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BYRON
CHILDE HAROLD'S
PILGRIMAGE

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LORD BYRON
(Statue in Trinity College)

BYRON
CHILDE HAROLD'S
PILGRIMAGE

Edited by
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at the University Press
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PREFACE

THE notes in this edition of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* are intended chiefly to supply a commentary upon the historical, literary and topographical allusions, which are plentiful in the poem, especially in the concluding canto. Explanations of the more involved passages have been added where necessary, with notes here and there on the principal characteristics of the poet's thought and the style in which it is clothed. These last, however, are sufficiently obvious to the reader without elaborate discussion, and some of the more striking points in connection with them are summed up in the introduction to this volume. Quotations from the classics or from foreign writers, where they throw light on passages of the poem, have been translated in the notes. The text has been obtained by a collation of the best editions, which present very few variations.

A. H. T.

GRETTON, NORTHANTS
July 1913

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	v
CONTENTS	vi
INTRODUCTION	vii
TEXT :	
Preface to First and Second Cantos	1
Addition to Preface	3
To Ianthe	6
Canto the First	8
Canto the Second	45
Canto the Third	81
To John Hobhouse, Esq.	123
Canto the Fourth	128
NOTES	190
APPENDIX :	
Summary of the contents of <i>Childe Harold's Pilgrimage</i>	278
LORD BYRON (Statue in Trinity College)	<i>Frontispiece</i>

INTRODUCTION

THE first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* were published in March 1812. Their author, George Gordon Noel, sixth baron Byron of Rochdale, born 22 Jan. 1788, had succeeded his grand-uncle in his barony soon after entering upon his eleventh year. While still at Trinity college, Cambridge, he had published with a bookseller at Newark, near his mother's house at Southwell, a volume of short poems called *Hours of Idleness* (1807). An unfavourable notice of this book in *The Edinburgh Review* impelled him to write *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809), a satire in the manner of Pope. These were his only published works at the time when he began *Childe Harold*. His natural sensitiveness, much increased by the misfortune of a deformed foot and by the unwisdom of a capricious and hysterical mother, bred in him a self-consciousness which proved a serious hindrance to his entry into life. Much of his time after leaving Cambridge was spent in company with his chosen friends at his seat of Newstead abbey in Nottinghamshire, where he indulged in orgies of a boyish and comparatively harmless character. The coldness of his guardian, lord Carlisle, who, probably misunderstanding his ward's poetical tendencies and

disliking his dissipations, neglected to introduce him to the house of Lords, and the difficulties in which his already over-burdened estate was becoming involved, preyed upon his spirits; while an early and disappointed affection for a cousin, Miss Chaworth, may have been an additional cause of chagrin. On 2 July 1809 he sailed from Falmouth for Lisbon, with the intention of abandoning England and visiting the East.

The successive stages of his journey, in company with John Cam Hobhouse, through Portugal and the south of Spain are recorded in the first canto of *Childe Harold* and will be found chronicled in their proper places in the notes at the end of this volume. From Gibraltar he sailed to Malta, and thence to Prevesa in Albania. It was during his travels in Albania that he began at Janina, on 31 October 1809, the stanzas which developed into the first canto of the poem, which was finished on 30 December, soon after his arrival at Athens, and had been written, as stanzas LX.—LXIV. and LXX. shew, at intervals during his journey. The second canto, which describes the Albanian journey in detail, was finished in its first form at Smyrna on 2 May 1810, but was subsequently enlarged by the addition of passages relating to later incidents of his tour. It contains stanzas referring to the scenes in Greece which impressed him most, but his visit to Smyrna, Ephesus and the Troad in the spring of 1810 is left unrecorded. He stayed at Constantinople for two months in the summer, and returned to Athens about 18 July. He made Athens his head-quarters until the following May, when he returned to England, reaching home in July.

His fame as a poet was ensured by the publication next year, after much revision and with some additions, of the first two cantos of his poem, which are virtually complete in themselves. His series of oriental tales in verse, beginning with *The Giaour* (1813), won him further popularity, and he became the fashionable poet of the day. On 2 Jan. 1815, at the height of his success, he married Miss Milbanke. Their child was born in the following December, and some six weeks later his wife suddenly left him, never to return. A formal separation followed; and, in the misery and scandal caused by this event, Byron, with his hopes broken, his popularity turned to obloquy, and at the lowest ebb of his fortunes, again left England. He never set foot again in his native country. Travelling through Belgium and along the Rhine to Basel, he reached the lake of Geneva in June 1816. Here he had the society of the Shelleys, and the poet beside whose funeral pyre he stood six years later exercised a profound influence upon his thought. In the autumn of 1816 he entered Italy and took up his abode at Venice, his chief place of residence till 1819. From 1819 to 1821 he made his head-quarters at Ravenna. From Ravenna he moved to Pisa, and in the autumn of 1822 to Genoa. In July 1823 he sailed to Greece, to take part in the Greek war of independence: he died at Missolonghi on the gulf of Patras on 18 April (Easter day) 1824.

The third and fourth cantos of *Childe Harold*, published in 1818, are founded upon his journeys of 1816 and 1817. The third canto follows the course of his travels by the field of Waterloo and the Rhine to Morat and the lake of Geneva. The fourth canto,

beginning in Venice, is chiefly occupied with the impressions of a hastily made journey to Rome in April and May 1817. Begun about the end of the following June, it had reached the length of 144 stanzas early in September, but it was gradually extended to 184, the final additions being made while the poem was still in the press.

Childe Harold thus consists of two distinct portions, which reflect emotions of a somewhat different kind. The earlier part was written in petulant chagrin, and, although its general tone is misanthropical, its contempt of humanity is something of a pose, and it is not without flashes of gaiety. Byron, while describing a journey which he had taken himself, invented an imaginary wanderer who, although naturally possessing many of his own characteristics, was not wholly identical with himself. The excesses of *Childe Harold* and the satiety which they produced are both exaggerated: Byron himself had a capacity for enjoyment which he denied to his hero. On the other hand, *Childe Harold's* separate individuality, such as it is, is of no special interest. Byron's poetry depended on his own emotions: the characters of his poetry have life only in so far as they are embodiments of his own broodings. It is, therefore, natural that in the last two cantos, written in a mood of deeper suffering than the first two, the supposed hero practically disappears, and the poet himself and his misfortunes become the undisguised motive of his song.

The same influence affects the outward form of the poem. It is clothed in the Spenserian stanza of eight ten-syllabled lines, with a concluding Alexandrine or

line of twelve syllables. In the earlier portion Byron affected Spenserian archaisms, as did Thomson and the eighteenth-century imitators of Spenser; but these were actually uncongenial to him, and after the opening stanzas are of fitful recurrence. In the third and fourth cantos they are so rare that they are practically non-existent. His stanza is no longer hampered by the necessity of imitation, but becomes an unfettered vehicle of sombre thought. Similarly, the tendency to burlesque writing which appears here and there in the first canto, and was apparently thought by Byron to be consistent with his archaic experiments in language, becomes in the second canto mere vivacity of description, and is utterly absent from the last two. While the opening cantos are rich in magnificent passages, and the poem has few things as fine to shew as the picture of the giant, Battle personified, standing on the mountain (canto I., st. XXXIX.), or the prelude of the second canto, conceived in the ruins of the temple of Zeus at Athens, the sustained eloquence and dignity of the third and fourth cantos is still more remarkable.

In no respect, however, is the deepening of subjective emotion more clearly visible than in the descriptive passages to which the reader naturally looks for enjoyment. If Byron in his earlier days felt deeply, he had not yet learned to discover his own sorrows in everything which he saw. He moralised his travels: the cave of Honorius and the crosses on the mountain path at Cintra, the skull amid the ruins of Athens, the field of Marathon, are subjects for pensive reflection. Personifications of abstract qualities, such as those in which the poetry of Gray and Collins abound,

constantly occurred to him and were used with fine effect. But he could describe what his eye observed, for its own sake without deeper reflection. The picture of Ali's court at Tepaleni, with its several details woven into verse, has no parallel in the third and fourth cantos; and one has only to compare the bull-fight in the first canto with the stanzas upon the Coliseum in the fourth to realise the change which has come over the author's spirit. His embarkation in the third canto, the apostrophe to Ocean at the end of the fourth, belong to a period of thought entirely different from that to which the lively description in the second of the voyage through the Mediterranean belongs.

The contrast is due in the first instance to personal experience, which has driven the poet back upon himself and absorbed his whole mind, so that he fills the world with 'the pageant of his bleeding heart.' There are few stanzas in the third and fourth cantos which do not revert to his shattered hopes and bitter memories. Even the beauty of the Rhine, which seems to call him for a moment out of himself, leads to the reflection that this earthly Paradise cannot be so to him, unless the river were Lethe, to bring forgetfulness of woes. Beneath the Alps the shadow deepens: in Italy, amid the ruins of an ancient civilisation, the gloom is profound and there is no relaxation of memory. But it must be owned that the attitude of mingled pride and despair, expressed though it is with majesty of phrase and rhythm, would be monotonous were it not for the presence of an alleviating element. This is found in the sense of the power of nature to calm and console—a sense which, though it may be contradicted by the

poet's words, is very seldom far absent. This is not felt, at any rate so keenly, in the earlier cantos, where Byron, still under the influence of eighteenth-century poetry, looked upon nature as a theme for picturesque and animated description. Even in the third canto, the Rhine afforded him material for something of the same kind of writing. It is at the lake of Geneva that the change is first clearly visible, and that Byron becomes 'portion of that around' him. The influence of Shelley and, with it, the growing acknowledgement of that revolution in the poetic conception of nature which Wordsworth had achieved, were the partly external causes accountable for Byron's altered attitude. Henceforward the conviction of kinship with nature is responsible for the most noble passages of *Childe Harold*. Splendid as are the eloquent Roman episodes, one feels that, as in Florence, Byron is more restless among ruins and statues than he is in the open air among mountains or in sight of the ocean. The beautiful Venetian stanzas are inspired by the blending of the decaying city with 'the spouseless Adriatic' and the memory of her marriage with the sea. And the passages of the poem, the intrinsic beauty of which, as distinct from splendour of rhetoric or invective, rises most readily to the mind, are the stanzas on Clarens (canto III., stt. C.—CIII.), the sunset landscape seen from the banks of the Brenta (canto IV., stt. XXVII.—XXIX.), the description of Arquà (*ibid.* stt. XXXII., XXXIII.), which defines so well the spirit of the 'soft, quiet hamlet,' the pictures of the source of Clitumnus and the cascade of Terni (*ibid.* stt. LXVI.—LXXII.), the reflections on the grotto of Egeria (*ibid.* st. CXV. sqq.),

and the all too brief sketches of Nemi and Albano (*ibid.* stt. CLXXIII., CLXXIV.). Here Byron, face to face with nature, discovers her healing power and procures a 'suspension of disgust' from his woes.

The rhetoric and invective, however, must not be forgotten in the contemplation of these more placid features. Although, as Byron stands amid the vestiges of bygone history, the ruins of the past assume for him the complexion of his own tragedy, and he contemplates, as George Meredith says of Shakespeare, 'the seas without upon the reflex of that within,' he is also filled with a passion which, if it arises in the beginning from a feeling of personal restraint, is pure and disinterested in its effect. Liberty has found no more eloquent laureate, and kings and priests, who deserve the gratitude of mankind for the provocation they have given to the highest poetry, no more devoted opponent. In this respect the whole poem is upon the same level, although naturally the later part is tinged by a more keenly personal sympathy for the victims of tyranny. *Childe Harold* was written at the end of the most epic chapter in modern history, and its two parts faithfully reflect the fluctuations of opinion which its development produced in minds earnestly set upon the enfranchisement of Europe. The French Revolution, which had awakened the enthusiasm of Wordsworth and Coleridge in England and of the romantic poets throughout Europe, had run its course. Its sympathisers had seen the nation, which they fondly imagined as 'standing on the top of golden hours,' sink into anarchy, 'drunk with blood to vomit crime.' When Byron arrived in Portugal in 1809, the power of

Napoleon had reached its zenith. The peninsular war was in progress; and to Byron the eagles of France, flying over the peninsula, were vultures come to feed upon the dead body of a ruined nation. Napoleon was the tyrant, England the champion of freedom; and for the time England had forfeited her reputation by her concessions at Cintra. But in 1816 the position was changed. Byron's feelings towards Napoleon were never cordial, and, while he praised his fortitude upon the field of Waterloo, at Rome he condemned his vanity. Nevertheless, he felt that, had Napoleon achieved his whole ambition, his empire might have made for the liberty of Europe. His fall, the promulgation of the Holy alliance, the settlement achieved by the congress of Vienna and the peace of Paris, had restored the old sovereigns, and Europe was doubly yoked in servitude. These events and the sentiments which they excite prompt some of the noblest verse in *Childe Harold*. Byron's sympathy, aroused by his own isolation, was with the enslaved and the outcast. In Greece, the mother of European civilisation, given over to slavery and degradation, he found its most congenial object; and the faults of his life, faults which arose from a natural incompatibility to meet the world with its own weapons and mould his mind to accept its standards, were in no small measure redeemed by his final expedition to relieve the sufferings of the country which, in happier days, had repelled the Persian invader at Marathon and Salamis, and sacrificed her noblest sons in the cause of freedom at Thermopylae.

In estimating the literary and artistic judgments of the poem, we have to remember two things. In the

first place, Byron was not one of those poets who, like Milton, pass a long apprenticeship to the earlier masters of poetry, and have a mind stocked with literary reminiscence. The expression of his thoughts in verse came to him spontaneously: his tendency was to amplify his naturally fluent verse, not to subject it to that condensation and refinement which is the fruit of careful literary discipline. As we have seen, his adoption of the Spenserian stanza is a mere accident of the poem, and no one who has used that form has probably owed so slight a debt to Spenser. His classical reading had been desultory. In Greece the sentiment of a glorious past and the picturesqueness of the local mythology filled his mind as he composed, but the memory of the great Attic poets, a memory which was ever present to such writers, men of sympathies so akin to his own, as Shelley, Landor and their disciple Swinburne, was so far of secondary interest to him that he does not allude to them directly. Epaminondas, Thrasybulus, Brasidas, Leonidas, warriors and champions of liberty, are the names which he chooses to commemorate: Euripides is mentioned only once, and then in a context which does not refer directly to Greece or intimately to his poetry. For Latin literature he seems to have had more feeling. He confesses that the necessity of reading Horace at school as a task checked that complete enjoyment which he saw was a desirable possession; and the Latin author whom he seems to have admired and appreciated most was Cicero, a preference not unnatural in a poet whose genius found a natural vent in passages of oratory. He shared with Vergil the sense of mortality in human

things, and such passages as the description of Arquà or Clitumnus have a Vergilian note of quiet melancholy in their contemplation of rural scenery; but this likeness is merely general, and springs rather from the abiding spirit of the places than from any direct remembrance of the appeal which such scenes made to Vergil. In Vergil's characteristic power of compression of phrase Byron was wanting: striking and vivid phrases escape from him in plenty, but his deliberate attempts at confining an impression of a place within the limits of a few words or lines are—like his description of the effect of the interior of St Peter's—involved and sometimes obscure. Further, in estimating the poets of modern Italy, his interest was primarily directed to the circumstances of their lives and to their strife with tyranny. The style of Dante, like that of Vergil by which it was formed, was too restrained and compressed to affect Byron's torrent of language; but the idea of the exile, driven from his native place to end his life in a foreign city, touched his imagination all the more strongly in that he saw in it a general resemblance to his own lot. He shared the taste of his day for the less severe poets of the Renaissance, for Ariosto and Tasso; and his translation of the first canto of Pulci's burlesque epic, *Morgante Maggiore*, prepared the way for his own *Don Juan*, a mass of discursive wit and satire, mingled with passages of the finest poetry, and hung together on the thread of a rambling succession of incidents. But his lines on Tasso are concerned with the traditional misfortunes which the poet suffered at the hands of a monarch. Just as when he refers to Rousseau by the lake of

Geneva, the tumult in his own mind fills his horizon, and Rousseau and Tasso alike are not objects of literary criticism, but reflections of Byron himself. *The Prophecy of Dante*, in which he used Dante's own form of rhyme, and *The Lament of Tasso* are similarly expressions of personal feeling aroused by a sense of his own banishment and distress; while the sonnet of Filicaja, combined with the fabric of *Childe Harold*, so closely reflects his own enthusiasm for liberty that he echoes it from the depths of his own spirit.

In the second place, he cared little for painting and sculpture. Painting, indeed, suggests to him no reflection for his poem. Sculpture, on the other hand, plays a prominent part in the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*, and Canova excited his admiration more than all the contemporary artists and men of letters of Italy. In this, as in his appreciation of Tasso, he followed the taste of his day; and the ancient Florentine and Roman sculptures which moved him to poetry were just those which any educated tourist of the time would have selected. He expressly disclaims any understanding of their artistic merits: their general effect brings before him the beauty and majesty of the vanished ages which produced them. Like the architecture of the Coliseum and the tomb of Caecilia Metella, they are the enduring fragments of the irrevocable past, and his thought turns from their actual form to the creative power of which they are the embodiment, to the circumstances in which that power was moulded, and by a natural transition to the decay of civilisations and the vanity of human hopes. It is significant of his attitude of mind that his most graphic

lines upon a piece of sculpture—the so-called dying gladiator—were not suggested in the presence of the statue itself. It was in the Coliseum, with his mind busy upon the slaughters of which the amphitheatre had been the scene, that the statue recurred to him and was endowed with life as the centre of the tragedy. Here, as ever, his thoughts go back to himself: it is the distant land, the Dacian mother, the children at play, which are the absorbing subject of the wounded gladiator's thoughts, and blend themselves with Byron's indignation and regret for all that he himself had forfeited. Of the dramatic power which Byron here displays the Roman stanzas are full. Great architecture, although its details probably interested him little, impressed him by its vastness and splendour; and although, as we have already seen, the most finished beauty of the poem is in those passages which deal directly with nature, its highest eloquence and its ability to call the past to life are awakened by the buildings of Rome and by that sentiment of antiquity which, five centuries before, they had aroused in Petrarch and, more recently, they had communicated as an inspiration to Gibbon. Still, of direct architectural description *Childe Harold* contains little, and Byron's taste was fitful in this respect. If the Coliseum filled him with reverence, the mole of Hadrian provoked only a perfunctory and uncomplimentary stanza. For the gorgeousness of the Medici chapel in Florence he had only contempt, but the huge mass of St Peter's at Rome, largely a production of the same period of florid architecture, awed him with the sense of his own littleness in the face of such grandiose conception; and

St Peter's is the only building which he seems to have admired in the first instance upon its own merits. It is noteworthy that from the first and second cantos, buildings, apart from the ruins of Athens and the description of Ali's house at Tepaleni, are practically absent. In the third canto, the ruined castles of the Rhine and the remains of Aventicum are isolated examples of meditations on architecture. Even in Venice he singles out no special buildings for description: the bridge of Sighs, the bridge of Rialto, the palaces 'crumbling to the shore'—those palaces which in *Marino Faliero* he likened to 'altars ranged along the broad canal'—are merely notes in a general impression. It was on his way to Rome, amid the tombs of the mighty dead in Santa Croce at Florence, that he seems first to have realised in his poetry what the Roman stanzas so clearly shew, that the architecture of the past is the most noble monument of history.

No detailed notice need be given here of the style of the poem. Some of its characteristics, its impetuous eloquence and oratorical power, its use of personification, its softness and beauty under soothing influences, have already been touched upon. Byron wrote with freedom, and his faults of style are those of a poet whose language comes almost too readily to his command. The perpetual presence of one thought naturally leads him into repetition of the same themes, but with a variety and richness of imagery which save his treatment from monotony. It is impossible not to feel, as stanza runs on into stanza in moments of the deepest emotion, that the expression is too luxuriant, and that such passages might have been revised and

pruned with advantage. The poem is full of inversions of subject and object, subject and predicate, used with a remarkable licence which occasionally veils the sense of a passage. Here and there Byron is tempted into solecisms of grammar which in one instance, at any rate—the famous ‘there let him lay’ of canto IV., st. CLXXX.—amount to vulgarity. We know from the records of Byron’s life that his taste was not impeccable: the very incidents of the journey which is the subject of the fourth canto, the casual day in Florence, the hurried and crowded sight-seeing in Rome, are characteristic of his want of taste. Few people would have had the effrontery to make such a tour the subject of verse: no one else, perhaps, could have recorded it in verse which is immortal. But *Childe Harold*, although it has enriched the memory of the traveller with descriptions and phrases which add a new beauty to the scenes to which they refer, is only in a secondary sense a poem which celebrates some of the most famous shrines of the continental pilgrim. Nor does its real importance arise from its revelation of the sorrows of a poet’s heart: in this respect it is not unique, and Byron’s sorrows, due largely to his own waywardness and endured in a spirit which was the reverse of stoicism, could not by themselves have invested *Childe Harold* with that sublimity which it assumes at its best. But his genius identified his disappointments and distresses with those of the world at large; and, by virtue of his personal experience, he spoke with the voice of struggling humanity throughout Europe, at a period when the birth-throes of a new era were upon it. It is at such

epochs that poetry has its greatest opportunity, and in that 'iron time of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears,' Byron took 'his seat upon the intellectual throne' and interpreted from his own heart the anguish and aspirations of his contemporaries. In England itself the other great poets of the romantic movement hold as high a place as he; but the author of *Childe Harold*, appealing to no one nation in particular, but to all mankind which shared his despair and entertained his hopes, gained a place above them all in the affection of Europe.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

A ROMAUNT

L'UNIVERS est une espèce de livre, dont on n'a lu que la première page quand on n'a vu que son pays. J'en ai feuilleté un assez grand nombre, que j'ai trouvé également mauvaises. Cet examen ne m'a point été infructueux. Je haïssais ma patrie. Toutes les impertinences des peuples divers, parmi lesquels j'ai vécu, m'ont réconcilié avec elle. Quand je n'aurais tiré d'autre bénéfice de mes voyages que celui-là, je n'en regretterais ni les frais ni les fatigues.—LE COSMOPOLITE.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST AND SECOND CANTOS

THE following poem was written, for the most part, amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. It was begun in Albania; and the parts relative to Spain and Portugal were composed from the author's observations in those countries. Thus much it may be necessary to state for the correctness of the descriptions. The scenes attempted to be sketched are in Spain, Portugal, Epirus, Acarnania, and Greece. There, for the present, the poem stops; its reception will determine whether the

author may venture to conduct his readers to the capital of the East, through Ionia and Phrygia: these two cantos are merely experimental.

A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece; which, however, makes no pretension to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, 'Childe Harold,' I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage: this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim—Harold is the child of imagination, for the purpose I have stated. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such a notion; but in the main points, I should hope, none whatever.

It is almost superfluous to mention that the appellation 'Childe,' as 'Childe Waters,' 'Childe Childers,' &c., is used as more consonant with the old structure of versification which I have adopted. The 'Good Night,' in the beginning of the first canto, was suggested by 'Lord Maxwell's Good Night,' in the *Border Minstrelsy*, edited by Mr Scott.

With the different poems which have been published on Spanish subjects, there may be found some slight coincidence in the first part, which treats of the Peninsula, but it can only be casual; as, with the exception of a few concluding stanzas, the whole of this poem was written in the Levant.

The stanza of Spenser, according to one of our most successful poets, admits of every variety. Dr Beattie makes the following observation:—'Not long ago, I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser,

in which I propose to give full scope to my inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me; for, if I mistake not, the measure which I have adopted admits equally of all these kinds of composition¹.—Strengthened in my opinion by such authority, and by the example of some in the highest order of Italian poets, I shall make no apology for attempts at similar variations in the following composition; satisfied that if they are unsuccessful, their failure must be in the execution, rather than in the design, sanctioned by the practice of Ariosto, Thomson, and Beattie.

LONDON, *February*, 1812.

ADDITION TO THE PREFACE

I have now waited till almost all our periodical journals have distributed their usual portion of criticism. To the justice of the generality of their criticisms I have nothing to object: it would ill become me to quarrel with their very slight degree of censure, when, perhaps, if they had been less kind they had been more candid. Returning, therefore, to all and each my best thanks for their liberality, on one point alone shall I venture an observation. Amongst the many objections justly urged to the very indifferent character of the ‘vagrant Childe,’ (whom, notwithstanding many hints to the contrary, I still maintain to be a fictitious personage), it has been stated, that, besides the anachronism, he is

¹ Beattie’s Letters.

very *unknightly*, as the times of the Knights were times of Love, Honour, and so forth. Now, it so happens that the good old times, when 'l'amour du bon vieux tems, l'amour antique,' flourished, were the most profligate of all possible centuries. Those who have any doubts on this subject may consult Sainte-Palaye, *passim*, and more particularly vol. ii. p. 69¹. The vows of chivalry were no better kept than any other vows whatsoever; and the songs of the Troubadours were not more decent, and certainly were much less refined, than those of Ovid. The 'Cours d'amour, parlemens d'amour, ou de courtesie et de gentillesse' had much more of love than of courtesy or gentleness. See Roland on the same subject with Sainte-Palaye. Whatever other objection may be urged to that most unamiable personage Childe Harold, he was so far perfectly knightly in his attributes—'No waiter, but a knight templar².' By the by, I fear that Sir Tristrem and Sir Lancelot were no better than they should be, although very poetical personages and true knights 'sans peur,' though not 'sans reproche.' If the story of the institution of the 'Garter' be not a fable, the knights of that order have for several centuries borne the badge of a Countess of Salisbury, of indifferent memory. So much for chivalry. Burke need not have regretted that its days are over, though Marie-Antoinette was quite as chaste as most of those in whose honour lances were shivered, and knights unhorsed.

Before the days of Bayard, and down to those of Sir Joseph Banks (the most chaste and celebrated of

¹ *Mémoires sur l'Ancienne Chevalerie*, Par. 1781.

² *The Rovers, or the Double Arrangement*.

ancient and modern times), few exceptions will be found to this statement; and I fear a little investigation will teach us not to regret these monstrous mummeries of the middle ages.

I now leave 'Childe Harold' to live his day, such as he is; it had been more agreeable, and certainly more easy, to have drawn an amiable character. It had been easy to varnish over his faults, to make him do more and express less, but he never was intended as an example, further than to show, that early perversion of mind and morals leads to satiety of past pleasures and disappointment in new ones, and that even the beauties of nature and the stimulus of travel (except ambition, the most powerful of all excitements) are lost on a soul so constituted, or rather misdirected. Had I proceeded with the poem, this character would have deepened as he drew to the close; for the outline which I once meant to fill up for him was, with some exceptions, the sketch of a modern Timon, perhaps a poetical Zeluco.

LONDON, 1813.

TO IANTHE

NOT in those climes where I have late been straying,
Though Beauty long hath there been matchless
 deem'd;
Not in those visions to the heart displaying
Forms which it sighs but to have only dream'd,
Hath aught like thee in truth or fancy seem'd: 5
Nor, having seen thee, shall I vainly seek
To paint those charms which varied as they beam'd—
To such as see thee not my words were weak;
To those who gaze on thee what language could they
 speak?

Ah! may'st thou ever be what now thou art, 10
Nor unbeseem the promise of thy spring,
As fair in form, as warm yet pure in heart,
Love's image upon earth without his wing,
And guileless beyond Hope's imagining!
And surely she who now so fondly rears 15
Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brightening,
Beholds the rainbow of her future years,
Before whose heavenly hues all sorrow disappears.

Young Peri of the West!—'t is well for me
My years already doubly number thine; 20
My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on thee,
And safely view thy ripening beauties shine;
Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline;

Happier, that while all younger hearts shall bleed,
Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes assign 25
To those whose admiration shall succeed,
But mix'd with pangs to Love's even loveliest hours
decreed.

Oh! let that eye, which, wild as the Gazelle's,
Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,
Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells, 30
Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse deny
That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh
Could I to thee be ever more than friend:
This much, dear maid, accord; nor question why
To one so young my strain I would commend, 35
But bid me with my wreath one matchless lily blend.

Such is thy name with this my verse entwined;
And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast
On Harold's page, Ianthe's here enshrined
Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten last: 40
My days once number'd, should this homage past
Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre
Of him who hail'd thee, loveliest as thou wast,
Such is the most my memory may desire;
Though more than Hope can claim, could Friendship
less require? 45

CHILDE HAROLD'S
PILGRIMAGE

CANTO THE FIRST

I

OH, thou! in Hellas deem'd of heavenly birth,
Muse! form'd or fabled at the minstrel's will!
Since shamed full oft by later lyres on earth,
Mine dares not call thee from thy sacred hill:
Yet there I've wander'd by thy vaunted rill; 5
Yes! sigh'd o'er Delphi's long deserted shrine,
Where, save that feeble fountain, all is still;
Nor mote my shell awake the weary Nine
To grace so plain a tale—this lowly lay of mine.

II

Whilome in Albion's isle there dwelt a youth, 10
Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight;
But spent his days in riot most uncouth,
And vex'd with mirth the drowsy ear of Night.
Ah me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,
Sore given to revel and ungodly glee; 15
Few earthly things found favour in his sight
Save concubines and carnal companie,
And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

III

Childe Harold was he hight:—but whence his name
And lineage long, it suits me not to say; 20
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day:
But one sad losel soils a name for aye,
However mighty in the olden time;
Nor all that heralds rake from coffin'd clay, 25
Nor florid prose, nor honeyed lies of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.

IV

Childe Harold bask'd him in the noontide sun,
Disporting there like any other fly;
Nor deem'd before his little day was done 30
One blast might chill him into misery.
But long ere scarce a third of his pass'd by,
Worse than adversity the Childe befell;
He felt the fulness of satiety:
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell, 35
Which seem'd to him more lone than Eremite's sad cell.

V

For he through Sin's long labyrinth had run,
Nor made atonement when he did amiss,
Had sigh'd to many though he loved but one,
And that loved one, alas! could ne'er be his. 40
Ah, happy she! to 'scape from him whose kiss
Had been pollution unto aught so chaste;
Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
And spoil'd her goodly lands to gild his waste,
Nor calm domestic peace had ever deign'd to taste. 45

VI

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;
'Tis said, at times the sullen tear would start,
But Pride congeal'd the drop within his ee:
Apart he stalk'd in joyless reverie, 50
And from his native land resolved to go,
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea;
With pleasure drugg'd, he almost long'd for woe,
And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades
below.

VII

The Childe departed from his father's hall: 55
It was a vast and venerable pile;
So old, it seemed only not to fall,
Yet strength was pillar'd in each massy aisle.
Monastic dome! condemn'd to uses vile!
Where Superstition once had made her den 60
Now Paphian girls were known to sing and smile;
And monks might deem their time was come agen,
If ancient tales say true, nor wrong these holy men.

VIII

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood
Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's
brow, 65
As if the memory of some deadly feud
Or disappointed passion lurk'd below:
But this none knew, nor haply cared to know;

For his was not that open, artless soul
That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow, 70
Nor sought he friend to counsel or condole,
Whate'er this grief mote be, which he could not control.

IX

And none did love him: though to hall and bower
He gather'd revellers from far and near,
He knew them flatt'ers of the festal hour; 75
The heartless parasites of present cheer.
Yea! none did love him—not his lemans dear—
But pomp and power alone are woman's care,
And where these are light Eros finds a feere;
Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare, 80
And Mammon wins his way where Seraphs might despair.

X

Childe Harold had a mother—not forgot,
Though parting from that mother he did shun;
A sister whom he loved, but saw her not
Before his weary pilgrimage begun: 85
If friends he had, he bade adieu to none.
Yet deem not thence his breast a breast of steel:
Ye, who have known what 't is to dote upon
A few dear objects, will in sadness feel
Such partings break the heart they fondly hope to heal.

XI

His house, his home, his heritage, his lands, 91
The laughing dames in whom he did delight,
Whose large blue eyes, fair locks, and snowy hands,
Might shake the saintship of an anchorite,
And long had fed his youthful appetite; 95

His goblets brimm'd with every costly wine,
And all that mote to luxury invite,
Without a sigh he left, to cross the brine,
And traverse Paynim shores, and pass Earth's central
line.

XII

The sails were fill'd, and fair the light winds blew, 100
As glad to waft him from his native home;
And fast the white rocks faded from his view,
And soon were lost in circumambient foam:
And then, it may be, of his wish to roam
Repented he, but in his bosom slept 105
The silent thought, nor from his lips did come
One word of wail, while others sate and wept,
And to the reckless gales unmanly moaning kept.

XIII

But when the sun was sinking in the sea
He seized his harp, which he at times could string, 110
And strike, albeit with untaught melody,
When deem'd he no strange ear was listening:
And now his fingers o'er it he did fling,
And tuned his farewell in the dim twilight.
While flew the vessel on her snowy wing, 115
And fleeting shores receded from his sight,
Thus to the elements he pour'd his last 'Good Night.'

I

ADIEU, adieu! my native shore
Fades o'er the waters blue;
The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar, 120
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.

Yon sun that sets upon the sea
We follow in his flight;
Farewell awhile to him and thee,
My native Land—Good Night! 125

2

A few short hours and he will rise
To give the morrow birth;
And I shall hail the main and skies,
But not my mother earth.
Deserted is my own good hall, 130
Its hearth is desolate;
Wild weeds are gathering on the wall;
My dog howls at the gate.

3

‘Come hither, hither, my little page!
Why dost thou weep and wail? 135
Or dost thou dread the billows’ rage,
Or tremble at the gale?
But dash the tear-drop from thine eye;
Our ship is swift and strong:
Our fleetest falcon scarce can fly 140
More merrily along.’

4

‘Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high,
I fear not wave nor wind:
Yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I
Am sorrowful in mind; 145
For I have from my father gone,
A mother whom I love,
And have no friend, save these alone,
But thee—and one above.

5

'My father bless'd me fervently, 150
Yet did not much complain;
But sorely will my mother sigh
Till I come back again.'--
'Enough, enough, my little lad!
Such tears become thine eye; 155
If I thy guileless bosom had,
Mine own would not be dry.

6

'Come hither, hither, my staunch yeoman,
Why dost thou look so pale?
Or dost thou dread a French foeman? 160
Or shiver at the gale?'--
'Deem'st thou I tremble for my life?
Sir Childe, I'm not so weak;
But thinking on an absent wife
Will blanch a faithful cheek. 165

7

'My spouse and boys dwell near thy hall,
Along the bordering lake,
And when they on their father call,
What answer shall she make?'--
'Enough, enough, my yeoman good, 170
Thy grief let none gainsay;
But I, who am of lighter mood,
Will laugh to flee away.'

8

For who would trust the seeming sighs
Of wife or paramour? 175
Fresh feeres will dry the bright blue eyes
We late saw streaming o'er.

For pleasures past I do not grieve,
Nor perils gathering near;
My greatest grief is that I leave 180
No thing that claims a tear.

9

And now I'm in the world alone,
Upon the wide, wide sea:
But why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me? 185
Perchance my dog will whine in vain,
Till fed by stranger hands;
But long ere I come back again
He'd tear me where he stands.

10

With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go 190
Athwart the foaming brine;
Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,
So not again to mine.
Welcome, welcome, ye dark-blue waves!
And when you fail my sight, 195
Welcome, ye deserts and ye caves!
My native Land—Good Night!

XIV

On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone,
And winds are rude in Biscay's sleepless bay.
Four days are sped, but with the fifth, anon, 200
New shores descried make every bosom gay;

And Cintra's mountain greets them on their way,
And Tagus dashing onward to the deep,
His fabled golden tribute bent to pay;
And soon on board the Lusian pilots leap, 205
And steer 'twixt fertile shores where yet few rustics reap.

XV

Oh, Christ! it is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land:
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand! 210
But man would mar them with an impious hand:
And when the Almighty lifts his fiercest scourge
'Gainst those who most transgress his high command,
With treble vengeance will his hot shafts urge 214
Gaul's locust host, and earth from fellest foemen purge.

XVI

What beauties doth Lisboa first unfold!
Her image floating on that noble tide,
Which poets vainly pave with sands of gold,
But now whereon a thousand keels did ride
Of mighty strength, since Albion was allied, 220
And to the Lusians did her aid afford:
A nation swoln with ignorance and pride,
Who lick yet loathe the hand that waves the sword
To save them from the wrath of Gaul's unsparing lord.

• XVII

But whoso entereth within this town, 225
That, sheening far, celestial seems to be,
Disconsolate will wander up and down,
'Mid many things unsightly to strange ee;

For hut and palace show like filthily:
 The dingy denizens are rear'd in dirt; 230
 Ne personage of high or mean degree
 Doth care for cleanness of surtout or shirt;
 Though shent with Egypt's plague, unkempt, unwash'd,
 unhurt.

XVIII

Poor, paltry slaves! yet born 'midst noblest scenes—
 Why, Nature, waste thy wonders on such men? 235
 Lo! Cintra's glorious Eden intervenes
 In variegated maze of mount and glen.
 Ah me! what hand can pencil guide, or pen,
 To follow half on which the eye dilates
 Through views more dazzling unto mortal ken 240
 Than those whereof such things the bard relates,
 Who to the awe-struck world unlock'd Elysium's gates?

XIX

The horrid crags, by toppling convent crown'd,
 The cork-trees hoar that clothe the shaggy steep,
 The mountain-moss by scorching skies imbrown'd, 245
 The sunken glen, whose sunless shrubs must weep,
 The tender azure of the unruffled deep,
 The orange tints that gild the greenest bough,
 The torrents that from cliff to valley leap,
 The vine on high, the willow branch below, 250
 Mix'd in one mighty scene, with varied beauty glow.

XX

Then slowly climb the many-winding way,
 And frequent turn to linger as you go,
 From loftier rocks new loveliness survey,
 And rest ye at 'Our Lady's house of woe'; 255

Where frugal monks their little relics show,
And sundry legends to the stranger tell:
Here impious men have punish'd been, and lo!
Deep in yon cave Honorius long did dwell,
In hope to merit Heaven by making earth a Hell. 260

XXI

And here and there, as up the crags you spring,
Mark many rude-carved crosses near the path:
Yet deem not these devotion's offering—
These are memorials frail of murderous wrath:
For wheresoe'er the shrieking victim hath 265
Pour'd forth his blood beneath the assassin's knife,
Some hand erects a cross of mouldering lath;
And grove and glen with thousand such are rife
Throughout this purple land, where law secures not life.

XXII

On sloping mounds, or in the vale beneath, 270
Are domes where whilome kings did make repair;
But now the wild flowers round them only breathe;
Yet ruin'd splendour still is lingering there.
And yonder towers the Prince's palace fair:
There thou too, Vathek! England's wealthiest son, 275
Once form'd thy Paradise, as not aware
When wanton Wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,
Meek Peace voluptuous lures was ever wont to shun.

XXIII

Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan,
Beneath yon mountain's ever beauteous brow: 280
But now, as if a thing unblest by Man,
Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!

Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
To halls deserted, portals gaping wide:
Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how 285
Vain are the pleasaunces on earth supplied;
Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle tide!

XXIV

Behold the hall where chiefs were late convened!
Oh! dome displeasing unto British eye!
With diadem hight foolscap, lo! a fiend, 290
A little fiend that scoffs incessantly,
There sits in parchment robe array'd, and by
His side is hung a seal and sable scroll,
Where blazon'd glare names known to chivalry,
And sundry signatures adorn the roll, 295
Whereat the Urchin points and laughs with all his soul.

XXV

Convention is the dwarfish demon styled
That foil'd the knights in Marialva's dome:
Of brains (if brains they had) he them beguiled,
And turn'd a nation's shallow joy to gloom. 300
Here Folly dash'd to earth the victor's plume,
And Policy regain'd what arms had lost:
For chiefs like ours in vain may laurels bloom!
Woe to the conqu'ring, not the conquer'd host,
Since baffled Triumph droops on Lusitania's coast! 305

XXVI

And ever since that martial synod met,
Britannia sickens, Cintra! at thy name;
And folks in office at the mention fret,
And fain would blush, if blush they could, for shame.

How will posterity the deed proclaim! 310
Will not our own and fellow nations sneer,
To view these champions cheated of their fame,
By foes in fight o'erthrown, yet victors here,
Where Scorn her finger points through many a coming
year?

XXVII

So deem'd the Childe, as o'er the mountains he 315
Did take his way in solitary guise:
Sweet was the scene, yet soon he thought to flee,
More restless than the swallow in the skies:
Though here awhile he learn'd to moralize,
For Meditation fix'd at times on him; 320
And conscious Reason whisper'd to despise
His early youth, misspent in maddest whim;
But as he gazed on truth his aching eyes grew dim.

XXVIII

To horse! to horse! he quits, for ever quits
A scene of peace, though soothing to his soul: 325
Again he rouses from his moping fits,
But seeks not now the harlot and the bowl.
Onward he flies, nor fix'd as yet the goal
Where he shall rest him on his pilgrimage;
And o'er him many changing scenes must roll 330
Ere toil his thirst for travel can assuage,
Or he shall calm his breast, or learn experience sage.

XXIX

Yet Mafra shall one moment claim delay,
Where dwelt of yore the Lusians' luckless queen;
And church and court did mingle their array, 335
And mass and revel were alternate seen;

Lordlings and freres—ill-sorted fry I ween!
But here the Babylonian whore hath built
A dome, where flaunts she in such glorious sheen,
That men forget the blood which she hath spilt, 340
And bow the knee to Pomp that loves to varnish guilt.

XXX

O'er vales that teem with fruits, romantic hills,
(Oh, that such hills upheld a free-born race!)
Whereon to gaze the eye with joyaunce fills,
Childe Harold wends through many a pleasant place.
Though sluggards deem it but a foolish chase, 346
And marvel men should quit their easy chair,
The toilsome way, and long, long league to trace,
Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air,
And life, that bloated Ease can never hope to share. 350

XXXI

More bleak to view the hills at length recede,
And, less luxuriant, smoother vales extend;
Immense horizon-bounded plains succeed!
Far as the eye discerns, withouten end, 354
Spain's realms appear whereon her shepherds tend
Flocks, whose rich fleece right well the trader knows—
Now must the pastor's arm his lambs defend:
For Spain is compass'd by unyielding foes,
And all must shield their all, or share Subjection's woes.

