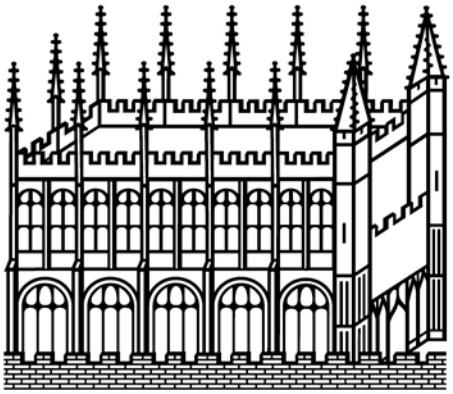

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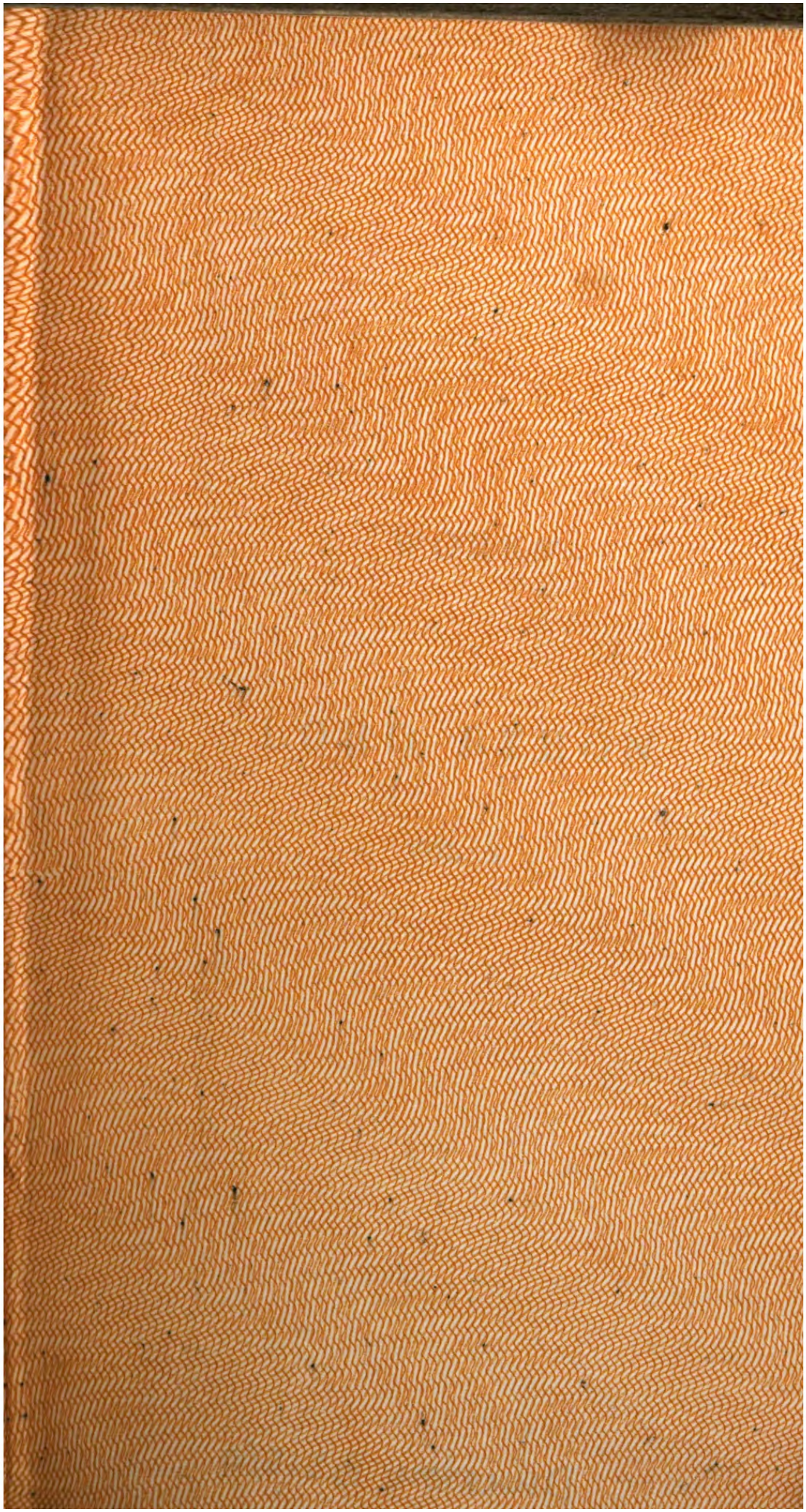

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WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

VOL. X.

LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
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BIBLIOTHECA

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Engraved by [illegible]

CORINTH

From the Acropolis,

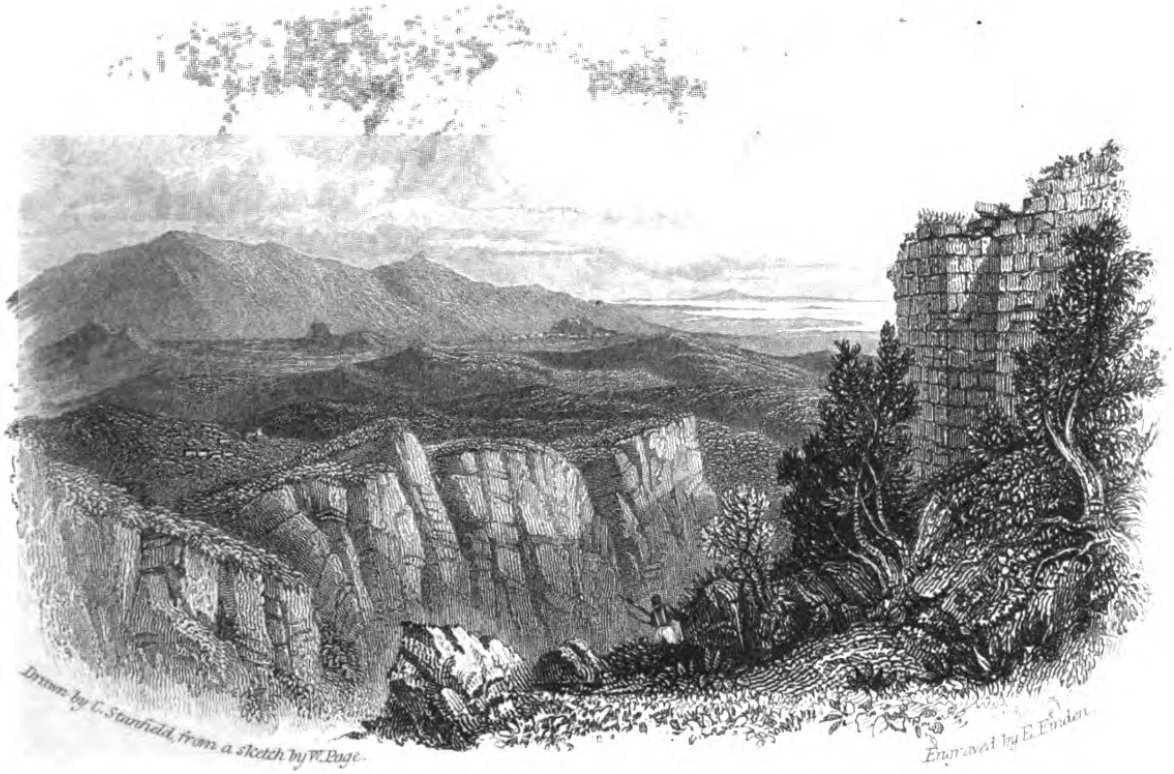
[illegible] Murray Albemarle

WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

VOL. X.



Athens and the Island of Egina.

From Phylæ.

LONDON.
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1832.

THE

WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON:

WITH

HIS LETTERS AND JOURNALS,

AND HIS LIFE,

BY THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

VOL. X.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1832.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In this Volume are arranged, as exactly as could be ascertained, in the order in which they were written, Lord Byron's detached poetical pieces produced between the publication of "The Corsair," in January, 1814, and the end of July, 1816, when he left Geneva for Italy. The third Canto of "Childe Harold" was composed, as has been already mentioned, during the last two months of the period thus embraced.

The contents of this Volume are so miscellaneous, that we have found it necessary to give our observations on the several pieces, in immediate connection with each as it occurs. On the whole, the section of the Author's life to which these belong is, perhaps, the most deeply interesting of all; and cer-

tainly there is none which has been more clearly and touchingly reflected in his poetry. Indeed, the course of his personal feelings may be traced with hardly less distinctness in the romantic tales of "Lara," the "Siege of Corinth," "Parisina," and the "Prisoner of Chillon," than in the occasional Stanzas with which they are intermixed — even in the six remarkable effusions expressly originating in his separation from Lady Byron.

With regard to the first of those Domestic Pieces, — the "Fare thee well," — we have seen, since the sheet containing it was sent to the press, the original draught of it; and, had it fallen under our notice sooner, we should have presented the reader with a fac-simile. The appearance of the MS. confirms, and more than confirms, the account of the circumstances under which it was written, given in the Notices of Lord Byron's Life. It is blotted all over with the marks of tears.

We have also observed, that the motto from "Christabel," which now stands at the head of "Fare thee well," did not appear there until

several editions had been printed. Mr. Coleridge's poem was, in fact, first published in June, 1816, and reached Lord Byron after he had crossed the Alps, in September. It was then that he signified his wish to have the extract in question affixed to all future copies of his stanzas; and the reader, who might have doubted Mr. Moore's assertion, that Lord Byron's hopes of an ultimate reconciliation with his Lady survived even the unsuccessful negotiation prompted by the kind interference of Madame de Staël, when he visited her at Copet, will probably now consider the selection and date of this motto, as circumstances strongly corroborative of the biographer's statement: —

> " A dreary sea now flows between —
> But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
> Shall wholly do away, I ween,
> The marks of that which once hath been!"

The saddest period of Lord Byron's life was also, we see, one of the busiest. His refuge and solace were ever in the practice of his art; and the rapidity with which he continued to pour out verses at this melancholy time, if it

tended to prolong some of his personal annoyances, by giving malevolent critics fresh pretences for making his private affairs the subject of public discussion, has certainly been in no respect injurious to his poetical reputation. It was in reviewing some of the performances included in this Volume, that Sir Walter Scott threw out the following observations, not the less interesting and instructive for certain modest allusions to that great author's own experiences as a popular poet: —

" We are sometimes," he says, " tempted to blame the timidity of those poets, who, possessing powers to arrest the admiration of the public, are yet too much afraid of censure to come frequently forward, and thus defraud themselves of their fame, and the public of the delight which they might afford us. Where success has been unexpectedly, and perhaps undeservedly, obtained by the capricious vote of fashion, it may be well for the adventurer to draw his stake and leave the game, as every succeeding hazard will diminish the chance of his rising a winner. But, they cater ill for the public, and give indifferent advice to the

poet, — supposing him possessed of the highest qualities of his art, — who do not advise him to labour, while the laurel around his brows yet retains its freshness. Sketches from Lord Byron are more valuable than finished pictures from others; nor are we at all sure, that any labour which he might bestow in revisal, would not rather efface than refine those outlines of striking and powerful originality which they exhibit, when flung rough from the hand of the master. No one would have wished to condemn Michael Angelo to work upon a single block of marble, until he had satisfied, in every point, the petty criticism of that Pope, who, neglecting the sublime and magnificent character and attitude of his Moses, descended to blame a wrinkle in the fold of the garment.

" Should it be urged that, in thus stimulating genius to unsparing exertion, we encourage carelessness and hurry in the youthful candidates for literary distinction, we answer, it is not the learner to whom our remarks apply; they refer to him only, who, gifted by nature with the higher power of poetry, — an art as difficult as it is enchanting, — has made himself master, by application and study, of the mechani-

cal process, and in whom, we believe, frequent exertions upon new works awaken and stimulate that genius, which might be cramped and rendered tame, by long and minute attention to finish to the highest possible degree any one of the number. If we look at our poetical library we shall find, generally speaking, the most distinguished poets have been the most voluminous, and that those who, like Gray, limited their productions to a few poems, anxiously and sedulously corrected and revised, have given them a stiff and artificial character, which, far from disarming criticism, has rather embittered its violence, while the Aristarch, like Achilles assailing Hector, meditates dealing the mortal wound through some unguarded crevice of the supposed impenetrable armour, with which the cautious bard has vainly invested himself.

"Our opinion must be necessarily qualified by the caution, that as no human invention can be infinitely fertile, as even the richest genius may be, in agricultural phrase, *cropped out*, and rendered sterile, and as each author must necessarily have a particular style in which he is supposed to excel, and must therefore be more or less a mannerist; no one can with prudence

persevere in forcing himself before the public when, from failure in invention, or from having rendered the peculiarities of his style over trite and familiar, the veteran 'lags superfluous on the stage,' a slighted mute in those dramas where he was once the principal personage. To this humiliation vanity frequently exposes genius; and it is no doubt true that a copious power of diction, joined to habitual carelessness in composition, has frequently conduced to it.

"We would therefore be understood to recommend to authors, while a consciousness of the possession of vigorous powers, carefully cultivated, unites with the favour of the public, to descend into the arena, and continue their efforts vigorously while their hopes are high, their spirits active, and the public propitious, in order that, on the slightest failure of nerves or breath, they may be able to withdraw themselves honourably from the contest gracefully, giving way to other candidates for fame, and cultivating studies more suitable to a flagging imagination than the fervid art of poetry. This, however, is the affair of the authors themselves: should they neglect this prudential course, the public will, no doubt, have more indifferent

books on their table than would otherwise have loaded it; and as the world always seizes the first opportunity of recalling the applause it has bestowed, the former wreaths of the writers will for a time be blighted by their immediate failure. But these evils, so far as the public is concerned, are greatly overbalanced by such as arise from the timid caution which bids genius suppress its efforts until they shall be refined into unattainable perfection: and we cannot but repeat our conviction that poetry, being, in its higher classes, an art which has for its elements sublimity and unaffected beauty, is more liable than any other to suffer from the labour of polishing, or from the elaborate and composite style of ornament, and alternate affectation of simplicity and artifice, which characterise the works, even of the first poets, when they have been over-anxious to secure public applause, by long and reiterated correction. It must be remembered that we speak of the higher tones of composition; there are others of a subordinate character, where extreme art and labour are not bestowed in vain. But we cannot consider over-anxious correction as likely to be employed with advantage upon

poems like those of Lord Byron, which have for their object to rouse the imagination, and awaken the passions." *

With the exception of "Parisina," the original MSS. of the poems in this Volume have been in our hands, and have furnished various readings worthy of being preserved. For the use of some of these MSS., and for many other obliging favours, we are indebted to the Honourable Mrs. Leigh.

September 16. 1832.

* See Quarterly Review, vol. xvi. p. 178.

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ODE

TO

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

" Expende Annibalem : — quot libras in duce summo
Invenies ? " JUVENAL, *Sat.* X. (1)

---

(1) ["Produce the urn that Hannibal contains,
And weigh the mighty dust which yet remains:
AND IS THIS ALL ! "—

I know not that this was ever done in the old world; at least, with regard to Hannibal; but, in the Statistical Account of Scotland, I find that Sir John Paterson had the curiosity to collect, and weigh, the ashes of a person discovered a few years since in the parish of Eccles; which he was happily enabled to do with great facility, as "the inside of the coffin was smooth, and the whole body visible." Wonderful to relate, he found the whole did not exceed in weight one ounce and a half! AND IS THIS ALL! Alas! the *quot libras* itself is a satirical exaggeration. — GIFFORD.]

" The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the Senate, by the Italians, and by the Provincials of Gaul; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity.

* * * * * * *

* * * * * * *

By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till ——— "

GIBBON's *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. p. 220. (1)

---

(1) ["I send you an additional motto from Gibbon, which you will find *singularly* appropriate."—*Lord B. to Mr. M.* April 12. 1814.]

ODE

TO

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE. (1)

I.

'Tis done—but yesterday a King!
And arm'd with Kings to strive—
And now thou art a nameless thing:
So abject—yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive? (2)

(1) [The reader has seen that Lord Byron, when publishing "The Corsair," in January, 1814, announced an apparently quite serious resolution to withdraw, for some years at least, from poetry. His letters of the February and March following abound in repetitions of the same determination. On the morning of the *ninth* of April, he writes—"No more rhyme for—or rather *from*—me. I have taken my leave of that stage, and henceforth will mountebank it no longer." In the evening, a Gazette Extraordinary announced the abdication of Fontainebleau, and the poet violated his vows next morning, by composing this Ode, which he immediately published, though without his name. His diary says, "April 10. To-day I have boxed one hour—written an Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte—copied it—eaten six biscuits—drunk four bottles of soda water, and redde away the rest of my time."—E.]

(2) ["I don't know—but I think *I*, even *I* (an insect compared with this creature), have set my life on casts not a millionth part of this man's. But,

Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

II.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bow'd so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestion'd,—power to save,—
Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipp'd thee;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

III.

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preach'd before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

---

after all, a crown may not be worth dying for. Yet, to outlive *Lodi* for this!!! Oh that Juvenal or Johnson could rise from the dead! 'Expende —quot libras in duce summo invenies?' I knew they were light in the balance of mortality; but I thought their living dust weighed more *carats*. Alas! this imperial diamond hath a flaw in it, and is now hardly fit to stick in a glazier's pencil; — the pen of the historian won't rate it worth a ducat. Psha! 'something too much of this.' But I won't give him up even now; though all his admirers have, like the Thanes, fallen from him."—*B. Diary*, April 9.]

IV.

The triumph, and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife (1)—
The earthquake voice of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seem'd made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife—
All quell'd!—Dark Spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

V.

The Desolator desolate!
The Victor overthrown!
The Arbiter of others' fate
A Suppliant for his own!
Is it some yet imperial hope
That with such change can calmly cope?
Or dread of death alone?
To die a prince—or live a slave—
Thy choice is most ignobly brave!

VI.

He who of old would rend the oak, (2)
Dream'd not of the rebound;

(1) "Certaminis *gaudia*"— the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

(2) ["Out of town six days. On my return, find my poor little pagod, Napoleon, pushed off his pedestal. It is his own fault. Like Milo, he would rend the oak; but it closed again, wedged his hands, and now the beasts — lion, bear, down to the dirtiest jackall — may all tear him. That Muscovite winter *wedged* his arms; — ever since, he has fought with his feet and teeth. The last may still leave their marks; and 'I guess now' (as the Yankees say), that he will yet play them a pass."—*B. Diary*, April 8.]

Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke—
Alone—how look'd he round?
Thou in the sternness of thy strength
An equal deed hast done at length,
And darker fate hast found:
He fell, the forest prowlers' prey;
But thou must eat thy heart away!

VII.

The Roman, (1) when his burning heart
Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
In savage grandeur, home.—
He dared depart in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

VIII.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway
Had lost its quickening spell, (2)

(1) Sylla. — [We find the germ of this stanza in the Diary of the evening before it was written: — "Methinks Sylla did better; for he revenged, and resigned in the height of his sway, red with the slaughter of his foes — the finest instance of glorious contempt of the rascals upon record. Dioclesian did well too — Amurath not amiss, had he become ught except a dervise — Charles the Fifth but so so; but Napoleon worst of all." — *B. Diary*, April 9.]

(2) ["Alter '*potent* spell' to 'quickening spell:' the first (as Polonius says) 'is a vile phrase,' and means nothing, besides being common-place and Rosa-Matildaish. After the resolution of not publishing, though our Ode is a thing of little length and less consequence, it will be better altogether that it is anonymous." — *Lord B. to Mr. M.* April 11.]

Cast crowns for rosaries away,
An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
His dotage trifled well: (1)
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne. (2)

IX.

But thou — from thy reluctant hand
The thunderbolt is wrung —
Too late thou leav'st the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart
To see thine own unstrung;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean;

(1) [Charles the Fifth, Emperor of Germany, and King of Spain, resigned, in 1555, his imperial crown to his brother Ferdinand, and the kingdom of Spain to his son Philip, and retired to a monastery in Estremadura, where he conformed, in his manner of living, to all the rigour of monastic austerity. Not satisfied with this, he dressed himself in his shroud, was laid in his coffin with much solemnity, joined in the prayers which were offered up for the rest of his soul, and mingled his tears with those which his attendants shed, as if they had been celebrating a real funeral. — E.]

(2) ["I looked," says Boswell, "into Lord Kaimes's 'Sketches of the History of Man,' and mentioned to Dr. Johnson his censure of Charles the Fifth, for celebrating his funeral obsequies in his life-time, which, I told him, I had been used to think a solemn and affecting act." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, a man may dispose his mind to think so of that act of Charles; but it is so liable to ridicule, that if one man out of ten thousand laughs at it, he'll make the other nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine laugh too." — *Croker's Boswell*, vol. iv. p. 102.]

X.

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,
And thank'd him for a throne!
Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

XI.

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain —
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain:
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again —
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night? (1)

XII.

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, Mortality! are just
To all that pass away:

(1) [In the original MS. —

"But who would rise in brightest day
To set without one parting ray?" — E.]

But yet methought the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay:
Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

XIII.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride;
How bears her breast the torturing hour?
Still clings she to thy side?
Must she too bend, must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,
'Tis worth thy vanish'd diadem! ([1])

XIV.

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea;
That element may meet thy smile—
It ne'er was ruled by thee!
Or trace with thine all idle hand
In loitering mood upon the sand
That Earth is now as free!
That Corinth's pedagogue ([2]) hath now
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

(1) [It is well known that Count Neipperg, a gentleman in the suite of the Emperor of Austria, who was first presented to Maria Louisa within a few days after Napoleon's abdication, became, in the sequel, her chamberlain, and then her husband. He is said to have been a man of remarkably plain appearance. The Count died in 1831. — E.]

(2) [Dionysius the Younger, esteemed a greater tyrant than his father,

XV.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage (1)
What thoughts will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prison'd rage?
But one—"The world *was* mine!"
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit pour'd so widely forth—
So long obey'd—so little worth!

XVI.

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven, (2)
Wilt thou withstand the shock?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock!
Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst, (3)
And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch mock; (4)

---

on being for the second time banished from Syracuse, retired to Corinth, where he was obliged to turn schoolmaster for a subsistence. — E.]

(1) The cage of Bajazet, by order of Tamerlane.

(2) Prometheus.

(3) [In first draught—

"He suffered for kind acts to men,
Who have not seen his like again,
At least of kingly stock;
Since he was good, and thou but great,
Thou canst not quarrel with thy fate."— E.]

(4) ——"The very fiend's arch mock—
To lip a wanton, and suppose her chaste." — SHAKSPEARE.

[We believe there is no doubt of the anecdote here alluded to — of Napoleon's having found leisure for an unworthy *amour*, the very evening of his arrival at Fontainebleau. — E.]

He in his fall preserved his pride,
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

XVII.

There was a day—there was an hour, (1)
While earth was Gaul's—Gaul thine—
When that immeasurable power
Unsated to resign
Had been an act of purer fame
Than gathers round Marengo's name
And gilded thy decline,
Through the long twilight of all time,
Despite some passing clouds of crime.

XVIII.

But thou forsooth must be a king,
And don the purple vest,—
As if that foolish robe could wring
Remembrance from thy breast.
Where is that faded garment? where
The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
The star—the string—the crest?
Vain froward child of empire! say,
Are all thy playthings snatch'd away?

(1) [The three last stanzas, which Lord Byron had been solicited by Mr. Murray to write, to avoid the stamp duty then imposed upon publications not exceeding a sheet, were not published with the rest of the poem. "I don't like them at all," says Lord Byron, "and they had better be left out. The fact is, I can't do any thing I am asked to do, however gladly I would; and at the end of a week my interest in a composition goes off."—E.]

XIX.

Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the Great; (1)
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state?

(1) [In one of Lord Byron's MS. Diaries, begun at Ravenna in May, 1821, we find the following: — "What shall I write? — another Journal? I think not. Any thing that comes uppermost, and call it

My Dictionary.

Augustus. — I have often been puzzled with his character. Was he a great man? Assuredly. But not one of *my* great men. I have always looked upon Sylla as the greatest character in history, for laying down his power at the moment when it was —

'Too great to keep or to resign,'

and thus despising them all. As to the retention of his power by Augustus, the thing was already settled. If he had given it up — the commonwealth was gone — the republic was long past all resuscitation. Had Brutus and Cassius gained the battle of Philippi, it would not have restored the republic. Its days ended with the Gracchi; the rest was a mere struggle of parties. You might as well cure a consumption, or restore a broken egg, as revive a state so long a prey to every uppermost soldier, as Rome had long been. As for a despotism, if Augustus could have been sure that all his successors would have been like himself — (I mean *not* as Octavius, but Augustus) or Napoleon could have insured the world that *none* of his successors would have been like himself — the ancient or modern world might have gone on, like the empire of China, in a state of lethargic prosperity. Suppose, for instance, that, instead of Tiberius and Caligula, Augustus had been immediately succeeded by Nerva, Trajan, the Antonines, or even by Titus and his father — what a difference in our estimate of himself! — So far from gaining by the contrast, I think that one half of our dislike arises from his having been heired by Tiberius — and one half of Julius Cæsar's fame, from his having had his empire consolidated by Augustus. — Suppose that there had been *no Octavius*, and Tiberius had 'jumped the life' between, and at once succeeded Julius? — And yet it is difficult to say whether hereditary right or popular choice produce the worser sovereigns. The Roman Consuls make a goodly show; but then they only reigned for a year, and were under a sort of personal obligation to distinguish themselves. It is still more difficult to say which form of government is the worst — all are so bad. As for democracy, it is the worst of the whole; for what is, in fact, democracy? — an aristocracy of blackguards." — E.]

Yes — one — the first — the last — the best —
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeath'd the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but one! (1)

(1) [On being reminded by a friend of his recent promise not to write any more for years — "There was," replied Lord Byron, "a mental reservation in my pact with the public, in behalf of *anonymes;* and, even had there not, the provocation was such as to make it physically impossible to pass over this epoch of triumphant tameness. 'Tis a sad business; and, after all, I shall think higher of rhyme and reason, and very humbly of your heroic people, till — Elba becomes a volcano, and sends him out again. I can't think it is all over yet." — E.]

LARA.

A TALE.

[A few days after he had put the finishing hand to the "Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte," Lord Byron adopted the most extraordinary resolution that, perhaps, ever entered into the mind of an author of any celebrity. Annoyed at the tone of disparagement in which his assailants — not content with blackening his moral and social character — now affected to speak of his genius, and somewhat mortified, there is reason to believe, by finding that his own friends dreaded the effects of constant publications on his ultimate fame, he came to the determination, not only to print no more in future, but to purchase back the whole of his past copyrights, and suppress every line he had ever written. With this view, on the 29th of April, he actually enclosed his publisher a draft for the money. "For all this," he said, "it might be as well to assign some reason: I have none to give, except my own caprice, and I do not consider the circumstance of consequence enough to require explanation." An appeal, however, from Mr. Murray, to his good-nature and considerateness brought, in eight and forty hours, the following reply: — "If your present note is serious, and it really would be inconvenient, there is an end of the matter: tear my draft, and go on as usual: that I was perfectly serious, in wishing to suppress all future publication, is true; but certainly not to interfere with the convenience of others, and more particularly your own."

The following passages in his Diary depict the state of Lord Byron's mind at this period: — "Murray has had a letter from his brother bibliopole of Edinburgh, who says, 'he is lucky in having such a *poet*' — something as if one was a pack-horse, or 'ass, or any thing that is his;' or like Mrs. Packwood, who replied to some enquiry after the Odes on Razors, 'Laws, sir, we keeps a poet.' The same illustrious Edinburgh bookseller once sent an order for books, poesy, and cookery, with this agreeable postscript — 'The *Harold* and *Cookery* are much wanted.' Such is fame! and, after all, quite as good as any other 'life in others' breath.' 'Tis much the same to divide purchasers with Hannah Glasse or Hannah More."—"March 17th, Redde the 'Quarrels of Authors,' a new work, by that most entertaining and researching writer, D'Israeli. They seem to be an irritable set, and I wish myself well out of it. 'I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat.' What the devil had I to do with scribbling? It is too late to enquire, and all regret is useless. But an' it were to do again — I should write again, I suppose. Such is human nature, at least my share of it; — though I shall think better of myself if I have sense to stop now. If I have a wife, and that wife has a son, I will bring up mine heir in the most anti-poetical way — make him a lawyer, or a pirate, or anything. But if he writes too, I shall be sure he is none of mine, and will cut him off with a bank token."—"April 19. I will keep no further journal; and, to prevent me from returning, like a dog, to the vomit of memory, I tear out the remaining leaves of this volume. 'Oh fool! I shall go mad.'"

These extracts are from the Diary of March and April. Before the end of May he had begun the composition of "Lara," which has been almost

universally considered as the continuation of "The Corsair." This poem was published anonymously in the following August, in the same volume with Mr. Rogers's elegant tale of "Jacqueline;" an unnatural and unintelligible conjunction, which, however, gave rise to some pretty good jokes. "I believe," says Lord Byron, in one of his letters, "I told you of Larry and Jacquy. A friend of mine — at least a friend of his — was reading said Larry and Jacquy in a Brighton coach. A passenger took up the book and queried as to the author. The proprietor said, 'there were *two*;' — to which the answer of the unknown was, 'Ay, ay, — a joint concern, I suppose, *summot* like Sternhold and Hopkins.' Is not this excellent? I would not have missed the 'vile comparison' to have escaped being the 'Arcades ambo et cantare pares.'"—E.]

LARA.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

THE Serfs (1) are glad through Lara's wide domain,
And Slavery half forgets her feudal chain;
He, their unhoped, but unforgotten lord,
The long self-exiled chieftain, is restored:
There be bright faces in the busy hall,
Bowls on the board, and banners on the wall;
Far checkering o'er the pictured window, plays
The unwonted faggots' hospitable blaze;
And gay retainers gather round the hearth,
With tongues all loudness, and with eyes all mirth.

II.

The chief of Lara is return'd again:
And why had Lara cross'd the bounding main?
Left by his sire, too young such loss to know,
Lord of himself;—that heritage of woe,

(1) The reader is apprised, that the name of Lara being Spanish, and no circumstance of local and natural description fixing the scene or hero of the poem to any country or age, the word 'Serf,' which could not be correctly applied to the lower classes in Spain, who were never vassals of the soil, has nevertheless been employed to designate the followers of our fictitious chieftain. — [Lord Byron elsewhere intimates, that he meant Lara for a chief of the Morea. — E.]

That fearful empire which the human breast
But holds to rob the heart within of rest!—
With none to check, and few to point in time
The thousand paths that slope the way to crime;
Then, when he most required commandment, then
Had Lara's daring boyhood govern'd men.
It skills not, boots not step by step to trace
His youth through all the mazes of its race;
Short was the course his restlessness had run,
But long enough to leave him half undone. (1)

III.

And Lara left in youth his father-land;
But from the hour he waved his parting hand
Each trace wax'd fainter of his course, till all
Had nearly ceased his memory to recall.
His sire was dust, his vassals could declare,
Twas all they knew, that Lara was not there;
Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew
Cold in the many, anxious in the few.
His hall scarce echoes with his wonted name,
His portrait darkens in its fading frame,
Another chief consoled his destined bride,
The young forgot him, and the old had died;
" Yet doth he live!" exclaims the impatient heir,
And sighs for sables which he must not wear.
A hundred scutcheons deck with gloomy grace
The Laras' last and longest dwelling-place;
But one is absent from the mouldering file,
That now were welcome in that Gothic pile.

(1) [Lord Byron's own tale is partly told in this section. —Sir Walter Scott.]

IV.

He comes at last in sudden loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need not guess;
They more might marvel, when the greeting's o'er,
Not that he came, but came not long before:
No train is his beyond a single page,
Of foreign aspect, and of tender age.
Years had roll'd on, and fast they speed away
To those that wander as to those that stay;
But lack of tidings from another clime
Had lent a flagging wing to weary Time.
They see, they recognise, yet almost deem
The present dubious, or the past a dream.

He lives, nor yet is past his manhood's prime,
Though sear'd by toil, and something touch'd by time;
His faults, whate'er they were, if scarce forgot,
Might be untaught him by his varied lot;
Nor good nor ill of late were known, his name
Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame:
His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins
No more than pleasure from the stripling wins;
And such, if not yet harden'd in their course,
Might be redeem'd, nor ask a long remorse.

