255 Than destiny to make the eternal years
 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;
 260 And that the ' sons of God/ like those of clay,
 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 't would take up hours.

xxxiv

- 265 And this is not a theologic tract,
 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
 270 As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
 'T is ^very 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
 275 The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,
 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
 280 There pass'd a mutual glance of great politeness.

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
 3*5 In this poor planet's conquest; nor, alas!
 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:
 320 I think few worth damnation save their kings,—

XLI

- * And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
 Assert my right as lord: and even had
 I such an inclination, 't were (as you
 Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,
 325 That hell has nothing better left to do
 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:
 330 When this old, blind, mad, helgless, weak, poor worm
 Began in youth's first bloom anorlush 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
 335 His Lies had floated on the abyss of time;
 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,
 340 How to a rrunipn first he gave the helm;
 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 Agicjus' 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,—
 380 Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord,
 Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! 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

- 385 * True! he allowed them to pray God; but as
 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,
 390 And cried, ' You may the prisoner withdraw:
 Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,
 While I am guard, may I be damn'd myself!

L

- ¹ Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange
 My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
 395 Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range
 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 shouTH be given,
 400 I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven! '

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,
 405 And condescension to the vulgar's level:
 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.

LIII

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're 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,
 445 And if they ran a race, they would not win it
 '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
 450 Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd
 (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 aerial ship it tack'd, and steer'd,
 455 Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar
 Of the last phrase, which 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
 460 Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;
 They shad^{ow}'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 realized the phrase of ' hell broke loose.'

LIX

465 Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,
 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,
 470 As the first coachman will; and 'midst the war,
 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;
 'T is 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, 't will stretch our immortality.'

LXIV

505 Satan replied, ' To me the matter is
 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
 510 Late majesty of Britain's case with you
 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 ' multi-faced '
 By multo-scribbling Southey). ' Then we'll call
 515 One or two persons of the myriads placed
 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;
 520 But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any.'

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 tickle
 525 By people in the next world; where unite
 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
 530 Assembled, and exclaim'd, ' My friends of all
 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,
 535 Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat!
 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;
 570 You turn'd to half a courtier ere you died,
 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; whatsoever betide,
 575 He won't be sovereign more: you've lost your labour,
 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
 580 Where Belial, upon duty for the day,
 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*—'t was one of his own bills.

LXXIV

585 ' Call Junius! ' From the crowd a shadow stalk'd,
 And at the name there was a general squeeze,
 So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd
 In comfort, at their own aerial ease,
 But were all ramm'd, and jamm'd (but to be balk'd,
 590 As we shall see), and jostled hands and knees,
 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;
 595 Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,
 But nought to mark its breeding or jts birth;
 Now it wax'd little, then again grew bigger,
 With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth;
 But as you gazed upon its features, they
 600 Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say.

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
 635 Of doing people harm about the throne,
 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
 640 Was *really, truly*, nobody at all.

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 fiird as well without the latter too:
 645 And really till we fix on somebody
 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.
 650 ' For *that* you may consult my title-page,'
 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
 655 Aught further ? ' Junius answer'd, * You had better
 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
 660 Exaggeration ? something which may doom
 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, 'tis 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 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,
 700 Or more conceited in his petty sphere:
 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

705 ' But since he's here, let's see what he has done.'
 ' 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,
 710 When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates ? '
 ' Let's hear,' quoth Michael, ' what he has to say:
 You know we're bound to that in every way.'

XC

Now the bajd, glad to get an audience, which
 By no means often was his case below,
 715 Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
 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,
 720 Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

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;
 725 And Michael rose ere he could get a word
 Of all his founder'd verses under waf,
 And cried, * For God's sake stop, my friend! 'twere best—
Non Di, non homines—you know the rest.'

xcn

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
 Pve come again ? No more—no more of that! '

xcm

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; 'twould delay
 765 Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),
 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/

XCVII

He had written praises of a regicide;
 770 He had written praises of all kings whatever;
 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;
 775 Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin—
 Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

XCVIII

He had sung against all battles, and again
 In their high praise and glory; he had call'd
 Reviewing ' the ungentle craft', and then
 780 Become as base a critic as e'er crawl'd—
 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

785 He had written Wesley's life:—here turning round
 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
 790 For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
 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. 800

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.'

en

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
 Persuasion on the part of devils, 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
 Jiao^ vanish'd, 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 1

civ

- 825 Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
 For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
 And at the fifth line knock'd the post down;
 Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,
 Into his lake, for there he did not drown;
- 830 A different web being by the Destinies
 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;
- 835 For all corrupted things are buoy'd like corks,
 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,'
- 840 As Welborn says—' the devil turn'd precisian.'

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;
- 845 All I saw farther, in the last confusion,
 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.

SOUTHEY'S VISION OF JUDGMENT

I

THE TRANCE

- 'T WAS at that sober hour when the light of day is receding,
And from surrounding things the hues wherewith day has
adorn'd them
Fade, like the hopes of youth, till the beauty of earth is
departed:
Pensive, though not in thought, I stood at the window,
beholding
5 Mountain and lake and vale; the valley disrobed of its
verdure;
Derwent retaining yet from eve a glassy reflection
Where his expanded breast, then still and smooth as a mirror,
Under the woods reposed; the hills that, calm and majestic,
Lifted their heads in the silent sky, from far Glaramar
10 Bleacrag, and Maidenmawr, to Grizedal and westermost
Withop.
Dark and distinct they rose. The clouds had gather'd above
them
High in the middle air, huge, purple, pillowy masses,
While in the west beyond was the last pale tint of the twilight;
Green as a stream in the glen whose pure and chrysolite
waters
15 Flow o'er a schistous bed, and serene as the age of the
righteous.
Earth was hushed and still; all motion and sound were
suspended:
Neither man was heard, bird, beast, nor humming of insect,
Only the voice of the Greta, heard only when all is in still-
ness.
Pensive I stood and alone, the hour and the scene had sub-
dued me,
20 And as I gazed in the west, where Infinity seem'd to be
open,
Yearn'd to be free from time, and felt that this life is a thral-
dom.

Thus as I stood, the bell which awhile from its warning had
rested,
Sent forth its note again, toll, toll, through the silence of
evening.

'Tis a deep dull sound that is heavy and mournful at all times,
For it tells of mortality always. But heavier this day 25
Fell on the conscious ear its deeper and mournfuller import,
Yea, in the heart it sunk; for this was the day when the herald
Breaking his wand should proclaim, that George our King
was departed.

Thou art released! I cried: thy soul is delivered from bondage!
Thou who hast lain so long in mental and visual darkness, 30
Thou art in yonder heaven! thy place is in light and in glory.

Come, and behold! . . . methought a startling Voice from
the twilight

Answered; and therewithal I felt a stroke as of lightning,
With a sound like the rushing of winds, or the roaring of
waters.

If from without it came, I knew not, so sudden the seizure; 35
Or if the brain itself in that strong flash had expended
All its electric stores. Of strength and of thought it bereft
me;

Hearing, and sight, and sense, were gone; and when I
awaken'd,

'Twas from a dream of death, in silence and uttermost
darkness;

Knowing not where or how, nor if I was rapt in the body, 40
Nor if entranced, or dead. But all around me was blackness,
Utterly blank and void, as if this ample creation
Had been blotted out, and I were alone in the chao.

Yet had I even then a living hope to sustain me
Under that awful thought, and I strengthen'd my spirit 45
with prayer.

Comfort I sought and support, and both were found in
retiring

Into that inner world, the soul's strong hold and her kingdom.
Then came again the Voice, but then no longer appalling,
Like the voice of a friend it came: O son of the Muses!

Be of good heart, it said, and think not that thou art 50
abandon'd;

For to thy mortal sight shall the Grave unshadow its secrets;

Such as of yore the Florentine saw, Hell's perilous chambers
 He who trod in his strength; and the arduous Mountain of
 Penance,

And the regions of Paradise, sphere within sphere inter-
 circled.