XXXII

Where Lusitania and her Sister meet, 360
Deem ye what bounds the rival realms divide?
Or ere the jealous queens of nations greet,
Doth Tayo interpose his mighty tide?

Or dark Sierras rise in craggy pride?
Or fence of art, like China's vasty wall?— 365
Ne barrier wall, ne river deep and wide,
Ne horrid crags, nor mountains dark and tall,
Rise like the rocks that part Hispania's land from Gaul:

XXXIII

But these between a silver streamlet glides,
And scarce a name distinguisheth the brook, 370
Though rival kingdoms press its verdant sides.
Here leans the idle shepherd on his crook,
And vacant on the rippling waves doth look,
That peaceful still 'twixt bitterest foemen flow;
For proud each peasant as the noblest duke: 375
Well doth the Spanish hind the difference know
'Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low.

XXXIV

But ere the mingling bounds have far been pass'd,
Dark Guadiana rolls his power along
In sullen billows, murmuring and vast, 380
So noted ancient roundelays among.
Whilome upon his banks did legions throng
Of Moor and Knight, in mailed splendour drest:
Here ceased the swift their race, here sunk the strong;
The Paynim turban and the Christian crest 385
Mix'd on the bleeding stream, by floating hosts oppress'd.

XXXV

Oh, lovely Spain! renown'd, romantic land!
Where is that standard which Pelagio bore,
When Cava's traitor-sire first call'd the band
That dyed thy mountain streams with Gothic gore?

Where are those bloody banners which of yore 391
Waved o'er thy sons, victorious to the gale,
And drove at last the spoilers to their shore?
Red gleam'd the cross, and waned the crescent pale,
While Afric's echoes thrill'd with Moorish matrons' wail.

XXXVI

Teems not each ditty with the glorious tale? 396
Ah! such, alas! the hero's amplest fate!
When granite moulders and when records fail,
A peasant's plaint prolongs his dubious date.
Pride! bend thine eye from heaven to thine estate, 400
See how the Mighty shrink into a song!
Can Volume, Pillar, Pile preserve thee great?
Or must thou trust tradition's simple tongue,
When Flattery sleeps with thee, and History does thee
wrong?

XXXVII

Awake, ye sons of Spain! awake! advance! 405
Lo! Chivalry, your ancient goddess, cries,
But wields not, as of old, her thirsty lance,
Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the skies:
Now on the smoke of blazing bolts she flies,
And speaks in thunder through yon engine's roar: 410
In every peal she calls—'Awake! arise!'
Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,
When her war-song was heard on Andalusia's shore?

XXXVIII

Hark! heard you not those hoofs of dreadful note?
Sounds not the clang of conflict on the heath? 415
Saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote,
Nor saved your brethren ere they sank beneath

Tyrants and tyrants' slaves?—the fires of death,
The bale-fires flash on high:—from rock to rock
Each volley tells that thousands cease to breathe; 420
Death rides upon the sulphury Siroc,
Red Battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock.

XXXIX

Lo! where the Giant on the mountain stands,
His blood-red tresses deep'ning in the sun,
With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands, 425
And eye that scorcheth all it glares upon;
Restless it rolls, now fix'd, and now anon
Flashing afar,—and at his iron feet
Destruction cowers, to mark what deeds are done;
For on this morn three potent nations meet, 430
To shed before his shrine the blood he deems most sweet.

XL

By Heaven! it is a splendid sight to see
(For one who hath no friend, no brother there)
Their rival scarfs of mix'd embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air! 435
What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair,
And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey!
All join the chase, but few the triumph share;
The Grave shall bear the chiefest prize away,
And Havoc scarce for joy can number their array. 440

XLI

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice;
Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high;
Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies;
The shouts are France, Spain, Albion, Victory!

The foe, the victim, and the fond ally 445
That fights for all, but ever fights in vain,
Are met—as if at home they could not die—
To feed the crow on Talavera's plain,
And fertilize the field that each pretends to gain.

XLII

There shall they rot—Ambition's honour'd fools! 450
Yes, Honour decks the turf that wraps their clay!
Vain Sophistry! in these behold the tools,
The broken tools, that tyrants cast away
By myriads, when they dare to pave their way
With human hearts—to what?—a dream alone. 455
Can despots compass aught that hails their sway?
Or call with truth one span of earth their own,
Save that wherein at last they crumble bone by bone?

XLIII

Oh, Albuera! glorious field of grief!
As o'er thy plain the Pilgrim prick'd his steed, 460
Who could foresee thee, in a space so brief,
A scene where mingling foes should boast and bleed!
Peace to the perish'd! may the warrior's meed
And tears of triumph their reward prolong!
Till others fall where other chieftains lead 465
Thy name shall circle round the gaping throng,
And shine in worthless lays the theme of transient song.

XLIV

Enough of battle's minions! let them play
Their game of lives, and barter breath for fame:
Fame that will scarce reanimate their clay, 470
Though thousands fall to deck some single name.

In sooth 't were sad to thwart their noble aim
Who strike, blest hirelings! for their country's good,
And die, that living might have proved her shame;
Perish'd, perchance, in some domestic feud, 475
Or in a narrower sphere wild Rapine's path pursued.

XLV

Full swiftly Harold wends his lonely way
Where proud Sevilla triumphs unsubdued:
Yet is she free—the spoiler's wish'd-for prey!
Soon, soon shall Conquest's fiery foot intrude, 480
Blackening her lovely domes with traces rude.
Inevitable hour! 'Gainst fate to strive
Where Desolation plants her famish'd brood
Is vain, or Ilion, Tyre, might yet survive,
And Virtue vanquish all, and murder cease to thrive. 485

XLVI

But all unconscious of the coming doom,
The feast, the song, the revel here abounds;
Strange modes of merriment the hours consume,
Nor bleed these patriots with their country's wounds;
Nor here War's clarion, but Love's rebeck sounds; 490
Here Folly still his votaries inthrals;
And young-eyed Lewdness walks her midnight
rounds;
'Girt with the silent crimes of Capitals,
Still to the last kind Vice clings to the tott'ring walls.

XLVII

Not so the rustic—with his trembling mate 495
He lurks, nor casts his heavy eye afar,
Lest he should view his vineyard desolate,
Blasted below the dun hot breath of war.

No more beneath soft Eve's consenting star
Fandango twirls his jocund castanet: 500
Ah, monarchs! could ye taste the mirth ye mar,
Not in the toils of Glory would ye fret;
The hoarse dull drum would sleep, and Man be happy yet!

XLVIII

How carols now the lusty muleteer?
Of love, romance, devotion is his lay, 505
As whilome he was wont the leagues to cheer,
His quick bells wildly jingling on the way?
No, as he speeds, he chants 'Vivā el Rey!'
And checks his song to execrate Godoy,
The royal wittol Charles, and curse the day 510
When first Spain's queen beheld the black-eyed boy,
And gore-faced Treason sprung from her adulterate joy.

XLIX

On yon long, level plain, at distance crown'd
With crags, whereon those Moorish turrets rest,
Wide scatter'd hoof-marks dint the wounded ground;
And, scathed by fire, the greensward's darken'd vest
Tells that the foe was Andalusia's guest:
Here was the camp, the watch-flame, and the host,
Here the bold peasant storm'd the dragon's nest;
Still does he mark it with triumphant boast; 520
And points to yonder cliffs, which oft were won and lost.

L

And whomsoe'er along the path you meet
Bears in his cap the badge of crimson hue,
Which tells you whom to shun and whom to greet.
Woe to the man that walks in public view 525

Without of loyalty this token true :
 Sharp is the knife, and sudden is the stroke ;
 And sorely would the Gallic foeman rue,
 If subtle poniards, wrapt beneath the cloke,
 Could blunt the sabre's edge, or clear the cannon's smoke.

LI

At every turn Morena's dusky height 531
 Sustains aloft the battery's iron load ;
 And, far as mortal eye can compass sight,
 The mountain-howitzer, the broken road,
 The bristling palisade, the fosse o'erflow'd, 535
 The station'd bands, the never-vacant watch,
 The magazine in rocky durance stow'd,
 The holster'd steed beneath the shed of thatch,
 The ball-piled pyramid, the ever-blazing match,

LII

Portend the deeds to come :—but he whose nod 540
 Has tumbled feeble despots from their sway,
 A moment pauseth ere he lifts the rod ;
 A little moment deigneth to delay :
 Soon will his legions sweep through these their way ;
 The West must own the Scourger of the world. 545
 Ah ! Spain ! how sad will be thy reckoning day,
 When soars Gaul's Vulture, with his wings unfurl'd,
 And thou shalt view thy sons in crowds to Hades hurl'd.

LIII

And must they fall ? the young, the proud, the brave,
 To swell one bloated Chief's unwholesome reign ? 550
 No step between submission and a grave ?
 The rise of rapine and the fall of Spain ?

And doth the Power that man adores ordain
Their doom, nor heed the suppliant's appeal?
Is all that desperate Valour acts in vain? 555
And Counsel sage, and patriotic Zeal,
The Veteran's skill, Youth's fire, and Manhood's heart
of steel?

LIV

Is it for this the Spanish maid, aroused,
Hangs on the willow her unstrung guitar,
And, all unsex'd, the anlace hath espoused, 560
Sung the loud song, and dared the deed of war?
And she, whom once the semblance of a scar
Appall'd, an owlet's larum chill'd with dread,
Now views the column-scattering bay'net jar,
The falchion flash, and o'er the yet warm dead 565
Stalks with Minerva's step where Mars might quake
to tread.

LV

Ye who shall marvel when you hear her tale,
Oh! had you known her in her softer hour,
Mark'd her black eye that mocks her coal-black veil,
Heard her light, lively tones in Lady's bower, 570
Seen her long locks that foil the painter's power,
Her fairy form, with more than female grace,
Scarce would you deem that Saragoza's tower
Beheld her smile in Danger's Gorgon face,
Thin the closed ranks, and lead in Glory's fearful chase.

LVI

Her lover sinks—she sheds no ill-timed tear; 576
Her chief is slain—she fills his fatal post;
Her fellows flee—she checks their base career;
The foe retires—she heads the sallying host:

Who can appease like her a lover's ghost? 580
Who can avenge so well a leader's fall?
What maid retrieve when man's flush'd hope is lost?
Who hang so fiercely on the flying Gaul,
Foil'd by a woman's hand, before a batter'd wall?

LVII

Yet are Spain's maids no race of Amazons, 585
But form'd for all the witching arts of love:
Though thus in arms they emulate her sons,
And in the horrid phalanx dare to move,
'Tis but the tender fierceness of the dove,
Pecking the hand that hovers o'er her mate: 590
In softness as in firmness far above
Remoter females, famed for sickening prate;
Her mind is nobler sure, her charms perchance as great.

LVIII

The seal Love's dimpling finger hath impress'd
Denotes how soft that chin which bears his touch: 595
Her lips, whose kisses pout to leave their nest,
Bid man be valiant ere he merit such:
Her glance how wildly beautiful! how much
Hath Phœbus woo'd in vain to spoil her cheek,
Which glows yet smoother from his amorous clutch!
Who round the North for paler dames would seek? 601
How poor their forms appear! how languid, wan, and
weak!

LIX

Match me, ye climes! which poets love to laud;
Match me, ye harems of the land! where now
I strike my strain, far distant, to applaud 605
Beauties that ev'n a cynic must avow;

Match me those Houries, whom ye scarce allow
To taste the gale lest Love should ride the wind,
With Spain's dark-glancing daughters—deign to
know,

There your wise Prophet's paradise we find, 610
His black-eyed maids of Heaven, angelically kind.

LX

Oh, thou Parnassus! whom I now survey,
Not in the phrensy of a dreamer's eye,
Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,
But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky, 615
In the wild pomp of mountain majesty!
What marvel if I thus essay to sing?
The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by
Would gladly woo thine Echoes with his string,
Though from thy heights no more one Muse will wave
her wing. 620

LXI

Oft have I dream'd of Thee! whose glorious name
Who knows not, knows not man's divinest lore:
And now I view thee, 'tis, alas! with shame
That I in feeblest accents must adore.
When I recount thy worshippers of yore 625
I tremble, and can only bend the knee;
Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to soar,
But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy
In silent joy to think at last I look on Thee!

LXII

Happier in this than mightiest bards have been, 630
Whose fate to distant homes confined their lot,
Shall I unmoved behold the hallow'd scene,
Which others rave of, though they know it not?

Though here no more Apollo haunts his grot,
And thou, the Muses' seat, art now their grave, 635
Some gentle spirit still pervades the spot,
Sighs in the gale, keeps silence in the cave,
And glides with glassy foot o'er yon melodious wave.

LXIII

Of thee hereafter.--Ev'n amidst my strain
I turn'd aside to pay my homage here; 640
Forgot the land, the sons, the maids of Spain;
Her fate, to every freeborn bosom dear;
And hail'd thee, not perchance without a tear.
Now to my theme—but from thy holy haunt
Let me some remnant, some memorial bear; 645
Yield me one leaf of Daphne's deathless plant,
Nor let thy votary's hope be deem'd an idle vaunt.

LXIV

But ne'er didst thou, fair Mount, when Greece was
young,
See round thy giant base a brighter choir,
Nor e'er did Delphi, when her priestess sung 650
The Pythian hymn with more than mortal fire,
Behold a train more fitting to inspire
The song of love, than Andalusia's maids,
Nurst in the glowing lap of soft desire:
Ah! that to these were given such peaceful shades 655
As Greece can still bestow, though Glory fly her glades.

LXV

Fair is proud Seville; let her country boast
Her strength, her wealth, her site of ancient days;
But Cadiz, rising on the distant coast,
Calls forth a sweeter, though ignoble praise. 660

Ah, Vice! how soft are thy voluptuous ways!
 While boyish blood is mantling, who can 'scape
 The fascination of thy magic gaze?
 A Cherub-hydra round us dost thou gape,
 And mould to every taste thy dear delusive shape. 665

LXVI

When Paphos fell by Time—accursed Time!
 The Queen who conquers all must yield to thee—
 The Pleasures fled, but sought as warm a clime;
 And Venus, constant to her native sea,
 To nought else constant, hither deign'd to flee, 670
 And fix'd her shrine within these walls of white,
 Though not to one dome circumscribeth she
 Her worship, but, devoted to her rite,
 A thousand altars rise, for ever blazing bright.

LXVII

From morn till night, from night till startled Morn
 Peeps blushing on the revel's laughing crew, 676
 The song is heard, the rosy garland worn;
 Devices quaint, and frolics ever new,
 Tread on each other's kibes. A long adieu
 He bids to sober joy that here sojourns: 680
 Nought interrupts the riot, though in lieu
 Of true devotion monkish incense burns,
 And love and prayer unite, or rule the hour by turns.

LXVIII

The Sabbath comes, a day of blessed rest:
 What hallows it upon this Christian shore? 685
 Lo! it is sacred to a solemn feast:
 Hark! heard you not the forest-monarch's roar?

Crashing the lance, he snuffs the spouting gore
Of man and steed, o'erthrown beneath his horn;
The throng'd arena shakes with shouts for more; 690
Yells the mad crowd o'er entrails freshly torn,
Nor shrinks the female eye, nor ev'n affects to mourn.

LXIX

The seventh day this; the jubilee of man.
London! right well thou know'st the day of prayer:
Then thy spruce citizen, wash'd artisan, 695
And smug apprentice gulp their weekly air:
Thy coach of hackney, whiskey, one-horse chair,
And humblest gig through sundry suburbs whirl;
To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow make repair;
Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to hurl, 700
Provoking envious gibe from each pedestrian churl.

LXX

Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribbon'd fair,
Others along the safer turnpike fly;
Some Richmond-hill ascend, some scud to Ware,
And many to the steep of Highgate hie. 705
Ask ye, Bœotian shades! the reason why?
'Tis to the worship of the solemn Horn,
Grasp'd in the holy hand of Mystery,
In whose dread name both men and maids are sworn,
And consecrate the oath with draught, and dance till
morn. 710

LXXI

All have their fooleries—not alike are thine,
Fair Cadiz, rising o'er the dark blue sea!
Soon as the matin bell proclaimeth nine,
Thy saint-adorers count the rosary:

Much is the VIRGIN teased to shrive them free 715
 (Well do I ween the only virgin there)
 From crimes as numerous as her beadsmen be;
 Then to the crowded circus forth they fare:
 Young, old, high, low, at once the same diversion share.

LXXII

The lists are oped, the spacious area clear'd, 720
 Thousands on thousands piled are seated round;
 Long ere the first loud trumpet's note is heard,
 Ne vacant space for lated wight is found:
 Here dons, grandees, but chiefly dames abound,
 Skill'd in the ogle of a roguish eye, 725
 Yet ever well inclined to heal the wound;
 None through their cold disdain are doom'd to die,
 As moon-struck bards complain, by Love's sad archery.

LXXIII

Hush'd is the din of tongues—on gallant steeds,
 With milk-white crest, gold spur, and light-poised
 lance, 730
 Four cavaliers prepare for venturous deeds,
 And lowly bending to the lists advance;
 Rich are their scarfs, their chargers featly prance:
 If in the dangerous game they shine to-day,
 The crowd's loud shout and ladies' lovely glance, 735
 Best prize of better acts, they bear away,
 And all that kings or chiefs e'er gain their toils repay.

LXXIV

In costly sheen and gaudy cloak array'd,
 But all afoot, the light-limb'd Matadore
 Stands in the centre, eager to invade 740
 The lord of lowing herds; but not before

The ground, with cautious tread, is traversed o'er,
Lest aught unseen should lurk to thwart his speed :
His arms a dart, he fights aloof, nor more
Can man achieve without the friendly steed— 745
Alas! too oft condemn'd for him to bear and bleed.

LXXV

Thrice sounds the clarion ; lo! the signal falls,
The den expands, and Expectation mute
Gapes round the silent circle's peopled walls.
Bounds with one lashing spring the mighty brute, 750
And, wildly staring, spurns, with sounding foot,
The sand, nor blindly rushes on his foe :
Here, there, he points his threatening front, to suit
His first attack, wide waving to and fro
His angry tail ; red rolls his eye's dilated glow. 755

LXXVI

Sudden he stops ; his eye is fix'd : away,
Away, thou heedless boy ! prepare the spear :
Now is thy time to perish, or display
The skill that yet may check his mad career.
With well-timed croupe the nimble coursers veer ; 760
On foams the bull, but not unscathed he goes ;
Streams from his flank the crimson torrent clear :
He flies, he wheels, distracted with his throes ;
Dart follows dart ; lance, lance ; loud bellowings speak
his woes.

LXXVII

Again he comes ; nor dart nor lance avail, 765
Nor the wild plunging of the tortured horse ;
Though man and man's avenging arms assail,
Vain are his weapons, vainer is his force.

One gallant steed is stretch'd a mangled corse;
Another, hideous sight! unseam'd appears, 770
His gory chest unveils life's panting source;
Though death-struck, still his feeble frame he rears;
Staggering, but stemming all, his lord unharm'd he bears.

LXXVIII

Foil'd, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,
Full in the centre stands the bull at bay, 775
Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,
And foes disabled in the brutal fray;
And now the Matadores around him play,
Shake the red cloak and poise the ready brand:
Once more through all he bursts his thundering way—
Vain rage! the mantle quits the conynge hand, 781
Wraps his fierce eye—'t is past—he sinks upon the sand!

LXXIX

Where his vast neck just mingles with the spine,
Sheathed in his form the deadly weapon lies.
He stops—he starts—disdaining to decline: 785
Slowly he falls, amidst triumphant cries,
Without a groan, without a struggle dies.
The decorated car appears—on high
The corse is piled—sweet sight for vulgar eyes—
Four steeds that spurn the rein, as swift as shy, 790
Hurl the dark bulk along, scarce seen in dashing by.

LXXX

Such the ungentle sport that oft invites
The Spanish maid, and cheers the Spanish swain.
Nurtured in blood betimes, his heart delights
In vengeance, gloating on another's pain. 795

What private feuds the troubled village stain!
Though now one phalanx'd host should meet the foe,
Enough, alas! in humble homes remain,
To meditate 'gainst friends the secret blow,
For some slight cause of wrath whence life's warm
stream must flow. 800

LXXXI

But Jealousy has fled: his bars, his bolts,
His wither'd centinel, Duenna sage!
And all whereat the generous soul revolts,
Which the stern dotard deem'd he could encage,
Have pass'd to darkness with the vanish'd age. 805
Who late so free as Spanish girls were seen
(Ere War uprose in his volcanic rage),
With braided tresses bounding o'er the green,
While on the gay dance shone Night's lover-loving
Queen?

LXXXII

Oh! many a time and oft, had Harold loved, 810
Or dream'd he loved, since rapture is a dream;
But now his wayward bosom was unmoved,
For not yet had he drunk of Lethe's stream;
And lately had he learn'd with truth to deem
Love has no gift so grateful as his wings: 815
How fair, how young, how soft soe'er he seem,
Full from the fount of Joy's delicious springs
Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings.

LXXXIII

Yet to the beauteous form he was not blind,
Though now it moved him as it moves the wise: 820
Not that Philosophy on such a mind
E'er deign'd to bend her chastely-awful eyes:

But Passion raves itself to rest, or flies;
And Vice, that digs her own voluptuous tomb,
Had buried long his hopes, no more to rise: 825
Pleasure's pall'd victim! life-abhorring gloom
Wrote on his faded brow curst Cain's unresting doom.

LXXXIV

Still he beheld, nor mingled with the throng;
But view'd them not with misanthropic hate:
Fain would he now have join'd the dance, the song;
But who may smile that sinks beneath his fate? 831
Nought that he saw his sadness could abate:
Yet once he struggled 'gainst the demon's sway,
And as in Beauty's bower he pensive sate,
Pour'd forth this unpremeditated lay, 835
To charms as fair as those that soothed his happier day.

TO INEZ

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow;
Alas! I cannot smile again:
Yet Heaven avert that ever thou
Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain. 840

And dost thou ask what secret woe
I bear, corroding joy and youth?
And wilt thou vainly seek to know
A pang, ev'n thou must fail to soothe?

3

It is not love, it is not hate, 845
Nor low Ambition's honours lost,
That bids me loathe my present state,
And fly from all I prized the most:

4

It is that weariness which springs
From all I meet, or hear, or see: 850
To me no pleasure Beauty brings;
Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

5

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom
The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore;
That will not look beyond the tomb, 855
But cannot hope for rest before.

6

What Exile from himself can flee?
To zones though more and more remote,
Still, still pursues, where'er I be,
The blight of life—the demon Thought. 860

7

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,
And taste of all that I forsake;
Oh! may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake!

8

Through many a clime 't is mine to go, 865
With many a retrospection curst;
And all my solace is to know,
Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

9

What is that worst? Nay, do not ask—

In pity from the search forbear: 870

Smile on—nor venture to unmask

Man's heart, and view the Hell that's there.

LXXXV

Adieu, fair Cadiz! yea, a long adieu!

Who may forget how well thy walls have stood?

When all were changing, thou alone wert true, 875

First to be free, and last to be subdued:

And if amidst a scene, a shock so rude,

Some native blood was seen thy streets to dye,

A traitor only fell beneath the feud:

Here all were noble, save Nobility! 880

None hugg'd a conqueror's chain, save fallen Chivalry!

LXXXVI

Such be the sons of Spain, and strange her fate!

They fight for freedom who were never free,

A Kingless people for a nerveless state;

Her vassals combat when their chieftains flee, 885

True to the veriest slaves of Treachery:

Fond of a land which gave them nought but life,

Pride points the path that leads to Liberty;

Back to the struggle, baffled in the strife,

War, war is still the cry, 'War even to the knife!' 890

LXXXVII

Ye, who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,

Go, read whate'er is writ of bloodiest strife:

Whate'er keen Vengeance urged on foreign foe

Can act, is acting there against man's life:

From flashing scimitar to secret knife, 895
 War mouldeth there each weapon to his need—
 So may he guard the sister and the wife,
 So may he make each curst oppressor bleed—
 So may such foes deserve the most remorseless deed !

LXXXVIII

Flows there a tear of pity for the dead ? 900
 Look o'er the ravage of the reeking plain ;
 Look on the hands with female slaughter red ;
 Then to the dogs resign the unburied slain,
 Then to the vulture let each corse remain,
 Albeit unworthy of the prey-bird's maw ; 905
 Let their bleach'd bones, and blood's unbleaching stain,
 Long mark the battle-field with hideous awe :
 Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes we saw !

LXXXIX

Nor yet, alas ! the dreadful work is done ;
 Fresh legions pour adown the Pyrenees : 910
 It deepens still, the work is scarce begun,
 Nor mortal eye the distant end foresees.
 Fall'n nations gaze on Spain ; if freed, she frees
 More than her fell Pizarros once enchain'd :
 Strange retribution ! now Columbia's ease 915
 Repairs the wrongs that Quito's sons sustain'd,
 While o'er the parent clime prowls Murder unrestrain'd.

XC

Not all the blood at Talavera shed,
 Not all the marvels of Barossa's fight,
 Not Albuera lavish of the dead, 920
 Have won for Spain her well-asserted right.

When shall her Olive-Branch be free from blight?
When shall she breathe her from the blushing toil?
How many a doubtful day shall sink in night,
Ere the Frank robber turn him from his spoil, 925
And Freedom's stranger-tree grow native of the soil!

XCI

And thou, my friend!—since unavailing woe
Bursts from my heart, and mingles with the strain—
Had the sword laid thee with the mighty low,
Pride might forbid e'en Friendship to complain: 930
But thus unlaurel'd to descend in vain,
By all forgotten, save the lonely breast,
And mix unbleeding with the boasted slain,
While Glory crowns so many a meaner crest!
What hadst thou done to sink so peacefully to rest? 935

XCII

Oh, known the earliest, and esteem'd the most!
Dear to a heart where nought was left so dear!
Though to my hopeless days for ever lost,
In dreams deny me not to see thee here!
And Morn in secret shall renew the tear 940
Of Consciousness awaking to her woes,
And Fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
Till my frail frame return to whence it rose,
And mourn'd and mourner lie united in repose.

XCIII

Here is one fyttē of Harold's pilgrimage: 945
Ye who of him may further seek to know,
Shall find some tidings in a future page,
If he that rhymeth now may scribble moe.

Is this too much? stern Critic! say not so:
Patience! and ye shall hear what he beheld 950
In other lands, where he was doom'd to go:
Lands that contain the monuments of Eld,
Ere Greece and Grecian arts by barbarous hands
were quell'd.

CANTO THE SECOND

COME, blue-eyed maid of heaven!—but thou, alas!
Didst never yet one mortal song inspire—
Goddess of Wisdom! here thy temple was,
And is, despite of war and wasting fire,
And years, that bade thy worship to expire: 5
But worse than steel, and flame, and ages slow,
Is the dread sceptre and dominion dire
Of men who never felt the sacred glow
That thoughts of thee and thine on polish'd breasts
bestow.

II

Ancient of days! august Athena! where, 10
Where are thy men of might? thy grand in soul?
Gone—glimmering through the dream of things
that were:
First in the race that led to Glory's goal,
They won, and pass'd away—is this the whole?
A schoolboy's tale, the wonder of an hour! 15
The warrior's weapon and the sophist's stole
Are sought in vain, and o'er each mouldering tower,
Dim with the mist of years, gray flits the shade of power.

III

Son of the morning, rise! approach you here!
Come—but molest not yon defenceless urn: 20
Look on this spot—a nation's sepulchre!
Abode of gods, whose shrines no longer burn.

Even gods must yield—religions take their turn :
'T was Jove's—'t is Mahomet's—and other creeds
Will rise with other years, till man shall learn 25
Vainly his incense soars, his victim bleeds ;
Poor child of Doubt and Death, whose hope is built
on reeds.

IV

Bound to the earth, he lifts his eye to heaven—
Is't not enough, unhappy thing! to know
Thou art? Is this a boon so kindly given, 30
That being, thou wouldst be again, and go,
Thou know'st not, reck'st not, to what region, so
On earth no more, but mingled with the skies?
Still wilt thou dream on future joy and woe?
Regard and weigh yon dust before it flies: 35
That little urn saith more than thousand homilies.

V

Or burst the vanish'd Hero's lofty mound ;
Far on the solitary shore he sleeps :
He fell, and falling nations mourn'd around ;
But now not one of saddening thousands weeps, 40
Nor warlike worshipper his vigil keeps
Where demi-gods appear'd, as records tell.
Remove yon skull from out the scatter'd heaps :
Is that a temple where a God may dwell?
Why ev'n the worm at last disdains her shatter'd cell! 45

VI

Look on its broken arch, its ruin'd wall,
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul :
Yes, this was once Ambition's airy hall,
The dome of Thought, the palace of the Soul :

Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole, 50
The gay recess of Wisdom and of Wit,
And Passion's host, that never brook'd control:
Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,
People this lonely tower, this tenement refit?

VII

Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son! 55
'All that we know is, nothing can be known.'
Why should we shrink from what we cannot shun?
Each hath his pang, but feeble sufferers groan
With brain-born dreams of evil all their own.
Pursue what Chance or Fate proclaimeth best; 60
Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron:
There no forced banquet claims the sated guest,
But Silence spreads the couch of ever welcome rest.

VIII

Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore, 65
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore;
How sweet it were in concert to adore
With those who made our mortal labours light!
To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no more! 70
Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the
right!

IX

There, thou!—whose love and life together fled,
Have left me here to love and live in vain—
Twined with my heart, and can I deem thee dead 75
When busy Memory flashes on my brain?

Well—I will dream that we may meet again,
And woo the vision to my vacant breast:
If aught of young Remembrance then remain,
Be 'as it may Futurity's behest, 80
For me 't were bliss enough to know thy spirit blest!

X

Here let me sit upon this massy stone,
The marble column's yet unshaken base;
Here, son of Saturn! was thy fav'rite throne:
Mightiest of many such! Hence let me trace 85
The latent grandeur of thy dwelling-place.
It may not be: nor ev'n can Fancy's eye
Restore what Time hath labour'd to deface.
Yet these proud pillars claim no passing sigh;
Unmoved the Moslem sits, the light Greek carols by. 90

XI

But who, of all the plunderers of yon fane
On high, where Pallas linger'd, loth to flee
The latest relic of her ancient reign;
The last, the worst, dull spoiler, who was he?
Blush, Caledonia! such thy son could be! 95
England! I joy no child he was of thine:
Thy free-born men should spare what once was free;
Yet they could violate each saddening shrine,
And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant brine.

XII

But most the modern Pict's ignoble boast, 100
To rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time hath spared:
Cold as the crags upon his native coast,
His mind as barren and his heart as hard,

Is he whose head conceived, whose hand prepared,
Aught to displace Athena's poor remains: 105
Her sons, too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains,
And never knew, till then, the weight of Despot's chains.

XIII

What! shall it e'er be said by British tongue,
Albion was happy in Athena's tears? 110
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom wrung,
Tell not the deed to blushing Europe's ears;
The ocean queen, the free Britannia, bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding land:
Yes, she, whose gen'rous aid her name endears, 115
Tore down those remnants with a harpy's hand,
Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand.

XIV

Where was thine Ægis, Pallas! that appall'd
Stern Alaric and Havoc on their way?
Where Peleus' son? whom Hell in vain inthrall'd, 120
His shade from Hades upon that dread day
Bursting to light in terrible array!
What! could not Pluto spare the chief once more,
To scare a second robber from his prey?
Idly he wander'd on the Stygian shore, 125
Nor now preserved the walls he loved to shield before.

XV

Cold is the heart, fair Greece! that looks on thee,
Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they loved;
Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defaced, thy mouldering shrines removed

By British hands, which it had best behaved 131
To guard those relics ne'er to be restored.
Curst be the hour when from their isle they roved,
And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
And snatch'd thy shrinking Gods to northern climes
abhorr'd! 135

XVI

But where is Harold? shall I then forget
To urge the gloomy wanderer o'er the wave?
Little reck'd he of all that men regret;
No loved-one now in feign'd lament could rave;
No friend the parting hand extended gave, 140
Ere the cold stranger pass'd to other climes:
Hard is his heart whom charms may not enslave;
But Harold felt not as in other times,
And left without a sigh the land of war and crimes.

XVII

He that has sail'd upon the dark blue sea 145
Has view'd at times, I ween, a full fair sight;
When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,
The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight;
Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the right,
The glorious main expanding o'er the bow, 150
The convoy spread like wild swans in their flight,
The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,
So gaily curl the waves before each dashing prow.

XVIII

And oh, the little warlike world within!
The well-reeved guns, the netted canopy, 155
The hoarse command, the busy humming din,
When, at a word, the tops are mann'd on high:

Hark, to the Boatswain's call, the cheering cry!
While through the seaman's hand the tackle glides;
Or schoolboy Midshipman that, standing by, 160
Strains his shrill pipe as good or ill betides,
And well the docile crew that skilful urchin guides.

XIX

White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
Where on the watch the staid Lieutenant walks:
Look on that part which sacred doth remain 165
For the lone chieftain, who majestic stalks,
Silent and fear'd by all—not oft he talks
With aught beneath him, if he would preserve
That strict restraint, which broken, ever balks
Conquest and fame: but Britons rarely swerve 170
From law, however stern, which tends their strength
to nerve.

XX

Blow! swiftly blow, thou keel-compelling gale!
Till the broad sun withdraws his lessening ray;
Then must the pennant-bearer slacken sail,
That lagging barks may make their lazy way. 175
Ah! grievance sore, and listless dull delay,
To waste on sluggish hulks the sweetest breeze!
What leagues are lost, before the dawn of day,
Thus loitering pensive on the willing seas,
The flapping sail haul'd down to halt for logs like these!

XXI

The moon is up; by Heaven, a lovely eve! 181
Long streams of light o'er dancing waves expand;
Now lads on shore may sigh, and maids believe:
Such be our fate when we return to land!

Meantime some rude Arion's restless hand 185
Wakes the brisk harmony that sailors love;
A circle there of merry listeners stand,
Or to some well-known measure featly move,
Thoughtless, as if on shore they still were free to rove.

XXII

Through Calpe's straits survey the steepy shore; 190
Europe and Afric on each other gaze!
Lands of the dark-eyed Maid and dusky Moor
Alike beheld beneath pale Hecate's blaze:
How softly on the Spanish shore she plays,
Disclosing rock, and slope, and forest brown, 195
Distinct, though darkening with her waning phase;
But Mauritania's giant shadows frown,
From mountain-cliff to coast descending sombre down.

XXIII

'Tis night, when Meditation bids us feel
We once have loved, though love is at an end: 200
The heart, lone mourner of its baffled zeal,
Though friendless now, will dream it had a friend.
Who with the weight of years would wish to bend,
When Youth itself survives young Love and Joy?
Alas! when mingling souls forget to blend, 205
Death hath but little left him to destroy!
Ah! happy years! once more who would not be a boy?

XXIV

Thus bending o'er the vessel's laving side,
To gaze on Dian's wave-reflected sphere,
The soul forgets her schemes of hope and pride, 210
And flies unconscious o'er each backward year.

None are so desolate but something dear,
Dearer than self, possesses or possess'd
A thought, and claims the homage of a tear;
A flashing pang! of which the weary breast 215
Would still, albeit in vain, the heavy heart divest.

XXV

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been; 220
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steep and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 't is but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores
unroll'd. 225

XXVI

But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;
Minions of splendour shrinking from distress! 230
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less,
Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and sued;
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

XXVII

More blest the life of godly eremite, 235
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen,
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so serene,

That he who there at such an hour hath been
Will wistful linger on that hallow'd spot; 240
Then slowly tear him from the 'witching scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot.

XXVIII

Pass we the long, unvarying course, the track
Oft trod, that never leaves a trace behind; 245
Pass we the calm, the gale, the change, the tack,
And each well-known caprice of wave and wind;
Pass we the joys and sorrows sailors find,
Coop'd in their winged sea-girt citadel;
The foul, the fair, the contrary, the kind, 250
As breezes rise and fall and billows swell,
Till on some jocund morn—lo, land! and all is well.

XXIX

But not in silence pass Calypso's isles,
The sister tenants of the middle deep;
There for the weary still a haven smiles, 255
Though the fair goddess long hath ceased to weep,
And o'er her cliffs a fruitless watch to keep
For him who dared prefer a mortal bride:
Here, too, his boy essay'd the dreadful leap
Stern Mentor urged from high to yonder tide; 260
While thus of both bereft, the nymph-queen doubly
sigh'd.

XXX

Her reign is past, her gentle glories gone:
But trust not this: too easy youth, beware!
A mortal sovereign holds her dangerous throne,
And thou mayst find a new Calypso there. 265

Sweet Florence! could another ever share
This wayward, loveless heart, it would be thine:
But check'd by every tie, I may not dare
To cast a worthless offering at thy shrine,
Nor ask so dear a breast to feel one pang for mine. 270

XXXI

Thus Harold deem'd, as on that lady's eye
He look'd, and met its beam without a thought
Save admiration glancing harmless by:
Love kept aloof, albeit not far remote,
Who knew his votary often lost and caught, 275
But knew him as his worshipper no more,
And ne'er again the boy his bosom sought:
Since now he vainly urged him to adore,
Well deem'd the little God his ancient sway was o'er.

XXXII

Fair Florence found, in sooth with some amaze, 280
One who, 't was said, still sigh'd to all he saw,
Withstand, unmoved, the lustre of her gaze,
Which others hail'd with real or mimic awe,
Their hope, their doom, their punishment, their law;
All that gay Beauty from her bondsmen claims: 285
And much she marvell'd that a youth so raw
Nor felt, nor feign'd at least, the oft-told flames,
Which, though sometimes they frown, yet rarely anger
dames.

XXXIII

Little knew she that seeming marble heart,
Now mask'd in silence or withheld by pride, 290
Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art,
And spread its snares licentious far and wide;

Nor from the base pursuit had turn'd aside,
As long as aught was worthy to pursue:
But Harold on such arts no more relied; 295
And had he doted on those eyes so blue,
Yet never would he join the lover's whining crew.

XXXIV

Not much he kens, I ween, of woman's breast,
Who thinks that wanton thing is won by sighs;
What careth she for hearts when once possess'd? 300
Do proper homage to thine idol's eyes;
But not too humbly, or she will despise
Thee and thy suit, though told in moving tropes:
Disguise ev'n tenderness, if thou art wise;
Brisk Confidence still best with woman copes: 305
Pique her and soothe in turn, soon Passion crowns thy
hopes.

XXXV

'Tis an old lesson; Time approves it true,
And those who know it best deplore it most;
When all is won that all desire to woo,
The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost: 310
Youth wasted, minds degraded, honour lost,
These are thy fruits, successful Passion! these!
If, kindly cruel, early hope is crost,
Still to the last it rankles, a disease,
Not to be cured when love itself forgets to please. 315

XXXVI

Away! nor let me loiter in my song,
For we have many a mountain-path to tread,
And many a varied shore to sail along,
By pensive Sadness, not by Fiction, led—

Climes, fair withal as ever mortal head 320
Imagined in its little schemes of thought;
Or e'er in new Utopias were ared,
To teach man what he might be, or he ought;
If that corrupted thing could ever such be taught.

XXXVII

Dear Nature is the kindest mother still, 325
Though always changing in her aspect mild;
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-wean'd, though not her favour'd child.
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polish'd dares pollute her path: 330
To me by day or night she ever smiled,
Though I have mark'd her when none other hath,
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in
wrath.

XXXVIII

Land of Albania! where Iskander rose,
Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise, 335
And he his namesake, whose oft-baffled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprise:
Land of Albania! let me bend mine eyes
On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage men!
The cross descends, thy minarets arise, 340
And the pale crescent sparkles in the glen,
Through many a cypress grove within each city's ken.

XXXIX

Childe Harold sail'd, and pass'd the barren spot,
Where sad Penelope o'erlook'd the wave;
And onward view'd the mount, not yet forgot, 345
The lover's refuge, and the Lesbian's grave.

Dark Sappho! could not verse immortal save
 That breast imbued with such immortal fire?
 Could she not live who life eternal gave?
 If life eternal may await the lyre, 350
 That only Heaven to which Earth's children may aspire.

XL

'T was on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve
 Childe Harold hail'd Leucadia's cape afar;
 A spot he long'd to see, nor cared to leave:
 Oft did he mark the scenes of vanish'd war, 355
 Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar;
 Mark them unmoved, for he would not delight
 (Born beneath some remote inglorious star)
 In themes of bloody fray, or gallant fight,
 But loathed the bravo's trade, and laughed at martial
 wight. 360

XLI

But when he saw the evening star above
 Leucadia's far-projecting rock of woe,
 And hail'd the last resort of fruitless love,
 He felt, or deem'd he felt, no common glow:
 And as the stately vessel glided slow 365
 Beneath the shadow of that ancient mount,
 He watch'd the billows' melancholy flow,
 And, sunk albeit in thought as he was wont,
 More placid seem'd his eye, and smooth his pallid front.

XLII

Morn dawns: and with it stern Albania's hills, 370
 Dark Suli's rocks, and Pindus' inland peak,
 Robed half in mist, bedew'd with snowy rills,
 Array'd in many a dun and purple streak,

Arise; and, as the clouds along them break,
Disclose the dwelling of the mountaineer; 375
Here roams the wolf, the eagle whets his beak,
Birds, beasts of prey, and wilder men appear,
And gathering storms around convulse the closing year.

XLIII

Now Harold found himself at length alone,
And bade to Christian tongues a long adieu; 380
Now he adventured on a shore unknown,
Which all admire, but many dread to view:
His breast was arm'd 'gainst fate, his wants were few;
Peril he sought not, but ne'er shrank to meet:
The scene was savage, but the scene was new; 385
This made the ceaseless toil of travel sweet,
Beat back keen winter's blast, and welcomed summer's
heat.

XLIV

Here the red cross, for still the cross is here,
Though sadly scoff'd at by the circumcised,
Forgets that pride to pamper'd priesthood dear; 390
Churchman and votary alike despised.
Foul Superstition! howsoe'er disguised,
Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent, cross,
For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss! 395
Who from true worship's gold can separate thy dross?