V.

And they indeed were changed—'tis quickly seen,
Whate'er he be, 'twas not what he had been:
That brow in furrow'd lines had fix'd at last,
And spake of passions, but of passion past:

The pride, but not the fire, of early days,
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise;
A high demeanour, and a glance that took
Their thoughts from others by a single look;
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath stung, (1)
That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the wound;

(1) [It is a remarkable property of the poetry of Lord Byron, that although his manner is frequently varied, — although he appears to have assumed for an occasion the characteristic stanza and style of several contemporaries,— yet not only is his poetry marked in every instance by the strongest cast of originality, but in some leading particulars, and especially in the character of his heroes, each story so closely resembled the other, that, managed by a writer of less power, the effect would have been an unpleasant monotony. All, or almost all, his heroes have somewhat the attributes of Childe Harold: — all, or almost all, have minds which seem at variance with their fortunes, and exhibit high and poignant feelings of pain and pleasure; a keen sense of what is noble and honourable; and an equally keen susceptibility of injustice or injury, under the garb of stoicism or contempt of mankind. The strength of early passion, and the glow of youthful feeling, are uniformly painted as chilled or subdued by a train of early imprudences or of darker guilt, and the sense of enjoyment tarnished, by too intimate an acquaintance with the vanity of human wishes. These general attributes mark the stern features of all Lord Byron's heroes, from those which are shaded by the scalloped hat of the illustrious Pilgrim, to those which lurk under the turban of Alp the Renegade. It was reserved to him to present the same character on the public stage again and again, varied only by the exertions of that powerful genius which, searching the springs of passion and of feeling in their innermost recesses, knew how to combine their operations, so that the interest was eternally varying, and never abated, although the most important personage of the drama retained the same lineaments. It will one day be considered as not the least remarkable literary phenomenon of this age, that during a period of four years, notwithstanding the quantity of distinguished poetical talent of which we may be permitted to boast, a single author — and he managing his pen with the careless and negligent ease of a man of quality, and choosing for his theme subjects so very similar, and personages bearing so close a resemblance to each other, — did, in despite of these circumstances, of the unamiable attributes with which he usually invested his heroes, and of the proverbial fickleness of the public, maintain the ascendancy in their favour, which he had acquired by his first matured production. So, however, it indisputably has been. — Sir Walter Scott.]

All these seem'd his, and something more beneath
Than glance could well reveal, or accent breathe.
Ambition, glory, love, the common aim,
That some can conquer, and that all would claim,
Within his breast appear'd no more to strive,
Yet seem'd as lately they had been alive;
And some deep feeling it were vain to trace
At moments lighten'd o'er his livid face.

VI.

Not much he loved long question of the past,
Nor told of wondrous wilds, and deserts vast,
In those far lands where he had wander'd lone,
And — as himself would have it seem — unknown:
Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely scan,
Nor glean experience from his fellow man;
But what he had beheld he shunn'd to show,
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know;
If still more prying such enquiry grew,
His brow fell darker, and his words more few.

VII.

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,
Warm was his welcome to the haunts of men;
Born of high lineage, link'd in high command,
He mingled with the Magnates of his land;
Join'd the carousals of the great and gay,
And saw them smile or sigh their hours away;(1)

(1) [This description of Lara suddenly and unexpectedly returned from distant travels, and re-assuming his station in the society of his own country, has strong points of resemblance to the part which the author himself seemed occasionally to bear amid the scenes where the great mingle with the fair. — SIR WALTER SCOTT.]

But still he only saw, and did not share,
The common pleasure or the general care;
He did not follow what they all pursued
With hope still baffled still to be renew'd;
Nor shadowy honour, nor substantial gain,
Nor beauty's preference, and the rival's pain:
Around him some mysterious circle thrown
Repell'd approach, and show'd him still alone;
Upon his eye sat something of reproof,
That kept at least frivolity aloof;
And things more timid that beheld him near,
In silence gazed, or whisper'd mutual fear;
And they the wiser, friendlier few confess'd
They deem'd him better than his air express'd.

VIII.

'Twas strange—in youth all action and all life,
Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife;
Woman—the field—the ocean—all that gave
Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,
In turn he tried—he ransack'd all below,
And found his recompense in joy or woe,
No tame, trite medium; for his feelings sought
In that intenseness an escape from thought:
The tempest of his heart in scorn had gazed
On that the feebler elements hath raised;
The rapture of his heart had look'd on high,
And ask'd if greater dwelt beyond the sky:
Chain'd to excess, the slave of each extreme,
How woke he from the wildness of that dream?
Alas! he told not—but he did awake
To curse the wither'd heart that would not break.

IX.

Books, for his volume heretofore was Man,
With eye more curious he appear'd to scan,
And oft, in sudden mood, for many a day,
From all communion he would start away:
And then, his rarely call'd attendants said,
Through night's long hours would sound his hurried tread
O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers frown'd
In rude but antique portraiture around:
They heard, but whisper'd—"*that* must not be known—
The sound of words less earthly than his own.
Yes, they who chose might smile, but some had seen
They scarce knew what, but more than should have been.
Why gazed he so upon the ghastly head
Which hands profane had gather'd from the dead,
That still beside his open'd volume lay,
As if to startle all save him away?
Why slept he not when others were at rest?
Why heard no music, and received no guest?
All was not well, they deem'd—but where the wrong?
Some knew perchance—but 'twere a tale too long;
And such besides were too discreetly wise,
To more than hint their knowledge in surmise;
But if they would—they could"—around the board,
Thus Lara's vassals prattled of their lord.

X.

It was the night—and Lara's glassy stream
The stars are studding, each with imaged beam;

So calm, the waters scarcely seem to stray,
And yet they glide like happiness away;
Reflecting far and fairy-like from high
The immortal lights that live along the sky:
Its banks are fringed with many a goodly tree,
And flowers the fairest that may feast the bee;
Such in her chaplet infant Dian wove,
And Innocence would offer to her love.
These deck the shore; the waves their channel make
In windings bright and mazy like the snake.
All was so still, so soft in earth and air,
You scarce would start to meet a spirit there;
Secure that nought of evil could delight
To walk in such a scene, on such a night!
It was a moment only for the good:
So Lara deem'd, nor longer there he stood,
But turn'd in silence to his castle-gate;
Such scene his soul no more could contemplate:
Such scene reminded him of other days,
Of skies more cloudless, moons of purer blaze,
Of nights more soft and frequent, hearts that now—
No—no—the storm may beat upon his brow,
Unfelt—unsparing—but a night like this,
A night of beauty, mock'd such breast as his.

XI.

He turn'd within his solitary hall,
And his high shadow shot along the wall:
There were the painted forms of other times,
'Twas all they left of virtues or of crimes,
Save vague tradition; and the gloomy vaults
That hid their dust, their foibles, and their faults;

And half a column of the pompous page,
That speeds the specious tale from age to age;
Where history's pen its praise or blame supplies,
And lies like truth, and still most truly lies.
He wandering mused, and as the moonbeam shone
Through the dim lattice o'er the floor of stone,
And the high fretted roof, and saints, that there
O'er Gothic windows knelt in pictured prayer,
Reflected in fantastic figures grew,
Like life, but not like mortal life, to view;
His bristling locks of sable, brow of gloom,
And the wide waving of his shaken plume,
Glanced like a spectre's attributes, and gave
His aspect all that terror gives the grave.

XII.

'Twas midnight—all was slumber; the lone light
Dimm'd in the lamp, as loth to break the night.
Hark! there be murmurs heard in Lara's hall—
A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call!
A long, loud shriek—and silence—did they hear
That frantic echo burst the sleeping ear?
They heard and rose, and, tremulously brave,
Rush where the sound invoked their aid to save;
They come with half-lit tapers in their hands,
And snatch'd in startled haste unbelted brands.

XIII.

Cold as the marble where his length was laid,
Pale as the beam that o'er his features play'd,
Was Lara stretch'd; his half drawn sabre near,
Dropp'd it should seem in more than nature's fear;

Yet he was firm, or had been firm till now,
And still defiance knit his gather'd brow;
Though mix'd with terror, senseless as he lay,
There lived upon his lip the wish to slay;
Some half form'd threat in utterance there had died,
Some imprecation of despairing pride;
His eye was almost seal'd, but not forsook
Even in its trance the gladiator's look,
That oft awake his aspect could disclose,
And now was fix'd in horrible repose.
They raise him—bear him;—hush! he breathes, he speaks,
The swarthy blush recolours in his cheeks,
His lip resumes its red, his eye, though dim,
Rolls wide and wild, each slowly quivering limb
Recalls its function, but his words are strung
In terms that seem not of his native tongue;
Distinct but strange, enough they understand
To deem them accents of another land;
And such they were, and meant to meet an ear
That hears him not—alas! that cannot hear!

XIV.

His page approach'd, and he alone appear'd
To know the import of the words they heard;
And, by the changes of his cheek and brow,
They were not such as Lara should avow,
Nor he interpret,—yet with less surprise
Than those around their chieftain's state he eyes,
But Lara's prostrate form he bent beside,
And in that tongue which seem'd his own replied,

And Lara heeds those tones that gently seem
To soothe away the horrors of his dream —
If dream it were, that thus could overthrow
A breast that needed not ideal woe.

XV.

Whate'er his frenzy dream'd or eye beheld,
If yet remember'd ne'er to be reveal'd,
Rests at his heart: the custom'd morning came,
And breathed new vigour in his shaken frame;
And solace sought he none from priest nor leech,
And soon the same in movement and in speech
As heretofore he fill'd the passing hours, —
Nor less he smiles, nor more his forehead lowers,
Than these were wotn; and if the coming night
Appear'd less welcome now to Lara's sight,
He to his marvelling vassals show'd it not,
Whose shuddering proved *their* fear was less forgot.
In trembling pairs (alone they dared not) crawl
The astonish'd slaves, and shun the fated hall;
The waving banner, and the clapping door,
The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;
The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze;
Aught they behold or hear their thought appals,
As evening saddens o'er the dark grey walls.

XVI.

Vain thought! that hour of ne'er unravell'd gloom
Came not again, or Lara could assume
A seeming of forgetfulness, that made
His vassals more amazed nor less afraid —

Had memory vanish'd then with sense restored?
Since word, nor look, nor gesture of their lord
Betray'd a feeling that recall'd to these
That fever'd moment of his mind's disease.
Was it a dream? was his the voice that spoke
Those strange wild accents; his the cry that broke
Their slumber? his the oppress'd, o'erlabour'd heart
That ceased to beat, the look that made them start?
Could he who thus had suffer'd so forget,
When such as saw that suffering shudder yet?
Or did that silence prove his memory fix'd
Too deep for words, indelible, unmix'd
In that corroding secrecy which gnaws
The heart to show the effect, but not the cause?
Not so in him; his breast had buried both,
Nor common gazers could discern the growth
Of thoughts that mortal lips must leave half told;
They choke the feeble words that would unfold.

XVII.

In him inexplicably mix'd appear'd
Much to be loved and hated, sought and fear'd;
Opinion varying o'er his hidden lot,
In praise or railing ne'er his name forgot:
His silence form'd a theme for others' prate—
They guess'd—they gazed—they fain would know
his fate.
What had he been? what was he, thus unknown,
Who walk'd their world, his lineage only known?
A hater of his kind? yet some would say,
With them he could seem gay amidst the gay;

But own'd that smile, if oft observed and near,
Waned in its mirth, and wither'd to a sneer;
That smile might reach his lip, but pass'd not by,
None e'er could trace its laughter to his eye:
Yet there was softness too in his regard,
At times, a heart as not by nature hard,
But once perceived, his spirit seem'd to chide
Such weakness, as unworthy of its pride,
And steel'd itself, as scorning to redeem
One doubt from others' half withheld esteem;
In self-inflicted penance of a breast
Which tenderness might once have wrung from rest;
In vigilance of grief that would compel
The soul to hate for having loved too well.

XVIII.

There was in him a vital scorn of all:
As if the worst had fall'n which could befall,
He stood a stranger in this breathing world,
An erring spirit from another hurl'd;
A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped
By choice the perils he by chance escaped;
But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory yet
His mind would half exult and half regret:
With more capacity for love than earth
Bestows on most of mortal mould and birth,
His early dreams of good outstripp'd the truth,
And troubled manhood follow'd baffled youth;
With thought of years in phantom chase mispent,
And wasted powers for better purpose lent;
And fiery passions that had pour'd their wrath
In hurried desolation o'er his path,

And left the better feelings all at strife
In wild reflection o'er his stormy life;
But haughty still, and loth himself to blame,
He call'd on Nature's self to share the shame,
And charged all faults upon the fleshly form
She gave to clog the soul, and feast the worm;
Till he at last confounded good and ill,
And half mistook for fate the acts of will:
Too high for common selfishness, he could
At times resign his own for others' good,
But not in pity, not because he ought,
But in some strange perversity of thought,
That sway'd him onward with a secret pride
To do what few or none would do beside;
And this same impulse would, in tempting time,
Mislead his spirit equally to crime;
So much he soar'd beyond, or sunk beneath,
The men with whom he felt condemn'd to breathe,
And long'd by good or ill to separate
Himself from all who shared his mortal state;
His mind abhorring this had fix'd her throne
Far from the world, in regions of her own:
Thus coldly passing all that pass'd below,
His blood in temperate seeming now would flow:
Ah! happier if it ne'er with guilt had glow'd,
But ever in that icy smoothness flow'd!
'Tis true, with other men their path he walk'd,
And like the rest in seeming did and talk'd,
Nor outraged Reason's rules by flaw nor start,
His madness was not of the head, but heart;
And rarely wander'd in his speech, or drew
His thoughts so forth as to offend the view.

XIX.

With all that chilling mystery of mien,
And seeming gladness to remain unseen,
He had (if 'twere not nature's boon) an art
Of fixing memory on another's heart:
It was not love perchance — nor hate — nor aught
That words can image to express the thought;
But they who saw him did not see in vain,
And once beheld, would ask of him again:
And those to whom he spake remember'd well,
And on the words, however light, would dwell:
None knew, nor how, nor why, but he entwined
Himself perforce around the hearer's mind;
There he was stamp'd, in liking, or in hate,
If greeted once; however brief the date
That friendship, pity, or aversion knew,
Still there within the inmost thought he grew.
You could not penetrate his soul, but found,
Despite your wonder, to your own he wound;
His presence haunted still; and from the breast
He forced an all unwilling interest:
Vain was the struggle in that mental net,
His spirit seem'd to dare you to forget!

XX.

There is a festival, where knights and dames,
And aught that wealth or lofty lineage claims,
Appear — a highborn and a welcome guest
To Otho's hall came Lara with the rest.
The long carousal shakes the illumined hall,
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball;

And the gay dance of bounding Beauty's train
Links grace and harmony in happiest chain:
Blest are the early hearts and gentle hands
That mingle there in well according bands;
It is a sight the careful brow might smooth,
And make Age smile, and dream itself to youth,
And Youth forget such hour was past on earth,
So springs the exulting bosom to that mirth!

XXI.

And Lara gazed on these, sedately glad,
His brow belied him if his soul was sad;
And his glance follow'd fast each fluttering fair,
Whose steps of lightness woke no echo there:
He lean'd against the lofty pillar nigh,
With folded arms and long attentive eye,
Nor mark'd a glance so sternly fix'd on his —
Ill brook'd high Lara scrutiny like this:
At length he caught it, 'tis a face unknown,
But seems as searching his, and his alone;
Prying and dark, a stranger's by his mien,
Who still till now had gazed on him unseen:
At length encountering meets the mutual gaze
Of keen enquiry, and of mute amaze;
On Lara's glance emotion gathering grew,
As if distrusting that the stranger threw;
Along the stranger's aspect, fix'd and stern,
Flash'd more than thence the vulgar eye could learn.

XXII.

"'Tis he!" the stranger cried, and those that heard
Re-echoed fast and far the whisper'd word.

" 'Tis he ! " — " 'Tis who ? " they question far and
near,
Till louder accents rung on Lara's ear ;
So widely spread, few bosoms well could brook
The general marvel, or that single look :
But Lara stirr'd not, changed not, the surprise
That sprung at first to his arrested eyes
Seem'd now subsided, neither sunk nor raised
Glanced his eye round, though still the stranger gazed ;
And drawing nigh, exclaim'd, with haughty sneer,
" 'Tis he ! — how came he thence ? — what doth he
here ? "

XXIII.

It were too much for Lara to pass by
Such questions, so repeated fierce and high ;
With look collected, but with accent cold,
More mildly firm than petulantly bold,
He turn'd, and met the inquisitorial tone —
" My name is Lara ! — when thine own is known,
Doubt not my fitting answer to requite
The unlook'd for courtesy of such a knight.
'Tis Lara ! — further wouldst thou mark or ask ?
I shun no question, and I wear no mask."

" Thou shunn'st no question ! Ponder — is there
none [shun ?
Thy heart must answer, though thine ear would
And deem'st thou me unknown too ? Gaze again !
At least thy memory was not given in vain.
Oh ! never canst thou cancel half her debt,
Eternity forbids thee to forget."

With slow and searching glance upon his face
Grew Lara's eyes, but nothing there could trace
They knew, or chose to know — with dubious look
He deign'd no answer, but his head he shook,
And half contemptuous turn'd to pass away;
But the stern stranger motion'd him to stay.
" A word! — I charge thee stay, and answer here
To one, who, wert thou noble, were thy peer,
But as thou wast and art — nay, frown not, lord,
If false, 'tis easy to disprove the word —
But as thou wast and art, on thee looks down,
Distrusts thy smiles, but shakes not at thy frown.
Art thou not he? whose deeds ——"
" Whate'er I be,
Words wild as these, accusers like to thee
I list no further; those with whom they weigh
May hear the rest, nor venture to gainsay
The wondrous tale no doubt thy tongue can tell,
Which thus begins so courteously and well.
Let Otho cherish here his polish'd guest,
To him my thanks and thoughts shall be express'd."
And here their wondering host hath interposed —
" Whate'er there be between you undisclosed,
This is no time nor fitting place to mar
The mirthful meeting with a wordy war.
If thou, Sir Ezzelin, hast aught to show
Which it befits Count Lara's ear to know,
To-morrow, here, or elsewhere, as may best
Beseem your mutual judgment, speak the rest;
I pledge myself for thee, as not unknown,
Though, like Count Lara, now return'd alone
From other lands, almost a stranger grown;

And if from Lara's blood and gentle birth
I augur right of courage and of worth,
He will not that untainted line belie,
Nor aught that knighthood may accord, deny."

" To-morrow be it," Ezzelin replied,
" And here our several worth and truth be tried;
I gage my life, my falchion to attest
My words, so may I mingle with the blest!"
What answers Lara? to its centre shrunk
His soul, in deep abstraction sudden sunk;
The words of many, and the eyes of all
That there were gather'd, seem'd on him to fall;
But his were silent, his appear'd to stray
In far forgetfulness away — away —
Alas! that heedlessness of all around
Bespoke remembrance only too profound.

XXIV.

" To-morrow! — ay, to-morrow!" further word
Than those repeated none from Lara heard;
Upon his brow no outward passion spoke;
From his large eye no flashing anger broke;
Yet there was something fix'd in that low tone,
Which show'd resolve, determined, though unknown.
He seized his cloak — his head he slightly bow'd,
And passing Ezzelin, he left the crowd;
And, as he pass'd him, smiling met the frown
With which that chieftain's brow would bear him down:
It was nor smile of mirth, nor struggling pride
That curbs to scorn the wrath it cannot hide;

But that of one in his own heart secure
Of all that he would do, or could endure.
Could this mean peace? the calmness of the good?
Or guilt grown old in desperate hardihood?
Alas! too like in confidence are each,
For man to trust to mortal look or speech;
From deeds, and deeds alone, may he discern
Truths which it wrings the unpractised heart to learn.

XXV.

And Lara call'd his page, and went his way—
Well could that stripling word or sign obey:
His only follower from those climes afar,
Where the soul glows beneath a brighter star;
For Lara left the shore from whence he sprung,
In duty patient, and sedate though young;
Silent as him he served, his faith appears
Above his station, and beyond his years.
Though not unknown the tongue of Lara's land,
In such from him he rarely heard command;
But fleet his step, and clear his tones would come,
When Lara's lip breathed forth the words of home:
Those accents, as his native mountains dear,
Awake their absent echoes in his ear,
Friends', kindreds', parents', wonted voice recall,
Now lost, abjured, for one—his friend, his all:
For him earth now disclosed no other guide;
What marvel then he rarely left his side?

XXVI.

Light was his form, and darkly delicate
That brow whereon his native sun had sate,

But had not marr'd, though in his beams he grew,
The cheek where oft the unbidden blush shone through; [show
Yet not such blush as mounts when health would
All the heart's hue in that delighted glow;
But 'twas a hectic tint of secret care
That for a burning moment fever'd there;
And the wild sparkle of his eye seem'd caught
From high, and lighten'd with electric thought,
Though its black orb those long low lashes' fringe
Had temper'd with a melancholy tinge;
Yet less of sorrow than of pride was there,
Or, if 'twere grief, a grief that none should share:
And pleased not him the sports that please his age,
The tricks of youth, the frolics of the page;
For hours on Lara he would fix his glance,
As all-forgotten in that watchful trance;
And from his chief withdrawn, he wander'd lone,
Brief were his answers, and his questions none;
His walk the wood, his sport some foreign book;
His resting-place the bank that curbs the brook:
He seem'd, like him he served, to live apart
From all that lures the eye, and fills the heart;
To know no brotherhood, and take from earth
No gift beyond that bitter boon — our birth.

XXVII.

If aught he loved, 'twas Lara; but was shown
His faith in reverence and in deeds alone;
In mute attention; and his care, which guess'd
Each wish, fulfill'd it ere the tongue express'd.

Still there was haughtiness in all he did,
A spirit deep that brook'd not to be chid;
His zeal, though more than that of servile hands,
In act alone obeys, his air commands;
As if 'twas Lara's less than *his* desire
That thus he served, but surely not for hire.
Slight were the tasks enjoin'd him by his lord,
To hold the stirrup, or to bear the sword;
To tune his lute, or, if he will'd it more,
On tomes of other times and tongues to pore;
But ne'er to mingle with the menial train,
To whom he show'd nor deference nor disdain,
But that well-worn reserve which proved he knew
No sympathy with that familiar crew:
His soul, whate'er his station or his stem,
Could bow to Lara, not descend to them.
Of higher birth he seem'd, and better days,
Nor mark of vulgar toil that hand betrays,
So femininely white it might bespeak
Another sex, when match'd with that smooth cheek,
But for his garb, and something in his gaze,
More wild and high than woman's eye betrays;
A latent fierceness that far more became
His fiery climate than his tender frame:
True, in his words it broke not from his breast,
But from his aspect might be more than guess'd.
Kaled his name, though rumour said he bore
Another ere he left his mountain-shore;
For sometimes he would hear, however nigh,
That name repeated loud without reply,
As unfamiliar, or, if roused again,
Start to the sound, as but remember'd then;

Unless 'twas Lara's wonted voice that spake,
For then, ear, eyes, and heart would all awake.

XXVIII.

He had look'd down upon the festive hall,
And mark'd that sudden strife so mark'd of all;
And when the crowd around and near him told
Their wonder at the calmness of the bold,
Their marvel how the high-born Lara bore
Such insult from a stranger, doubly sore,
The colour of young Kaled went and came,
The lip of ashes, and the cheek of flame;
And o'er his brow the dampening heart-drops threw
The sickening iciness of that cold dew,
That rises as the busy bosom sinks
With heavy thoughts from which reflection shrinks.
Yes—there be things which we must dream and dare,
And execute ere thought be half aware:
Whate'er might Kaled's be, it was enow
To seal his lip, but agonise his brow.
He gazed on Ezzelin till Lara cast
That sidelong smile upon the knight he past;
When Kaled saw that smile his visage fell,
As if on something recognised right well;
His memory read in such a meaning more
Than Lara's aspect unto others wore:
Forward he sprung—a moment, both were gone,
And all within that hall seem'd left alone;
Each had so fix'd his eye on Lara's mien,
All had so mix'd their feelings with that scene,
That when his long dark shadow through the porch
No more relieves the glare of yon high torch,

Each pulse beats quicker, and all bosoms seem
To bound as doubting from too black a dream,
Such as we know is false, yet dread in sooth,
Because the worst is ever nearest truth.
And they are gone—but Ezzelin is there,
With thoughtful visage and imperious air;
But long remain'd not; ere an hour expired
He waved his hand to Otho, and retired.

XXIX.

The crowd are gone, the revellers at rest;
The courteous host, and all-approving guest,
Again to that accustom'd couch must creep
Where joy subsides, and sorrow sighs to sleep,
And man, o'erlabour'd with his being's strife,
Shrinks to that sweet forgetfulness of life:
There lie love's feverish hope, and cunning's guile,
Hate's working brain, and lull'd ambition's wile;
O'er each vain eye oblivion's pinions wave,
And quench'd existence crouches in a grave.
What better name may slumber's bed become?
Night's sepulchre, the universal home,
Where weakness, strength, vice, virtue, sunk supine,
Alike in naked helplessness recline;
Glad for awhile to heave unconscious breath,
Yet wake to wrestle with the dread of death,
And shun, though day but dawn on ills increased,
That sleep, the loveliest, since it dreams the least.

LARA.

CANTO THE SECOND. (1)

I.

NIGHT wanes—the vapours round the mountains curl'd
Melt into morn, and Light awakes the world.
Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him near to little, but his last;
But mighty Nature bounds as from her birth,
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth;
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.
Immortal man! behold her glories shine,
And cry, exulting inly, "They are thine!"

(1) [Lord Byron seems to have taken a whimsical pleasure in disappointing, by his second Canto, most of the expectations which he had excited by the first. For, without the resuscitation of Sir Ezzelin, Lara's mysterious vision in his antique hall becomes a mere useless piece of lumber, inapplicable to any intelligible purpose;—the character of Medora, whom we had been satisfied to behold very contentedly domesticated in the Pirate's Island, without enquiring whence or why she had emigrated thither, is, by means of some mysterious relation between her and Sir Ezzelin, involved in very disagreeable ambiguity;—and, further, the high-minded and generous Conrad, who had preferred death and torture to life and liberty, if purchased by a nightly murder, is degraded into a vile and cowardly assassin.—GEORGE ELLIS.]

Gaze on, while yet thy gladden'd eye may see;
A morrow comes when they are not for thee:
And grieve what may above thy senseless bier,
Nor earth nor sky will yield a single tear;
Nor cloud shall gather more, nor leaf shall fall,
Nor gale breathe forth one sigh for thee, for all;
But creeping things shall revel in their spoil,
And fit thy clay to fertilise the soil.

II.

'Tis morn — 'tis noon — assembled in the hall,
The gather'd chieftains come to Otho's call;
'Tis now the promised hour, that must proclaim
The life or death of Lara's future fame;
When Ezzelin his charge may here unfold,
And whatsoe'er the tale, it must be told.
His faith was pledged, and Lara's promise given,
To meet it in the eye of man and heaven.
Why comes he not? Such truths to be divulged,
Methinks the accuser's rest is long indulged.

III.

The hour is past, and Lara too is there,
With self-confiding, coldly patient air;
Why comes not Ezzelin? The hour is past,
And murmurs rise, and Otho's brow's o'ercast.
"I know my friend! his faith I cannot fear,
If yet he be on earth, expect him here;
The roof that held him in the valley stands
Between my own and noble Lara's lands;
My halls from such a guest had honour gain'd,
Nor had Sir Ezzelin his host disdain'd,

But that some previous proof forbade his stay,
And urged him to prepare against to-day;
The word I pledged for his I pledge again,
Or will myself redeem his knighthood's stain."

He ceased—and Lara answer'd, " I am here
To lend at thy demand a listening ear
To tales of evil from a stranger's tongue,
Whose words already might my heart have wrung,
But that I deem'd him scarcely less than mad,
Or, at the worst, a foe ignobly bad.
I know him not—but me it seems he knew
In lands where—but I must not trifle too:
Produce this babbler—or redeem the pledge;
Here in thy hold, and with thy falchion's edge."

Proud Otho on the instant, reddening, threw
His glove on earth, and forth his sabre flew.
" The last alternative befits me best,
And thus I answer for mine absent guest."

With cheek unchanging from its sallow gloom,
However near his own or other's tomb;
With hand, whose almost careless coolness spoke
Its grasp well-used to deal the sabre-stroke;
With eye, though calm, determined not to spare,
Did Lara too his willing weapon bare.
In vain the circling chieftains round them closed,
For Otho's frenzy would not be opposed;
And from his lip those words of insult fell—
His sword is good who can maintain them well.

IV.

Short was the conflict; furious, blindly rash,
Vain Otho gave his bosom to the gash:
He bled, and fell; but not with deadly wound,
Stretch'd by a dextrous sleight along the ground.
"Demand thy life!" He answer'd not: and then
From that red floor he ne'er had risen again,
For Lara's brow upon the moment grew
Almost to blackness in its demon hue;
And fiercer shook his angry falchion now
Than when his foe's was levell'd at his brow;
Then all was stern collectedness and art,
Now rose the unleaven'd hatred of his heart;
So little sparing to the foe he fell'd,
That when the approaching crowd his arm withheld,
He almost turn'd the thirsty point on those
Who thus for mercy dared to interpose;
But to a moment's thought that purpose bent;
Yet look'd he on him still with eye intent,
As if he loathed the ineffectual strife
That left a foe, howe'er o'erthrown, with life;
As if to search how far the wound he gave
Had sent its victim onward to his grave.

V.

They raised the bleeding Otho, and the Leech
Forbade all present question, sign, and speech;
The others met within a neighbouring hall,
And he, incensed and heedless of them all,
The cause and conqueror in this sudden fray,
In haughty silence slowly strode away;

He back'd his steed, his homeward path he took,
Nor cast on Otho's towers a single look.

VI.

But where was he? that meteor of a night,
Who menaced but to disappear with light.
Where was this Ezzelin? who came and went
To leave no other trace of his intent.
He left the dome of Otho long ere morn,
In darkness, yet so well the path was worn
He could not miss it: near his dwelling lay;
But there he was not, and with coming day
Came fast enquiry, which unfolded nought
Except the absence of the chief it sought.
A chamber tenantless, a steed at rest,
His host alarm'd, his murmuring squires distress'd:
Their search extends along, around the path,
In dread to meet the marks of prowlers' wrath:
But none are there, and not a brake hath borne
Nor gout of blood, nor shred of mantle torn;
Nor fall nor struggle hath defaced the grass,
Which still retains a mark where murder was;
Nor dabbling fingers left to tell the tale,
The bitter print of each convulsive nail,
When agonised hands that cease to guard,
Wound in that pang the smoothness of the sward.
Some such had been, if here a life was reft,
But these were not; and doubting hope is left;
And strange suspicion, whispering Lara's name,
Now daily mutters o'er his blacken'd fame;
Then sudden silent when his form appear'd,
Awaits the absence of the thing it fear'd

Again its wonted wondering to renew,
And dye conjecture with a darker hue.

VII.

Days roll along, and Otho's wounds are heal'd,
But not his pride; and hate no more conceal'd:
He was a man of power, and Lara's foe,
The friend of all who sought to work him woe,
And from his country's justice now demands
Account of Ezzelin at Lara's hands.
Who else than Lara could have cause to fear
His presence? who had made him disappear,
If not the man on whom his menaced charge
Had sate too deeply were he left at large?
The general rumour ignorantly loud,
The mystery dearest to the curious crowd;
The seeming friendlessness of him who strove
To win no confidence, and wake no love;
The sweeping fierceness which his soul betray'd,
The skill with which he wielded his keen blade;
Where had his arm unwarlike caught that art?
Where had that fierceness grown upon his heart?
For it was not the blind capricious rage
A word can kindle and a word assuage;
But the deep working of a soul unmix'd
With aught of pity where its wrath had fix'd;
Such as long power and overgorged success
Concentrates into all that's merciless:
These, link'd with that desire which ever sways
Mankind, the rather to condemn than praise,
'Gainst Lara gathering raised at length a storm,
Such as himself might fear, and foes would form,

And he must answer for the absent head
Of one that haunts him still, alive or dead.

VIII.

