

THE
LIBERAL.

VERSE AND PROSE FROM THE
SOUTH.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

LONDON, 1822:
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ERRATA.¹

Page 6, line 6, instead of "a *worse* king never left a realm undone," read "a *weaker* king ne'er left a realm undone."

Page 7, line 16, instead of "a bad ugly woman," read "an unhandsome woman."

Page 20, line 5, for "dwell," read "well."

Page 23, line 6, instead of "amidst the *war*;" read "amidst the *roar*."

Page 38, in the note, for "body," read "bottom."

Page 62, lines 29 and 30—and page 68, line 15, for "*Signora* Veronica," read "*Gossip* Veronica."

Page 109, line 10, for "about the size of Stratford Place," read "about *half* the size."

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ The first edition of the first number featured an errata slip listing two items. The second issue of the first number contained a list of errata at the foot of the Contents page (with two more errata). In the second edition of the first number three additional errata were added to the list.

ADVERTISEMENT
TO THE SECOND EDITION.*

It is necessary to explain the omission in the first edition of the Preface of the Vision of Judgment, as well as the cause of those mistakes, obviously too considerable for mere errors of the press, which are noticed in the *errata*. The fact is, that Mr. Murray the bookseller, who was to have been the original publisher of the Vision, sent the present publisher a copy *not* corrected by the author, and also wanting the Preface,—from which copy the first edition was consequently printed. It was not till after the First Number of the Liberal had appeared, that the Publisher was informed there was a Preface, and that the copy of the poem sent to him to print from, was not the proper one with the necessary corrections by the Author. The only mode left of repairing this mischief, was to print the Preface and the corrections for the poem in a Second Edition, which is now done, and would have been done sooner, but for the time lost,—first, in endeavouring (though unsuccessfully) to obtain the corrected copy, which had passed through the Author's hands,—afterwards in procuring his corrections a second time from abroad. The reader need hardly be told, that the Author can with no more justice be held responsible for the mistakes in the first edition, than if his poem had been published at once from his MS. without the proofs being submitted to his revision. And it should be mentioned as aggravating the evil in this case, that the writings of the Author of the Vision of Judgment were mostly printed from the *rough and only manuscripts*—and that consequently he relied on seeing the proof-sheets, in order both to correct the errors of the printer, and to make such alterations as more mature consideration might suggest. This circumstance made it a particular duty in the publisher to take every possible care of the proofs corrected by the Author, and especially to see that those proofs alone were followed in the final printing.

January 1st, 1823.

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Diego Saglia.

PREFACE.*

WE are not going to usher in our publication with any pomp of prospectus. We mean to be very pleasant and ingenious, of course; but decline proving it beforehand by a long common-place. The greater the flourish of trumpets now-a-days, the more suspicious what follows. Whatever it may be our luck to turn out, we at least wave our privilege of having the way prepared for us by our own mouth-pieces,—by words with long tails, and antitheses two and two. If we succeed, so much the better. If not, we shall at all events not die of the previous question, like an honest proposal in Parliament.

But we are forced to be prefatory, whether we would or no: for others, it seems, have been so anxious to furnish us with something of this sort, that they have blown the trumpet for us; and done us the honour of announcing, that nothing less is to ensue, than a dilapidation of all the outworks of civilized society. Such at least, they say, is our intention; and such would be the consequences, if they, the trumpeters, did not take care, by counter-blasts, to puff the said outworks up again. We should be more sensible of this honour, if it did not arise from a confusion of ideas. They say that we are to cut up religion, morals, and everything that is legitimate;—a pretty carving. It only shews what they really think of their own opinions on those subjects. The other day a ministerial paper said, that “robes and coronations were

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the strong-holds of royalty.”¹ We do not deny it; but if such is their strength, what is their weakness? If by religion they meant anything really worthy of divine or human beings; if by morals, they meant the only true morals, justice and beneficence; if by everything legitimate, they meant but half of what their own laws and constitutions have provided against the impudent pretensions of the despotic,—then we should do our best to leave religion and morals as we found them, and shew their political good faith at least half as much respect as we do. But when we know,—and know too from our intimacy with various classes of people,—that there is not a greater set of hypocrites in the world than these pretended teachers of the honest and inexperienced part of our countrymen;—when we know that their religion, even when it is in earnest on any point (which is very seldom) means the most ridiculous and untenable notions of the DIVINE BEING, and in all other cases means nothing but the Bench of Bishops;—when we know that their morals consist for the most part in a secret and practical contempt of their own professions, and for the least and best part, of a few dull examples of something a little more honest, clapped in front to make a show and a screen, and weak enough to be made tools against all mankind;—and when we know, to crown all, that their “legitimacy,” as they call it, is the most unlawful of all lawless and impudent things, tending, under pretence that the whole world are as corrupt and ignorant as themselves, to put it at the mercy of the most brute understandings among them,—men by their very education in these pretensions, rendered the least fit to sympathize with their fellow men, and as unhappy, after all, as the lowest of their slaves;—when we know all this, and see nine-tenths of all the intelligent men in the world alive to it, and as resolved as we are to oppose it, then indeed we are willing to accept the title of enemies of religion, morals, and legitimacy, and hope to do our duty with all becoming profaneness accordingly. God defend us from the piety of thinking him a monster! God defend us from the morality of slaves and turncoats, and from the legitimacy

of half a dozen lawless old gentlemen, to whom, it seems, human nature is an estate in fee.

The object of our work is not political, except inasmuch as all writing now-a-days must involve something to that effect, the connexion between politics and all other subjects of interest to mankind having been discovered, never again to be done away. We wish to do our work quietly, if people will let us,—to contribute our liberalities in the shape of Poetry, Essays, Tales, Translations, and other amenities, of which kings themselves may read and profit, if they are not afraid of seeing their own faces in every species of inkstand. Italian Literature, in particular, will be a favourite subject with us; and so was German and Spanish to have been, till we lost the accomplished Scholar and Friend who was to share our task;² but perhaps we may be able to get a supply of the scholarship, though not of the friendship. It may be our good fortune to have more than one foreign correspondent, who will be an acquisition to the reader. In the meantime, we must do our best by ourselves; and the reader may be assured he shall have all that is in us, clear and candid at all events, if nothing else; for

We love to pour out all ourselves as plain
As downright SHIPPEN or as old MONTAIGNE.³

There are other things in the world besides kings, or even sycophants. There is one thing in particular with which we must help to bring the polite world acquainted, which is NATURE. Life really does not consist, entirely, of clubs and ball-rooms, of a collar made by Wilkins,⁴ and of the west end of a town. We confess we have a regard for the Dandies, properly so called; not the spurious race who take their title from their stays; we mean the pleasant and pithy personages who began the system, and who had ideas as well as bibs in their head. But it was on that account. We liked them, because they partook of the ETHERIDGES⁵ and SUCKLINGS⁶ of old: and why were the ETHERIDGES and SUCKLINGS better than their neighbours, but because they inherited from Old Mother Wit as well as Mother West-end, and

partook of the prerogatives of Nature? We have a regard for certain modern Barons, as well as those who got the Great Charter⁷ for us; but is it for those who would keep or for those who would give up the Charter? Is it for those who identify themselves with every feeble King John, or for those who have some of "GOD ALMIGHTY'S Nobility" in them as well as their own? Assuredly for the latter,—assuredly for those, who have something in them "which surpasses show," and which the breath of a puffing and blowing legitimate cannot unmake.