XLV

Ambracia's gulf behold, where once was lost
A world for woman, lovely, harmless thing!
In yonder rippling bay, their naval host
Did many a Roman chief and Asian king 400

To doubtful conflict, certain slaughter bring :
Look where the second Cæsar's trophies rose :
Now, like the hands that rear'd them, withering :
Imperial anarchs, doubling human woes !
GOD ! was thy globe ordain'd for such to win and lose ?

XLVI

From the dark barriers of that rugged clime, 406
Ev'n to the centre of Illyria's vales,
Childe Harold pass'd o'er many a mount sublime,
Through lands scarce noticed in historic tales ;
Yet in famed Attica such lovely dales 410
Are rarely seen ; nor can fair Tempe boast
A charm they know not ; loved Parnassus fails,
Though classic ground and consecrated most,
To match some spots that lurk within this lowering coast.

XLVII

He pass'd bleak Pindus, Acherusia's lake, 415
And left the primal city of the land,
And onwards did his further journey take
To greet Albania's chief, whose dread command
Is lawless law ; for with a bloody hand
He sways a nation, turbulent and bold ; 420
Yet here and there some daring mountain-band
Disdain his power, and from their rocky hold
Hurl their defiance far, nor yield, unless to gold.

XLVIII

Monastic Zitza ! from thy shady brow,
Thou small but favour'd spot of holy ground ! 425
Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found !

Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound,
And bluest skies that harmonise the whole:
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing sound 430
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please
the soul.

XLIX

Amidst the grove that crowns yon tufted hill,
Which, were it not for many a mountain nigh
Rising in lofty ranks, and loftier still, 435
Might well itself be deem'd of dignity,
The convent's white walls glisten fair on high:
Here dwells the caloyer, nor rude is he,
Nor niggard of his cheer; the passer by
Is welcome still; nor heedless will he flee 440
From hence, if he delight kind Nature's sheen to see.

L

Here in the sultriest season let him rest,
Fresh is the green beneath those aged trees;
Here winds of gentlest wing will fan his breast,
From heaven itself he may inhale the breeze: 445
The plain is far beneath—oh! let him seize
Pure pleasure while he can; the scorching ray
Here pierceth not, impregnate with disease:
Then let his length the loitering pilgrim lay,
And gaze, untired, the morn, the noon, the eve away. 450

LI

Dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight,
Nature's volcanic amphitheatre,
Chimæra's alps extend from left to right:
Beneath, a living valley seems to stir;

Flocks play, trees wave, streams flow, the mountain-fir
Nodding above; behold black Acheron! 456

Once consecrated to the sepulchre.

Pluto! if this be hell I look upon,
Close shamed Elysium's gates, my shade shall seek
for none.

LII

Ne city's towers pollute the lovely view; 460

Unseen is Yanina, though not remote,

Veil'd by the screen of hills: here men are few,

Scanty the hamlet, rare the lonely cot:

But, peering down each precipice, the goat

Browseth; and, pensive o'er his scatter'd flock, 465

The little shepherd in his white capote

Doth lean his boyish form along the rock,

Or in his cave awaits the tempest's short-lived shock.

LIII

Oh! where, Dodona! is thine aged grove,

Prophetic fount, and oracle divine? 470

What valley echoed the response of Jove?

What trace remaineth of the Thunderer's shrine?

All, all forgotten—and shall man repine

That his frail bonds to fleeting life are broke?

Cease, fool! the fate of gods may well be thine: 475

Wouldst thou survive the marble or the oak?

When nations, tongues, and worlds must sink beneath
the stroke!

LIV

Epirus' bounds recede, and mountains fail;

Tired of up-gazing still, the wearied eye

Reposes gladly on as smooth a vale 480

As ever Spring yclad in grassy dye:

Ev'n on a plain no humble beauties lie,
Where some bold river breaks the long expanse,
And woods along the banks are waving high,
Whose shadows in the glassy waters dance, 485
Or with the moonbeam sleep in midnight's solemn trance.

LV

The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit,
And Laos wide and fierce came roaring by;
The shades of wonted night were gathering yet,
When, down the steep banks winding warily, 490
Childe Harold saw, like meteors in the sky,
The glittering minarets of Tepalen,
Whose walls o'erlook the stream; and drawing nigh,
He heard the busy hum of warrior-men
Swelling the breeze that sigh'd along the lengthening
glen. 495

LVI

He pass'd the sacred Haram's silent tower,
And underneath the wide o'erarching gate
Survey'd the dwelling of this chief of power,
Where all around proclaim'd his high estate.
Amidst no common pomp the despot sate, 500
While busy preparation shook the court,
Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and santons wait;
Within, a palace, and, without, a fort:
Here men of every clime appear to make resort.

LVI

Richly caparison'd, a ready row 505
Of armed horse, and many a warlike store,
Circled the wide-extending court below;
Above, strange groups adorn'd the corridore;

And oft-times through the area's echoing door,
Some high-capp'd Tartar spurr'd his steed away: 510
The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor,
Here mingled in their many-hued array,
While the deep war-drum's sound announced the close
of day.

LVIII

The wild Albanian kirtled to his knee,
With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun, 515
And gold-embroider'd garments, fair to see;
The crimson-scarfed men of Macedon;
The Delhi with his cap of terror on,
And crooked glaive; the lively, supple Greek;
And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son; 520
The bearded Turk, that rarely deigns to speak,
Master of all around, too potent to be meek,

LIX

Are mix'd conspicuous: some recline in groups,
Scanning the motley scene that varies round;
There some grave Moslem to devotion stoops, 525
And some that smoke, and some that play, are found;
Here the Albanian proudly treads the ground;
Half whispering there the Greek is heard to prate;
Hark! from the mosque the nightly solemn sound,
The Muezzin's call doth shake the minaret, 530
'There is no god but God!—to prayer—lo! God is great!'

LX

Just at this season Ramazani's fast
Through the long day its penance did maintain:
But when the lingering twilight hour was past,
Revel and feast assumed the rule again: 535

Now all was bustle, and the menial train
 Prepared and spread the plenteous board within;
 The vacant gallery now seem'd made in vain,
 But from the chambers came the mingling din,
 As page and slave anon were passing out and in. 540

LXI

Here woman's voice is never heard: apart,
 And scarce permitted, guarded, veil'd, to move,
 She yields to one her person and her heart,
 Tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to rove:
 For, not unhappy in her master's love, 545
 And joyful in a mother's gentlest cares,
 Blest cares! all other feelings far above!
 Herself more sweetly rears the babe she bears,
 Who never quits the breast, no meaner passion shares.

LXII

In marble-paved pavilion, where a spring 550
 Of living water from the centre rose,
 Whose bubbling did a genial freshness fling,
 And soft voluptuous couches breathed repose,
 ALI reclined, a man of war and woes:
 Yet in his lineaments ye cannot trace, 555
 While Gentleness her milder radiance throws
 Along that aged venerable face,
 The deeds that lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace.

LXIII

It is not that yon hoary lengthening beard
 Ill suits the passions which belong to youth; 560
 Love conquers age—so Hafiz hath averr'd,
 So sings the Teian, and he sings in sooth—

But crimes that scorn the tender voice of ruth,
Beseeming all men ill, but most the man
In years, have mark'd him with a tiger's tooth; 565
Blood follows blood, and, through their mortal span,
In bloodier acts conclude those who with blood began.

LXIV

'Mid many things most new to ear and eye
The pilgrim rested here his weary feet,
And gazed around on Moslem luxury, 570
Till quickly wearied with that spacious seat
Of Wealth and Wantonness, the choice retreat
Of sated Grandeur from the city's noise:
And were it humbler, it in sooth were sweet;
But Peace abhorreth artificial joys, 575
And Pleasure, leagued with Pomp, the zest of both
destroys.

LXV

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
Where is the foe that ever saw their back?
Who can so well the toil of war endure? 580
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need:
Their wrath how deadly! but their friendship sure,
When Gratitude or Valour bids them bleed,
Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead. 585

LXVI

Childe Harold saw them in their chieftain's tower
Thronging to war in splendour and success;
And after view'd them, when, within their power,
Himself awhile the victim of distress;

That saddening hour when bad men hotlier press: 590
But these did shelter him beneath their roof,
When less barbarians would have cheer'd him less,
And fellow-countrymen have stood aloof—
In aught that tries the heart how few withstand the
proof!

LXVII

It chanced that adverse winds once drove his bark 595
Full on the coast of Suli's shaggy shore,
When all around was desolate and dark;
To land was perilous, to sojourn more;
Yet for a while the mariners forbore,
Dubious to trust where treachery might lurk: 600
At length they ventured forth, though doubting sore
That those who loathe alike the Frank and Turk
Might once again renew their ancient butcher-work.

LXVIII

Vain fear! the Suliotes stretch'd the welcome hand,
Led them o'er rocks and past the dangerous swamp,
Kinder than polish'd slaves, though not so bland, 606
And piled the hearth, and wrung their garments damp,
And fill'd the bowl, and trimm'd the cheerful lamp,
And spread their fare; though homely, all they had:
Such conduct bears Philanthropy's rare stamp: 610
To rest the weary and to soothe the sad,
Doth lesson happier men, and shames at least the bad.

LXIX

It came to pass, that when he did address
Himself to quit at length this mountain-land,
Combined marauders half-way barr'd egress, 615
And wasted far and near with glaive and brand;

And therefore did he take a trusty band
To traverse Acarnania's forest wide,
In war well season'd, and with labours tann'd,
Till he did greet white Achelous' tide, 620
And from his further bank Ætolia's wolds espied.

LXX

Where lone Utraikey forms its circling cove,
And weary waves retire to gleam at rest,
How brown the foliage of the green hill's grove,
Nodding at midnight o'er the calm bay's breast, 625
As winds come lightly whispering from the west,
Kissing, not ruffling, the blue deep's serene:—
Here Harold was received a welcome guest;
Nor did he pass unmoved the gentle scene, 629
For many a joy could he from Night's soft presence glean.

LXXI

On the smooth shore the night-fires brightly blazed,
The feast was done, the red wine circling fast,
And he that unawares had there ygazed
With gaping wonderment had stared aghast;
For ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past, 635
The native revels of the troop began;
Each Palikar his sabre from him cast,
And bounding hand in hand, man link'd to man,
Yelling their uncouth dirge, long daunced the kirtled
clan.

LXXII

Childe Harold at a little distance stood 640
And view'd, but not displeased, the revelrie,
Nor hated harmless mirth, however rude:
In sooth, it was no vulgar sight to see

Their barbarous, yet their not indecent, glee;
And, as the flames along their faces gleam'd, 645
Their gestures nimble, dark eyes flashing free,
The long wild locks that to their girdles stream'd,
While thus in concert they this lay half sang, half
scream'd:—

I

TAMBOURGI! Tambourgi! thy 'larum afar
Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war; 650
All the sons of the mountains arise at the note,
Chimariot, Illyrian, and dark Suliote!

2

Oh! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote?
To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,
And descends to the plain like the stream from the
rock. 656

3

Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive
The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live?
Let those guns so unerring such vengeance forego?
What mark is so fair as the breast of a foe? 660

4

Macedonia sends forth her invincible race;
For a time they abandon the cave and the chase;
But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder, before
The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

5

Then the pirates of Parga that dwell by the waves, 665
And teach the pale Franks what it is to be slaves,
Shall leave on the beach the long galley and oar,
And track to his covert the captive on shore.

6

I ask not the pleasures that riches supply,
My sabre shall win what the feeble must buy; 670
Shall win the young bride with her long flowing hair,
And many a maid from her mother shall tear.

7

I love the fair face of the maid in her youth,
Her caresses shall lull me, her music shall soothe;
Let her bring from the chamber her many-toned
lyre, 675
And sing us a song on the fall of her sire.

8

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,
The shrieks of the conquer'd, the conqueror's yell;
The roofs that we fired, and the plunder we shared,
The wealthy we slaughter'd, the lovely we spared. 680

9

I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear;
He neither must know who would serve the Vizier:
Since the days of our prophet the Crescent ne'er saw
A chief ever glorious like Ali Pashaw.

10

Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped, 685
Let the yellow-hair'd Giaours view his horsetail with
dread;

When his Delhis come dashing in blood o'er the banks,
How few shall escape from the Muscovite ranks!

11

Selictar! unsheathe then our chief's scimitar;
Tambourgi! thy 'larum give promise of war. 690
Ye mountains, that see us descend to the shore,
Shall view us as victors, or view us no more!

LXXIII

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!
Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth, 695
And long accustom'd bondage uncreate?
Not such thy sons who whilome did await,
The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait—
Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume, 700
Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the tomb?

LXXIV

Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
Couldst thou forebode the dismal hour which now
Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain? 705

Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;
Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand;
From birth till death enslaved; in word, in deed,
unmann'd. 710

LXXV

In all save form alone, how changed! and who
That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
Who but would deem their bosoms burn'd anew
With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!
And many dream withal the hour is nigh 715
That gives them back their fathers' heritage:
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful page.

LXXVI

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not 720
Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars flame. 725
Shades of the Helots! triumph o'er your foe!
Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the same;
Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thy years of shame.

LXXVII

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Othman's race again may wrest; 730
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former guest;

Or Wahab's rebel brood, who dared divest
The prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,
May wind their path of blood along the West; 735
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

LXXVIII

Yet mark their mirth—ere lenten days begin,
That penance which their holy rites prepare
To shrive from man his weight of mortal sin, 740
By daily abstinence and nightly prayer:
But ere his sackcloth garb Repentance wear,
Some days of joyaunce are decreed to all,
To take of pleasaunce each his secret share,
In motley robe to dance at masking ball, 745
And join the mimic train of merry Carnival.

LXXIX

And whose more rife with merriment than thine,
Oh Stamboul! once the empress of their reign?
Though turbans now pollute Sophia's shrine,
And Greece her very altars eyes in vain: 750
(Alas! her woes will still pervade my strain!)
Gay were her minstrels once, for free her throng,
All felt the common joy they now must feign,
Nor oft I've seen such sight, nor heard such song,
As woo'd the eye, and thrill'd the Bosphorus along. 755

LXXX

Loud was the lightsome tumult on the shore,
Oft Music changed, but never ceased her tone,
And timely echo'd back the measured oar,
And rippling waters made a pleasant moan:

The Queen of tides on high consenting shone, 760
And when a transient breeze swept o'er the wave,
'T was, as if darting from her heavenly throne,
A brighter glance her form reflected gave,
Till sparkling billows seem'd to light the banks they lave.

LXXXI

Glanced many a light caique along the foam, 765
Danced on the shore the daughters of the land,
No thought had man or maid of rest or home,
While many a languid eye and thrilling hand
Exchanged the look few bosoms may withstand,
Or gently prest, return'd the pressure still: 770
Oh Love! young Love! bound in thy rosy band,
Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem Life's years of ill!

LXXXII

But, midst the throng in merry masquerade,
Lurk there no hearts that throb with secret pain, 775
Even through the closest searment half betray'd?
To such the gentle murmurs of the main
Seem to re-echo all they mourn in vain;
To such the gladness of the gamesome crowd
Is source of wayward thought and stern disdain. 780
How do they loathe the laughter idly loud,
And long to change the robe of revel for the shroud!

LXXXIII

This must he feel, the true-born son of Greece,
If Greece one true-born patriot still can boast:
Not such as prate of war, but skulk in peace, 785
The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all he lost,

Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can accost,
And wield the slavish sickle, not the sword:
Ah! Greece! they love thee least who owe thee most—
Their birth, their blood, and that sublime record 790
Of hero sires, who shame thy now degenerate horde!

LXXXIV

When riseth Lacedemon's hardihood,
When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,
When Athens' children are with hearts endued,
When Grecian mothers shall give birth to men, 795
Then may'st thou be restored; but not till then.
A thousand years scarce serve to form a state;
An hour may lay it in the dust: and when
Can man its shatter'd splendour renovate,
Recall its virtues back, and vanquish Time and Fate? 800

LXXXV

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
Land of lost gods and godlike men, art thou!
Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow,
Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite now:
Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow, 805
Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
Broke by the share of every rustic plough:
So perish monuments of mortal birth,
So perish all in turn, save well-recorded Worth;

LXXXVI

Save where some solitary column mourns 810
Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;
Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave;

Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,
Where the gray stones and unmolested grass 815
Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave;
While strangers only not regardless pass,
Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh 'Alas!'

LXXXVII

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild;
Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields, 820
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honey'd wealth Hymettus yields;
There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-air;
Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds, 825
Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare;
Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

LXXXVIII

Where'er we tread 't is haunted, holy ground;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around, 830
And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon;
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone: 835
Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

LXXXIX

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same;
Unchanged in all except its foreign lord;
Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame
The Battle-field, where Persia's victim horde 840

First bow'd beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,
As on the morn to distant Glory dear,
When Marathon became a magic word;
Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear
The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career. 845

XC

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow;
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below;
Death in the front, Destruction in the rear!
Such was the scene—what now remaineth here? 850
What sacred trophy marks the hallow'd ground,
Recording Freedom's smile and Asia's tear?
The rifled urn, the violated mound,
The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger! spurns
around.

XCI

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past 855
Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng;
Long shall the voyager, with th' Ionian blast,
Hail the bright clime of battle and of song;
Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore; 860
Boast of the aged! lesson of the young!
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the Muse unveil their awful lore.

XCII

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,
If aught that's kindred cheer the welcome hearth;
He that is lonely, hither let him roam, 866
And gaze complacent on congenial earth.

Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth :
But he whom Sadness sootheth may abide,
And scarce regret the region of his birth, 870
When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side,
Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died.

XCIII

Let such approach this consecrated land,
And pass in peace along the magic waste ;
But spare its relics—let no busy hand 875
Deface the scenes, already how defaced !
Not for such purpose were these altars placed :
Revere the remnants nations once revered :
So may our country's name be undisgraced,
So may'st thou prosper where thy youth was rear'd,
By every honest joy of love and life endear'd ! 881

XCIV

For thee, who thus in too protracted song
Hast soothed thine idlesse with inglorious lays,
Soon shall thy voice be lost amid the throng
Of louder minstrels in these later days : 885
To such resign the strife for fading bays—
Ill may such contest now the spirit move
Which heeds nor keen reproach nor partial praise,
Since cold each kinder heart that might approve,
And none are left to please when none are left to love.

XCV

Thou too art gone, thou loved and lovely one ! 891
Whom youth and youth's affections bound to me ;
Who did for me what none beside have done,
Nor shrank from one albeit unworthy thee.

What is my being? thou hast ceased to be! 895
Nor staid to welcome here thy wanderer home,
Who mourns o'er hours which we no more shall see—
Would they had never been, or were to come!
Would he had ne'er return'd to find fresh cause to roam!

XCVI

Oh! ever loving, lovely, and beloved! 900
How selfish Sorrow ponders on the past,
And clings to thoughts now better far removed!
But Time shall tear thy shadow from me last.
All thou couldst have of mine, stern Death! thou hast;
The parent, friend, and now the more than friend; 905
Ne'er yet for one thine arrows flew so fast,
And grief with grief continuing still to blend,
Hath snatch'd the little joy that life had yet to lend.

XCVII

Then must I plunge again into the crowd,
And follow all that Peace disdains to seek? 910
Where Revel calls, and Laughter, vainly loud,
False to the heart, distorts the hollow cheek,
To leave the flagging spirit doubly weak;
Still o'er the features, which perforce they cheer,
To feign the pleasure or conceal the pique? 915
Smiles form the channel of a future tear,
Or raise the writhing lip with ill-dissembled sneer.

XCVIII

What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life's page, 920
And be alone on earth, as I am now.

Before the Chastener humbly let me bow,
O'er hearts divided and o'er hopes destroy'd:
Roll on, vain days! full reckless may ye flow,
Since Time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoy'd, 925
And with the ills of Eld mine earlier years alloy'd.

CANTO THE THIRD

‘Afin que cette application vous forçât de penser à autre chose ; il n’y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps.’—
Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D’Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.

I

Is thy face like thy mother’s, my fair child !
ADA ! sole daughter of my house and heart ?
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
And then we parted,—not as now we part,
But with a hope.— 5

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

II

Once more upon the waters ! yet once more ! 10
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar !
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe’er it lead !
Though the strain’d mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale, 15
Still must I on ; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean’s foam to sail
Where’er the surge may sweep, the tempest’s breath
prevail.

III

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind; 20
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind, 25
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

IV

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

V

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,
So that no wonder waits him; nor below
Can love or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife, 40
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpair'd, though old, in the soul's haunted cell. 45

VI

'Tis to create, and in creating live
A being more intense that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now.
What am I? Nothing: but not so art thou, 50
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crush'd feelings' dearth.

VII

Yet must I think less wildly:—I *have* thought 55
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd. 'Tis too late! 60
Yet am I changed; though still enough the same
In strength to bear what time cannot abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.

VIII

Something too much of this:—but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal. 65
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last;
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er heal;
Yet Time, who changes all, had alter'd him
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal 70
Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

IX

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he found
The dregs were wormwood; but he fill'd again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground, 75
And deem'd its spring perpetual; but in vain!
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though unseen,
And heavy though it clank'd not; worn with pain,
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen, 80
Entering with every step he took through many a scene.

X

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deem'd his spirit now so firmly fix'd
And sheath'd with an invulnerable mind, 85
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many stand
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to find
Fit speculation; such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and Nature's hand. 90

XI

But who can view the ripen'd rose, nor seek
To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds unfold 95
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb?
Harold, once more within the vortex, roll'd
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.

XII

But soon he knew himself the most unfit 100
Of men to herd with Man; with whom he held
Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quell'd
In youth by his own thoughts; still uncompell'd,
He would not yield dominion of his mind 105
To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;
Proud though in desolation; which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.

XIII

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home; 110
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome *book* 115
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

XIV

^A Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,
And human frailties, were forgotten quite: 121
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link 125
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its
brink.

XV

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,
Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt wing,
To whom the boundless air alone were home: 130
Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat .
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat
Of his impeded soul would through his bosom eat. 135

XVI

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of hope left, but with less of gloom;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume, 140
Which, though 't were wild,—as on the plunder'd
wreck
When mariners would madly meet their doom
With draughts intemperate on the sinking deck,—
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to check.

XVII

Stop!—for thy tread is on an Empire's dust! 145
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be;— 150
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,
Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

XVIII

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
 The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo! 155
 How in an hour the power which gave annals
 Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
 In 'pride of place' here last the eagle flew,
 Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
 Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through; 160
 Ambition's life and labours all were vain;
 He wears the shatter'd links of the world's broken chain.

XIX

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
 And foam in fetters;—but is Earth more free?
 Did nations combat to make *One* submit; 165
 Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?
 What! shall reviving Thralldom again be
 The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?
 Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
 Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly gaze 170
 And servile knees to thrones? No; *prove* before ye
 praise!

XX

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more!
 In vain fair cheeks were furrow'd with hot tears
 For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
 The trampler of her vineyards; in vain years 175
 Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
 Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
 Of roused-up millions; all that most endears
 Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword
 Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant lord. 180

XXI

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when 185
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

XXII

Did ye not hear it?—No; 't was but the wind, 190
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more, 195
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

XXIII

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear 200
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier, 205
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

XXIV

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago 210
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes, 215
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

XXV

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war; 220
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! they come!
they come!" 225

XXVI

And wild and high the 'Cameron's gathering' rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills 230
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's
ears!

XXVII

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves, 235
 Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they pass,
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves, ~~with~~
 Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
 Which now beneath them, but above shall grow 240
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

XXVIII

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay, 245
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
 Battle's magnificently stern array!
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
 The earth is cover'd thick with other clay, 250
 Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
 Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

XXIX

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine:
 Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
 Partly because they blend me with his line, 255
 And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
 And partly that bright names will hallow song;
 And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd
 The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,
 Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd, 260
 They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young gallant
 Howard!

XXX

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
 And mine were nothing had I such to give;
 But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
 Which living waves where thou didst cease to live, 265
 And saw around me the wide field revive
 With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
 Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
 With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
 I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not
 bring. 270

XXXI

I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom each
 And one as all a ghastly gap did make
 In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
 Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
 The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must awake 275
 Those whom they thirst for; though the sound of Fame
 May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
 The fever of vain longing, and the name
 So honour'd but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

XXXII

They mourn, but smile at length; and, smiling, mourn:
 The tree will wither long before it fall; 281
 The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
 The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
 In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall
 Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone; 285
 The bars survive the captive they enthrall;
 The day drags through, though storms keep out the
 sun;
 And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

XXXIII

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes 290
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shatter'd guise; and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches, 295
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

XXXIV

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison,—a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches; for it were 300
As nothing did we die; but Life will suit
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste: Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er 305
Such hours 'gainst years of life,—say, would he name
threescore?

XXXV

The Psalmist number'd out the years of man:
They are enough: and if thy tale be *true*,
Thou, who didst grudge him even that fleeting span,
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo! 310
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and say—
'Here, where the sword united nations drew,
Our countrymen were warring on that day!'
And this is much, and all which will not pass away. 315

XXXVI

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,
Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixt;
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt, 320
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;
For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seek'st
Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene!

XXXVII

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou! 325
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,
Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert 330
A god unto thyself; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

XXXVIII

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field; 335
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;
An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skill'd, 340
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star.

XXXIX

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride, 345
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye;—
When Fortune fled her spoil'd and favourite child,
He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon him piled. 351

XL

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn, which could condemn
Men and their thoughts; 't was wise to feel, not so 355
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turn'd unto thine overthrow:
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

XLI

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock, 361
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,
Such scorn of man had help'd to brave the shock;
But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy
throne,
Their admiration thy best weapon shone; 365
The part of Philip's son was thine, not then
(Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

XLII

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell, 370
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore, 375
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

XLIII

This makes the madmen who have made men mad
By their contagion; Conquerors and Kings, 380
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;
Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings 385
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule:

XLIV

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife, 390
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid by, 395
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

XLV

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow ;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below. 400
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

XLVI

Away with these ! true Wisdom's world will be 406
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature ! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine ?
There Harold gazes on a work divine, 410
A blending of all beauties ; streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
And chieffless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells.

XLVII

And there they stand, as stands a lofty mind, 415
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying wind,
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.
There was a day when they were young and proud ;
Banners on high, and battles pass'd below ; 420
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow.

XLVIII

Beneath these battlements, within those walls,
 Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud state 425
 Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
 Doing his evil will, nor less elate
 Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
 What want these outlaws conquerors should have
 But history's purchased page to call them great? 430
 A wider space, an ornamented grave?
 Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full
 as brave.

XLIX

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
 What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
 And Love, which lent a blazon to their shields, 435
 With emblems well devised by amorous pride,
 Through all the mail of iron hearts would glide;
 But still their flame was fierceness, and drew on
 Keen contest and destruction near allied,
 And many a tower for some fair mischief won, 440
 Saw the discolour'd Rhine beneath its ruin run.

L

But Thou, exulting and abounding river!
 Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
 Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever
 Could man but leave thy bright creation so, 445
 Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
 With the sharp scythe of conflict,—then to see
 Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
 Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem such to me,
 Even now what wants thy stream?—that it should
 Lethe be.

450

LI

A thousand battles have assail'd thy banks,
But these and half their fame have pass'd away,
And Slaughter heap'd on high his weltering ranks;
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of yesterday, 455
And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glass'd, with its dancing light, the sunny ray;
But o'er the blacken'd memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem.

LII

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along, 460
Yet not insensible to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even exile dear:
Though on his brow were graven lines austere,
And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en the place 465
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with transient
trace.

LIII

Nor was all love shut from him, though his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to dust. 470
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such as smile upon us; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though disgust
Hath wean'd it from all worldlings: thus he felt,
For there was soft remembrance, and sweet trust 475
In one fond breast, to which his own would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom dwelt.

LIV

And he had learn'd to love,—I know not why,
 For this in such as him seems strange of mood,—
 The helpless looks of blooming infancy, 480
 Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,
 To change like this, a mind so far imbued
 With scorn of man, it little boots to know;
 But thus it was; and though in solitude
 Small power the nipp'd affections have to grow, 485
 In him this glow'd when all beside had ceased to glow.

LV

And there was one soft breast, as hath been said,
 Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
 Than the church links withal; and, though unwed,
That love was pure, and, far above disguise, 490
 Had stood the test of mortal enmities
 Still undivided, and cemented more
 By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
 But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
 Well to that heart might his these absent greetings pour!

I

THE castled crag of Drachenfels 496
 Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
 Whose breast of waters broadly swells
 Between the banks which bear the vine,
 And hills all rich with blossom'd trees, 500
 And fields which promise corn and wine,
 And scatter'd cities crowning these,
 Whose far white walls along them shine,
 Have strew'd a scene, which I should see
 With double joy wert *thou* with me. 505

2

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray; 510
And many a rock which steeply lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine! 515

3

I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such;
For I have cherish'd them as dear, 520
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine! 525

4

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound 530
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,

| Could thy dear eyes in following mine
| Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine! 535

LVI

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,
Our enemy's—but let not that forbid 540
Honour to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

LVII

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career,—
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and
foes; 546
And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had not o'erstept 550
The charter to chastise which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him
wept.

LVIII

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shatter'd wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon her height 555
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light:

A tower of victory! from whence the flight
 Of baffled foes was watch'd along the plain:
 But Peace destroy'd what War could never blight, 560
 And laid those proud roofs bare to Summer's rain—
 On which the iron shower for years had pour'd in vain.

LIX

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long delighted
 The stranger fain would linger on his way!
 Thine is a scene alike where souls united 565
 Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray;
 And could the ceaseless vultures cease to prey
 On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
 Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too gay,
 Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere, 570
 Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the year.

LX

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!
 There can be no farewell to scene like thine;
 The mind is colour'd by thy every hue;
 And if reluctantly the eyes resign 575
 Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!
 'Tis with the thankful heart of parting praise;
 More mighty spots may rise, more glaring shine,
 But none unite in one attaching maze
 The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories of old days, 580

LXI

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
 Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
 The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
 The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between,

The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been, 585
 In mockery of man's art; and these withal
 A race of faces happy as the scene,
 Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
 Still springing o'er thy banks, though Empires near
 them fall.

LXII

But these recede. Above me are the Alps 590
 The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
 Have pinnaced in clouds their snowy scalps,
 And throned Eternity in icy halls
 Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
 The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow! 595
 All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
 Gather around these summits, as to show
 How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man
 below.

LXIII

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
 There is a spot should not be pass'd in vain,— 600
 Morat! the proud, the patriot field! where man
 May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
 Nor blush for those who conquer'd on that plain;
 Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tombless host,
 A bony heap, through ages to remain, 605
 Themselves their monument;—the Stygian coast
 Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd each wander-
 ing ghost.

LXIV

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage vies,
 Morat and Marathon twin names shall stand;
 They were true Glory's stainless victories, 610
 Won by the unambitious heart and hand

Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
 All unbought champions in no princely cause
 Of vice-entail'd Corruption; they no land
 Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of laws 615
 Making kings' rights divine, by some Draconic clause.

LXV

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
 A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
 'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
 And looks as with the wild-bewilder'd gaze 620
 Of one to stone converted by amaze,
 Yet still with consciousness; and there it stands
 Making a marvel that it not decays,
 When the coeval pride of human hands,
 Levell'd Aventicum, hath strew'd her subject lands. 625

LXVI

And there—oh! sweet and sacred be the name!—
 Julia—the daughter, the devoted—gave
 Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim
 Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
 Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
 The life she lived in; but the judge was just, 631
 And then she died on him she could not save.
 Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
 And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.

LXVII

But these are deeds which should not pass away, 635
 And names that must not wither, though the earth
 Forgets her empires with a just decay,
 The enslavers and the enslaved, their death and
 birth;

The high, the mountain-majesty of worth
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe, 640
And from its immortality look forth
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

LXVIII

Lake Lemman woos me with its crystal face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains view 645
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue :
There is too much of man here, to look through
With a fit mind the might which I behold ;
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew 650
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd than of old,
Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd me in their fold.

LXIX

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind :
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind 655
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng, where we become the spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong 660
Midst a contentious world, striving where none are
strong.

LXX

There, in a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul turn all our blood to tears,
And colour things to come with hues of Night ; 665

The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness: on the sea
The boldest steer but where their ports invite;
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er
shall be. 670

LXXI

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make 675
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake;—
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd to inflict or bear?

LXXII

I live not in myself, but I become 680
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture: I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain, 685
Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

LXXIII

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life:
I look upon the peopled desert past, 690
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,

To act and suffer, but remount at last
 With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
 Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the blast 695
 Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
 Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being
 cling.

LXXIV

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
 From what it hates in this degraded form,
 Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be 700
 Existent happier in the fly and worm,—
 When elements to elements conform,
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not
 Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
 The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot? 705
 Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

LXXV

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
 Of me and of my soul, as I of them?
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart
 With a pure passion? should I not contemn 710
 All objects, if compared with these? and stem
 A tide of suffering, rather than forego
 Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
 Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,
 Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not
 glow? 715

LXXVI

But this is not my theme; and I return
 To that which is immediate, and require
 Those who find contemplation in the urn,
 To look on One, whose dust was once all fire,

A native of the land where I respire 720
 The clear air for a while—a passing guest,
 Where he became a being,—whose desire
 Was to be glorious; 't was a foolish quest,
 The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

LXXVII

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau, 725
 The apostle of affliction, he who threw
 Enchantment over passion, and from woe
 Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
 The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
 How to make madness beautiful, and cast 730
 O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
 Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past
 The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

LXXVIII

His love was passion's essence:—as a tree
 On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame 735
 Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
 Thus, and enamour'd, were in him the same.
 But his was not the love of living dame,
 Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
 But of ideal beauty, which became 740
 In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
 Along his burning page, distemper'd though it seems.

LXXIX

This breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*
 Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;
 This hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss 745
 Which every morn his fever'd lip would greet,

From hers, who but with friendship his would meet ;
 But to that gentle touch through brain and breast
 Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring heat ;
 In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest 750
 Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possest.

LXXX

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
 Or friends by him self-banish'd ; for his mind
 Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose,
 For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind, 755
 'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.
 But he was phrensied,—wherefore, who may know ?
 Since cause might be which skill could never find ;
 But he was phrensied by disease or woe,
 To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

LXXXI

For then he was inspired, and from him came, 761
 As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
 Those oracles which set the world in flame,
 Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more :
 Did he not this for France ? which lay before 765
 Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years ?
 Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
 'Till by the voice of him and his compeers
 Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'er-grown
 fears ?

LXXXII

They made themselves a fearful monument ! 770
 The wreck of old opinions—things which grew,
 Breathed from the birth of time : the veil they rent,
 And what behind it lay, all earth shall view.

But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild 775
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour refill'd,
As heretofore, because ambition was self-will'd.

LXXXIII

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and made it felt.
They might have used it better, but, allured 781
By their new vigour, sternly have they dealt
On one another; pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But they,
Who in oppression's darkness caved had dwelt, 785
They were not eagles, nourish'd with the day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey?

LXXXIV

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who war 790
With their own hopes, and have been vanquish'd, bear
Silence, but not submission: in his lair
Fix'd Passion holds his breath, until the hour
Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
It came, it cometh, and will come,—the power 795
To punish or forgive—in *one* we shall be slower.

LXXXV

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring. 800

This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so
moved. 805

LXXXVI

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near, 810
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more;

LXXXVII

He is an evening reveller, who makes 815
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dew 820
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

LXXXVIII

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate 825
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,

Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
 And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
 A beauty and a mystery, and create 830
 In us such love and reverence from afar,
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves
 a star.

LXXXIX

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
 But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:— 835
 All heaven and earth are still: From the high host
 Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
 All is concenter'd in a life intense,
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
 But hath a part of being, and a sense 840
 Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

XC

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
 In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
 A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
 And purifies from self: it is a tone, 845
 The soul and source of music, which makes known
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
 Binding all things with beauty;—'t would disarm
 The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

XCI

Not vainly did the early Persian make 851
 His altar the high places, and the peak
 Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
 A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek

The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak, 855
Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy pray'r!

XCII

The sky is changed!—and such a change! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong, 861
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud, 865
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

XCIII

And this is in the night!—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be 870
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee 875
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

XCIV

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene, 880
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;

Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
 Love was the very root of the fond rage
 Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:
 Itself expired, but leaving them an age 885
 Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

XCV

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
 The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:
 For here not one, but many, make their play,
 And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand, 890
 Flashing and cast around: of all the band,
 The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
 His lightnings,—as if he did understand,
 That in such gaps as desolation work'd, 894
 There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

XCVI

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
 With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
 To make these felt and feeling, well may be
 Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
 Of your departing voices, is the knoll 900
 Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
 But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
 Are ye like those within the human breast?
 Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

XCVII

Could I embody and unbosom now 905
 That which is most within me,—could I wreak
 My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
 Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,

All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
 Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word, 910
 And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;
 But as it is, I live and die unheard,
 With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

XCVIII

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
 With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,
 Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn, 916
 And living as if earth contain'd no tomb,—
 And glowing into day: we may resume
 The march of our existence: and thus I,
 Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find room 920
 And food for meditation, nor pass by
 Much, that may give us pause, if ponder'd fittingly.

XCIX

Clarens! sweet Clarens, birthplace of deep Love!
 Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought;
 Thy trees take root in Love; the snows above 925
 The very Glaciers have his colours caught,
 And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought
 By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,
 The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought
 In them a refuge from the worldly shocks, 930
 Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then
 mocks.

C ()

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are trod,—
 Undying Love's, who here ascends a throne
 To which the steps are mountains; where the god
 Is a pervading life and light,—so shown 935

Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

CI

All things are here of *him*; from the black pines, 941
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bow'd waters meet him, and adore, 945
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

CII

A populous solitude of bees and birds, 950
And fairy-form'd and many-colour'd things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings,
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend 955
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty end.

CIII

He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore,
And make his heart a spirit; he who knows 960
That tender mystery, will love the more;
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes,

And the world's waste, have driven him far from
those,
For 't is his nature to advance or die;
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows 965
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

CIV

'T was not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot,
Peopling it with affections; but he found
It was the scene which Passion must allot 970
To the mind's purified beings; 't was the ground
Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound,
And hallow'd it with loveliness: 't is lone,
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,
And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the Rhone 975
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have rear'd a
throne.

CV

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes
Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name;
Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of fame: 980
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the
flame
Of Heaven again assail'd, if Heaven the while
On man and man's research could deign do more than
smile. 985

CVI

The one was fire and fickleness, a child
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or wild,—
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind, 990
The Proteus of their talents: But his own
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,—
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

CVII

The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought, 995
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony,—that master-spell, 1000
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,
And doom'd him to the zealot's ready Hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

CVIII

Yet, peace be with their ashes,—for by them,
If merited, the penalty is paid; 1005
It is not ours to judge,—far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things shall be made
Known unto all, or hope and dread allay'd
By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decay'd; 1010
And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'T will be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

CIX

But let me quit man's works, again to read
His Maker's, spread around me, and suspend
This page, which from my reveries I feed, 1015
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey whate'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region, where 1020
The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

CX

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages 1025
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires; still,
The fount at which the panting mind assuages
Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

CXI

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme 1031
Renew'd with no kind auspices:—to feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be, and to steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal, 1035
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught,—
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal,—
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul:—No matter,—it is taught.

CXII

And for these words, thus woven into song, 1040
It may be that they are a harmless wile,—
The colouring of the scenes which fleet along,
Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth, but I am not 1045
So young as to regard men's frown or smile,
As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;
I stood and stand alone,—remember'd or forgot.

CXIII

I have not loved the world, nor the world me;
I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd 1050
To its idolatries a patient knee,
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, nor cried aloud
In worship of an echo; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such; I stood
Among them, but not of them; in a shroud 1055
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still
could,
Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

CXIV

I have not loved the world, nor the world me,—
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be 1060
Words which are things, hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing; I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve;
That two, or one, are almost what they seem, 1065
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

CXV

My daughter! with thy name this song begun;
My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end;
I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend 1070
To whom the shadows of far years extend:
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart, when mine is cold,
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould. 1075

CXVI

To aid thy mind's development, to watch
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see
Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to thee!
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee, 1080
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss,—
This, it should seem, was not reserved for me;
Yet this was in my nature: as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

CXVII

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should be taught, 1085
I know that thou wilt love me; though my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still fraught
With desolation, and a broken claim:
Though the grave closed between us,—'t were the
same,
I know that thou wilt love me; though to drain 1090
My blood from out thy being were an aim,
And an attainment,—all would be in vain,—
Still thou wouldst love me, still that more than life retain.

CXVIII

The child of love, though born in bitterness,
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire 1095
These were the elements, and thine no less.
As yet such are around thee, but thy fire
Shall be more temper'd, and thy hope far higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea
And from the mountains where I now respire, 1100
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me.

CANTO THE FOURTH

‘Visto ho Toscana, Lombardia, Romagna,
 Quel Monte che divide, e quel che serra
 Italia, e un mare e l’altro, che la bagna.’
Ariosto, Satira iii.

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ., A.M., F.R.S., &c. &c. &c.

VENICE, *January 2, 1818.*

MY DEAR HOBHOUSE,

After an interval of eight years between the composition of the first and last cantos of *Childe Harold*, the conclusion of the poem is about to be submitted to the public. In parting with so old a friend, it is not extraordinary that I should recur to one still older and better,—to one who has beheld the birth and death of the other, and to whom I am far more indebted for the social advantages of an enlightened friendship, than—though not ungrateful—I can, or could be, to *Childe Harold*, for any public favour reflected through the poem on the poet,—to one, whom I have known long and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril,—to a friend often tried and never found wanting;—to yourself.