Within that land was many a malcontent,
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,
Who work'd his wantonness in form of law;
Long war without and frequent broil within
Had made a path for blood and giant sin,
That waited but a signal to begin
New havoc, such as civil discord blends,
Which knows no neuter, owns but foes or friends;
Fix'd in his feudal fortress each was lord,
In word and deed obey'd, in soul abhorr'd.
Thus Lara had inherited his lands,
And with them pining hearts and sluggish hands;
But that long absence from his native clime
Had left him stainless of oppression's crime,
And now, diverted by his milder sway,
All dread by slow degrees had worn away.
The menials felt their usual awe alone,
But more for him than them that fear was grown;
They deem'd him now unhappy, though at first
Their evil judgment augur'd of the worst,
And each long restless night, and silent mood,
Was traced to sickness, fed by solitude:
And though his lonely habits threw of late
Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his gate;
For thence the wretched ne'er unsoothed withdrew,
For them, at least, his soul compassion knew.

Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,
The humble pass'd not his unheeding eye;
Much he would speak not, but beneath his roof
They found asylum oft, and ne'er reproof.
And they who watch'd might mark that, day by day,
Some new retainers gather'd to his sway;
But most of late, since Ezzelin was lost,
He play'd the courteous lord and bounteous host:
Perchance his strife with Otho made him dread
Some snare prepared for his obnoxious head;
Whate'er his view, his favour more obtains
With these, the people, than his fellow thanes.
If this were policy, so far 'twas sound,
The million judged but of him as they found;
From him by sterner chiefs to exile driven
They but required a shelter, and 'twas given.
By him no peasant mourn'd his rifled cot,
And scarce the Serf could murmur o'er his lot;
With him old avarice found its hoard secure,
With him contempt forbore to mock the poor;
Youth present cheer and promised recompense
Detain'd, till all too late to part from thence:
To hate he offer'd, with the coming change,
The deep reversion of delay'd revenge;
To love, long baffled by the unequal match,
The well-won charms success was sure to snatch.
All now was ripe, he waits but to proclaim
That slavery nothing which was still a name.
The moment came, the hour when Otho thought
Secure at last the vengeance which he sought:
His summons found the destined criminal
Begirt by thousands in his swarming hall,

Fresh from their feudal fetters newly riven,
Defying earth, and confident of heaven.
That morning he had freed the soil-bound slaves
Who dig no land for tyrants but their graves!
Such is their cry—some watchword for the fight
Must vindicate the wrong, and warp the right;
Religion—freedom—vengeance—what you will,
A word's enough to raise mankind to kill;
Some factious phrase by cunning caught and spread,
That guilt may reign, and wolves and worms be fed!

IX.

Throughout that clime the feudal chiefs had gain'd
Such sway, their infant monarch hardly reign'd;
Now was the hour for faction's rebel growth,
The Serfs contemn'd the one, and hated both:
They waited but a leader, and they found
One to their cause inseparably bound;
By circumstance compell'd to plunge again,
In self-defence, amidst the strife of men.
Cut off by some mysterious fate from those
Whom birth and nature meant not for his foes,
Had Lara from that night, to him accurst,
Prepared to meet, but not alone, the worst:
Some reason urged, whate'er it was, to shun
Enquiry into deeds at distance done;
By mingling with his own the cause of all,
E'en if he fail'd, he still delay'd his fall.
The sullen calm that long his bosom kept,
The storm that once had spent itself and slept,
Roused by events that seem'd foredoom'd to urge
His gloomy fortunes to their utmost verge,

Burst forth, and made him all he once had been,
And is again; he only changed the scene.
Light care had he for life, and less for fame,
But not less fitted for the desperate game:
He deem'd himself mark'd out for others' hate,
And mock'd at ruin so they shared his fate.
What cared he for the freedom of the crowd?
He raised the humble but to bend the proud.
He had hoped quiet in his sullen lair,
But man and destiny beset him there:
Inured to hunters, he was found at bay;
And they must kill, they cannot snare the prey.
Stern, unambitious, silent, he had been
Henceforth a calm spectator of life's scene;
But dragg'd again upon the arena, stood
A leader not unequal to the feud;
In voice—mien—gesture—savage nature spoke,
And from his eye the gladiator broke.

X.

What boots the oft-repeated tale of strife,
The feast of vultures, and the waste of life?
The varying fortune of each separate field,
The fierce that vanquish, and the faint that yield?
The smoking ruin, and the crumbled wall?
In this the struggle was the same with all;
Save that distemper'd passions lent their force
In bitterness that banish'd all remorse.
None sued, for Mercy knew her cry was vain,
The captive died upon the battle-slain:
In either cause, one rage alone possess'd
The empire of the alternate victor's breast;

And they that smote for freedom or for sway,
Deem'd few were slain, while more remain'd to slay.
It was too late to check the wasting brand,
And Desolation reap'd the famish'd land;
The torch was lighted, and the flame was spread,
And Carnage smiled upon her daily dead.

XI.

Fresh with the nerve the new-born impulse strung,
The first success to Lara's numbers clung:
But that vain victory hath ruin'd all;
They form no longer to their leader's call:
In blind confusion on the foe they press,
And think to snatch is to secure success.
The lust of booty, and the thirst of hate,
Lure on the broken brigands to their fate:
In vain he doth whate'er a chief may do,
To check the headlong fury of that crew;
In vain their stubborn ardour he would tame,
The hand that kindles cannot quench the flame;
The wary foe alone hath turn'd their mood,
And shown their rashness to that erring brood:
The feign'd retreat, the nightly ambuscade,
The daily harass, and the fight delay'd,
The long privation of the hoped supply,
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,
The stubborn wall that mocks the leaguer's art,
And palls the patience of his baffled heart,
Of these they had not deem'd: the battle-day
They could encounter as a veteran may;
But more preferr'd the fury of the strife,
And present death, to hourly suffering life:

And famine wrings, and fever sweeps away
His numbers melting fast from their array;
Intemperate triumph fades to discontent,
And Lara's soul alone seems still unbent:
But few remain to aid his voice and hand,
And thousands dwindled to a scanty band:
Desperate, though few, the last and best remain'd
To mourn the discipline they late disdain'd.
One hope survives, the frontier is not far,
And thence they may escape from native war;
And bear within them to the neighbouring state
An exile's sorrows, or an outlaw's hate:
Hard is the task their father-land to quit,
But harder still to perish or submit.

XII.

It is resolved—they march—consenting Night
Guides with her star their dim and torchless flight;
Already they perceive its tranquil beam
Sleep on the surface of the barrier stream;
Already they descry—Is yon the bank?
Away! 'tis lined with many a hostile rank.
Return or fly!—What glitters in the rear?
'Tis Otho's banner—the pursuer's spear!
Are those the shepherds' fires upon the height?
Alas! they blaze too widely for the flight:
Cut off from hope, and compass'd in the toil,
Less blood perchance hath bought a richer spoil!

XIII.

A moment's pause—'tis but to breathe their band,
Or shall they onward press, or here withstand?

It matters little — if they charge the foes
Who by their border-stream their march oppose,
Some few, perchance, may break and pass the line,
However link'd to baffle such design.
" The charge be ours ! to wait for their assault
Were fate well worthy of a coward's halt."
Forth flies each sabre, rein'd is every steed,
And the next word shall scarce outstrip the deed:
In the next tone of Lara's gathering breath
How many shall but hear the voice of death !

XIV.

His blade is bared, — in him there is an air
As deep, but far too tranquil for despair;
A something of indifference more than then
Becomes the bravest, if they feel for men.
He turn'd his eye on Kaled, ever near,
And still too faithful to betray one fear;
Perchance 'twas but the moon's dim twilight threw
Along his aspect an unwonted hue
Of mournful paleness, whose deep tint express'd
The truth, and not the terror of his breast.
This Lara mark'd, and laid his hand on his:
It trembled not in such an hour as this;
His lip was silent, scarcely beat his heart,
His eye alone proclaim'd, " We will not part !
Thy band may perish, or thy friends may flee,
Farewell to life, but not adieu to thee ! "

The word hath pass'd his lips, and onward driven,
Pours the link'd band through ranks asunder riven;

Well has each steed obey'd the armed heel,
And flash the scimitars, and rings the steel;
Outnumber'd, not outbraved, they still oppose
Despair to daring, and a front to foes;
And blood is mingled with the dashing stream,
Which runs all redly till the morning beam.

XV.

Commanding, aiding, animating all,
Where foe appear'd to press, or friend to fall,
Cheers Lara's voice, and waves or strikes his steel,
Inspiring hope himself had ceased to feel.
None fled, for well they knew that flight were vain;
But those that waver turn to smite again,
While yet they find the firmest of the foe
Recoil before their leader's look and blow:
Now girt with numbers, now almost alone,
He foils their ranks, or re-unites his own;
Himself he spared not — once they seem'd to fly—
Now was the time, he waved his hand on high,
And shook—Why sudden droops that plumed crest?
The shaft is sped— the arrow's in his breast!
That fatal gesture left the unguarded side,
And Death hath stricken down yon arm of pride.
The word of triumph fainted from his tongue;
That hand, so raised, how droopingly it hung!
But yet the sword instinctively retains,
Though from its fellow shrink the falling reins;
These Kaled snatches: dizzy with the blow,
And senseless bending o'er his saddle-bow,
Perceives not Lara that his anxious page
Beguiles his charger from the combat's rage:

Meantime his followers charge, and charge again;
Too mix'd the slayers now to heed the slain!

XVI.

Day glimmers on the dying and the dead,
The cloven cuirass, and the helmless head;
The war-horse masterless is on the earth,
And that last gasp hath burst his bloody girth;
And near, yet quivering with what life remain'd,
The heel that urged him and the hand that rein'd;
And some too near that rolling torrent lie,
Whose waters mock the lip of those that die;
That panting thirst which scorches in the breath
Of those that die the soldier's fiery death,
In vain impels the burning mouth to crave
One drop—the last—to cool it for the grave;
With feeble and convulsive effort swept,
Their limbs along the crimson'd turf have crept;
The faint remains of life such struggles waste,
But yet they reach the stream, and bend to taste:
They feel its freshness, and almost partake—
Why pause? No further thirst have they to slake—
It is unquench'd, and yet they feel it not;
It was an agony—but now forgot!

XVII.

Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,
Where but for him that strife had never been,
A breathing but devoted warrior lay:
'Twas Lara bleeding fast from life away.
His follower once, and now his only guide,
Kneels Kaled watchful o'er his welling side,

And with his scarf would stanch the tides that rush,
With each convulsion, in a blacker gush;
And then, as his faint breathing waxes low,
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow:
He scarce can speak, but motions him 'tis vain,
And merely adds another throb to pain.
He clasps the hand that pang which would assuage,
And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page,
Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds, nor sees,
Save that damp brow which rests upon his knees;
Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though dim,
Held all the light that shone on earth for him.

XVIII.

The foe arrives, who long had search'd the field,
Their triumph nought till Lara too should yield;
They would remove him, but they see 'twere vain,
And he regards them with a calm disdain,
That rose to reconcile him with his fate,
And that escape to death from living hate:
And Otho comes, and leaping from his steed,
Looks on the bleeding foe that made him bleed,
And questions of his state; he answers not,
Scarce glances on him as on one forgot,
And turns to Kaled:—each remaining word
They understood not, if distinctly heard;
His dying tones are in that other tongue,
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung.
They spake of other scenes, but what—is known
To Kaled, whom their meaning reach'd alone;
And he replied, though faintly, to their sound,
While gazed the rest in dumb amazement round:

They seem'd even then — that twain — unto the last
To half forget the present in the past;
To share between themselves some separate fate,
Whose darkness none beside should penetrate.

XIX.

Their words though faint were many — from the tone
Their import those who heard could judge alone;
From this, you might have deem'd young Kaled's death
More near than Lara's by his voice and breath,
So sad, so deep, and hesitating broke
The accents his scarce-moving pale lips spoke;
But Lara's voice, though low, at first was clear
And calm, till murmuring death gasp'd hoarsely near:
But from his visage little could we guess,
So unrepentant, dark, and passionless,
Save that when struggling nearer to his last,
Upon that page his eye was kindly cast;
And once, as Kaled's answering accents ceased,
Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East:
Whether (as then the breaking sun from high
Roll'd back the clouds) the morrow caught his eye,
Or that 'twas chance, or some remember'd scene,
That raised his arm to point where such had been,
Scarce Kaled seem'd to know, but turn'd away,
As if his heart abhorr'd that coming day,
And shrunk his glance before that morning light,
To look on Lara's brow — where all grew night.
Yet sense seem'd left, though better were its loss;
For when one near display'd the absolving cross,

And proffer'd to his touch the holy bead,
Of which his parting soul might own the need,
He look'd upon it with an eye profane,
And smiled—Heaven pardon! if 'twere with disdain:
And Kaled, though he spoke not, nor withdrew
From Lara's face his fix'd despairing view,
With brow repulsive, and with gesture swift,
Flung back the hand which held the sacred gift,
As if such but disturb'd the expiring man,
Nor seem'd to know his life but *then* began,
That life of Immortality, secure
To none, save them whose faith in Christ is sure.

XX.

But gasping heaved the breath that Lara drew,
And dull the film along his dim eye grew;
His limbs stretch'd fluttering, and his head droop'd o'er
The weak yet still untiring knee that bore;
He press'd the hand he held upon his heart—
It beats no more, but Kaled will not part
With the cold grasp, but feels, and feels in vain,
For that faint throb which answers not again.
"It beats!"—Away, thou dreamer! he is gone—
It once was Lara which thou look'st upon. (1)

(1) [The death of Lara is, by far, the finest passage in the poem, and is fully equal to any thing else which the author ever wrote. The physical horror of the event, though described with a terrible force and fidelity, is both relieved and enhanced by the beautiful pictures of mental energy and affection with which it is combined. The whole sequel of the poem is written with equal vigour and feeling, and may be put in competition with any thing that poetry has produced, in point either of pathos or energy.—JEFFREY.]

XXI.

He gazed, as if not yet had pass'd away
The haughty spirit of that humble clay;
And those around have roused him from his trance,
But cannot tear from thence his fixed glance;
And when, in raising him from where he bore
Within his arms the form that felt no more,
He saw the head his breast would still sustain,
Roll down like earth to earth upon the plain;
He did not dash himself thereby, nor tear
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,
But strove to stand and gaze, but reel'd and fell,
Scarce breathing more than that he loved so well.
Than that *he* loved! Oh! never yet beneath
The breast of man such trusty love may breathe!
That trying moment hath at once reveal'd
The secret long and yet but half conceal'd;
In baring to revive that lifeless breast,
Its grief seem'd ended, but the sex confess'd;
And life return'd, and Kaled felt no shame —
What now to her was Womanhood or Fame?

XXII.

And Lara sleeps not where his fathers sleep,
But where he died his grave was dug as deep;
Nor is his mortal slumber less profound,
Though priest nor bless'd nor marble deck'd the mound;
And he was mourn'd by one whose quiet grief,
Less loud, outlasts a people's for their chief.
Vain was all question ask'd her of the past,
And vain e'en menace — silent to the last;

She told nor whence, nor why she left behind
Her all for one who seem'd but little kind.
Why did she love him? Curious fool!—be still—
Is human love the growth of human will?
To her he might be gentleness; the stern
Have deeper thoughts than your dull eyes discern,
And when they love, your smilers guess not how
Beats the strong heart, though less the lips avow.
They were not common links, that form'd the chain
That bound to Lara Kaled's heart and brain;
But that wild tale she brook'd not to unfold,
And seal'd is now each lip that could have told.

XXIII.

They laid him in the earth, and on his breast,
Besides the wound that sent his soul to rest,
They found the scatter'd dints of many a scar,
Which were not planted there in recent war;
Where'er had pass'd his summer years of life,
It seems they vanish'd in a land of strife;
But all unknown his glory or his guilt,
These only told that somewhere blood was spilt,
And Ezzelin, who might have spoke the past,
Return'd no more—that night appear'd his last.

XXIV.

Upon that night (a peasant's is the tale)
A Serf that cross'd the intervening vale, (1)

(1) The event in this section was suggested by the description of the death, or rather burial, of the Duke of Gandia. The most interesting and particular account of it is given by Burchard, and is in substance as follows: — "On the eighth day of June, the Cardinal of Valenza and the Duke of Gandia, sons of the Pope, supped with their mother, Vanozza, near

When Cynthia's light almost gave way to morn,
And nearly veil'd in mist her waning horn;

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the church of *S. Pietro ad vincula;* several other persons being present at the entertainment. A late hour approaching, and the cardinal having reminded his brother, that it was time to return to the apostolic palace, they mounted their horses or mules, with only a few attendants, and proceeded together as far as the palace of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, when the duke informed the cardinal that, before he returned home, he had to pay a visit of pleasure. Dismissing therefore all his attendants, excepting his *staffiero*, or footman, and a person in a mask, who had paid him a visit whilst at supper, and who, during the space of a month or thereabouts, previous to this time, had called upon him almost daily, at the apostolic palace, he took this person behind him on his mule, and proceeded to the street of the Jews, where he quitted his servant, directing him to remain there until a certain hour; when, if he did not return, he might repair to the palace. The duke then seated the person in the mask behind him, and rode, I know not whither; but in that night he was assassinated, and thrown into the river. The servant, after having been dismissed, was also assaulted and mortally wounded; and although he was attended with great care, yet such was his situation, that he could give no intelligible account of what had befallen his master. In the morning, the duke not having returned to the palace, his servants began to be alarmed; and one of them informed the pontiff of the evening excursion of his sons, and that the duke had not yet made his appearance. This gave the pope no small anxiety; but he conjectured that the duke had been attracted by some courtesan to pass the night with her, and, not choosing to quit the house in open day, had waited till the following evening to return home. When, however, the evening arrived, and he found himself disappointed in his expectations, he became deeply afflicted, and began to make enquiries from different persons, whom he ordered to attend him for that purpose. Amongst these was a man named Giorgio Schiavoni, who, having discharged some timber from a bark in the river, had remained on board the vessel to watch it; and being interrogated whether he had seen any one thrown into the river on the night preceding, he replied, that he saw two men on foot, who came down the street, and looked diligently about, to observe whether any person was passing. That seeing no one, they returned, and a short time afterwards two others came, and looked around in the same manner as the former: no person still appearing, they gave a sign to their companions, when a man came, mounted on a white horse, having behind him a dead body, the head and arms of which hung on one side, and the feet on the other side of the horse; the two persons on foot supporting the body, to prevent its falling. They thus proceeded towards that part, where the filth of the city is usually discharged into the river, and turning the horse, with his tail towards the water, the two persons took the dead body by the arms and feet, and with all their strength flung it into the river. The person on horseback then asked if they had thrown it in;

A Serf, that rose betimes to thread the wood,
And hew the bough that bought his children's food,
Pass'd by the river that divides the plain
Of Otho's lands and Lara's broad domain:
He heard a tramp—a horse and horseman broke
From out the wood—before him was a cloak
Wrapt round some burthen at his saddle-bow,
Bent was his head, and hidden was his brow.
Roused by the sudden sight at such a time,
And some foreboding that it might be crime,
Himself unheeded watch'd the stranger's course,
Who reach'd the river, bounded from his horse,
And lifting thence the burthen which he bore,
Heaved up the bank, and dash'd it from the shore,

---

to which they replied, *Signor, sì* (yes, Sir). He then looked towards the river, and seeing a mantle floating on the stream, he enquired what it was that appeared black, to which they answered, it was a mantle; and one of them threw stones upon it, in consequence of which it sunk. The attendants of the pontiff then enquired from Giorgio, why he had not revealed this to the governor of the city; to which he replied, that he had seen in his time a hundred dead bodies thrown into the river at the same place, without any enquiry being made respecting them; and that he had not, therefore, considered it as a matter of any importance. The fishermen and seamen were then collected, and ordered to search the river, where, on the following evening, they found the body of the duke, with his habit entire, and thirty ducats in his purse. He was pierced with nine wounds, one of which was in his throat, the others in his head, body, and limbs. No sooner was the pontiff informed of the death of his son, and that he had been thrown, like filth, into the river, than, giving way to his grief, he shut himself up in a chamber, and wept bitterly. The Cardinal of Segovia, and other attendants on the pope, went to the door, and after many hours spent in persuasions and exhortations, prevailed upon him to admit them. From the evening of Wednesday till the following Saturday the pope took no food; nor did he sleep from Thursday morning till the same hour on the ensuing day. At length, however, giving way to the entreaties of his attendants, he began to restrain his sorrow, and to consider the injury which his own health might sustain, by the further indulgence of his grief."—ROSCOE's *Leo Tenth*, vol. i. p. 265.

Then paused, and look'd, and turn'd, and seem'd to watch,
And still another hurried glance would snatch,
And follow with his step the stream that flow'd,
As if even yet too much its surface show'd:
At once he started, stoop'd, around him strown
The winter floods had scatter'd heaps of stone;
Of these the heaviest thence he gather'd there,
And slung them with a more than common care.
Meantime the Serf had crept to where unseen
Himself might safely mark what this might mean;
He caught a glimpse, as of a floating breast,
And something glitter'd starlike on the vest;
But ere he well could mark the buoyant trunk,
A massy fragment smote it, and it sunk:
It rose again, but indistinct to view,
And left the waters of a purple hue,
Then deeply disappear'd: the horseman gazed
Till ebb'd the latest eddy it had raised;
Then turning, vaulted on his pawing steed,
And instant spurr'd him into panting speed.
His face was mask'd—the features of the dead,
If dead it were, escaped the observer's dread;
But if in sooth a star its bosom bore,
Such is the badge that knighthood ever wore,
And such 'tis known Sir Ezzelin had worn
Upon the night that led to such a morn.
If thus he perish'd, Heaven receive his soul!
His undiscover'd limbs to ocean roll;
And charity upon the hope would dwell
It was not Lara's hand by which he fell.

XXV.

And Kaled—Lara—Ezzelin, are gone,
Alike without their monumental stone!
The first, all efforts vainly strove to wean
From lingering where her chieftain's blood had been;
Grief had so tamed a spirit once too proud,
Her tears were few, her wailing never loud;
But furious would you tear her from the spot
Where yet she scarce believed that he was not,
Her eye shot forth with all the living fire
That haunts the tigress in her whelpless ire;
But left to waste her weary moments there,
She talk'd all idly unto shapes of air,
Such as the busy brain of Sorrow paints,
And woos to listen to her fond complaints:
And she would sit beneath the very tree
Where lay his drooping head upon her knee;
And in that posture where she saw him fall,
His words, his looks, his dying grasp recall;
And she had shorn, but saved her raven hair,
And oft would snatch it from her bosom there,
And fold, and press it gently to the ground,
As if she stanch'd anew some phantom's wound.
Herself would question, and for him reply;
Then rising, start, and beckon him to fly
From some imagined spectre in pursuit;
Then seat her down upon some linden's root,
And hide her visage with her meagre hand,
Or trace strange characters along the sand—
This could not last—she lies by him she loved;
Her tale untold—her truth too dearly proved.(1)

(1) [Lara, though it has many good passages, is a further proof of the

melancholy fact, which is true of all sequels, from the continuation of the Æneid, by one of the famous Italian poets of the middle ages, down to "Polly, a sequel to the Beggar's Opera," that "more last words" may generally be spared, without any great detriment to the world. — BISHOP HEBER.

Lara has some charms which the Corsair has not. It is more domestic; it calls forth more sympathies with polished society; it is more intellectual, but much less passionate, less vigorous, and less brilliant; it is sometimes even languid, — at any rate, it is more diffuse. — SIR E. BRYDGES.

Lara, obviously the sequel of "The Corsair," maintains in general the same tone of deep interest, and lofty feeling; — though the disappearance of Medora from the scene deprives it of the enchanting sweetness by which its terrors are there redeemed, and make the hero, on the whole, less captivating. The character of Lara, too, is rather too laboriously finished *, and his nocturnal encounter with the apparition is worked up too ostentatiously. There is infinite beauty in the sketch of the dark Page, and in many of the moral or general reflections which are interspersed with the narrative. — JEFFREY.]

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* ["What do the Reviewers mean by 'elaborate?' Lara I wrote while undressing, after coming home from balls and masquerades, in the year of revelry, 1814." *B. Letters*, 1822.]

HEBREW MELODIES.(1)

(1) [Lord Byron never alludes to his share in these Melodies with complacency. Mr. Moore having, on one occasion, rallied him a little on the manner in which some of them had been set to music, — "Sunburn Nathan," he exclaims, "why do you always twit me with his Ebrew nasalities? Have I not told you it was all Kinnaird's doing, and my own exquisite facility of temper?" — E.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Hon. D. Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr. Braham and Mr. Nathan.

January, 1815.

HEBREW MELODIES. (1)

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY. (2)

I.

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

II.

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

(1) ["Neither the ancient Jews," says Dr. Burney, "nor the modern, have ever had characters peculiar to music; so that the melodies used in their religious ceremonies have, at all times, been traditional, and at the mercy of the singers."— Kalkbrenner tells us, that "les Juifs Espagnols lisent et chantent leurs pseaumes bien différemment que les Juifs Hollandais, les Juifs Romains autrement que les Juifs de la Prusse et de la Hesse; et tous croient chanter comme on chantoit dans le Temple de Jérusalem!"—*Hist. de la Musique*, tom. i. p. 34.—E.]

(2) [These stanzas were written by Lord Byron, on returning from a ball-room, where he had seen Mrs. (now Lady) Wilmot Horton, the wife of his

III.

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

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT. (1)

I.

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which Music hallow'd while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!
It soften'd men of iron mould,
It gave them virtues not their own;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
That felt not, fired not to the tone,
Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne!

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relation, the present Governor of Ceylon. On this occasion Mrs. W. H. had appeared in mourning, with numerous spangles on her dress. — E.]

(1) ["In the reign of King David, music was held in the highest estimation by the Hebrews. The genius of that prince for music, and his attachment to the study and practice of it, as well as the great number of musicians appointed by him for the performance of religious rites and ceremonies, could not fail to extend its influence and augment its perfections: for it was during this period, that music was first honoured by being admitted in the ministry of sacrifice, and worship of the ark; as well as by being cultivated by a king." — BURNEY.]

II.

It told the triumphs of our King,
  It wafted glory to our God;
It made our gladden'd valleys ring,
  The cedars bow, the mountains nod;
  Its sound aspired to Heaven and there abode!
Since then, though heard on earth no more,
  Devotion and her daughter Love
Still bid the bursting spirit soar
  To sounds that seem as from above,
  In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.(1)

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

I.

If that high world, which lies beyond
  Our own, surviving Love endears;
If there the cherish'd heart be fond,
  The eye the same, except in tears—

(1) [The hymns of David excel no less in sublimity and tenderness of expression, than in loftiness and purity of religious sentiment. In comparison with them, the sacred poetry of all other nations sinks into mediocrity. They have embodied so exquisitely the universal language of religious emotion, that (a few fierce and vindictive passages excepted, natural in the warrior-poet of a sterner age,) they have entered, with unquestionable propriety, into the Christian ritual. The songs which cheered the solitude of the desert caves of Engedi, or resounded from the voice of the Hebrew people as they wound along the glens or the hill-sides of Judea, have been repeated for ages in almost every part of the habitable world,—in the remotest islands of the ocean, among the forests of America, or the sands of Africa. How many human hearts have they softened, purified, exalted!—of how many wretched beings have they been the secret consolation!—on how many communities have they drawn down the blessings of Divine Providence, by bringing the affections in unison with their deep devotional fervour! — MILLMAN.]

How welcome those untrodden spheres!
How sweet this very hour to die!
To soar from earth and find all fears
Lost in thy light—Eternity!

II.

It must be so: 'tis not for self
That we so tremble on the brink;
And striving to o'erleap the gulf,
Yet cling to Being's severing link.
Oh! in that future let us think
To hold each heart the heart that shares,
With them the immortal waters drink,
And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!

THE WILD GAZELLE.

I.

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills
Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
That gush on holy ground;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by:—

II.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
Hath Judah witness'd there;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
Inhabitants more fair.

The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

III.

More blest each palm that shades those plains
Than Israel's scatter'd race;
For, taking root, it there remains
In solitary grace:
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

IV.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE.

I.

Oh! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn — where their God hath dwelt the Godless dwell!

II.

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?

And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice?

III.

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave!

ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

I.

On Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray,
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep —
Yet there—even there—Oh God! thy thunders sleep:

II.

There —where thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone!
There — where thy shadow to thy people shone!
Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
Thyself—none living see and not expire!

III.

Oh! in the lightning let thy glance appear;
Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear:
How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod!
How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God!

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER. (1)

I.

SINCE our Country, our God—Oh, my Sire!
Demand that thy Daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

II.

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow!

III.

And of this, oh, my Father! be sure—
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

(1) [Jephtha, a bastard son of Gilead, having been wrongfully expelled from his father's house, had taken refuge in a wild country, and become a noted captain of freebooters. His kindred, groaning under foreign oppression, began to look to their valiant, though lawless compatriot, whose profession, according to their usage, was no more dishonourable than that of a pirate in the elder days of Greece. They sent for him, and made him head of their city. Before he went forth against the Ammonites, he made the memorable vow, that, if he returned victorious, he would sacrifice as a burnt-offering whatever first met him on his entrance into his native city. He gained a splendid victory. At the news of it, his only daughter came dancing forth, in the gladness of her heart, and with jocund instruments of music, to salute the deliverer of his people. The miserable father rent his clothes in agony; but the noble-spirited maiden would not hear of the disregard of the vow: she only demanded a short period to bewail upon the mountains, like the Antigone of Sophocles, her dying without hope of becoming a bride or mother, and then submitted to her fate.—MILLMAN.]

IV.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent!
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my Father and Country are free!

V.

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died!

OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

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

MY SOUL IS DARK.

I.

My soul is dark — Oh! quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again:
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain.

II.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
Nor let thy notes of joy be first:
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
Or else this heavy heart will burst;
For it hath been by sorrow nursed,
And ached in sleepless silence long;
And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,
And break at once — or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

I.

I SAW thee weep—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew:
I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine;
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

II.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow dye,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

I.

THY days are done, thy fame begun;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen Son,
The slaughters of his sword!
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored!

II.

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
Thou shalt not taste of death!
The generous blood that flow'd from thee
Disdain'd to sink beneath:
Within our veins its currents be,
Thy spirit on our breath!

III.

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
Shall be the battle-word!
Thy fall, the theme of choral song
From virgin voices pour'd!
To weep would do thy glory wrong;
Thou shalt not be deplored.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

I.

WARRIORS and chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path:
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath!

II.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

III.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day!

SAUL. (1)

I.

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!
King, behold the phantom seer!"
Earth yawn'd; he stood the centre of a cloud:
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;
His hand was wither'd, and his veins were dry;

(1) [Haunted with that insatiable desire of searching into the secrets of futurity, inseparable from uncivilised man, Saul knew not to what quarter to turn. The priests, outraged by his cruelty, had forsaken him: the prophets stood aloof: no dreams visited his couch; he had persecuted even the unlawful diviners. He hears at last of a female necromancer, a woman with the spirit of Ob; strangely similar in sound to the Obeah women in the West Indies. To the cave-dwelling of this woman, in Endor, the monarch proceeds in disguise. He commands her to raise the spirit of Samuel. At this daring demand, the woman first recognises, or pretends to recognise, her royal visitor. "Whom seest thou?" says the king. — "Mighty ones ascending from the earth."—"Of what form?"—"An old man covered with a mantle." Saul, in terror, bows down his head to the earth; and, it should seem, not daring to look up, receives from the voice of the spectre the awful intimation of his defeat and death. On the reality of this apparition we pretend not to decide: the figure, if figure there were, was not seen by Saul; and, excepting the event of the approaching battle, the spirit said nothing which the living prophet had not said before, repeatedly and publicly. But the fact is curious, as showing the popular belief of the Jews in departed spirits to have been the same with that of most other nations. — MILLMAN.]

His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare;
From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,
Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

II.

" Why is my sleep disquieted?
Who is he that calls the dead?
Is it thou, O King? Behold,
Bloodless are these limbs, and cold:
Such are mine; and such shall be
Thine to-morrow, when with me:
Ere the coming day is done,
Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
Fare thee well, but for a day,
Then we mix our mouldering clay.
Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
And the falchion by thy side
To thy heart thy hand shall guide:
Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul!" (1)

(1) ["Since we have spoken of witches," said Lord Byron at Cephalonia, in 1823, "what think you of the witch of Endor? I have always thought this the finest and most finished witch-scene that ever was written or conceived; and you will be of my opinion, if you consider all the circumstances and the actors in the case, together with the gravity, simplicity, and dignity of the language. It beats all the ghost scenes I ever read. The finest conception on a similar subject is that of Goethe's Devil, Mephistopheles; and though, of course, you will give the priority to the former, as being inspired, yet the latter, if you know it, will appear to you — at least it does to me — one of the finest and most sublime specimens of human conception." — E.]

"ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER."

I.

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
And health and youth possess'd me;
My goblets blush'd from every vine,
And lovely forms caress'd me;
I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,
And felt my soul grow tender;
All earth can give, or mortal prize,
Was mine of regal splendour.

II.

I strive to number o'er what days
Remembrance can discover,
Which all that life or earth displays
Would lure me to live over.
There rose no day, there roll'd no hour
Of pleasure unembitter'd;
And not a trapping deck'd my power
That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

III.

The serpent of the field, by art
And spells, is won from harming;
But that which coils around the heart,
Oh! who hath power of charming?
It will not list to wisdom's lore,
Nor music's voice can lure it;
But there it stings for evermore
The soul that must endure it.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY.

I.

When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

II.

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth, or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recall:
Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all, that was, at once appears.

III.

Before Creation peopled earth,
Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
And where the furthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track.
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
Fix'd in its own eternity.

IV.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
It lives all passionless and pure:
An age shall fleet like earthly year;
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

I.

THE King was on his throne,
The Satraps throng'd the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine!

II.

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

III.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice.
"Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

IV.

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

V.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night,—
The morrow proved it true.

VI.

" Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He, in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay.
The shroud, his robe of state,
His canopy the stone;
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!"

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS!

Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star!
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remember'd well!
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold!

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST IT TO BE.

I.

Were my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be,
I need not have wander'd from far Galilee;
It was but abjuring my creed to efface
The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my race.

II.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee!
If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free!
If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,
Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

III.

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,
As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know;
In his hand is my heart and my hope — and in thine
The land and the life which for him I resign.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.(1)

I.

Oh, Mariamne! now for thee
The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding;
Revenge is lost in agony,
And wild remorse to rage succeeding.
Oh, Mariamne! where art thou?
Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading:
Ah! couldst thou — thou wouldst pardon now,
Though Heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

(1) [Mariamne, the wife of Herod the Great, falling under the suspicion of infidelity, was put to death by his order. She was a woman of unrivalled beauty, and a haughty spirit: unhappy in being the object of passionate attachment, which bordered on frenzy, to a man who had more or less concern in the murder of her grandfather, father, brother, and uncle, and who had twice commanded her death, in case of his own. Ever after, Herod was haunted by the image of the murdered Mariamne, until disorder of the mind brought on disorder of body, which led to temporary derangement. — Millman.]

II.

And is she dead?—and did they dare
Obey my frenzy's jealous raving?
My wrath but doom'd my own despair:
The sword that smote her's o'er me waving.—
But thou art cold, my murder'd love!
And this dark heart is vainly craving
For her who soars alone above,
And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

III.

She's gone, who shared my diadem;
She sunk, with her my joys entombing;
I swept that flower from Judah's stem
Whose leaves for me alone were blooming;
And mine's the guilt, and mine the hell,
This bosom's desolation dooming;
And I have earn'd those tortures well,
Which unconsumed are still consuming!

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

I.

From the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
I beheld thee, oh Sion! when render'd to Rome:
'Twas thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

II.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come;
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

III.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed;
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

IV.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away;
Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

V.

But the Gods of the Pagan shall never profane
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign;
And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may be,
Our worship, oh Father! is only for thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT.

I.

We sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day

When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scatter'd all weeping away.

II.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

III.

On the willow that harp is suspended,
Oh Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

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

IV.

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

V.

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

VI.

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

A SPIRIT PASS'D BEFORE ME.

FROM JOB.

I.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me: I beheld
The face of immortality unveil'd—
Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine—
And there it stood,—all formless—but divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake:

II.

"Is man more just than God? Is man more pure
Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure?
Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust!
The moth survives you, and are ye more just?
Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light!" (1)

(1) [The Hebrew Melodies, though obviously inferior to Lord Byron's other works, display a skill in versification, and a mastery in diction, which would have raised an inferior artist to the very summit of distinction. — JEFFREY.]

THE

SIEGE OF CORINTH.

[The "Siege of Corinth," which appears, by the original MS., to have been begun in July, 1815, made its appearance in January, 1816. Mr. Murray having enclosed Lord Byron a thousand guineas for the copyright of this poem and of "Parisina," he replied, — "Your offer is liberal in the extreme, and much more than the two poems can possibly be worth; but I cannot accept it, nor will not. You are most welcome to them as additions to the collected volumes; but I cannot consent to their separate publication. I do not like to risk any fame (whether merited or not) which I have been favoured with upon compositions which I do not feel to be at all equal to my own notions of what they should be; though they may do very well as things without pretension, to add to the publication with the lighter pieces. I have enclosed your draft torn, for fear of accidents by the way — I wish you would not throw temptation in mine. It is not from a disdain of the universal idol, nor from a present superfluity of his treasures, I can assure you, that I refuse to worship him; but what is right is right, and must not yield to circumstances. I am very glad that the *handwriting* was a favourable omen of the *morale* of the piece; but you must not trust to that, for my copyist would write out any thing I desired, in all the ignorance of innocence — I hope, however, in this instance, with no great peril to either." The copyist was Lady Byron. Lord Byron gave Mr. Gifford *carte-blanche* to strike out or alter any thing at his pleasure in this poem, as it was passing through the press; and the reader will be amused with the *variæ lectiones* which had their origin in this extraordinary confidence. Mr. Gifford drew his pen, it will be seen, through at least one of the most admired passages. — E.]

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS

FRIEND.

January 22. 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

"THE grand army of the Turks (in 1715), under the Prime Vizier, to open to themselves a way into the heart of the Morea, and to form the siege of Napoli di Romania, the most considerable place in all that country*, thought it best in the first place to attack Corinth, upon which they made several storms. The garrison being weakened, and the governor seeing it was impossible to hold out against so mighty a force, thought it fit to beat a parley: but while they were treating about the articles, one of the magazines in the Turkish camp, wherein they had six hundred barrels of powder, blew up by accident, whereby six or seven hundred men were killed; which so enraged the infidels, that they would not grant any capitulation, but stormed the place with so much fury, that they took it, and put most of the garrison, with Signior Minotti, the governor, to the sword. The rest, with Antonio Bembo, proveditor extraordinary, were made prisoners of war."—*History of the Turks*, vol. iii. p. 151.

* Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napoli is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810–11; and, in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1809, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness; but the voyage being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Ægina, Poro, &c. and the coast of the Continent.

THE

SIEGE OF CORINTH. (1)

In the year since Jesus died for men, (2)
Eighteen hundred years and ten,

(1) ["With regard to the observations on carelessness, &c.," wrote Lord Byron to a friend, "I think, with all humility, that the gentle reader has considered a rather uncommon, and decidedly irregular, versification for haste and negligence. The measure is not that of any of the other poems, which (I believe) were allowed to be tolerably correct, according to Byshe and the fingers — or ears — by which bards write, and readers reckon. Great part of the 'Siege' is in (I think) what the learned call anapests, (though I am not sure, being heinously forgetful of my metres and my Gradus,) and many of the lines intentionally longer or shorter than its rhyming companion; and the rhyme also occurring at greater or less intervals of caprice or convenience. I mean not to say that this is right or good, but merely that I could have been smoother, had it appeared to me of advantage; and that I was not otherwise without being aware of the deviation, though I now feel sorry for it, as I would undoubtedly rather please than not. My wish has been to try at something different from my former efforts; as I endeavoured to make them differ from each other. The versification of the 'Corsair' is not that of 'Lara;' nor the 'Giaour' that of the 'Bride:' 'Childe Harold' is, again, varied from these; and I strove to vary the last somewhat from *all* of the others. Excuse all this nonsense and egotism. The fact is, that I am rather trying to think on the subject of this note, than really thinking on it."— *B. Letters*, Feb. 1816. — E.]

(2) [On Christmas-day, 1815, Lord Byron, enclosing this fragment to Mr. Murray, says, — "I send some lines, written some time ago, and intended as an opening to the 'Siege of Corinth.' I had forgotten them, and am not sure that they had not better be left out now; — on that, you and your synod can determine." — "They are written," says Moore, "in the loosest form of that rambling style of metre, which his admiration of Mr. Coleridge's 'Christabel' led him, at this time, to adopt." It will be seen, hereafter, that the poet had never read "Christabel" at the time when he

We were a gallant company,
Riding o'er land, and sailing o'er sea.
Oh! but we went merrily!
We forded the river, and clomb the high hill,
Never our steeds for a day stood still;
Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,
Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed;
Whether we couch'd in our rough capote, (1)
On the rougher plank of our gliding boat,
Or stretch'd on the beach, or our saddles spread
As a pillow beneath the resting head,
Fresh we woke upon the morrow:
  All our thoughts and words had scope,
  We had health, and we had hope,
Toil and travel, but no sorrow.
We were of all tongues and creeds;—
Some were those who counted beads,

---

wrote these lines;—he had, however, the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." With regard to the character of the species of versification at this time so much in favour, it may be observed, that feeble imitations have since then vulgarised it a good deal to the general ear; but that, in the hands of Mr. Coleridge, Sir Walter Scott, and Lord Byron himself, it has often been employed with the most happy effect. Its irregularity, when moulded under the guidance of a delicate taste, is more to the eye than to the ear, and in fact not greater than was admitted in some of the most delicious of the lyrical measures of the ancient Greeks.—E.]

(1) [In one of his sea excursions, Lord Byron was nearly lost in a Turkish ship of war, owing to the ignorance of the captain and crew. "Fletcher," he says, "yelled; the Greeks called on all the saints; the Mussulmans on Alla; while the captain burst into tears, and ran below deck. I did what I could to console Fletcher; but finding him incorrigible, I wrapped myself up in my Albanian capote, and lay down to wait the worst." This striking instance of the poet's coolness and courage is thus confirmed by Mr. Hobhouse:—"Finding that, from his lameness, he was unable to be of any service in the exertions which our very serious danger called for, after a laugh or two at the panic of his valet, he not only wrapped himself up and lay down, in the manner he has described, but when our difficulties were terminated was found fast asleep."—E.]

Some of mosque, and some of church,
And some, or I mis-say, of neither;
Yet through the wide world might ye search,
Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.

But some are dead, and some are gone,
And some are scatter'd and alone,
And some are rebels on the hills ([1])
That look along Epirus' valleys,
Where freedom still at moments rallies,
And pays in blood oppression's ills;
And some are in a far countree,
And some all restlessly at home;
But never more, oh! never, we
Shall meet to revel and to roam.

But those hardy days flew cheerily,
And when they now fall drearily,
My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main,
And bear my spirit back again
Over the earth, and through the air,
A wild bird and a wanderer.
'Tis this that ever wakes my strain,
And oft, too oft, implores again
The few who may endure my lay,
To follow me so far away.
Stranger — wilt thou follow now,
And sit with me on Acro-Corinth's brow?

(1) The last tidings recently heard of Dervish (one of the Arnaouts who followed me) state him to be in revolt upon the mountains, at the head of some of the bands common in that country in times of trouble.

I.

Many a vanish'd year and age,
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
Have swept o'er Corinth ; yet she stands,
A fortress form'd to Freedom's hands. (1)
The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock,
Have left untouch'd her hoary rock,
The keystone of a land, which still,
Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,
The landmark to the double tide
That purpling rolls on either side,
As if their waters chafed to meet,
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
But could the blood before her shed
Since first Timoleon's brother bled, (2)
Or baffled Persia's despot fled,
Arise from out the earth which drank
The stream of slaughter as it sank,
That sanguine ocean would o'erflow
Her isthmus idly spread below :
Or could the bones of all the slain,
Who perish'd there, be piled again,
That rival pyramid would rise
More mountain-like, through those clear skies,

(1) [In the original MS. —

" A marvel from her Moslem bands. " — E.]

(1) [Timoleon, who had saved the life of his brother Timophanes in battle, afterwards killed him for aiming at the supreme power in Corinth, preferring his duty to his country to all the obligations of blood. Dr. Warton says, that Pope once intended to write an epic poem on the story, and that Dr. Akenside had the same design. — E.]

Than yon tower-capp'd Acropolis,
Which seems the very clouds to kiss. (1)

II.

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears;
And downward to the Isthmian plain,
From shore to shore of either main,
The tent is pitch'd, the crescent shines
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines;
And the dusk Spahi's bands (2) advance
Beneath each bearded pacha's glance;

(1) [The Giaour, the Bride of Abydos, the Corsair, Lara, the Siege of Corinth, followed each other with a celerity, which was only rivalled by their success; and if at times the author seemed to pause in his poetic career, with the threat of forbearing further adventure for a time, the public eagerly pardoned the breach of a promise by keeping which they must have been sufferers. Exquisitely beautiful in themselves, these tales received a new charm from the romantic climes into which they introduced us, and from the oriental costume so strictly preserved and so picturesquely exhibited. Greece, the cradle of the poetry with which our earliest studies are familiar, was presented to us among her ruins and her sorrows. Her delightful scenery, once dedicated to those deities who, though dethroned from their own Olympus, still preserve a poetical empire, was spread before us in Lord Byron's poetry, varied by all the moral effect derived from what Greece is and what she has been, while it was doubled by comparisons, perpetually excited, between the philosophers and heroes who formerly inhabited that romantic country, and their descendants, who either stoop to their Scythian conquerors, or maintain, among the recesses of their classical mountains, an independence as wild and savage as it is precarious. The oriental manners also and diction, so peculiar in their picturesque effect that they can cast a charm even over the absurdities of an eastern tale, had here the more honourable occupation of decorating that which in itself was beautiful, and enhancing by novelty what would have been captivating without its aid. The powerful impression produced by this peculiar species of poetry confirmed us in a principle, which, though it will hardly be challenged when stated as an axiom, is very rarely complied with in practice. It is, that every author should, like Lord Byron, form to himself, and communicate to the reader, a precise, defined, and distinct view of the landscape, sentiment, or action which he intends to describe to the reader. — Sir Walter Scott.]

(2) [Turkish holders of military fiefs, which oblige them to join the army, mounted at their own expense. — E.]

And far and wide as eye can reach
The turban'd cohorts throng the beach;
And there the Arab's camel kneels,
And there his steed the Tartar wheels;
The Turcoman hath left his herd, (1)
The sabre round his loins to gird;
And there the volleying thunders pour
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
Wings the far hissing globe of death;
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball;
And from that wall the foe replies,
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
With fires that answer fast and well
The summons of the Infidel.

III.

But near and nearest to the wall
Of those who wish and work its fall,
With deeper skill in war's black art,
Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
As any chief that ever stood
Triumphant in the fields of blood;
From post to post, and deed to deed,
Fast spurring on his reeking steed,
Where sallying ranks the trench assail,
And make the foremost Moslem quail;

(1) The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal: they dwell in tents.

Or where the battery, guarded well,
Remains as yet impregnable,
Alighting cheerly to inspire
The soldier slackening in his fire;
The first and freshest of the host
Which Stamboul's sultan there can boast,
To guide the follower o'er the field,
To point the tube, the lance to wield,
Or whirl around the bickering blade; —
Was Alp, the Adrian renegade!

IV.

From Venice — once a race of worth
His gentle sires — he drew his birth;
But late an exile from her shore,
Against his countrymen he bore
The arms they taught to bear; and now
The turban girt his shaven brow.
Through many a change had Corinth pass'd
With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
And here, before her walls, with those
To Greece and Venice equal foes,
He stood a foe, with all the zeal
Which young and fiery converts feel,
Within whose heated bosom throngs
The memory of a thousand wrongs.
To him had Venice ceased to be
Her ancient civic boast — "the Free;"
And in the palace of St. Mark
Unnamed accusers in the dark
Within the "Lion's mouth" had placed
A charge against him uneffaced:

He fled in time, and saved his life,
To waste his future years in strife,
That taught his land how great her loss
In him who triumph'd o'er the Cross,
'Gainst which he rear'd the Crescent high,
And battled to avenge or die.

V.

Coumourgi (1)— he whose closing scene
Adorn'd the triumph of Eugene,
When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,
The last and mightiest of the slain,
He sank, regretting not to die,
But cursed the Christian's victory —
Coumourgi— can his glory cease,
That latest conqueror of Greece,
Till Christian hands to Greece restore
The freedom Venice gave of yore?
A hundred years have roll'd away
Since he refix'd the Moslem's sway,
And now he led the Mussulman,
And gave the guidance of the van
To Alp, who well repaid the trust
By cities levell'd with the dust;

(1) Ali Coumourgi, the favourite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III., after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin (in the plain of Carlowitz), in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of General Breuner, and some other German prisoners; and his last words, "Oh that I could thus serve all the Christian dogs!" a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption: on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, "was a great general," he said, "I shall become a greater, and at his expense."

And proved, by many a deed of death,
How firm his heart in novel faith.

VI.

The walls grew weak; and fast and hot
Against them pour'd the ceaseless shot,
With unabating fury sent
From battery to battlement;
And thunder-like the pealing din
Rose from each heated culverin;
And here and there some crackling dome
Was fired before the exploding bomb:
And as the fabric sank beneath
The shattering shell's volcanic breath,
In red and wreathing columns flash'd
The flame, as loud the ruin crash'd,
Or into countless meteors driven,
Its earth-stars melted into heaven;
Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,
Impervious to the hidden sun,
With volumed smoke that slowly grew
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

VII.

But not for vengeance, long delay'd,
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
The Moslem warriors sternly teach
His skill to pierce the promised breach:
Within these walls a maid was pent
His hope would win without consent
Of that inexorable sire,
Whose heart refused him in its ire,

When Alp, beneath his Christian name,
Her virgin hand aspired to claim.
In happier mood, and earlier time,
While unimpeach'd for traitorous crime,
Gayest in gondola or hall,
He glitter'd through the Carnival;
And tuned the softest serenade
That e'er on Adria's waters play'd
At midnight to Italian maid. (1)

VIII.

And many deem'd her heart was won;
For sought by numbers, given to none,
Had young Francesca's hand remain'd
Still by the church's bonds unchain'd:
And when the Adriatic bore
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail,
And pensive wax'd the maid and pale;
More constant at confessional,
More rare at masque and festival;
Or seen at such, with downcast eyes,
Which conquer'd hearts they ceased to prize:
With listless look she seems to gaze:
With humbler care her form arrays;
Her voice less lively in the song;
Her step, though light, less fleet among
The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

(1) [MS. — " In midnight courtship to Italian maid." — E.]

IX.

Sent by the state to guard the land,
(Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
While Sobieski tamed his pride
By Buda's wall and Danube's side,
The chiefs of Venice wrung away
From Patra to Eubœa's bay,)
Minotti held in Corinth's towers
The Doge's delegated powers,
While yet the pitying eye of Peace
Smiled o'er her long forgotten Greece:
And ere that faithless truce was broke
Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,
With him his gentle daughter came;
Nor there, since Menelaus' dame
Forsook her lord and land, to prove
What woes await on lawless love,
Had fairer form adorn'd the shore
Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

X.

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn;
And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,
O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
The foremost of the fierce assault.
The bands are rank'd; the chosen van
Of Tartar and of Mussulman,
The full of hope, misnamed "forlorn,"
Who hold the thought of death in scorn,
And win their way with falchion's force,
Or pave the path with many a corse,

O'er which the following brave may rise,
Their stepping-stone — the last who dies!

XI.

'Tis midnight: on the mountains brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down;
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright;
Who ever gazed upon them shining
And turn'd to earth without repining,
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away,
And mix with their eternal ray?
The waves on either shore lay there
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmur'd meekly as the brook.
The winds were pillow'd on the waves;
The banners droop'd along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling;
And that deep silence was unbroke,
Save where the watch his signal spoke,
Save where the steed neigh'd oft and shrill,
And echo answer'd from the hill,
And the wide hum of that wild host
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,
As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
In midnight call to wonted prayer;
It rose, that chanted mournful strain,
Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain:

'Twas musical, but sadly sweet,
Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,
And take a long unmeasured tone,
To mortal minstrelsy unknown. (1)
It seem'd to those within the wall
A cry prophetic of their fall:
It struck even the besieger's ear
With something ominous and drear,
An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed
Of that strange sense its silence framed;
Such as a sudden passing-bell
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell. (2)

XII.

The tent of Alp was on the shore;
The sound was hush'd, the prayer was o'er;
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obey'd:
'Tis but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite
With all revenge and love can pay,
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter; but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.

(1) [MS. — " And make a melancholy moan,
To mortal voice and ear unknown." — E.]

(2) [MS. — " Which rings a deep, internal knell,
A visionary passing-bell." — E.]

He stood alone among the host;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the crescent o'er the cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,
Secure in paradise to be
By Houris loved immortally:
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,
The stern exaltedness of zeal,
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,
When battling on the parent soil.
He stood alone—a renegade
Against the country he betray'd;
He stood alone amidst his band,
Without a trusted heart or hand:
They follow'd him, for he was brave,
And great the spoil he got and gave;
They crouch'd to him, for he had skill
To warp and wield the vulgar will:
But still his Christian origin
With them was little less than sin.
They envied even the faithless fame
He earn'd beneath a Moslem name;
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been
In youth a bitter Nazarene.
They did not know how pride can stoop,
When baffled feelings withering droop;
They did not know how hate can burn
In hearts once changed from soft to stern;
Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel.
He ruled them—man may rule the worst,
By ever daring to be first;

So lions o'er the jackal sway ;
The jackal points, he fells the prey, (1)
Then on the vulgar yelling press,
To gorge the relics of success.

XIII.

His head grows fever'd, and his pulse
The quick successive throbs convulse ;
In vain from side to side he throws
His form, in courtship of repose ; (2)
Or if he dozed, a sound, a start
Awoke him with a sunken heart.
The turban on his hot brow press'd,
The mail weigh'd lead-like on his breast,
Though oft and long beneath its weight
Upon his eyes had slumber sate,
Without or couch or canopy,
Except a rougher field and sky
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
Than now along the heaven was spread.
He could not rest, he could not stay
Within his tent to wait for day,
But walk'd him forth along the sand,
Where thousand sleepers strew'd the strand.
What pillow'd them? and why should he
More wakeful than the humblest be,

(1) [MS. — " As lions o'er the jackal sway
By springing dauntless on the prey ;
They follow on, and yelling press
To gorge the fragments of success." — E.]

(2) [MS. — " He vainly turn'd from side to side,
And each reposing posture tried." — E.]

Since more their peril, worse their toil?
And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
While he alone, where thousands pass'd
A night of sleep, perchance their last,
In sickly vigil wander'd on,
And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV.

He felt his soul become more light
Beneath the freshness of the night.
Cool was the silent sky, though calm,
And bathed his brow with airy balm:
Behind, the camp — before him lay,
In many a winding creek and bay,
Lepanto's gulf; and, on the brow
Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,
High and eternal, such as shone
Through thousand summers brightly gone,
Along the gulf, the mount, the clime;
It will not melt, like man, to time:
Tyrant and slave are swept away,
Less form'd to wear before the ray;
But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,
While tower and tree are torn and rent,
Shines o'er its craggy battlement;
In form a peak, in height a cloud,
In texture like a hovering shroud,
Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
As from her fond abode she fled,
And linger'd on the spot, where long
Her prophet spirit spake in song.

Oh ! still her step at moments falters
O'er wither'd fields, and ruin'd altars,
And fain would wake, in souls too broken,
By pointing to each glorious token:
But vain her voice, till better days
Dawn in those yet remember'd rays
Which shone upon the Persian flying,
And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV.

Not mindless of these mighty times
Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes;
And through this night, as on he wander'd,
And o'er the past and present ponder'd,
And thought upon the glorious dead
Who there in better cause had bled,
He felt how faint and feebly dim
The fame that could accrue to him,
Who cheer'd the band, and waved the sword,
A traitor in a turban'd horde;
And led them to the lawless siege,
Whose best success were sacrilege.
Not so had those his fancy number'd,
The chiefs whose dust around him slumber'd;
Their phalanx marshall'd on the plain,
Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.
They fell devoted, but undying;
The very gale their names seem'd sighing:
The waters murmur'd of their name;
The woods were peopled with their fame;
The silent pillar, lone and grey,
Claim'd kindred with their sacred clay;

Their spirits wrapp'd the dusky mountain,
Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain;
The meanest rill, the mightiest river
Roll'd mingling with their fame for ever.
Despite of every yoke she bears,
That land is glory's still and theirs! (1)
'Tis still a watch-word to the earth:
When man would do a deed of worth
He points to Greece, and turns to tread,
So sanction'd, on the tyrant's head:
He looks to her, and rushes on
Where life is lost, or freedom won. (2)

XVI.

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
And woo'd the freshness Night diffused.
There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea, (3)
Which changeless rolls eternally;
So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,
Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood;
And the powerless moon beholds them flow,
Heedless if she come or go:
Calm or high, in main or bay,
On their course she hath no sway.
The rock unworn its base doth bare,
And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there;
And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,
On the line that it left long ages ago:

(1) [Here follows, in MS. —
"Immortal — boundless — undecay'd —
Their souls the very soil pervades." — E.]

(2) [MS. — "Where Freedom loveliest may be won." — E.]

(3) The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.

A smooth short space of yellow sand
Between it and the greener land.

He wander'd on, along the beach,
Till within the range of a carbine's reach
Of the leaguer'd wall; but they saw him not,
Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot? (1)
Did traitors lurk in the Christians' hold? [cold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts wax'd
I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall
There flash'd no fire, and there hiss'd no ball,
Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flank'd the sea-ward gate of the town;
Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell
The sullen words of the sentinel,
As his measured step on the stone below
Clank'd, as he paced it to and fro;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival, (2)
Gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb;
They were too busy to bark at him!
From a Tartar's skull they had stripp'd the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the whiter
skull, (3) [grew dull,
As it slipp'd through their jaws, when their edge

(1) [MS. — " Or would not waste on a single head
The ball on numbers better sped." — E.]

(2) [Omit the rest of this section. — GIFFORD.]

(3) This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's Travels. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.

As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where
they fed;
So well had they broken a lingering fast
With those who had fallen for that night's repast.(1)
And Alp knew, by the turbans that roll'd on the sand,
The foremost of these were the best of his band:
Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,
And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair,(2)
All the rest was shaven and bare.
The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.
But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey;
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Pick'd by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

XVII.

Alp turn'd him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight;
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,(3)
Scorch'd with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.(4)

(1) [This passage shows the force of Lord Byron's pencil. — JEFFREY.]

(2) This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mahomet will draw them into Paradise by it.

(3) [Than the mangled corpse in its own blood lying. — GIFFORD.]

(4) [Strike out —

" Scorch'd with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain."

What is a " perishing dead? " — GIFFORD.]

There is something of pride in the perilous hour,
Whate'er be the shape in which death may lower;
For Fame is there to say who bleeds,
And Honour's eye on daring deeds!
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead, (1)
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there;
All regarding man as their prey,
All rejoicing in his decay. (2)

XVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashion'd by long forgotten hands;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown!
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before! (3)
Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be:
What we have seen, our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
Fragments of stone, rear'd by creatures of clay! (4)

(1) [O'er the weltering *limbs* of the tombless dead. — GIFFORD.]

(2) [MS.—" All that liveth on man will prey,
All rejoice in his decay,
All that can kindle dismay and disgust
Follow his frame from the bier to the dust." — E.]

(3) [Omit this couplet. — GIFFORD.]

(4) [After this follows in MS. —
" Monuments that the coming age
Leaves to the spoil of the seasons' rage —

XIX.

He sate him down at a pillar's base, (1)
And pass'd his hand athwart his face;
Like one in dreary musing mood,
Declining was his attitude;
His head was drooping on his breast,
Fever'd, throbbing, and oppress'd;
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
Oft his beating fingers went,
Hurriedly, as you may see
Your own run over the ivory key,
Ere the measured tone is taken
By the chords you would awaken.
There he sate all heavily,
As he heard the night-wind sigh.
Was it the wind, through some hollow stone,
Sent that soft and tender moan? (2)

Till Ruin makes the relics scarce,
Then Learning acts her solemn farce,
And, roaming through the marble waste,
Prates of beauty, art, and taste.

XIX.

" That Temple was more in the midst of the plain;
What of that shrine did yet remain
Lay to his left ——— "— E.]

(1) [From this, all is beautiful to—
" He saw not, he knew not; but nothing is there."— GIFFORD.]

(2) I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr. Coleridge, called " Christabel." It was not till after these lines were written that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited; and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr. Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr. Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, of

He lifted his head, and he look'd on the sea,
But it was unrippled as glass may be;
He look'd on the long grass — it waved not a blade;
How was that gentle sound convey'd?
He look'd to the banners — each flag lay still,
So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill,
And he felt not a breath come over his cheek;
What did that sudden sound bespeak?
He turn'd to the left — is he sure of sight?
There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX.

He started up with more of fear
Than if an armed foe were near.
"God of my fathers! what is here?
Who art thou, and wherefore sent
So near a hostile armament?"
His trembling hands refused to sign
The cross he deem'd no more divine:
He had resumed it in that hour,
But conscience wrung away the power.

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which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges. — [The following are the lines in "Christabel" which Lord Byron had unintentionally imitated: —

"The night is chill, the forest bare,
Is it the wind that moneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek —
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks at the sky." — E.]

He gazed, he saw: he knew the face
Of beauty, and the form of grace;
It was Francesca by his side,
The maid who might have been his bride!

The rose was yet upon her cheek,
But mellow'd with a tenderer streak:
Where was the play of her soft lips fled?
Gone was the smile that enliven'd their red.
The ocean's calm within their view,
Beside her eye had less of blue;
But like that cold wave it stood still,
And its glance, (1) though clear, was chill.
Around her form a thin robe twining,
Nought conceal'd her bosom shining;
Through the parting of her hair,
Floating darkly downward there,
Her rounded arm show'd white and bare:
And ere yet she made reply,
Once she raised her hand on high;
It was so wan, and transparent of hue,
You might have seen the moon shine through.

XXI.

"I come from my rest to him I love best,
That I may be happy, and he may be bless'd.
I have pass'd the guards, the gate, the wall;
Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
From a maid in the pride of her purity;

(1) [And its *thrilling* glance, &c. — GIFFORD.]

And the Power on high, that can shield the good
Thus from the tyrant of the wood,
Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well
From the hands of the leaguering infidel.
I come — and if I come in vain,
Never, oh never, we meet again!
Thou hast done a fearful deed
In falling away from thy father's creed:
But dash that turban to earth, and sign
The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine;
Wring the black drop from thy heart,
And to-morrow unites us no more to part."

" And where should our bridal couch be spread?
In the midst of the dying and the dead?
For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame
The sons and the shrines of the Christian name.
None, save thou and thine, I've sworn,
Shall be left upon the morn:
But thee will I bear to a lovely spot, [forgot.
Where our hands shall be join'd, and our sorrow
There thou yet shalt be my bride,
When once again I've quell'd the pride
Of Venice; and her hated race
Have felt the arm they would debase
Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
Whom vice and envy made my foes."

Upon his hand she laid her own —
Light was the touch, but it thrill'd to the bone,
And shot a chillness to his heart,
Which fix'd him beyond the power to start.

Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,
He could not loose him from its hold;
But never did clasp of one so dear
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,
As those thin fingers, long and white,
Froze through his blood by their touch that night.
The feverish glow of his brow was gone,
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,
As he look'd on the face, and beheld its hue,
So deeply changed from what he knew:
Fair but faint—without the ray
Of mind, that made each feature play
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day;
And her motionless lips lay still as death,
And her words came forth without her breath,
And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,
And there seem'd not a pulse in her veins to dwell.
Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fix'd,
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmix'd
With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream;
Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare,
Stirr'd by the breath of the wintry air, (1)
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight; [down
As they seem, through the dimness, about to come
From the shadowy wall where their images frown;(2)

(1) [MS.—"Like a picture, that magic had charm'd from its frame,
Lifeless but life-like, and ever the same."—E.]