55 Child of Earth, look up! and behold what passes before thee.

II

THE VAULT

SO by the unseen comforted, raised I my head in obedience,
 And in a vault I found myself placed, arch'd over on all sides.
 Narrow and low was that house of the dead. Around it were
 coffins,

Each in its niche, and palls, and urns, and funeral hatch-
 ments;

60 Velvets of Tyrian die, retaining their hues unfaded;
 Blazonry vivid still, as if fresh from the touch of the limner;
 Nor was the golden fringe, nor the golden broidery tarnish'd.

Whence came the light whereby that place of death was
 discover'd?

For there was there no lamp, whose wonderous flame in-
 extinguish'd,

65 As with a vital power endued, renewing its substance,
 Age after age unchanged, endureth in self-subsistence:
 Nor did the cheerful beam of day, direct or reflected,
 Penetrate there. That low and subterranean chamber

70 Saw not the living ray, nor felt the breeze; but for ever
 Closely immured, was seal'd in perpetual silence and dark-
 ness.

Whence then this lovely light, calm, pure, and soft, and
 cerulean,

Such as the sapphire sheds? And whence this air that infuses
 Strength while I breathe it in, and a sense of life, and a still-
 ness,

Filling the heart with peace, and giving a joy that contents it?
 75 Not of the Earth that light; and these paradisiacal breathings,
 Not of the Earth are they!

These thoughts were passing within me,
 When there arose around a strain of heavenly music,
 Such as the hermit hears when the Angels visit his slumbers.

Faintly it first began, scarce heard; and gentle its rising,
 Low as the softest breath that passes in summer at evening. 80
 O'er the Eolian strings, felt there when nothing is moving,
 Save the thistle-down, lighter than air, and the leaf of the
 aspin.

Then as it swell'd and rose, the thrilling melody deepen'd;
 Such, methought, should the music be, which is heard in the
 cloister,

By the sisterhood standing around the beatified Virgin, 85
 When with her dying eyes she sees the firmament open,
 Lifts from the bed of dust her arms towards her beloved,
 Utters his name adored, and breathes out her soul in a rapture.

Well could I then believe such legends, and well could
 I credit

All that the poets old relate of Amphion and Orpheus; 90
 How to melodious sounds wild^beasts their strength have
 surrender'd,

Men were reclaimed from the woods, and stones in har-
 monious order

Mov'd, as their atoms obey'd the mysterious attraction of
 concord.

This was a higher strain; a mightier, holier virtue
 Came with its powerful tones. O'ercome by the piercing 95
 emotion,

Dizzy I grew, and it seem'd as though my soul were dissolving.
 How might I bear unmov'd such sounds? For, like as the
 vapours

Melt on the mountain side, when the sun comes forth in his
 splendour,

Even so the vaulted roof and whatever was earthly
 Faded away; the Grave was gone, and the dead was awaken'd. 100

III

THE AWAKENING

THEN I beheld the King. From a cloud which cover'd the
 pavement

His reverend form uprose: heavenward his face was directed,
 Heavenward his eyes were rais'd, and heavenward his arms
 were extended.

Lord, it is past! he cried; the mist, and the weight, and the
 darkness; . . .

- 105 That long and weary night, that long drear dream of desertion.
 Father, to Thee I come! My days have been many and evil;
 Heavy my burthen of care, and grievous hath been my
 affliction.
 Thou hast released me at length. O Lord, in Thee have
 I trusted;
 Thou art my hope and my strength!... And then in profound
 adoration,
 no Crossing his arms on his breast, he bent and worshipped in
 silence.

- Presently one approach'd to greet him with joyful
 obeisance;
 He of whom in an hour of woe, the assassin bereav'd us
 When his counsels most, and his resolute virtue were needed.
 Thou, said the Monarch, here ? Thou, Perceval, summon'd
 before me ? . . .
 115 Then as his waken'd mind to the weal of his country reverted,
 What of his son, he ask'd, what course by the Prince had been
 follow'd.
 Right in his Father's steps hath the Regent trod, was the
 answer:
 Firm hath he proved and wise, at a time when weakness or error
 Would have sunk us in shame, and to ruin have hurried us
 headlong.
 120 True to himself hath he been, and Heaven has rewarded his
 counsels.

- Peace is obtain'd then at last, with safety and honour! the
 Monarch
 Cried, and he clasp'd his hands; ... I thank Thee, O merciful
 Father!
 Now is my heart's desire fulfil'd.
 With honour surpassing
 All that in elder time had adorn'd the annals of England,
 125 Peace hath been won by the sword, the faithful minister
 answer'd.
 Paris hath seen once more the banners of England in triumph
 Wave within her walls, and the ancient line is established.
 While that man of blood, the tyrant, faithless and godless,
 Rendered at length the sport, as long the minion of Fortune,
 130 Far away, confined in a rocky isle of the ocean,
 Fights his battles again, and pleas'd to win in the chamber

What he lost in the field, in fancy conquers his conqueror.
 There he reviles his foes, and there the ungrateful accuses
 For his own defaults the men who too faithfully serv'd him;
 Frets and complains and intrigues, and abuses the mercy that 135
 spared him.

Oh that my King could have known these things! could have
 witness'd how England

Check'd in its full career the force of her enemy's empire,
 Singly defied his arms and his arts, and baffled them singly,
 Rous'd from their lethal sleep with the stirring example the
 nations,

And the refluent tide swept him and his fortune before it. 140

Oh that my King, ere he died, might have seen the fruit of
 his counsels!

Nay, it is better thus, the Monarch piously answer'd;
 Here I can bear the joy; it comes as an earnest of Heaven.
 Righteous art Thou, O Lord! long-suffering, but sure are
 thy judgments.

Then having paused awhile, like one in devotion abstracted, 145
 Earthward his thoughts recurred, so deeply the care of his
 country

Lay in that royal soul reposed: and he said, Is the spirit
 Quell'd which hath troubled the land? and the multitude
 freed from delusion,

Know they their blessings at last, and are they contented and
 thankful?

Still is that fierce and restless spirit at work, was the answer; 150
 Still it deceiveth the weak, and inflameth the rash and the
 desperate.

Even now, I ween, some dreadful deed is preparing;
 For the Souls of the Wicked are loose, and the Powers of Evil
 Move on the wing alert. Some nascent horror they look for,
 Be sure! some accursed conception of filth and of darkness 155
 Ripe for its monstrous birth. Whether France or Britain be
 threatened,

Soon will the issue shew; or if both at once are endanger'd:
 For with the ghosts obscene of Robespierre, Danton, and
 Hebert,

Faux and Despard I saw, and the band of rabid fanatics,
 They whom Venner led, who rising in frantic rebellion 160
 Made the Redeemer's name their cry of slaughter and treason.

IV

THE GATE OF HEAVEN

THUS as he spake, methought the surrounding space dilated.

Over head I beheld the infinite ether; beneath us

Lay the solid expanse of the firmament spread like a pavement:

165 Wheresoever I look'd, there was light and glory around me.
Brightest it seem'd in the East, where the New Jerusalem glitter'd.

Eminent on a hill, there stood the Celestial City;

Beaming afar it shone; its towers and cupolas rising

High in the air serene, with the brightness of gold in the furnace,

!70 Where on their breadth the splendour lay intense and quiescent:

Part with a fierier glow, and a short quick tremulous motion,

Like the burning pyropus; and turrets and pinnacles sparkled,

Playing in jets of light, with a diamond-like glory coruscant.

Groves of all hues of green their foliage intermingled,

!75 Tempering with grateful shade the else unendurable lustre*

Drawing near, I beheld what over the portal was written:

This is the Gate of Bliss, it said; thro' me is the passage

To the City of God, the abode of beatified Spirits.

Weariness is not there, nor change, nor sorrow, nor parting;

180 Time hath no place therein; nor evil. Ye who would enter,

Drink of the Weil of Life, and put away all that is earthly.

O'er the adamantine gates an Angel stood on the summit.

Ho! he exclaim'd, King George of England cometh to judgment!