In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth; and in dedicating to you in its complete, or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most

thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honour to myself by the record of many years' intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honour. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship; and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anniversary of the most unfortunate day of my past existence¹, but which cannot poison my future while I retain the resource of your friendship, and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable—Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy; and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me

¹ His marriage.

with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain describe; and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable, and of feeling for what is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, and I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's 'Citizen of the World,' whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject are *now* a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have

touched upon the present state of Italian literature, and perhaps of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects, and the consequent reflections; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

It is also a delicate, and no very grateful task, to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality which would induce us—though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people amongst whom we have recently abode—to distrust, or at least defer our judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political party, appears to run, or to *have* run, so high, that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be enough, then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language—‘*Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la più nobile ed insieme la più dolce, tutte tutte le vie diverse si possono tentare, e che sinche la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto l’ antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima.*’ Italy has great names still—Canova, Monti, Ugo Foscolo, Pindemonte, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzophanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Aglietti, and Vacca, will secure to the present generation an honourable place in most of the departments of Art, Science, and Belles Lettres; and in some the very highest—Europe—the World—has but one Canova.

It has been somewhere said by Alfieri, that ‘*La pianta uomo nasce più robusta in Italia che in qualunque altra terra—e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova.*’ Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition, a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbours, that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraordinary capacity of this people, or, if such a word be admissible, their *capabilities*, the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and, amidst all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles, and the despair of ages, their still unquenched ‘longing after immortality,’—the immortality of independence. And when we ourselves, in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the labourers’ chorus, ‘*Roma! Roma! Roma! Roma non è più come era prima,*’ it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns, over the carnage of Mont St Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work worthy of the better days of our history. For me,—

‘Non movero mai corda
Ove la turba di sue ciance assorda.’

What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations, it were useless for Englishmen to inquire, till it

·becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended Habeas Corpus ; it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the South, 'Verily they *will have* their reward,' and at no very distant period.

Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state ; and repeat once more how truly I am ever

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

BYRON.

I

I STOOD in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs ;
A palace and a prison on each hand :
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand 5
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!

II

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean, 10
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers :

And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East 15
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

III

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

IV

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

V

The beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate 40

Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void. 45

VI

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from Hope, the last from Vacancy;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye:
Yet there are things whose strong reality 50
Outshines our fairy-land; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse:

VII

I saw or dream'd of such,—but let them go,— 55
They came like truth, and disappear'd like dreams;
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so:
I could replace them if I would; still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found; 60
Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
Such overweening phantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

VIII

I've taught me other tongues, and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger; to the mind 65
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find

A country with—ay, or without mankind;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,—
Not without cause; and should I leave behind 70
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

IX

Perhaps I loved it well: and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it—if we may 75
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
My hopes of being remember'd in my line
With my land's language: if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline,—
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are, 80
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

X

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honour'd by the nations—let it be—
And light the laurels on a loftier head!
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me— 85
'Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.'
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
I planted: they have torn me, and I bleed:
I should have known what fruit would spring from
such a seed. 90

XI

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
And, annual marriage now no more renew'd,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood!

St Mark yet sees his lion where he stood 95
Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower.

XII

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns— 100
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt,
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go 105
Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt;
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo!
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

XIII

Before St Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun; 110
But is not Doria's menace come to pass?
Are they not *bridled*?—Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a seaweed, into whence she rose!
Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun, 115
Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

XIV

In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre;
Her very by-word sprung from victory,
The 'Planter of the Lion,' which through fire 120
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;

Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite;
Witness Troy's rival, Candia! Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight! 125
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

XV

Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file
Of her dead Doges are declined to dust;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust; 130
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what inthrals,
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls. 135

XVI

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar:
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car 140
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands, his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his
strains.

XVII

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine, 145
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot

Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all, 150
Albion! to thee: the Ocean queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

XVIII

I loved her from my boyhood; she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart, 155
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art,
Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part; 160
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

XIX

I can repeople with the past—and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chasten'd down, enough; 165
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;
And of the happiest moments which were wrought
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colours caught :
There are some feelings Time cannot benumb, 170
Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be cold and
dumb.

XX

But from their nature will the tannen grow
Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,
Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks 175

Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
The howling tempest, till its height and frame
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
Of bleak, gray granite into life it came,
And grew a giant tree;—the mind may grow the same.

XXI

Existence may be borne, and the deep root 181
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms: mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd 185
In vain should such example be; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

XXII

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd, 190
Even by the sufferer; and, in each event,
Ends: Some, with hope replenish'd and rebuoy'd,
Return to whence they came—with like intent,
And weave their web again; some, bow'd and bent,
Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time, 195
And perish with the reed on which they leant;
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,
According as their souls were form'd to sink or climb.

XXIII

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting, 200
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;
And slight withal may be the things which bring

Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever: it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring— 205
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly
bound;

XXIV

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface 210
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,—
The cold, the changed, perchance the dead—anew,
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many!—yet how
few! 216

XXV

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land 220
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand;
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave, the lords of earth and sea,

XXVI

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome! 226
And even since, and now, fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;

Even in thy desert, what is like to thee? 230
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced.

XXVII

The moon is up, and yet it is not night; 235
Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be,—
Melted to one vast Iris of the West,— 240
Where the Day joins the past Eternity,
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest!

XXVIII

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still 245
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As Day and Night contending were, until
Nature reclaim'd her order:—gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil 250
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within
it glows,

XXIX

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star, 255
Their magical variety diffuse:

And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away, 260
The last still loveliest,—till—'t is gone—and all is gray.

XXX

There is a tomb in Arqua;—rear'd in air,
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes, 265
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
To raise a language, and his land reclaim
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame. 270

XXXI

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died;
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years; and 't is their pride—
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze 275
His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain
Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

XXXII

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt 280
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd

In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away 285
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,
For they can lure no further; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

XXXIII

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, where-by, 290
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die; 295
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive:

XXXIV

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were 300
Of moody texture from their earliest day,
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb, 305
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

XXXV

Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 't were a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood 310

Of Este, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

XXXVI

And Tasso is their glory and their shame. 316
Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell:
The miserable despot could not quell 320
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scatter'd the clouds away; and on that name attend

XXXVII

The tears and praises of all time; while thine 325
Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing—but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn: 330
Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou madest to mourn:

XXXVIII

Thou! form'd to eat, and be despised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou 335
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:
He! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,

Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
 In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
 And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow 340
 No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
 That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

XXXIX

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 't was his
 In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
 Aim'd with her poison'd arrows,—but to miss. 345
 Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!
 Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
 The tide of generations shall roll on,
 And not the whole combined and countless throng
 Compose a mind like thine? though all in one 350
 Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form
 a sun.

XL

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,
 Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
 The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose
 The Tuscan father's comedy divine; 355
 Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
 The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth
 A new creation with his magic line,
 And, like the Ariosto of the North,
 Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

XLI

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust 361
 The iron crown of laurel's mimick'd leaves;
 Nor was the ominous element unjust,
 For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves

Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves, 365
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
Whate'er it strikes;—yon head is doubly sacred now.

XLII

Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast 370
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
Oh, God! that thou wert in thy nakedness 375
Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

XLIII

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplord 380
For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armed torrents pour'd
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde
Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword 385
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.

XLIV

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind,
The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim 390
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,

Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite 395
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

XLV

For Time hath not rebuilt them, but uprear'd
Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,
Which only make more mourn'd and more endear'd
The few last rays of their far-scatter'd light, 400
And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.
The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

XLVI

That page is now before me, and on mine 406
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,
And I in desolation: all that *was*
Of then destruction *is*; and now, alas! 410
Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form,
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

XLVII

Yet, Italy! through every other land 415
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side;
Mother of Arts! as once of arms; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide;

Parent of our religion! whom the wide
 Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven! 420
 Europe, repentant of her parricide,
 Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
 Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

XLVIII

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
 Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps 425
 A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
 Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
 Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
 To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
 Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps 430
 Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,
 And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

XLIX

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
 The air around with beauty; we inhale
 The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils 435
 Part of its immortality; the veil
 Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
 We stand, and in that form and face behold
 What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail;
 And to the fond idolaters of old 440
 Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould:

L

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
 Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
 Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there—
 Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art, 445

We stand as captives, and would not depart.
 Away!—there need no words nor terms precise,
 The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
 Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes:
 Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan Shepherd's
 prize. 450

LI

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise?
 Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,
 In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
 Before thee thy own vanquish'd Lord of War?
 And gazing in thy face as toward a star, 455
 Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
 Feeding on thy sweet cheek! while thy lips are
 With lava kisses melting while they burn,
 Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from
 an urn?

LII

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love, 460
 Their full divinity inadequate
 That feeling to express, or to improve,
 The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
 Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
 Of earth recoils upon us;—let it go! 465
 We can recall such visions, and create,
 From what has been, or might be, things which grow
 Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

LIII

I leave to learned fingers and wise hands,
 The artist and his ape, to teach and tell 470
 How well his connoisseurship understands
 The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:

Let these describe the undescribable :
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell ; 475
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

LIV

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality, 480
'Though there were nothing save the past, and this,
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos : here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes ; 485
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.

LV

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation :—Italy !
Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand
 rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny, 490
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin : thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray ;
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day. 495

LVI

But where repose the all Etruscan three—
Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit ! he
Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay

Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay 500
 In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
 And have their country's marbles nought to say?
 Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
 Did they not to her breast their filial earth intrust?

LVII

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar, 505
 Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore:
 Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
 Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
 Their children's children would in vain adore
 With the remorse of ages; and the crown 510
 Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
 Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
 His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not
 thine own.

LVIII

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd
 His dust,—and lies it not her great among, 515
 With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
 O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue?
 That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
 The poetry of speech? No;—even his tomb
 Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong, 520
 No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
 Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom*!

LIX

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
 Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
 The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust, 525
 Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more:

Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire! honour'd sleeps
The immortal exile;—Arqua, too, her store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps, 530
While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead and
weeps.

LX

What is her pyramid of precious stones?
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to incrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dew 535
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread 539
Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head.

LXI

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,
Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;
There be more marvels yet—but not for mine;
For I have been accustom'd to entwine 545
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
Than Art in galleries: though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

LXII

Is of another temper, and I roam 550
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles

Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore, 555
Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swell'n to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scatter'd o'er,

LXIII

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day, 560
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away!
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay 565
Upon their bucklers for a winding-sheet;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet!

LXIV

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to Eternity; they saw
The Ocean round, but had no time to mark 570
The motions of their vessel; Nature's law,
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge, and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no
words. 576

LXV

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain 580

Lay where their roots are ; but a brook hath ta'en—
 A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
 A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain ;
 And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
 Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

LXVI

But thou, Clitumnus ! in thy sweetest wave 586
 Of the most living crystal that was e'er
 The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
 Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
 Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer 590
 Grazes ; the purest god of gentle waters !
 And most serene of aspect, and most clear ;
 Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters,
 A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters !

LXVII

And on thy happy shore a Temple still, 595
 Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
 Upon a mild declivity of hill,
 Its memory of thee ; beneath it sweeps
 Thy current's calmness ; oft from out it leaps
 The finny darter with the glittering scales, 600
 Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps ;
 While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails
 Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling
 tales.

LXVIII

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place !
 If through the air a zephyr more serene 605
 Win to the brow, 't is his ; and if ye trace
 Along his margin a more eloquent green,

If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean 610
With Nature's baptism,—'t is to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;
The fall of waters! rapid as the light 615
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture; while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet 620
That guard the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

LXX

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground, 625
Making it all one emerald:—how profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

LXXI

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows 631
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be

Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly, 635
With many windings, through the vale :—Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,

LXXII

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge, 640
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dyes, while all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene 645
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

LXXIII

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which—had I not before 650
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lawine—might be worshipp'd more;
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar 655
Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

LXXIV

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 't were for fame, 660
For still they soared unutterably high:

I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height, display'd 665.
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

LXXV

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake, 670
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record 675

LXXVI

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd
My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,
Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought, 680
That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

LXXVII

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so, 685
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse:

Although no deeper Moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art, 690
Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,
Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

LXXVIII

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee, 695
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye! 700
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands, 705
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness? 710
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

LXXX

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride, 715

Where the car climb'd the Capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, 'here was, or is,' where all is doubly night?

LXXXI

The double night of ages, and of her, 721
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err:
The ocean hath its chart, the stars their map,
And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap; 725
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands, and cry 'Eureka!' it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII

Alas! the lofty city! and alas! 730
The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be 735
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was
free!

LXXXIII

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,
Triumphant Sylla! Thou, who didst subdue 740
Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due

Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too, 745
With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

LXXXIV

The dictatorial wreath—couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so supine 750
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
She who was named Eternal, and array'd
Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd
Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd, 755
Her rushing wings—Oh! she who was Almighty hail'd!

LXXXV

Sylla was first of victors; but our own,
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell!—he
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne
Down to a block—immortal rebel! See 760
What crimes it costs to be a moment free,
And famous through all ages! but beneath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his
breath. 765

LXXXVI

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crown'd him, on the self-same day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.

And show'd not Fortune thus how fame and sway, 770
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb?
Were they but so in man's, how different were his
doom!

LXXXVII

And thou, dread statue! yet existent in 775
The austere form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins' din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen 780
Of gods and men, great Nemesis! did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene?

LXXXVIII

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome!
She-wolf! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart 785
The milk of conquest yet within the dome
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest:—Mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's ethereal dart, 790
And thy limbs black with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget?

LXXXIX

Thou dost; but all thy foster-babes are dead—
The men of iron: and the world hath rear'd
Cities from out their sepulchres: men bled 795
In imitation of the things they fear'd,

And fought and conquer'd, and the same course
steer'd,
At apish distance; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the grave, 800
But, vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a slave—

XC

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal; for the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould, 805
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,
Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
At Cleopatra's feet,—and now himself he beam'd, 810

XCI

And came—and saw—and conquer'd! But the man
Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be 815
A listener to itself, was strangely framed;
With but one weakest weakness—vanity,
Coquettish in ambition, still he aim'd—
At what? can he avouch, or answer what he claim'd?

XCII

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait 820
For the sure grave to level him; few years
Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
On whom we tread: For *this* the conqueror rears

The arch of triumph! and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have flow'd, 825
An universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow! Renew thy rainbow, God!

XCIII

What from this barren being do we reap?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail, 830
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;
Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale 835
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too
much light.

XCIV

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die, 840
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see 845
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

XCV

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allow'd,
Averr'd, and known, and daily, hourly seen—
The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd, 850

And the intent of tyranny avow'd,
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne:
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done. 855

XCVI

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild, 860
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

XCVII

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime, 865
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile Ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamant wall, 870
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his
second fall.

XCVIII

Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind; 875
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;

Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
 Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
 But the sap lasts,—and still the seed we find 880
 Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;
 So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

XCIX

There is a stern round tower of other days,
 Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
 Such as an army's baffled strength delays, 885
 Standing with half its battlements alone,
 And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
 The garland of eternity, where wave
 The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown;—
 What was this tower of strength? within its cave 890
 What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid?—A woman's grave.

C

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
 Tomb'd in a palace? Was she chaste and fair?
 Worthy a king's, or more—a Roman's bed?
 What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear? 895
 What daughter of her beauties was the heir?
 How lived, how loved, how died she? Was she not
 So honoured—and conspicuously there,
 Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
 Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot? 900

CI

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
 Who love the lords of others? such have been
 Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
 Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,

Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen, 905
Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war
Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
Love from amongst her griefs?—for such the affec-
tions are.

CII

Perchance she died in youth: it may be, bow'd 910
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites—early death; yet shed
A sunset charm around her, and illume 916
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

CIII

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray 920
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome—But whither would Conjecture stray? 925
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife: Behold his love or pride!

CIV

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou Tomb! and other days come back on me 930
With recollected music, though the tone

Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
 Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
 Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
 Till I had bodied forth the heated mind 935
 Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves
 behind;

CV

And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er the rocks,
 Built me a little bark of hope, once more
 To battle with the ocean and the shocks
 Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar 940
 Which rushes on the solitary shore
 Where all lies founder'd that was ever dear:
 But could I gather from the wave-worn store
 Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?
 There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is
 here. 945

CVI

Then let the winds howl on! their harmony
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
 The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry,
 As I now hear them, in the fading light
 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site, 950
 Answering each other on the Palatine,
 With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
 And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
 What are our petty griefs?—let me not number mine.

CVII

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown 955
 Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd
 On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown
 In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steep'd

In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd,
 Deeming it midnight:—Temples, baths, or halls? 960
 Pronounce who can; for all that Learning reap'd
 From her research hath been, that these are walls—
 Behold the Imperial Mount! 't is thus the mighty falls.

CVIII

There is the moral of all human tales;
 'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past, 965
 First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,
 Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.
 And History, with all her volumes vast,
 Hath but *one* page,—'t is better written here
 Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amass'd 970
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask—Away with words!
 draw near,

CIX

Admire, exult, despise, laugh, weep,—for here
 There is such matter for all feeling:—Man!
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear, 975
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
 Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van
 Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd! 980
 Where are its golden roofs? where those who dared to
 build?

CX

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
 Thou nameless column with the buried base!
 What are the laurels of the Caesar's brow?
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place. 985

Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
 Titus or Trajan's? No—'t is that of Time:
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace
 Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb
 To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime,

CXI

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome, 991
 And looking to the stars: they had contain'd
 A spirit which with these would find a home,
 The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,
 The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd, 995
 But yielded back his conquests:—he was more
 Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd
 With household blood and wine, serenely wore
 His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's name adore.

CXII

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place 1000
 Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep
 Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,
 The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap
 Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap
 Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below, 1005
 A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
 The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
 And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

CXIII

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:
 Here a proud people's passions were exhaled, 1010
 From the first hour of empire in the bud
 To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd;

But long before had Freedom's face been veil'd,
And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assail'd 1015
Trode on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

CXIV

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame— 1020
The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree
Of freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
The forum's champion, and the people's chief— 1025
Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas! too brief.

CXV

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art
Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air, 1030
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled 1036
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,

Whose green, wild margin now no more erase 1040
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prison'd in marble, bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

CXVII

Fantastically tangled: the green hills 1045
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes, 1050
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by its
skies.

CXVIII

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating 1055
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover;
The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befell?
This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting 1060
Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle!

CXIX

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing, 1065
Share with immortal transports? could thine art

Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
The dull satiety which all destroys— 1070
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloy?

CXX

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes, 1075
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poisons; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants. 1080

CXXI

Oh Love! no habitant of earth thou art—
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,—
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,—
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be; 1085
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd, wearied,
wrung, and riven.

CXXII

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased, 1090
And fevers into false creation:—where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seiz'd?
In him alone. Can Nature show so fair?

Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men, 1095
The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

CXXIII

Who loves, raves—'t is youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still, as charm by charm unwinds 1100
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds; 1105
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize—wealthiest when most
undone.

CXXIV

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
Sick—sick; unfound the boon, unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay, 1110
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
But all too late,—so are we doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'t is the same,
Each idle, and all ill, and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name, 1115
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXV

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved,
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies—but to recur, ere long, 1120

Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong;
And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
And miscreator, makes and helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns Hope to dust,—the dust we all
have trod. 1125

CXXVI

Our life is a false nature: 'tis not in
The harmony of things,—this hard decree,
This unradicable taint of sin,
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree, 1129
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see,
And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

CXXVII

Yet let us ponder boldly—'t is a base 1135
Abandonment of reason to resign
Our right of thought—our last and only place
Of refuge; this, at least, shall still be mine:
Though from our birth the faculty divine
Is chain'd and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,
And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine 1141
Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the
blind.

CXXVIII

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line, 1145
Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine

As 't were its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here to illume
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine 1150
Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

CXXIX

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
F'loats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
And shadows forth its glory. There is given 1155
Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour 1160
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

CXXX

Oh Time! the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled;
Time! the corrector where our judgments err, 1165
The test of truth, love—sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists—from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer—
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift 1169
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

CXXXI

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years, though few, yet full of fate:

If thou hast ever seen me too elate, 1175
 Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne
 Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
 Which shall not whelm me, let me not have worn
 This iron in my soul in vain—shall *they* not mourn?

CXXXII

And thou, who never yet of human wrong 1180
 Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!
 Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long—
 Thou who didst call the Furies from the abyss,
 And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
 For that unnatural retribution—just, 1185
 Had it but been from hands less near—in this
 Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
 Dost thou not hear my heart?—Awake! thou shalt,
 and must.

CXXXIII

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
 For my ancestral faults or mine the wound 1190
 I bleed withal, and, had it been conferr'd
 With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound;
 But now my blood shall not sink in the ground;
 To thee I do devote it—*thou* shalt take
 The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found,
 Which if *I* have not taken for the sake— 1196
 But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

CXXXIV

And if my voice break forth, 't is not that now
 I shrink from what is suffer'd: let him speak
 Who hath beheld decline upon my brow, 1200
 Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;

But in this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse, 1205
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

CXXXV

That curse shall be Forgiveness.—Have I not—
Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven!
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffer'd things to be forgiven? 1210
Have I not had my brain sear'd, my heart riven,
Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied away?
And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey. 1215

CXXXVI

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could do?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew, 1220
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain: 1225
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain;
But there is that within me which shall tire

Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of, 1230
Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

CXXXVIII

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power!
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here 1235
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear;
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear 1240
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

CXXXIX

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow-man. 1245
And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot? 1250
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

CXL

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low— 1255

And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
 The arena swims around him—he is gone,
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch
 who won.

1260

CXLI

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
 Were with his heart, and that was far away;
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play, 1265
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
 All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
 And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

CXLI

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;
 And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
 And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
 Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
 Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
 Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd, 1275
 My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
 On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely
 loud.

CXLI

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd; 1280
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
 And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.

Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd: 1285
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft
away.

CXLIV

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air 1291
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead: 1295
Heroes have trod this spot—'t is on their dust ye
tread.

CXLV

'While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
'When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
'And when Rome falls—the World.' From our own
land
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall 1300
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what
ye will. 1305

CXLVI

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime—
 Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
 From Jove to Jesus—spared and blest by time;
 Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods 1309
 Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
 His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome!
 Shalt thou not last? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
 Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
 Of art and piety—Pantheon!—pride of Rome!

CXLVII

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts! 1315
 Despoil'd yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
 A holiness appealing to all hearts—
 To art a model; and to him who treads
 Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
 Her light through thy sole aperture; to those 1320
 Who worship, here are altars for their beads;
 And they who feel for genius may repose
 Their eyes on honour'd forms, whose busts around
 them close.

CXLVIII

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light
 What do I gaze on? Nothing: Look again! 1325
 Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my sight—
 Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
 It is not so; I see them full and plain—
 An old man, and a female young and fair,
 Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein 1330
 The blood is nectar:—but what doth she there,
 With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

CXLIX

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took
Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife, 1335
Blest into mother, in the innocent look
Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives
Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
She sees her little bud put forth its leaves— 1340
What may the fruit be yet? I know not—Cain was
Eve's.

CL

But here youth offers to old age the food,
The milk of his own gift: it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood
Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire 1345
While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
Of health and holy feeling can provide
Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher
Than Egypt's river: from that gentle side
Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's realm holds
no such tide. 1350

CLI

The starry fable of the milky way
Has not thy story's purity; it is
A constellation of a sweeter ray,
And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss 1355
Where sparkle distant worlds:—Oh, holiest nurse!
No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

CLII

Turn to the mole which Hadrian rear'd on high, 1360
Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
Colossal copyist of deformity,
Whose travell'd phantasy from the far Nile's
Enormous model, doom'd the artist's toils
To build for giants, and for his vain earth, 1365
His shrunken ashes, raise this dome: How smiles
The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
To view the huge design which sprung from such
a birth!

CLIII

But lo! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,
To which Diana's marvel was a cell— 1370
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle;—
Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell
The hyæna and the jackal in their shade;
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell 1375
Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd;

CLIV

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
Standest alone, with nothing like to thee—
Worthiest of God, the holy and the true. 1380
Since Zion's desolation, when that He
Forsook his former city, what could be,
Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,
Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty all are aisled 1385
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;
And why? It is not lessen'd; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find 1390
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality; and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow. 1395

CLVI

Thou movest, but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
Vastness which grows, but grows to harmonise—
All musical in its immensities; 1400
Rich marbles, richer painting—shrines where flame
The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
In air with Earth's chief structures, though their frame
Sits on the firm-set ground, and this the clouds must
claim.

CLVII

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole; 1406
And as the ocean many bays will make
That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
To more immediate objects, and control
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart 1410
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

CLVIII

Not by its fault—but thine: Our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is 1415
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression; even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great
Defies at first our Nature's littleness, 1420
Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CLIX

Then pause, and be enlighten'd; there is more
In such a survey than the sating gaze
Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore 1425
The worship of the place, or the mere praise
Of art and its great masters, who could raise
What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan;
The fountain of sublimity displays
Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man 1430
Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

CLX

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
Laocoön's torture dignifying pain—
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal's patience blending: Vain 1435
The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench; the long envenom'd chain
Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp. 1440

CLXI

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
 The God of life, and poesy, and light—
 The Sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
 The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright 1445
 With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
 And nostril beautiful disdain, and might
 And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII

But in his delicate form—a dream of Love, 1450
 Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
 Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
 And madden'd in that vision—are exprest
 All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
 The mind with in its most unearthly mood, 1455
 When each conception was a heavenly guest—
 A ray of immortality—and stood
 Starlike, around, until they gather'd to a god!

CLXIII

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid 1460
 By him to whom the energy was given
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd
 With an eternal glory—which, if made
 By human hands, is not of human thought;
 And Time himself hath hallow'd it, nor laid 1465
 One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which
 't was wrought.

CLXIV

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
 The being who upheld it through the past?
 Methinks he cometh late and tarries long. 1470
 He is no more—these breathings are his last;
 His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
 And he himself as nothing:—if he was
 Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
 With forms which live and suffer—let that pass— 1475
 His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

CLXV

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
 That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
 And spreads the dim and universal pall
 Through which all things grow phantoms; and the
 cloud 1480
 Between us sinks and all which ever glow'd,
 Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
 A melancholy halo scarce allow'd
 To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
 Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

CLXVI

And send us prying into the abyss, 1486
 To gather what we shall be when the frame
 Shall be resolved to something less than this
 Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,
 And wipe the dust from off the idle name 1490
 We never more shall hear,—but never more,
 Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:
 It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
 These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was
 gore.

CLXVII

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds, 1495
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending
ground,
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief 1500
Seems royal still, though with her head discrown'd,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

CLXVIII

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead? 1505
Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hush'd that pang for ever: with thee fled 1510
The present happiness and promised joy
Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to cloy.

CLXIX

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored!
Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee, 1515
And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard
Her many griefs for ONE; for she had pour'd
Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed! 1520
The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

CLXX

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made;
 Thy bridal's fruit is ashes: in the dust
 The fair-hair'd Daughter of the Isles is laid,
 The love of millions! How we did intrust 1525
 Futurity to her! and, though it must
 Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd
 Our children should obey her child, and bless'd
 Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd
 Like stars to shepherd's eyes:—'t was but a meteor
 beam'd. 1530

CLXXI

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well:
 The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
 Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
 Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
 Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung 1535
 Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate
 Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
 Against their blind omnipotence a weight
 Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late,—

CLXXII

These might have been her destiny; but no, 1540
 Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair,
 Good without effort, great without a foe;
 But now a bride and mother—and now *there*!
 How many ties did that stern moment tear!
 From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast 1545
 Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,
 Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
 The land which loved thee so that none could love
 thee best.

CLXXIII

Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears 1550
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears 1555
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

CLXXIV

And near, Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves 1560
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
'Arms and the man,' whose re-ascending star
Rose o'er an empire:—but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome;—and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight 1565
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's delight.

CLXXV

But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be,—
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea; 1570
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine
roll'd 1575

CLXXVI

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many—since have done
Their work on both; some suffering, and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run; 1580
We have had our reward, and it is here,—
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place, 1585
With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!
Ye elements!—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not 1590
Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore, 1595
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before, 1600
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

CLXXIX

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control 1605
Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan, 1610
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

CLXXX

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise, 1615
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

CLXXXI

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls 1621
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take 1625
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar. 1629

CLXXXII

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
 Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
 Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,
 And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
 The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
 Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou;— 1635
 Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play,
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow:
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
 Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,— 1640
 Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, or storm,
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
 Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime,
 The image of eternity, the throne
 Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime 1645
 The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
 Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy 1650
 I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
 Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
 Made them a terror—'t was a pleasing fear,
 For I was as it were a child of thee,
 And trusted to thy billows far and near, 1655
 And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

CLXXXV

My task is done, my song hath ceased, my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit 1660
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ;
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

CLXXXVI

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been— 1666
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell 1670
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell;
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain.

NOTES

PREFACE, ETC.

L'univers, etc.] The author of this motto was Fougeret de Montbron, whose *Cosmopolite* Byron characterised (23 Sept. 1811) as 'an amusing little volume, and full of French flippancy.' 'The universe is a kind of book, of which, when a man has seen only his own country, he has read but the first page. I have turned over a considerable number of pages, and have found them equally bad. This inquiry has not been without fruit to me. I used to hate my native land. All the trivial faults of the different nations, among whom I have lived, have reconciled me to her. Even if I had derived no other benefit than this from my travels, I should regret neither their expense nor their weariness.'

Border Minstrelsy] Published in three vols., 1802—3. Sir Walter Scott did not receive his baronetcy till 1820.

the Levant] The countries of the eastern Mediterranean.

Dr Beattie] James Beattie (1735—1803), author of *The Minstrel* (1771 and 1774), a poem in Spenserian stanza. His life and letters were published in 1806 by sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, Aberdeenshire. The use of the Spenserian stanza, e.g. by Thomson in *The Castle of Indolence* (1748), was an early sign of that revival of interest in old literature which heralded the romantic movement.

Sainte-Palaye] Jean-Baptiste de la Curne de Sainte-Palaye (1697—1781), whose *Mémoires sur l'ancienne Chevalerie* were published in 1781.

Cours d'amour] The courts of love, common in Provence and Languedoc, the country of the Troubadours, were competitions of minstrels, in which the chosen 'reine d'amour' distributed the prizes.

No waiter] 'The Rovers' is one of John Hookham Frere's contributions to the *Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin*.

Burke] See Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*, speaking of Marie Antoinette: 'Little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour, and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators, has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever,' etc.

Bayard] Pierre du Terrail, seigneur of Bayard in Dauphiné, the 'Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche,' born 1476, died of a wound at Romagnano in Piedmont, 1524.

Sir Joseph Banks] President of the Royal Society, 1778—1820. He accompanied captain Cook in his first voyage (1768—71), and was much admired by the ladies of Tahiti.

Timon] Shakespeare's misanthropic hero in *Timon of Athens*.

Zeluco] The hero of *Zeluco* (1786), a novel by John Moore, M.D. (1729—1802)—an early fore-runner of the 'Byronic hero.'

TO IANTHE

These stanzas are addressed to lady Charlotte Harley, daughter of Edward, fifth earl of Oxford and Mortimer. She was born 12 Dec. 1801, and was thus in 1813 a mere child. She married captain (afterwards brigadier-general) Anthony Bacon in 1823, and died 1880.

19. **Peri]** A Peri, in Persian mythology, was a beautiful fairy.

CANTO THE FIRST

4. **thy sacred hill]** Mount Parnassus, above Delphi in Phocis. 'That feeble fountain' (l. 7) is the Castalian spring, the fountain of the Muses, 'the weary Nine' of l. 8. See stt. LX.—LXIV. below.

8. **mote]** may, must. Notice the archaisms of the opening stanzas, adopted as in keeping with the Spenserian metre, but gradually dropped. 'Mote' = 'might' in l. 72 below.

10. **a youth]** Byron's statement in the preface that Childe Harold is 'a fictitious character...introduced for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece' should be remembered.

23. **losel]** Worthless fellow.

25-7. Cf. Pope, *Essay on Man*, iv, 215-6:

‘What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?’

Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards.’

44. **spoil'd her goodly lands]** This had happened in the case of Byron's mother, Catharine Gordon of Gicht, whose patrimony had been wasted by her husband, ‘mad Jack’ Byron.

55. **his father's hall]** This stanza is a general description of Newstead abbey, Nottinghamshire, the seat which Byron inherited from his grand-uncle, the fifth lord Byron. The priory—it was never an abbey—of St Mary, Newstead (*de Novo Loco*), in Sherwood forest, was founded for Augustinian canons about 1170 by Henry II. The cloister buildings are incorporated in the modern house, and are adjoined on the north side by the priory church, of which, however, little but the beautiful west front, one of the masterpieces of late thirteenth-century architecture, remains.

61. **Paphian]** Paphos in Cyprus was sacred to Aphrodite.

77. **lemans]** Mistresses.

79. **Eros]** The god of love, corresponding to the Latin Cupid.

feere] Companion. Cf. l. 176 below.

82. **a mother]** The mother and sister of Childe Harold are drawn from Byron's own relations. His affection for his mother, such as it was, was checked by his resentment at the insults which she heaped upon him in her moments of hysteric passion. His half-sister, Augusta, daughter of John Byron by his first wife, Amelia, baroness Conyers, married colonel George Leigh, her first cousin.

99. **Paynim]** Pagan: the epithet, however, is generally applied to Mohammedans. See l. 385 below.

Earth's central line] Byron explained this ‘by saying that, before Childe Harold left England, it was his full intention to traverse Persia, and return by India’ (Letter to Dallas, 7 Sept. 1811).

134. **my little page]** When Byron left England in July 1809, he took with him Robert Rushton, the son of one of the tenants at Newstead. ‘I like him,’ he wrote to his mother, ‘because, like myself, he seems a friendless animal.’ The ‘staunch yeoman’ (l. 158) was Byron's valet, William Fletcher. Rushton's ill-health

did not allow him to go far: he was sent home from Gibraltar in August.

200. **Four days are sped]** Byron sailed from Falmouth on 2 July 1809, and reached Lisbon on 7 July.

204. **His fabled golden tribute]** The Tagus had a legendary reputation, like that of the Lydian Pactolus, for washing down gold in its waters. Cf. Drayton, *The Shepherd's Sirena*, 'Tagus and Pactolus Are to thee debtor,' etc.

205. **Lusian]** Portuguese. More correctly 'Lusitanian.' Byron seems to have coined the epithet by analogy with Camoens' national epic, the *Lusiad* (*Os Lusíadas*).

215. **Gaul's locust host]** Junot invaded Portugal in the late autumn of 1807, and concentrated himself with an army of 28,000 men near Lisbon. He met with little resistance, as the Portuguese army had been disbanded: the insane queen, Maria I, the prince regent John, and the rest of the royal family, took refuge, upon the news of his coming, in Brazil. In August 1808 a British force of 9000 men landed under sir Arthur Wellesley, the future duke of Wellington, in Mondego bay, and, being joined by further reinforcements, defeated the French at Vimiero on 21 August. The full fruits of victory were snatched from the English army by the indecision of Wellesley's fellow commanders. Sir Hew Dalrymple agreed to the convention of Cintra, signed on 30 August, by which the French were allowed to leave Portugal on extremely favourable terms, taking their booty with them. After sir John Moore's Spanish campaign in 1808-9, conducted from a base of operations in Portugal, Soult invaded the country and penetrated it as far as Oporto (March 1809). Wellesley, nominated commander-in-chief, landed at Lisbon on 22 April 1809, crossed the Douro at Oporto on 12 May, and drove the French army northwards into Galicia. When Byron arrived in Portugal, Wellesley was marching up the Tagus into Spain: before Byron left Spain, the battle of Talavera (27, 28 July) had been fought. Masséna's invasion of Portugal and the campaign of Busaco and Torres Vedras took place in the autumn of 1810 and spring of 1811.

216. **Lisboa]** The Portuguese name of Lisbon, corrupted from Olisipo, its ancient name.

226. **sheening]** An archaism coined by Byron.

229. **like**] Alike.

233. **shent**] Defiled: so Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II, ii, st. 11:

‘How may it be,’ sayd then the knight halfe wroth,

‘That knight should knighthood ever so have shent?’

Egypt's plague] Exodus viii, 16–19.

unkempt] Uncombed.

236. **Cintra's glorious Eden**] ‘The village of Cintra in Estremadura,’ wrote Byron to Hodgson on 16 July, ‘is the most beautiful, perhaps, in the world.’ Cintra, 17 miles west of Lisbon, in a beautiful hilly and wooded country, was the summer residence of the kings of Portugal.

241. **the bard**] Dante, with special reference to the *Paradiso*.

252. **the many-winding way**] Up the mountain (cf. l. 202) called the Penha (i.e. the rock).

255. **Our Lady's house of woe**] The convent of Nossa Senhora da Penha, i.e. our Lady of the Rock. Byron mistook *penha* (a rock) for *pena* (pain), and was corrected, as he noted in the second edition, by sir Walter Scott. He left the passage unaltered: ‘I may well assume the other sense from the severities practised there.’

259. **Honorius**] A canonised hermit who ‘dug his den’ in the rocks below the convent during the sixteenth century.

274. **the Prince's palace**] The Castelo da Penha, high on the mountain. The old royal palace of the monarchs of the house of Avis is in the town.

275. **Vathek**] William Beckford of Fonthill, Wilts (1759–1844), whose wealth was inherited from his father, William Beckford, lord mayor of London. His Arabian romance, *Vathek*, a work of extraordinary imagination, was written in French about 1781, and reflects the extravagant and fantastic character of its author. His stay at Cintra was only temporary. When Byron wrote, he was living the life of a luxurious hermit at Fonthill.

288. **the hall**] The palace of the marques de Marialva (l. 298). The convention of Cintra was actually signed at Lisbon. Byron's lines on the convention faithfully represent the indignation with which this lenient treaty was regarded in England. The three generals who were responsible for its signature had to face the ordeal of a court of inquiry. They were acquitted of any stain on their

character; but, while Wellesley was sent out again in 1809, sir Harry Burrard and sir Hew Dalrymple were passed over.

296. **the Urchin]** An urchin is literally a hedgehog, as in Spenser, *F. Q.*, II, II, st. 13, 'some like ugly Urchins thick and short.' The word is thus applicable to a 'dwarfish demon' (l. 297). The form of allegory in which this stanza is cast is intended to be Spenserian.

298. **Marialva's dome]** See note on l. 288 above.

333. **Mafra]** North of Cintra, about 29 miles from Lisbon. Here John V, king of Portugal 1706-59, built his vast palace, which, like the Spanish Escorial, includes a church and monastery.

334. **luckless queen]** Maria I of Portugal, daughter of John V's son and successor Joseph. She married her uncle Dom Pedro: on Joseph's death (1777), Pedro succeeded to the crown and died in 1786. Maria then became queen, but went out of her mind. In 1807 she went to Brazil with the rest of the royal family, and died at Rio de Janeiro in 1816.

337. **freres]** Friars (*fratres*, brothers). Byron got on well with the members of the convent at Mafra, and talked Latin to them: 'they have a large library, and asked me if the *English* had any books in their country?'

358. **unyielding foes]** Napoleon invaded Spain, his nominal ally, in 1808, and in June of that year, after the successive abdications of Charles IV and Ferdinand VII (see note on l. 509 below), imposed his eldest brother Joseph as king upon the Junta of regency. The nation, however, stood out against French rule, and the long struggle of the peninsular war, which lasted until 1814, was the result.

360. Byron apparently entered Spain by the ordinary route from Lisbon, by way of Elvas and Badajoz.

363. **Tayo]** Correctly Tajo, the name of the Tagus in its own country.

364. **Sierras]** The Spanish word *sierra* (=a saw, *serra* in Portuguese) is used to mean a range of mountains, from the jagged, serrated appearance of their peaks.

365. **of art]** Artificial.

366-7. **Ne...ne.. ne]** Neither...nor...nor.

379. **Dark Guadiana]** The Guadiana (Arabic *wady* = river,

combined with its ancient name, the Anas) rises in La Mancha, the mountainous district in the south-east of New Castile, and enters the gulf of Cadiz. For some fifty miles south-west of Badajoz, and again for some distance above its mouth, it forms the boundary between Spain and Portugal.

382. **Whilome upon his banks]** A general allusion to the wars between Moors and Christians in Spain is probably intended. The battle which secured the Moorish domination in Spain was fought in 711 on the banks of the Guadalete, a river in the south of Andalusia; but its exact date and the identity of the river have been disputed by historians.

388. **Pelagio]** The legend of the Moorish conquest of Spain is briefly as follows. Roderick, the last Visigothic king, violated Florinda, traditionally called la Cava, the daughter of Count Julian, governor of Ceuta. In revenge, Julian conspired against him with the sons of the dethroned king Witiza and their uncle the bishop of Seville, and invited the aid of the Moors from northern Africa. After the defeat of Roderick at the Guadalete, Tarik, the Moorish general, whose name survives in Gibraltar (Djebel-el-Tarik, i.e. Tarik's mountain), over-ran the Peninsula; but a body of refugees under the leadership of Pelayo took shelter among the rocks of Covadonga in Asturias, and successfully withstood the Arab invaders. From the kingdom of Asturias, of which Pelayo was the first monarch, Spain was gradually recovered for the Christians, and the Moors driven out, in a long series of wars which ended with the conquest of Granada in 1492. Three British poets of Byron's day, stirred by the events of the peninsular war, added to the legendary literature of early Spanish history. Scott's *Vision of Don Roderick* and Landor's tragedy, *Count Julian*, appeared in 1811, the year before *Childe Harold*: Southey's *Roderick, the last of the Goths* was published in 1813. Southey's notes form an excellent guide to the literary history of the legend and its 'ancient roundelays' (l. 381 above).

399. **A peasant's plaint]** Byron alludes to the preservation of heroic legend in folk-song. The ballads on the conquest of Alhama by the Christians in 886 were skilfully adapted by him in his stanzas with the refrain, 'Woe is me, Alhama.'

405. The subject is changed from ancient legends of chivalry to

the contemporary war and to the battle of Talavera (see note on l. 215 above).

421. **Siroc**] Siroco, a word of Arabic derivation, is the Spanish name (It. *Sirocco*) for the hot wind which blows across the Mediterranean from the African desert. The 'sulphury Siroc' is a poetical metaphor for the hot blast of gunpowder.

423. **the Giant**] Battle personified.

430. **three potent nations**] France, Spain, and Great Britain.

445. **the fond ally**] Byron writes of his own country with irony mingled with affection. The convention of Cintra and its neutralising effect on British victories in Portugal are still in his mind.

448. **Talavera's plain**] Talavera de la Reina is at the junction of the Tagus and Alberche, about 50 miles west of Toledo and 84 miles south-west of Madrid.