Be present then, and put life into our work, ye Spirits, not of the GAVESTONES⁸ and the DESPENSERS,⁹ but of the JOHN O'GAUNTS,¹⁰ the WICKLIFFES,¹¹ and the CHAUCERS;¹²—be present, not the slaves and sycophants of King HENRY the Eighth¹³ (whose names we have forgotten) but the HENRY HOWARDS, the SURREYS, and the WYATTS;¹⁴—be present, not ye other rascallions and "booing" slaves of the court of King JAMIE,¹⁵ but ye BUCHANANS¹⁶ and ye WALTER RALEIGHS;¹⁷—be present, not ye bed-chamber lords, flogging-boys, and mere soldiers, whosoever ye are, from my Lord THINGUMEE in King CHARLES's time,¹⁸ down to the immortal Duke of WHAT'S-HIS-NAME now flourishing; but the HERBERTS,¹⁹ the HUTCHINSONS,²⁰ the LOCKES,²¹ the POPES,²² and the PETERBOROUGHs;²³—be present, not ye miserable tyrants, slaves, bigots, or turncoats of any party, not ye LAUDS²⁴ or ye LAUDERDALES,²⁵ ye Legitimate Pretenders (for so ye must now be called) ye TITUS OATESes,²⁶ BEDLOWS,²⁷ GARDINERS,²⁸ SACHEVERELLS,²⁹ and SOUTHEYS;³⁰ but ye MILTONS³¹ and ye MARVELLS,³² ye HOADLEYS,³³ ADDISONS,³⁴ and STEELES,³⁵ ye SOMERSES,³⁶ DORSETS,³⁷ and PRIORS,³⁸ and all who have thrown light and life upon man, instead of darkness and death; who have made him a thing of hope and freedom, instead of despair and slavery; a being progressive, instead of a creeping creature retrograde:—if we have no pretensions to your genius, we at least claim the merit of loving and admiring it, and of longing to further its example.

We wish the title of our work to be taken in its largest acception, old as well as new,—but always in the same spirit of

admiring and assisting, rather than of professing. We just as much disclaim any assumption in it before the wise, as we disclaim any false modesty before all classes. All that we mean is, that we are advocates of every species of liberal knowledge, and that, by a natural consequence in these times, we go the full length in matters of opinion with large bodies of men who are called LIBERALS. At the same time, when we say the full length, we mean something very different from what certain pretended Liberals, and all the Illiberals, will take it to be; for it is by the very reason of going to that length, in its most liberal extreme—“Ay, ay,” interrupts some old club-house Gentleman, in a buff waistcoat and red-face,—“Now you talk sense. Extremes meet. *Verbum sat*.³⁹ I am a Liberal myself, if you come to that, and devilish liberal I am. I gave for instance five guineas out of the receipts of my sinecure to the Irish sufferers; but that is between ourselves. You mean, that there are good hearty fellows in all parties, and that the great business is to balance them properly;—to let the people talk, provided they do no harm, and to let Governments go on as they do, have done, and will do for ever. Good,—good. I’ll take in your journal myself;—here’s to the success of it;—only don’t make it too violent, you rogues;—don’t spoil the balance. (God! I’ve spilt my bumper!) Cut up SOUTHEY as much as you please. We all think him as great a coxcomb as you do, and he bores us to death; but spare the King⁴⁰ and the Ministers and all that, particularly Lord CASTLEREAGH⁴¹ and the Duke of WELLINGTON.⁴² D——d gentlemanly fellow, CASTLEREAGH, as you know; and besides he’s dead. Shocking thing—shocking. It was all nonsense about his being so cold-hearted, and doing Ireland so much harm. He was the most gentlemanly of men. Wars must be carried on; Malthus⁴³ has proved that millions must be slaughtered from time to time. The nonsense about that is as stupid as the cry about the game-laws and those infernal villains the poachers, who ought all to be strung up like hares: and as to Ireland, it is flying in the face of Providence to think that such horrible things could happen there, and

be prevented by *earthly* means,—*earthly* means, sir. Lord CASTLEREAGH himself referred us to Providence in all these unavoidable matters, and he was right;—but to think of his cutting his own throat—Good God! so very gentlemanly a man, and in the height of his power! It is truly shocking! As to WELLINGTON, he's not so gentlemanly a man, certainly; but then neither is CANNING,⁴⁴ if you come to that. He cannot make speeches, I own; but no more can the King or my Lord MARYBOROUGH,⁴⁵ or a hundred other eminent characters; and he does not make such cursed awkward blunders as poor CASTLEREAGH used to do. He has not got a very wise look, they say; but—I don't know,—it's soldier-like, I think; and if you come to that, what a strange fellow old BLUCHER⁴⁶ looked, and SUWARROW,⁴⁷ and all those; and between ourselves, the reigning Monarchs are a set of as common-looking gentry, as you'd wish to see in a summer's day; so I don't know what people would have. No—no—you really mustn't speak against WELLINGTON. Besides, he prosecutes.”⁴⁸

We beg the reader's pardon in behalf of our worthy interrupter. Whatever may be his right estimation of his friends, we need not say that he misinterprets our notions of liberality, which certainly do not consist either in making the sort of confusion, or keeping the sort of peace, which he speaks of. There are, if he pleases, very silly fellows to be found in most parties, and these may be good enough to be made tools of by the clever ones; but to confound all parties themselves with one another, which is the real end of these pretended liberalities, and assume that none of them are a jot better or worse than the other, and may contain just as good and generous people,—this is to confound liberality with illiberality, narrow views with large, the instincts of a selfish choice with those of a generous one, and in the best and most imposing instances, the mere amenities and ordinary virtues of private life (which may be only a graceful selfishness, unless they go farther) with the noblest and boldest sympathies in behalf of the human race. It is too late in the day to be taken in with this kind of cant, even by the jolliest of placemen in all the benevolence of