Hear Heaven! Ye Angels hear! Souls of the Good and the Wicked

185 Whom it concerns, attend! Thou, Hell, bring forth his accusers!

As the sonorous summons was utter'd, the Winds, who were waiting,

Bore it abroad thro' Heaven; and Hell, in her nethermost caverns,

Heard, and obey'd in dismay.

Anon a body of splendour
 Gathered before the gate, and veil'd the Ineffable Presence,
 Which, with a rushing of wings, came down. The sentient 190
 ether
 Shook with that dread descent, and the solid firmament
 trembled.
 Round the cloud were the Orders of Heaven . . . Archangel
 and Angel,
 Principality, Cherub and Seraph, Thrones, Dominations, ,
 Virtues, and Powers. The Souls of the Good, whom Death
 had made perfect,
 Flocking on either hand, a multitudinous army, 195
 Came at the awful call. In semicircle inclining,
 Tier over tier they took their place: aloft, in the distance,
 Far as the sight could pierce, that glorious company glisten'd.
 From the skirts of the shining assembly, a silvery vapour
 Rose in the blue serene, and moving onward it deepen'd, 200
 Taking a denser form; the while from the opposite region
 Heavy and sulphurous clouds roll'd on, and completed the
 circle.
 There with the Spirits accurst, in congenial darkness en-
 velop[^],
 Were the Souls of the Wicked, who wilful in guilt and in
 error,
 Chose the service of sin, and now were abiding its wages. 205
 Change of place to them brought no reprieve from anguish;
 They in their evil thoughts and desires of impotent malice,
 Envy, and hate, and blasphemous rage, and remorse un-
 availing,
 Carried a Hell within, to which all outer affliction,
 So it abstracted the sense, might be deem'd a remission of 210
 torment.
 At the edge of the cloud, the Princes of Darkness were
 marshall'd:
 Dimly descried within were wings and truculent faces;
 And in the thick obscure there struggled a mutinous uproar,
 Railing, and fury, and strife, that the whole deep body of
 darkness
 Roll'd like a troubled sea, with a wide and a manifold motion. 215

V

THE ACCUSERS

ON the cerulean floor by that dread circle surrounded,
 Stood the soul of the King alone. In front was the Presence
 Veil'd with excess of light; and behind was the blackness of
 darkness.

Then might be seen the strength of holiness, then was its
 triumph,
 220 Calm in his faith he stood, and his own clear conscience
 upheld him.

When the trumpet was blown, and the Angel made pro-
 clamations—

Lo, where the King appears! Come forward ye who arraign
 him!

Forth from the lurid cloud a Demon came at the summons?
 It was the Spirit by whom his righteous reign had been
 troubled;

225 Likest in form uncouth to the hideous Idols whom India
 (Long by guilty neglect to hellish delusions abandon'd,)
 Worships with horrible rites of self-destruction and torture.
 Many-headed and monstrous the Fiend; with numberless
 faces,

Numberless bestial ears erect to all rumours, and restless,
 230 And with numberless mouths which were fill'd with lies as
 with arrows.

Clamours arose as he came, a confusion of turbulent voices,
 Maledictions, and blatant tongues, and viperous hisses;
 And in the hubbub of senseless sounds the watchwords of
 faction,

Freedom, Invaded Rights, Corruption, and War, and
 Oppression,

235 Loudly enounced were heard.

But when he stood in the Presence,
 Then was the Fiend dismay'd, tho' with impudence clothed
 as a garment;

And the lying tongues were mute, and the lips which had
 scatter'd

Accusation and slander, were still. No time for evasion
 This, in the Presence he stood: no place for flight; for dis-
 sembling

No possibility there. From the souls on the edge of the 240
darkness,

Two he produced, prime movers and agents of mischief, and
bade them

Show themselves faithful now to the cause for which they had
labour'd.

Wretched and guilty souls, where now their audacity ? Where
now

Are the insolent tongues so ready of old at rejoinder ?

Where the lofty pretences of public virtue and freedom ? 245

Where the gibe, and the jeer, and the threat, the envenom'd
investive,

Calumny, falsehood, fraud, and the whole ammunition of
malice ?

Wretched and guilty souls, they stood in the face of their
Sovereign,

Conscious and self-condemn'd; confronted with him they
had injured,

At the Judgment-seat they stood. 250

Beholding the foremost,

Him by the cast of his eye oblique, I knew as the firebrand
Whom the unthinking populace held for their idol and hero,
Lord of Misrule in his day. But how was that countenance
alter'd

Where emotion of fear or of shame had never been witness'd;
That invincible forehead abash'd; and those eyes wherein 255
malice

Once had been wont to shine with wit and hilarity temper'd,
Into how deep a gloom their mournful expression had
settled!

Little avail'd it now that not from a purpose malignant,
Not with evil intent he had chosen the service of evil;
But of his own desires the slave, with profligate impulse, 260
Solely by selfishness mov'd, and reckless of aught that might
follow.

Could he plead in only excuse a confession of baseness ?

Could he hide the extent of his guilt; or hope to atone for
Faction excited at home, when all old feuds were abated,
Insurrection abroad, and the train of woes that had follow'd! 265

Discontent and disloyalty, like the teeth of the dragon,
He had sown on the winds; they had ripen'd beyond the
Atlantic;

Thence in natural birth sedition, revolt, revolution;

VISION OF JUDC

- France had received the seeds, an
horrors; . . .
- 270 Where . . . where should the plague
be pitied
They of all souls in bale, who see no term to the evil
They by their guilt have rais'd, no end to their inner up-
braidings!
- Him I could not choose but know, nor knowing but grieve
for.
- Who might the other be, his comrade in guilt and in suffering,
- 275 Brought to the proof like him, and shrinking like him from
the trial ?
Nameless the libeller lived, and shot his arrows in darkness;
Undetected he passed to the grave, and leaving behind him
Noxious works on earth, and the pest of an evil example,
Went to the world beyond, where no offences are hidden.
- 280 Mask'd had he been in his life, and now a visor of iron
Riveted round his head, had abolish'd his features for ever.
Speechless the slanderer stood, and turn'd his face from the
Monarch
Iron-bound as it was, . . . so insupportably dreadful
Soon or late to conscious guilt is the eye of the injured.
- 285 Caitiffs, are ye dumb ? cried the multifaced Demon in
anger;
Think ye then by shame to shorten the term of your penance ?
Back to your penal dens! . . . And with horrible grasp
gigantic
Seizing the guilty pair, he swung them aloft, and in vengeance
Hurl'd them all abroad, far into the sulphurous darkness.
- 290 Sons of Faction, be warn'd! And ye, ye Slanderers! learn ye,
Justice, and bear injnind that after death there is judgment.
Whirling, away they flew. Nor long Himself *did* he tarry,
Ere from the ground where he stood, caught up by a vehement
whirlwind,
He too was hurried away; and the blast with lightning and
thunder
- 295 Vollying aright and aleft amid the accumulatè blackness,
Scatter'd its inmates accurst, and beyond the limits of ether
Drove the hircine host obscene: they howling and groaning
Fell precipitate, down to their dolorous place of endurance.
Then was the region clear; the arrowy flashes which redden'd

SOUTHEY'S

Thro' the foul thick throng, like sheeted argentry floating 300
Now o'er the blue serene, diffused an innocuous splendour,
In the infinite dying away. The roll of the thunder
Ceased, and all sounds were hush'd, till again from the gate
adamantine
Was the voice of the Angel heard thro* the silence of Heaven.