451. **Honour**] A reminiscence of Collins' *Ode written in the year 1746* :

'There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,

To bless the turf that wraps their clay.'

The personifications in stanzas xxxviii—xlii and their general phraseology are indicative of the influence of the poetry of Collins and Gray upon Byron.

459. **Albuera**] South-east of Badajoz. The battle was fought on 16 May 1811 between Soult, who had advanced from Seville to relieve Badajoz, and marshal Beresford. The allies were successful, although Beresford, out of 8000 British soldiers, lost more than half. In 1814 Beresford was created viscount Beresford of Albuera and Cappoquin.

478. **Sevilla**] Byron was at Seville 21—25 July 1809. Seville was taken by Soult on 31 Jan. 1810, and was evacuated by him in 1812, after Wellington's victory at Salamanca had isolated Andalusia from the other French positions in Spain.

490. **rebeck**] A primitive form of fiddle with three strings.

492. **young-eyed**] The epithet seems to mean 'fully awake,' in spite of the lateness of the hour. Probably a reminiscence of 'the young-eyed cherubins' in Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, v, i, 62.

500. **Fandango**] A Spanish dance personified.

508. **Vivā el Rey**] Long live the king.

509. Godoy] Manuel de Godoy, prince of the Peace, duke of Alcudia and prince of Bassano, was prime minister and virtual ruler of Spain under Charles IV, king of Spain 1788—1808. Charles had married his first cousin, Maria Luisa of Parma; and her passion for Godoy was responsible for the influence of the minister, whose rule was marked by flagrant corruption. Napoleon, in his designs upon Spain, used Godoy as his catspaw. By the treaty of Fontainebleau (27 Oct. 1807), Godoy was promised a third of the kingdom of Portugal for himself, in return for helping the French army to gain a free passage to Lisbon. Early in 1808 Napoleon, having prepared the way by sending French troops into Spain, began hostilities against his nominal ally. The popular fury against Godoy, who had thus lent himself to the betrayal of his country, led quickly to his fall and imprisonment, and to the abdication of Charles in favour of his son, Ferdinand VII, who had previously been inculpated in a plot to murder the minister. The events of this revolution, which took place at Aranjuez on 18 and 19 March 1808, were grateful to the Spaniards; but Ferdinand, aiming at alliance with Napoleon and a marriage with a Bonaparte princess, put himself into Napoleon's power at Bayonne, and on 6 May was forced to restore the crown to his father, who already had resigned it by a private treaty to Napoleon. Ferdinand was sent into imprisonment in France; Charles, the queen and Godoy went into inglorious retirement at Rome; and on 15 June Joseph Bonaparte was proclaimed king of Spain.

513. On yon long, level plain] This stanza contains a bird's-eye view of the Andalusian plain, as seen from the slopes of the Sierra Morena.

514. those Moorish turrets] Castles which, like that at Jaen, or the Alhambra at Granada, are reminders of Moorish rule in Andalusia.

519. the dragon's nest] Jaen in northern Andalusia, retaken by the Spaniards from the French during the first invasion of Andalusia in July 1808.

523. the badge of crimson hue] A red cockade, with the words 'Fernando Septimo' in the middle, the badge of the Spanish national party.

531. **Morena's dusky height]** The Sierra Morena, the Marianus Mons of the ancients. Byron's epithet indicates that he wrongly thought Morena to be the feminine of the Spanish *moreno* = dusky. He noted that the 'Sierra Morena was fortified in every defile through which I passed on my way to Seville.'

534. **the mountain-howitzer]** A howitzer is a cannon used for firing small shell at a short range, which can be easily dragged to mountain positions. Cf. the method of description in this stanza with ll. 243-51 above—an enumeration of separate details which in combination give a complete picture. See also note on canto III, l. 581.

540. **he whose nod]** Napoleon. Andalusia had already been unsuccessfully invaded by Dupont in the summer of 1808. For the subsequent invasion see note on l. 478 above.

547. **Gaul's Vulture]** The symbolical eagle of France is, Byron implies, too noble a bird for the invader, whom he personifies by the vulture, the bird of the eagle tribe which preys on dead bodies.

558. **the Spanish maid]** This and the two following stanzas refer to Agostina, the 'maid of Saragossa,' who, during the heroic defence of Saragossa by Palafox, worked a cannon whose gunner had fallen dead. When Byron was in Seville, she was to be seen walking 'daily on the Prado, decorated with medals and orders, by command of the Junta.' Saragossa, the capital of the old kingdom of Aragon, was first besieged by Verdier in the summer of 1808: the second siege by Lannes (Dec. 1808—Feb. 1809), which ended in the reduction of the city, was that in which this famous incident occurred.

560. **anlace]** A two-edged dagger with a broad hilt, a poniard.

569. **her coal-black veil]** The black *mantilla*.

599. **Phœbus]** Byron probably remembered Shakespeare, *Ant. and Cleo.* I, v, 28, where Cleopatra speaks of herself, 'that am with Phœbus' amorous pinches black.'

607. **Houries]** The houris were the beauties of the Mohammedan paradise; hence, the beautiful women of the east.

612. **Parnassus]** The 'sacred hill' of l. 4 above.

638. **yon melodious wave]** The Castalian spring: cf. l. 7 above.

646. **Daphne's deathless plant]** The poet's laurel. The laurel, the tree into which Daphne was changed when fleeing from Apollo,

became his favourite tree, and, as sacred to him, the leader of the quire of the Muses, was appropriated as the reward of poetry.

651. **The Pythian hymn]** The hymn of Apollo, who received his name of Pythius from his destruction of the python, whose den was in mount Parnassus. The ancient name of Delphi was Pytho, and the priestess was known as Pythia.

659. **Cadiz]** Byron rode from Seville to Cadiz at the end of July 1809.

666. **Paphos]** See note on l. 61 above.

667. **The Queen who conquers all]** Aphrodite, Venus.

679. **kibes]** A kibe is a blister on the heel, as Shakespeare, *Hamlet* v, i, 153: 'the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe.' Byron seems in this line to have taken 'kibe' as equivalent to 'heel,' unless he meant that a new pleasure served to take the attention from the satiety which the last had left behind it.

687. **the forest-monarch]** The wild bull.

697. **hackney]** A hackney is a common horse for riding, from the old French *haquenée*; hence a hired horse. A hackney coach is by analogy a hired coach.

whiskey] A light one-horse chaise, buggy. The word is derived from its whisking movement, and has nothing to do with the spirit of the same name.

702. **Thamis]** Byron coins this form to suit his metre: the old name of the Thames was Tamesis.

706. **ye, Bœotian shades]** 'This,' says Byron, 'was written at Thebes, and consequently in the best situation for asking and answering such a question; not as the birthplace of Pindar, but as the capital of Bœotia, where the first riddle was propounded and solved'—i.e. the riddle of the Sphinx, which was solved by Oedipus.

707. **the solemn Horn]** The excursionist who called at the Highgate inns was sworn on a pair of horns to certain observances, the chief of which was that he would never drink small beer if he could get strong ale.

717. **bedsmen]** Petitioners. A bede is the old English word for a prayer, and bedesmen, e.g. in an almshouse, are persons whose

duty it is to pray for their founders or benefactors. Each of the small circular pieces of wood or other material strung together to form a rosary is called a bead, because it is used to count off one prayer of a number corresponding to the whole number of beads.

723. **lated]** Belated.

731. **Four cavaliers]** These are the *picadores* or 'prickers,' whose part is to excite the bull by stabbing him slightly with their spears.

739. **Matadore]** *Matador*=killer (Sp. *matar*=to kill). His part is to administer the *coup-de-grace* to the bull.

744. **His arms a dart]** This is inaccurate. The *matador's* weapon is a sword, 'a long straight Toledan blade' (Ford, *Gatherings from Spain*, ch. xxii). The *matador* does not enter until the end of the fight.

760. **croupe]** The croup is, of course, the hind-quarters of a horse. The sudden turn to which Byron refers is properly called the croupade.

776. **brast]** Broken, an archaism.

778. **the Matadores]** Another error. The bull-fighters who use their coloured cloaks to divert the attention of the bull from the *picadores* (see note on l. 731 above) are called *chulos*. The word *chulo* 'signifies, in the Arabic, a lad, a merryman' (Ford).

781. **conynge]** Cunning, knowing.

802. **centinel]** Spenser uses the spelling 'centonel,' e.g. *F. Q.* iv, ii, st. 36: 'warie Centonels well stayd.'

809. **Night's lover-loving Queen]** The moon, who herself wooed Endymion in *Latinos*.

815. **his wings]** I.e. because they enable him readily to fly from one object to another.

818. **Some bitter]** Byron in his notes quoted the original of this sentiment from Lucretius, *De Rer. Nat.* iv, 1133:

Medio de fonte leporum

Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipseis floribus angat.

I.e. 'from the midst of the well of sportive fancy there rises something bitter to leave a sting in the very flowers.'

837. The lines to Inez may indicate that Byron's own fancy was attracted at Cadiz. In a letter to his mother he mentions a señorita Cordova whose beauty made a strong impression on him.

854. **Hebrew wanderer]** The wandering Jew.

874. **how well thy walls have stood]** Cadiz from 1810 to 1812 was the unconquered stronghold in Andalusia of the Spanish national party, and was continuously blockaded during the period of Soult's rule at Seville.

879. **A traitor]** This incident happened before the first French invasion of Andalusia, in May 1808. The marques de Solano, governor of Cadiz, was killed by the mob for refusing to fire upon a French fleet which had taken refuge from the English in the harbour.

884. **Kingless]** See note on l. 509 above.

890. **War even to the knife!]** Byron notes that this was the answer of José Palafox (see note on l. 558 above) to the French general at the siege of Saragossa. His actual words seem to have been, 'War to the last barricade!' (*Guerra hasta la ultima tapia*).

910. **Fresh legions]** The closing stanzas of the poem were evidently written after May 1811, while the fortunes of Spain were hanging in the balance. The most decisive events in the war, the taking of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, and the battle of Salamanca, followed in 1812, and the battles of Vittoria and the Pyrenees, which cleared the way for Wellington's invasion of France, in 1813.

914. **Pizarros]** Francisco and his brother Gonzales Pizarro, the conquerors of Peru in 1528. Gonzales became governor of Quito after the assassination of Francisco in 1541. Byron somewhat exaggerated the peace of the Spanish colonies at this period, which was much disturbed by revolution, as the result of events in the mother country. The exploits of Bolivar followed within the next few years; the republic of Colombia was founded in 1819, and between that time and 1826 the Spanish crown lost all its possessions in South America.

918. **Talavera]** See notes on ll. 215, 448 above.

919. **Barossa's fight]** The battle of Barrosa, south-east of Cadiz, near cape Trafalgar, was won (5 March 1811) by lieutenant-general Graham, with a much inferior force, over marshal Victor's army, which was engaged in the blockade of Cadiz. The effects of the battle were neutralised by the failure of the English and Spanish generals to co-operate.

920. **Albuera**] See note on l. 459 above. Albuera was the most bloody battle of the peninsular war.

922. **her Olive-Branch**] The emblem of peace, appropriate to Spain, where the olive is a common tree.

927. **my friend**] The hon. John Wingfield, son of Richard, fourth viscount Powerscourt. He was at Harrow with Byron, and died of fever at Coimbra in Portugal in 1811. Byron's note alludes to the deaths of Mrs Byron and of his Cambridge friend Charles Skinner Matthews, which took place at the beginning of August in the same year: he quotes Young, *Night-Thoughts*, 1, 211—13:

'Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?

Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;

And thrice ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.'

945. **fytte**] A fit or fyte (Old Eng. *fitt*) is a song or division of a song, e.g. Spenser, *F. Q.*, 1, 11, st. 7: 'Fayre Goddess, lay that furious fitt aside.'

948. **moe**] More.

CANTO THE SECOND

1. **blue-eyed maid of heaven**] Athena, the goddess of wisdom, the γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη of Homer. These stanzas were written at Athens, where Byron arrived on Christmas day, 1809.

3. **thy temple**] The Parthenon, the temple of Athena Parthenos (the maid) on the Acropolis.

4. **war and wasting fire**] The Acropolis was surrendered to the Turks in 1456 by Franco Acciaiuoli, the last duke of Athens, which had formed a separate principality under the Byzantine empire. In 1687 the Venetian Francesco Morosini took Athens from the Turks: the city was surrendered on 28 Sept., but the bombardment ruined the Parthenon. The Venetians were confirmed in their conquest of the Morea by the peace of Carlowitz (1699), but it was conquered from them by the Turks in 1716, and Turkish rule was re-established by the peace of Passarowitz in 1718.

16. **stole**] The Greek στολή, a robe or gown.

19. **Son of the morning**] Byron introduces a Greek or Turk as his object of apostrophe in this and the next three stanzas, inviting

him to contemplate the funeral urn and skull. Son of the morning = native of the east.

24. **Jove's]** As stanza x shows, the point of view is taken from the temple of the Olympian Zeus, which stood south-east of the Acropolis, near the Ilissus and the fountain of Callirrhoe.

32. **so]** I.e. provided that it is.

37. **mound]** The funeral mound of a typical Grecian hero. Byron, in his notes, cites the example of Ajax, who was not burned, but interred in a mound.

46. **its broken arch]** Byron likens the brow and other parts of the skull to the ruined arches, etc., of a temple.

55. **Athena's wisest son]** Socrates, whose maxim on the subject of knowledge is recorded in the next line. Cf. note on canto iv, l. 830.

61. **Acheron]** One of the rivers of Hades.

66. **the Sadducee]** Who said that there was no resurrection (St Matt. xxii, 23).

72. **the Bactrian, Samian sage]** The philosophers Zoroaster, born in Bactria (eastern Persia), and Pythagoras, a native of Samos in the Ægean.

73. **There, thou]** The person alluded to cannot be identified. Some have connected the stanza with Edleston, Byron's adopted brother at Cambridge: others with the unknown Thyrza, to whose memory Byron addressed lyrics in 1811 and 1812.

84. **son of Saturn]** Jove, i.e. Zeus, son of Kronos: see note on l. 24 above.

91. **But who]** Stt. xi—xv refer to the removal of the sculptures of the Parthenon—the 'Elgin marbles,' now in the British museum—to England by Thomas Bruce, seventh earl of Elgin. This took place between 1803 and 1812: the marbles were purchased for the nation in 1816. The removal was thus in progress while Byron was in Athens, and he writes on 3 Jan. 1810: 'At this moment, besides what has been already deposited in London, an Hydriot vessel is in the Pyræus (sic) to receive every portable relic.' On 17 March 1811, during his second stay at Athens, in the Capuchin convent, he wrote his satire, *The Curse of Minerva*, in which he attacked lord Elgin at length: the satire was not published until 1828, after Byron's death.

99. **long-reluctant**] One of the ships which conveyed the marbles was wrecked in the Archipelago.

100. **the modern Pict**] The ancient Picts had the reputation of robbers.

101. **Goth**] The Greek historian Zosimus is responsible for the legend that when Alaric, the Gothic general, was marching on Athens in 395, Pallas and Achilles appeared on the walls in full panoply, and caused him to spare the city. As a matter of fact, the city surrendered: Finlay says that 'he appears really to have occupied Athens rather as a federal leader than as a foreign conqueror,' but thinks that the mercy shown to the monuments of the city was compensated for by the indemnities which he levied.

115. **she, whose gen'rous aid**] Cf. canto I, ll. 445, 446.

118. **Ægis**] Originally the word *aiγίς* meant a flashing shield, and was applied to the shield of Zeus. But, owing to a supposed connexion with the word *αἴξ* (a goat), the ægis borne by Athena Promachos (the defender), whose statue was one of the marvels of the Acropolis, was represented as a goat-skin, with the Gorgon's head in the middle, and a border of snakes. For the legend referred to here, see note on l. 101 above.

120. **Peleus' son**] Achilles.

136. **But where is Harold**] After these anticipatory stanzas, the narrative of the pilgrimage is resumed. Byron arrived in Gibraltar from Cadiz on 6 Aug. 1809, and left on 16 Aug. for Malta. Leaving Malta on 21 Sept. in the brig of war *Spider*, he arrived at Prevesa in Albania on 28 Sept. It will be noticed that he describes the frigate, in which only the second part of the journey was made, in connexion with the earlier part.

151. **convoy**] The merchant ships, under the escort of the frigate.

152. **The dullest sailer**] I.e. the slowest vessel in the convoy showing itself at its best.

155. **well-reeved**] Well fastened, roped.

the netted canopy] A net spread 'to prevent blocks or splinters falling on deck during action' (Byron).

166. **the lone chieftain**] The captain.

174. **pennant-bearer**] The pennant is the flag borne by the

frigate, which has to sail slowly after dark to keep pace with the slower merchantmen of the convoy.

185. **some rude Arion**] Some unskilled minstrel. Arion was the lyre-player of Methymna in Lesbos, who, when sailing back to Corinth from Sicily and in danger of his life from the sailors, attracted a school of dolphins by his playing, and was by them carried safe to land.

190. **Calpe's straits**] The straits of Gibraltar. Calpe (Gibraltar) and mount Abyla in Mauritania were called the pillars of Hercules, who was supposed to have cloven the straits through the mountain of which they were originally the halves.

193. **Hecate**] Selene, the moon, was identified with Artemis, whose third name, proper to the lower world, was Hecate. Cf. 'Dian,' l. 209 below: Diana was the Latin equivalent of Artemis.

197. **Mauritania**] The land of the Moors, Morocco.

208. **laving**] Washing itself in the waves.

218. **To slowly trace**] A solecism in grammar: 'slowly to trace' would be correct, but would alter the slow rhythm, which is doubtless intentional.

230. **Minions of splendour**] I.e. the crowd, understood in the repeated 'none' of the previous line.

236. **Athos**] Mount Athos (Hagion Oros, the holy mountain) is the easternmost of the three peninsulas of Chalkis, the southern part of Macedonia. It became the chief seat of Greek monasticism in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and is covered with monasteries and other religious buildings. The monasteries of the eastern Church have always given more opportunity for the solitary life than those of the west, of which, save in the Carthusian order, the common life of the monks is a distinctive feature. Hence the word 'eremite' (l. 235) is appropriate to the monasteries of mount Athos.

253. **Calypso's isles**] Gozo and Malta. Ogygia, the isle in which Calypso detained Ulysses for seven years (l. 258), has been supposed to be Gozo.

259. **his boy**] Telemachus, son of Ulysses. The story that Mentor, his father's friend and his own tutor, effected his escape from Calypso's island by pushing him over the cliffs, comes from Fénelon's *Aventures de Télémaque*, and is not classical.

266. **Sweet Florence**] Mrs Spencer Smith, daughter of baron Herbert, Austrian ambassador at Constantinople. Byron describes her as 'very pretty, very accomplished, and extremely eccentric.' She took part in a conspiracy against Napoleon, and suffered much danger in consequence. The narrative of her journey in 1806 from Italy to England through the Tyrol was written by the marchese di Salvo, and published in 1807.

277. **the boy**] Love, Cupid.

303. **tropes**] Metaphors, figures of speech.

322. **Utopias**] Schemes for imaginary commonwealths. The word is, of course, derived from the famous *Utopia* of sir Thomas More.

ared] Explained, an archaic past participle from the verb *rede* or *arcad*, which is common in Spenser.

334. **Iskander**] The Turkish name for Alexander the Great, born at Pella in Macedonia.

335. **beacon**] I.e. a moral warning, as an example of the transitory nature of glory.

336. **his namesake**] George Castriot (1404-67), son of John Castriot, a petty prince of Albania. He is known as Scanderbeg (i.e. Iskander-beg, the lord Alexander), a name given him by the Turks. He was brought up as a hostage in the Turkish court, where his three brothers are said to have been poisoned. After having gained a great military reputation, he revolted from the Turks in 1443 and established himself as prince of Albania, where he maintained his power for some years, and was even able to send reinforcements to aid the king of Naples in 1461. In his later years, his power declined, and at his death he was a fugitive from Albania. Gibbon (ch. LXVII) says: 'The enthusiasm of chivalry and religion has ranked him with the names of Alexander and Pyrrhus, nor would they blush to acknowledge their intrepid countryman.'

343. **the barren spot**] The isle of Ithaca, the principality of Ulysses, who (l. 258) preferred his 'mortal bride,' Penelope, to the charms of Calypso. Ithaca is off the coast of Acarnania.

345. **the mount**] Leucas (Capo Dukato), the southern promontory of the isle of Leucadia (Santa Maura). Sappho, the Lesbian poetess, was said to have thrown herself into the sea from this

promontory, for love of Phaon. Hence 'the last resort of fruitless love' (l. 363 below).

349. **life eternal**] I.e. the eternal life of her verse. The poems of Sappho are preserved only in fragments.

356. **Actium**] The battle of Actium, fought 2 Sept., B.C. 31, at the entrance of the Ambracian gulf (see stanza XLV below), was won by Augustus over Antony and Cleopatra: the scene of the battle was close to Byron's landing-place at Prevesa. The battle of Lepanto (cf. canto IV, 125) was won 7 Oct. 1571 by Don John of Austria in command of the allied fleets of Spain, Venice and the papacy against the Turks: the scene was at the mouth of the gulf of Patras, near Missolonghi, where Byron afterwards died. Nelson's final victory over the French fleet was won off cape Trafalgar in southern Spain, 21 Oct. 1805: Byron probably visited the spot on his way from Cadiz to Gibraltar.

371. **Suli**] In Epirus, to the west of Janina, the Albanian capital, and north of Prevesa. Tsumata, the highest summit (7113 feet) of the Pindus range, rises to the east of Prevesa, some forty miles inland.

378. **the closing year**] Byron landed in Albania at the end of September: see note on l. 136 above.

381. **a shore unknown**] Byron says that at this time he and Hobhouse were, with the exception of major Leake, the British consul at Janina, the only Englishmen who had ever ventured into the interior of Albania beyond its capital.

391. **alike despised**] One of Byron's two Albanian attendants, a Christian named Basili, 'had the greatest veneration for the church, mixed with the highest contempt of churchmen, whom he cuffed upon occasion in a most heterodox manner.'

395. **sacerdotal gain**] Advantage to the priesthood, a single class as opposed to mankind in general.

397. **Ambracia's gulf**] The gulf of Arta: see note on l. 356 above.

398. **A world for woman**] The burden of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* and Dryden's drama on the same subject, *All for Love*, or, *The World well lost*.

400. **Roman chief and Asian king**] 'It is said, that, on the day

previous to the battle of Actium, Antony had thirteen kings at his levee' (Byron).

402. **the second Cæsar's trophies]** The city of Nicopolis, founded by Augustus to commemorate his victory. The ruins lie north of Prevesa: Byron describes them as 'large masses of brick-work, the bricks of which are joined by interstices of mortar, as large as the bricks themselves and equally durable.'

404. **Imperial anarchs]** I.e. individuals who, to establish their own empire, subvert all rule.

407. **Illyria's vales]** Illyria or Illyricum was the general name for the country north of Epirus and between the east coast of the Adriatic and Macedonia, including Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, etc.

411. **Tempe]** The vale in north Thessaly between mounts Olympus and Ossa, through which the river Peneus (the Peneios or Salamvria) enters the sea.

412. **Parnassus]** See note on canto I, 4; and canto I, stanzas LX. etc.

415. **bleak Pindus]** See note on l. 371 above. Byron's course from Prevesa lay along the north coast of the gulf of Arta, and then northwards to Janina, along the western slopes of mount Pindus. He arrived at Janina, 'the primal city of the land,' on 5 Oct. Janina lies on the west shore of 'Acherusia's lake,' so called from the river Acheron (Kalamas), which flows north-westward from it, and was one of the several rivers of that name supposed to have a connexion with the lower world.

418. **Albania's chief]** Ali Pasha, the 'lion of Janina,' during the early years of the nineteenth century, established a principality in Albania, of which he was nominally governor under the Sultan, and gained control of the various towns on the sea-board. His power reached its height after the time of Byron's visit, but in 1820 he was deposed by the Turkish government, and, surrendering at Janina in 1822, was murdered. Byron left Janina on 11 Oct., and, travelling northwards, arrived at Tepeleni on 20 Oct. He left on 23 Oct., returning to Janina on 26 Oct.

424. **Zitza]** 'A village with a Greek monastery (where I slept on my return),' writes Byron to his mother, 'in the most beautiful situation (always excepting Cintra, in Portugal) I ever beheld.' He

describes the scene in a note to *Childe Harold*. Zitza is four hours' journey from Janina. The 'volumed cataract' (l. 431) is the fall of the Acheron in the valley beneath the monastery.

438. **caloyer]** A Greek monk: *καλόγερος* (*calógeros*) = a good old man.

448. **impregnate]** A Latinised past participle.

453. **Chimaera's alps]** The town of Khimara is on the sea-coast, at the foot of the Acroceraunian or Chimariot mountains, which form the northern boundary of Epirus. Cf. canto iv, 657—8.

459. **Close shamed Elysium's gates]** I.e. the beauty of Elysium is put to shame by this scene, the fabled entrance to Hades.

460. **Ne]** Nor.

466. **capote]** The national garment of the Albanians, a cloak hanging over one shoulder.

468. **the tempest's short-lived shock]** Byron and his guides, on the way from Janina to Zitza, were separated from their companions in a thunder-storm, and were lost for nine hours. The *Stanzas composed during a thunder-storm* belong to this episode, and contain an apostrophe to the Florence of stt. xxx—xxxiii above, somewhat more affectionate in tone than the subsequent attitude of *Childe Harold* would lead us to expect. The Ceraunian (i.e. Thunderbolt) mountains took their name from the frequency of thunder-storms among them.

469. **Dodona]** The oracle of Zeus was at Dodona in Epirus, near the south-east corner of the lake of Janina. The 'aged grove' are the trees through which the voice of the oracle came in the wind.

474. **are broke]** I.e. must be broken.

478. **Epirus' bounds]** Byron hurries over his journey through the southern part of the ancient Illyricum. It is worth noting that he thought that the approach to Delvinaki, which he reached the day after leaving Zitza, might 'contest the palm' with the beauty of Zitza itself.

481. **yclad]** Clothed: an archaism. Strictly speaking, the word is a past participle.

487] **Tomerit]** The ancient mount Tomarus, now Tomor Gora, to the north-east of Tepeleni. The highest summit reaches 7917 feet.

488. **Laos**] The Voyusa: Tepeleni stands below its junction with the Dryno. Byron describes it as being 'as wide as the Thames at Westminster' and calls it 'the finest river in the Levant.'

492. **Tepalen**] Ali Pasha was encamped here, besieging Ibrahim Pasha, who held Berat, some forty miles to the north.

502. **santons**] Mohammedan hermits (Sp. *santos* = holy men).

508. **the corridore**] Byron, in a letter to his mother, describes the scene. His words explain much in this and the following stanzas. 'It brought to my mind (with some change of *dress*, however) Scott's description of Branksome Castle in his *Lay*, and the feudal system. The Albanians, in their dresses (the most magnificent in the world, consisting of a long *white kilt*, gold worked cloak, crimson velvet gold-laced jacket and waistcoat, silver-mounted pistols and daggers), the Tartars with their high caps, the Turks in their vast pelisses and turbans, the soldiers and black slaves with the horses, the former in groups in an immense large open gallery in front of the palace, the latter placed in a kind of cloister below it, two hundred steeds ready caparisoned to move in a moment, couriers entering or passing out with the despatches, the kettle-drums beating, boys calling the hour from the minaret of the mosque, altogether, with the singular appearance of the building itself, formed a new and delightful spectacle to a stranger.' The palace was evidently built round a large quadrangle, and the portico and upper gallery (the 'corridore') described as 'in front of the palace,' formed the front of all four inner faces.

518. **Delhi**] In a note on l. 687 below, Byron describes the Delhis as 'horsemen, answering to our forlorn hope.' The 'cap of terror' is the helmet, the 'crooked glaive' is the scimitar.

520. **swarthy Nubia's mutilated son**] An eunuch from north-east Africa.

530. **Muezzin**] The 'proclaimer' who utters the call to prayer from the minaret of the mosque.

532. **Ramazani's fast**] The ninth month of the Mohammedan year, usually known as Ramazan, is set apart for fasting during the hours of daylight.

538. **the vacant gallery**] The 'corridore' of l. 508 above.

549. **no meaner passion shares**] I.e. the child occupies the

entire thoughts of the mother, and prevents her from allowing her fancy to stray in forbidden directions.

554. **ALI**] See note on l. 418 above.

561. **Hafiz**] A famous Persian poet of the fourteenth century, whose work consists of a large number of ghazuls or lyrics in praise of love. He died at Shiraz in 1389.

562. **the Teian**] Anacreon, who was born at Teos near Smyrna in the later part of the sixth century B.C.

565. **a tiger's tooth**] Figuratively, as a symbol of Ali's savage character.

566-7. The meaning is obvious, but the construction is elliptic. One deed of blood follows another, and those who began their mortal span with bloody acts, conclude it in bloodier, increasing in ferocity throughout its length.

588. **within their power**] This refers to the episode described in the two following stanzas. The storm took place about 8 Nov., when Byron had sailed from Prevesa in a Turkish war-ship bound for Patras. He was forced to land near Parga and return by land to Prevesa. He describes his own conduct during the storm thus: 'I did what I could to console Fletcher'—his valet—'but finding him incorrigible, wrapped myself up in my Albanian capote (an immense cloak), and lay down on deck to wait the worst.'

592. **less barbarians**] I.e. more civilized people.

593. **fellow-countrymen**] Byron notes that this alludes to the wreckers of Cornwall.

596. **Suli's shaggy shore**] See note on l. 371 above.

602. **the Frank**] The name given to the native of western Europe by the peoples of the Levant.

610. **Philanthropy's rare stamp**] Byron says that the Albanian chief who entertained him 'refused any compensation but a written paper stating that I was well received; and when I pressed him to accept a few sequins, "No," he replied; "I wish you to love me, not to pay me."'

613. **It came to pass**] Byron left Prevesa a second time, with a body-guard of Albanians, on 13 Nov., and sailed to Lutraki (Utraikey of st. LXX) on the south shore of the gulf of Arta, landing there next day. From Lutraki he travelled south-westward through

Acarnania and Aetolia, crossing the Achelous (Aspro Potamo) to Missolonghi on the gulf of Patras, which he reached a week after leaving Prevesa.

624. **How brown the foliage]** Cf. 'forest brown' in l. 195 above, a similar note of the colour of woods in a night-scene.

632. **the red wine]** Byron notes that 'the Albanian Mussulmans do not abstain from wine, and, indeed, very few of the others.'

633. **ygazed]** Cf. 'yelad,' l. 481 above.

637. **Palikar]** Byron explains that Παλικαρί (Palikari) is the Romaic word for a soldier: the literal meaning is 'lad.' The correct form is παλληκάρι (Pallēkári).

639. **kirtled clan]** Cf. l. 514 above. Byron gives in his note two specimens of songs, akin to the 'uncouth dirge,' in the Albanian dialect, with translations. The lyric which follows st. LXXII contains reminiscences of songs heard on his travels, but is not a translation of any single one.

649. **Tambourgi]** Drummer, from French *tambour*, with Turkish termination *-gi*, i.e. drum-man.

652. **Chimariot]** See note on l. 453 above.

654. **camese]** Literally 'shirt'; here used of the white kirtle, over which is worn the cloak or 'capote.'

663. **scarfs of blood-red]** See l. 517 above.

665. **the pirates of Parga]** Parga is an Albanian coast-town, some 30 to 40 miles north of Prevesa. It was the last place on the coast which withstood Ali Pasha, of the towns which, formerly Venetian, had passed under the rule of France. In 1814 the French garrison was expelled by the inhabitants, and the defence was entrusted to a British force. In 1817 it was delivered by Great Britain to Ali, and the inhabitants were offered a refuge in the Ionian islands. Hobhouse, in his description of the scene at Lutraki, says that one song, 'which detained' the Albanians 'more than an hour,' was an account of a piratical raid from Parga, each verse ending with the refrain 'Robbers all at Parga!'

677. **when Previsa fell]** Prevesa had been taken from the French by Ali in 1798.

682. **the Vizier]** A vizier or wazir is a counsellor or minister of state. Byron probably applies the title to Ali for the sake of the rhyme.

686. **the yellow hair'd Giaours]** A Giaour (pronounced *jowr*) is the Turkish name for an infidel, i.e. one not professing the Mohammedan religion. The Russians ('Muscovites,' l. 688 below) are alluded to: 'yellow,' as Byron explains, being the epithet commonly applied to them.

horsetail] The horsetail is 'the insignia of a Pasha' (Byron), carried as a standard before him. The number of horsetails increases with the rank of the pasha: the Sultan is entitled to seven.

687. **his Delhis]** See note on l. 518 above.

689. **Selictar]** Byron explains as 'sword-bearer.'

693. **Fair Greece]** Byron reached Patras on 23 Nov., 1809. From this point the itinerary of Childe Harold in Greece and Asia Minor is not connectedly described. Byron's visit to Delphi, alluded to in canto I, st. I, took place on 16 Dec., when stt. LIX—LXIV of canto I were written. His visit to Thebes in Boeotia (22—24 Dec.) is referred to in st. LXX of the same canto; while the opening stanzas of canto II were written on his arrival at Athens on Christmas day.

697. **await]** Used for 'wait.' Possibly, however, the words 'a willing doom' in the next line may be implied as the object of the verb, though they are used to serve a different construction.

699. **bleak Thermopylae]** The pass between Thessaly and southern Greece, celebrated for its defence by Leonidas and his 300 Spartans against the Persian host in 480 B.C. The name 'Thermopylae,' i.e. the Hot Gates, is derived from the hot springs in the neighbourhood of the pass.

701. **Eurotas' banks]** The Eurotas is the chief river of Laconia. Sparta, the native place and capital of Leonidas, is situated near its right bank.

702. **Phyle's brow]** Phyle, on the slopes of mount Parnes, is some miles north-west of Athens. It was by this route that Byron approached Athens on 25 Dec. 1809. In the long notes written at Athens early in 1811, and appended to this portion of *Childe Harold*, he speaks with enthusiasm of the view from Phyle, 'in my opinion, a more glorious prospect than even Cintra and Istambol,' and prefers it even to the more extensive view from the Troad, which he saw in April 1810. Phyle, like Thermopylae, was a sacred place to lovers of Grecian liberty. In B.C. 404 Thrasybulus, banished from Athens

by the oligarchy of the thirty tyrants, occupied Phyle with a small band of followers, and, after capturing Piræus, drove out the Athenian oligarchy of the ten, and restored democracy in the city.

707. **carle**] Churl, common fellow: a Spenserian word.

718. **solely**] Alone, without an ally.

726. **the Helots**] The servile class in ancient Sparta. Their 'foe' is the class which kept them in slavery, now condemned to slavery itself.

729. **The city**] Constantinople, conquered by the Mohammedans in 1453. For 'Giaour' see note on l. 686 above. Byron arrived at Constantinople, after his visit to Asia Minor, on 13 May 1810, and stayed there till 14 July, when he started on his return journey to Athens.

730. **Othman**] The founder and first Sultan of the Ottoman dynasty, to which he gave his name. He died in 1326. Mohammed II, the conqueror of Constantinople, was the seventh Sultan of the dynasty.

731. **the Serai**] The palace of the Sultan at Constantinople, better known as the Seraglio, a name derived from the Italian *serraglio* = a locked enclosure, to which the epithet 'impenetrable' is appropriate. 'Serai' is a quite distinct word, connected with an eastern word meaning a 'mansion.' The Seraglio was not, as the next line implies, a palace of the Byzantine emperors, but was planned by Mohammed II and enlarged by his successors, especially by his great-grandson, Suleiman I, the greatest of the Sultans (1520-66).

733. **Wahab's rebel brood**] The sect of the Wahabites overran Arabia in the time of Selim III, and sacked Mecca and Medina in 1804.

738. **lenten days**] Byron is still referring to the 'hereditary bondsmen,' the Greek subjects of the Turk.

742. **But**] The conjunction repeats the force of 'yet' in l. 738.

746. **Carnival**] Carnival personified. At such times a figure, called king Carnival, is often carried in procession.

747. **whose**] I.e. whose Carnival or 'days of joyaunce.'

748. **Stamboul**] The modern name of Constantinople, so called from the Greek *εἰς τὴν πόλιν* (literally, into the city).

their reign] The reign of the Greek: cf. 'their mirth' in l. 738 above.

749. **Sophia's shrine]** The church of Hagia Sophia (holy Wisdom), built in the reign of Justinian I (527-65), and converted into a mosque by the Turks.

760. **The Queen of tides]** The moon.

765. **caique]** The small rowing-boat used on the Bosphorus.

776. **searment]** I.e. cerement, here used generally for a garment covering the body.

792. **Lacedemon's hardihood]** Sparta or Lacedaemon was famous for the hardy training and the endurance of its inhabitants.

793. **Epaminondas]** The hero of Thebes, who raised his city to the supreme position in Greece, and fell at the battle of Mantinea in 362 B.C.

812. **Tritonia's airy shrine]** The temple of Athena, one of whose names was Triton, on cape Sunium, the promontory at the southern end of Attica. It was 300 feet above the sea, and its remaining columns gave the cape in modern times the name of Colonna. Byron visited it on 23 Jan. 1810.

821. **Minerva]** I.e. Athena, to whom the olive tree was sacred.

822. **Hymettus]** A mountain south of Athens, famous for its honey.

825. **Apollo]** Phoebus, the sun.

826. **Mendell's marbles]** Mendeli is the modern name of Pentelicus, a mountain famous for its marble quarries, to the north-east of Athens, between it and Marathon. Byron was there on 16 Jan. 1810.

836. **Marathon]** On the east coast of Attica, the scene of the first Grecian victory over the Persians in 490 B.C. Byron spent 24-26 Jan. 1810 at Marathon.

857. **th' Ionian blast]** The west wind, blowing from the Ionian sea, and bringing western travellers eastward.

883. **idlesse]** Archaic for 'idleness.'

891. **Thou too]** This and the next stanza appear to be addressed to the unknown person commemorated in st. ix above.

905. **The parent, friend]** See note on canto i, l. 927. This stanza must have been written after the death of Byron's mother in

Aug. 1811: the 'friend' was probably Charles Skinner Matthews; the 'more than friend' remains uncertain. It should be noticed how in the next line Byron follows up Young's image of Death as the 'insatiate archer,' quoted by him in a note on the earlier passage.

CANTO THE THIRD

The motto, translated, is: 'In order that this application might compel you to think of something else: there is certainly no remedy but that and time.' The 'application' is the concentration upon some form of work which Byron needed to divert his thoughts from his misfortunes, and found in returning to *Childe Harold*. The 'Roi de Prusse' was, of course, Frederick the Great, king of Prussia 1740-86: Jean le Rond d'Alembert (1717-83) was a philosopher and mathematician, to whom and Denis Diderot was due the conception of the *Encyclopédie*. Frederick the Great met him in 1763, and he became the king's chief correspondent.

2. **ADA**] Byron's only daughter, Augusta Ada, was born on 10 Dec. 1815. In 1835 she became the first wife of William, eighth baron King, who in 1838 was created earl of Lovelace: she died in 1852.

6. **The waters heave around me**] Byron left England for Ostend on 25 April, 1816.

46-9. **'Tis to create**] The object of the poet's work—the clothing of his fancy in a definite form—is to create, and in the work of creation to live a more intense life, becoming identified, as Byron now becomes, with the life which his creation shadows forth, the 'soul of his thought' (l. 51).

67. **the breast which fain no more would feel**] Cf. Canto I, st. x.

94. **all**] Altogether.

95-6. Who can watch Fame revealing through clouds the star which rises above her steep, and not climb that steep? The steep is the difficult path to fame: the star is the glory of attainment: the clouds the uncertainty which surrounds it.

107. **Proud**] The adjective is in apposition to 'his own [spirit],' which is also the antecedent to 'which.'

109. **Where rose the mountains]** This sense of the kinship of nature with man was common to all the poets of the romantic era. Cf. Wordsworth, *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*:

‘His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.’

It was even felt by writers of the time who were comparatively little affected by romantic ideals, e.g. Jane Austen makes Elizabeth Bennet say, when invited by her friends to go for a tour in the north of England, ‘What are men to rocks and mountains?’ See st. LXXII below for the absorption of poetic feeling in nature.

118. **the Chaldean]** I.e. a Chaldean astrologer.

124. **Its spark immortal]** The soul, Pope’s ‘vital spark of heav’nly flame.’

144. **a cheer]** A cheerfulness.

145. Byron visited Waterloo from Brussels in May 1816. The battle had been fought in the preceding June.

146. **An Earthquake’s spoil]** So Tennyson, in his *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, speaks of ‘that world-earthquake, Waterloo.’

147. **no colossal bust]** The famous mound, with its figure of the Belgian lion, on the spot where the prince of Orange fell in the battle, was not raised till 1823, seven years after Byron’s visit.

158. **pride of place]** The phrase is taken from Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, II, iv, 12, ‘A falcon, towering in her pride of place.’ Byron, who misquotes the line as ‘An eagle towering in his pride of place,’ notes that ‘pride of place’ is a term of falconry, and means the highest pitch of flight.

the eagle] The imperial emblem of France under Napoleon. Cf. ‘Gaul’s Vulture’ in Canto I, l. 547.

170. **the Wolf]** Napoleon is compared to the lion, the king of beasts; the sovereignties restored by his fall, to the wolf. To Byron and the liberal poets of his day the Holy Alliance, proclaimed by the Czar Alexander I on 26 Sept. 1815, with the object of restoring the peace of Europe under constitutional and Christian principles of monarchy, stood for the symbol of reaction, hostile to the liberty which might have been achieved by the ruin of the Napoleonic empire.

Napoleon himself said that the battle of Waterloo 'was as fatal to the liberties of Europe as that of Philippi was to those of Rome.'

180. **Harmodius]** The tyrant Hipparchus, son of Pisistratus, was slain in B.C. 514 by two of his Athenian subjects, Harmodius and Aristogeiton, who also conspired to kill his brother Hippias. The murder was regarded by haters of tyranny as a deed of exalted patriotism, although its motives were in the first instance personal. It was celebrated in a noble ode attributed to the poet Callistratus, to the first line of which ('*Ἐν μύρτου κλαδί τὸ ξίφος φορήσω*') Byron refers in l. 179, alluding in a note to the translation ('I'll wreath my sword in myrtle bough') by Thomas, afterwards first lord, Denman.