his bumpers. The Duke of WELLINGTON is a great officer, “after his kind.” We do not mean at court, where he is a very little officer, and condescends to change his Marshal’s staff for the stick of a Lord in Waiting.⁴⁹ But he is a good hunting captain,—a sort of human setter. We allow him all his praise in that respect, and only wish he had not confounded the rights of nations with those of a manor. What does he mean too by treating public meetings with contempt? and above all, what did he mean by that extremely odd assumption of the didactic, about teaching a “great moral lesson!”⁵⁰ As to Lord CASTLEREAGH, he was one of the most illiberal and vindictive of statesmen, if we must use that word for every petty retainer, whom a bad system swells for a time into a part of its own unnatural greatness. Look at his famous Six Acts!⁵¹ Look at his treatment of BONAPARTE,⁵² his patronage of such infamous journals as the *Beacon*,⁵³ his fondness for imprisoning, and for what his weak obstinacy calls his other strong measures. But he is dead, and people are now called upon to be liberal! Let us be so, in God’s name, in the general sense we have of the infirmities of human nature; but it is one thing to be liberal in behalf of the many, and another thing to be exclusively so in behalf of the few. Have the consequences of Lord CASTLEREAGH’s actions died with him? Are the Six Acts dead? Are thousands of the Irish *living*? We will give a specimen of the liberality of these new demanders of liberality. The other day, when one of the noblest of human beings, PERCY SHELLEY, who had more religion in his very differences with religion, than thousands of your church-and-state men, was lost on the coast of Italy, the *Courier* said, that “Mr. PERCY SHELLEY, *a writer of infidel poetry*, was drowned.”⁵⁴ Where was the liberality of this canting insinuation? Where was the decency, or, as it turned out, the common sense of it? Mr. SHELLEY’s death by the waves was followed by Lord CASTLEREAGH’s by his own hand; and then the cry is for liberal constructions! How could we not turn such a death against the enemies of Mr. SHELLEY, if we could condescend to affect a moment’s agreement with their hypocrisy? But the least we can do

is to let these people see, that we know them, and to warn them how they assail us. The force of our answers will always be proportioned to the want of liberality in the assailant. This is a liberality, at all events, upon which our readers may reckon. The rest, which we were going to say, is this;—that although we condemn by wholesale certain existing demands upon our submission and credulity, we are not going to discover every imaginative thing even in a religion to be nonsense, like a semi-liberalized Frenchman; nor, on the other hand, to denounce all levity and wit to be nonsense and want of feeling, like a semi-liberalized German. If we are great admirers of VOLTAIRE, we are great admirers also of GOETHE and SCHILLER. If we pay our homage to DANTE and MILTON, we have tribute also for the brilliant sovereignties of ARIOSTO and BOCCACCIO.

Wherever, in short, we see the mind of man exhibiting powers of its own, and at the same time helping to carry on the best interests of human nature,—however it may overdo the matter a little on this side or on that, or otherwise partake of the common frailty through which it passes,—there we recognise the demi-gods of liberal worship;—there we bow down, and own our lords and masters;—there we hope for the final passing away of all obscene worships, however formalized,—of all monstrous sacrifices of the many to the few, however “legitimatized” and besotted.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ¹ Untraced quotation.
- ² Percy Bysshe Shelley.
- ³ Alexander Pope, "First Satire of the Second Book of Horace", ll. 51-2. The Tory politician and MP William Shippen (1673-1743) relentlessly criticized the Walpole administration, attacking it in particular over the financial corruption of the South-Sea Company. Thanks to his *Essais*, Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) became a model for honest self-examination and open discussions of social, political, moral and religious issues.
- ⁴ Arnold Wilkins, a fashionable tailor with premises off Oxford Street.
- ⁵ Sir George Etherege (c. 1635-91), Restoration playwright.
- ⁶ Sir John Suckling (1609-41), Cavalier poet and playwright.
- ⁷ The Magna Charta, granted by King John in 1215.
- ⁸ Piers Gaveston (1284-1312), favourite of Edward II.
- ⁹ Hugh le Despenser (1261/2-1326), favourite of Edward II.
- ¹⁰ John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster (1340-99), son of Edward III and father of Henry IV.
- ¹¹ John Wyclif (c. 1329-84), philosopher and Biblical translator. A protégé of John of Gaunt's, he was strongly critical of the Catholic establishment.
- ¹² Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340s-1400), poet and civil servant.
- ¹³ King Henry VIII (1491-1547, reigned 1509-47).
- ¹⁴ Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517-47) and Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-42), poets and courtiers at the time of Henry VIII.
- ¹⁵ King James VI of Scotland (1567-1625) and I of England (1603-25).
- ¹⁶ George Buchanan (1506-82), Scottish scholar who promoted a doctrine of resistance to royal usurpation.
- ¹⁷ Sir Walter Raleigh (c. 1554-1618), poet, adventurer and courtier of Elizabeth I.
- ¹⁸ Possible reference to Charles II (1630-85), who created a significant number of new peers during his reign.
- ¹⁹ The poet and clergyman George Herbert (1593-1633) or possibly the poet and politician Edward Herbert, first Baron of Cherbury (1583-1648).
- ²⁰ John Hutchinson (1614-64), Parliamentary soldier and regicide.
- ²¹ The philosopher and political thinker John Locke (1632-1704).
- ²² The poet Alexander Pope (1688-1744).
- ²³ Charles Mordaunt, third Earl of Peterborough (1658-1735), soldier and politician.
- ²⁴ William Laud (1573-1645), Archbishop of Canterbury.
- ²⁵ John Maitland, Duke of Lauderdale (1616-82), one of Charles II's principal ministers.
- ²⁶ Titus Oates (1649-1705), Anglican clergyman and fabricator of the 'Popish Plot' (1678), a fictitious but widely believed Jesuit conspiracy aimed at assassinating Charles II and placing his Catholic brother, the Duke of York (later James II), on the throne.
- ²⁷ The adventurer William Bedlow (1650-80), who provided the English government with an account of the 'Popish Plot'.
- ²⁸ The clergyman and politician Stephen Gardiner (1482-1555), who supported Henry VIII's antipapal policies.
- ²⁹ The Anglican preacher Henry Sacheverell (c. 1674-1724), whose incendiary sermon delivered on 5 November 1709 facilitated the Tory landslide victory in the general election of 1710.
- ³⁰ Robert Southey (1774-1843), appointed Poet Laureate in 1813 by the Prince Regent (later George IV).
- ³¹ John Milton (1608-74), poet and Secretary for Foreign Tongues to the Commonwealth Council of State.
- ³² The poet and satirist Andrew Marvell (1621-78).
- ³³ Benjamin Hoadly (1706-57), physician and dramatist.
- ³⁴ Joseph Addison (1672-1719), essayist, politician, poet, and playwright.
- ³⁵ Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729), politician, writer, and playwright.
- ³⁶ Lawyer and politician John Somers, Baron Somers (1651-1716).

EDITORIAL NOTES

³⁷ Poet and courtier Charles Sackville, sixth Earl of Dorset (1638-1706), patron of the poet and diplomat Matthew Prior (1664-1721).

³⁸ The poet and diplomat Matthew Prior (1664-1721) who was 'discovered' by his patron, the poet and courtier Charles Sackville, sixth Earl of Dorset (1638-1706).