(2) [In the summer of 1803, when in his sixteenth year, Lord Byron, though offered a bed at Annesley, used at first to return every night to sleep at Newstead; alleging as a reason, that he was afraid of the family pictures

Fearfully flitting to and fro,
As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.
" If not for love of me be given
Thus much, then, for the love of heaven,—
Again I say—that turban tear
From off thy faithless brow, and swear
Thine injured country's sons to spare,
Or thou art lost; and never shalt see—
Not earth—that's past—but heaven or me.
If this thou dost accord, albeit
A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet,
That doom shall half absolve thy sin,
And mercy's gate may receive thee within:
But pause one moment more, and take
The curse of Him thou didst forsake;
And look once more to heaven, and see
Its love for ever shut from thee.
There is a light cloud by the moon—(1)
'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—

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of the Chaworths; that he fancied " they had taken a grudge to him on account of the duel." Mr. Moore thinks it may possibly have been the recollection of these pictures that suggested to him these lines. — E.]

(1) I have been told that the idea expressed in this and the five following lines has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original — at least not mine; it may be found much better expressed in pages 182-3-4. of the English version of " Vathek " (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification. — [The following is the passage :—" ' Deluded prince!' said the Genius addressing the Caliph, ' to whom Providence hath confided the care of innumerable subjects; is it thus that thou fulfillest thy mission? Thy crimes are already completed; and art thou now hastening to thy punishment? Thou knowest that beyond those mountains Eblis and his accursed dives hold their infernal empire; and, seduced by a malignant phantom, thou art proceeding to surrender thyself to them! This moment is the last of grace allowed thee: give back Nouronahar to her father, who still retains a few sparks of life: destroy thy

If, by the time its vapoury sail
Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,
Thy heart within thee is not changed,
Then God and man are both avenged;
Dark will thy doom be, darker still
Thine immortality of ill."

Alp look'd to heaven, and saw on high
The sign she spake of in the sky;
But his heart was swollen, and turn'd aside
By deep interminable pride.
This first false passion of his breast
Roll'd like a torrent o'er the rest.
He sue for mercy! *He* dismay'd
By wild words of a timid maid!
He, wrong'd by Venice, vow to save
Her sons, devoted to the grave!
No — though that cloud were thunder's worst,
And charged to crush him—let it burst!

He look'd upon it earnestly,
Without an accent of reply;
He watch'd it passing; it is flown:
Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
And thus he spake — "Whate'er my fate,
I am no changeling—'tis too late:

---

tower, with all its abominations: drive Carathis from thy councils: be just to thy subjects: respect the ministers of the prophet: compensate for thy impieties by an exemplary life; and, instead of squandering thy days in voluptuous indulgence, lament thy crimes on the sepulchres of thy ancestors. Thou beholdest the clouds that obscure the sun: at the instant he recovers his splendour, if thy heart be not changed, the time of mercy assigned thee will be past for ever." — E.]

The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
Then rise again; the tree must shiver.
What Venice made me, I must be,
Her foe in all, save love to thee:
But thou art safe: oh, fly with me!"
He turn'd, but she is gone!
Nothing is there but the column stone.
Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air?
He saw not—he knew not—but nothing is there.

XXII.

The night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one. (1)
Lightly and brightly breaks away
The Morning from her mantle grey,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day. (2)
Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
And the clash, and the shout, "They come! they come!"
The horsetails (3) are pluck'd from the ground, and the sword
From its sheath; and they form, and but wait for the word.
Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman,
Strike your tents, and throng to the van;

(1) [Leave out this couplet. — GIFFORD.]

(2) [Strike out — "And the Noon will look on a sultry day."—G.]

(3) The horsetails, fixed upon a lance, a pacha's standard.

Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
That the fugitive may flee in vain,
When he breaks from the town; and none escape,
Aged or young, in the Christian shape;
While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
Bloodstain the breach through which they pass. (1)
The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;
White is the foam of their champ on the bit:
The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
And crush the wall they have crumbled before: (2)
Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,
So is the blade of his scimitar;
The khan and the pachas are all at their post;
The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;
Leave not in Corinth a living one —
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.
God and the prophet — Alla Hu!
Up to the skies with that wild halloo!
"There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to scale;
And your hands on your sabres, and how should ye fail?

(1) [Omit —
"While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
Bloodstain the breach through which they pass." — GIFFORD.]

(2) ["And crush the wall they have *shaken* before." — G.]

He who first downs with the red cross may crave(1)
His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it, and have!"
Thus utter'd Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier;
The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear,
And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire:—
Silence—hark to the signal—fire!

XXIII.

As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die:
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent; (2)
Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,
Strew'd the earth like broken glass,
Shiver'd by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levell'd plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain. (3)

XXIV.

As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash

(1) ["He who first *downs* with the red-cross may crave," &c. What vulgarism is this!—
"He who *lowers*,—or *plucks down*," &c.—GIFFORD.]

(2) [Thus against the wall they *bent*,
Thus the first were backward *sent*.—G.]

(3) [Such was the fall of the foremost *train*,—G.]

Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft renew'd
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heap'd by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice,
Which pierces the deep hills through and through
With an echo dread and new:
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara;
(We have heard the hearers say,)
Even unto Piræus' bay

XXV.

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt;
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after carnage done.

Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plunder'd dome:
Hark to the haste of flying feet,
That splash in the blood of the slippery street;
But here and there, where 'vantage ground
Against the foe may still be found,
Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
Make a pause, and turn again —
With banded backs against the wall,
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall.

There stood an old man(1)—his hairs were white,
But his veteran arm was full of might:
So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,
The dead before him, on that day,
In a semicircle lay;
Still he combated unwounded,
Though retreating, unsurrounded.
Many a scar of former fight
Lurk'd (2) beneath his corslet bright;
But of every wound his body bore,
Each and all had been ta'en before:
Though aged, he was so iron of limb,
Few of our youth could cope with him;
And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,
Outnumber'd his thin hairs (3) of silver grey.
From right to left his sabre swept:
Many an Othman mother wept
Sons that were unborn, when dipp'd (4)

(1) [There stood a man, &c. — GIFFORD.]
(2) ["*Lurk'd*," a bad word — say "*Was hid.*" — G.]
(3) [Outnumber'd his hairs, &c. — G.]
(4) [Sons that were unborn, when *he* dipp'd. — G.]

His weapon first in Moslem gore,
Ere his years could count a score.
Of all he might have been the sire (1)
Who fell that day beneath his ire:
For, sonless left long years ago,
His wrath made many a childless foe;
And since the day, when in the strait (2)
His only boy had met his fate,
His parent's iron hand did doom
More than a human hecatomb. (3)
If shades by carnage be appeased,
Patroclus' spirit less was pleased
Than his, Minotti's son, who died
Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.
Buried he lay, where thousands before [shore;
For thousands of years were inhumed on the
What of them is left, to tell
Where they lie, and how they fell?
Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves;
But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI.

Hark to the Allah shout! (4) a band
Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand:
Their leader's nervous arm is bare,
Swifter to smite, and never to spare —

(1) [Bravo! — this is better than King Priam's fifty sons. — GIFFORD.]

(2) In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and Turks.

(3) [There can be no such thing; but the whole of this is poor, and spun out. — G.]

(4) [Hark to the Alla Hu! &c. — G.]

Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on;
Thus in the fight is he ever known:
Others a gaudier garb may show,
To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe;
Many a hand 's on a richer hilt,
But none on a steel more ruddily gilt;
Many a loftier turban may wear, —
Alp is but known by the white arm bare;
Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there!
There is not a standard on that shore
So well advanced the ranks before;
There is not a banner in Moslem war
Will lure the Delhis half so far;
It glances like a falling star!
Where'er that mighty arm is seen,
The bravest be, or late have been; (1)
There the craven cries for quarter
Vainly to the vengeful Tartar;
Or the hero, silent lying,
Scorns to yield a groan in dying;
Mustering his last feeble blow
'Gainst the nearest levell'd foe,
Though faint beneath the mutual wound,
Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII.

Still the old man stood erect,
And Alp's career a moment check'd.
"Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,
For thine own, thy daughter's sake."

(1) [Omit the remainder of the section. — GIFFORD.]

" Never, renegado, never !
Though the life of thy gift would last for ever." (1)

" Francesca ! — Oh, my promised bride ! (2)
Must she too perish by thy pride ?"
" She is safe."—" Where ? where ?"—" In heaven;
From whence thy traitor soul is driven —
Far from thee, and undefiled."
Grimly then Minotti smiled,
As he saw Alp staggering bow
Before his words, as with a blow.

" Oh God ! when died she ?" — " Yesternight —
Nor weep I for her spirit's flight :
None of my pure race shall be
Slaves to Mahomet and thee —
Come on !" — That challenge is in vain—
Alp 's already with the slain !
While Minotti's words were wreaking
More revenge in bitter speaking
Than his falchion's point had found,
Had the time allow'd to wound,
From within the neighbouring porch
Of a long defended church,
Where the last and desperate few
Would the failing fight renew,
The sharp shot dash'd Alp to the ground ;
Ere an eye could view the wound

(1) [In the original MS. —
" Though the life of thy giving would last for ever." — E.]

(2) [MS. — " Where 's Francesca ? — my promised bride ! " — E.]

That crash'd through the brain of the infidel,
Round he spun, and down he fell;
A flash like fire within his eyes
Blazed, as he bent no more to rise,
And then eternal darkness sunk
Through all the palpitating trunk; (1)
Nought of life left, save a quivering
Where his limbs were slightly shivering:
They turn'd him on his back; his breast
And brow were stain'd with gore and dust,
And through his lips the life-blood oozed,
From its deep veins lately loosed;
But in his pulse there was no throb,
Nor on his lips one dying sob;
Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
Heralded his way to death:
Ere his very thought could pray,
Unaneled he pass'd away,
Without a hope from mercy's aid, —
To the last — a Renegade. (2)

(1) [Here follows in MS. —

" Twice and once he roll'd a space,
Then lead-like lay upon his face." —E.]

(2) [One cannot help suspecting, on longer and more mature consideration, that one has been led to join in ascribing much more force to the objections made against such characters as the Corsair, Lara, the Giaour, Alp, &c. than belongs to them. The incidents, habits, &c., are much too remote from modern and European life to act as mischievous examples to others; while, under the *given* circumstances, the splendour of imagery, beauty and tenderness of sentiment, and extraordinary strength and felicity of language, are applicable to human nature at all times, and in all countries, and convey to the best faculties of the reader's mind an impulse which elevates, refines, instructs, and enchants, with the noblest and purest of all pleasures. — Sir E. Brydges.]

XXVIII.

Fearfully the yell arose
Of his followers, and his foes;
These in joy, in fury those: (1)
Then again in conflict mixing,
Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,
Interchanged the blow and thrust,
Hurling warriors in the dust.
Street by street, and foot by foot,
Still Minotti dares dispute
The latest portion of the land
Left beneath his high command;
With him, aiding heart and hand,
The remnant of his gallant band.
Still the church is tenable,
  Whence issued late the fated ball
  That half avenged the city's fall,
When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell:
Thither bending sternly back,
They leave before a bloody track;
And, with their faces to the foe,
Dealing wounds with every blow, (2)
The chief, and his retreating train,
Join to those within the fane;
There they yet may breathe awhile,
Shelter'd by the massy pile.

XXIX.

Brief breathing-time! the turban'd host,
With adding ranks and raging boast,

(1) [MS. — "These in rage, in triumph those." — E.]
(2) — [Dealing *death* with every blow. — GIFFORD.]

Press onwards with such strength and heat,
Their numbers balk their own retreat;
For narrow the way that led to the spot
Where still the Christians yielded not;
And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try
Through the massy column to turn and fly;
They perforce must do or die.
They die; but ere their eyes could close,
Avengers o'er their bodies rose;
Fresh and furious, fast they fill
The ranks unthinn'd, though slaughter'd still;
And faint the weary Christians wax
Before the still renew'd attacks:
And now the Othmans gain the gate;
Still resists its iron weight,
And still, all deadly aim'd and hot,
From every crevice comes the shot;
From every shatter'd window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower:
But the portal wavering grows and weak—
The iron yields, the hinges creak—
It bends—it falls— and all is o'er;
Lost Corinth may resist no more!

XXX.

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar stone:
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above,
With eyes of light and looks of love;
And placed upon that holy shrine
To fix our thoughts on things divine,

When pictured there, we kneeling see
Her, and the boy-God on her knee,
Smiling sweetly on each prayer
To heaven, as if to waft it there,
Still she smiled; even now she smiles,
Though slaughter streams along her aisles:
Minotti lifted his aged eye,
And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
Then seized a torch which blazed thereby;
And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,
Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

XXXI.

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone
Contain'd the dead of ages gone;
Their names were on the graven floor,
But now illegible with gore;
The carved crests, and curious hues
The varied marble's veins diffuse,
Were smear'd, and slippery — stain'd, and strown
With broken swords, and helms o'erthrown:
There were dead above, and the dead below
Lay cold in many a coffin'd row;
You might see them piled in sable state,
By a pale light through a gloomy grate;
But War had enter'd their dark caves,
And stored along the vaulted graves
Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
In masses by the fleshless dead:
Here, throughout the siege, had been
The Christian's chiefest magazine;
To these a late form'd train now led,

Minotti's last and stern resource
Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

XXXII.

The foe came on, and few remain
To strive, and those must strive in vain:
For lack of further lives, to slake
The thirst of vengeance now awake,
With barbarous blows they gash the dead,
And lop the already lifeless head,
And fell the statues from their niche,
And spoil the shrines of offering rich,
And from each other's rude hands wrest
The silver vessels saints had bless'd.
To the high altar on they go;
Oh, but it made a glorious show! (1)
On its table still behold
The cup of consecrated gold;
Massy and deep, a glittering prize,
Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes:
That morn it held the holy wine,
Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,
Which his worshippers drank at the break of day,
To shrive their souls ere they join'd in the fray.
Still a few drops within it lay;
And round the sacred table glow
Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
From the purest metal cast;
A spoil—the richest, and the last.

(1) ["Oh, but it made a glorious show!!!" Out. — GIFFORD.]

XXXIII.

So near they came, the nearest stretch'd
To grasp the spoil he almost reach'd,
When old Minotti's hand
Touch'd with the torch the train—
'Tis fired!
Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,
The turban'd victors, the Christian band,
All that of living or dead remain,
Hurl'd on high with the shiver'd fane,
In one wild roar expired!
The shatter'd town—the walls thrown down—
The waves a moment backward bent—
The hills that shake, although unrent,
As if an earthquake pass'd—
The thousand shapeless things all driven
In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,
By that tremendous blast—
Proclaim'd the desperate conflict o'er
On that too long afflicted shore: (1)
Up to the sky like rockets go
All that mingled there below:
Many a tall and goodly man,
Scorch'd and shrivell'd to a span,
When he fell to earth again
Like a cinder strew'd the plain:
Down the ashes shower like rain;
Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles
With a thousand circling wrinkles;

(1) [Strike out from "Up to the sky," &c. to "All blacken'd there and reeking lay." Despicable stuff.—GIFFORD.]

Some fell on the shore, but, far away,
Scatter'd o'er the isthmus lay;
Christian or Moslem, which be they?
Let their mothers see and say!
When in cradled rest they lay,
And each nursing mother smiled
On the sweet sleep of her child,
Little deem'd she such a day
Would rend those tender limbs away.
Not the matrons that them bore
Could discern their offspring more;
That one moment left no trace
More of human form or face
Save a scatter'd scalp or bone:
And down came blazing rafters, strown
Around, and many a falling stone,
Deeply dinted in the clay,
All blacken'd there and reeking lay.
All the living things that heard
That deadly earth-shock disappear'd:
The wild birds flew; the wild dogs fled,
And howling left the unburied dead; (1)
The camels from their keepers broke;
The distant steer forsook the yoke—
The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
And burst his girth, and tore his rein;
The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,
Deep-mouth'd arose, and doubly harsh;
The wolves yell'd on the cavern'd hill
Where echo roll'd in thunder still;

(1) [Omit the next six lines. — GIFFORD.]

The jackal's troop, in gather'd cry, (1)
Bay'd from afar complainingly,
With a mix'd and mournful sound,
Like crying babe, and beaten hound: (2)
With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,
The eagle left his rocky nest,
And mounted nearer to the sun,
The clouds beneath him seem'd so dun;
Their smoke assail'd his startled beak,
And made him higher soar and shriek—
Thus was Corinth lost and won! (3)

(1) I believe I have taken a poetical licence to transplant the jackal from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They haunt ruins, and follow armies.

(2) [Leave out this couplet. — GIFFORD.]

(3) [The "Siege of Corinth," though written, perhaps, with too visible an effect, and not very well harmonised in all its parts, cannot but be regarded as a magnificent composition. There is less misanthropy in it than in any of the rest; and the interest is made up of alternate representations of soft and solemn scenes and emotions, and of the tumult, and terrors, and intoxication of war. These opposite pictures are, perhaps, too violently contrasted, and, in some parts, too harshly coloured; but they are in general exquisitely designed, and executed with the utmost spirit and energy. — JEFFREY.]

PARISINA.

[This poem, perhaps the most exquisitely versified one that ever the author produced, was written in London in the autumn of 1815, and published in February, 1816. Although the beauties of it were universally acknowledged, and fragments of its music ere long on every lip, the nature of the subject prevented it from being dwelt upon at much length in the critical journals of the time; most of which were content to record, generally, their regret that so great a poet should have permitted himself, by awakening sympathy for a pair of incestuous lovers, to become, in some sort, the apologist of their sin. An anonymous writer, in "Blackwood's Magazine," seems, however, to have suggested some particulars, in the execution of the story, which ought to be taken into consideration, before we rashly class Lord Byron with those poetical offenders, who have bent their powers "to divest incest of its hereditary horrors." "In Parisina," says this critic, "we are scarcely permitted to have a single glance at the guilt, before our attention is rivetted upon the punishment: we have scarcely had time to condemn, within our own hearts, the sinning, though injured son, when —

'For a departing being's soul
The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll:
He is near his mortal goal;
Kneeling at the Friar's knee;
Sad to hear — and piteous to see —
Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
With the block before and the guards around —
And the headman with his bare arm ready,
That the blow may be both swift and steady,
Feels if the axe be sharp and true —
Since he set its edge anew:
While the crowd in a speechless circle gather
To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father!'

"The fatal guilt of the Princess is in like manner swallowed up in the dreary contemplation of her uncertain fate. We forbear to think of her as an adulteress, after we have heard that '*horrid voice*' which is sent up to heaven at the death of her paramour —

'Whatsoe'er its end below,
Her life began and closed in woe.'

"Not only has Lord Byron avoided all the details of this unhallowed love, he has also contrived to mingle in the very incest which he condemns the idea of retribution; and our horror for the sin of Hugo is diminished by our belief that it was brought about by some strange and super-human fatalism, to revenge the ruin of Bianca. That gloom of righteous visitation, which invests, in the old Greek tragedies, the fated house of Atreus, seems here to impend with some portion of its ancient horror over the line of Esté. We hear, in the language of Hugo, the voice of the same pro-

phetic solemnity which announced to Agamemnon, in the very moment of his triumph, the approaching and inevitable darkness of his fate: —

> ' The gather'd guilt of elder times
> Shall reproduce itself in crimes;
> There is a day of vengeance still,
> Linger it may — but come it will.'

" That awful chorus does not, unless we be greatly mistaken, leave an impression of *destiny* upon the mind more powerful than that which rushed on the troubled spirit of Azo, when he heard the speech of Hugo in his hall of judgment: —

> ' Thou gavest, and may'st resume my breath,
> A gift for which I thank thee not;
> Nor are my mother's wrongs forgot,
> Her slighted love and ruin'd name,
> Her offspring's heritage of shame.' "

We shall have occasion to recur to this subject when we reach our author's " Manfred." The facts on which the present poem was grounded are thus given in Frizzi's History of Ferrara: —

" This turned out a calamitous year for the people of Ferrara; for there occurred a very tragical event in the court of their sovereign. Our annals, both printed and in manuscript, with the exception of the unpolished and negligent work of Sardi, and one other, have given the following relation of it, — from which, however, are rejected many details, and especially the narrative of Bandelli, who wrote a century afterwards, and who does not accord with the contemporary historians.

" By the above-mentioned Stella dell' Assassino, the Marquis, in the year 1405, had a son called Ugo, a beautiful and ingenuous youth. Parisina Malatesta, second wife of Niccolo, like the generality of step-mothers, treated him with little kindness, to the infinite regret of the Marquis, who regarded him with fond partiality. One day she asked leave of her husband to undertake a certain journey, to which he consented, but upon condition that Ugo should bear her company; for he hoped by these means to induce her, in the end, to lay aside the obstinate aversion which she had conceived against him. And indeed his intent was accomplished but too well, since, during the journey, she not only divested herself of all her hatred, but fell into the opposite extreme. After their return, the Marquis had no longer any occasion to renew his former reproofs. It happened one day that a servant of the Marquis, named Zoese, or, as some call him, Giorgio, passing before the apartments of Parisina, saw going out from them one of her chamber-maids, all terrified and in tears. Asking the reason, she told him that her mistress, for some slight offence, had been beating her; and, giving vent to her rage, she added, that she could easily be revenged, if she chose to make known the criminal familiarity which subsisted between Parisina and her step-son. The servant took note of the words, and related them to his master. He was astounded thereat, but, scarcely believing his ears, he assured himself of the fact, alas! too clearly, on the

18th of May, by looking through a hole made in the ceiling of his wife's chamber. Instantly he broke into a furious rage, and arrested both of them, together with Aldobrandino Rangoni, of Modena, her gentleman, and also, as some say, two of the women of her chamber, as abettors of this sinful act. He ordered them to be brought to a hasty trial, desiring the judges to pronounce sentence, in the accustomed forms, upon the culprits. This sentence was death. Some there were that bestirred themselves in favour of the delinquents, and, amongst others, Ugoccion Contrario, who was all powerful with Niccolo, and also his aged and much deserving minister Alberto dal Sale. Both of these, their tears flowing down their cheeks, and upon their knees, implored him for mercy; adducing whatever reasons they could suggest for sparing the offenders, besides those motives of honour and decency which might persuade him to conceal from the public so scandalous a deed. But his rage made him inflexible, and, on the instant, he commanded that the sentence should be put in execution.

" It was, then, in the prisons of the castle, and exactly in those frightful dungeons which are seen at this day beneath the chamber called the Aurora, at the foot of the Lion's tower, at the top of the street Giovecca, that on the night of the 21st of May were beheaded, first, Ugo, and afterwards Parisina. Zoese, he that accused her, conducted the latter under his arm to the place of punishment. She, all along, fancied that she was to be thrown into a pit, and asked at every step, whether she was yet come to the spot? She was told that her punishment was the axe. She enquired what was become of Ugo, and received for answer, that he was already dead; at the which, sighing grievously, she exclaimed, ' Now, then, I wish not myself to live;' and, being come to the block, she stripped herself with her own hands of all her ornaments, and wrapping a cloth round her head, submitted to the fatal stroke, which terminated the cruel scene. The same was done with Rangoni, who, together with the others, according to two calendars in the library of St. Francesco, was buried in the cemetery of that convent. Nothing else is known respecting the women.

" The Marquis kept watch the whole of that dreadful night, and, as he was walking backwards and forwards, enquired of the captain of the castle if Ugo was dead yet? who answered him, Yes. He then gave himself up to the most desperate lamentations, exclaiming, ' Oh! that I too were dead, since I have been hurried on to resolve thus against my own Ugo!' And then gnawing with his teeth a cane which he had in his hand, he passed the rest of the night in sighs and in tears, calling frequently upon his own dear Ugo. On the following day, calling to mind that it would be necessary to make public his justification, seeing that the transaction could not be kept secret, he ordered the narrative to be drawn out upon paper, and sent it to all the courts of Italy.

" On receiving this advice, the Doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari, gave orders, but without publishing his reasons, that stop should be put to the preparations for a tournament, which, under the auspices of the Marquis, and at the expense of the city of Padua, was about to take place, in the square of St. Mark, in order to celebrate his advancement to the ducal chair.

" The Marquis, in addition to what he had already done, from some unaccountable burst of vengeance, commanded that as many of the married women as were well known to him to be faithless, like his Parisina, should, like her, be beheaded. Amongst others, Barberina, or, as some call her, Laodamia Romei, wife of the court judge, underwent this sentence, at the usual place of execution; that is to say, in the quarter of St. Giacomo, opposite the present fortress, beyond St. Paul's. It cannot be told how strange appeared this proceeding in a prince, who, considering his own disposition, should, as it seemed, have been in such cases most indulgent. Some, however, there were who did not fail to commend him."

The above passage of Frizzi was translated by Lord Byron, and formed a closing note to the original edition of " Parisina." — E.]

TO

SCROPE BERDMORE DAVIES, ESQ.

THE FOLLOWING POEM

IS INSCRIBED

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIRED HIS TALENTS

AND VALUED HIS FRIENDSHIP.

January 22. 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's "Antiquities of the House of Brunswick." I am aware, that in modern times the delicacy or fastidiousness of the reader may deem such subjects unfit for the purposes of poetry. The Greek dramatists, and some of the best of our old English writers, were of a different opinion: as Alfieri and Schiller have also been, more recently, upon the Continent. The following extract will explain the facts on which the story is founded. The name of *Azo* is substituted for Nicholas, as more metrical.

"Under the reign of Nicholas III. Ferrara was polluted with a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of an attendant, and his own observation, the Marquis of Este discovered the incestuous loves of his wife Parisina, and Hugo his bastard son, a beautiful and valiant youth. They were beheaded in the castle by the sentence of a father and husband, who published his shame, and survived their execution. (1) He was unfortunate, if they were guilty: if they were innocent, he was still more unfortunate; nor is there any possible situation in which I can sincerely approve the last act of the justice of a parent." — GIBBON's *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 470.

(1) ["Ferrara is much decayed and depopulated; but the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon." — *B. Letters*, 1817. — E.]

PARISINA.

I.

It is the hour when from the boughs
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whisper'd word;(1)
And gentle winds, and waters near,
Make music to the lonely ear.
Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue,
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away. (2)

II.

But it is not to list to the waterfall
That Parisina leaves her hall,

(1) [The opening verses, though soft and voluptuous, are tinged with the same shade of sorrow which gives character and harmony to the whole poem. — JEFFREY.]

(2) The lines contained in this section were printed as set to music some time since, but belonged to the poem where they now appear; the greater part of which was composed prior to "Lara."

And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light
That the lady walks in the shadow of night;
And if she sits in Este's bower,
'Tis not for the sake of its full-blown flower —
She listens — but not for the nightingale —
Though her ear expects as soft a tale.
There glides a step through the foliage thick,
And her cheek grows pale — and her heart beats quick.
There whispers a voice through the rustling leaves,
And her blush returns, and her bosom heaves:
A moment more — and they shall meet —
'Tis past — her lover 's at her feet.

III.

And what unto them is the world beside,
With all its change of time and tide?
Its living things — its earth and sky —
Are nothing to their mind and eye.
And heedless as the dead are they
Of aught around, above, beneath;
As if all else had pass'd away,
They only for each other breathe;
Their very sighs are full of joy
So deep, that did it not decay,
That happy madness would destroy
The hearts which feel its fiery sway:
Of guilt, of peril, do they deem
In that tumultuous tender dream?
Who that have felt that passion's power,
Or paused or fear'd in such an hour?

'r thought how brief such moments last?
But yet—they are already past!
Alas! we must awake before
We know such vision comes no more.

IV.

With many a lingering look they leave
The spot of guilty gladness past;
And though they hope, and vow, they grieve,
As if that parting were the last.
The frequent sigh—the long embrace—
The lip that there would cling for ever,
While gleams on Parisina's face
The Heaven she fears will not forgive her,
As if each calmly conscious star
Beheld her frailty from afar—
The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
Yet binds them to their trysting-place.
But it must come, and they must part
In fearful heaviness of heart,
With all the deep and shuddering chill
Which follows fast the deeds of ill.

V.

And Hugo is gone to his lonely bed,
To covet there another's bride;
But she must lay her conscious head
A husband's trusting heart beside.
But fever'd in her sleep she seems,
And red her cheek with troubled dreams,
And mutters she in her unrest
A name she dare not breathe by day,

And clasps her Lord unto the breast
Which pants for one away:
And he to that embrace awakes,
And, happy in the thought, mistakes
That dreaming sigh, and warm caress,
For such as he was wont to bless;
And could in very fondness weep
O'er her who loves him even in sleep.

VI.

He clasp'd her sleeping to his heart,
And listened to each broken word:
He hears — Why doth Prince Azo start,
As if the Archangel's voice he heard?
And well he may — a deeper doom
Could scarcely thunder o'er his tomb,
When he shall wake to sleep no more,
And stand the eternal throne before.
And well he may — his earthly peace
Upon that sound is doom'd to cease.
That sleeping whisper of a name
Bespeaks her guilt and Azo's shame.
And whose that name? that o'er his pillow
Sounds fearful as the breaking billow,
Which rolls the plank upon the shore,
And dashes on the pointed rock
The wretch who sinks to rise no more, —
So came upon his soul the shock.
And whose that name? 'tis Hugo's, — his —
In sooth he had not deem'd of this! —
'Tis Hugo's, — he, the child of one
He loved — his own all-evil son —

The offspring of his wayward youth,
When he betray'd Bianca's truth,
The maid whose folly could confide
In him who made her not his bride.

VII.

He pluck'd his poniard in its sheath,
But sheath'd it ere the point was bare—
Howe'er unworthy now to breathe,
He could not slay a thing so fair—
At least, not smiling—sleeping—there—
Nay more:—he did not wake her then,
But gazed upon her with a glance
Which, had she roused her from her trance,
Had frozen her sense to sleep again—
And o'er his brow the burning lamp
Gleam'd on the dew-drops big and damp.
She spake no more—but still she slumber'd—
While, in his thought, her days are number'd.

VIII.

And with the morn he sought, and found,
In many a tale from those around,
The proof of all he fear'd to know,
Their present guilt, his future woe;
The long-conniving damsels seek
To save themselves, and would transfer
The guilt—the shame—the doom—to her:
Concealment is no more—they speak
All circumstance which may compel
Full credence to the tale they tell:

And Azo's tortured heart and ear
Have nothing more to feel or hear.

IX.

He was not one who brook'd delay:
Within the chamber of his state,
The chief of Este's ancient sway
Upon his throne of judgment sate;
His nobles and his guards are there,—
Before him is the sinful pair;
Both young,—and *one* how passing fair!
With swordless belt, and fetter'd hand,
Oh, Christ! that thus a son should stand
Before a father's face!
Yet thus must Hugo meet his sire,
And hear the sentence of his ire,
The tale of his disgrace!
And yet he seems not overcome,
Although, as yet, his voice be dumb.

X.

And still, and pale, and silently
Did Parisina wait her doom;
How changed since last her speaking eye
Glanced gladness round the glittering room,
Where high-born men were proud to wait—
Where Beauty watch'd to imitate
Her gentle voice—her lovely mien—
And gather from her air and gait
The graces of its queen:
Then,—had her eye in sorrow wept,
A thousand warriors forth had leapt,

A thousand swords had sheathless shone, (1)
And made her quarrel all their own.
Now,—what is she? and what are they?
Can she command, or these obey?
All silent and unheeding now,
With downcast eyes and knitting brow,
And folded arms, and freezing air,
And lips that scarce their scorn forbear,
Her knights, and dames, her court—is there:
And he, the chosen one, whose lance
Had yet been couch'd before her glance,
Who—were his arm a moment free—
Had died or gain'd her liberty;
The minion of his father's bride,—
He, too, is fetter'd by her side;
Nor sees her swoln and full eye swim
Less for her own despair than him:
Those lids—o'er which the violet vein
Wandering, leaves a tender stain,
Shining through the smoothest white
That e'er did softest kiss invite—
Now seem'd with hot and livid glow
To press, not shade, the orbs below;
Which glance so heavily, and fill,
As tear on tear grows gathering still.

(1) [A sagacious writer gravely charges Lord Byron with paraphrasing, in this passage, without acknowledgment, Mr. Burke's well-known description of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette. "Verily," says Mr. Coleridge, "there be amongst us a set of critics, who seem to hold, that every possible thought and image is traditional; who have no notion that there are such things as fountains in the world, small as well as great; and who would therefore charitably derive every rill they behold flowing, from a perforation made in some other man's tank." — E.]

XI.