VI

THE ABSOLVERS

HO! he exclaim'd, King George of England standeth in 305
judgment!
Hell hath been dumb in his presence. Ye who on earth
arraign'd him,
Come ye before him now, and here accuse or absolve him!
For injustice hath here no place.
From the Souls of the Blessed
Some were there then who advanced; and more from the
skirts of the meeting,
Spirits who had not yet accomplished their purification, 310
Yet being cleansed from pride, from faction and error
deliver'd,
Purged of the film wherewith the eye of the mind is clouded,
They, in their better state, saw all things clear; and dis-
cerning
Now in the light of truth what tortuous views had deceived
them,
They acknowledged their fault, and own'd the wrong they 315
had offer'd;
Not without ingenuous shame, and a sense of compunction,
Mplfi~or Jess, as each had more or less to atone for.
One alone remain'd, when the rest had retired to their station:
Silently he had stood, and still unmoved and in silence,
With a steady mien, regarded the face of the Monarch. 320
Thoughtful awhile he gazed; severe, but serene, was his
aspect;
Calm, but stern; like one whom no compassion could weaken,
Neither could doubt deter, nor violent impulses alter:
Lord of his own resolves, ... of his own heart absolute
master.
Aweful Spirit! his place was with ancient sages and heroes: 325
Fabius, Aristides, and Solon, and Epaminondas.

- Here then at the Gate of Heaven we are met! said the Spirit;
 King of England! albeit in life opposed to each other,
 Here we meet at last. Not unprepared for the meeting
 330 Ween I; for we had both outlived all enmity, rendering
 Each to each that justice which each from each had withholden.
 In the course of events, to thee I seem'd as a Rebel,
 Thou a Tyrant to me; ... so strongly doth circumstance rule
 men
 During evil days, when right and wrong are confounded.
 335 Left to our hearts we were just. For me, my actions have
 spoken,
 That not for lawless desires, nor goaded by desperate fortunes,
 Nor for ambition, I chose my part; but observant of duty,
 Self-approved. And here, this witness I willingly bear
 thee, . . .
 Here, before Angels and Men, in the awful hour of judg-
 ment, . . .
 340 Thou too didst act with upright heart, as befitted a Sovereign,
 True to his sacred trust, to his crown, his kingdom, and
 people.
 Heaven in these things fulfill'd its wise, tho' inscrutable
 purpose,
 While we work'd its will, doing each in his place as became
 him.

- Washington ! said the Monarch, well hast thou spoken and
 truly,
 345 Just to thyself and to me. On them is the guilt of the contest,
 Who, for wicked ends, with foul arts of faction and false-
 hood,
 Kindled and fed the flame: but verily they have their guerdon.
 Thou and I are free from offence. And would that the
 nations,
 Learning of us, would lay aside all wrongful resentment,
 350 All injurious thought, and honouring each in the other
 Kindred courage and virtue, and cognate knowledge and
 freedom,
 Live in brotherhood wisely conjoined. We set the example.
 They who stir up strife, and would break that natural con-
 cord,
 Evil they sow, and sorrow will they reap for their harvest.

VII

THE BEATIFICATION

WHEN that Spirit withdrew, the Monarch around the 355
assembly

Look'd, but none else came forth; and he heard the voice of
the Angel, . . .

¹ King of England, speak for thyself! here is none to arraign
thee.

Father, he replied, from whom no secrets are hidden,
What should I say! Thou knowest that mine was an arduous
station,

Full of cares, and with perils beset. How heavy the burthen 360

Thou alone canst tell! Short-sighted and frail hast Thou
made us,

And Thy judgments who can abide? But as surely Thou
knowest

The desire of my heart hath been always the good of my
people,

Pardon my errors, O Lord, and in mercy accept the inten-
tion!

As in Thee I have trusted, so let me not now be confounded! 365

Bending forward he spake with earnest humility. Well
done,

Good and faithful servant! then said a Voice from the Bright-
ness,

Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. . . , The ministring
Spirits

Clapt their pennons therewith, and from that whole army of
Angels

Songs of thanksgiving and joy resounded, and loud halle- 370
lujahs;

While on the wings of Winds uprais'd, the pavilion of
splendour

Where inscrutable light enveloped the Holy of Holies,

Moved, and was borne away, thro' the empyrean ascending.

Beautiful then on its hill appear'd the Celestial City,
Softened, like evening suns, to a mild and bearable lustre. 375

Beautiful was the ether above; and the sapphire beneath us,
Beautiful was its tone, to the dazzled sight as refreshing

As the fields with their loveliest green at the coming of
summer,
When the mind is at ease, and the eye and the heart are
contented.

- 380 Then methought we approached the gate. In front of the
portal,
From a rock where the standard of man's Redemption was
planted,
Issued the Well of Life, where whosoever would enter,
So it was written, must drink, and put away all that is
earthly.
Earth among its gems, its creations of art and of nature,
385 Offers not aught whereto that marvellous Cross may be
liken'd
Even in dim similitude, such was its wonderful substance.
Pure it was and diaphanous. It had no visible lustre;
Yet from It alone whole Heaven was illuminate alway;
Day and Night being none in the upper firmament, neither
390 Sun, nor Moon, nor Stars; but from that Cross as a fountain
Flow'd the Light uncreated; light all-sufficing, eternal,
Light which was, and which is, and which will be, for ever
" and ever;
Light of light, which, if daringly gazed on, would blind an
Archangel,
Yet the eye of weak man may behold, and beholding is
strengthened.
395 Yea, while we wander below, opprest with our bodily
burthen,
And in the shadow of death, this Light is in mercy vouch-
safed us,
So we seek it with humble heart; and the soul that receives it
Hath with it healing and strength, peace, love, and life
everlasting.

Thither the King drew nigh, and kneeling he drank of the
water.

- 400 Oh what a change was wrought! In the semblance of age he
had risen,
Such as at last he appear'd, with the traces of time and
affliction
Deep on his faded form, when the burthen of years was upon
him.

Oh what a change was wrought! For now the corruptible

put on
 Incorrupt! on; the mortal put off mortality. Rising
 Rejuvenescent he stood in a glorified body, obnoxious 405
 Never again to change, nor to evil and trouble and sorrow,
 But for eternity form'd, and to bliss everlasting appointed

VIII

THE SOVEREIGNS

LIFT up your heads, ye Gates; and ye everlasting Portals,
 Be ye lift up! For lo! a glorified Monarch approacheth,
 One who in righteousness reign'd, and religiously govern'd 410
 his people.

Who are these that await him within? Nassau the Deliverer,
 Him I knew: and the Stuart, he who, serene in his meek-
 ness,

Bow'd his anointed head beneath the axe of rebellion,
 Calm in that insolent hour, and over his fortune triumphant.

Queen of the eagle eye, thou too, O matchless Eliza, 415
 Excellent Queen, wert there! and thy brother's beautiful
 spirit;

O'er whose innocent head there hover'd a silvery halo,
 Such as crowns the Saint when his earthly warfare is ended.

There too was he of the sable mail, the hero of Cressy,
 Flower of chivalry, he, in arms and in courtesy peerless. 420
 There too his royal sire I saw, magnificent Edward,
 He who made the English renown, and the fame of his
 Windsor

In the Orient and Occident known, from Tagus to Tigris.
 Lion-hearted Richard was there, redoubtable warrior,
 At whose irresistible presence the Saracen trembled; 425
 At whose name the Caliph exclaim'd in dismay on Ma-
 hommed,

Syrian mothers grew pale, and their children were scared
 into silence.

Born in a bloody age, did he in his prowess exulting
 Run like a meteor his course, and fulfil the service assigned
 him,

Checking the Mussulman power in the height of its pros- 430
 perous fortune;

But that leonine heart was with virtues humaner ennobled,
 (Otherwhere else, be sure, his doom had now been appointed,) Friendship, disdain of wrong, and generous feeling redee'd it,
 Magnanimity there had its seat, and the love of the Muses.

- 435 There with the Saxon Kings who founded our laws and
 our temples,
 (Gratefully still to be named while these endure in re-
 membrance,
 They, for the pious work!) I saw the spirit of Alfred;
 Alfred than whom no Prince with loftier intellect gifted,
 Nor with a finer soul, nor in virtue more absolute, ever
 440 Made a throne twice-riallow'd, and reign'd in the hearts of
 his people.
 With him the Worthies were seen who in life partook of his
 labours,
 Shared his thoughts, and with him for the weal of posterity
 travail'd:
 Some who in cloisters immured, and to painful study devoted
 Day and night, their patient and innocent lives exhausted,
 445 And in meekness possess'd their souls: and some who in battle
 Put the Raven to flight: and some who intrepid in duty
 Reach'd the remotest East, or invading the kingdom of Winter,
 Plough'd with audacious keel the Hyperborean Ocean.
 I could perceive the joy which fill'd their beatified spirits
 45° While of the Georgian age they thought, and the glory of
 England.