181. **There was a sound of revelry]** The allusion is to the ball given at Brussels on 15 June, 1815, by Charlotte, duchess of Richmond, the night before the battle of Quatre-Bras. It will be remembered that Thackeray brought this ball, with fine dramatic effect, into the course of *Vanity Fair*. Wellington himself attended the ball: the swiftness of Napoleon's advance was unexpected.

200. **Brunswick's fated chieftain]** Frederick William, duke of Brunswick, brother of George IV's ill-fated queen Caroline. He fell in command of a corps at Quatre-Bras on the afternoon of 16 June, 1815: the place of his death is marked by a monument. His father, Charles William Ferdinand, was the Prussian general at Auerstädt (14 Oct. 1806), where he received a mortal wound, dying shortly afterwards at Altona.

215. **those mutual eyes]** Cf. l. 187 above.

226. **the 'Cameron's gathering']** The pibroch (l. 229), or battle-call played on the bagpipes, of the Scottish clan of Cameron. Colonel John Cameron of Fassiefern, Argyllshire, commander of the Gordon Highlanders, fell at Quatre-Bras.

227. **Lochiel]** The territorial title of the head of the house of Cameron.

Albyn] Scotland. Albany, probably 'the hilly land' (cf. the word 'alp'), was an old name for the northern part of Britain and became specially applied to the highlands of Scotland.

234. **Evan's, Donald's]** Sir Ewen or Evan Cameron of Lochiel (1629—1719), and Donald Cameron (d. 1748), his successor in the headship of the clan. Both were adherents of the Stewarts: Sir Ewan

fought with Dundee at Killiecrankie and sent his clan to aid the earl of Mar in 1714, while Donald retired to France with the Young Pretender after Culloden.

235. **Ardennes**] Strictly speaking, the forest country known as the Ardennes (for the name of which, 'the great woodland,' cf. the Warwickshire forest of Arden) does not extend west of Namur, which is some miles south-east of Quatre-Bras and Waterloo. The way from Brussels to Waterloo was at this date thickly wooded, as Southey notes in *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo*:

'The way is through a forest deep and wide,

Extending many a mile on either side.'

This was the Forêt de Soignes (not Soignies, which is a town in the neighbourhood), of which considerable portions remain east of the battle-field. Byron notes that it 'is supposed to be a remnant of the forest of Ardennes.'

253. **loftier harps**] Among poems which had appeared on the subject of the battle, the most conspicuous was Scott's *The Field of Waterloo* (Oct. 1815). No poem on the battle, however, can compare with these stanzas of Byron's.

254. **Yet one**] The hon. Frederick Howard, third son of Frederick, fourth earl of Carlisle, fell at Waterloo. Lord Carlisle's mother was Isabella, sister of Byron's predecessor in his barony; and lord Carlisle had been appointed Byron's guardian in 1798. Byron was piqued by his apparent neglect and coldness: he had received the dedication of *Hours of Idleness* without enthusiasm and failed to introduce his young kinsman to the house of Lords. Byron had in revenge inserted in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* a savage attack on his guardian's poems, which he characterised as 'the paralytic puling of Carlisle.'

280. **They mourn**] I.e. the kindred of the dead (l. 273).

293. **which not forsakes**] I.e. which does not forsake the object of its affection.

299. **a quick root**] A living root. The metaphor is continued from the analogy in l. 281 above, 'The tree will wither long before it fall.'

303. **the apples on the Dead Sea's shore**] According to a well-known travellers' tale, apples which grew near the Dead sea, although attractive to look at, turned to ashes in the mouth.

306. **threescore]** 'The days of our years are threescore years and ten' (Ps. xc, 10). Hence the allusion to 'the Psalmist' in the following line. If we measured our existence by our enjoyment, a few such hours of despair would be equivalent to years, and threescore years would be too long a term.

316. **the greatest, nor the worst of men]** Napoleon. See note on Canto iv, l. 800.

317. **antithetically mixt]** Composed of extremes. The lines which follow supply a commentary upon the phrase.

322. **daring made thy rise as fall]** Napoleon achieved his rise to the highest power in the French state by the *coup d'état* of 18 Brumaire (9 Nov.) 1799, by which, at the age of thirty, he overthrew the directory and became first consul. His ultimate fall was preceded by his return from exile in Elba, his bloodless march through France to Paris, which he entered on 20 March, 1815, and his invasion of the Low Countries with all his available strength—the final effort which ended in his defeat at Waterloo.

323. **Even now]** Byron speaks merely of probabilities. Napoleon was at this time in his last exile at St Helena. He surrendered to the British government on the *Bellerophon*, 15 July 1815, and was sent on the *Northumberland* to St Helena, where he arrived on 17 October.

341. **nor curb the lust of war]** Napoleon's fate was sealed, as he himself recognised in after years, by the invasion of Russia in 1812 before the Peninsular war was settled. Had he secured his hold on Spain and Portugal, and waited to attack Russia, the sequel might have been very different.

343. **Yet well thy soul hath brook'd]** Although this estimate of Napoleon in adversity is to some extent true, yet the historical accounts of his final years generally concur in the capriciousness of his temper and his occasional despondency and resentment.

366. **Philip's son]** Alexander the Great, who is reported to have said that, if he were not Alexander, he would prefer to be Diogenes. Byron's criticism is that Napoleon, in the position of Alexander, which depended upon the admiration of mankind, forfeited the chief support of his power by assuming the cynical attitude of Diogenes and openly contemning men. Earth (l. 369) is too wide an area for a monarch

whose philosophy is undisguisedly cynical: Diogenes could afford to despise his fellow-creatures in his poverty and his tub.

390. **so nursed and bigoted to strife**] So trained and bigoted by that training to the love of strife. The use of the word 'bigoted' is elliptical and requires paraphrase.

393. **supineness**] The sense of inactivity.

406. **Away with these!**] The meditations on the career of Napoleon are suddenly interrupted, and the scene is changed from Waterloo to the Rhine. The train of thought, appropriate to Byron's state of mind, is continued, however, in the picture of the 'lofty mind' in st. XLVII and the reflections upon the robber chieftains and warfare which follow it. Byron travelled from Brussels to Geneva in 1816 by way of the Rhine.

413. **chiefless castles**] The banks of the Rhine between Coblenz and Bingen, where the river flows through a narrow defile between steep hills, are studded at frequent intervals by small castles, built by various feudal lords. The largest is that of Rheinfels, above St Goar, on the left bank of the river. Drachenfels (see l. 496 below) is above Königswinter on the right bank, between Bonn and Coblenz, and is passed by the traveller who pursues Byron's route before reaching the district where castles are most numerous.

417. **the crannying wind**] The wind that blows through the crannies. The adjective 'crannying' is coined.

420. **Banners on high**] The verb is understood in 'pass'd' in the second half of the line: 'waved' is the necessary word which is wanting.

430. **history's purchased page**] A place in history is purchased by the fame of conquests, wider than that achieved by mere outlaws, whose fame is less on account of the more limited character of their exploits—a price insufficient to win them a place in history.

433. **single fields**] Single combats.

435. **a blazon**] The coloured device on a shield.

442. Notice the use in this and the corresponding line 444 of eleven syllables with the weak ending instead of the usual ten syllables. This variation, repeated several times in Cantos III and IV, produces one of the most beautiful metrical effects in the poem.

450. **Lethe**] The stream of forgetfulness. Were it not for bitter

memory, the Rhine valley would be to Byron the image of heaven on earth. The memory of the warfare which in time past has blackened its banks and stained its waters is reflected in the poet's memory—or in that of Harold, the 'soul of his thought,' here closely identified with himself—of his own misfortunes.

480. **blooming infancy**] In this trait of Harold's character, Byron doubtless reflected his own affection for the child to whom the opening of the canto is addressed.

487. **one soft breast**] The 'fond breast' of l. 476 above. The reference is to Byron's half-sister Augusta: see Canto I, l. 84.

496. **Drachenfels**] See note on l. 413 above. The rock, 1065 feet high, received its name (dragon's rock) from the epic legend of the dragon which lived in a cavern on its side and was slain by the hero Siegfried. The castle, founded by Arnold, archbishop of Cologne, in the twelfth century, was granted by him to the chapter of St Cassius at Bonn, from whom the counts of Drachenfels held it.

537. **a small and simple pyramid**] François-Séverin Desgravières Marceau, one of the most promising young generals of the French republic, was killed at the battle of Altenkirchen in 1796, where the archduke Charles defeated the army of the Sambre and Meuse under Jourdan. Marceau was buried with honour in the presence of both armies (l. 546). 'Heroes' (l. 539) may refer to the burial of another French general, Lazare Hoche, who died at Wetzlar in 1797, in the same tomb. The death of these two generals left the way open for Bonaparte, whose only possible rivals they were.

545. **his young career**] Marceau was only 27 at his death. Five years before, as one of the generals of the army of the west, he had contributed to the defeat of the royalists of La Vendée at Le Mans, and in 1794 had taken part in the republican victory of Fleurus over the allied Austrians and English.

554. **Ehrenbreitstein**] Coblenz (the Roman Confluentes) lies on a triangular site at the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle. The great rock of Ehrenbreitstein (the 'broad stone of honour') rises 385 feet above the right bank of the Rhine opposite the town. The archbishops of Treves had a castle on the summit of the rock in the middle ages. The situation, commanding the passage of the Rhine at this point, was of great strategic importance; and the fortress was

beleaguered by the French and taken early in 1799 after a year's siege. It was dismantled after the peace of Lunéville in 1801 (see l. 560 below), which secured the left bank of the Rhine to France. In the year of Byron's visit, the fortress was being reconstructed by the Prussian general von Aster, whose works still crown the top of the cliff.

563. See note on l. 442 above.

567. **the ceaseless vultures]** Byron returns in these lines to the theme of stt. L, LI: see note on l. 450 above. The 'vultures' stand for remorse. The giant Tityus was ceaselessly devoured by two vultures in Tartarus, as a penalty for an insult offered to Artemis.

579. **attaching]** Alluring. The qualities of the scenery of the Rhine, 'brilliant, fair, and soft' (l. 580), are combined inextricably in the memory, like the intricacies of a maze.

581. The method of description by catalogue is a favourite device of Byron. Cf. Canto I, stt. XIX, LI, etc. The elements in this stanza are most happily chosen: although the phrases are general, they combine the leading features of Rhenish scenery in an impression which stamps the whole scene on the imagination or brings it vividly before the memory. The opening phrase, 'the negligently grand,' produces the general effect. Then follow the details—the ripening vineyards on the banks, the towns along the river or at a distance in the plain (cf. ll. 502-3), the swift current of the stream, the high rocks which, like the Loreley, descend into it, the forests which cover the slopes and summits of the hills, with castles rising in their clearings, and the fantastic shapes of the rocks, like those opposite Bacharach.

601. **Morat]** Morat or Murten, in canton Friburg, lies between Berne and Neuchâtel, on the south-east side of the lake of Morat. Here, on 22 June 1476, Charles the Bold, the last of the Valois dukes of Burgundy, was defeated and his army cut to pieces by the Swiss, who had defeated him earlier in the year at Granson. In more recent times, in 1802, the federated cantons had won a victory here over the Swiss governmental forces.

607. **shriek'd each wandering ghost]** The inversion of subject and predicate, a frequent feature of Byron's poetical style, is here noticeably awkward. Allusions to the thin voices of disembodied

spirits are constant in poetry, e.g. the *vagitus ingens* of Vergil, *Aen.* vi, 426; 'the sheeted dead Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets' of Shakespeare, *Hamlet* i, i, 115-6; 'his voice was thin, as voices from the grave' of Tennyson, *Lotos-Eaters*.

608-9. Morat and Marathon (see Canto ii, stt. lxxxix, xc) are apt parallels, for in both cases a republic defeated a monarch who threatened to enslave it. Waterloo and Cannae, however, are parallels only in bloodshed: otherwise they are contrasts. At Waterloo the tyranny of Napoleon was conquered: at Cannae (B.C. 216) the forces of the Roman republic were defeated with great slaughter by Hannibal.

616. **Draconic clause]** The laws of Draco (B.C. 621), the first written code of Athenian law, were remarkable for their severity and rigid enforcement of the penalty of death.

617. **a lonelier column]** Avenches, some five miles south-west of Morat, stands near the site of the Roman Aventicum. The Corinthian column to which Byron refers goes under the name of *le Cigognier*, from the fact that storks built their nests on the capital: it appears to have belonged to a temple.

625. **Levell'd Aventicum]** The words are in apposition to 'the coeval pride of human hands.' The column stands, provoking wonder that it does not decay, while the ruins of Aventicum, the pride of human hands contemporary with them, levelled with the ground, have been scattered over the lands which owned her sway. The early settlement was surrendered by the Helvetii to Vitellius' general Caecina, and became a Roman colony under Vespasian. It was destroyed by the Alemanni in A.D. 264, and again by the Huns in the fifth century.

627. **Julia]** Julius Alpinus, who led the resistance of the Helvetii against Caecina (see above), was executed. Byron refers to an epitaph said to have been discovered at Aventicum, and supposed to be that of a daughter of Alpinus. He gives the inscription in a note: 'Julia Alpinula hic jaceo infelicis patris infelix proles, deae Aventiae sacerdos: exorare patris necem non potui, male mori in fatis illi erat. Vixi annos xxiii,' i.e. 'Here I lie, Julia Alpinula, the luckless offspring of a luckless father, priestess of the goddess Aventia: I could not avert by prayer the murder of my father, it was his fate to die unhappily. I lived twenty-three years.' Byron remarks, 'I know of no human

composition so affecting as this, nor a history of deeper interest.' The inscription appears to have been a forgery.

628. **Her youth to Heaven]** I.e. as a priestess of the local goddess.

631. **The life she lived in]** Her father's life, with which her own was bound up.

635. **But these are deeds]** 'These,' writes Byron in his note, 'are the names and actions which ought not to perish, and to which we turn with a true and healthy tenderness, from the wretched and glittering detail of a confused mass of conquests and battles, with which the mind is roused for a time to a false and feverish sympathy, from whence it recurs at length with all the nausea consequent on such intoxication.'

642. **yonder Alpine snow]** 'Written in the eye of Mont Blanc (June 3rd, 1816), which even at this distance dazzles mine.'

644. **Lake Leman]** The lake of Geneva, the Roman name of which was Lacus Lemannus.

649. **the 'might which I behold]** The stars and mountains (l. 645).

670. **Whose bark drives on and on]** A metaphor similar to that in l. 282 above.

673. **the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone]** 'The colour of the Rhône at Geneva is blue, to a depth of tint which I have never seen equalled in water, salt or fresh, except in the Mediterranean and Archipelago' (Byron). Ruskin, in an eloquent passage of *Præterita*, notes the swift and combined rush of the waters of the Rhône, 'one translucent jewel...blue to the shore and radiant to the depth.' The river is not 'flowing, but flying water,' tinged with an infinite variety of colour, 'aquamarine, ultramarine, peacock blue, gentian blue, river-of-Paradise blue, glass of a painted window melted in the sun, and the witch of the Alps flinging the spun tresses of it for ever from her snow.'

685. **a fleshly chain]** The chain of being, connecting all creatures in due gradation. The theory is explained by Pope in the *Essay on Man*, Ep. 1.

705. **the Spirit of each spot]** Byron's view of nature is here indistinguishable from Wordsworth's, and the phrase may be compared

with Wordsworth's 'Souls of lonely places,' in *The Prelude*, book 1. Each place has its own special character and features, which assume life to the poet and make

'The surface of the universal earth,
With triumph and delight, with hope and fear,
Work like a sea.'

718. **the urn]** The funeral urn.

719. **One, whose dust was once all fire]** Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the son of a watchmaker at Geneva, where he was born in 1712. He died at Ermenonville (Oise) in 1778.

725. **the self-torturing sophist]** The personal and subjective element in Rousseau's writings is a feature which gave him an extraordinary influence and still gives his work a peculiar importance in the history of eighteenth-century thought. Sentiment and philosophy are combined in his work; and his narratives, *La Nouvelle Héloïse* and *Émile*, had the double intention of working upon the reader's sensibilities and provoking novel trains of thought on moral and social questions.

743. **Julie]** The heroine of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*.

745. **the memorable kiss]** In his autobiographical *Confessions*, Rousseau records the walk which he took daily to see the Comtesse d'Houdetot, 'for the sake of the single kiss which was the common salutation of French acquaintance.'

759. **But he was phrensied]** The repetition of the phrase after a parenthesis is characteristic of the rhetorical eloquence of Byron's style.

762. **the Pythian's mystic cave]** The oracle of Delphi. Cf. 'the Pythian hymn' in Canto 1, l. 651.

763. **Those oracles]** The writings of Rousseau, in which, as has been said, the popular quality of sentiment—or rather, sentimentality—existed side by side with constructive thought, had a great influence upon the French Revolution; and the more crude of them, in which a state of nature was praised at the expense of ordered civil society, were in great measure responsible for the excesses of that period.

772. **Breathed]** Endowed with breath. Immemorial opinions and prejudices were swept away by the Revolution, which, as Byron saw (ll. 772-3), was of world-wide importance.

783. **pity ceased to melt]** The reign of terror in 1793-4 is referred to.

786. **eagles]** The keen sight of the eagle, which can look at the sun without blinking, is referred to in the words 'nourish'd with the day.' The revolutionary leaders, after the long darkness of oppression in which they had dwelt, could not be expected to distinguish at first between their real and imaginary foes.

790. **That which disfigures it]** The scar which still disfigures the heart, after the wound is healed.

796. **in one]** I.e. we shall be slower to punish than to forgive, or *vice versa*. The French revolutionists were slower to forgive, when the time for action came at the end of their long brooding on their suffering.

797. **contrasted lake]** The epithet is predicative, 'when contrasted with the wild world,' etc.

803. **Torn ocean's roar]** See st. II above.

804. **a Sister's voice]** Cf. ll. 476, 487 above.

809. **Jura, whose capt heights]** 'Capt' = covered with cloud. Cf. 'her misty shroud' in l. 867 below. The Jura mountains are to the north-west of the lake of Geneva, forming the boundary between Switzerland and France.

828-9. **Our destinies, etc.]** Men seek to read their fortunes in the stars, not content with merely pursuing their destiny on earth.

832. **have named themselves a star]** Cf. 'the star which rises o'er' the 'steep' of fame (l. 96) and 'tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star' (l. 342 above). The line means that every object of ambition or enjoyment has been likened to a star.

838. **is concenter'd]** Has a common centre.

841. **that which is of all Creator and defence]** The principle of life which is the soul of the universe. Cf. Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey* :

'A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.'

848. **Cytherea's zone]** The girdle of Aphrodite, which made its wearer an object of love. The name Cytherea is derived from the island of Cythera (Cerigo), near which Aphrodite is said to have risen from the sea.

855. **The Spirit]** Cf. St John iv., 21-4. Byron has a long note on this passage, to the effect that devotion in the open air is more impressive and elevating than devotion within walls—and not only devotion, but eloquence heard and great literature read in the open.

859. **Nor fix on fond abodes]** Nor settle on vain habitations within which to confine thy prayer.

860. **The sky is changed]** The date of this thunderstorm is given by Byron as 13 June 1816.

868. **the joyous Alps]** The Alps of Savoy, to the south of the lake. 'Joyous' because of the exulting echo of the thunder: cf. 'the glee Of the loud hills' in ll. 875-6 below.

871. **A sharer]** So Shelley, *Ode to the West Wind*, st. v., apostrophises the wind:

'Be thou, Spirit fierce,

My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!'

880. **mining depths]** I.e. depths mined by hate between the separated lovers.

883. **the very root of the fond rage]** Cf. Coleridge, *Christabel*, ll. 412-3:

'And to be wroth with one we love

Doth work like madness in the brain.'

In the same passage (l. 422) Coleridge compares the two parted friends, Roland and Sir Leoline, to 'cliffs which had been rent asunder,' a striking parallel to the present passage.

898. **To make these felt and feeling]** The poet's function has already been described by Byron as to create and to identify himself with the intense life of his creation. See l. 46 sqq. above.

900. **knoll]** Another form of the word 'knell.' The departing roll of the thunder finds its echo in the voice of remorse in the breast.

906. **could I wreak]** I.e. could I give my thoughts full play in expression, could I make expression the object of their vengeance.

915. **breath all incense]** Cf. Gray, *Elegy*, l. 17: 'The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn.'

923. **Clarens]** Clarens is at the north-east extremity of the lake of Geneva, between Vevey and Montreux. It is the centre of the district which Rousseau made the scene of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*. Byron visited this district in July 1816. 'It would be difficult,' he says, 'to see

Clarens (with the scenes around it...) without being forcibly struck with its peculiar adaptation to the persons and events with which it has been peopled. But this is not all; the feeling with which all around Clarens, and the opposite rocks of Meillerie, is invested, is of a still higher and more comprehensive order than the mere sympathy with individual passion; it is a sense of the existence of love in its most extended and sublime capacity, and of our own participation of its good and of its glory: it is the great principle of the universe, which is there more condensed, but not less manifested; and of which, though knowing ourselves a part, we lose our individuality, and mingle in the beauty of the whole.—If Rousseau had never written, nor lived, the same associations would not less have belonged to such scenes.' It may be noted that this district is also connected with the *Obermann* of Étienne de Sénancour, made familiar to English readers by two poems of Matthew Arnold—a work tinged with the influence of Rousseau and closely akin in spirit to that of Byron.

927. **rose-hues**] Byron quotes a note from *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, part iv, letter xvii, to the effect that the mountains—especially over Meillerie, opposite Clarens, are so high that, half an hour after sunset, their tops are lighted by the dying rays and assume a beautiful rose colour, which can be seen from a long distance. This after-glow, common to Alpine regions, can be seen even in districts where the heights are much lower; and those who have lived near a great church must have noticed how its towers keep the light of the sunset when all below is in twilight.

963. **those**] I.e. men and the world.

965. **or decays**] I.e. either decays.

967. **the immortal lights**] The planets and stars.

970. **the scene which Passion must allot**] See the quotation from Byron's note in note on l. 923 above. Rousseau's fiction has not made the scene, but the scene has impressed itself upon his fiction as an inevitable part of it.

972. **early Love**] An allusion to the famous allegory of Cupid and Psyche—Love and the soul.

977. **Lausanne! and Ferney!**] Lausanne is on the north side of the lake, 37 miles from Geneva. Ferney is 4½ miles north of Geneva,

and is in France (Jura department). The names (l. 978) connected with these places are those of the historian Edward Gibbon, who lived at Lausanne 1753-8 and 1783-93, and finished there in 1787 his history of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and François Arouet de Voltaire, who acquired the estate of Ferney in 1759, and lived there till shortly before his death in 1778.

982. **Titan-like**] The allusion in ll. 982-5 is to the fruitless war of the giants against the gods. The giants assailed Olympus by piling mount Pelion upon mount Ossa, while the gods laughed at their efforts and Zeus hurled his thunderbolts upon them. Byron applies the old allegory of the earth-born warriors attacking the strongholds of the gods to the assaults of modern thought upon ancient beliefs, and to Voltaire and Gibbon, typical assailants.

986. **The one**] Voltaire. Byron lays stress on his extraordinary versatility. As historian, his most famous works are the *Siècle de Louis XIV* and *Histoire de Charles XII*. As bard, he composed several tragedies, chiefly on classical subjects, an epic, the *Henriade*, and the satiric *La Pucelle*. As philosopher, his works were very numerous, and included the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, which fills several volumes of his collected writings.

991. **Proteus**] The old man of the sea, who kept Poseidon's flocks of seals. When anyone came to learn the future from him, it was necessary to catch him while he was enjoying his noonday siesta on the shore. When caught, he changed himself into a great variety of forms, struggling to get loose; but, if his captor held him fast, he at last resumed his own form and gave the required prophecy.

992. **ridicule**] Byron refers to such works as Voltaire's satirical novel of *Candide*, in which he cast ridicule upon optimism. His fiction—e.g. the tale of *Zadig*—is full of touches of satire, which formed his most effective method of attack upon opinions and systems which he disliked.

994. **to shake a throne**] The more moderate and intellectual spirits of the French Revolution were deeply influenced by Voltaire, just as the extremists adopted the most easily understood, though not the most profound, doctrines of Rousseau.

995. **The other**] Gibbon. The idea of his great history was conceived at Rome, on 15 Oct. 1764, as he 'sat musing amidst the

ruins of the Capitol, while the bare-footed fryars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter.' The actual writing of the book was begun in London in 1773, and the first volume published in 1776. The last lines of the work were written in Gibbon's summer-house at Lausanne on the night of 27 June 1787. It forms a remarkable testimony to the virtue of slow and deliberate composition; for the history, apart from its literary merit, is still of first-rate importance as an authority upon its subject.

999. **Sapping a solemn creed]** The fifteenth chapter of the *Decline and Fall* examines the progress of Christianity in a tone of solemn irony which is here perfectly characterised.

1001. **which grew from fear]** Wrath grew from fear: Gibbon's opponents relieved their fear in anger. The loose construction of the sentence, with its string of three consecutive relatives, is noticeable.

1012. **to be forgiven, or suffer]** Cf. the alternative in l. 796 above.

1020. **their most great and growing region]** The summits of the Alps. Byron and his friend Hobhouse left the lake of Geneva early in October, and travelled up the Rhône valley to the Simplon, by which they crossed into Italy. They arrived at Milan before the middle of the month, visiting the Lago Maggiore on the way.

1024. **the fierce Carthaginian]** Hannibal.

1028. **The fount]** Italy has been the source of intellectual nourishment to Europe. The supremacy of Rome in the pagan and medieval world alike kept the rest of Europe in touch with Italy. The great revival of literature and art, known as the Renaissance, which had so vast an influence upon the thought of European nations, began and reached its highest glory in Italy, and was communicated by her to the other nations, chiefly during that period of warfare, from 1494 onwards, which drained her of her activity and freedom at their expense.

1045-6. **I am not So young]** Byron in 1816 was twenty-eight, young in years, but old in the intensity of his experience.

1056. **and still could]** I could still stand among them in proud isolation, had I not exercised restraint upon my mind, which thus conquered its pride. The phrase 'filed my mind' is taken from Shakespeare, *Macbeth* III, i, 64, where, however, it means 'defiled my mind.'

1065. **two, or one]** I.e. two or one of his friends.

1067. **My daughter]** These concluding stanzas return to the opening thought of the canto. Byron was at first uncertain whether to publish them or not, and in the ms. of the canto which was entrusted to Shelley for delivery to the publisher, a doubtful mark was set against them. He wrote, however, to Murray from Martigny on 9 Oct. 1816, to the effect that he had fully determined that they should be published. The ungenerous imputation upon lady Byron in st. cxvii is one of those faults of taste of which Byron was never guiltless; and, even were it true, there could be no excuse for it.

1084. **something like to this]** Cf. st. LIV above.

1093. **that more than life]** That which is more than life, i.e. love.

CANTO THE FOURTH

Visto ho] 'I have seen Tuscany, Lombardy and Romagna, the range of mountains which divides and that which shuts in Italy, and both the seas which wash her shores.' The mountains are, of course, the Apennines and Alps; the seas the Mediterranean and the Adriatic. Lodovico Ariosto (1474—1533) was a native of Reggio in the duchy of Modena.

DEDICATION

John Cam Hobhouse (1786—1869) was a contemporary of Byron at Trinity college, Cambridge, and shared his political views. He accompanied Byron throughout the tour of which the first and second cantos of *Childe Harold* are a record, and wrote an account of the journey in Albania and Turkey (2 vols., 1813). In September 1816, he met Byron at the villa Diodati on the lake of Geneva, and the two made a fortnight's excursion to the Bernese Oberland and ascended the Wengern Alp together. He visited Byron at Venice, and supplied notes to the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*. He was the poet's chief executor. In 1831 he succeeded his father, Sir Benjamin Hobhouse of Broughton Gifford and Monkton Farleigh, Wilts, as second baronet, and, after a distinguished political career, was created baron Broughton de Gyfford in 1851, a title which became extinct at his death in 1869. His *Recollections of a Long Life* (1865) and other works contain much valuable authority for the history of his day.

the date of this letter] Byron's marriage had taken place three years before, on 2 Jan. 1815, at Seaham, county Durham.

Venice and Rome] Hobhouse was at Venice in August 1817, Byron having arrived there in the previous November. Byron's hasty visit to Rome, where Hobhouse was staying, took place in May 1817.

the Chinese] Goldsmith, *Citizen of the World*, letter xxxiii: 'Wherever I come, I raise either diffidence or astonishment: some fancy me no Chinese, because I am formed more like a man than a monster; and others wonder to find one born five thousand miles from England with common sense. "Strange," say they, "that a man who has received his education at such a distance from London, should have common sense! to be born out of England, and yet have common sense! impossible! He must be some Englishman in disguise; his very visage has nothing of the true exotic barbarity."'

Mi pare] "It appears to me that in a wholly poetic land, which boasts the most noble and at the same time the sweetest of languages, all the most various paths [of poetry] may be attempted, and that, so long as the country of Alfieri and of Monti has not lost its ancient worth, it should be the first in all." Vittorio Alfieri (1749—1803), born at Asti in Piedmont, was the great Italian tragic poet of the eighteenth century. Byron was profoundly affected by a representation of his *Mirra* at Bologna in Aug. 1819: countess Guiccioli says that 'he burst out weeping, and his sobs forbade him to stay in the box.' Vincenzo Monti (1754—1827), the most celebrated Italian poet of Byron's day, visited Byron at Milan in the autumn of 1816: he had written poetry against the French during their earlier invasions of Italy, but later became an admirer of Napoleon. 'His frequent changes in politics,' Byron wrote to Moore (6 Nov. 1816), 'have made him very unpopular as a man.' Byron noted his admiration for Alfieri and the *Aristodemo* of Monti at an earlier date, in his journal for 20 Feb. 1814, where he places them above Schiller.

Canova] Antonio Canova, sculptor (1757—1822). Byron wrote the lines *On the Bust of Helen by Canova* in Nov. 1816, and describes the bust in the letter to Murray which contains the lines as 'the most perfectly beautiful of human conceptions, and far beyond my ideas of human execution.' For Monti see previous note. Ugo Foscolo, born at Zante in 1777, was forced to escape from Italy owing to his poetic

attacks on the Austrian domination, and died in London in 1827: 'he is more,' wrote Byron (8 Oct. 1820) 'of the ancient Greek than the modern Italian...'tis a wonderful man, and my friends Hobhouse and Rose both swear by him; and they are good judges of men and of Italian humanity.' Ippolito Pindemonte (1753—1828), 'the celebrated poet of Verona,' called on Byron at Venice in June 1817, 'a little thin man with acute and pleasing features'—'a poet,' as William Stewart Rose described him, 'who has caught a portion of that sun, whose setting beams yet gild the horizon of Italy.' Ennius Quirinus Visconti (1751—1818) was a celebrated archaeologist, curator of the Capitoline museum under Pius VI; he lived in Paris under Napoleon, who appointed him administrator of the museum of the Louvre. The abate Jacopo Morelli (1745—1819) was librarian of St Mark at Venice and a philologist. Leopoldo, conte da Cicognara (1767—1834), was president of the Accademia at Venice and wrote a history of modern sculpture. Isabella Teotochi, contessa Albrizzi (1770—1836), was the leader of intellectual society in Venice: her *Ritratti di Uomini Illustri* (Portraits of illustrious men) contains an interesting account of Byron, and she was the owner of Canova's bust of Helen, already mentioned. Giuseppe Gaspardo Mezzofanti (1774—1849) was a linguist, 'a monster of languages, the Briareus of parts of speech, a walking Polyglott and more, who ought to have existed at the time of the Tower of Babel as universal interpreter....I tried him in all the tongues of which I knew a single oath...and egad! he astounded me—even to my English' (Byron). Angelo, cardinal Mai (1782—1854), was another scholar and philologist, librarian of the Vatican. Andreas Mustoxidi or Moustoxides (1787—1860) was an archaeologist of Greek birth. Francesco Aglietti (1757—1836) is described by Byron as 'the best physician, not only in Venice, but in Italy.' Andrea Vacca Berlinghieri (1772—1836), a surgeon of Pisa, shares a fame akin to that of Aglietti in Byron's letters as 'the first surgeon on the Continent' (24 Jan. 1817).

La pianta] 'The plant Man is of more sturdy growth in Italy than in any other country, and that (*sic*) of this the atrocious crimes which are committed there are themselves a proof.'

Roma!] 'Rome! Rome! Rome! Rome is no longer as she was at first.'

Mont St Jean] Waterloo. The height of Mont-Saint-Jean was Wellington's position, round which the fiercest part of the battle took place.

the betrayal of Genoa.] These allusions are to the final act of the congress of Vienna (1815), which gave Genoa to the kingdom of Sardinia, divided Italy among Austria and the sovereign princes of the various states, and restored the Bourbon monarchy in France.

Non movero] 'I will never touch a string [of my lyre], where the crowd is deafened with its own babbling.'

a suspended Habeas Corpus] The Habeas Corpus act 'for the better securing the Liberty of the Subject, and for Prevention of Imprisonments beyond the Seas' was passed by the parliament of 31 Charles II. Its suspension was moved by lord Castlereagh on 24 Feb. 1817, as a consequence of the alarming riots in the English manufacturing districts and elsewhere, and lasted till 1 March 1818.

Verily they will have their reward] See St Matt. vi, 2, 5, 16.

1. **the Bridge of Sighs]** This covered bridge (Ponte de' Sospiri) connects the east side of the Doges' palace with the prisons (Carceri) constructed in 1512 by Giovanni da Ponte. The bridge, which crosses a narrow canal, was designed about 1600 by Antonio Contino. 'It has two passages: the criminal went by the one to judgment, and returned by the other to death, being strangled in a chamber adjoining, where there was a mechanical process for the purpose.' (Byron.)

8. **the winged Lion]** The emblem of St Mark, and of Venice, of which he is the patron saint. The body of St Mark was brought to Venice from Alexandria, in fulfilment of a traditional prophecy, in A.D. 828. On one of the columns in the Piazzetta, brought from Syria in 1120 by the doge Domenico Michiel and erected in 1178 by the doge Sebastiano Ziani, stands the winged lion of St Mark: on the other is the statue of St Theodore, the older patron saint of the city, standing on a crocodile. The basilican church of St Mark, the patriarchal church of Venice, was built between 976 and 1071 on the site of the older and smaller church built to receive the body of the saint.

9. **her hundred isles]** Venice is said to be built upon 117 islands, formed by the intersection of 150 canals; but there is much divergence of statement as to the exact number.

10. **a sea Cybele]** Cybèle (not, as Byron calls her here, Cybèle), the 'mother of the gods,' was represented with a mural crown upon her head, typical of her dominion over the cities of the earth. Hence she was known as *turrigera*, the tower-crowned goddess. Ruskin, speaking of the westward approach to Venice, acknowledges that 'seen in this direction, its buildings are far less characteristic than those of the other great towns of Italy; but this inferiority was partly disguised by distance, and more than atoned for by the strange rising of its walls and towers out of the midst, as it seemed, of the deep sea' (*Stones of Venice*, vol. II, ch. i). See also Shelley, *Lines written among the Euganean hills*, l. 94 sqq., and *Julian and Maddalo*, ll. 88—92:

'from that funereal bark
I leaned, and saw the city, and could mark
How from their many isles, in evening's gleam,
Its temples and its palaces did seem
Like fabrics of enchantment piled to Heaven.'

15. **the exhaustless East]** Cf. Wordsworth, *On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic*, l. 1: 'Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee.' The power of Venice in the Levant reached its highest point after the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204 (see note on l. 107 below).

19. **Tasso's echoes]** For Tasso, see note on l. 316 below. 'You know that formerly the gondoliers sung always, and Tasso's Gierusalemme was their ballad' (Byron to Murray, 1 July 1817). They sang stanzas of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* antiphonally.

27. **The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy]** This description is more appropriate to Venice in her decline—'the decayed sea-city, where folly had danced Parisianly of old' (Meredith, *Beauchamp's Career*, ch. x)—than in her splendour. Ruskin, intent upon the early glory of Venice, says, 'The Venice of modern fiction and drama is a thing of yesterday, a mere efflorescence of decay, a stage dream which the first ray of daylight must dissipate into dust. No prisoner, whose name is worth remembering, or whose sorrow deserved sympathy, ever crossed that "Bridge of Sighs," which is the centre of the Byronic ideal of Venice; no great merchant of Venice ever saw that Rialto under which the traveller now passes with breathless interest,' etc. (*Stones of Venice*, ut sup.).

31. **dogeless]** The doge (*dux*) was the chief magistrate of the Venetian republic. The last doge, Ludovico Manin, was deposed in 1797.

33. **the Rialto]** The Ponte di Rialto, crossing the Grand Canal, and connecting the two principal islands on which Venice is built. Rialto (Rivo Alto) is the name of the chief island, to which the seat of government was transferred in 810 from the outlying island of Malamocco. The present bridge was designed by Antonio da Ponte, and was built 1588-91.

33-4. **Shylock and the Moor, And Pierre]** Shylock and the Moor (Othello) need no explanation. Pierre is one of the ringleaders of the conspiracy in Otway's *Venice Preserved* (1682). The plot is cemented by Pierre and Jaffier in a scene on the Rialto (act II, sc. ii). Otway's play was founded upon a conspiracy which took place in 1618; and Byron, although he visited the Rialto 'for the sake of Shylock,' declared 'I hate things *all fiction*; and therefore the *Merchant* and *Othello* have no great associations to me: but *Pierre* has' (letter to Murray, 2 April 1817).

37. **The beings of the mind]** Cf. Canto III, st. vi. Here, however, the creations are not merely those of the poet's own mind, but those of others, which become his property by association.

47. The feeling described in the previous stanza, arising from literary pleasure, is the refuge of youth from Hope, which otherwise would bring too disastrous a disillusion, and of old age from that sensation of the emptiness of life, which is the result of disappointed hope.

52. **our fantastic sky]** The canopy of fancy, studded with 'strange constellations' (l. 53), beneath which the poet lives.

57. **but so]** I.e. are now only dreams.

75. **My spirit shall resume it]** My spirit shall make it her own again. Byron's prophecy came so far true that he died at Missolonghi in Greece; but he was buried at Hucknall Torkard in Nottinghamshire, the parish church of Newstead.

82. **the temple]** Figuratively used: the temple of Fame.

86. **Sparta hath many a worthier son than he]** 'The answer of the mother of Brasidas, the Lacedaemonian general, to the strangers who praised the memory of her son' (Byron).

89. **they have torn me, and I bleed]** So Shelley, *Ode to the West Wind*, l. 54: 'I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!'

91. **The spouseless Adriatic]** Cf. Wordsworth, *On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic*, ll. 7, 8:

'And, when she took unto herself a Mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.'

The ceremony of the *Sposalizio del Mare* (espousal of the sea), which took place annually on Ascension day, commemorated the embarkation of the doge Pietro Orseolo II in 998, on his way to the conquest of Dalmatia. The doge on these occasions was rowed out to the Lido, where the lagoons meet the sea, in the great galley called the Bucentaur (*Bucintoro*, said to be *buzin d'oro*, i.e. golden galley): here he was met by the clergy, and, after being sprinkled with holy water, cast a golden ring into the sea. The remains of the Bucentaur are preserved in the Arsenal at Venice.

95. **his lion]** See note on l. 8 above for the column in the Piazzetta referred to.

97. **the proud Place where an Emperor sued]** The emperor Frederick Barbarossa, 'the Suabian' (l. 100), was defeated in 1176 at Legnano by the Lombard league, which was protected by pope Alexander III. A further defeat of his combined fleet of Genoese and Pisan vessels by the fleet of Venice forced him to seek a reconciliation with the pope, which he had previously refused. The famous scene, in which the pope is said to have placed his foot upon the neck of the kneeling emperor, took place in 1177 at Venice in the vestibule of St Mark's, where a slab of red marble marks the spot: it is represented in a painting by Federico Zuccaro, forming one of a series of twelve illustrating the whole episode, by various painters, in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio (hall of the grand council) in the doge's palace. The 'proud Place' is the Piazza of St Mark, on the west side of the church: the Piazzetta, where the winged lion stands, runs at right angles to this from the south-west angle of St Mark's.

99. **an unequall'd dower]** The dower of liberty.

100. **the Austrian reigns]** The Austrian house of Hapsburg obtained the crown of the Holy Roman empire during the anarchy which followed the ruin of the house of Suabia. In 1797 her conquerors, the French republic, by the treaty of Campoformio, gave

Venice over to Austria. In 1805, however, by the peace of Pressburg, she was restored to France, and became, jointly with Milan, the capital of Napoleon's Franco-Italian kingdom. On Napoleon's fall she again became Austrian, and, at the time of Byron's visit, was joint capital of the Lombardo-Venetian viceroyalty. She remained Austrian until 1866, when, in consequence of the defeat of Austria by Prussia, she was ceded to the kingdom of Italy under the house of Savoy.

106. **lauwine]** The German for 'avalanche.'