And he for her had also wept,
But for the eyes that on him gazed:
His sorrow, if he felt it, slept;
Stern and erect his brow was raised.
Whate'er the grief his soul avow'd,
He would not shrink before the crowd;
But yet he dared not look on her:
Remembrance of the hours that were—
His guilt—his love—his present state—
His father's wrath—all good men's hate—
His earthly, his eternal fate—
And hers,—oh, hers!—he dared not throw
One look upon that deathlike brow!
Else had his rising heart betray'd
Remorse for all the wreck it made.

XII.

And Azo spake:—"But yesterday
I gloried in a wife and son;
That dream this morning pass'd away;
Ere day declines, I shall have none.
My life must linger on alone;
Well,—let that pass,—there breathes not one
Who would not do as I have done:
Those ties are broken—not by me;
Let that too pass;—the doom's prepared!
Hugo, the priest awaits on thee,
And then—thy crime's reward!
Away! address thy prayers to Heaven,
Before its evening stars are met—
Learn if thou there canst be forgiven;
Its mercy may absolve thee yet.

But here, upon the earth beneath,
There is no spot where thou and I
Together, for an hour, could breathe:
Farewell! I will not see thee die—
But thou, frail thing! shalt view his head—
Away! I cannot speak the rest:
Go! woman of the wanton breast;
Not I, but thou his blood dost shed:
Go! if that sight thou canst outlive,
And joy thee in the life I give."

XIII.

And here stern Azo hid his face—
For on his brow the swelling vein
Throbb'd as if back upon his brain
The hot blood ebb'd and flow'd again;
And therefore bow'd he for a space,
And pass'd his shaking hand along
His eye, to veil it from the throng;
While Hugo raised his chained hands,
And for a brief delay demands
His father's ear: the silent sire
Forbids not what his words require.

"It is not that I dread the death—
For thou hast seen me by thy side
All redly through the battle ride,
And that not once a useless brand
Thy slaves have wrested from my hand
Hath shed more blood in cause of thine,
Than e'er can stain the axe of mine:
Thou gav'st, and may'st resume my breath,

A gift for which I thank thee not;
Nor are my mother's wrongs forgot,
Her slighted love and ruin'd name,
Her offspring's heritage of shame;
But she is in the grave, where he,
Her son, thy rival, soon shall be.
Her broken heart—my sever'd head—
Shall witness for thee from the dead
How trusty and how tender were
Thy youthful love—paternal care.
'Tis true that I have done thee wrong—
  But wrong for wrong:—this, deem'd thy bride,
  The other victim of thy pride,
Thou know'st for me was destined long.
Thou saw'st, and coveted'st her charms—
  And with thy very crime—my birth,
  Thou taunted'st me—as little worth;
A match ignoble for her arms,
Because, forsooth, I could not claim
The lawful heirship of thy name,
Nor sit on Este's lineal throne:
  Yet, were a few short summers mine,
  My name should more than Este's shine
With honours all my own.
I had a sword—and have a breast
That should have won as haught (1) a crest
As ever waved along the line
Of all these sovereign sires of thine.
Not always knightly spurs are worn
The brightest by the better born;

(1) Haught—haughty.—"Away, *haught* man, thou art insulting me."
SHAKSPEARE.

And mine have lanced my courser's flank
Before proud chiefs of princely rank,
When charging to the cheering cry
Of 'Este and of Victory!'
I will not plead the cause of crime,
Nor sue thee to redeem from time
A few brief hours or days that must
At length roll o'er my reckless dust; —
Such maddening moments as my past,
They could not, and they did not, last.
Albeit my birth and name be base,
And thy nobility of race
Disdain'd to deck a thing like me —
  Yet in my lineaments they trace
  Some features of my father's face,
And in my spirit — all of thee.
From thee — this tamelessness of heart —
From thee — nay, wherefore dost thou start? —
From thee in all their vigour came
My arm of strength, my soul of flame —
Thou didst not give me life alone,
But all that made me more thine own.
See what thy guilty love hath done!
Repaid thee with too like a son!
I am no bastard in my soul,
For that, like thine, abhorr'd control:
And for my breath, that hasty boon
Thou gav'st and wilt resume so soon,
I valued it no more than thou,
When rose thy casque above thy brow,
And we, all side by side, have striven,
And o'er the dead our coursers driven:

The past is nothing—and at last
The future can but be the past;
Yet would I that I then had died:
  For though thou work'dst my mother's ill,
And made thy own my destined bride,
  I feel thou art my father still;
And, harsh as sounds thy hard decree,
'Tis not unjust, although from thee.
Begot in sin, to die in shame,
My life begun and ends the same:
As err'd the sire, so err'd the son,
And thou must punish both in one.
My crime seems worst to human view,
But God must judge between us too!"

XIV.

He ceased—and stood with folded arms,
  On which the circling fetters sounded;
  And not an ear but felt as wounded,
  Of all the chiefs that there were rank'd,
  When those dull chains in meeting clank'd:
Till Parisina's fatal charms (1)

(1) ["I sent for 'Marmion,' because it occurred to me, there might be a resemblance between part of 'Parisina' and a similar scene in the second canto of 'Marmion.' I fear there is, though I never thought of it before, and could hardly wish to imitate that which is inimitable. I wish you would ask Mr. Gifford whether I ought to say any thing upon it. I had completed the story on the passage from Gibbon, which indeed leads to a like scene naturally, without a thought of the kind: but it comes upon me not very comfortably."—*Lord B. to Mr. M.* Feb. 3. 1816.—The scene referred to is the one in which Constance de Beverley appears before the conclave—

"Her look composed, and steady eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy;
And there she stood so calm and pale,
That, but her breathing did not fail,
And motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted,

Again attracted every eye —
Would she thus hear him doom'd to die!
She stood, I said, all pale and still,
The living cause of Hugo's ill:
Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
Not once had turn'd to either side —
Nor once did those sweet eyelids close,
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew —
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood;
But every now and then a tear
So large and slowly gather'd slid
From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
It was a thing to see, not hear!
And those who saw, it did surprise,
Such drops could fall from human eyes.
To speak she thought — the imperfect note
Was choked within her swelling throat,
Yet seem'd in that low hollow groan
Her whole heart gushing in the tone.
It ceased — again she thought to speak,
Then burst her voice in one long shriek, (1)
And to the earth she fell like stone
Or statue from its base o'erthrown,

That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
You must have thought a form of wax,
Wrought to the very life, was there —
So still she was, so pale, so fair." — E.]

(1) [The arraignment and condemnation of the guilty pair, with the bold, high-toned, and yet temperate defence of the son, are managed with considerable talent; and yet are less touching than the mute despair of the fallen beauty, who stands in speechless agony before him. — JEFFREY.]

More like a thing that ne'er had life, —
A monument of Azo's wife, —
Than her, that living guilty thing,
Whose every passion was a sting,
Which urged to guilt, but could not bear
That guilt's detection and despair.
But yet she lived—and all too soon
Recover'd from that death-like swoon —
But scarce to reason — every sense
Had been o'erstrung by pangs intense;
And each frail fibre of her brain
(As bowstrings, when relax'd by rain,
The erring arrow launch aside)
Sent forth her thoughts all wild and wide —
The past a blank, the future black,
With glimpses of a dreary track,
Like lightning on the desert path,
When midnight storms are mustering wrath.
She fear'd—she felt that something ill
Lay on her soul, so deep and chill —
That there was sin and shame she knew;
That some one was to die — but who?
She had forgotten: — did she breathe?
Could this be still the earth beneath,
The sky above, and men around;
Or were they fiends who now so frown'd
On one, before whose eyes each eye
Till then had smiled in sympathy?
All was confused and undefined
To her all-jarr'd and wandering mind;
A chaos of wild hopes and fears:
And now in laughter, now in tears,

But madly still in each extreme,
She strove with that convulsive dream;
For so it seem'd on her to break:
Oh! vainly must she strive to wake!

XV.

The Convent bells are ringing,
  But mournfully and slow;
In the grey square turret swinging,
  With a deep sound, to and fro.
  Heavily to the heart they go!
Hark! the hymn is singing —
  The song for the dead below,
  Or the living who shortly shall be so!
For a departing being's soul
The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll:
He is near his mortal goal;
Kneeling at the Friar's knee:
Sad to hear — and piteous to see —
Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
With the block before and the guards around —
And the headman with his bare arm ready,
That the blow may be both swift and steady,
Feels if the axe be sharp and true —
Since he set its edge anew:
While the crowd in a speechless circle gather
To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father!

XVI.

It is a lovely hour as yet
Before the summer sun shall set,

Which rose upon that heavy day,
And mock'd it with his steadiest ray;
And his evening beams are shed
Full on Hugo's fated head,
As his last confession pouring
To the monk, his doom deploring
In penitential holiness,
He bends to hear his accents bless
With absolution such as may
Wipe our mortal stains away.
That high sun on his head did glisten
As he there did bow and listen —
And the rings of chestnut hair
Curl'd half down his neck so bare;
But brighter still the beam was thrown
Upon the axe which near him shone
With a clear and ghastly glitter ——
Oh! that parting hour was bitter!
Even the stern stood chill'd with awe:
Dark the crime, and just the law —
Yet they shudder'd as they saw.

XVII.

The parting prayers are said and over
Of that false son — and daring lover?
His beads and sins are all recounted,
His hours to their last minute mounted —
His mantling cloak before was stripp'd,
His bright brown locks must now be clipp'd;
'Tis done — all closely are they shorn —
The vest which till this moment worn —

The scarf which Parisina gave —
Must not adorn him to the grave.
Even that must now be thrown aside,
And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied;
But no — that last indignity
Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
All feelings seemingly subdued,
In deep disdain were half renew'd,
When headman's hands prepared to bind
Those eyes which would not brook such blind:
As if they dared not look on death.
" No—yours my forfeit blood and breath —
These hands are chain'd— but let me die
At least with an unshackled eye—
Strike :" — and as the word he said,
Upon the block he bow'd his head;
These the last accents Hugo spoke:
" Strike"— and flashing fell the stroke —
Roll'd the head — and, gushing, sunk
Back the stain'd and heaving trunk,
In the dust, which each deep vein
Slaked with its ensanguined rain;
His eyes and lips a moment quiver,
Convulsed and quick — then fix for ever.
He died, as erring man should die,
  Without display, without parade;
  Meekly had he bow'd and pray'd,
  As not disdaining priestly aid,
Nor desperate of all hope on high.
And while before the Prior kneeling,
His heart was wean'd from earthly feeling;

His wrathful sire—his paramour—
What were they in such an hour?
No more reproach—no more despair;
No thought but heaven—no word but prayer—
Save the few which from him broke,
When, bared to meet the headman's stroke,
He claim'd to die with eyes unbound,
His sole adieu to those around. (1)

XVIII.

Still as the lips that closed in death,
Each gazer's bosom held his breath:
But yet, afar, from man to man,
A cold electric shiver ran,
As down the deadly blow descended
On him whose life and love thus ended;
And, with a hushing sound compress'd,
A sigh shrunk back on every breast;
But no more thrilling noise rose there,
Beyond the blow that to the block
Pierced through with forced and sullen shock,
Save one:—what cleaves the silent air
So madly shrill, so passing wild?
That, as a mother's o'er her child,
Done to death by sudden blow,
To the sky these accents go,
Like a soul's in endless woe.
Through Azo's palace-lattice driven,
That horrid voice ascends to heaven,

(1) [The grand part of this poem is that which describes the execution of the rival son; and in which, though there is no pomp, either of language or of sentiment, and though every thing is conceived and expressed with the utmost simplicity and directness, there is a spirit of pathos and poetry to which it would not be easy to find many parallels. —JEFFREY.]

And every eye is turn'd thereon;
But sound and sight alike are gone!
It was a woman's shriek—and ne'er
In madlier accents rose despair;
And those who heard it, as it past,
In mercy wish'd it were the last.

XIX.

Hugo is fallen; and, from that hour,
No more in palace, hall, or bower,
Was Parisina heard or seen:
Her name—as if she ne'er had been—
Was banish'd from each lip and ear,
Like words of wantonness or fear;
And from Prince Azo's voice, by none
Was mention heard of wife or son;
No tomb—no memory had they;
Theirs was unconsecrated clay;
At least the knight's who died that day.
But Parisina's fate lies hid
Like dust beneath the coffin lid:
Whether in convent she abode,
And won to heaven her dreary road,
By blighted and remorseful years
Of scourge, and fast, and sleepless tears;
Or if she fell by bowl or steel,
For that dark love she dared to feel;
Or if, upon the moment smote,
She died by tortures less remote;
Like him she saw upon the block,
With heart that shared the headman's shock,

In quicken'd brokenness that came,
In pity, o'er her shatter'd frame,
None knew—and none can ever know:
But whatsoe'er its end below,
Her life began and closed in woe!

XX.

And Azo found another bride,
And goodly sons grew by his side;
But none so lovely and so brave
As him who wither'd in the grave;
Or if they were—on his cold eye
Their growth but glanced unheeded by,
Or noticed with a smother'd sigh.
But never tear his cheek descended,
And never smile his brow unbended;
And o'er that fair broad brow were wrought
The intersected lines of thought;
Those furrows which the burning share
Of Sorrow ploughs untimely there;
Scars of the lacerating mind
Which the Soul's war doth leave behind.
He was past all mirth or woe:
Nothing more remain'd below
But sleepless nights and heavy days,
A mind all dead to scorn or praise,
A heart which shunn'd itself—and yet
That would not yield—nor could forget,
Which, when it least appear'd to melt,
Intensely thought—intensely felt:
The deepest ice which ever froze
Can only o'er the surface close —

The living stream lies quick below,
And flows — and cannot cease to flow.
Still was his seal'd-up bosom haunted
By thoughts which Nature hath implanted;
Too deeply rooted thence to vanish,
Howe'er our stifled tears we banish;
When, struggling as they rise to start,
We check those waters of the heart,
They are not dried—those tears unshed
But flow back to the fountain head,
And resting in their spring more pure,
For ever in its depth endure,
Unseen, unwept, but uncongeal'd,
And cherish'd most where least reveal'd.
With inward starts of feeling left,
To throb o'er those of life bereft;
Without the power to fill again
The desert gap which made his pain;
Without the hope to meet them where
United souls shall gladness share,
With all the consciousness that he
Had only pass'd a just decree;
That they had wrought their doom of ill;
Yet Azo's age was wretched still.
The tainted branches of the tree,
If lopp'd with care, a strength may give,
By which the rest shall bloom and live
All greenly fresh and wildly free:
But if the lightning, in its wrath,
The waving boughs with fury scathe,

The massy trunk the ruin feels,
And never more a leaf reveals. (1)

(1) [In Parisina there is no tumult or stir. It is all sadness, and pity, and terror. There is too much of horror, perhaps, in the circumstances; but the writing is beautiful throughout, and the whole wrapped in a rich and redundant veil of poetry, where every thing breathes the pure essence of genius and sensibility. — JEFFREY.]

DOMESTIC PIECES—1816.

[Of the six following poems, the first three were written immediately before Lord Byron's final departure from England; the others, during the earlier part of his residence in the neighbourhood of Geneva. They all refer to the unhappy event, which will for ever mark the chief crisis of his personal story, — that separation from Lady Byron, of which, after all that has been said and written, the real motives and circumstances remain as obscure as ever.

It is only, of course, with Lord Byron's part in the transaction that the public have any sort of title to concern themselves. He has given us this right, by making a domestic occurrence the subject of printed verses; but, so long as the other party chooses to guard that reserve, which few can be so uncharitable as not to ascribe, in the main, to a high feeling, it is entirely impossible to arrive at any clear and definite judgment on the case as a whole. Each reader must, therefore, be content to interpret for himself, as fairly as he may, an already bulky collection of evidence, which will probably be doubled before it has any claim to be considered as complete.

There are, however, two important points which seem to us to be placed beyond all chance of dispute hereafter: namely, first, that Lord Byron himself never knew the precise origin of his Lady's resolution to quit his society, in 1816; and, secondly, that, down to the last, he never despaired of being ultimately reconciled to her. Both of these facts appear to be established, in the clearest manner, by Mr. Moore's narrative, and the whole subsequent tenour of the Poet's own diaries, letters, and conversations. Mr. Kennedy, in his account of Lord Byron's last residence in Cephalonia, represents him as saying, — "Lady Byron deserves every respect from me: I do not indeed know the cause of the separation, and I have remained, and ever will remain, ready for a reconciliation, whenever circumstances open and point out the way to it." Mr. Moore has preserved evidence of one attempt which Lord Byron made to bring about an explanation with his Lady, ere he left Switzerland for Italy. Whether he ever repeated the experiment we are uncertain: but *that* failed, — and the failure must be borne in mind, when the reader considers some of the smaller pieces included in this Section. See Moore's *Notices*, *antè*, Vol. III. p. 286. — E.]

FARE THEE WELL. (1)

" Alas ! they had been friends in Youth ;
But whispering tongues can poison truth ;
And constancy lives in realms above ;
And Life is thorny ; and youth is vain :
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain;
* * * * *
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'*s Christabel.*

FARE thee well ! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well :*
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

(1) [It was about the middle of April that his two celebrated copies of verses, " Fare thee well," and " A Sketch," made their appearance in the newspapers; and while the latter poem was generally, and, it must be owned, justly condemned, as a sort of literary assault on an obscure female, whose situation ought to have placed her as much *beneath* his satire, as the undignified mode of his attack certainly raised her *above* it, with regard to the other poem, opinions were a good deal more divided. To many it appeared a strain of true conjugal tenderness, — a kind of appeal which no woman with a heart could resist; while, by others, on the contrary, it was considered to be a mere showy effusion of sentiment, as difficult for real feeling to have produced as it was easy for fancy and art, and altogether unworthy of the deep interests involved in the subject. To this latter opinion I confess my own to have, at first, strongly inclined; and suspicious as I could

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou would'st at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee —
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:

---

not help thinking the sentiment that could, at such a moment, indulge in such verses, the taste that prompted or sanctioned their publication appeared to me even still more questionable. On reading, however, his own account of all the circumstances in the Memoranda, I found that on both points I had, in common with a large portion of the public, done him injustice. He there described, and in a manner whose sincerity there was no doubting, the swell of tender recollections under the influence of which, as he sat one night musing in his study, these stanzas were produced, — the tears, as he said, falling fast over the paper as he wrote them. - Neither did it appear, from that account, to have been from any wish or intention of his own, but through the injudicious zeal of a friend whom he had suffered to take a copy, that the verses met the public eye. — MOORE.]

Still thine own its life retaineth —
  Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
  Is — that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
  Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
  Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou would solace gather,
  When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
  Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
  When her lip to thine is press'd,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
  Think of him thy love had bless'd!

Should her lineaments resemble
  Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
  With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
  All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
  Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
  Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee — by thee forsaken,
  Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 'tis done — all words are idle —
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will. —

Fare thee well! — thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.

March 17. 1816.

A SKETCH.(1)

"Honest — honest Iago!
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee." — SHAKSPEARE.

BORN in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
Next — for some gracious service unexpress'd,
And from its wages only to be guess'd —
Raised from the toilet to the table, — where
Her wondering betters wait behind her chair.
With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.
Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie —
The genial confidante, and general spy —
Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess —
An only infant's earliest governess!
She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to spell.
An adept next in penmanship she grows,
As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
What she had made the pupil of her art,
None know — but that high Soul secured the heart,

(1) ["I send you my last night's dream, and request to have fifty copies struck off, for private distribution. I wish Mr. Gifford to look at them They are from life." — *Lord B. to Mr. M.* March 30. 1816.]

And panted for the truth it could not hear,
With longing breast and undeluded ear.
Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,
Which Flattery fool'd not—Baseness could not blind,
Deceit infect not—near Contagion soil—
Indulgence weaken—nor Example spoil—
Nor master'd Science tempt her to look down
On humbler talents with a pitying frown—
Nor Genius swell—nor Beauty render vain—
Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain—
Nor Fortune change—Pride raise—nor Passion bow,
Nor Virtue teach austerity—till now.
Serenely purest of her sex that live,
But wanting one sweet weakness—to forgive,
Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,
She deems that all could be like her below:
Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme:—now laid aside too long
The baleful burthen of this honest song—
Though all her former functions are no more,
She rules the circle which she served before.
If mothers—none know why—before her quake;
If daughters dread her for the mothers' sake;
If early habits—those false links, which bind
At times the loftiest to the meanest mind—
Have given her power too deeply to instil
The angry essence of her deadly will;
If like a snake she steal within your walls,
Till the black slime betray her as she crawls;

If like a viper to the heart she wind,
And leave the venom there she did not find;
What marvel that this hag of hatred works
Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
And reign the Hecate of domestic hells?
Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
With all the kind mendacity of hints [smiles—
While mingling truth with falsehood—sneers with
A thread of candour with a web of wiles;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,
To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd scheming;
A lip of lies—a face form'd to conceal;
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel:
With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown;
A cheek of parchment—and an eye of stone.
Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,
Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale—
(For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
Congenial colours in that soul or face)—
Look on her features! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined:
Look on the picture! deem it not o'ercharged—
There is no trait which might not be enlarged:
Yet true to "Nature's journeymen," who made
This monster when their mistress left off trade—
This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh! wretch without a tear—without a thought,
Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought—

The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crush'd affections light
Back on thy bosom with reflected blight!
And make thee in thy leprosy of mind
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind!
Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black—as thy will for others would create:
Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.
Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed,—
The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread!
Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven with prayer,
Look on thine earthly victims—and despair!
Down to the dust!—and, as thou rott'st away,
Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would tear—
Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers—
And festering (1) in the infamy of years.

March 29. 1816.

(1) [In first draught—"weltering."—"I doubt about 'weltering.' We say 'weltering in blood;' but do not they also use 'weltering in the wind,' 'weltering on a gibbet?' I have no dictionary, so look. In the mean time, I have put 'festering;' which, perhaps, in any case is the best word of the two. Shakspeare has it often, and I do not think it too strong for the figure in this thing. Quick! quick! quick! quick!"—*Lord B. to Mr. M.* April 2.—E.]

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA.(1)

[" WHEN ALL AROUND," &c.]

I.

WHEN all around grew drear and dark,
And reason half withheld her ray—
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way;

II.

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deem'd too kind,
The weak despair—the cold depart;

III.

When fortune changed—and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose and set not to the last.

(1) [His sister, the Honourable Mrs. Leigh.—These stanzas— the parting tribute to her, whose unshaken tenderness had been the author's sole consolation during the crisis of domestic misery—were, we believe, the last verses written by Lord Byron in England. In a note to Mr. Rogers, dated April 16th, he says,—" My sister is now with me, and leaves town to-morrow: we shall not meet again for some time at all events,—*if ever!* and, under these circumstances, I trust to stand excused to you and Mr. Sheridan, for being unable to wait upon him this evening." On the 25th, the poet took a last leave of his native country.—E.]

IV.

Oh! blest be thine unbroken light!
That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
For ever shining sweetly nigh.

V.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dash'd the darkness all away.

VI.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
And teach it what to brave or brook—
There's more in one soft word of thine
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

VII.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

VIII.

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,
But there thou wert—and still would'st be
Devoted in the stormiest hour
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

IX.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall;

For heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind—and thee the most of all.

X.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken—thine will never break;
Thy heart can feel—but will not move;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

XI.

And these, when all was lost beside,
Were found and still are fix'd in thee;—
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert—ev'n to me.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA. (1)

[" THOUGH THE DAY OF MY DESTINY'S," &c.]

I.

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined, (2)
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

II.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;

(1) [These beautiful verses, so expressive of the writer's wounded feelings at the moment, were written in July, at the Campagne Diodati, near Geneva, and transmitted to England for publication, with some other pieces. "Be careful," he says, "in printing the stanzas beginning, 'Though the day of my destiny's,' &c., which I think well of as a composition." — E.]

(2) [In the original MS. —

" Though the days of my glory are over,
And the sun of my fame hath declined." — E.]

And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

III.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain — it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn —
They may torture, but shall not subdue me —
'Tis of *thee* that I think — not of them." (1)

IV.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake, —
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie. (2)

(1) [Originally thus: —

" There is many a pang to pursue me,
And many a peril to stem:
They may torture, but shall not subdue me;
They may crush, but they shall not contemn." — E.]

(2) [MS. — " Though watchful, 'twas but to reclaim me,
Nor, silent, to sanction a lie." — E.]

V.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one —
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

IV.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

July 24. 1816.

EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA. (1)

["MY SISTER! MY SWEET SISTER!" &c.]

I.

My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine.
Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
Go where I will, to me thou art the same—
A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny,—
A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

II.

The first were nothing—had I still the last,
It were the haven of my happiness;
But other claims and other ties thou hast,
And mine is not the wish to make them less.

(1) [These stanzas—"Than which," says the Quarterly Review, for January 1831, "there is, perhaps, nothing more mournfully and desolately beautiful in the whole range of Lord Byron's poetry"—were also written at Diodati; and sent home at the time for publication, in case Mrs. Leigh should sanction it. "There is," he says, "amongst the manuscripts an Epistle to my Sister, on which I should wish her opinion to be consulted before publication; if she objects, of course omit it." On the 5th of October he writes,—"My sister has decided on the omission of the lines. Upon this point, her option will be followed. As I have no copy of them, I request that you will preserve one for me in MS.; for I never can remember a line of that nor any other composition of mine. God help me! if I proceed in this scribbling, I shall have frittered away my mind before I am thirty; but poetry is at times a real relief to me. To-morrow I am for Italy." The Epistle was first given to the world in 1830.—E.]

A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
Reversed for him our grandsire's (1) fate of yore,—
He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

III.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,
I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks,
The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen
My errors with defensive paradox;
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

IV.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd
The gift,—a fate, or will, that walk'd astray;
And I at times have found the struggle hard,
And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay:
But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

(1) [Admiral Byron was remarkable for never making a voyage without a tempest. He was known to the sailors by the facetious name of "Foul-weather Jack."

"But, though it were tempest-toss'd,
Still his bark could not be lost."

He returned safely from the wreck of the Wager (in Anson's voyage), and subsequently circumnavigated the world, many years after, as commander of a similar expedition.]

V.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
And when I look on this, the petty spray
Of my own years of trouble, which have roll'd
Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:
Something—I know not what—does still uphold
A spirit of slight patience;—not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

VI.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
Within me,—or perhaps a cold despair,
Brought on when ills habitually recur,—
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
(For even to this may change of soul refer,
And with light armour we may learn to bear,)
Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
The chief companion of a calmer lot.

VII.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
Which do remember me of where I dwelt
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks;
And even at moments I could think I see
Some living thing to love—but none like thee.

VIII.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
A fund for contemplation;—to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;
But something worthier do such scenes inspire:
Here to be lonely is not desolate,
For much I view which I could most desire,
And, above all, a lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

IX.

Oh that thou wert but with me!—but I grow
The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude which I have vaunted so
Has lost its praise in this but one regret;
There may be others which I less may show;—
I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

X.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake, (1)
By the old Hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:

(1) The Lake of Newstead Abbey. [Thus described in Don Juan:—

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

Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

XI.

The world is all before me; I but ask
Of Nature that with which she will comply—
It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.
She was my early friend, and now shall be
My sister—till I look again on thee.

XII.

I can reduce all feelings but this one;
And that I would not;—for at length I see
Such scenes as those wherein my life begun.
The earliest—even the only paths for me—
Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be;
The passions which have torn me would have slept;
I had not suffer'd, and *thou* hadst not wept.

XIII.

With false Ambition what had I to do?
Little with Love, and least of all with Fame;
And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
And made me all which they can make—a name.
Yet this was not the end I did pursue;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.

But all is over—I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

XIV.

And for the future, this world's future may
From me demand but little of my care;
I have outlived myself by many a day;
Having survived so many things that were;
My years have been no slumber, but the prey
Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
Of life which might have fill'd a century,
Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.

XV.

And for the remnant which may be to come
I am content; and for the past I feel
Not thankless,—for within the crowded sum
Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,
And for the present, I would not benumb
My feelings farther.—Nor shall I conceal
That with all this I still can look around
And worship Nature with a thought profound.

XVI.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
I know myself secure, as thou in mine;
We were and are—I am, even as thou art—
Beings who ne'er each other can resign;
It is the same, together or apart,
From life's commencement to its slow decline
We are entwined—let death come slow or fast,
The tie which bound the first endures the last!

LINES

ON HEARING THAT LADY BYRON WAS ILL. (1)

And thou wert sad—yet I was not with thee;
And thou wert sick, and yet I was not near;
Methought that joy and health alone could be
Where I was not—and pain and sorrow here!
And is it thus?—it is as I foretold,
And shall be more so; for the mind recoils
Upon itself, and the wreck'd heart lies cold,
While heaviness collects the shatter'd spoils.
It is not in the storm nor in the strife
We feel benumb'd, and wish to be no more,
But in the after-silence on the shore,
When all is lost, except a little life.

I am too well avenged!—but 'twas my right;
Whate'er my sins might be, *thou* wert not sent
To be the Nemesis who should requite—
Nor did Heaven choose so near an instrument.

(1) [These verses, of which the opening lines are given in Moore's *Notices*, were written immediately after the failure of the negotiation already alluded to (*antè*, p. 181.), but were not not intended for the public eye: as, however, they have recently found their way into circulation, we must include them, though with reluctance, in this collection. — E.]

Mercy is for the merciful!—if thou
Hast been of such, 'twill be accorded now.
Thy nights are banish'd from the realms of sleep!—
  Yes! they may flatter thee, but thou shalt feel
  A hollow agony which will not heal,
For thou art pillow'd on a curse too deep;
Thou hast sown in my sorrow, and must reap
  The bitter harvest in a woe as real!
I have had many foes, but none like thee;
  For 'gainst the rest myself I could defend,
  And be avenged, or turn them into friend;
But thou in safe implacability
Hadst nought to dread—in thy own weakness shielded,
And in my love, which hath but too much yielded,
  And spared, for thy sake, some I should not spare—
And thus upon the world—trust in thy truth—
And the wild fame of my ungovern'd youth—
  On things that were not, and on things that are—
Even upon such a basis hast thou built
A monument, whose cement hath been guilt!
  The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord,
And hew'd down, with an unsuspected sword,
Fame, peace, and hope—and all the better life
  Which, but for this cold treason of thy heart,
Might still have risen from out the grave of strife,
And found a nobler duty than to part.
But of thy virtues didst thou make a vice,
  Trafficking with them in a purpose cold,
  For present anger, and for future gold—
And buying other's grief at any price.
And thus once enter'd into crooked ways,
The early truth, which was thy proper praise.

Did not still walk beside thee — but at times,
And with a breast unknowing its own crimes,
Deceit, averments incompatible,
Equivocations, and the thoughts which dwell
In Janus-spirits — the significant eye
Which learns to lie with silence — the pretext
Of Prudence, with advantages annex'd —
The acquiescence in all things which tend,
No matter how, to the desired end —
All found a place in thy philosophy.
The means were worthy, and the end is won —
I would not do by thee as thou hast done ![1]

September, 1816.

(1) ["Lord Byron had at least this much to say for himself, that he was not the first to make his domestic differences a topic of public discussion. On the contrary, he saw himself, ere any fact but the one undisguised and tangible one was, or could be known held up every where, and by every art of malice, as the most infamous of men, — because he had parted from his wife. He was exquisitely sensitive: he was wounded at once by a thousand arrows; and all this with the most perfect and indignant knowledge, that of all who were assailing him *not one* knew any thing of the real merits of the case. Did he right, then, in publishing those squibs and tirades? No, certainly: it would have been nobler, better, wiser far, to have utterly scorned the assaults of such enemies, and taken no notice, of any kind, of them. But, because this young, hot-blooded, proud, patrician poet did not, amidst the exacerbation of feelings which he could not control, act in precisely the most dignified and wisest of all possible manners of action, — are we entitled, is the world at large entitled, to issue a broad sentence of vituperative condemnation? Do *we* know all that he had suffered? — have *we* imagination enough to comprehend what he suffered, under circumstances such as these? — have *we* been tried in similar circumstances, whether we could feel the wound unflinchingly, and keep the weapon quiescent in the hand that trembled with all the excitements of insulted privacy, honour, and faith?