IX

THE ELDER WORTHIES

- LIFT up your heads, ye Gates; and ye everlasting Portals,
 Be ye lift up! Behold the Worthies are there to receive him,
 They who in later days, or in elder ages ennobled
 Britain's dear name. Bede I beheld, who, humble and holy,
 455 Shone like a single star, serene in a night of darkness.
 Bacon also was there, the marvellous Friar; and he who
 Struck the spark from which the Bohemian kindled his taper;
 Thence the flame, long and hardly preserv'd, was to Luther
 transmitted,
 Mighty soul, and he lifted his torch, and enlighten'd the
 nations.

Thee too, Father Chaucer! I saw, and delighted to see thee, 460
 At whose well undefiled I drank in my youth, and was
 strengthen'd;
 With whose mind immortal so oft I have communed, par-
 taking
 All its manifold moods, and willingly moved at its pleasure.
 Bearing the palm of martyrdom, Cranmer was there in his
 meekness,
 Holy name to be ever revered! And Cecil, whose wisdom 465
 'Stablish'd the Church and State, Eliza's pillar of council.
 And Shakespeare, who in our hearts for himself hath erected
 an empire
 Not to be shaken by Time, nor e'er by another divided.
 But with what love did I then behold the face of m[^]jriaster,...
 Spenser, my master dear! with whom in boyhood I wander'd 470
 Thro' the regions of Faery Land, in forest or garden
 Spending delicious hours, or at tilt and tourney rejoicing;
 Yea, by the magic of verse enlarged, and translated in spirit,
 In the World of Romance free denizen I; . . . till awakening,
 When the spell was dissolved, this real earth and its uses 475
 Seem'd to me weary, and stale, and flat. . .
 With other emotion
 Milton's severer shade I saw, and in reverence humbled
 Gazed on that soul sublime: of passion now as of blindness
 Heal'd, and no longer here to Kings and to Hierarchs hostile,
 He was assoil'd from taint of the fatal fruit; and in Eden 480
 Not again to be lost, consorted an equal with Angels.
 Taylor too was there, from whose mind of its treasures
 redundant
 Streams of eloquence flow'd, like an inexhaustible fountain:
 And the victor of Blenheim, alike in all virtues accomplish'd,
 Public or private, he; the perfect soldier and statesman, 485
 England's reproach and her pride, her pride for his noble
 achievements,
 Her reproach for the wrongs he endur'd: And Newton,
 exalted
 There above those orbs whose motions from earth he had
 measur'd,
 Thro' infinity ranging in thought: And Berkeley, angelic
 Now in substance as soul, that kingdom enjoying where all 490
 things
 Are what they seem, and the good and the beautiful there are
 eternal.

X

THE WORTHIES OF THE GEORGIAN AGE

- THESE with a kindred host of great and illustrious spirits
 Stood apart, while a train whom nearer duty attracted
 Thro* the Gate of Bliss came forth to welcome their
 Sovereign.
- 495 Many were they and glorious all. Conspicuous among them
 Wolfe was seen: And the seaman who fell on the shores of
 Owhyhee,
 Leaving a lasting name, to humanity dear as to science:
 And the mighty musician of Germany, ours by adoption,
 Who beheld in the King his munificent pupil and patron.
- 500 Reynolds, with whom began that school of art which hath
 equall'd
 Richest Italy's works, and the masterly labours of Belgium,
 Came in that famous array: and Hogarth, who followed no
 master,
 Nor by pupil shall e'er be approach'd, alone in his greatness.
 Reverend in comely mien, of aspect mild and benignant,
- 505 There, too, Wesley I saw and knew, whose zeal apostolic,
 Tho' with error alloy'd, hath on earth its merited honour,
 As in Heaven its reward. And Mansfield the just and in-
 trepid ;
 Wise Judge, by the craft of the Law ne'er seduced from its
 purpose;
 And when the misled multitude raged like the winds in their
 madness,
- 510 Not to be moved from his rightful resolves. And Burke
 I beheld there,
 Eloquent statesman and sage, who, tho' late, broke loose from
 his trammels,
 Giving then to mankind what party too long had diverted.
 Here, where wrongs are forgiven, was the injured Hastings
 beside him:
 Strong in his high deserts, and in innocence happy, tho'
 injured,
- 515 He, in his good old age, outlived persecution and malice.
 Even where he had stood a mark for the arrows of slander,
 He had his triumph at last, when moved with one feeling, the
 Senate
 Rose in respect at his sight, and atoned for the sin of their
 fathers. "

Cowper, thy lovely spirit was there, by death disenchant'd
From that heavy spell which had bound it in sorrow and 520
darkness,

Thou wert there, in the kingdom of peace and of light ever-
lasting.

Nelson also was there in the kingdom of peace, tho' his calling
While upon earth he dwelt, was to war and the work of
destruction.

Not in him had that awful ministry deaden'd, or weakened
Quick compassion, and feelings that raise while they soften 525
our nature.

Wise in counsel, and steady in purpose, and rapid in action,
Never thought of self from the course of his duty seduced
him,

Never doubt of the issue unworthily warp'd his intention.

Long shall his memory live, and while his example is
cherish'd,

From the Queen of the Seas, the sceptre shall never be 530
wrested.

XI

THE YOUNG SPIRITS

YE whom I leave unnam'd, ye other Worthies of Britain,
Lights of the Georgian age, . . . for ye are many and noble,
How might I name ye all, whom I saw in this glorious
vision? . . .

Pardon ye the imperfect tale! Yet some I beheld there.

Whom should I pretermite, my heart might rightly upbraid me, 535

That its tribute of honour, poor tho' it be, was withholden.

Somewhat apart they came in fellowship gather'd together,

As in godly array they follow'd the train of the worthies.

Chosen spirits were these, of the finest elements tempered,

And embodied on earth in mortality's purest texture; 54°

But in the morning of hope, in the blossom of virtue and
genius,

They were cut down by death. What then, . . . were it wise
to lament them,

Seeing the mind bears with it its wealth, and the soul its
affections ?

What we sow, we shall reap; and the seeds whereof earth is
not worthy

Strike their roots in a kindlier soil, and ripen to harvest. 545

Here were the gallant youths of high heroic aspiring,
 Who, so fate had allow'd, with the martial renown of their
 country
 Would have wedded their names, for perpetual honour united;
 Strong of heart and of mind, but in undistinguishing battle,
 550 Or by pestilence stricken, they fell, unknown and confounded
 With the common dead. Oh! many are they who were worthy,
 Under the Red Cross flag, to have wielded the thunders of
 Britain,
 Making her justice felt, and her proper power upholding
 Upon all seas and shores, wheresoever her rights were
 offended,
 555 Followers of Nelson's path, and the glorious career of the
 Wellesley.
 Many are they, whose bones beneath the billows have
 whiten'd,
 Or in foreign earth they have moulder'd, hastily covered,
 In some wide and general grave.

Here also were spirits

To have guided, like Cecil of old, the councils of England;
 560 Or have silenced and charm'd a tumultuous Senate, like
 Canning,
 When to the height of his theme, the consummate Orator
 rising,
 Makes our Catalines pale, and rejoices the friends of their
 country.

Others came in that goodly band whom benigner fortune
 Led into pleasanter ways on earth: the children of Science
 565 Some, whose unerring pursuit would, but for death, have
 extended
 O'er the unknown and material, Man's intellectual empire,
 Such their intuitive power; like Davy, disarming destruction
 When it moves on the vapour; or him, who discovering the
 secret
 Of the dark and ebullient abyss, with the fire of Vesuvius
 570 Arm'd the chemist's hand: well then might Eleusinian Ceres
 Yield to him, from whom the seas and the mountains con-
 ceal'd not
 Nature's mystery, hid in their depths.