107. **blind old Dandolo]** Enrico Dandolo, doge 1193—1205, is said to have been eighty-four at the time of his election: he was blind, and there is an untrustworthy legend that he had been blinded by order of the emperor Manuel, while on an embassy to the court of Byzantium. Envoys sent by the leaders of the fourth crusade arrived in Venice early in 1201, and asked the Venetians to supply them with transport and battle-ships. Their request was granted, but in 1202 the crusaders found themselves unable to raise the sum required in payment, and undertook to defray it by helping Venice to recover Zara in Dalmatia from the king of Hungary; whereupon Dandolo and many of the Venetians took the cross. Before and during the siege of Zara, which was taken in 1203, the crusading host was invited by Alexius, son of the dethroned and blinded emperor of the East, Isaac Angelus, to join in recovering Constantinople from his uncle, the usurper Alexius. This proposal was distasteful to many of the crusaders, as diverting them from their original objects; but it was strongly supported by the Venetians, and the bulk of the army sailed from Corfu, and encamped before Constantinople on Midsummer day 1203. The city was taken in July, and the chronicler Villehardouin tells how the blind doge stood in armour on the prow of his galley, with the standard of St Mark before him, and 'cried to his people to put him on land, or else that he would do justice upon their bodies with his hands' (Sir F. Marzials' translation). His orders had the desired effect, and twenty-five towers on the wall were taken. The triumph of the crusaders was short-lived, for disputes rose between the Greeks and Latins in the city: the young Alexius, crowned emperor on 1 Aug. 1203, was strangled, and an usurper proclaimed. A second siege by the French and Venetians ended in the capture and sack of Constantinople and the election of Baldwin of Montferrat as

emperor. The exploits of Dandolo and the Venetians are the subject of a series of paintings in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio complementary to those mentioned in the note on l. 97 above.

109. **his steeds of brass**] Four horses of gilded bronze stand above the middle arch of the western façade of St Mark's. Their date and workmanship are uncertain, but they were taken by Constantine from one of the triumphal arches in Rome, and set up in the hippodrome at Constantinople. They were brought to Venice as part of the spoil of Byzantium in 1204 and set up in the Arsenal, from which they were afterwards removed to St Mark's. In 1797 they were taken to Paris by Bonaparte, and were placed upon the Arc de Triomphe in the Place du Carrousel, when it was erected to commemorate the victories of 1805 and 1806. After Napoleon's fall the Austrians sent them back to Venice, and they were re-erected in their old position at the end of 1815.

111. **Doria's menace**] In 1379 the Genoese fleet defeated the Venetians in the Adriatic off Pola, and the admiral Pietro Doria with his allies besieged and took Chioggia, at the south end of the lagoons. The doge Andrea Contarini attempted to treat with the victors, but Doria answered that they should never have peace with the allied Paduans and Genoese 'till we have ourselves bridled the bronze horses which stand in your square of St Mark.' The Venetians rallied and re-took Chioggia, and made peace in 1381. Doria himself was killed during the war in 1380 by the discharge of a cannon.

113. **thirteen hundred years**] Venice was founded in the fifth century, traditionally in 421: she lost her freedom in 1797.

114. **like a seaweed**] Cf. Pope, *Essay on Man*, ep. iv, l. 292: 'From dirt and seaweed as proud Venice rose.' On the west side of Venice is 'the lonely island church, fitly named "St George of the Seaweed"' (Ruskin)—San Giorgio in Aliga.

115. **Better be whelm'd beneath the waves**] A similar idea of destruction as preferable to the slavery of a free city is nobly, if elaborately, expressed by Browning in *Aristophanes' Apology*—of Athens after the Spartan conquest:—

' Or sea,

What if thy watery plural vastitude,
Rolling unanimous advance, had rushed,

Might upon might, a moment—stood, one stare,
 Sea-face to city-face, thy glaucous wave
 Glassing that marbled last magnificence,—
 Till fate's pale tremulous foam-flower tipped the grey,
 And when wave broke and overswarmed and, sucked
 To bounds back, multitudinously ceased,
 Let land again breathe unconfused with sea,
 Attiké was, Athenai was not now.'

118. **a new Tyre]** See the description of the glories of Tyre in Ezekiel xxvii.

120. **The 'Planter of the Lion']** The byword 'pantaloon' for a clown is derived from Venetian comedy. *Pantalone* is said to be connected with the Venetian name Pantaleone, which Byron derives from 'Pianta-leone,' i.e. plant-lion. There is a church of San Pantaleone in Venice. The Lion is, of course, the standard of St Mark.

123. **Europe's bulwark]** So Wordsworth calls Venice 'the safeguard of the West.' Her long wars with the Turk (the 'Ottomite' or Ottoman, so called from Othman, the founder of the dynasty of Turkish Sultans) lasted at intervals from 1462 to 1718 (see note on Canto II, l. 4).

124. **Troy's rival, Candia]** The island of Candia was acquired by Venice after the conquest of Constantinople in 1204. The war in which it was taken from Venice by the Turk lasted for twenty-four years (1645-69), and the stubborn resistance of Venice is the chief glory of the epoch of her decline. Candia is 'Troy's rival' because her capture took a longer time than that of Troy by the Greeks.

125. **Lepanto's fight]** See note on Canto II, l. 356.

126. **ye]** Candia and Lepanto.

129. **the vast and sumptuous pile]** The Palazzo Ducale or doges' palace on the south side of St Mark's—'the principal effort of' Venetian 'imagination, employing her best architects in its masonry, and her best painters in its decoration, for a long series of years' (Ruskin). The greater part of the existing building was built 1301-1423, including the south or sea-front: the destruction of the late twelfth-century palace on the east side of the Piazzetta was begun in 1424, and the western part of the palace built in its place. Numerous

additions were made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the final addition being the bridge of Sighs (see note on l. 1 above).

136. **Syracuse]** The Sicilian expedition, which ended in the defeat of the Athenians at Syracuse (B.C. 413), was the most disastrous blow to the Athenian empire. The incident commemorated in this stanza is told by Plutarch in his life of Nicias. Some of the Athenian prisoners 'were saved also for Euripides' sake. For the Sicilians like the verses of this poet better, than they did any other Grecians' verses of the midst of Greece....And therefore it is reported, that divers escaping this bondage, and returning again to Athens, went very lovingly to salute Euripides, and to thank him for their lives: and told him how they were delivered from slavery, only by teaching them those verses which they remembered of his works' (North's Plutarch). This passage of Plutarch, with the story of the ship which, escaping from pirates, was admitted to a Sicilian harbour because the crew knew some of Euripides' verses, was used by Browning as the framework of his *Balaustion's Adventure*.

148. **Thy love of Tasso]** See note on l. 19 above.

151. **Albion]** Cf. Byron's comments in the dedicatory letter of this canto upon 'the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world' by Castlereagh and his colleagues at the congress of Vienna.

158. **Otway]** Byron already has referred to Otway and Shakespeare, ll. 33-4 above. Radcliffe is Ann Radcliffe, authoress of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797), romances which had a considerable vogue in their day. Scott said that 'the Utopian scenes and manners of Mrs Radcliffe's Novels captivated the imagination more than the most laboured descriptions or the greatest historical accuracy' (Lockhart, *Life of Scott*, ch. lxxxiii). Miss Austen gently ridiculed *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and its class of fiction in *Northanger Abbey*. Of Schiller's *Armenian* or *Ghost Seer* Byron said that it was 'a novel which took a great hold of me when a boy....I never walked down St Mark's by moonlight without thinking about it' (letter to Murray, 2 April 1817).

172. **tannen]** Plural of the German *Tanne* = fir-tree.

189. **temper it]** I.e. temper our clay.

204. **it may be a sound]** Cf. the similar thought in Browning,

Bishop Blougram's Apology, of the power of slight associations to disturb a fancied security:

'Just when we are safest, there's a sunset-touch,
A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's death,
A chorus-ending from Euripides,—
And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
As old and new at once as nature's self,
To rap and knock and enter in our soul,' etc.

207. **the electric chain**] The chain of memory.

238. **blue Friuli's mountains**] I.e. the blue mountains of Friuli—an example of the figure of speech called *hypallage* or transference of epithet. Friuli is the mountainous district north of Venice, beyond which rise the Alps dividing Italy from the Austrian Tyrol. The view described is that from the villa of La Mira on the Brenta, a few miles west of Venice, which was Byron's head-quarters during the summer and autumn of 1817. He gives the date of this view as 18 Aug. 1817.

240. **one vast Iris**] The rainbow hues of the sunset.

242. **meek Dian's crest**] The crescent moon.

247. **the far Rhætian hill**] The Rhætian alps are the mountains of south-west Switzerland (canton Grisons); the high snows might possibly be seen in the far western distance behind the intervening alps of Bergamo.

250. **Brenta**] The Brenta rises in the Dolomite alps, and enters the Adriatic south of the Venetian lagoons and close to the mouth of the Adige: a canal connects it directly with Venice.

262. **Arqua**] Arquà del Monte, on the Euganean hills, about 14 miles south of Padua, was the scene of the last years and death of the great poet Francesco Petrarca (1304–74). His villa and tomb are described at length in John Chetwode Eustace's *Classical Tour through Italy*, ch. iv. 'His body lies interred in the churchyard of the village, in a large stone sarcophagus raised on four low pillars, and surmounted with a bust,' which the classical Mr Eustace, indulging 'the caprice of the moment,' crowned with a branch of laurel.

269. **the tree**] The laurel. Of Laura herself little is known: Gibbon (*Decline and Fall*, ch. lxx) called Petrarch's love 'a meta-

physical passion for a nymph so shadowy that her existence has been questioned'; and the history of the sonnet-form in poetry is in favour of the theory that the passion was, if not artificial, at least ideal. Tradition identifies her with Laure de Noves (1307-48), wife of Hugues de Sade of Avignon, where Petrarch first saw her in church in 1327.

286. **now in vain display'd]** I.e. the man who has 'felt mortality' no longer feels the attraction of the busy cities in the distant view, but is content to spend his retirement sitting in the sun, whose rays make sufficient holiday for him.

293. **Idlesse]** Idleness, as in canto II, l. 883. Byron's use of such archaisms in *Childe Harold*, after the first canto, is rare.

307. **Ferrara]** Byron's first visit to Ferrara took place in April 1817, on his way to Rome, and its outcome was the poem called *The Lament of Tasso*. *Parisina*, founded upon an incident in the Ferrarese history of the fifteenth century, was written in 1816, before Byron's departure from England. The 'long and spacious streets, silent, solitary, and grass-grown' are noticed by lady Morgan in her superficial but entertaining *Italy* (1821). The chief feature of the town is the huge quadrangular Castello, the moated fortress of the dukes, with high towers at its angles.

311. **Este]** The house of Este, which rose to fame in the eleventh century as a feudatory of the empire in north Italy, acquired the lordship of Ferrara, Modena and Reggio. Borso, marquis of Este, became duke of Modena in 1452 and of Ferrara in 1470. The duchy was held as a fief from the papacy, and after the death of Alfonso II in 1597 without offspring, it was seized by pope Clement VIII and re-united to the states of the Church. The younger line of Este continued to rule in Modena until the deposition of Ercole III by the French in 1797: it gave a queen to England in the person of James II's second wife, Mary Beatrice. At the time of Byron's visit, Ferrara was occupied by an Austrian garrison.

314-5. **those who wore The wreath]** I.e. the poets who succeeded to Dante's position as premier poet of Italy. Lodovico Ariosto was in the service of the cardinal Ippolito d'Este, brother of Alfonso I of Ferrara, from 1503 to 1517, and from 1518 to 1534 served Alfonso, living at Ferrara from 1526 to his death in 1534. Tasso (see below) and

Giovanni Battista Guarini (1537—1612), author of *Il Pastor Fido*, were in the service of Alfonso II, the grandson of Alfonso I. Guarini came to Ferrara in 1567, two years after Tasso, and succeeded him as court poet, but his career, though less tragic than that of Tasso, was injured by his incompatibility with the life of the court.

316. **Tasso]** Byron takes the traditional view of the career of Torquato Tasso, born at Sorrento in 1544, died at the convent of Sant' Onofrio near Rome in 1595. In 1565 he entered the household of Ludovico d' Este, cardinal archbishop of Ferrara, and brother of the duke, and in 1572 he entered the duke's service as court poet. His restlessness, wounded vanity and quarrels at court made his life unhappy: he twice left Ferrara and twice returned, and in March 1579 was imprisoned, after rashly expostulating with the duke on his cold treatment, in the hospital of Santa Anna, a mad-house, where he remained till 1586. He then left Ferrara and wandered from city to city of Italy in disappointment and in a morbid condition of mind which, if not madness, was akin to it. The story of his affection for one or both of Alfonso's sisters, Lucrezia, duchess of Urbino, and Leonora, may have some foundation of truth, but its influence on his fortunes has been magnified. It is probable that Alfonso acted with some forbearance towards a poet of great genius, whose personal character was irritable and untrustworthy. Tasso's masterpiece, the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, was completed in 1574.

317. **his cell]** Byron's name is still shewn among the autographs on the walls of the cell in which Tasso was confined.

325. **thine]** Byron turns to address Alfonso. The superlative praise of Tasso and the invective to which Alfonso is treated in these stanzas find a close parallel in more modern verse, in Swinburne's glorification of Victor Hugo and other poets at the expense of all who held less liberal opinions.

339. **the Cruscan quire]** The Accademia della Crusca, the most famous and permanent of the academies which were founded in Italy during the later period of the revival of learning, was founded in Florence in 1572, with the object of preserving the purity of the Italian language. In 1585 two of its members, Leonardi Salviati and Bastiano de' Rossi, published a minute and pedantic criticism of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*.

340. **Boileau]** Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux (1632—1711), the poet who did much to fix the type of the heroic couplet in France. In his ninth satire l. 176, he sneers at the fools of quality who prefer 'le clinquant du Tasse à tout l'or de Virgile'—i.e. the pinchbeck of Tasso to all Vergil's gold. This provokes Byron's taunt at the couplet of Boileau in ll. 342-3. Boileau again spoke disparagingly of the theme and hero of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* in *L'Art Poétique*, III, ll. 209-16, and attributed its success to its lighter and more secular side.

349. **And not]** I.e. how long shall the tide of generations roll on, and the whole combined throng of countless generations fail to produce a mind like thine? To modern taste, which recognises the pre-eminence of Dante over all Italian poets, this praise of Tasso is exaggerated, as well as the estimate of Ariosto (l. 356) as 'not unequal to the Florentine.' The importance of Tasso in European literature may, however, be forgotten at the present day: Milton, for example, owes more to him than he does to Dante, and the machinery and portraiture of *Paradise Lost* were directly influenced by the study of Tasso.

354. **The Bards of Hell and Chivalry]** Dante and Ariosto. In modern times, again, the mystical side of Dante's poetry, in the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, has won more recognition than the realism of the *Inferno*. Isolated episodes of the *Inferno*, however, such as those of Francesca da Rimini and Ugolino, still remain with the general reader the most famous passages of the *Divina Commedia*.

357. **The southern Scott]** This famous comparison of Scott with Ariosto belongs to that dangerous class of comparisons which reach absurdity in the epitaph of the native of Salisbury who died in Venice:

'Born in the English Venice, thou didst die,
Dear friend, in the Italian Salisbury.'

Byron and Murray were both doubtful about it. Byron defends it in a letter to Murray of 17 Sept. 1817: 'Surely their themes, chivalry, war, and love, were as like as can be; and as to the compliment, if you knew what the Italians think of Ariosto, you would not hesitate about that. But as to their "measures," you forget that Ariosto's is an octave stanza, and Scott's anything but a stanza....I do not call

him the "*Scotch*" Ariosto, which would be sad *provincial* eulogy, but the "Ariosto of the *North*," meaning of all *countries* that are not the *South*.'

360. **ladye-love and war**] See the opening lines of the *Orlando Furioso* :

‘Le donne, i cavalier, l’arme, gli amori,
Le cortesie, l’audaci imprese io canto.’

i.e. ‘Ladies, knights, arms, loves, courtesy, bold enterprises I sing.’

361. **The lightning**] Hobhouse notes that, before Ariosto’s remains and tomb were removed from the church of San Benedetto to the library of Ferrara, the bust above the tomb was struck by lightning, and a crown of iron laurels which it wore was destroyed.

368. **the lightning sanctifies**] This is the idea perpetuated by Pope, *Essay on Man*, ep. III, l. 68, ‘favour’d man by touch of lightning slain.’ The idea that persons struck by lightning were specially favoured by heaven appears to have no warrant in the antiquity to which Pope appealed.

370. **Italia! oh Italia!**] This and the next stanza are a free translation of the famous sonnet by Vincenzo Filicaja (1642—1707) :

‘Italia, Italia, o tu, che feo la sorte
Dono infelice di bellezza,’ etc.

The sonnet, translated into literal prose, runs: ‘Italy, Italy, oh thou, to whom fortune made a hapless gift of beauty, whereby thou hast a mournful dower of endless woes, which thou bearest written by deep sorrow upon thy forehead; ah! would that thou wert less lovely, or at least more powerful, so that he might terrify thee something more or love thee something less, who seems to melt before the rays of thy loveliness, and yet challenges thee to death—then wouldst thou not see torrents of armed men descending down from the Alps, nor flocks of Frenchmen drinking the blood-tinged water of the Po, nor wouldst thou see thyself, girt with a sword not thine own, fighting with the arm of stranger nations, ever to be a slave, whether conquering or conquered.’

388. **Wandering in youth**] Byron recalls his journeys in Greece in 1809–11. The passage referred to is the letter of Servius Sulpicius, written to Cicero, to condole with him on the death of his daughter, and remind him of the smallness of human loss in comparison with

the ruin of the greatest powers on earth. 'In my return from Asia, as I was sailing from Aegina towards Megara, on my right was Piraeus, on my left Corinth—towns which at one time were most flourishing, but now lie prostrate and in ruins before our eyes. I for my part began thus to reason with myself: what! are we little folk angry, if one of us dies or is slain, whose life ought to be shorter, seeing that the corpses of so many towns lie prone in one place?' The passage is quoted with an admirably humorous effect in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, where Mr Shandy, consoling himself for his son's death by reading the passage aloud, mystifies his brother Toby, ignorant of the real author, by the references to foreign parts, and provokes Toby's genuine alarm for his sanity.

410. **Of then destruction]** I.e. of the destruction which Sulpicius saw.

411. **Rome]** For a brief period, during the Napoleonic empire, Rome had recovered something of her old prestige. She had been decreed the second city of the empire in 1810, and the title of king of Rome had been given to Napoleon's heir; while the emperor had assumed the old right of the emperors of the West to be crowned in St Peter's.

417. **Mother of Arts]** The phrase applied by Milton (*Paradise Regained*, iv, 240-1), to

'Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence.'

420. **the keys of heaven]** The keys figuratively given by our Lord to St Peter, and transmitted by him, according to the doctrine of the Roman church, to his successors in the bishopric of Rome.

421. **her parricide]** See note on Canto III, l. 1028, and cf. the words of Filicaja translated in the note on l. 370 above. The nations which owed most to Italy made her their battle-field, draining her of her life, while they absorbed her intellectual and artistic treasures. This theme has been enlarged upon by Vernon Lee in the opening chapter of her book of essays upon the Renaissance, *Euphorion*.

423. **Roll the barbarian tide]** To the Italian, as to the Athenian, uncultured foreign nations were barbarians. The last chapter of Machiavelli's famous treatise, *Il Principe*, is an exhortation to the armed deliverer of the house of Medici, whom he hoped to raise by

precepts drawn from contemporary practice, to free Italy from the barbarians. 'Nor can I express with what love he would be received in all those provinces which have suffered from these foreign deluges, with what thirst of revenge, with what determined loyalty, with what devotion, with what tears. What gates would be closed against him? what people would refuse him obedience? what envy would stand against him? what Italian would deny him service? This dominion of the barbarian stinks in every nostril. Let your illustrious house then undertake this enterprise with that courage and with that hope wherewith righteous exploits are undertaken, in order that beneath its banner this our fatherland may be ennobled by it, and under its auspices that saying of Petrarch may be fulfilled: "Virtue shall take up arms against Madness, and short shall be the fight; for in Italian hearts their olden worth is not yet dead."'

424. **Arno**] Florence, the Athens (see quotation in note on l. 417 above) of Etruria, the modern Tuscany, is on the river Arno. The course of the Arno, the 'little river which rises in Falterona,' is described by Dante in a famous passage (*Purgatorio*, Canto xiv).

429. **her redundant horn**] The cornucopia or horn of plenty was one of the horns of the goat Amalthea which suckled Zeus, and was endowed by him with the property of becoming full at the wish of the possessor.

431. **Luxury of Commerce born**] From 1282, when the priors of the arts—wardens of the great commercial guilds of the city—were invested with the supreme magistracy of Florence, the city was controlled by its merchants. The Medici, who established their supremacy in 1434, were themselves merchants.

432. **buried Learning**] Florence was the chief centre of the revival of learning in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Two of the most illustrious natives of Tuscany, Petrarch and Boccaccio, were the chief promoters of the reviving interest in Latin and Greek literature respectively; and, at a later date, when Rome shared the pre-eminence of Florence in scholarship, the court of the Medici was a favourite haunt of scholars.

433. **the Goddess loves in stone**] The Medici Venus in the Tribuna of the Uffizi gallery. This small statue, under five feet high, which is the work of an unknown Roman imitator of Greek sculpture,

was found at the villa of Hadrian near Tivoli in the sixteenth century, and was added to the Medici collection in 1680. A forged Greek inscription beneath it attributes it to Cleomenes, an Athenian sculptor, son of Apollodorus. Byron, who spent only a day at Florence on his way to Rome, wrote to Murray (26 Ap. 1817); 'the Venus is more for admiration than love.' Thomson (*Liberty*, part iv, 175-84) describes the statue with enthusiasm:

'The gazer grows enamoured, and the stone,
As if exulting in its conquest, smiles.'

Even in Byron's day, however, taste was changing, and criticism was already beginning to depreciate the somewhat effeminate perfection of the figure.

441. **the innate flash]** The spark of life which the sculptor's genius could infuse into the marble, making it a living object of adoration.

448. **The paltry jargon]** Byron's contempt for the art-critic is expressed in st. LIII below. He confessed that he had not much feeling for painting and sculpture, 'those two most artificial of the arts': painting was to him 'of all the arts...the most artificial and unnatural, and that by which the nonsense of mankind is most imposed upon.' The Uffizi and Pitti collections, however, contained 'sculpture and painting, which for the first time at all gave me an idea of what people mean by their *cant*' (letters to Murray, 14 and 26 April 1817).

450. **the Dardan Shepherd's prize]** Paris awarded the golden apple, the prize of beauty, to the goddess Aphrodite, whose attributes were transferred by the Romans to Venus.

452. **Anchises]** The father of Aeneas by Aphrodite.

454. **Lord of War]** Arcs (Mars). The phrase is used by Gray, *Progress of Poesy*:

'On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,
And dropp'd his thirsty lance at thy command.'

470. **his ape]** The art-critic.

478. **Santa Croce]** The church of the Franciscans or grey friars in Florence, begun by Arnolfo di Cambio in 1294, and containing a remarkable collection of monuments to the men of genius of modern

Italy. Michelangelo Buonarroti (1474—1564), Vittorio Alfieri (see note on 'Mi pare,' p. 235 above), and the statesman, poet and political philosopher, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469—1527), are buried in the south aisle. Michelangelo's tomb, the work of several artists, was erected in 1570; Alfieri's is the work of Canova; Machiavelli's, by Innocenzo Spinazzi, was erected in 1787. On the north side of the floor of the nave is the recumbent effigy, by Giulio Foggini, of the astronomer Galileo Galilei (1564—1642).

485. **with his woes]** The revolutionary views of Galileo upon the solar system exposed him to persecution. Milton, *Areopagitica*, records how in Italy he 'found and visited the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought.'

495. **Canova]** See the praise given to Canova in the dedicatory letter of the canto, and note on p. 235 above.

496. **the all Etruscan three]** Dante Alighieri, born in Florence 1265, died at Ravenna in 1321: the mausoleum above his tomb, adjoining the church of San Francesco at Ravenna, was erected in 1482. Francesco Petrarca, born of Florentine parentage at Arezzo in 1304, died at Arquà del Monte in 1374 (see note on l. 262 above). Giovanni Boccaccio, son of a Florentine merchant, was born in Paris in 1313: he died at Certaldo, between Florence and Siena, in 1375, and was buried in the church of SS. Michele and Giacomo. His tomb was desecrated in 1783 (see ll. 519—20 below), and the remains of his monument, erected in 1503, are preserved in his house. A monument to Dante was erected in Santa Croce in 1829.

498. **The Bard of Prose]** Boccaccio, author of the *Decamerone*, a series of a hundred tales or *novelle* divided into ten days, which are supposed to be spent at a villa by a company of Florentine ladies and gentlemen, driven from Florence by the great pestilence popularly known as the Black Death.

506. **Like Scipio]** Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Hannibal at Zama in B.C. 202, was accused of bribery in 185 B.C., and, after setting his accusers at defiance and enlisting popular sympathy, retired to his estate at Liternum on the bay of Naples, where he died, desiring to be buried there and not in his ungrateful country. Dante was similarly the victim of political

faction in Florence, and died at the court of the feudal lord of Ravenna, far from his native city.

510. **the crown]** Petrarch received the laurel crown of poetry on the Roman Capitol from the senator Orso of Anguillara, 8 April 1341—a ceremony symbolical of the revival of the ancient glory of Rome in the hopes and imagination of classical scholars. His sonnets and odes were chiefly written at Avignon and Vaucluse, during his sojourn at the papal court, then removed to French soil.

514. **his parent earth]** Boccaccio is said traditionally to have been born at Certaldo. See, however, note on l. 496 above.

517. **the Tuscan's siren tongue]** Boccaccio was the father of modern Italian prose. The work, however, of forming the language belongs more truly to Dante, who expressed the theology of the middle ages in a tongue which until his time had found no fixed literary form.

520. **the hyæna bigot]** The bigot is likened to the hyæna, which devours the bodies of the dead. The desecration of Boccaccio's tomb was due to the licentiousness and paganism of the *Decamerone*, which were resented by the religious feeling of the ruling powers of Italy in the later eighteenth century.

525. **Caesar's pageant]** The allusion is drawn, not, as the words imply, from a triumph of the conqueror of Philippi, but from Tacitus' account (*Annals* III, 76) of the funeral of Junia, half-sister of Marcus Brutus and wife of Caius Cassius, who died in A.D. 22, during the reign of Tiberius. In spite of her marked omission of the emperor from her will, she was granted a splendid funeral. The busts of members of twenty distinguished families were carried to do her honour in her funeral procession; 'but Cassius and Brutus were the most remarkable for that very reason, that their likenesses did not appear.'

526. **Rome's best Son]** 'This was the noblest Roman of them all' (Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, v, v, 68).

528. **Fortress of falling empire]** In 404, after the first invasion of Italy by Alaric, the emperor Honorius fixed his residence at Ravenna, which was protected from attack by its marshy surroundings. After the empire of the West had fallen, Ravenna became the favourite capital of the Ostrogothic king Theodoric. It was taken by

Belisarius in 539, and, after the settlement of Italy by Narses, was made the capital of a vice-royalty or exarchate of the eastern empire. The exarchate was gradually reduced in extent by the barbarian conquests, until about 752 Ravenna was finally taken by the Lombards.

529. **Arqua]** See note on l. 262 above.

532. **What is her pyramid]** 'I also went to the Medici chapel—fine frippery in great slabs of various expensive stones, to commemorate fifty rotten and forgotten carcasses. It is unfinished, and will remain so' (Byron to Murray, 26 Ap. 1817). This is the octagonal domed Cappella dei Principi, attached to the church of San Lorenzo, and constructed in 1604 as a mausoleum for the Medicean grand-dukes. Byron either did not visit or was not impressed by Michelangelo's sacristy, the Sagrestia Nuova of the same church, which contains the famous tombs of Lorenzo, duke of Urbino, and Giuliano, duke of Nemours, the masterpieces of Michelangelo.

542. **Arno's dome]** Byron again refers to the Uffizi and Pitti galleries. He enumerates to Murray a few of the sculptures and paintings which struck him most there. But he turns with relief to those scenes of nature with which he can identify himself most easily.

548. **it yields]** I.e. my spirit yields. Pictures and sculpture are objects of admiration with which the spirit cannot be thoroughly at one. On the other hand, alone with nature, as Byron says in Canto III, ll. 680-1:

'I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me.'

551. **Thrasimene's lake]** The final e of 'Thrasimene' ought not, strictly speaking, to be sounded: the ancient name of the Lago Trasimeno was Trasimenus. Byron travelled to Rome by way of Foligno, where he was on 26 Ap. 1817: his road led him through Arezzo, Cortona and Perugia, and between these two last places he passed along the northern shore of Trasimeno. In B.C. 217 Hannibal and his Carthaginians surrounded the consul Flaminius, who was pursuing them, in the plain between the hills and the lake. The Romans suffered a disastrous defeat, leaving the consul and 15,000 men dead on the field: those who cut their way through the Cartha-

ginians surrendered next day. An earthquake is said to have occurred during the battle, which was felt by neither army in the heat of the fight (see the following stanza, and the magnificent image suggested by the legend in st. LXIV).

557. **torrents]** One of these is known as the Sanguinetto, from the blood which discoloured it on the day of battle. See ll. 580-5.

586. **Clitumnus]** The Clitumnus (Clitunno) is a tributary of the Tiber, which joins it a few miles south of Perugia. Its valley is followed on the way from Foligno to Spoleto, which passes near its source in the limestone rock at Le Vene, between Trevi and Spoleto. Byron describes the scene near Le Vene, commemorated by Pliny in his epistles (VIII, 8). 'Almost close to the post-house,' writes Eustace, 'on the northern side, rises on a steep bank an ancient temple, and a little to the south of it, from various narrow vents or *veins* [Le Vene], gushes out a most plentiful stream of clear limpid water, forming one of the sources of the Clitumnus.' Pliny describes how 'a hill of moderate height rises, thickly clothed with a grove of aged cypresses: beneath this is the mouth of the spring, which forces its way out through several vents of unequal size, and makes in its escape a pool, the broad bosom of which expands clear and glassy, so that you can count small coins, if you throw them in, and the glistening pebbles.' The 'ancient and hallowed temple' mentioned by Pliny is probably not the one described by Byron (l. 595), which appears to be a later erection on its site.

590. **the milk-white steer]** The white oxen of the vale of Clitumnus were used to draw the cars in Roman triumphs. Vergil (*Georgic* II, 146-8) commemorates the white herds of Clitumnus, which 'often laved in thy sacred stream, have drawn the triumphs of Rome to the temples of the gods'; while Propertius (*Elegies* II, 17) speaks of the place 'where Clitumnus shades his streams with his beauteous grove, and his wave washes the snowy oxen.' Macaulay remembered the Latin poets and Byron in *Horatius*, st. VI:

'Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear,'

and in st. VII:

'Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer.'

604. **the Genius of the place]** The ancient temple was dedicated to the river-god Clitumnus. 'There,' says Pliny, 'stands Clitumnus himself girt about and adorned with the *praetexta*. His oracles declare the presence and also the prophetic power of his divinity.'

613. **The roar of waters]** Beyond Spoleto the road climbs Monte Somma and descends to Terni, the ancient Interamna, in the valley of the Nera, eighteen miles from Spoleto. The falls of Terni, formed by the Velino close to its junction with the Nera, are four to five miles south-east of Terni, and are known as the *Cascata delle Marmore* (i.e. the marble cascade). 'At a little distance beyond the cascade rise two hills of a fine swelling form, covered with groves of ilex. The Velino passes near one of these hills, and suddenly tumbling over a ridge of broken rock, rushes headlong down in one vast sheet, and in three streamlets. The precipice is of brown rock; its sides are smooth and naked; it forms a semicircle, crowned with wood on the right, and on the left it rises steep, and feathered with evergreens. On the one side it ascends in broken ridges, and on the other sinks gradually away, and subsides in a narrow valley, through which the Nar [i.e. the Nera] glides gently along till its junction with the Velino, after which it rolls along the dell in boisterous agitation' (Eustace). The height of the whole fall is over 600 feet.

617. **The hell of waters]** Byron notes that 'Addison thought the descent alluded to by the gulf in which Alecto plunged into the infernal regions.' See Vergil, *Aen.* vii, 563-71.

620. **Phlegethon]** One of the six fabled rivers of hell. Phlegethon = boiling.

642. **An Iris]** The rainbow which is often seen in the sun over the lower part of a waterfall—not merely Alpine waterfalls, as Byron explains in his note to *Manfred*, act II, sc. ii:

'It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch

The torrent with the many hues of heaven,'

but in falls of less volume. The iris may be seen to perfection, e.g., at Hardraw force in Yorkshire, or at the lovely fall of Ysgwd-yr-Eira in the vale of Neath.

649. **the woody Apennine]** The road from Terni descends the valley of the Nera, through 'the Apennine, in its mildest form' (Eustace), clothed with woods of ilex. Beyond Narni the valley

widens out till the junction of the Nera with the Tiber near Otricoli.

653. **lauwine**] See note on l. 106 above.

654. **the soaring Jungfrau**] For Byron's Alpine tour in Switzerland see note on John Cam Hobhouse, p. 234 above.

657. **Chimari**] See note on Canto II, l. 453.

659. **Parnassus**] For Byron's visit to Parnassus see Canto I, stt. LX—LXIV. The flight of twelve eagles which he saw on that occasion was regarded by him as a happy omen from Apollo, the god of poetry. The other mountains mentioned here were visited or seen from a distance by him on his journeys of 1809–11. For Athos see note on Canto II, l. 236.

665. **Soracte**] The peak of mount Soracte, 2267 feet above the sea, is an outlying summit of the Apennines and a conspicuous feature from the Campagna north of Rome. The allusion to 'the lyric Roman' (l. 666) is to Horace, *Carm.* I, 9:

'Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte'

i.e. 'Thou seest how Soracte stands white with his crown of snow.'

672. **Latian echoes**] Echoes of the poets of Latium.

674. **The drill'd dull lesson**] Byron explains at length in a note his distaste, here so violently expressed, for his classical reading at Harrow, undertaken as a task before he was old enough to enter into the literary beauty of his authors. He appreciated Horace well enough to imitate the epistle *De Arte Poetica* in *Hints from Horace*, written at Athens in 1811; but it is not the most inspired of his earlier productions, and these stanzas may be taken as a fair record of his feelings.

689. **no deeper Moralist**] The philosophy of the *Odes* is referred to. In l. 690 the *De Arte Poetica* and in l. 691 the *Satires* are the objects of allusion.

694. **Rome**] Byron arrived in Rome at the end of April, and stayed there till 20 May.

703. **Niobe**] Niobe, the wife of Amphion, king of Thebes, boasted that her children were more beautiful than those of Leto. Apollo and Artemis destroyed the children with their arrows, and Niobe herself was turned into stone, without losing the power of feeling her grief.

707. **The Scipios' tomb**] The family tomb of the Scipios is close

to the Via di Porta San Sebastiano—the beginning of the Appian way. It was found in 1780: the sarcophagus of Lucius Cornelius Scipio Barbatus, consul B.C. 298, and the inscriptions to other members of the family, are in the Museo Pio-Clementino in the Vatican, to which they were removed by Pius VII shortly before Byron's visit. The actual remains of Lucius were removed and buried at Padua by a Venetian named Quirini.

712. **The Goth, the Christian]** The Visigoths under Alaric besieged Rome three times, and sacked it in 410. Attila spared Rome in 452, but in 455 it was sacked by Genseric and his Vandals. The third sack of Rome took place in 472 under the Gothic patrician Ricimer. In 537 Belisarius successfully defended Rome against the Gothic king Witigis. In 546 it was sacked by Totila and in 547 was recovered by Belisarius, but in 549 it was again taken, but not pillaged, by Totila. Narses recovered it for the empire in 552, and, after the removal of the imperial authority from the city, its independence was maintained by the popes. It was saved from the Lombards by Pepin and his son Charlemagne; but Charlemagne's successors in the empire of the West were hardly less dangerous to the city than the Goths and Vandals. The visit of Lewis II in 864 was attended by tumult: the emperor Arnulf besieged his rival Lambert in Rome, and took it by storm in 896: Otho the Great sacked the city and established the imperial authority in it in 966: his grandson, Otho III, besieged the senator Crescentius in the castle of St Angelo in 998. Henry IV, during his struggle with pope Gregory VII, besieged Rome four times, and in 1083 and 1084 entered the city and beset the pope in St Angelo. Gregory was delivered by the Norman Robert Guiscard, but at the expense of the sack of the city. The constant quarrels between the pope, the emperor and the citizens led to numerous revolts in the city, and the Franconian and Suabian emperors, who came to receive their crown in Rome, usually visited it as besiegers or conquerors. The siege by Frederick Barbarossa in 1167, and the events of the fourteenth century, during the absence of the popes at Avignon, including the revival of the republic under Rienzi in 1347, added to the damage which the city had already received; and the culminating work of destruction was the sack of Rome by Charles V's imperialist army in 1527—an event which put an end to

medieval Rome and forms an important line of division in its history.

716. **Where the car climb'd]** I.e. where the triumphal car had been wont to climb. The Capitoline hill, above the forum, was the most sacred spot in ancient Rome. On one of its peaks stood the Arx or citadel; on the other the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.

719. **a lunar light]** A dim light, like that of the moon.

728. **Eureka]** The Greek *εὕρηκα*, i.e. I have found.

731. **the day]** 15 March, B.C. 44, when Julius Caesar was murdered in the Capitol.

736. **Her resurrection]** Cf. what Byron says of the permanence of literary associations, stt. iv—vi above.

740. **Triumphant Sylla]** Lucius Sulla (B.C. 138—78), the rival of Marius. In B.C. 84, while his enemies had gained the upper hand at Rome, he brought the war against Mithridates to a successful conclusion, and then turned against Rome. In 82 he secured the dictatorship by the victory of the Colline gate, and revenged himself upon his enemies by wholesale proscription, but resigned his office voluntarily in 79 and retired to Puteoli. He received the surname of Felix: hence the phrase in l. 739: the wheels of his chariot were always uppermost on the legendary wheel of Fortune.

755. **the o'er-canopied horizon]** Rome conquered the known world, which was thus overshadowed by the wings of her eagles, until there was no horizon to her power.

762. **famous through all ages]** Pope, *Essay on Man*, ep. iv, l. 284, stigmatises Cromwell as 'damn'd to everlasting fame.'

764. **His day]** The third of September, the day of the decisive victories of Dunbar (1650) and Worcester (1651), and of Cromwell's death (1658).

775. **dread statue]** The naked statue of Pompey (Cnaeus Pompeius Magnus) is preserved in the Palazzo Spada. It is said to be the statue erected during Pompey's life-time in the senate-house, at the foot of which Caesar was murdered. See Shakespeare, *Jul. Caesar*, III, ii, 190-3.

‘Then burst his mighty heart;
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,

Even at the base of Pompey's statuë,
Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar fell.'

The statue was removed by Augustus from the disused senate-house and placed above a marble gateway opposite the theatre of Pompey. It disappeared after one of the sacks of Rome, and was dug up in 1550, while the foundations of a house were being excavated. Two proprietors laid claim to it; but pope Julius III bought it and presented it to cardinal Capodiferro, who placed it in its present lodging, then his palace.

782. **Pompey]** Pompey was murdered in B.C. 48, when he was landing in Egypt after his defeat at Pharsalia.

784. **the thunder-stricken nurse]** The bronze statue of the wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, in the Capitoline museum. It is supposed to be the statue alluded to by Cicero (*In Catilinam* III, 8), as having been injured in the great thunderstorm of B.C. 65: 'he also, the founder of this city, Romulus, was struck, whose gilded statue as a little sucking-child, with his mouth at the wolf's breasts, you remember was on the Capitol.' The statue is referred to by the sixteenth-century Latin poet Muretus: 'here was the wild nurse of the Roman name...who then fell down with the boys under the fiery stroke of the thunderbolt, and left her footsteps, torn from her pedestal.' An injured foot of the statue is said to be the result of this catastrophe.

798. **At apish distance]** I.e. as an ape imitates a man.

800. **one vain man]** Napoleon. This estimate should be compared with the more favourable estimate in Canto III, stt. xxxvi—xlii. See also Byron's *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*, written in 1814, after Napoleon's exile to Elba, and *The Age of Bronze*, Byron's satire on the Holy alliance.

801. **to his own slaves a slave]** Cf. *The Age of Bronze*, II:

'But where is he, the modern, mightier far,
Who, born no king, made monarchs draw his car;
The new Sesostriis, whose unharness'd kings,
Freed from the bit, believe themselves with wings,
And spurn the dust o'er which they crawled of late,
Chain'd to the chariot of the chieftain's state?'

802. **The fool of false dominion]** I.e. deluded by the ambition of empire.

809. **Alcides with the distaff]** Hercules, in his captivity to Omphale, queen of Lydia, wore women's garments and spun wool. The amours of Julius Caesar and Cleopatra form the subject of Fletcher's drama, *The False One*, and are alluded to more than once in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

811. **And came]** Caesar's famous message to the senate, after his defeat of Pharnaces, son of Mithridates, at Zela in B.C. 47, was *Veni, vidi, vici* (I came, I saw, I conquered).

828. **Renew thy rainbow]** The rainbow was the visible sign of God's promise that no other flood should destroy the earth. Byron calls for a second rainbow as a visible sign that the deluge of blood will cease.

830. **Our senses narrow]** The passage (ll. 830-4) is paraphrased from Cicero, *Academica*, I, 13, 'angustus sensus, inbecillos animos,' etc. Cicero is speaking of 'the dunness of those matters which led Socrates to his confession of ignorance, and, as lovers of Socrates, Democritus, Anaxagoras, Empedocles, almost all the ancients, who said that nothing can be apprehended, nothing perceived, nothing known; that *our senses are narrow, our minds weak, the span of our life short; and* (as Democritus) *that truth is drowned in the deep; that all things are bound by private judgment and established custom; that nothing is left for truth; that all things in short wear a mantle of darkness.*'

852. **The edict of Earth's rulers]** The manifesto of the Holy alliance, signed by the rulers of Russia, Austria and Prussia on 26 Sept. 1815, announcing that their own government and international relations would be conducted on Christian principles. Byron judged this document, well-meaning in itself, by its apparent results: the yoke of tyranny, imposed upon Europe by Napoleon, seemed to him 'doubly bow'd' (l. 850) upon her neck by the restored monarchies after Napoleon's fall.

858. **Columbia]** Cf. *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*, st. xix:

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

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.'

859. **Pallas]** Athene sprang fully armed from the head of her father Zeus.

866. **her Saturnalia]** The licence and anarchy of the reign of Terror during the French revolution made the idea of liberty unpopular.