"Let people consider for a moment what it is that they demand when they insist upon a poet of Byron's class abstaining altogether from expressing in his works any thing of his own feelings in regard to any thing that immediately concerns his own history. We tell him in every possible form and shape, that the great and distinguishing merit of his poetry is the intense truth with which that poetry expresses his own personal feelings. We encourage him in every possible way to dissect his own heart for our entertainment — we tempt him by every bribe most likely to act power-

fully on a young and imaginative man, to plunge into the darkest depths of self-knowledge; to madden his brain with eternal self-scrutinies, to find his pride and his pleasure in what others shrink from as torture — we tempt him to indulge in these dangerous exercises, until they obviously acquire the power of leading him to the very brink of frenzy — we tempt him to find, and to see in this perilous vocation, the staple of his existence, the food of his ambition, the very essence of his glory, — and the moment that, by habits of our own creating, at least of our own encouraging and confirming, he is carried one single step beyond what we happen to approve of, we turn round with all the bitterness of spleen, and reproach him with the unmanliness of entertaining the public with his feelings in regard to his separation from his wife. This was truly the conduct of a fair and liberal public! To our view of the matter, Lord Byron, treated as he had been, tempted as he had been, and tortured and insulted as he was at the moment, did no more forfeit his character by writing what he did write upon that unhappy occasion, than another man, under circumstances of the same nature, would have done, by telling something of his mind about it to an intimate friend across the fire. The public had forced him into the habits of familiarity, and they received his confidence with nothing but anger and scorn." — LOCKHART.]

MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE. (1)

(1) [Mr. Sheridan died the 7th of July, 1816, and this monody was written at Diodati on the 17th, at the request of Mr. Douglas Kinnaird. "I did as well as I could," says Lord Byron, "but where I have not my choice, I pretend to answer for nothing." A proof-sheet of the poem, with the words "by request of a friend" in the titlepage, having reached him,—"I request you," he says, "to expunge that same, unless you please to add, 'by a person of quality,' or 'of wit and humour.' It is sad trash, and must have been done to make it ridiculous."— E.]

MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN,

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE. (1)

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
A holy concord—and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?
'Tis not harsh sorrow—but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,

(1) [Sheridan's own monody on Garrick was spoken from the same boards, by Mrs. Yates, in March, 1779. "One day," says Lord Byron, "I saw him take it up. He lighted upon the dedication to the Dowager Lady Spencer. On seeing it, he flew into a rage and exclaimed, 'that it must be a forgery, as he had never dedicated any thing of his to such a d—d canting,' &c. &c.—and so he went on for half an hour abusing his own dedication, or at least the object of it. If all writers were equally sincere, it would be ludicrous."—*B. Diary*, 1821.]

Felt without bitterness—but full and clear,
A sweet dejection—a transparent tear,
Unmix'd with worldly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame—and secret without pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When Summer's day declines along the hills,
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of Genius which can perish dies.
A mighty Spirit is eclipsed—a Power
Hath pass'd from day to darkness—to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeath'd—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!
The flash of Wit—the bright Intelligence,
The beam of Song—the blaze of Eloquence,
Set with their Sun—but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal Mind;
Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,
Which all embraced—and lighten'd over all,
To cheer—to pierce—to please—or to appal.
From the charm'd council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised—the proud—who made his praise their pride.
When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan (1)
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,

(1) [See Fox, Burke, and Pitt's eulogy on Mr. Sheridan's speech on the charges exhibited against Mr. Hastings in the House of Commons. Mr. Pitt

His was the thunder—his the avenging rod,
The wrath—the delegated voice of God!
Which shook the nations through his lips—and blazed
Till vanquish'd senates trembled as they praised. (1)

And here, oh! here, where yet all young and warm
The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue—the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring;
These wondrous beings of his Fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat;
A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight,
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,

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entreated the House to adjourn, to give time for a calmer consideration of the question than could then occur after the immediate effect of that oration. —"Before my departure from England," says Gibbon, "I was present at the august spectacle of Mr. Hastings's trial in Westminster Hall. It is not my province to absolve or condemn the governor of India; but Mr. Sheridan's eloquence demanded my applause; nor could I hear without emotion the personal compliment which he paid me in the presence of the British nation. This display of genius blazed four successive days," &c. On being asked by a brother Whig, at the conclusion of the speech, how he came to compliment Gibbon with the epithet "luminous," Sheridan answered, in a half whisper, "I said '*vo*luminous'"—E.]

(1) "I heard Sheridan only once, and that briefly; but I liked his voice, his manner, and his wit. He is the only one of them I ever wished to hear at greater length."—*B. Diary*, 1821.

Still let them pause — ah! little do they know
That what to them seem'd Vice might be but Woe.(1)
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fix'd for ever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel — accuser — judge — and spy,
The foe — the fool — the jealous — and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in others' pain,
Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the Pyramid of Calumny!

(1) ["Once I saw Sheridan cry, after a splendid dinner. I had the honour of sitting next him. The occasion of his tears was some observation or other upon the subject of the sturdiness of the Whigs in resisting office and keeping to their principles. Sheridan turned round: — 'Sir, it is easy for my Lord G. or Earl G. or Marquis B. or Lord H., with thousands upon thousands a year, some of it either *presently* derived, or *inherited* in sinecure or acquisitions from the public money, to boast of their patriotism and keep aloof from temptation: but they do not know from what temptation those have kept aloof who had equal pride, at least equal talents, and not unequal passions, and nevertheless knew not in the course of their lives what it was to have a shilling of their own.' And in saying this he wept. I have more than once heard him say, 'that he never had a shilling of his own.' To be sure, he contrived to extract a good many of other people's. In 1815, I found him at my lawyer's. After mutual greetings, he retired. Before recurring to my own business, I could not help enquiring that of Sheridan. 'Oh,' replied the attorney, 'the usual thing! to stave off an action.' — 'Well,' said I, 'and what do you mean to do?' — 'Nothing at all for the present,' said he: 'would you have us proceed against old Sherry? what would be the use of it?' and here he began laughing, and going over Sheridan's good gifts of conversation. Such was Sheridan! he could soften an attorney! There has been nothing like it since the days of Orpheus."— *B. Diary*, 1821.]

These are his portion — but if joined to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,
If the high Spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door, (1)
To soothe Indignity — and face to face
Meet sordid Rage — and wrestle with Disgrace,
To find in Hope but the renew'd caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness: —
If such may be the Ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given
Bear hearts electric — charged with fire from Heaven,
Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turn'd to thunder — scorch — and burst. (2)

But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be — if such have ever been;
Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanish'd beam — and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.

(1) [This was not fiction. Only a few days before his death, Sheridan wrote thus to Mr. Rogers: — "I am absolutely undone and broken-hearted. They are going to put the carpets out of window, and break into Mrs. S.'s room and *take me*: 150*l.* will remove all difficulty. For God's sake let me see you!" Mr. Moore was the immediate bearer of the required sum. This was written on the 15th of May. On the 14th of July, Sheridan's remains were deposited in Westminster Abbey, — his pall-bearers being the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Lauderdale, Earl Mulgrave, the Lord Bishop of London, Lord Holland, and Earl Spencer. — E.]

(2) [In the original MS. —

"Abandon'd by the skies, whose beams have nurst
Their very thunders lighten — scorch — and burst."]

Ye Orators! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field!
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three!* (1)
Whose words were sparks of Immortality!
Ye Bards! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your Master—emulate him *here!*
Ye men of wit and social eloquence! (2)
He was your brother—bear his ashes hence!
While Powers of mind almost of boundless range, (3)

(1) Fox—Pitt—Burke. [" When Fox was asked, which he thought the best speech he had ever heard, he replied, 'Sheridan's on the impeachment of Hastings, in the House of Commons.' When he made it, Fox advised him to speak it over again in Westminster Hall on the trial, as nothing better could be made of the subject; but Sheridan made his new speech as different as possible, and, according to the best judges, very inferior, notwithstanding the panegyric of Burke, who exclaimed during the delivery of some passages of it—'There, that is the true style—something between poetry and prose, and better than either.'"—*B. Diary,* (*from Lord Holland,*) 1821.]

(2) ["In society I have met Sheridan frequently. He was superb! I have seen him cut up Whitbread, quiz Madame de Staël, annihilate Colman, and do little less by some others of good fame and ability. I have met him at all places and parties—at Whitehall with the Melbournes, at the Marquis of Tavistock's, at Robins's the auctioneers, at Sir Humphry Davy's, at Sam. Rogers's—in short, in most kinds of company, and always found him convivial and delightful."—*B. Diary,* 1821.]

(3) ["Lord Holland told me a curious piece of sentimentality in Sheridan. The other night we were all delivering our respective and various opinions upon him and other *hommes marquans,* and mine was this:—'Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been *par excellence* always the *best* of its kind. He has written the best comedy (School for Scandal), the best drama (in my mind, far beyond that St. Giles's lampoon, the Beggars' Opera), the best farce (the Critic—it is only too good for a farce), and the best address (Monologue on Garrick), and, to crown all, delivered the very best oration (the famous Begum speech) ever conceived or heard in this country.' Somebody told Sheridan this the next day, and, on hearing it, he burst into tears! Poor Brinsley! if they were tears of pleasure, I would rather have said these few, but most sincere, words, than have written the Iliad, or made his own celebrated philippic. Nay, his own comedy never gratified me more than to hear that he had derived a moment's gratification from any praise of mine."—*B. Diary,* Dec. 17. 1813.]

Complete in kind — as various in their change,
While Eloquence — Wit — Poesy — and Mirth,
That humbler Harmonist of care on Earth,
Survive within our souls — while lives our sense
Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness — long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature form'd but one such man,
And broke the die — in moulding Sheridan!

THE

PRISONER OF CHILLON,

A FABLE. (1)

(1) [Lord Byron wrote this beautiful poem at a small inn, in the little village of Ouchy, near Lausanne, where he happened, in June, 1816, to be detained two days by stress of weather; "thereby adding," says Moore, 'one more deathless association to the already immortalised localities of he Lake."—E.]

SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind! (1)
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

(1) [In the first draught, the sonnet opens thus—

" Beloved Goddess of the chainless mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
Thy palace is within the Freeman's heart,
Whose soul the love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Thy joy is with them still, and unconfined,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom." — E.]

[WHEN this poem was composed, I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavoured to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. With some account of his life I have been furnished, by the kindness of a citizen of that republic, which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom : —

" François de Bonnivard, fils de Louis de Bonnivard, originaire de Seyssel et Seigneur de Lunes, naquit en 1496. Il fit ses études à Turin : en 1510 Jean Aimé de Bonnivard, son oncle, lui résigna le Prieuré de St. Victor, qui aboutissoit aux murs de Genève, et qui formoit un bénéfice considérable.

" Ce grand homme — (Bonnivard mérite ce titre par la force de son âme, la droiture de son cœur, la noblesse de ses intentions, la sagesse de ses conseils, le courage de ses démarches, l'étendue de ses connaissances et la vivacité de son esprit), — ce grand homme, qui excitera l'admiration de tous ceux qu'une vertu héroïque peut encore émouvoir, inspirera encore la plus vive reconnaissance dans les cœurs des Génévois qui aiment Genève. Bonnivard en fut toujours un des plus fermes appuis : pour assurer la liberté de notre République, il ne craignit pas de perdre souvent la sienne ; il oublia son repos ; il méprisa ses richesses ; il ne négligea rien pour affermir le bonheur d'une patrie qu'il honora de son choix : dès ce moment il la chérit comme le plus zélé de ses citoyens ; il la servit avec l'intrépidité d'un héros, et il écrivit son Histoire avec la naïveté d'un philosophe et la chaleur d'un patriote.

" Il dit dans le commencement de son Histoire de Genève, que, *dès qu'il eut commencé de lire l'histoire des nations, il se sentit entraîné par son goût pour les Républiques, dont il épousa toujours les intérêts :* c'est ce goût pour la liberté qui lui fit sans doute adopter Genève pour sa patrie.

" Bonnivard, encore jeune, s'annonça hautement comme le défenseur de Genève contre le Duc de Savoye et l'Evêque.

" En 1519, Bonnivard devient le martyr de sa patrie : Le Duc de Savoye étant entré dans Genève avec cinq cent hommes, Bonnivard craint le ressentiment du Duc ; il voulut se retirer à Fribourg pour en éviter les suites ; mais il fut trahi par deux hommes qui l'accompagnoient, et conduit par ordre du Prince à Grolée, où il resta prisonnier pendant deux ans. Bonnivard étoit malheureux dans ses voyages : comme ses malheurs n'avoient point ralenti son zèle pour Genève, il étoit toujours un ennemi redoutable pour ceux qui la menaçoient, et par conséquent il devoit être exposé à leurs coups. Il fut rencontré en 1530 sur le Jura par des voleurs, qui le dépouillèrent, et qui le mirent encore entre les mains du Duc de Savoye : ce Prince le fit enfermer dans le Château de Chillon, où il resta sans être interrogé jusques en 1536 ; il fut alors delivré par les Bernois, qui s'emparèrent du Pays de Vaud.

" Bonnivard, en sortant de sa captivité, eut le plaisir de trouver Genève libre et réformée : la République s'empressa de lui témoigner sa recon-

naissance, et de le dédommager des maux qu'il avoit soufferts; elle le reçut Bourgeois de la ville au mois de Juin, 1536; elle lui donna la maison habitée autrefois par le Vicaire-Général, et elle lui assigna une pension de deux cent écus d'or tant qu'il séjourneroit à Genève. Il fut admis dans le Conseil de Deux-Cent en 1537.

" Bonnivard n'a pas fini d'être utile : après avoir travaillé à rendre Genève libre, il réussit à la rendre tolérante. Bonnivard engagea le Conseil à accorder aux Ecclésiastiques et aux paysans un tems suffisant pour examiner les propositions qu'on leur faisoit; il réussit par sa douceur: on prêche toujours le Christianisme avec succès quand on le prêche avec charité.

" Bonnivard fut savant: ses manuscrits, qui sont dans la Bibliothèque publique, prouvent qu'il avoit bien lu les auteurs classiques Latins, et qu'il avoit approfondi la théologie et l'histoire. Ce grand homme aimoit les sciences, et il croyoit qu'elles pouvoient faire la gloire de Genève; aussi il ne négligea rien pour les fixer dans cette ville naissante; en 1551 il donna sa bibliothèque au public; elle fut le commencement de notre bibliothèque publique; et ces livres sont en partie les rares et belles éditions du quinzième siècle qu'on voit dans notre collection. Enfin, pendant la même année, ce bon patriote institua la République son héritière, à condition qu'elle employeroit ses biens à entretenir le collège dont on projettoit la fondation.

" Il paroit que Bonnivard mourut en 1570; mais on ne peut l'assurer, parcequ'il y a une lacune dans le Nécrologe depuis le mois de Juillet, 1570, jusques en 1571."

THE

PRISONER OF CHILLON. (1)

I.

My hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night, (2)
As men's have grown from sudden fears:

(1) ["I will tell you something about 'Chillon.' A Mr. De Luc, ninety years old, a Swiss, had it read to him, and is pleased with it — so my sister writes. He said that he was *with Rousseau* at Chillon, and that the description is perfectly correct. But this is not all; I recollected something of the name, and find the following passage in 'The Confessions,' vol. iii. p. 247., liv. viii. 'De tous ces amusemens celui qui me plut davantage fut une promenade autour du Lac, que je fit en bateau avec *De Luc* père, sa bon, ses *deux fils*, et ma Therèse. Nous mîmes sept jours à cette tournée par le plus beau temps du monde. J'en gardai le vif souvenir des sites, qui m'avoient frappé à l'autre extrémité *du Lac*, et dont je fis la description quelques années après, dans "La Nouvelle Héloïse." This nonagerian, De Luc, must be one of the 'deux fils.' He is in England, infirm, but still in faculty. It is odd that he should have lived so long, and not wanting in oddness, that he should have made this voyage with Jean Jacques, and afterwards, at such an interval, read a poem by an Englishman (who made precisely the same circumnavigation) upon the same scenery." — *B. Letters*, April 9. 1817. — Jean André de Luc, F.R.S., died at Windsor, in the July following. He was born in 1726, at Geneva, was the author of many geological works, and corresponded with most of the learned societies of Europe. — E.]

(2) Ludovico Sforza, and others. — The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis the Sixteenth, though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect: to such, and not to fear, this change in *hers* was to be attributed.

My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose, (1)
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffer'd chains and courted death;
That father perish'd at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth and one in age,
Finish'd as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have seal'd:
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;—
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,

(1) [Original MS.—
"But with the inward waste of grief."—E.]
(2) [MS.—"Braving rancour—chains—and rage."—E.]

And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left:
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III.

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together—yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, but pined in heart;
'Twas still some solace, in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each

With some new hope or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound—not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be;
It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own. (1)

IV.

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did my best—
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him—with eyes as blue as heaven,
For him my soul was sorely moved:
And truly might it be distress'd
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,

(1) [This picture of the first feelings of the three gallant brothers, when bound apart in this living tomb, and of the gradual decay of their cheery fortitude, is full of pity and agony. — JEFFREY.]

With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flow'd like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V.

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

VI.

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement, (1)
Which round about the wave inthrals:

(1) The Château de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the heights of Meillerie and the

A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made — and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day;
  Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
  And then the very rock hath rock'd,
  And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

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range of Alps above Boveret and St. Gingo. Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent: below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet, French measure: within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered: in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces. He was confined here several years. It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his Héloïse, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death. The château is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white. — ["The early history of this castle," says Mr. Tennant, who went over it in 1821, "is, I believe, involved in doubt. By some historians it is said to be built in the year 1120, and according to others, in the year 1236; but by whom it was built seems not to be known. It is said, however, in history, that Charles the Fifth, Duke of Savoy, stormed and took it in 1536; that he there found great hidden treasures, and many wretched beings pining away their lives in these frightful dungeons, amongst whom was the good Bonnivard. On the pillar to which this unfortunate man is said to have been chained, I observed, cut out of the stone, the name of one whose beautiful poem has done much to heighten the interest of this dreary spot, and will, perhaps, do more towards rescuing from oblivion the names of 'Chillon' and 'Bonnivard,' than all the cruel sufferings which that injured man endured within its damp and gloomy walls." — E.]

VII.

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captive's tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth?—he died.(1)
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash(2) my bonds in twain.
He died—and they unlock'd his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day

(1) [MS. — "But why withhold the blow?—he died."—E.]

(2) [MS. — "To break or bite."—E.]

Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laugh'd—and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII.

But he, the favourite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:—
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread:

But these were horrors — this was woe
Unmix'd with such — but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray —
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur — not
A groan o'er his untimely lot, —
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence — lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listen'd, but I could not hear —
I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished;
I call'd, and thought I heard a sound —
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rush'd to him: — I found him not,
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only lived — *I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;

The last—the sole—the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.(1)
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX.

What next befell me then and there
I know not well—I never knew—
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and grey,
It was not night—it was not day,
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,

(1) [The gentle decay and gradual extinction of the youngest life is the most tender and beautiful passage in the poem. — JEFFREY.]

But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good—no crime—
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X.

A light broke in upon my brain,—
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track,
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
And seem'd to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:

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

XI.

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate;

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

XII.

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

XIII.

I saw them — and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high — their wide long lake below, (1)
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle, (2)
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly,
And then new tears came in my eye,

(1) [MS. — " I saw them with their lake below,
And their three thousand years of snow." — E.]

(2) Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,—
And yet my glance, too much oppress'd,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV.

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count—I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free,
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where,
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,

Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell— (1)
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh. (2)

(1) [Here follow in MS.—

" Nor slew I of my subjects one—
What sovereign {hath so little / yet so much} hath done?"—E.]

(2) [It has not been the purpose of Lord Byron to paint the peculiar character of Bonnivard. The object of the poem, like that of Sterne's celebrated sketch of the prisoner, is to consider captivity in the abstract, and to mark its effects in gradually chilling the mental powers as it benumbs and freezes the animal frame, until the unfortunate victim becomes, as it were, a part of his dungeon, and identified with his chains. This transmutation we believe to be founded on fact: at least, in the Low Countries, where solitude for life is substituted for capital punishments, something like it may be witnessed. On particular days in the course of the year, these victims of a jurisprudence which calls itself humane, are presented to the public eye, upon a stage erected in the open market-place, apparently to prevent their guilt and their punishment from being forgotten. It is scarcely possible to witness a sight more degrading to humanity than this exhibition:—with matted hair, wild looks and haggard features, with eyes dazzled by the unwonted light of the sun, and ears deafened and astounded by the sudden exchange of the silence of a dungeon for the busy hum of men, the wretches sit more like rude images fashioned to a fantastic imitation of humanity, than like living and reflecting beings. In the course of time we are assured they generally become either madmen or idiots, as mind or matter happens to predominate, when the mysterious balance between them is destroyed. It will readily be allowed that this singular poem is more powerful than pleasing. The dungeon of Bonnivard is, like that of Ugolino, a subject too dismal for even the power of the painter or poet to counteract its horrors. It is the more disagreeable as affording human hope no anchor to rest upon, and describing the sufferer, though a man of talents and virtues, as altogether inert and powerless under his accumulated sufferings: yet, as a picture, however gloomy the colouring, it may rival any which Lord Byron has drawn; nor is it possible to read it without a sinking of the heart, corresponding with that which he describes the victim to have suffered.—Sir Walter Scott.]

THE DREAM.(1)

(1) [In the first draught of this poem, Lord Byron had entitled it "*The Destiny.*" Mr. Moore says, "it cost him many a tear in writing," and justly characterises it as "the most mournful, as well as picturesque 'story of a wandering life' that ever came from the pen and heart of man." It was composed at Diodati in July 1816. — E.]

THE DREAM.

I.

Our life is twofold: Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their developement have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak
Like sibyls of the future; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows—Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind?—The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.

I would recall a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs;—the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her;
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, but in hers;

She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,(1)
For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
Which colour'd all his objects:—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother—but no more; 'twas much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honour'd race. (2)—It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why?
Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved
Another; even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

(1) [MS.:— ——"she was his sight,
For never did he turn his glance until
Her own had led by gazing on an object."—E.]

(2) [(See *antè*, Vol. VII. pp. 43. 291. — "Our union," said Lord Byron in 1821, "would have healed feuds in which blood had been shed by our fathers — it would have joined lands, broad and rich — it would have joined at least *one* heart and two persons not ill-matched in years (she is two years my elder) — and — and — and — what has been the result!" —E.]

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd:
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake;—he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro: anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion—then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears. (1)
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet: as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-enter'd there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved,—she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all. (2)
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand; a moment o'er his face

(1) [The picture which Lord Byron has here drawn of his youthful love shows how genius and feeling can elevate the realities of this life, and give to the commonest events and objects an undying lustre. The old hall at Annesley, under the name of the "antique oratory," will long call up to fancy the "maiden and the youth" who once stood in it; while the image of the "lover's steed," though suggested by the unromantic race-ground of Nottingham, will not the less conduce to the general charm of the scene, and share a portion of that light which only Genius could shed over it.—Moore.]

(2) ["I had long been in love with M.A.C., and never told it, though *she* had discovered it without. I recollect my sensations, but cannot describe them, and it is as well."—*B. Diary*, 1822.]

A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came;
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way;
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood: in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his Soul drank their sunbeams: he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects; he was not
Himself like what he had been; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a man
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven. (1)

(1) [This is true *keeping* — an Eastern picture perfect in its foreground,

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better:—in her home,
A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
Daughters and sons of Beauty,—but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was return'd.—I saw him stand
Before an Altar—with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood;—as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came

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and distance, and sky, and no part of which is so dwelt upon or laboured as to obscure the principal figure. It is often in the slight and almost imperceptible touches that the hand of the master is shown, and that a single spark, struck from his fancy, lightens with a long train of illumination that of the reader. — Sir Walter Scott.]

The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light:
What business had they there at such a time? (1)

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love;—Oh! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes
They had not their own lustre, but the look

(1) [This touching picture agrees closely, in many of its circumstances, with Lord Byron's own prose account of the wedding in his Memoranda; in which he describes himself as waking, on the morning of his marriage, with the most melancholy reflections, on seeing his wedding-suit spread out before him. In the same mood, he wandered about the grounds alone, till he was summoned for the ceremony, and joined, for the first time, on that day, his bride and her family. He knelt down—he repeated the words after the clergyman; but a mist was before his eyes—his thoughts were elsewhere; and he was but awakened by the congratulations of the by-standers to find that he was—married.—Moore.]

Which is not of the earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls frenzy; but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?
Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real! (1)

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was mix'd
In all which was served up to him, until,
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days, (2)
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains: with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe

(1) [MS. —

——"the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
For it becomes the telescope of truth,
And shows us all things naked as they are."— E.]

(2) Mithridates of Pontus.

He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of Night was open'd wide,
And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd
A marvel and a secret—Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past; it had no further change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality—the one
To end in madness—both in misery. (1)

July, 1816.

(1) [This poem is written with great beauty and genius — but is extremely painful. We cannot maintain our accustomed tone of levity, or even speak like calm literary judges, in the midst of these agonising traces of a wounded and distempered spirit. Even our admiration is swallowed up in a most painful feeling of pity and of wonder. It is impossible to mistake these for fictitious sorrows, conjured up for the purpose of poetical effect. There is a dreadful tone of sincerity, and an energy that cannot be counterfeited, in the expression of wretchedness, and alienation from human-kind, which occurs in every line of this poem. — JEFFREY.]

OCCASIONAL PIECES.

1814—1816.

THE DEVIL'S DRIVE;

AN UNFINISHED RHAPSODY. (1)

THE Devil return'd to hell by two,
And he stay'd at home till five;
When he dined on some homicides done in *ragoût*,
And a rebel or so in an *Irish* stew,
And sausages made of a self-slain Jew—
And bethought himself what next to do,
"And," quoth he, "I'll take a drive.
I walk'd in the morning, I'll ride to-night;
In darkness my children take most delight,
And I'll see how my favourites thrive.

"And what shall I ride in?" quoth Lucifer then—
"If I follow'd my taste, indeed,
I should mount in a waggon of wounded men,
And smile to see them bleed.
But these will be furnished again and again,
And at present my purpose is speed;
To see my manor as much as I may,
And watch that no souls shall be poach'd away.

"I have a state-coach at Carlton House,
A chariot in Seymour Place;

(1) ["I have lately written a wild, rambling, unfinished rhapsody, called 'The Devil's Drive,' the notion of which I took from Porson's 'Devil's Walk.'" *B. Diary*, 1813.—"Of this strange, wild poem," says Moore, "the only copy that Lord Byron, I believe, ever wrote, he presented to Lord Holland. Though with a good deal of vigour and imagination, it is, for the most part, rather clumsily executed, wanting the point and condensation of those clever verses of Mr. Coleridge, which Lord Byron, adopting a notion long prevalent, has attributed to Professor Porson."—E.]

But they're lent to two friends, who make me amends
By driving my favourite pace:
And they handle their reins with such a grace,
I have something for both at the end of their race.

"So now for the earth to take my chance."
Then up to the earth sprung he;
And making a jump from Moscow to France,
He stepp'd across the sea,
And rested his hoof on a turnpike road,
No very great way from a bishop's abode.

But first as he flew, I forgot to say,
That he hover'd a moment upon his way
To look upon Leipsic plain;
And so sweet to his eye was its sulphury glare,
And so soft to his ear was the cry of despair,
That he perch'd on a mountain of slain;
And he gazed with delight from its growing height,
Nor often on earth had he seen such a sight,
Nor his work done half as well:
For the field ran so red with the blood of the dead,
That it blush'd like the waves of hell!
Then loudly, and wildly, and long laugh'd he:
"Methinks they have here little need of *me!*"

* * * * *

But the softest note that soothed his ear
Was the sound of a widow sighing;
And the sweetest sight was the icy tear,
Which horror froze in the blue eye clear
Of a maid by her lover lying —

As round her fell her long fair hair;
And she look'd to heaven with that frenzied air,
Which seem'd to ask if a God were there!
And, stretch'd by the wall of a ruin'd hut,
With its hollow cheek, and eyes half shut,
A child of famine dying:
And the carnage begun, when resistance is done
And the fall of the vainly flying!

* * * * *

But the Devil has reach'd our cliffs so white,
And what did he there, I pray?
If his eyes were good, he but saw by night
What we see every day:
But he made a tour, and kept a journal
Of all the wondrous sights nocturnal,
And he sold it in shares to the *Men* of the *Row*,
Who bid pretty well—but they *cheated* him, though!

The Devil first saw, as he thought, the *Mail*,
Its coachman and his coat;
So instead of a pistol he cock'd his tail,
And seized him by the throat:
"Aha!" quoth he, "what have we here?
'Tis a new barouche, and an ancient peer!"

So he sat him on his box again,
And bade him have no fear,
But be true to his club, and stanch to his rein,
His brothel, and his beer;
"Next to seeing a lord at the council board,
I would rather see him here."

* * * * *

The Devil gat next to Westminster,
And he turn'd to " the room " of the Commons ;
But he heard, as he purposed to enter in there,
That " the Lords " had received a summons ;
And he thought, as a " *quondam* aristocrat,"
He might peep at the peers, though to *hear* them were flat ;
And he walk'd up the house so like one of our own,
That they say that he stood pretty near the throne.

He saw the Lord Liverpool seemingly wise,
The Lord Westmoreland certainly silly,
And Johnny of Norfolk — a man of some size —
And Chatham, so like his friend Billy ;
And he saw the tears in Lord Eldon's eyes,
Because the Catholics would *not* rise,
In spite of his prayers and his prophecies ;
And he heard —which set Satan himself a staring —
A certain Chief Justice say something like *swearing*.
And the Devil was shock'd—and quoth he, " I must go,
For I find we have much better manners below :
If thus he harangues when he passes my border,
I shall hint to friend Moloch to call him to order."

WINDSOR POETICS.

Lines composed on the occasion of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent being seen standing between the coffins of Henry VIII. and Charles I., in the royal vault at Windsor.

FAMED for contemptuous breach of sacred ties,
By headless Charles see heartless Henry lies ;

Between them stands another sceptred thing —
It moves, it reigns — in all but name, a king:

Charles to his people, Henry to his wife,
— In him the double tyrant starts to life:
Justice and death have mix'd their dust in vain,
Each royal vampire wakes to life again.
Ah, what can tombs avail! — since these disgorge
The blood and dust of both — to mould a George.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

["I SPEAK NOT, I TRACE NOT," &c.] (1)

I SPEAK not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name,
There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame:
But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace
Were those hours — can their joy or their bitterness cease? [chain, —
We repent — we abjure — we will break from our
We will part, — we will fly to — unite it again!

(1) ["Thou hast asked me for a song, and I enclose you an experiment, which has cost me something more than trouble, and is, therefore, less likely to be worth your taking any in your proposed setting. Now, if it be so, throw it into the fire without *phrase*." — *Lord B. to Mr. Moore.* May 10. 1814.]

Oh! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt!
Forgive me, adored one!—forsake, if thou wilt;—
But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,
And *man* shall not break it—whatever *thou* mayst.

And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,
This soul, in its bitterest blackness, shall be;
And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet,
With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove;
And the heartless may wonder at all I resign—
Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to *mine*.

May, 1814.

ADDRESS INTENDED TO BE RECITED AT THE CALEDONIAN MEETING.

WHO hath not glow'd above the page where fame
Hath fix'd high Caledon's unconquer'd name;
The mountain-land which spurn'd the Roman chain,
And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,
Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand
No foe could tame—no tyrant could command?
That race is gone—but still their children breathe,
And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath:
O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,
And, England! add their stubborn strength to thine.

The blood which flow'd with Wallace flows as free,
But now 'tis only shed for fame and thee!
Oh! pass not by the northern veteran's claim,
But give support—the world hath given him fame!

The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who bled
While cheerly following where the mighty led—
Who sleep beneath the undistinguish'd sod
Where happier comrades in their triumph trod,
To us bequeath—'tis all their fate allows—
The sireless offspring and the lonely spouse:
She on high Albyn's dusky hills may raise
The tearful eye in melancholy gaze,
Or view, while shadowy auguries disclose
The Highland seer's anticipated woes,
The bleeding phantom of each martial form
Dim in the cloud, or darkling in the storm;
While sad, she chants the solitary song,
The soft lament for him who tarries long—
For him, whose distant relics vainly crave
The Coronach's wild requiem to the brave!

'Tis Heaven—not man—must charm away the woe
Which bursts when Nature's feelings newly flow;
Yet tenderness and time may rob the tear
Of half its bitterness for one so dear;
A nation's gratitude perchance may spread
A thornless pillow for the widow'd head;
May lighten well her heart's maternal care,
And wean from penury the soldier's heir.

May, 1814.

FRAGMENT OF AN EPISTLE TO THOMAS MOORE.