Here lost in their promise

And prime, were the children of Art, who should else have
 deliver'd

Works and undying names to grateful posterity's keeping,
 Such as Haydon will leave on earth; and he who, returning 575
 Rich in praise to his native shores, hath left a remembrance
 Long to be honour'd and loved on the banks of Thames and
 of Tiber:

So may America, prizing in time the worth she possesses,
 Give to that hand free scope, and boast hereafter of Allston.

Here too, early lost and deplored, were the youths whom 580
 the Muses

Mark'd for themselves at birth, and with dew from Castalia
 sprinkled:

Chatterton first, (for not to his affectionate spirit
 Could the act of madness innate for guilt be accounted):
 Marvellous boy, whose antique songs and unhappy story
 Shall, by gentle hearts, be in mournful memory cherish'd 585
 Long as thy ancient towers endure, and the rocks of St.
 Vincent,

Bristol! my birth-place dear. What though I have chosen
 a dwelling

Far away, and my grave shall not be found by the stranger
 Under thy sacred care, nathless in love and in duty
 Still am I bound to thee, and by many a deep recollection! 590
 City of elder days, I know how largely I owe thee;
 Nor least for the hope and the strength that I gather'd in
 boyhood,

While on Chatterton musing, I fancied his spirit was with me
 In the haunts which he loved upon earth. 'Twas a joy in my
 vision

When I beheld his face. . . . And here was the youth of Loch 595
 Leven,

Nipt, like an April flow'f'er, that opens its leaves to the sun-
 shine,

While the breath of the East prevails. And Russell and
 Bampfylde,

Bright emanations they! And the Poet, whose songs of child-
 hood

Trent and the groves of Clifton heard; not alone by the Muses
 But by the Virtues loved, his soul in its youthful aspirings 600
 Sought the Holy Hill, and his thirst was for Siloa's waters.
 Was I deceived by desire, or, Henry, indeed did thy spirit
 Know me, and meet my look, and smile like a friend at the
 meeting?

XII

THE MEETING

LIFT up your heads, ye Gates; and ye everlasting Portals,
 605 Be ye lift up! Behold the splendid train of the Worthies
 Halt; and with quicker pace a happy company issues
 Forth from the Gate of Bliss: the Parents, the Children, and
 Consort,
 Come to welcome in Heaven the Son, the Father, and
 Husband I
 Hour of perfect joy that overpays all earthly affliction;
 610 Yea, and the thought whereof supporteth the soul in its
 anguish!

There came England's blossom of hope, . . . the beautiful
 Princess;
 She in whose wedded bliss all hearts rejoiced, and whose
 death-bell,
 Heard from tower to tower thro* the islands, carried a sorrow,
 Felt by all like a private grief, which, sleeping or waking,
 615 Will not be shaken away; but possesses the soul and disturbs it,
 There was our late-lost Queen, the nation's example of
 virtue;
 In whose presence vice was not seen, nor the face of dis-
 honour,
 Pure in heart, and spotless in life, and secret in bounty,
 Queen, and Mother, and Wife unreprieved. . . . The gentle
 Amelia
 620 Stretch'd her arms to her father there, in tenderness shedding
 Tears, such as Angels weep. That hand was toward him
 extended
 Whose last pressure he could not bear, when merciful Nature,
 As o'er her dying bed he bent in severest anguish,
 Laid on his senses a weight, and suspended the sorrow for
 ever.
 625 He hath recover'd her now: all, all that was lost is restored
 him; . . .
 Hour of perfect bliss that o'erpays all earthly affliction!
 They are met where Change is not known, nor Sorrow, nor
 Parting.
 Death is subdued, and the Grave, which conquers all, hath
 "been conquer'd.

68 SOUTHEY'S VISION OF JUDGMENT

When I beheld them meet, the desire of my soul overcame
me;

And when with harp and voice the loud hosannahs of welcome 630

Fill'd the rejoicing sky, as the happy company enter'd

Thro' the everlasting Gates; I, too, press'd forward to
enter: . . .

But the weight of the body withheld me. I stoopt to the
fountain,

Eager to drink thereof, and to put away all that was earthly.

Darkness came over me then at the chilling touch of the 635
water,

And my feet methought sunk, and I fell precipitate. Starting,

Then I awoke, and beheld the mountains in twilight before
me,

Dark and distinct; and instead of the rapturous sounds of
hosannahs,

Heard the bell from the tower, toll! toll! thro' the silence of
evening.

NOTES

Line 5. *the Gallic era 'eighty-eight'*. In May 1788, Louis XVI summoned to Versailles the Parlement of Paris and required it at once to register a list of reforms he had drawn up. The most important provision was that the right of registering the King's edicts was to be withdrawn from the Parlement, which had shown itself obstructive whenever the King proposed any measures of reform, and a new court of registration was to be established which would be more under the control of the King. In addition there was a promise that the King would convoke the * States-General ' as often as the needs of the State required. These concessions, however, failed to satisfy the people. They demanded the immediate convocation of the States-General. In Dauphine" and Brittany revolt broke out. Under these circumstances the King was forced to go further and the States-General were summoned for the following spring; when they assembled the people took matters into their own hands and the Revolution began.

Line 36. *So many kingdoms fitted up anew*. During Napoleon's wars the map of Europe was continually being altered until he almost remodelled the continent. France was extended as far as the Rhine, and included Belgium, Piedmont, and Tuscany. Napoleon's brother Joseph was made king of Spain, his brother Louis king of Holland, his brother Jerome king of Westphalia, and Murat, his brother-in-law, king of Naples. States of South Germany were erected into a confederation of the Rhine. Austria and Prussia were considerably" diminished, and Italy was given something like political unity, the whole of the country coming directly or indirectly under the control of France.

Line 38. *the crowning carnage, Waterloo*. For a brief period in 1815 Napoleon, who had succeeded in escaping from his captivity in Elba, became again Emperor of the French, but was finally overthrown by England and Prussia at Waterloo. In this battle the slaughter on both sides, but more particularly on the French, was enormous.

Line 48. *he has both generals in reversion*. Property is in reversion when the owner has the future expectation but not the present enjoyment of it.

Line 49. *a few short years of hollow peace*. The years following the Congress of Vienna in 1815 were a period of reaction. The monarchs

of Europe were so impressed with the fear of revolution that their chief aim was to maintain the *status quo*.

Line 55. *Saint John's foretold beast*. See Revelation xvii. 3.

Line 57. *the first year off freedom's second dawn*. In 1820 there were revolutions in Spain, Portugal, and Naples.

In Spain the trouble began in an ill-equipped army collected at Cadiz with a view to being dispatched to South America to bring back the revolted colonies to their allegiance. The rebellion was put down in the army, but its influence spread until at length the King was obliged to swear to the Constitution of 1812—an unworkable system which was yet the rallying cry at that time for all revolutionary impulse—and to abolish the Inquisition.

The King of Portugal, who had left the country at the time of the French invasion in 1807, was still absent in Brazil, and was intent on transferring the centre of government to Brazil and making Portugal only a province. The revolutionary party, therefore, in 1820 dismissed the King's regent, and when he attempted to return would not let him land. The King then felt bound to come back, but before he was allowed to land, in July 1821, he had to consent to a constitution which was modelled on that of Spain.

In Naples, although the reaction had been less severe, there was a good deal of disaffection, and inspired by the news from Spain the revolutionary party forced their king also to take an oath to a constitution on the Spanish model.

These risings were the first signs that the desire for political freedom was still alive in spite of the repressive measures that had followed the Congress of Vienna.

Line 59. *each sense withdrawn*. In 1811 George III permanently lost his sight and his reason.

Line 92. *unless he left a German will*. This is a reference to a rumour at one time current that George III had kept back and destroyed the will of George II.

Lines 95-6. *Except that household virtue, most uncommon,
Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman*.