871. **the base pageant]** Napoleon's career, which was made possible by the anarchy of the Terror.

877. **The loudest]** I.e. is still the loudest which, etc.

881. **even in the bosom of the North]** The liberal measures of the Czar Alexander I and his attempted emancipation of the serfs belong to this period; while his Polish constitution of 27 Nov. 1815 contained features which were far in advance of the age.

883. **a stern round tower]** The tomb of Caecilia Metella on the Appian way. She was daughter of Quintus Caecilius Metellus Creticus, and wife of the triumvir Marcus Crassus. The building was converted into a fortress during the middle ages by the Gaetani, who united it to their castle.

894. **a king's, or more—a Roman's bed]** Cf. l. 226 above.

904. **Cornelia's mien]** Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus, and mother of Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, famous as a model of the antique Roman matron.

905. **Egypt's graceful queen]** Cleopatra.

915. **Heaven gives its favourites]** Byron quotes the gnomic verses:

Ὅν οἱ θεοὶ φιλοῦσιν, ἀποθνήσκει νέος·

Τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν οὐκ αἰσχρὸν ἀλλ' αἰσχρῶς θανεῖν.

I.e. 'he whom the gods love, dies young; for not death, but to die shamefully, is shameful.'

917. **Hesperus]** Byron likens the flush of early decline to the evening star, shining as the precursor of the night of death.

927. **The wealthiest Roman]** Crassus' fortune was founded on riches gained during the proscription which followed Sulla's return.

After his death at the battle of Carrhae, his head was brought to the Parthian king Orodes, who caused melted gold to be poured into his mouth with the taunt 'Sate thyself now with the metal of which in life thou wert so greedy.'

935. **forth]** I.e. forth from, out of.

945. **what is here]** Byron sees nothing in his life but ruin, such as he sees before him on the Appian way.

950. **native site]** I.e. the ruins in the distance, where owls naturally build.

951. **the Palatine]** The Palatine hill, to the south-east of the Roman forum, is covered with the ruins of the palaces of the Caesars. The name of the hill, however, is older than the Caesars, and is derived from a root which signifies 'to protect' and is akin to the Latin *pascere* (to feed): it was the original site of the earliest city of Rome. The word 'palace' is derived from the Palatium, the great house built upon it by Augustus and multiplied by the buildings of his successors. Archaeology has derived more substantial evidence from the ruins than is indicated in ll. 961-2; but the excavations begun in 1726 had been long abandoned in Byron's time, and no serious work was begun till much later.

966. **First Freedom]** The freedom of the Roman republic was succeeded by the glory of a world-wide empire, which in its turn yielded to luxury and decadence, until the empire was swept away by the barbarian invader.

977-8. This imperial mount, the buildings of which, now so ruined that their plan cannot be traced, were the topmost stone of a pyramid formed, as it were, of empires included in the world-empire of Rome. The inversion in l. 978 is followed by another in the next line: the 'pinnacle' shone in the forefront of Glory's gewgaws.

981. **golden roofs]** Nero's palace on the Esquiline, the most ambitious of the imperial buildings, was known as the *domus aurea* or golden house. It was destroyed by Vespasian, who began the Flavian palace, between those of Augustus and his immediate successors. The baths of Titus stand on its site.

983. **Thou nameless column]** The column now known as that of Phocas in the Roman forum. Since Byron's time, the base has been uncovered, and the inscription which it bears indicates that it was

erected in A.D. 608 in honour of the Byzantine emperor Phocas by Smaragdus, his exarch or viceroy in Italy.

987. **Titus or Trajan's]** The arch of Titus stands on the Velia, a ridge which slopes down from the Palatine hill between the forum and the Coliseum. It was erected after A.D. 80, when Titus died. The interior sculptures of the arch represent the triumphal procession after the conquest of Jerusalem. Trajan's column, 124 feet high, stood in the middle of his forum, which was to the north-west of the forum Romanum, between the Capitoline and Quirinal hills. The marble shaft is surrounded with spiral bas-reliefs representing his two campaigns against the Dacians: the emperor's ashes were placed within the pedestal. The statue of Trajan on the top is said to have been taken to Byzantium in the seventh century. The column is now crowned by a statue of St Peter (l. 989), placed there by pope Sixtus V (1585-90).

990. **sublime]** Byron seems to have thought that Trajan's ashes were buried in the pedestal of the statue above the column. They were actually placed in a small chamber within the pedestal of the column itself, which Sixtus V opened and found empty. It is now walled up.

998. **household blood and wine]** The two deeds which have stained the name of Alexander are the murder of his friend Clitus and the mad burning of Persepolis, both committed in fits of drunkenness.

1000. **the rock of Triumph]** The Capitoline hill: see note on l. 716 above.

1002. **Tarpeian]** Tarpeia was the traitress who admitted the Sabines to the citadel on the Capitol and, on asking for what they wore on their arms as her reward, meaning their gold bracelets, was crushed to death with their bucklers. Traitors were executed by being thrown from the Tarpeian rock, the actual position of which upon the side of the Capitoline hill has been disputed. It appears to have been on the side overlooking the forum, where the executions could be seen by all the people.

1007. **The Forum]** The centre of Roman civic life, where public assemblies were held. On these occasions orators addressed the people from the *rostra*, raised pulpits which received their name from

the beaked prows (*rostra*) of conquered vessels, fastened to the front of their ledges, for the first time after the victory over the ships of Antium (B.C. 338). The *rostra* were removed by Caesar to his temple at the east end of the forum; but the later *rostra*, of which the bases remain, were at the west end below the Capitol, near the arch of Septimius Severus. The allusion to 'the eloquent air' and Cicero (l. 1008) is explained by this. The memory of the oratory of Cicero is still alive in the atmosphere of the forum, and breathes its eloquence in the air.

1009. **The field of freedom]** Gibbon (*Memoirs of my Life*, ed. Hill, p. 163) records the emotions produced by his first visit to the forum. 'After a sleepless night, I trod, with a lofty step, the ruins of the Forum; each memorable spot where Romulus *stood*, or Tully spoke, or Cæsar fell, was at once present to my eye.'

1015. **every lawless soldier]** The later years of the Western empire were marked by the rise and fall of generals, chiefly of foreign races, who maintained, as patricians or as emperors, absolute authority over the city and senate.

1018. **her latest tribune]** Cola di Rienzo (Rienzi), son of plebeian parents, was born in 1314. His Latin scholarship and eloquence brought him to the front during the disturbed condition of the city, while the popes were absent at Avignon. He conspired against the feudal nobles who held Rome in subjection, and in May 1347 effected a revolution and assumed the title of tribune and liberator of the republic. His ambition was to restore Rome to her old position as the centre of empire and to drive out of Italy the foreign claimants of the imperial crown, and in this, the ideal of Dante, he was seconded by the literary genius of his friend Petrarch. On 15 Aug. 1347 he was crowned with the title of *tribunus Augustus* and candidate of the Holy Ghost. The Roman barons, cowed at first by the suddenness of the revolution, rose against him; but their ring-leaders, the house of Colonna, were defeated and slain. His tribunate, however, came to a sudden end in Dec. 1347, when a Neapolitan adventurer, the count of Minorbino, seized the city. Rienzi fled from Rome and, after long wanderings, was brought in captivity to Avignon. In 1354 he was freed and sent to appease the tumults in Rome, with the title of senator, by Innocent VI, in the company of the legate

Albornoz. The revival of his power was short: the people distrusted him as the envoy of the pope, and the legate disowned him; and he eventually was killed in a riot on 8 Oct. 1354.

1026. **Numa**] Numa Pompilius, the legendary second king of Rome, whose long reign was traditionally the golden age of the infant city. His name introduces the mention of Egeria (l. 1027), the nymph by whose counsels his religious measures were dictated.

1027. **Egeria**] The so-called grotto of Egeria, where the meetings of Numa with the nymph are supposed to have taken place, is a small *nymphaeum*, or fountain sacred to the nymphs, near the brook Almo, beyond the city walls and a short distance to the left of the Appian way. It probably belonged to a suburban villa: the position of the fabled grotto was identified by a passage in Juvenal, Sat. III, 12—20, but apparently incorrectly.

1031. **nympholepsy**] A passion for the ideal, figured by the ancients as inspired by the love of a nymph.

1041. **Art's works**] The entrance to the grotto was originally faced with marble.

1043. **the cleft statue**] The mutilated figure of the river-god, standing on corbels above the fountain.

1054. **in this enchanted cover**] The wording and cadence of this passage seem to be a reminiscence of Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, which had been published in 1816:

‘But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!’

1065. **Love**] The object of ‘share’ in l. 1066.

1083. **whose martyrs are the broken heart**] Possibly a condensed expression of the sentiment that, while the martyrs of religious faiths suffer in many ways, the martyrs of Love all suffer in one form, the broken heart. But Byron was by no means careful of grammar.

1091. **fevers**] Hastens with feverish activity.

1093. **In him alone**] So, in l. 439 above, Byron sees in the Medici Venus ‘what Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail.’

The creations of the artist, 'the beings of the mind' (l. 37 above) are subjective—ideals bodied forth by his own imagination.

1096. **The unreach'd Paradise of our despair]** This description of the pursuit of the unattainable ideal should be compared with the later stanzas of Matthew Arnold's *The Scholar-Gipsy*, a poem strongly influenced by the Byronic spirit.

1103. **it binds]** I.e. the mind, the imagination, continues to weave its fatal spell.

1106. **its alchemy]** The alchemy by which imagination transmutes everything into an ideal shape.

1116. **Death]** Cf. Matthew Arnold, *The Scholar-Gipsy*, st. 15 :

'Till having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have been.'

1120. **Antipathies]** Persons naturally antipathetic to each other may be drawn together by accident, etc., so that their want of mutual sympathy is overlooked for a time ; but sooner or later the antipathies must be felt, and all the more keenly because of the resentment which is the fruit of consciousness of error on both sides.

1122. **unspiritual]** The accent is on the third syllable.

1124. **a crutch-like rod]** The rod of Circumstance at once creates and is the crutch which 'helps along our coming evils.'

1129. **upas]** The tree, a native of Java, which was supposed to bring death to all who came beneath its branches.

1134. **immedicable]** Incapable of cure. Cf. l. 1498 below.

1136. **Abandonment of reason]** Byron quotes the author of the 'Academical Questions': 'Philosophy, wisdom, and liberty support each other: he who will not reason is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool; and he who dares not is a slave.'

1140. **cabin'd, cribb'd, confined]** Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, III, iv, 22.

1143. **couch]** To couch = to remove cataract from the eye.

1144. **Arches on arches]** The Flavian amphitheatre or the Coliseum, possibly so called from the colossal statue of Nero which was removed to its north side from the Aurea domus (see note on l. 981 above), is the greatest ruin remaining in Rome; and the name,

often written Colosseum, may be derived from its colossal size. It occupies the site of an artificial lake, the *Stagnum Neronis*, made by Nero on the low ground between the Caelian hill and his palace on the Esquiline. The great amphitheatre was begun by Vespasian and dedicated by his son Titus.

1158. **broke his scythe]** The scythe of Time is figuratively broken by its powerlessness to destroy such a building as the Coliseum. Cf. ll. 1312-13 below.

1167. **sophists]** Pretended philosophers: dealers in words.

from thy thrift] This explains 'Time, the avenger' (l. 1169). Time reserves its punishments; but, though they may be delayed, they inevitably come.

1179. **This iron in my soul]** This humiliating grief. For the phrase see Psalm cv, 18 (Prayer-book version).

1181. **the unbalanced scale]** An inversion for 'the scale unbalanced.'

Nemesis] The deity of vengeance: literally 'she who distributes.' The Coliseum was not specially devoted to her worship, and 'here' may be used of Rome in a general sense.

1184. **Orestes]** Orestes, the son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, murdered his mother in revenge for her murder of his father; but, as matricide, even when prompted by Heaven, was a sin against the gods, he was pursued by the Furies as a punishment.

1196. **for the sake—]** Byron abruptly breaks off the sentence, refraining from personal explanation.

1207. **Forgiveness]** Cf. what Byron says in canto III, st. LXXXIV, of the alternative of punishment or forgiveness in 'the hour which shall atone for years.'

1221. **The Janus glance]** The god Janus was represented with two faces.

1234. **The seal is set]** I.e. he has said enough: his curse has been irrevocably uttered. He proceeds to invoke the spirit of history, the 'dread power' whose presence lends awe to such ruins as the Coliseum.

1243. **eager nations]** The cosmopolitan crowd which filled the tiers of seats round the amphitheatre, to watch the gladiatorial combats.

1247. **Circus]** The general term for an amphitheatre, from its circular or elliptical plan. 'Genial' is probably ironical, but may mean 'natural to the genius of the place.'

1250. **listed spot]** Ground enclosed by barriers or lists, i.e. palisades, such as enclosed the fields set apart for tournaments.

1252. **the Gladiator]** Byron, thinking of the gladiator in the Coliseum, remembers the figure of the 'dying gladiator'—more properly the dying Gaul—in the Capitoline museum. The statue is attributed to a Greek sculptor from Pergamus, and was found in the gardens of Sallust, between the Quirinal and the Pincian hills.

1258. **the first]** I.e. the first drops.

1264. **by the Danube]** Byron imagines that the statue represents a barbarian from Dacia, the country north of the Danube, brought to Rome by some conqueror such as Trajan (see note on l. 987 above), and set to fight for his life in the Coliseum with one of his fellow captives. It is generally supposed, like the group of Gauls discovered on the same spot and now in the Villa Ludovisi, to commemorate the victory of Attalus I of Pergamus over the Gauls in the third century B.C.

1269. **ye Goths]** The home of the Visigoths, who sacked Rome under Alaric in 410 (see note on l. 712 above), was in Dacia, which roughly corresponded to Roumania and Transylvania. The woes of the Dacian captives were expiated, in Byron's view, by the disasters which their countrymen inflicted on Rome in later days.

1271. **the ways]** The *vomitoria* or passages by which access was gained to the various tiers of seats.

1280. **Walls, palaces]** The Coliseum was used during the earlier part of the middle ages by various families of Roman barons as a fortress. In spite of the classical enthusiasm of the Renaissance, the great building was an inexhaustible quarry to builders from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century. Benedict XIV (1740-58) protected it from further ruin by consecrating it to the Passion of our Lord in memory of the Christian martyrs who had suffered there.

1290. **the loops of time]** The fissures which time has made in the walls.

1297. **While stands the Coliseum]** Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ch. lxxi, quotes the prophecy: 'Reduced to its naked majesty, the

Flavian amphitheatre was contemplated with awe and admiration by the pilgrims of the North ; and their rude enthusiasm broke forth in a sublime proverbial expression, which is recorded in the eighth century, in the fragments of the venerable Bede.' Gibbon thought that Bede heard the saying from Anglo-Saxon pilgrims who had visited Rome.

1307. **Shrine of all saints]** The Pantheon, now the church of Santa Maria Rotonda. The original temple, dedicated to all the gods of Olympus, was built by Marcus Agrippa, the friend and son-in-law of Augustus, in B.C. 27. The portico of this temple remains, but the great rotunda, covered by a colossal dome with a circular opening at the top, seems to have been a reconstruction of the time of the emperor Hadrian. It is of brick, which originally was faced with marble. In 609 it was consecrated by pope Boniface IV under the title of Sancta Maria ad Martyres, and to this early consecration it owes the preservation of its roof and walls, which are structurally intact.

1320. **thy sole aperture]** The opening in the roof is the only means by which light enters the building.

1321. **altars]** The seven large and eight small niches in the walls of the ground-floor are filled by altars. The eighth large niche contains the doorway of the building.

1323. **honour'd forms]** Raffaele and other later artists are buried in the Pantheon.

1324. **There is a dungeon]** The church of San Nicola in Carcere (St Nicholas in the Prison), near the ruins of the theatre of Marcellus, has been supposed to be on the site of the temple of Pietas, erected, it is said, on account of the incident related here—the filial piety of the daughter who fed her imprisoned father with milk from her own breast. The church contains remains in its fabric and foundations of more than one temple, but that of Pietas was removed to clear part of the site of the neighbouring theatre.

1351. **the milky way]** The infant Heracles, the son of Zeus and Almena, is said to have been put to the breast of Hera while she was asleep. When she awoke, she refused to nurse him, and the milk which escaped from her breast became the milky way. A famous picture of the legend by Tintoretto is in the National Gallery.

1352. **it is]** I.e. thy story is.

1360. **the mole]** The circular *moles* or mass of building which Hadrian built as an imperial mausoleum, now known as the castle of Sant' Angelo. It stands on the right bank of the river, not far from St Peter's. The idea that it was intended to imitate the pyramids (ll. 1361-4) is fanciful: it is simply a colossal example of the type of mausoleum of which the tomb of Caecilia Metella (see note on l. 883 above) is another instance. Belisarius turned it into a fortress during the siege of 537 (see note on l. 712 above), and from that time forward it played a prominent part in Roman warfare. During a procession held to intercede for the cessation of the plague of 590, Gregory the Great saw St Michael standing on the summit, sheathing his sword; and from this vision the name of Sant' Angelo was given to it. The chapel of Sanctus Angelus inter Nubes was dedicated by pope Boniface IV in the place where the statue of St Michael now stands. At the end of the fourteenth century it became the papal fortress, and it was here that Clement VII took refuge and was besieged during the sack of Rome in 1527. The marble facing of the structure, the body of which is of the local stone called travertine, has been stripped off, and the original aspect has been much altered by the machicolated battlements and the upper buildings, which are of medieval and later dates.

1369. **the dome]** The Vatican basilica of St Peter, the high altar of which stands above the tomb of the apostle. The original basilica, the most historic church in Christendom, the fabric of which belonged in great part to the fourth century, was ruthlessly destroyed at the beginning of the sixteenth century to make way for the present building, which, begun in 1506 by Bramante, pope Julius II's architect, underwent many modifications and changes of plan, and was eventually completed, as we now see it, more than a century later by Carlo Maderno, and consecrated in 1626.

1370. **Diana's marvel]** The temple of Diana at Ephesus, 'the Ephesian's miracle' of l. 1372, which Byron visited during his excursion to Asia Minor in 1810.

1375. **Sophia's bright roofs]** See note on canto II, l. 749. The domes of Santa Sophia are gilded.

1385. **are aisled]** I.e. are attributes of the aisled building.

1393. **so defined]** In apposition to 'thy God' in the next line. 'Thou shalt see thy God face to face in so definite a form.'

1396. **Thou movest]** The sentence is involved and the construction is imperfect. You advance further in the building, but as you proceed, it is as though you were climbing some great Alp, which as you climb, seems to rise higher, so deceptive is the gigantic beauty of the church, whose vastness seems to increase, but imparts a sense of harmony and of a musical proportion in its hugeness. As a matter of fact, huge as St Peter's is, its decorations are on an even larger scale; and this accounts for the fact noticed by Byron in l. 1387 above, but explained by him from his usual subjective point of view.

1404. **this the clouds must claim]** The dome, designed by Michelangelo, rises 308 feet—the entire height of the great tower of Lincoln cathedral—above the roof of the church, and 435 feet above the pavement—31 feet higher than the spire of Salisbury. The area which it covers with its supports is vastly greater than that covered by these buildings. The diameter of the dome is 138 feet: that of the dome of St Paul's cathedral, 364 feet high, is 102 feet.

1429. **The fountain of sublimity]** The real lesson of the church is its sublimity, the depth of which is here displayed as in the clear waters of a fountain. From this the mind of man may draw its treasures, and learn of what great conceptions are capable.

1432. **the Vatican]** The palace of the popes and seat of the papal administration, a vast group of buildings which, from the fifteenth century onwards, has been subject to continual extension and reconstruction. The greater part of the palace is occupied by the museums.

1433. **Laocoön's torture]** The celebrated group of the Laocoön, attributed by Pliny to the Rhodian sculptors Agesander, Polydorus and Athenodorus, was re-discovered in 1506 in a garden near the site of the baths of Titus (see note on l. 981 above), and was bought by pope Julius II. It stands in one of the large niches or chambers formed in the angles of the Cortile del Belvedere, a courtyard designed for Julius II by Bramante.

1441. **the Lord of the unerring bow]** The statue of Apollo, known as the Apollo Belvedere, discovered near Porto d' Anzio, 34 miles south of Rome, during the pontificate of Alexander VI. It

was bought by cardinal Giuliano della Rovere and placed by him in his palace in Rome. When in 1503 he was raised to the papacy as Julius II, he brought it to the Vatican. It stands in the south-east niche of the Cortile del Belvedere, corresponding to the Laocoön at the south-west corner. The statue was for some time supposed to have held, not a bow, but the aegis (see note on canto II, l. 118), with which the god was repelling the Celtic attack on his sanctuary at Delphi in 279 B.C. This idea, however, rested on untrustworthy evidence, and the statue, which is of Carrara marble, is now generally recognised as a copy by a Roman artist of a Greek original, which is attributed to the fourth century B.C., and to the Athenian sculptor Leochares.

1456. **When each conception]** The Apollo is here described as the result of a crystallisation, as it were, of a number of ideal conceptions, embodying all that is most perfect in the ideal world.

1459. **Prometheus]** The Titan Prometheus conveyed the gift of fire to mortals, hidden in a hollow tube. The debt which mortals owe to heaven is repaid by the genius of the sculptor, who has consecrated his earthly material to the embodiment of a heavenly and immortal shape.

1468. **the Pilgrim]** Childe Harold has been forgotten in the intense personal feeling which fills the canto.

1478. **inherit]** Possess, as in Shakespeare, *Tempest*, iv, i, 154.

1494. **felds]** Burdens. Cf. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III, i, 76: 'Who would felds bear, To grunt and sweat under a weary life.'

1495. **Hark!]** Stt. CLXVII—CLXXII, following appropriately upon the lines which reflect upon the transitory nature of fame, refer to the death, at the age of twenty-one, of the princess Charlotte Augusta, daughter of the prince regent (afterwards George IV), on 19 Nov. 1817. She had married prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, afterwards king of Belgium, in May 1816, and died in child-birth with her infant son. This double calamity, which bereft the royal family of a direct heir, was the occasion of a great outburst of national sorrow. The princess is commemorated by a somewhat theatrical monument in the chantry-chapel at the north-west corner of St George's chapel at Windsor.

1519. **her Iris]** The rainbow, bringing hope of freedom, lit by the sun against the retreating storm-clouds of tyranny.

1532. **reek]** Smoke.

1536. **the strange fate]** The fatality which drives sovereigns into 'pride and tyranny, and, by breeding its own Nemesis, neutralises their unbridled power.

1543. **there!]** In the grave.

1546. **the electric chain]** An image already used with another significance in l. 207 above.

1549. **Nemi]** The Lago di Nemi lies in the Alban hills near Albano, about 20 miles south-east of Rome. Here was the grove of Diana (Nemus Dianae) from which the lake and town derive their name. In ancient times the priesthood of Diana at Nemi was filled by fugitives from justice, each of whom obtained his office by murdering his predecessor: see Macaulay, *Battle of the Lake Regillus*, st. x:

'From the still glassy lake that sleeps
Beneath Aricia's trees—
Those trees in whose dim shadow
The ghastly priest doth reign,
The priest who slew the slayer,
And shall himself be slain.'

This legend is hinted at by Byron in his characterisation of the spirit of the place in ll. 1555-7.

1558. **Albano]** The Lago di Albano fills the crater of an extinct volcano, like that of Nemi to the south-east, from which it is divided by the wooded ridges of Ariccia. The town of Albano stands upon the Appian way, which runs near its south-west shore.

1560. **The Tiber winds]** Byron describes the wide-stretching view of the Roman Campagna from the Alban hills. The neighbourhood of Albano and Nemi forms the subject of several striking and picturesque descriptions, full of literary reminiscence, in Mrs Humphry Ward's novel *Eleanor*.

1561. **the Epic war]** The conquest of Latium by Aeneas, the subject of Vergil's *Aeneid*, the opening words of which, *Arma virumque*, Byron quotes in l. 1562. The 're-ascending star' is that of Aeneas, the representative of the Trojan race, who refounded the Trojan kingdom in Italy and was the original source of 'the long glories of majestic Rome.'

1563. **beneath thy right]** As the spectator looks north-westward from the Alban hills towards Rome and the sea, Tusculum is beneath the hills on his right. Near Tusculum, which was on the Latin way, was the villa of Cicero, the Tusculanum which gives its name to one of his philosophical works, the *Tusculanae Disputationes*.

1566. **the Sabine farm]** Horace's farm was in the Sabine mountains, a spur of the Apennines, to the north-east of the Alban hills. The actual site was in the valley of Licenza, some miles north-east of Tivoli.

1571. **The midland ocean]** The Mediterranean, 'the tideless, dolorous midland sea' of Swinburne's *Triumph of Time*.

1574. **Calpe's rock]** Gibraltar. See note on canto II, l. 190.

1575. **the dark Euxine]** The Black sea, which Byron had seen near Constantinople (canto II, stt. LXXVII—LXXXII).

1576. **Symplegades]** The Cyanean (i.e. blue) islands, two rocks at the outlet of the Black sea into the Bosphorus. The tradition was that these islands were movable and struck against each other, until the Argo passed through them safely on her way to Colchis. Hence the name Symplegades (*συμπληγάδες πέτραι* = the clashing rocks).

1592. **such]** Such fair spirits.

1601. **To mingle with the Universe]** See note on canto III, l. 705, where the kinship of Byron's view of nature to Wordsworth's is alluded to.

1612. **His steps are not upon thy paths]** A reminiscence of Ps. lxxvii, 19: 'Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters'—an idea which occurs, in contrast to the weakness of man, in ll. 1639–40 below.

1618. **where haply lies]** I.e. on whose guidance to some near port or bay he builds his petty hope.

1620. **there let him lay]** The violation of grammar for the sake of rhyme gives an effect of bathos to the conclusion of the stanza.

1632. **wash'd them power]** I.e., while they were free, the waters of the sea brought them the power on which their empires were founded, and since then have brought power to many a tyrant. But, while these empires decay, the sea remains the same.

1638. **beheld]** I.e. beheld thee.

1642. **Icing the pole]** Surrounding the pole with frozen waters.

1648. **And I have loved thee, Ocean]** Each canto of *Childe Harold* contains at least one passage in which Byron dwells upon the details of a voyage. See canto I, stt. XII—XIV; II, stt. XVII—XXVIII; III, stt. I, II. See also the image of the bark of hope on the stormy sea, stt. CIV—CVI above.

1672. **sandal-shoon and scallop-shell]** The characteristic emblems of a pilgrim. The scallop-shell was the emblem of the fisherman St James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, and was worn by pilgrims in their hats as a token that they had been to the Holy land. See the ballad in Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, iv, v, 23—6:

‘How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal-shoon.’

APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF THE CONTENTS OF *CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE*

CANTO THE FIRST

Stanzas		Lines	Page
I	Invocation of the Muse	1-9	8
II-V	Character of Childe Harold	10-45	8, 9
VI-XI	Childe Harold's satiety and disgust with life: his resolve to leave home	46-99	10-12
XII, XIII	The embarkation	100-117	12
XIV, XV	Childe Harold's song of adieu	118-197	12-15
XVI, XVII	Arrival in Portugal	198-215	15, 16
XVIII-XXII	Lisbon	216-233	16, 17
XXII, XXIII	Cintra	234-274	17, 18
XXIV-XXVI	Apostrophe to William Beckford at Cintra	275-287	18, 19
XXVII, XXVIII	Reflections on the Convention of Cintra	288-314	19, 20
XXIX	Departure from Cintra	315-332	20
XXX, XXXI	Mafra	333-341	20, 21
XXXII, XXXIII	Journey to the Spanish frontier	342-359	21
XXXIV	The frontier streamlet	360-377	21, 22
XXXV, XXXVI	The Guadiana	378-386	22
XXXVII	Ancient glory and modern decline of Spain	387-404	22, 23
	Apostrophe to the Spaniards in time of war	405-413	23

Stanzas		Lines	Page
xxxviii—xlxii	The battle of Talavera	414—458	23—25
xlxiii, xlxiv	The field of Albuera	459—476	25, 26
xlvi, xlvii	Journey to Seville: thoughtless gaiety of the city	476—494	26
xlviij—l	The Andalusian plain: the horrors of invasion	495—530	26—28
li	Fortifications upon the Sierra Morena	531—539	28
lii, liii	The coming of Napoleon: helplessness of Spain	540—557	28, 29
liiv—lvii	The maid of Saragossa	558—584	29, 30
lviii—lix	'Spain's dark-glancing daughters'	585—611	30, 31
lx—lxiii	Digression written in sight of mount Parnassus	612—647	31, 32
lxiv	Return to the subject of 'Andalusia's maids'	648—656	32
lxv—lxviii	Cadiz: the modern Paphos	657—683	32, 33
lxviii	Sunday in Cadiz: the bull-fight	684—692	33, 34
lxx, lxx	Contrast with the diversions of a London Sunday	693—710	34
lxxi—lxxx	Description of a bull-fight at Cadiz	711—793	34—37
lxxx	Spanish bloodthirstiness	794—800	37, 38
lxxxi	The flight of jealousy: freedom of Spanish women	801—809	38
lxxxii—lxxxiv	Child Harold's indifference to the attractions of Cadiz	810—836	38, 39
	Stanzas to Inez	837—872	39—41
lxxxv	Farewell to Cadiz: its part in the peninsular war	873—881	41
lxxxvi—xc	Spain during the Napoleonic invasion	882—926	41—43
xc, xcii	Lines in memory of the hon. John Wingfield	927—944	43
xciii	Conclusion of the canto: departure for Greece	945—953	43, 44

CANTO THE SECOND

i	Invocation to Athena, written in sight of the Parthenon at Athens	1—9	45
ii—v	The vanished glory of Athens: the funeral urn and burial mound	10—42	45, 46
v—vi	The unburied skull: transitory nature of human intellect	43—54	46, 47
vii	Ignorance of man: the future life	55—63	47

Stanzas		Lines	Page
VIII, IX	Possibilities of the hereafter: apostrophe to a dead friend	64—81	47, 48
X	The temple of Zeus	82—90	48
XI—XV	Stanzas on the removal of the sculptures of the Parthenon to England by lord Elgin	91—135	48—50
XVI—XX	Departure of Harold from Spain: the frigate and its convoy	136—180	50, 51
XXI, XXII	The straits of Gibraltar by moonlight	181—198	51, 52
XXIII, XXIV	Recollections of the past, suggested by night	199—216	52, 53
XXV—XXVII	Contrast between solitude with nature and in cities	217—243	53, 54
XXVIII	Characteristics of the voyage	244—252	54
XXIX	Malta and Gozo	253—261	54
XXX—XXXIII	Harold at Malta: fair Florence	262—297	54—56
XXXIV, XXXV	Successful Passion, its methods and fruits	298—315	56
XXXVI, XXXVII	Return to the main theme: Nature the 'kindest mother'	316—333	56, 57
XXXVIII	Apostrophe to Albania	334—342	57
XXXIX—XLI	The Ionian islands: Ithaca and Leucadia: the death of Sappho	343—369	57, 58
XLII	Morning on the Albanian coast	370—378	58, 59
XLIII	Beginning of Harold's journey through Albania	379—387	59
XLIV	Religion in Albania	388—396	59
XLV	The Ambracian gulf: the battle of Actium	397—405	59, 60
XLVI, XLVII	The journey through Albania: Janina: character of Ali Pasha	406—423	60
XLVIII—LII	Zitza and the valley of the Acheron	424—468	60—62
LIII	Dodona	469—477	62
LIV	The journey to Tepaleni	478—486	62, 63
LV	Arrival at Tepaleni	487—495	63
LVI—LXI	Description of Ali's palace	496—549	63—65
LXII, LXIII	Ali Pasha	550—567	65, 66
LXIV—LXVI	Childe Harold among the Albanians	568—594	66, 67
LXVII, LXVIII	Childe Harold's shipwreck near Suli	595—612	67
LXIX	Journey with an escort through Acarnania	613—621	67, 68

Stanzas	Lines	Page
LXX—LXXII	622—648	68, 69
LXXIII—LXXVI	649—692	69—71
LXXVII	693—728	71, 72
LXXVIII—LXXXI	729—737	72, 73
LXXXII, LXXXIII	738—773	73, 74
LXXXIV	774—788	74, 75
LXXXV—LXXXVIII	789—800	75
LXXXIX, XC	801—836	75, 76
XCI, XCII	837—854	76, 77
XCIII	855—872	77, 78
XCIV	873—881	78
XCv, XCVI	882—890	78
XCvII, XCVIII	891—908	78, 79
	909—927	79, 80

CANTO THE THIRD

I	1—5	81
I, II	5—18	81
III, IV		
V, VI	19—36	82
VII	37—54	82, 83
VIII—XI	55—63	83
XII—XIV	64—99	83, 84
XV, XVI	100—126	85
	127—144	86

The bivouac at Lutraki
 Song of the Albanian escort
 Greece: past freedom and present slavery
 Constantinople
 Carnival at Constantinople
 Sadness of the patriotic Greek amid rejoicings
 The regeneration of Greece: a forlorn hope
 Beauty of Greece in her 'age of woe': memories of the past
 The field of Marathon
 The appeal of Greece to the traveller
 A plea for reverence for the relics of antiquity
 Loneliness of the poet
 The poet's dead friend (cf. st. ix above)
 The poet's future, alone among crowds

Address to Ada
 Departure from England: 'once more upon the waters'
 Resumption of the old theme: the poem a refuge from
 present emotions
 Imaginative creation a relief from the constraint of remorseful
 thought
 The poet's over-wrought brain
 Re-appearance of Harold: his second endeavour to mingle
 with his kind
 His unfitness for the task: self-sufficiency of his mind in
 communion with nature
 Weariness with mankind: Harold's second exile

Stanzas		Lines	Page
xvii—xx	The field of Waterloo: the fallen despot and the revival of thralldom	145—180	86, 87
xxi, xxii	The ball in Brussels on the night before Quatre-Bras	181—198	88
xxiii	'Brunswick's fated chieftain'	199—207	88
xxiv—xxvii	The departure for the battle	208—234	89
xxvii, xxviii	'The unreturning brave'	235—252	90
xxix, xxx	Lines in memory of the hon. Frederick Howard	253—270	90, 91
xxxi—xxxiii	The mourners: broken hearts and undying sorrow	271—297	91, 92
xxxiv	The vitalising power of sorrow	298—306	92
xxxv	The fame of Waterloo	307—315	92
xxxvi—xxxviii	The fall of Napoleon, 'conqueror and captive of the earth'	316—342	93
xxxix	Napoleon's endurance of misfortune	343—351	94
xl, xli	The error of his ambition—scorn of its instruments	352—369	94
xlii—xlv	The fatal fever of ambition	370—405	94, 95
xlii—xlix	Journey along the Rhine: feudal castles	406—441	96, 97
l—li	Harold's apostrophe to the Rhine: its scenery powerless to destroy memory	442—459	97, 98
lii—lv	Harold's compensations: moments of joy and thoughts of pure love	460—495	98, 99
lvi, lvii	Stanzas from the Rhine	496—535	99—101
lviii	Coblentz: the tomb of Marceau	536—553	101
lix—lxi	Elhrenbreitstein	554—562	101, 102
lxii	Farewell to the Rhine	563—589	102, 103
lxiii, lxiv	The Alps	590—598	103
lxv	The battle-field of Morat	599—616	103, 104
lxvi, lxvii	Avenches: the ruins of Aventicum	617—625	104
lxviii	Julia Alpinula: the immortality of noble deeds	626—643	104, 105
lxviii—lxxi	The lake of Geneva	644—647	105
	Seclusion from mankind: the solitary soul unfitted for life in the world	648—679	105, 106

Stanzas	Lines	Page
LXXII—LXXV	680—715	106, 107
LXXVI—LXXIX	716—751	107—109
LXXX—LXXXII		
LXXXIII, LXXXIV	752—778	109, 110
LXXXV—LXXXVII	779—796	110
LXXXVIII	797—823	110, 111
LXXXIX—XCI	824—832	111, 112
XCII—XCV	833—859	112, 113
XCVI, XCVII	860—895	113, 114
XCVIII	896—913	114, 115
XCIX—CIII	914—922	115
CIV	923—967	115—117
CV—CVIII	968—976	117
CIX, CX	977—1012	117, 118
CXI—CXIV	1013—1030	119
CXV—CXVIII	1031—1066	119, 120
	1067—1102	121, 122

CANTO THE FOURTH

I—III	1—27	128, 129
IV—VI		
VII	28—54	129, 130
VIII—X	55—63	130
X	64—86	130, 131
	87—90	131

Stanzas		Lines	Page
XI—XV	The glory and decline of Venice	91—135	131—133
XVI, XVII	Poetry the redemption of the captive Athenians at Syracuse : love of Tasso should have saved Venice	136—149	133, 134
XVII	Venetian servitude shameful to England	149—153	134
XVIII, XIX	Byron's love of Venice, an abiding feeling	154—171	134
XX—XXII	Endurance of life amid the destruction of feeling : growth of the mind 'rooted in barrenness'	172—198	134, 135
XXIII, XXIV	Recollection of grief: the power of association to bring back old sorrows	199—216	135, 136
XXV, XXVI	The poet in Italy: his soul 'a ruin among ruins'	217—234	136, 137
XXVII—XXIX	Sunset by the Brenta	235—261	137, 138
XXX—XXXIII	Arquà: the tomb of Petrarch	262—293	138, 139
XXXIII, XXXIV	Solitude and mental strife	294—306	139
XXXV	Ferrara: the house of Este	307—315	139, 140
XXXVI—XXXIX	Tasso and duke Alfonso	316—351	140, 141
XL	Tasso's predecessors: Dante and Ariosto	352—360	141
XLI	'The true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves'	361—369	141, 142
XLII, XLIII	Apostrophe to Italy: her 'fatal gift of beauty' (imitated from Filicaja)	370—387	142
XLIV—XLVI	Italy one of the ruins of the past, at one with ancient Greece	388—414	142, 143
XLVII	Italy the mother of arts and religion: her future redemption by Europe, 'repentant of her parricide'	415—423	143, 144
XLVIII	Florence: commerce, luxury and learning	424—432	144
XLIX—LIII	The Medici Venus	433—477	144—146
LIV, LV	Santa Croce: the tombs of Michelangelo, etc.	478—495	146
LVI—LIX	The 'all Etruscan three,' Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio: their tombs at a distance from Florence	496—531	146—148
LX	The mausoleum of the Medici	532—540	148
LXI, LXII	Farewell to Florence: nature a more congenial theme than art	541—550	148
LXII—LXV	Lago di Trasimeno: the battle and the earthquake	550—585	148—150

Stanzas	Lines	Page
LXVI—LXVIII	586—612	150, 151
LXIX—LXXII	613—648	151, 152
LXXIII—LXXV	649—669	152, 153
LXXV—LXXVII	669—693	153, 154
LXXVIII—LXXXII	694—738	154, 155
LXXXIII, LXXXIV		
LXXXV, LXXXVI	739—756	155, 156
LXXXVI	757—769	156
LXXXVII	770—774	157
LXXXVIII	775—783	157
LXXXIX	784—792	157
LXXXIX—XCI	793—798	157, 158
XCI, XCII	798—811	158
XCII—XCV	811—823	158
XCVI		
XCVII	823—855	158—160
XCVIII	856—864	160
XCIX—CII	865—873	160
CIV, CV	874—882	160, 161
CVI, CVII	883—927	161, 162
CVIII, CIX	928—945	162, 163
CX, CXI	946—963	163, 164
	964—981	164
CXII, CXIII	982—999	164, 165
CXIV	1000—1017	165, 166
CXV—CXIX	1018—1026	166
CXX, CXXI	1027—1071	166—168
CXXII—CXXV	1072—1089	168
	1090—1125	168—170

The sources of Clitumnus
The falls of Terni
The Apennines near the Campagna : Soracte
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'Triumphant Sylla' : transitoriness of the city which gave
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Trajan's column
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The grotto of Egeria
Passion and love
The pursuit of the ideal : failure and disenchantment

Stanzas	Life a 'false nature': the 'hard decree' of sin and woe. Use of reason the last refuge	Lines	Page
xxxvi, cxxvii		1126—1143	170
xxxviii, cxxix	The Coliseum	1144—1161	170, 171
cxxx, cxxxi	The poet's prayer to 'Time the avenger'	1162—1179	171, 172
xxxii, cxxxiii	An offering to Nemesis	1180—1197	172
xxxiv—cxxxvii	The poet's curse: forgiveness of his enemies; their late remorse		
xxxxviii	The spirit of the past in the Coliseum	1198—1233	172—174
xxxix—cxli	Combats in the amphitheatre: the dying gladiator	1234—1242	174
cxlii—cxliv	The ruined pile: moonlight in the Coliseum	1243—1269	174, 175
cxlv	The prophecy of the fate of Rome bound up with that of the Coliseum	1270—1296	175, 176
cxlvi, cxlvii	The Pantheon	1297—1305	176
cxlviii—cli	San Nicola in Carcere: legend of the temple of Pietas	1306—1323	177
clii	The mausoleum of Hadrian	1324—1359	177, 178
cliii—clix	St Peter's: the lesson of great conceptions	1360—1368	179
clx	The Vatican: Laocöon	1369—1431	179—181
cxli—clxiii	The Apollo Belvedere	1432—1440	181
clxiv—clxvi	Disappearance of the imaginary hero: the abyss of universal destruction	1441—1467	182
clxvii—clxxii	Stanzas on the death of the princess Charlotte	1468—1494	183
clxxiii	The lake of Nemi	1495—1548	184, 185
clxxiv	The Alban hills	1549—1557	186
clxxv, clxxvi	View of the Mediterranean from the Alban hills: passage of time since the voyage of the second canto	1558—1566	186
clxxvii, clxxviii	Longing for solitude and intercourse with nature	1567—1584	186, 187
clxxix—clxxxiv	Apostrophe to the changeless Ocean: the poet's love for the sea	1585—1602	187
clxxxv, clxxxvi	Stanzas of farewell	1603—1656	188, 189
		1657—1674	190

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