³⁹ (Latin) "One word is enough".

⁴⁰ George IV (reigned 1820-1830).

⁴¹ Robert Stewart (1769-1822), Viscount Castlereagh and second Marquess of Londonderry, Chief Secretary for Ireland (1798-1801), Secretary of State for War and the Colonies (1807-09) and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1812-22).

⁴² Arthur Wellesley (1769-1852), first Duke of Wellington.

⁴³ Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), clergyman and scholar of political economy and demography.

⁴⁴ George Canning (1770-1827), Foreign Secretary between 1822 and 1827.

⁴⁵ William Wellesley-Pole (1763-1845), brother of the Duke of Wellington, first Baron Maryborough.

⁴⁶ Prussian field marshal Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher (1742-1819).

⁴⁷ Russian military commander Aleksandr Vasilievich Suvorov (1729-1800), responsible for attacking the Turkish fortress of Ismail (see Lord Byron's *Don Juan* VII).

⁴⁸ Reference to Wellington's strong support for the measures against social unrest contained in the Six Acts of 1819.

⁴⁹ The Duke of Wellington was made field marshal in 1813. A Lord-in-waiting is a peer who holds office in the Royal household.

⁵⁰ Untraced quotation.

⁵¹ Repressive legislation passed in 1819, after the Peterloo Massacre (16 August 1819) and the subsequent wave of disturbances, and aimed at limiting the radical press and suppressing seditious meetings in favour of parliamentary reform.

⁵² Hunt may be referring to Castlereagh's statement, after Napoleon's defeat, that the French emperor would have deceived Britain into signing a peace treaty only in order subsequently to invade and defeat the country.

⁵³ Rabidly Tory paper published between 6 January and 22 September 1821.

⁵⁴ *The Courier*, 5 August 1822, p. 3.

THE
LIBERAL.

No. I.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT,
BY QUEVEDO¹ REDIVIVUS.*

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF
“WAT TYLER.”²

“A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.”³

PREFACE.

It hath been wisely said, that “One fool makes many;”⁴
and it hath been poetically observed,

“That fools rush in where angels fear to tread.” — *Pope*.⁵

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

* Author: Lord Byron / Transcribed and annotated by Diego Saglia.

form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed “Satanic School,” the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature, thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere, excepting in his imagination, such a school, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have “talked of *him*; for they laughed consumedly.”⁶

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

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

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

3dly. Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full Parliament, “a rancorous Renegado?”⁷

4thly. Is he not Poet Laureate, with his own lines on *Martin the Regicide* staring him in the face?⁸

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

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less, than that Mr. S. has

been laughed at a little in some recent publications,⁹ as he was of yore in the "Anti-jacobin" by his present patrons.¹⁰ Hence all this "skimble scramble stuff" about "Satanic," and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—"Qualis ab incepto."

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

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

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P.S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints,

angels, and spiritual persons, discourse in this "Vision." But for precedents upon such points I must refer him to Fielding's "Journey from this World to the next,"¹¹ and to the Visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated.¹² The reader is also requested to observe, that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not "like a school divine," but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of Heaven; and Chaucer's Wife of Bath, Pulci's Morgante Maggiore, Swift's Tale of a Tub, and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, &c. may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.

Q. R.

[*.* Mr. Southey, being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer.¹³ It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the mean time have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously "one Mr. Landor," who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the Poet Laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called *Gebir*.¹⁴ Who would suppose, that in this same *Gebir*, the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven,—yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious Sovereign:—

Prince Gebir having descended into¹⁵ the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view, and he exclaims to his ghostly guide)—

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

“Alas, O King!

Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
 Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east.”
 “He was a warrior then, nor fear’d the gods?”
 “Gebir, he fear’d the Demons, not the Gods,
 Though them indeed his daily face ador’d;
 And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
 Squander’d, as stones to exercise a sling!
 And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—
 Oh madness of mankind! address, adored!”—*Gebir*, p. 28.¹⁶

I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics¹⁷ of Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat indiscreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of “great moral lessons” are apt to be found in strange company.]

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.

I.

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

II.

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,
Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

III.

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

IV.

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

V.

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

VI.

This by the way; 'tis not mine to record
 What angels shrink from: even the very devil
 On this occasion his own work abhor'd,
 So surfeited with the infernal revel;
 Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,
 It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.
 (Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—
 'Tis, that he has both generals¹⁸ in reversion.)

VII.

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
 Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont,
 And heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease
 With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't;
 'Twill one day finish: meantime they increase,
 "With seven heads and ten horns,"¹⁹ and all in front,
 Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born
 Less formidable in the head than horn.

B

VIII.

In the first year of freedom's second dawn²⁰
 Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
 Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn
 Left him nor mental nor external sun:
 A better farmer²¹ ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,
 A worse king never left a realm undone!²²
 He died—but left his subjects still behind,
 One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

IX.

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

X.

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

XI.

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

XII.

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done:
He's buried; save the undertaker's bill,
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone
For him, unless he left a German will;²³
But where's the proctor who will ask his son?
In whom his qualities are reigning still,
Except that household virtue, most uncommon,
Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.²⁴

XIII.

“God save the king!” It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if he will
Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still:
I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill
By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,
The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

XIV.

I know this is unpopular; I know
 'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be damn'd
For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
 I know my catechism; I know we are crammd
With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
 I know that all save England's church have shammd,
And that the other twice two hundred churches
And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad purchase.

XV.

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

XVI.

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

XVII.

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

XVIII.

"No," quoth the Cherub; "George the Third is dead."
 "And who *is* George the Third?" replied the Apostle;
 "*What* George? *what* Third?" "The King of England," said
 The Angel. "Well! he wont²⁵ find kings to jostle
 "Him on his way; but does he wear his head?²⁶
 "Because the last we saw here had a tussle,
 "And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,
 "Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

XIX.

"He was, if I remember, king of France;
 "That head of his, which could not keep a crown
 "On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
 "A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:
 "If I had had my sword, as I had once
 "When I cut ears off,²⁷ I had cut him down;
 "But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
 "I only knock'd his head from out his hand.

XX.

“And then he set up such a headless howl,
“That all the saints came out, and took him in;
“And there he sits by St Paul, cheek by jowl;
“That fellow Paul—the parvenu!²⁸ The skin
“Of Saint Bartholomew,²⁹ which makes his cowl
“In heaven, and upon earth redeem’d his sin
“So as to make a martyr, never sped
“Better than did this weak and wooden head.

XXI.

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

XXII.

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

XXIII.

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

XXIV.

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

XXV.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or sin,
With such a glance of supernatural hate,
As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
He potter'd with his keys at a great rate,
And sweated through his apostolic skin:³⁰
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,³¹
Or some such other spiritual liquor.

XXVI.

The very cherubs huddled altogether,
Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt
A tingling to the tip of every feather,
And form'd a circle like Orion's belt
Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither
His guards had led him, though they gently dealt
With royal manes³² (for by many stories,
And true, we learn the angels all are Tories.)