The married life of George III was exemplary. His son, afterwards George IV, had in 1795 married the Princess Caroline of Brunswick. The marriage was unhappy, and after the birth of an only child the princess parted from her husband and lived abroad. Here her manner of life was at least indiscreet, and when, shortly after the accession of George IV, she returned to England to demand recognition as queen, her husband tried to get his marriage dissolved on the ground of her

misconduct abroad, of which he had been collecting evidence. The case, however, failed and the queen was acquitted. Not satisfied with this, she demanded to share her husband's coronation. This was refused. Notwithstanding, she tried to force an entrance into Westminster Abbey to witness the ceremony and was turned away from the doors. After this piteous but undignified action she withdrew into private life, and in 1821 she died.

Line 142. *the last we saw here.* Louis XVI of France, sent to the scaffold in January 1793.

Lines 149-50. *If I had had my sword, as I had once
When I cut ears off.*

See St. John xviii. 10.

Line 156. *That fellow Paul—the parvenu!* St. Paul, not having been associated with Jesus during His life, is regarded as an upstart by St. Peter, who had known Him throughout His ministry.

Line 157. *St. Bartholomew.* According to tradition, St. Bartholomew was flayed alive and crucified with his head downwards.

Line 197. *He patter'd with his keys.* Recited his prayers, using his keys in place of a rosary. The verb 'to patter' comes from the first part of 'Pater noster'.

Line 199. *ichor.* The ethereal fluid supposed to take the place of blood in the veins of the gods.

. Line 207. *manes.* The 'shade' of a departed person, looked upon as an object of reverence.

• Lines 215-16. *the same seen, when ice-bound,
By Captain Parry's crew, in 'Melville's Sound.'*

In May 1819 Captain Parry sailed from the Thames in command of an expedition to discover the possibilities of a North-West Passage to the Pacific. Early in September he arrived in Melville Sound, and having wintered there he tried to push on to Bering Strait. The state of the ice, however, made this impossible, and he turned back home, reaching England in November 1820. An account of the expedition was brought out in 1821.

• Line 224. *Johanna Southcote (1750-1814)*-A woman of obscure birth, who attained considerable notoriety as a prophet. Towards the end of her life she believed she was to be the mother of Shiloh, the second Messiah.

• Line 256. *champ clos.* Field of tourney.

• Line 296. *Who long have' paved hell with their good intentions.'* A pro-

verbal saying used by Dr. Johnson; see, in Boswell's *Life*, the note on 14 April 1775.

Line 321. *a kind of quit-rent*. A rent usually only nominal, paid in place of services the lord has a right to demand. Cf. Cowper:

The courtly laureate pays
His quit-rent ode, his peppercorn of praise.

Line 337. *He came to his sceptre young*. George III on his accession in 1760 was twenty-two years of age.

Line 340. *to a minion first he gave the realm*. The Marquis of Bute, the King's tutor before his accession. See note on line 564.

. Line 350. *from the Cæsar's school,*
Take the worst pupil.

Byron is probably thinking of the Roman Emperors, of whom several, notably Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, were notoriously wicked.

• Line 364. *Apicius' board*. Apicius was a notorious glutton of the time of Tiberius. Having spent the bulk of a large fortune on delicate foods, he preferred to die rather than live on without the pleasures he was accustomed to, and so hanged himself.

. Lines 377 ff. *Five millions, & c.* Following on the Union of Ireland with England in 1800, Pitt intended to bring in Catholic Emancipation. But the opposition of the King was so bitter that Pitt felt obliged to resign. It was not till 1829, in the following reign, that Catholics were released from their disabilities.

Line 415. *the artillery, which Milton mentions*
As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

See *Paradise Lost*, Book VI, lines 446-679.

Line 426. *gilt key*
Stuck in their loins.

This decoration distinguishes a lord chamberlain.

Line 475. *Otaheite'sisle*. Tahiti.

. Line 479. *subpæna*. A writ issued from a court of justice, demanding the presence of a witness on pain of penalty in case of non-appearance.

Line 513. *the Demon (late call'd 'multi-faced'*
By multo-scribbling Southey).

See Southey's *Vision of Judgment*, v, line 285. Also v, lines 228-30.

.Line 520. Wilkes was on several occasions the champion of the people's liberties when George III encroached on their rights. During the Grenville Ministry, early in George III's reign, Wilkes was

member for Aylesbury. In 1763, in No. 45 of his paper *The North Briton*, — called so in derision of Bute, the King's unpopular favourite — he described phrases in the Speech from the throne as false. The King, choosing to regard this in the light of a personal insult, himself ordered the prosecution of Wilkes, and Halifax, as Secretary of State, therefore issued a general warrant for the arrest of 'the authors, printers and publishers' of the obnoxious article. Wilkes was arrested and sent to the Tower, but on pleading that by his privilege as Member of Parliament he was protected from arrest except for treason, felony, or breach of the peace, he was set free amidst loud demonstrations of public approval.

In November the House of Commons voted No. 45 a seditious libel and expelled him. Wilkes having been seriously wounded in a duel retired to Paris, and when he failed to appear for sentence in the King's Bench for reprinting No. 45 he was outlawed. But later on when Wilkes sued the ministers who had arrested him he was awarded heavy damages against them, and finally the law courts condemned general warrants as illegal.

Wilkes remained abroad for more than four years, but in 1768 he was back in England making fresh trouble for Parliament, which had been filled with supporters of the King, largely by means of corruption. Having been returned as member for Middlesex, he was expelled by the House on the ground that his former conduct made him unfit to serve. Twice he was re-elected and twice again rejected, and on the fourth occasion his rival, who had secured very few votes, was declared the duly elected member. This flouting of the electors' rights roused an outcry from all who valued constitutional liberty, and the mob went to great extremes in expressing their enthusiasm for 'Wilkes and liberty'.

In 1774, Wilkes, now Lord Mayor, was again elected, and this time he was not turned out. He 'beat the King hollow at the last' when in 1782 the House of Commons, no longer the tool of the Crown, expunged from its records the resolution declaring him incapable of sitting.

Line 544. *Bless me! is he blind?* Wilkes had died in 1797, before George III lost his sight.

. Line 564. *Bute* was the much-hated agent of George III in his efforts in the early part of his reign to rule according to his own will, Realizing he could only do this by moulding Parliament to his purpose, he set to work to create a party of 'king's friends', using corruption freely in order to achieve his end. He desired to appoint ministers selected by himself and prepared to carry out his policy. Bute was one of these, but his ministry did not last long. He was heartily

detested by the people, partly because he was a Scotchman, and at this time the Scotch were unpopular in England, partly because of the scandals set afloat about his relations with the King's mother. Members of the ministries succeeding him hated him because they suspected he was still too much in the confidence of the King.

Grafton was a member of the ministry responsible for imposing, in 1767, the American Import Duties, which aroused again the spirit of defiance the American colonists had already shown over the Stamp Act. The same Government was concerned in the affair of the Middlesex elections. But *Grafton*, though at one time the chief of the ministry, was indolent and more interested in the turf and other pleasures than in affairs of state.

Line 567. *for me, I have forgiven,
And vote his 'habeas corpus' into heaven.*

Wilkes is here glancing back at one of his disputes with the King. A writ of habeas corpus required that a particular individual, imprisoned on a charge stated, should be produced for trial on a given date. As the general warrant under which Wilkes was arrested specified no particular person by name, the subject's right of habeas corpus had on this occasion been contravened.

. Line 573. *Charon's ferry.* Charon conveyed the shades of the dead across the river Styx into the realm of the underworld.

Line 581. *William Pitt* the younger, was a Tory, but of the new school that would not pander to the King. Charles James Fox was a Whig and the persistent opponent of Pitt. The two great political antagonists had both died in 1806.

Line 584. *'// have him gagg'd—'twas one of his own bills.* This refers to the Order in Parliament in November 1763 that No. 45 of the *North Briton* should be burned publicly by the common hangman.