"WHAT say *I?*"— not a syllable further in prose;
I'm your man "of all measures," dear Tom, — so, here goes!
Here goes, for a swim on the stream of old Time,
On those buoyant supporters, the bladders of rhyme.
If our weight breaks them down, and we sink in the flood,
We are smother'd, at least, in respectable mud,
Where the Divers of Bathos lie drown'd in a heap,
And Southey's last Pæan has pillow'd his sleep;—
That "Felo de se" who, half drunk with his malmsey,
Walk'd out of his depth and was lost in a calm sea,
Singing "Glory to God" in a spick and span stanza,
The like (since Tom Sternhold was choked) never man saw.

The papers have told you, no doubt, of the fusses,
The fêtes, and the gapings to get at these Russes,—
Of his Majesty's suite, up from coachman to Hetman,— [man.
And what dignity decks the flat face of the great
I saw him, last week, at two balls and a party,—
For a prince, his demeanour was rather too hearty.
You know, *we* are used to quite different graces,
* * * * *

The Czar's look, I own, was much brighter and brisker,
But then he is sadly deficient in whisker;

And wore but a starless blue coat, and in kersey-
-mere breeches whisk'd round, in a waltz with the
Jersey,
Who, lovely as ever, seem'd just as delighted
With majesty's presence as those she invited.

* * * * * *

* * * * * *

June, 1814.

CONDOLATORY ADDRESS TO SARAH, COUNTESS OF JERSEY, ON THE PRINCE REGENT'S RETURNING HER PICTURE TO MRS. MEE. (1)

When the vain triumph of the imperial lord,
Whom servile Rome obey'd, and yet abhorr'd,
Gave to the vulgar gaze each glorious bust,
That left a likeness of the brave, or just;
What most admired each scrutinising eye
Of all that deck'd that passing pageantry?
What spread from face to face that wondering air?
The thought of Brutus — for his was not there!
That absence proved his worth, — that absence fix'd
His memory on the longing mind, unmix'd;
And more decreed his glory to endure,
Than all a gold Colossus could secure.

(1) ["The newspapers have got hold (I know not how) of the Condolatory Address to Lady Jersey on the picture-abduction by our Regent, and have published them — with my name, too, smack — without even asking leave, or enquiring whether or no! D—n their impudence, and d—n every thing. It has put me out of patience, and so — I shall say no more about it." — *B. Letters.*]

If thus, fair Jersey, our desiring gaze
Search for thy form, in vain and mute amaze,
Amidst those pictured charms, whose loveliness,
Bright though they be, thine own had render'd less;
If he, that vain old man, whom truth admits
Heir of his father's crown, and of his wits,
If his corrupted eye, and wither'd heart,
Could with thy gentle image bear depart;
That tasteless shame be *his*, and ours the grief,
To gaze on Beauty's band without its chief:
Yet comfort still one selfish thought imparts,
We lose the portrait, but preserve our hearts.
What can his vaulted gallery now disclose?
A garden with all flowers—except the rose;—
A fount that only wants its living stream;
A night, with every star, save Dian's beam.
Lost to our eyes the present forms shall be,
That turn from tracing them to dream of thee;
And more on that recall'd resemblance pause,
Than all he *shall* not force on our applause.
Long may thy yet meridian lustre shine,
With all that Virtue asks of Homage thine:
The symmetry of youth—the grace of mien—
The eye that gladdens—and the brow serene;
The glossy darkness of that clustering hair,
Which shades, yet shows that forehead more than fair!
Each glance that wins us, and the life that throws
A spell which will not let our looks repose,
But turn to gaze again, and find anew
Some charm that well rewards another view.

These are not lessen'd, these are still as bright,
Albeit too dazzling for a dotard's sight;
And those must wait till ev'ry charm is gone,
To please the paltry heart that pleases none;—
That dull cold sensualist, whose sickly eye
In envious dimness pass'd thy portrait by;
Who rack'd his little spirit to combine
Its hate of *Freedom*'s loveliness, and *thine*.

August, 1814.

TO BELSHAZZAR.

Belshazzar! from the banquet turn,
Nor in thy sensual fulness fall;
Behold! while yet before thee burn
The graven words, the glowing wall.
Many a despot men miscall
Crown'd and anointed from on high;
But thou, the weakest, worst of all—
Is it not written, thou must die?

Go! dash the roses from thy brow —
Grey hairs but poorly wreathe with them;
Youth's garlands misbecome thee now,
More than thy very diadem,
Where thou hast tarnish'd every gem:—
Then throw the worthless bauble by,
Which, worn by thee, ev'n slaves contemn;
And learn like better men to die!

Oh! early in the balance weigh'd,
And ever light of word and worth,
Whose soul expired ere youth decay'd,
And left thee but a mass of earth.
To see thee moves the scorner's mirth:
But tears in Hope's averted eye
Lament that even thou hadst birth—
Unfit to govern, live, or die.

ELEGIAC STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER, BART. (1)

THERE is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And Triumph weeps above the brave.

For them is Sorrow's purest sigh
O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent:
In vain their bones unburied lie,
All earth becomes their monument!

(1) This gallant officer fell in August, 1814, in his twenty-ninth year, whilst commanding, on shore, a party belonging to his ship, the Menelaus, and animating them, in storming the American camp near Baltimore. He was Lord Byron's first cousin; but they had never met since boyhood. —E.]

A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue:
The present hours, the future age,
For them bewail, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth
Grows hush'd, *their name* the only sound;
While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,
Lamented by admiring foes,
Who would not share their glorious lot?
Who would not die the death they chose?

And, gallant Parker! thus enshrined
Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be;
And early valour, glowing, find
A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
In woe, that glory cannot quell;
And shuddering hear of victory,
Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
When cease to hear thy cherish'd name?
Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
They cannot choose but weep the more;
Deep for the dead the grief must be,
Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

October, 1814.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC. (1)

["THERE'S NOT A JOY THE WORLD CAN GIVE," &c.]

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."

GRAY's *Poemata.*

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

(1) These verses were given by Lord Byron to Mr. Power, of the Strand, who has published them, with very beautiful music by Sir John Stevenson. ["I feel merry enough to send you a sad song. An event, the death of poor Dorset, (see *antè*, Vol. VII. p. 43.) and the recollection of what I once felt, and ought to have felt now, but could not — set me pondering, and finally into the train of thought which you have in your hands. I wrote them with a view to your setting them, and as a present to Power, if he would accept the words, and *you* did not think yourself degraded, for once in a way, by marrying them to music. I don't care what Power says to secure the property of the song, so that it is *not* complimentary to me, nor any thing about 'condescending' or '*noble* author'—both 'vile phrases,' as Polonius says."—*Lord B. to Mr. Moore.*]

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

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

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and grey beneath.

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

As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish
though they be,
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would
flow to me. (1)

March, 1815.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

["THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS."]

There be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

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

(1) ["Do you remember the lines I sent you early last year? I don't wish (like Mr. Fitzgerald) to claim the character of 'Vates,' in all its translations, — but were they not a little prophetic? I mean those beginning, 'There's not a joy the world can give,' &c., on which I pique myself as being the *truest*, though the most melancholy, I ever wrote." — *B. Letters*, March, 1816.]

ON NAPOLEON'S ESCAPE FROM ELBA.

ONCE fairly set out on his party of pleasure,
Taking towns at his liking, and crowns at his leisure,
From Elba to Lyons and Paris he goes,
Making *balls for* the ladies, and *bows to* his foes.(1)

March 27. 1815.

ODE FROM THE FRENCH.

[" WE DO NOT CURSE THEE, WATERLOO!"]

I.

WE do not curse thee, Waterloo!
Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew;
There 'twas shed, but is not sunk —
Rising from each gory trunk,
Like the water-spout from ocean,
With a strong and growing motion —
It soars, and mingles in the air,
With that of lost Labedoyère —

(1) ["I can forgive the rogue for utterly falsifying every line of mine Ode — which I take to be the last and uttermost stretch of human magnanimity. Do you remember the story of a certain abbé, who wrote a treatise on the Swedish constitution, and proved it indissoluble and eternal? Just as he had corrected the last sheet, news came that Gustavus the Third had destroyed this immortal government. 'Sir,' quoth the abbé, 'the King of Sweden may overthrow the *constitution*, but not *my book!!*' I think *of* the abbé, but not *with* him. Making every allowance for talent and most consummate daring, there is, after all, a good deal in luck or destiny. He might have been stopped by our frigates, or wrecked in the Gulf of Lyons, which is particularly tempestuous — or — a thousand things But he is certainly fortune's favourite." — *B. Letters*, March, 1815.]

With that of him whose honour'd grave
Contains the " bravest of the brave."
A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
But shall return to whence it rose;
When 'tis full 'twill burst asunder —
Never yet was heard such thunder
As then shall shake the world with wonder —
Never yet was seen such lightning
As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!
Like the Wormwood Star foretold
By the sainted Seer of old,
Show'ring down a fiery flood,
Turning rivers into blood. (1)

II.

The Chief has fallen, but not by you,
Vanquishers of Waterloo!
When the soldier citizen
Sway'd not o'er his fellow-men —
Save in deeds that led them on
Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son —
Who, of all the despots banded,
With that youthful chief competed?
Who could boast o'er France defeated,
Till lone Tyranny commanded?

(1) See Rev. chap. viii. *v.* 7, &c. " The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood," &c. *v.* 8. " And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood," &c. *v.* 10. " And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp; and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." *v.* 11. " And the name of the star is called *Wormwood:* and the third part of the waters became *wormwood;* and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

Till, goaded by ambition's sting,
The Hero sunk into the King?
Then he fell: — so perish all,
Who would men by man enthral!

III.

And thou, too, of the snow-white plume! (1)
Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb; (2)
Better hadst thou still been leading
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
Than sold thyself to death and shame
For a meanly royal name;
Such as he of Naples wears,
Who thy blood-bought title bears.
Little didst thou deem, when dashing
On thy war-horse through the ranks
Like a stream which burst its banks,
While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,
Shone and shiver'd fast around thee —
Of the fate at last which found thee:
Was that haughty plume laid low
By a slave's dishonest blow?
Once — as the Moon sways o'er the tide,
It roll'd in air, the warrior's guide;
Through the smoke-created night
Of the black and sulphurous fight,

(1) ["Poor dear Murat, what an end! His white plume used to be a rallying point in battle, like Henry the Fourth's. He refused a confessor and a bandage; so would neither suffer his soul nor body to be bandaged." — *B. Letters.*]

(2) Murat's remains are said to have been torn from the grave and burnt.

The soldier raised his seeking eye
To catch that crest's ascendency, —
And, as it onward rolling rose,
So moved his heart upon our foes.
There, where death's brief pang was quickest,
And the battle's wreck lay thickest,
Strew'd beneath the advancing banner
Of the eagle's burning crest —
(There with thunder-clouds to fan her,
Who could then her wing arrest —
Victory beaming from her breast?)
While the broken line enlarging
Fell, or fled along the plain;
There be sure was Murat charging!
There he ne'er shall charge again!

IV.

O'er glories gone the invaders march,
Weeps Triumph o'er each levell'd arch —
But let Freedom rejoice,
With her heart in her voice;
But, her hand on her sword,
Doubly shall she be adored;
France hath twice too well been taught
The "moral lesson" dearly bought —
Her safety sits not on a throne,
With Capet or Napoleon!
But in equal rights and laws,
Hearts and hands in one great cause —
Freedom, such as God hath given
Unto all beneath his heaven,

With their breath, and from their birth,
Though Guilt would sweep it from the earth;
With a fierce and lavish hand
Scattering nations' wealth like sand;
Pouring nations' blood like water,
In imperial seas of slaughter!

V.

But the heart and the mind,
And the voice of mankind,
Shall arise in communion —
And who shall resist that proud union?
The time is past when swords subdued —
Man may die — the soul's renew'd:
Even in this low world of care
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;
Millions breathe but to inherit
Her for ever bounding spirit —
When once more her hosts assemble,
Tyrants shall believe and tremble —
Smile they at this idle threat?
Crimson tears will follow yet. (1)

(1) ["Talking of politics, as Caleb Quotem says, pray look at the conclusion of my 'Ode on Waterloo,' written in the year 1815, and, comparing it with the Duke de Berri's catastrophe in 1820, tell me if I have not as good a right to the character of '*Vates*,' in both senses of the word, as Fitzgerald and Coleridge? —

'Crimson tears will follow yet;'

and have they not?" — *B. Letters*, 1820.]

FROM THE FRENCH.

["MUST THOU GO, MY GLORIOUS CHIEF?"] (1)

I.

MUST thou go, my glorious Chief,
Sever'd from thy faithful few?
Who can tell thy warrior's grief,
Maddening o'er that long adieu?
Woman's love, and friendship's zeal,
Dear as both have been to me —
What are they to all I feel,
With a soldier's faith for thee?

II.

Idol of the soldier's soul!
First in fight, but mightiest now:
Many could a world control;
Thee alone no doom can bow.
By thy side for years I dared
Death; and envied those who fell,
When their dying shout was heard,
Blessing him they served so well. (2)

(1) "All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer who had been exalted from the ranks by Buonaparte. He clung to his master's knees; wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted."

(2) "At Waterloo, one man was seen, whose left arm was shattered by a cannon ball, to wrench it off with the other, and throwing it up in the air, exclaimed to his comrades, 'Vive l'Empereur, jusqu'à la mort!' There were many other instances of the like: this you may, however, depend on as true." — *Private Letter from Brussels.*

III.

Would that I were cold with those,
Since this hour I live to see;
When the doubts of coward foes
Scarce dare trust a man with thee,
Dreading each should set thee free!
Oh! although in dungeons pent,
All their chains were light to me,
Gazing on thy soul unbent.

IV.

Would the sycophants of him
Now so deaf to duty's prayer,
Were his borrow'd glories dim,
In his native darkness share?
Were that world this hour his own,
All thou calmly dost resign,
Could he purchase with that throne
Hearts like those which still are thine?

V.

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu!
Never did I droop before;
Never to my sovereign sue,
As his foes I now implore:
All I ask is to divide
Every peril he must brave;
Sharing by the hero's side
His fall, his exile, and his grave.

ON THE STAR OF "THE LEGION OF HONOUR."

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

STAR of the brave!—whose beam hath shed
Such glory o'er the quick and dead—
Thou radiant and adored deceit!
Which millions rush'd in arms to greet,—
Wild meteor of immortal birth!
Why rise in Heaven to set on Earth?

Souls of slain heroes form'd thy rays;
Eternity flash'd through thy blaze;
The music of thy martial sphere
Was fame on high and honour here;
And thy light broke on human eyes,
Like a volcano of the skies.

Like lava roll'd thy stream of blood,
And swept down empires with its flood;
Earth rock'd beneath thee to her base,
As thou didst lighten through all space;
And the shorn Sun grew dim in air,
And set while thou wert dwelling there.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,
A rainbow of the loveliest hue
Of three bright colours(1), each divine,
And fit for that celestial sign;
For Freedom's hand had blended them,
Like tints in an immortal gem.

(1) The tricolour.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;
One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes;
One, the pure Spirit's veil of white
Had robed in radiance of its light:
The three so mingled did beseem
The texture of a heavenly dream.

Star of the brave! thy ray is pale,
And darkness must again prevail!
But, oh thou Rainbow of the free!
Our tears and blood must flow for thee.
When thy bright promise fades away,
Our life is but a load of clay.

And Freedom hallows with her tread
The silent cities of the dead;
For beautiful in death are they
Who proudly fall in her array;
And soon, oh Goddess! may we be
For evermore with them or thee!

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

I.

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of my Glory
Arose and o'ershadow'd the earth with her name —
She abandons me now — but the page of her story,
The brightest or blackest, is fill'd with my fame.

I have warr'd with a world which vanquish'd me only
When the meteor of conquest allured me too far;
I have coped with the nations which dread me thus lonely,
The last single Captive to millions in war.

II.

Farewell to thee, France! when thy diadem crown'd me,
I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth,—
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,
Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.
Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
In strife with the storm, when their battles were won—
Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,
Had still soar'd with eyes fix'd on victory's sun!

III.

Farewell to thee, France!—but when Liberty rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then,—
The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;
Though wither'd, thy tear will unfold it again—
Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that surround us,
And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice—
There are links which must break in the chain that has bound us,
Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

ENDORSEMENT TO THE DEED OF SEPARATION, IN THE APRIL OF 1816

A YEAR ago you swore, fond she!
"To love, to honour," and so forth:
Such was the vow you pledged to me,
And here's exactly what 'tis worth.

DARKNESS. (1)

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream. (2)
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars

(1) [In the original MS. — "A Dream." — E.]

(2) [In this poem Lord Byron has abandoned the art, so peculiarly his own, of showing the reader where his purpose tends, and has contented himself with presenting a mass of powerful ideas unarranged, and the meaning of which it is not easy to attain. A succession of terrible images is placed before us, flitting and mixing, and disengaging themselves, as in the dream of a feverish man — chimeras dire, to whose existence the mind refuses credit, which confound and weary the ordinary reader, and baffle the comprehension, even of those more accustomed to the flights of a poetic muse. The subject is the progress of utter darkness, until it becomes, in Shakspeare's phrase, the "burier of the dead;" and the assemblage of terrific ideas which the poet has placed before us only fail in exciting our terror from the extravagance of the plan. To speak plainly, the framing of such phantasms is a dangerous employment for the exalted and teeming imagination of such a poet as Lord Byron, whose Pegasus ever required rather a bridle than a spur. The waste of boundless space into which they lead the poet, the neglect of precision which such themes may render habitual, make them, in respect to poetry, what mysticism is to religion. The meaning of the poet, as he ascends upon cloudy wing, becomes the shadow only of a thought, and having eluded the comprehension of others, necessarily ends by escaping from that of the author himself. The strength of poetical conception, and the beauty of diction, bestowed upon such prolusions, is as much thrown away as the colours of a painter, could he take a cloud of mist, or a wreath of smoke, for his canvass. — SIR WALTER SCOTT.]

Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consumed,
And men were gather'd round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch:
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,

And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food:
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again;—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answer'd not with a caress—he died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies: they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up

Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects — saw, and shriek'd, and died —
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless —
A lump of death — a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal; as they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a surge —
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The Moon, their mistress, had expired before;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them — She was the Universe. (1)

Diodati, July, 1816.

(1) ["Darkness" is a grand and gloomy sketch of the supposed consequences of the final extinction of the Sun and the heavenly bodies; executed, undoubtedly, with great and fearful force, but with something of German exaggeration, and a fantastical solution of incidents. The very conception is terrible above all conception of known calamity, and is too oppressive to the imagination to be contemplated with pleasure, even in the faint reflection of poetry. — JEFFREY.]

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE;

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED.

I STOOD beside the grave of him who blazed
The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it; and I ask'd
The Gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory task'd
Through the thick deaths of half a century;
And thus he answer'd — "Well, I do not know
Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
He died before my day of Sextonship,
And I had not the digging of this grave."
And is this all? I thought, — and do we rip
The veil of Immortality? and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon, and so successless? As I said,
The Architect of all on which we tread,

(1) [On the sheet containing the original draught of these lines, Lord Byron has written: — "The following poem (as most that I have endeavoured to write) is founded on a fact; and this detail is an attempt at a serious imitation of the style of a great poet — its beauties and its defects: I say, the *style;* for the thoughts I claim as my own. In this, if there be any thing ridiculous, let it be attributed to me, at least as much as to Mr. Wordsworth; of whom there can exist few greater admirers than myself. I have blended what I would deem to be the beauties as well as defects of his style; and it ought to be remembered, that, in such things, whether there be praise or dispraise, there is always what is called a compliment, however unintentional." — E.]

For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought,
Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers;—as he caught
As 'twere the twilight of a former Sun,
Thus spoke he, — "I believe the man of whom
You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
Was a most famous writer in his day,
And therefore travellers step from out their way
To pay him honour,—and myself whate'er
Your honour pleases,"—then most pleased I
From out my pocket's avaricious nook [shook(1)
Some certain coins of silver, which as 'twere
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare
So much but inconveniently:—Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I—for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a soften'd eye,
On that Old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame,—
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name. (2)

Diodati, 1816.

(1) [Originally—

—— "then most pleased, I shook
My inmost pocket's most retired nook,
And out fell five and sixpence."—E.]

(1) [The Grave of Churchill might have called from Lord Byron a deeper commemoration; for, though they generally differed in character and genius, there was a resemblance between their history and character. The satire of Churchill flowed with a more profuse, though not a more embittered, stream; while, on the other hand, he cannot be compared to Lord Byron in point of tenderness or imagination. But both these poets

PROMETHEUS.

I.

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

II.

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

---

held themselves above the opinion of the world, and both were followed by the fame and popularity which they seemed to despise. The writings of both exhibit an inborn, though sometimes ill-regulated, generosity of mind, and a spirit of proud independence, frequently pushed to extremes. Both carried their hatred of hypocrisy beyond the verge of prudence, and indulged their vein of satire to the borders of licentiousness. Both died in the flower of their age in a foreign land. — SIR WALTER SCOTT.]

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

III.

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

His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—and equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concenter'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

Diodati, July, 1816.

A FRAGMENT.

["COULD I REMOUNT," &c.]

COULD I remount the river of my years
To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,
I would not trace again the stream of hours
Between their outworn banks of wither'd flowers,
But bid it flow as now—until it glides
Into the number of the nameless tides.

* * * * *

What is this Death?—a quiet of the heart?
The whole of that of which we are a part?
For life is but a vision—what I see
Of all which lives alone is life to me,
And being so—the absent are the dead,
Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread

A dreary shroud around us, and invest
With sad remembrancers our hours of rest.
  The absent are the dead—for they are cold,
And ne'er can be what once we did behold;
And they are changed, and cheerless,—or if yet
The unforgotten do not all forget,
Since thus divided—equal must it be
If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea;
It may be both—but one day end it must
In the dark union of insensate dust.
  The under-earth inhabitants—are they
But mingled millions decomposed to clay?
The ashes of a thousand ages spread
Wherever man has trodden or shall tread?
Or do they in their silent cities dwell
Each in his incommunicative cell?
Or have they their own language? and a sense
Of breathless being?—darken'd and intense
As midnight in her solitude?—Oh Earth! [birth?
Where are the past?—and wherefore had they
The dead are thy inheritors—and we
But bubbles on thy surface; and the key
Of thy profundity is in the grave,
The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
Where I would walk in spirit, and behold
Our elements resolved to things untold,
And fathom hidden wonders, and explore
The essence of great bosoms now no more.

* * * * *

Diodati, July, 1816.

SONNET TO LAKE LEMAN.

Rousseau—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and De Staël—
Leman! (1) these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these! wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recall:
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous; but by *thee*
How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real!

Diodati, July, 1816.

(1) Geneva, Ferney, Copet, Lausanne.—[See *antè*, Vol. VIII. p. 163.—"I have," says Lord Byron, "traversed all Rousseau's ground with the Héloïse before me, and am struck to a degree that I cannot express, with the force and accuracy of his descriptions, and the beauty of their reality. I enclose you a sprig of Gibbon's acacia and some rose-leaves from his garden, which, with part of his house, I have just seen. You will find honourable mention, in his Life, made of this acacia, when he walked out on the night of concluding his history. Madame de Staël has made Copet as agreeable as society can make any place on earth."—*B. Letters*, 1816.]

ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA.

THE effect of the original ballad — which existed both in Spanish and Arabic — was such, that it was forbidden to be sung by the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada.

ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA.

El qual dezia en Aravigo assi.

I.

PASSEAVASE el Rey Moro
Por la ciudad de Granada,
Desde las puertas de Elvira
Hasta las de Bivarambla.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

II.

Cartas le fueron venidas
Que Alhama era ganada.
Las cartas echò en el fuego,
Y al mensagero matava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

III.

Descavalga de una mula,
Y en un cavallo cavalga.
Por el Zacatin arriba
Subido se avia al Alhambra.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE

SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA.

Which, in the Arabic language, is to the following purport.

I.

THE Moorish King rides up and down
Through Granada's royal town;
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama!

II.

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell:
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

III.

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.
Woe is me, Alhama!

IV.

Como en el Alhambra estuvo,
Al mismo punto mandava
Que se toquen las trompetas
Con añafiles de plata.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

V.

Y que atambores de guerra
Apriessa toquen alarma;
Por que lo oygan sus Moros,
Los de la Vega y Granada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

VI.

Los Moros que el son oyeron,
Que al sangriento Marte llama,
Uno a uno, y dos a dos,
Un gran esquadron formavan.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

VII.

Alli hablò un Moro viejo;
Desta manera hablava:—
Para que nos llamas, Rey?
Para que es este llamadá?
Ay de mi, Alhama!

IV.

When the Alhambra walls he gain'd,
On the moment he ordain'd
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.
Woe is me, Alhama!

V.

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain,
Woe is me, Alhama!

VI.

Then the Moors, by this aware
That bloody Mars recall'd them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron grew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

VII.

Out then spake an aged Moor
In these words the king before,
" Wherefore call on us, oh King?
What may mean this gathering?"
Woe is me, Alhama!

VIII.

Aveys de saber, amigos,
Una nueva desdichada:
Que Christianos, con braveza,
Ya nos han tomado Alhama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

IX.

Alli hablò un viejo Alfaqui,
De barba crecida y cana:—
Bien se te emplea, buen Rey,
Buen Rey; bien se te empleava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

X.

Mataste los Bencerrages,
Que era la flor de Granada;
Cogiste los tornadizos
De Cordova la nombrada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XI.

Por esso mereces, Rey,
Una pene bien doblada;
Que te pierdas tu y el reyno,
Y que se pierda Granada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

VIII.

" Friends! ye have, alas! to know
Of a most disastrous blow,
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtain'd Alhama's hold."
Woe is me, Alhama!

IX.

Out then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see,
" Good King! thou art justly served,
Good King! this thou hast deserved.
Woe is me, Alhama!

X.

" By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
And strangers were received by thee
Of Cordova the Chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XI.

" And for this, oh King! is sent
On thee a double chastisement:
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XII.

Si no se respetan leyes,
Es ley que todo se pierda;
Y que se pierda Granada,
Y que te pierdas en ella.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XIII.

Fuego por los ojos vierte,
El Rey que esto oyera.
Y como el otro de leyes
De leyes tambien hablava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XIV.

Sabe un Rey que no ay leyes
De darle a Reyes disgusto—
Esso dize el Rey Moro
Relinchando de colera.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XV.

Moro Alfaqui, Moro Alfaqui,
El de la vellida barba,
El Rey te manda prender,
Por la perdida de Alhama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XII.

" He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law;
And Granada must be won,
And thyself with her undone."
Woe is me, Alhama!

XIII.

Fire flash'd from out the old Moor's eyes,
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answer'd, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XIV.

" There is no law to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings:"—
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doom'd him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XV.

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui!
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XVI.

Y cortarte la cabeza,
Y ponerla en el Alhambra,
Por que a ti castigo sea,
Y otros tiemblen en miralla.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XVII.

Cavalleros, hombres buenos,
Dezid de mi parte al Rey,
Al Rey Moro de Granada,
Como no le devo nada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XVIII.

De averse Alhama perdido
A mi me pesa en el alma.
Que si el Rey perdiò su tierra,
Otro mucho mas perdiera.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XIX.

Perdieran hijos padres,
Y casados las casadas:
Las cosas que mas amara
Perdiò l' un y el otro fama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

XVI.

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XVII.

" Cavalier, and man of worth!
Let these words of mine go forth;
Let the Moorish Monarch know,
That to him I nothing owe.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XVIII.

" But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys;
And if the King his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XIX.

" Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives;
One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XX.

Perdi una hija donzella
Que era la flor d' esta tierra,
Cien doblas dava por ella,
No me las estimo en nada.
Ay de mi, Alhama !

XXI.

Diziendo assi al hacen Alfaqui,
Le cortaron la cabeça,
Y la elevan al Alhambra,
Assi come el Rey lo manda.
Ay de mi, Alhama !

XXII.

Hombres, niños y mugeres,
Lloran tan grande perdida.
Lloravan todas las damas
Quantas en Granada avia.
Ay de mi, Alhama !

XXIII.

Por las calles y ventanas
Mucho luto parecia ;
Llora el Rey como fembra,
Qu' es mucho lo que perdia.
Ay de mi, Alhama !

XX.

"I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day."
Woe is me, Alhama!

XXI.

And as these things the old Moor said,
They sever'd from the trunk his head;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'Twas carried, as the King decreed.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XXII.

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.
Woe is me, Alhama!

XXIII.

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.
Woe is me, Alhama!

SONETTO DI VITTORELLI.

PER MONACA.

Sonetto composto in nome di un genitore, a cui era morta poco innanzi una figlia appena maritata; è diretto al genitore della sacra sposa.

Di due vaghe donzelle, oneste, accorte
Lieti e miseri padri il ciel ne feo,
Il ciel, che degne di più nobil sorte
L' una e l' altra veggendo, ambo chiedeo.
La mia fu tolta da veloce morte
A le fumanti tede d' imeneo:
La tua, Francesco, in sugellate porte
Eterna prigioniera or si rendeo.
Ma tu almeno potrai de la gelosa
Irremeabil soglia, ove s' asconde,
La sua tenera udir voce pietosa.
Io verso un fiume d' amarissim' onde,
Corro a quel marmo, in cui la figlia or posa,
Batto, e ribatto, ma nessun risponde.

TRANSLATION FROM VITTORELLI.

ON A NUN.

Sonnet composed in the name of a father, whose daughter had recently died shortly after her marriage; and addressed to the father of her who had lately taken the veil.

Of two fair virgins, modest, though admired,
Heaven made us happy; and now, wretched sires,
Heaven for a nobler doom their worth desires,
And gazing upon *either*, *both* required.
Mine, while the torch of Hymen newly fired
Becomes extinguish'd, soon—too soon—expires;
But thine, within the closing grate retired,
Eternal captive, to her God aspires.
But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,
Which shuts between your never-meeting eyes,
May'st hear her sweet and pious voice once more:
I to the marble, where *my daughter* lies,
Rush,—the swoln flood of bitterness I pour,
And knock, and knock, and knock—but none replies.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

["BRIGHT BE THE PLACE OF THY SOUL!"]

I.

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul!
No lovelier spirit than thine
E'er burst from its mortal control,
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.
On earth thou wert all but divine,
As thy soul shall immortally be;
And our sorrow may cease to repine
When we know that thy God is with thee.

II.

Light be the turf of thy tomb!
May its verdure like emeralds be!
There should not be the shadow of gloom,
In aught that reminds us of thee.
Young flowers and an evergreen tree
May spring from the spot of thy rest:
But nor cypress nor yew let us see;
For why should we mourn for the blest?

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

["THEY SAY THAT HOPE IS HAPPINESS."]

I.

They say that Hope is happiness;
But genuine Love must prize the past,
And Memory wakes the thoughts that bless:
They rose the first — they set the last;

II.

And all that Memory loves the most
Was once our only Hope to be,
And all that Hope adored and lost
Hath melted into Memory.

III.

Alas! it is delusion all:
The future cheats us from afar,
Nor can we be what we recall,
Nor dare we think on what we are.

TO THOMAS MOORE.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

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

IV.

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

V.

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

SONG FOR THE LUDDITES.

I.

As the Liberty lads o'er the sea
Bought their freedom, and cheaply, with blood,
So we, boys, we
Will *die* fighting, or *live* free
And down with all kings but King Ludd!

II.

When the web that we weave is complete,
And the shuttle exchanged for the sword,
We will fling the winding sheet
O'er the despot at our feet,
And die it deep in the gore he has pour'd.

III.

Though black as his heart its hue,
Since his veins are corrupted to mud,
Yet this is the dew
Which the tree shall renew
Of Liberty, planted by Ludd!

SO, WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

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

ON THE BUST OF HELEN BY CANOVA. (1)

In this beloved marble view,
Above the works and thoughts of man,
What Nature *could*, but *would not*, do,
And Beauty and Canova *can!*
Beyond imagination's power,
Beyond the Bard's defeated art,
With immortality her dower,
Behold the *Helen* of the *heart!*

(1) ["The Helen of Canova (a bust which is in the house of Madame the Countess d'Albrizzi) is," says Lord Byron, "without exception, to my mind, the most perfectly beautiful of human conceptions, and far beyond my ideas of human execution." — E.]

END OF THE TENTH VOLUME.

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