XXVII.

As things were in this posture, the gate flew
Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
Flung over space an universal hue
Of many-coloured flame, until its tinges
Reach'd even our speck of earth, and made a new
Aurora borealis spread its fringes
O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,
By Captain Parry's crews, in "Melville's Sound."³³

XXVIII.

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming
A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,
Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight:
My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
With earthly likenesses, for here the night
Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
Johanna Southcote,³⁴ or Bob Southey raving.

XXIX.

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

XXX.

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

XXXI.

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

XXXII.

He and the sombre silent Spirit met—
They knew each other both for good and ill;
Such was their power, that neither could forget
His former friend and future foe; but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their "Champ Clos"³⁵ the spheres.

XXXIII.

But here they were in neutral space: we know
From Job,³⁶ that Sathan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a year or so;
And that "the Sons of God,"³⁷ like those of clay,
Must keep him company; and we might show,
From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

XXXIV.

And this is not a theologic tract,
To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic
If Job be allegory or a fact,³⁸
But a true narrative; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such an act
As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

XXXV.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of heaven; like eastern thresholds³⁹ is
The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,
And souls despatched to that world or to this;
And therefore Michael and the other wore
A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
There passed a mutual glance of great politeness.

XXXVI.

The Archangel bowed, not like a modern beau,
But with a graceful Oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where below
The heart in good men is supposed to tend.⁴⁰
He turned as to an equal, not too low,
But kindly; Sathan met his ancient friend
With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

XXXVII.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
An instant; and then raising it, he stood
In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
Cause why King George by no means could or should
Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings endued
With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions,
Who long have "paved hell with their good intentions."⁴¹

XXXVIII.

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

XXXIX.

"Michael!" replied the Prince of Air,⁴² "even here,
 "Before the gate of him thou servest, must
 "I claim my subject; and will make appear
 "That as he was my worshipper in dust,
 "So shall he be in spirit, although dear
 "To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust
 "Were of his weaknesses; yet on the throne
 "He reign'd o'er millions to serve me alone.

XL.

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

XLI.

“And these but as a kind of quit-rent,⁴³ to
“Assert my right as lord; and even had
“I such an inclination, ’twere (as you
“Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,
“That hell has nothing better left to do
“Than leave them to themselves: so much more mad
“And evil by their own internal curse,
“Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

XLII.

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

LXIII.⁴⁴

“He came to his sceptre, young; he leaves it, old:
“Look to the state in which he found his realm,
“And left it; and his annals too behold,
“How to a minion first he gave the helm;⁴⁵
“How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
“The beggar’s vice, which can but overwhelm
“The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance
“Thine eye along America and France!

XLIV.

“’Tis true, he was a tool from first to last;
“ (I have the workmen safe);⁴⁶ but as a tool
“So let him be consumed! From out the past
“Of ages, since mankind have known the rule
“Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amass’d
“Of sin and slaughter—from the Cæsar’s school,
“Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
“More drench’d with gore, more cumber’d with the slain!

LXV.⁴⁷

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

XLVI.

“I know he was a constant consort; own
“He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
“All this is much, and most upon a throne;
“As temperance, if at Apicius’ board,⁴⁸
“Is more than at an anchorite’s supper⁴⁹ shown.
“I grant him all the kindest can accord;
“And this was well for him, but not for those
“Millions who found him what oppression chose.

XLVII.

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

XLVIII.

“Five millions of the primitive, who hold
 “The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored
 “A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—
 “Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord,
 “Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! Cold
 “Must be your souls, if you have not abhorr’d
 “The foe to Catholic participation
 “In all the licence of a Christian nation.⁵⁰

XLIX.

“True! he allow’d them to pray God; but as
 “A consequence of prayer, refused the law
 “Which would have placed them upon the same base
 “With those who did not hold the saints in awe.”
 But here Saint Peter started from his place,
 And cried, “You may the prisoner withdraw:
 “Ere Heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelf,⁵¹
 “While I am guard, may I be damn’d myself!

L.

“Sooner will I with Cerberus⁵² exchange
 “My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
 “Than see this royal Bedlam⁵³ bigot range
 “The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!”
 “Saint!” replied Sathan, “you do dwell to avenge⁵⁴
 “The wrongs he made your satellites endure;
 “And if to this exchange you should be given,
 “I’ll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven.”

LI.

Here Michael interposed: “Good saint! and devil!
 “Pray not so fast; you both out-run discretion.
 “Saint Peter! you were want⁵⁵ to be more civil:
 “Sathan! excuse this warmth of his expression,
 “And condescension to the vulgar’s level:
 “Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.
 “Have you got more to say?” — “No!” — “If you please,
 “I’ll trouble you to call your witnesses.”

LII.

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

LIII.

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

LIV.

They are proud of this—as very well they may,
 It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
 Stuck in their loins;⁵⁶ or like to an “entré”
 Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry:
 I borrow my comparisons from clay,
 Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be
 Offended with such base low likenesses;
 We know their posts are nobler far than these.

LV.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell,—
 About ten million times the distance reckon'd
 From our sun to its earth, as we can tell
 How much time it takes up, even to a second,
 For every ray that travels to dispel
 The fogs of London; through which, dimly beacon'd,
 The weathercocks are gilt, some thrice a year,
 If that the *summer* is not too severe:—

LVI.

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute;
 I know the solar beams take up more time
 Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;
 But then their telegraph⁵⁷ is less sublime,
 And if they ran a race, they would not win it
 Gainst Sathan's couriers bound for their own clime.
 The sun takes up some years for every ray
 To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

LVII.

Upon the verge of space, about the size
 Of half-a-crown,⁵⁸ a little speck appear'd,
 (I've seen a something like it in the skies
 In the Ægean, ere a squall;) it near'd,
 And, growing bigger, took another guise;
 Like an aërial ship it tack'd, and steer'd
 Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar
 Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;—

LVIII.

But take your choice;) and then it grew a cloud,
 And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.⁵⁹
 But such a cloud! No land ere saw a crowd
 Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;
 They shadow'd with their myriads space; their loud
 And varied cries were like those of wild-geese,
 (If nations may be liken'd to a goose)
 And realized the phrase of "hell broke loose."

LVIX.⁶⁰

Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,⁶¹
 Who damn'd away his eyes as heretofore:
 There Paddy⁶² brogued "by Jasus!"—"What's your wull?"⁶³
 The temperate Scot exclaim'd: the French ghost swore
 In certain terms I sha'n't translate in full,
 As the first coachman will; and midst the war⁶⁴
 The voice of Jonathan⁶⁵ was heard to express,
 "*Our* President is going to war, I guess."⁶⁶

XL.⁶⁷

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;
 In short, an universal shoal of shades
 From Otaheite's Isle⁶⁸ to Salisbury Plain,
 Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
 Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
 Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:⁶⁹
 All summon'd by this grand "subpœna,"⁷⁰ to
 Try if kings mayn't be damn'd, like me or you.