• Line 585. *Junius.* During the trouble with the Middlesex electors the court party found its most skilful opponent in the unknown writer of the Letters of Junius, which appeared in the *Public Advertiser*. It is still undecided who Junius 'really, truly was'; Sir Philip Francis and other more distinguished people have been suggested. The letters show peculiarly intimate knowledge of the affairs and people of the day, they are intensely bitter in tone, and their sarcasm is the more deadly for the polish of its expression.

• Line 624. *this epistolary' Iron Mask'.* In 1679 an unknown person, whose features were always concealed in a mask, was placed in the fortress of Pignerol. Later he was removed to the Bastille, where he died in 1703. The story goes that this unknown was a twin brother of

Louis XIV, removed in this way in order to avert political complications, but the prisoner was probably a much less distinguished person.

« Line 626. *Three gentlemen at once*. See Sheridan, *The Rivals*, Act IV, Sc. ii. Captain Absolute, who hitherto has been making love to Lydia as 'Beverley', has just been revealed to her as nothing more than the son of Sir Anthony Absolute, and her unromantically destined husband. The lovers are left together 'to bill and coo', but Lydia falls to upbraiding her suitor for the deception he has practised on her. Mrs. Malaprop, returning to find Lydia in tears instead of in raptures, indignantly turns on Captain Absolute—'There 's no more trick, is there?—you are not like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once, are you?' Cerberus was the three-headed dog that guarded the entrance to the underworld.

Line 631. *Burke*, aware of the unwisdom of the King's course, had steadily resisted his repressive policy, both by his speeches in the House and in his writings; his *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* analysed the dissatisfaction of the people, which had found expression in the disturbances connected with Wilkes; and in the speech on American Taxation and the speech on Conciliation with America, he pleaded urgently for a more liberal attitude towards the colonies.

Line 670. *Washington*, The leader of the American colonists in their fight for independence, and afterwards the first President of the new republic.

^ *John Home Tooke*. During the Reign of Terror in France, England for a time lost her privilege of free speech. So uneasy were the authorities that any words criticizing the government were apt to be judged seditious in spite of contradictory or inadequate evidence. On such uncertain grounds a number of people had been condemned in 1793. Next year, however, when Tooke and eleven others were tried before a Special Commission on a charge of attempting to overthrow the Constitution, the jury were level-headed enough to acquit them.

Line 671. *Franklin* had been prominent in negotiating matters that arose between the home government and the colonists, before the troubles began which led to the War of Independence. During his second visit to England disturbances broke out in America in consequence of the passing of the Stamp Act. He was examined before a committee of the House of Commons on the probable effects of the Act, and it was largely through his representations that the measure was repealed. Next year, however, the American Import Duties were passed, and the position was as bad as ever. Franklin struggled hard till 1775 to bring about in England a more sympathetic

understanding of America's position, but when he returned to America it was to take part in the war for independence. He was soon afterwards sent by Congress to the court of Louis XVI, and was successful in persuading France to aid the colonists in their struggle with England.

Line 675. *Asmodeus*. An evil demon who appears in later Jewish tradition.

Line 686. / *saw a taper, far below me, wink*. Southey's home, Greta Hall, Keswick, lay below Skiddaw.

Line 710. *When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates*. See Numbers, chap. xxii.

- Line 719. *his first hexameter*. Southey's *Vision of Judgment* is written in 'English hexameters'.

Line 721. *spavin'd dactyls*. Spavin'd, of horses, 'diseased'. Here, 'lame'.

Line 728. '*Non Di, non homines*'—*you know the rest*. Horace, *De Arte Poetica*, 372-3:

mediocribus esse poëtis

Non di, non homines, non concessere columnæ.

'To poets, neither gods, nor men nor book counters have given permission to be mediocre'—which is to say that if, in defiance of gods and men, poets *are* mediocre, the falling-off in the sale of their books will soon bring the matter home to them.

- Lines 735-6. *What! what!*
Pye come again? No more—no more of that!

George III was given to repeating his words in this way.

Southey became Poet Laureate in 1813. Pye was his predecessor in the office.

Line 739. *Castlereagh*. Foreign Secretary 1812-22.

Lines 743-4. *Saint Peter . . . (Himself an author)*—with reference to the two epistles of St. Peter.

Line 752. *Quite a poetic felony 'de se'* 'Felony de se'—more usually *felo de se*—suicide.

. Line 769. *He had written praises of a regicide*. Among the early works of Southey is the following 'Inscription for the Apartment in Chepstow Castle, where Henry Martin, the Regicide, was imprisoned thirty years:'

For thirty years, secluded from mankind,
 Hare Martin linger'd. Often have these walls
 Echo'd his footsteps, as with even tread
 He paced around his prison. Not to him
 Did Nature's fair varieties exist.
 He never saw the sun's delightful beams,
 Save when through yon high bars he pour'd a sad
 And broken splendour. Dost thou ask his crime ?
 He had rebell'd against the King and sat
 In judgment on him; for his ardent mind
 Shaped goodliest plans of happiness on earth,
 And peace and liberty. Wild dreams! but such
 As Plato loved; such as, with holy zeal,
 Our Milton worshipp'd. Blessed hopes! awhile
 From man withheld, even to the latter days
 When Christ shall come, and all things be fulfill'd.

Line 771. *He had written for republics far and wide.* See Introduction, for *Wat Tyler and Joan of Arc*.

Line 772. *And then against them bitterer than ever.* See Southey's *Vision of Judgment*, v, lines 266-70.

Line 773. *For pantisocracy he once had cried.* Coleridge, while at Cambridge, evolved a scheme for an ideal community, and this, it was afterwards decided, was to be founded in America, on the banks of the Susquehanna. There, in virgin soil, the colony of pantisocrats was to lead the simple life, independent of all the luxuries of civilization, providing for their own wants and holding their possessions in common. Southey and other young men were fired with Coleridge's enthusiasm, but the plan was never put into practice because the money necessary to buy the land in America and pay the passage of the pantisocrats was not forthcoming.

Lines 778-9. *he had call'd
 Reviewing ' the ungentle craft '.*

See *Life of H. Kirke White* (Byron).

Lines 780-2. *as base a critic as e'er crawl'd—
 Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
 By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd.*

At the end of the eighteenth century Canning founded *The Anti-Jacobin* to discredit revolutionary sentiment in England. Gifford was editor, and with him was associated George Ellis. Their most effective weapon was ridicule, and as Southey's views at this time were republican his verse was several times cleverly mimicked.

78 NOTES TO BYRON'S VISION OF JUDGMENT

In 1809, the *Quarterly Review* was founded. Hitherto the *Edinburgh Review* had been read, for the sake of its literary and general articles, by neople belonging to both political parties, although it had a strong Whig bias. The intention of the founders of the *Quarterly* was that the new Review should provide general reading as good as that of the *Edinburgh*, and that its political articles should instil Tory principles. Gifford was chosen editor, and again Ellis worked with him. Southey was requested to write an article for its first number, and after that he was a regular contributor for thirty years.

Line 790. / *can choose my own reviewers*. Southey could now be sure of friendly notice at least from the *Quarterly*.

- Line 807. *Like King Alfonso*. King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolemaic system, said that ' had he been consulted at the creation of the world he would have spared the Maker some absurdities ' (Byron).

Line 816. *melodious twang*. John Aubrey, a seventeenth-century writer, tells a story in his *Miscellanies* of a ghost that vanished ' with a curious perfume and a most melodious twang '.

- Line 828. *Phceton*, son of the Sun God, persuaded his father to allow him for one day to drive the chariot of the sun across the heavens. The steeds got out of hand and rushed so near the earth that they almost set it on fire. At this Zeus slew Phaeton with a thunder-bolt and cast him down into the river Eridanus.

Line 829. *Into his lake*. Derwentwater. Southey's home, Greta Hall, was at Keswick.

Line 840. *As Welborn says—' the devil turned precisian*. 'Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* opens with a scene in which Welborn, in tattered garments, is asking refreshment of the disreputable tavern-keeper who has prospered by his profligacy. When the tavern-keeper refuses his request in pious language, Welborn declares that the devil has turned precisian, that is, puritan.

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