LXI.

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

LXII.

Then he address'd himself to Sathan: "Why—
"My good old friend, for such I deem you, though
"Our different parties make us fight so shy,
"I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;
"Our difference is *political*, and I
"Trust that, whatever may occur below,
"You know my great respect for you; and this
"Makes me regret whatever you do amiss—

LXIII.

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

LXIV.

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

LXV.

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd "multifaced"
By multo-scribbling Southey.) "Then we'll call
"One or two persons of the myriads placed
"Around our congress, and dispense with all
"The rest," quoth Michael: "Who may be so graced
"As to speak first? there's choice enough—who shall
"It be?" Then Sathan answered, "There are many;
"But you may choose Jack Wilkes⁷¹ as well as any."

LXVI.

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

LXVII.

The Spirit look'd around upon the crowds
Assembled, and exclaim'd, "My friends of all
"The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds;
"So let's to business: why this general call?
"If those are freeholders⁷² I see in shrouds,
"And 'tis for an election that they bawl,
"Behold a candidate with unturn'd-coat!
"Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?"

LXVIII.

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

LXIX.

"He is what you behold him, and his doom
"Depends upon his deeds," the Angel said.
"If you have ought to arraign in him, the tomb
"Gives licence to the humblest beggar's head
"To lift itself against the loftiest."—"Some,"
Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them laid in lead,
"For such a liberty—and I, for one,
"Have told them what I thought beneath the sun."

LXX.

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

LXXI.

"Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
 "A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
 "But then I blame the man himself much less
 "Than Bute and Grafton,⁷³ and shall be unwilling
 "To see him punish'd here for their excess,
 "Since they were both damn'd long ago, and still in
 "Their place below; for me, I have forgiven,
 "And vote his 'habeas corpus'⁷⁴ into heaven."

LXXII.

"Wilkes," said the Devil, "I understand all this;
 "You turn'd to half a courtier ere you died,
 "And seem to think it would not be amiss
 "To grow a whole one on the other side
 "Of Charon's ferry;⁷⁵ you forget that *his*
 "Reign is concluded; whatsoever betide,
 "He won't be sovereign more: you've lost your labour,
 "For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

LXXIII.

"However, I knew what to think of it,
 "When I beheld you in your jesting way
 "Flitting and whispering round about the spit
 "Where Belial,⁷⁶ upon duty for the day,
 "With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,⁷⁷
 "His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
 "That fellow even in hell breeds farther ills;
 "I'll have him *gagg'd*—'twas one of his own bills.

LXXIV.

“Call Junius!”⁷⁸ From the crowd a Shadow stalk’d,
And at the name there was a general squeeze,
So that the very ghosts no longer walk’d
In comfort, at their own aërial ease,
But were all ramm’d, and jamm’d (but to be balk’d,
As we shall see) and jostled hands and knees,
Like wind compress’d and pent within a bladder,
Or like a human cholic, which is sadder.

LXXV.

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

LXXVI.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less
Could they distinguish whose the features were;
The Devil himself seem’d puzzled even to guess;
They varied like a dream—now here, now there;
And several people swore from out the press,
They knew him perfectly; and one could swear
He was his father; upon which another
Was sure he was his mother’s cousin’s brother:

LXXVII.

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
 An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,
 A nabob,⁷⁹ a man-midwife; but the wight
 Mysterious changed his countenance at least
 As oft as they their minds: though in full sight
 He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
 The man was a phantasmagoria⁸⁰ in
 Himself—he was so volatile and thin!

LXXVIII.

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,
 Presto! his face changed, and he was another;
 And when that change was hardly well put on,
 It varied, till I don't think his own mother
 (If that he had a mother) would her son
 Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other,
 Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
 At this epistolary "iron mask."⁸¹

LXXIX.

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem—
 "Three gentlemen at once," (as sagely says
 Good Mrs. Malaprop;)⁸² then you might deem
 That he was not even *one*; now many rays
 Were flashing round him; and now a thick steam
 Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days:
 Now Burke,⁸³ now Tooke,⁸⁴ he grew to people's fancies,
 And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.⁸⁵

LXXX.

I've an hypothesis—'tis quite my own;
 I never let it out till now, for fear
 Of doing people harm about the throne,
 And injuring some minister or peer
 On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown;
 It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear!
 'Tis, that what Junius we are wont to call,
 Was *really, truly*, nobody at all.

LXXXI.

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
 Written without hands, since we daily view
 Them written without heads; and books we see
 Are fill'd as well without the latter too:
 And really till we fix on somebody
 For certain sure to claim them as his due,
 Their author, like the Niger's mouth,⁸⁶ will bother
 The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

LXXXII.

"And who and what art thou?" the Archangel said.
 "For *that*, you may consult my title-page,"
 Replied this mighty Shadow of a Shade:
 "If I have kept my secret half an age,
 "I scarce shall tell it now."—"Canst thou upbraid,"
 Continued Michael, "George Rex, or allege
 "Aught further?" Junius answer'd, "You had better
 "First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:⁸⁷

LXXXIII.

“My charges upon record will outlast
 “The brass of both his epitaph and tomb.”
 “Repent’st thou not,” said Michael, “of some past
 “Exaggeration? something which may doom
 “Thyself, if false, as him if true? Thou wast
 “Too bitter—is it not so? in thy gloom
 “Of passion?” “Passion!” cried the Phantom dim,
 “I loved my country, and I hated him.”⁸⁸

LXXXIV.

“What I have written, I have written: let
 “The rest be on his head or mine!” So spoke
 Old “Nominis Umbra;”⁸⁹ and while speaking yet,
 Away he melted in celestial smoke.
 Then Sathan said to Michael, “Don’t forget
 “To call George Washington,⁹⁰ and John Horne Tooke,⁹¹
 “And Franklin:”⁹²—but at this time there was heard
 A cry for room, though not a phantom stirr’d.

LXXXV.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
 Of cherubim appointed to that post,
 The devil Asmodeus⁹³ to the circle made
 His way, and look’d as if his journey cost
 Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,
 “What’s this?” cried Michael; “why, ’tis not a ghost?”⁹⁴
 “I know it,” quoth the incubus;⁹⁵ “but he
 “Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

LXXXVI.

“Confound the Renegado! I have sprain’d
“My left wing, he’s so heavy; one would think
“Some of his works about his neck were chain’d.
“But to the point: while hovering o’er the brink
“Of Skiddaw⁹⁶ (where as usual it still rain’d),
“I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
“And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel—
“No less on History than the Holy Bible.

LXXXVII.

“The former is the devil’s scripture, and
“The latter yours, good Michael; so the affair
“Belongs to all of us, you understand.
“I snatch’d him up just as you see him there,
“And brought him off for sentence out of hand:
“I’ve scarcely been ten minutes in the air—
“At least a quarter it can hardly be:
“I dare say that his wife is still at tea.”

LXXXVIII.

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

LXXXIX.

"But since he's here, let's see what he has done."
 "Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates
 "The very business you are now upon,
 "And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.
 "Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
 "When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates?"⁹⁷
 "Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say;
 "You know we're bound to that in every way."

XC.

Now the Bard, glad to get an audience, which
 By no means often was his case below,
 Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
 His voice into that awful note of woe
 To all unhappy hearers within reach
 Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;
 But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
 Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

XCI.

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be spurr'd
 Into recitative, in great dismay
 Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
 To murmur loudly through their long array;
 And Michael rose ere he could get a word
 Of all his founder'd verses under way,
 And cried, "For God's sake stop, my friend! 'twere best—
 "*Non Di, non homines*—" ⁹⁸ you know the rest."

XCII.

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,
 Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation;
 The angels had of course enough of song
 When upon service; and the generation
 Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long
 Before, to profit by a new occasion;
 The Monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd, "What! what!
 "Pye come again?"⁹⁹ No more—no more of that!"

XCIII.

The tumult grew, an universal cough
 Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
 When Castlereagh¹⁰⁰ has been up long enough,
 (Before he was first minister of state,
 I mean—the *slaves hear now*;) some cried "off, off,"
 As at a farce; till grown quite desperate,
 The Bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose
 (Himself an author)¹⁰¹ only for his prose.

XCIV.

The varlet was not an ill-favour'd knave;
 A good deal like a vulture in the face,
 With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
 A smart and sharper looking sort of grace
 To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
 Was by no means so ugly as his case;
 But that indeed was hopeless as can be,
 Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."¹⁰²

XCV.

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

XCVI.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
 He meant no harm in scribbling; 'twas his way
 Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,
 Of which he butter'd both sides; 'twould delay
 Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread)
 And take up rather more time than a day,
 To name his works—he would but cite a few—
 Wat Tyler—Rhymes on Blenheim—Waterloo.¹⁰³

XCVII.

He had written praises of a regicide;¹⁰⁴
 He had written praises of all kings whatever;
 He had written for republics far and wide,
 And then against them bitterer than ever;
 For pantisocracy¹⁰⁵ he once had cried
 Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;¹⁰⁶
 Then grew a hearty antijacobin—
 Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

XCVIII.

He had sung against all battles, and again
 In their high praise and glory; he had call'd
 Reviewing* "the ungentle craft," and then
 Become as base a critic as ere¹⁰⁷ crawl'd—
 Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
 By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd:
 He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,
 And more of both than any body knows.

XCIX.

He had written Wesley's life:¹⁰⁸—here, turning round
 To Sathan, "Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
 "In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
 "With notes and preface, all that most allures
 "The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
 "For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
 "So let me have the proper documents,
 "That I may add you to my other saints."

C.

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

* See "Life of H. Kirke White."¹⁰⁹

CI.

“But talking about trumpets, here’s my Vision!
 “Now you shall judge, all people; yes, you shall
 “Judge with my judgment! and by my decision
 “Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall!
 “I settle all these things by intuition,
 “Times present, past, to come, heaven, hell, and all,
 “Like King Alfonso!^{*110} When I thus see double,
 “I save the Deity some worlds of trouble.”

CII.

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
 Persuasion on the part of devils, or saints,
 Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so
 He read the first three lines of the contents;
 But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
 Had vanish’d, with variety of scents,
 Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
 Like lightning, off from his “melodious twang.”^{†111}

CIII.

Those grand heroics acted as a spell:
 The angels stopp’d their ears and plied their pinions;

* King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said, that “had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities.”

† See Aubrey’s account of the apparition which disappeared “with a curious perfume and a melodious twang;” or see the Antiquary, Vol. I.

The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down to hell;
 The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions—
 (For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,
 And I leave every man to his opinions;)
 Michael took refuge in his trump—but lo!
 His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

CIV.

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
 For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
 And at the fifth line knock'd the Poet down;
 Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,
 Into his lake, for there he did not drown,
 A different web being by the Destinies
 Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, whene'er
 Reform shall happen either here or there.

CV.

He first sunk to the bottom—like his works,
 But soon rose to the surface—like himself;
 For all corrupted things are buoy'd, like corks*,
 By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
 Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,
 It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,
 In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or "Vision,"
 As Wellborn says—"the devil turn'd precisian."¹¹²

* A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten; it then floats, as most people know.¹¹³

CVI.

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

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1645), one of the major protagonists of seventeenth-century Spanish literature, author of a series of satirical prose sketches entitled *Sueños y discursos de verdades descubridoras de abusos, vicios y engaños* ("Dreams and discourses of truths discovering abuses, vices and deceptions", published in 1627) and aimed at denouncing all forms of corruption during the reign of Philip III (1598-1621). The first *Sueño*, "El juicio final" ("The Last Judgment"), was written in 1607. Sir Roger L'Estrange's translation, entitled *The Visions of Dom Francisco de Quevedo Villegas*, appeared in 1667.

² Robert Southey's play *Wat Tyler* (written in 1794), about Walter Tyler, a leader of the 1381 Peasants' Revolt, was published in 1817 by the poet's enemies in order to denounce his apostasy from radicalism to support for the Tory establishment.

³ William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* IV.i.342.

⁴ Proverbial expression.

⁵ Alexander Pope, *Essay on Criticism* l. 625.

⁶ George Farquhar's *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707), III.66-67. Byron also mentions the character of Scrub in the *Ravenna Journal* (25 February 1821).

⁷ On 14 March 1817 the MP William Smith delivered a scathing attack on Southey in the House of Commons, attributing to him the "determined malignity of the renegade", during a debate on the Seditious Assemblies Bill. See also the Dedication to Byron's *Don Juan* (stanza 5).

⁸ Reference to Southey's poem "Inscription for an Apartment in Chepstow Castle where Henry Marten, the Regicide, Was Imprisoned Thirty Years". Henry Marten (1602-80) was one of the signatories of the death warrant of Charles II. See also *Vision of Judgment* stanza XCVII.

⁹ Byron's *Don Juan* was one of these recent publications.

¹⁰ In the *Anti-Jacobin* (1797-98), George Canning and John Hookham Frere parodied Southey's "The Widow" in "Sapphics: The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder", and Canning parodied Southey's "Inscription for an Apartment in Chepstow Castle" in "Inscription for the Door of the Cell in Newgate".

¹¹ Published in 1743.

¹² Byron may have known Sir Roger L'Estrange's *The Visions of Dom Francisco de Quevedo Villegas* (1667).

¹³ Southey did not produce a reply.

¹⁴ Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864) published his anti-monarchic epic poem *Gebir* in 1798. A revised version appeared in 1803, and a Latin translation, *Gebirus*, was published in the same year. Southey's comments on his friend Landor appear in the preface to his *A Vision of Judgement*.

¹⁵ Corrected from *nto* in the transcribed original.

¹⁶ *Gebir* III.185-200.

¹⁷ *Ithyphallics*: poems having the metre or tone of Bacchic hymns. Byron intimates that Landor is the author of indecent poetic compositions. Algernon Charles Swinburne identified the poem in question as Landor's "Ad Mulum in Hispania" published in *Idyllia Heroica* (1820).

¹⁸ The Duke of Wellington and Napoleon (who died on 5 March 1821).

¹⁹ Biblical reference. See *Book of Revelation* 12.3, 13.1 and 17.3.

²⁰ In January 1820, the *pronunciamiento* of General Rafael del Riego at Cabezas de San Juan started a liberal revolution that brought about the temporary transformation of Spain into a constitutional monarchy through the reinstatement of the 1812 Constitution of Cadiz. These events inspired several constitutional and liberal uprisings in 1820-21, including the failed Carbonari revolt in the Romagna, to which Byron had lent his support.

²¹ George III was well known for his agricultural interests that earned him the nickname of "Farmer George".

²² The list of errata reads: "Page 6, line 6, instead of 'a worse king never left a realm undone,' read 'a weaker king ne'er left a realm undone'".

²³ George III was also King of Hanover. Byron alludes to the fact that George II had hidden – and never acted upon – the will of his father George I.

²⁴ The list of errata reads: "Page 7, line 16, instead of 'a bad ugly woman,' read 'an unhandsome woman'".

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ²⁵ Misprint for *won't*.
- ²⁶ Reference to King Louis XVI of France, guillotined in 1793.
- ²⁷ Evangelical reference: see *Matthew* 26.51, *Mark* 14.47, *Luke* 22.51, and *John* 18.10.
- ²⁸ *Parvenu*: an upstart. Byron depicts St Peter as resentful of St Paul, who, although not among the original apostles, now sits inside the gates of Heaven, whereas Peter sits without.
- ²⁹ St Bartholomew was skinned alive.
- ³⁰ See Luigi Pulci, *Morgante Maggiore* XXVI.91. Byron's translation of the first canto of *Morgante* appeared in the fourth instalment of *The Liberal* (published 30 July 1823).
- ³¹ In Greek mythology, the fluid flowing in the veins of gods and other immortals.
- ³² (Latin) The souls or spirits of departed ancestors.
- ³³ Reference to Sir William Edward Parry's third polar expedition (1820-21). Viscount Melville's Sound is in northern Canada, to the south of what are now called Parry Islands. Parry's *Journal of a Voyage for the Discovery of the North-West Passage*, published by John Murray in 1821, records a sighting of the Northern Lights on 15 January 1820.
- ³⁴ Joanna Southcott (1750-1814), preacher, visionary and prophetess who gathered numerous followers from 1792 until her death. Famous for her millenarianist prophecies, in 1813 (at the age of 63) she announced that she was pregnant and that she would give birth to Shiloh, the new Prince of Peace (Shiloh was one of Byron's nicknames for Percy Bysshe Shelley).
- ³⁵ (French) Field enclosed for a duel or a tournament.
- ³⁶ Biblical reference: see *Book of Job*.
- ³⁷ Biblical reference: see *Genesis* 6.2 and *Book of Job* 1.6.
- ³⁸ Byron is thinking of such works as John Mason Good's 1812 translation of the *Book of Job*, which features a discussion of the historicity of the Biblical text and figure.
- ³⁹ Reference to the Near and Middle Eastern custom of holding trials at or near a city's gates.
- ⁴⁰ Reference to a customary form of Eastern salutation.
- ⁴¹ Proverbial expression.
- ⁴² Biblical reference: see *Ephesians* 2.2.
- ⁴³ Rent of little value paid by a freeholder in lieu of services that could be expected from them.
- ⁴⁴ Misprint for *XLIII*.
- ⁴⁵ George III's first Prime Minister was John Stuart, third Earl of Bute (1713-92), his tutor and close friend.
- ⁴⁶ Byron refers to the fact that George III outlived his ministers, who are now, therefore, in Hell with Satan.
- ⁴⁷ Misprint for *XLV*.
- ⁴⁸ Ancient Roman gourmet, to whom the ancient cookery book *De re culinaria* or *De re coquinaria* ("On the Subject of Cooking") is ascribed.
- ⁴⁹ *Anchorite*: hermit, ascetic.
- ⁵⁰ In 1795, William Pitt and other politicians proposed legislation for the emancipation of Catholics, which George III strongly opposed. He did so again in 1801.
- ⁵¹ George III belonged to the House of Hanover that descended from the medieval House of Welf or Guelph.
- ⁵² Many-headed dog guarding the entrance to the Underworld in Greek and Roman mythology.
- ⁵³ Lunatic.
- ⁵⁴ The list of errata reads: "Page 20, line 5, for 'dwell,' read 'well'".
- ⁵⁵ Misprint for *wont*.
- ⁵⁶ A gold key is among the insignia of several court official, including the Lord Chamberlain.
- ⁵⁷ A mechanical signalling instrument also known as a semphore.
- ⁵⁸ Coin worth two shillings and sixpence.
- ⁵⁹ Biblical reference: see *Hebrews* 12.1.
- ⁶⁰ Misprint for *LIX*.
- ⁶¹ Short, stocky character traditionally representing an average Englishman or Briton.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ⁶² Stereotypical name for an Irishman (from Patrick).
⁶³ (Scots) “What’s your will?”
⁶⁴ The list of errata reads: “Page 23, line 6, instead of ‘amidst the *war*,’ read ‘amidst the *roar*’.”
⁶⁵ Stereotypical name for an American (similar to John Bull for the English and British, and Paddy for the Irish).
⁶⁶ Byron believed that this phrase was commonly used in American conversation. See *BLJ* III:256 and *HVSV*:299.
⁶⁷ Misprint for *LX*.
⁶⁸ Tahiti.
⁶⁹ In card games, spades conventionally rank above clubs.
⁷⁰ (Latin) An official order to appear in court at a specified time.
⁷¹ John Wilkes (1725-97), whom George III called “that Devil Wilkes”, was an opposition politician famous for his opportunism and corruption. In his years as an active political figure, he was an antagonist of George III, but later reneged and in later life often appeared at the king’s levees.
⁷² In the Middlesex, or Westminster, constituency, men with freeholds of 40 shillings (£2) a year or more were allowed to vote. Thus, it had a broader electorate than the rest of English constituencies, and polls had a more popular tenor, something of which Wilkes took full advantage.
⁷³ The Earl of Bute (1713-92), George III’s first Prime Minister, and the Earl of Grafton (1735-1811), Prime Minister during the early years of the War of American Independence. The former was Wilkes’s antagonist, whereas the latter first sympathized with Wilkes then opposed him.
⁷⁴ (Latin) A writ requiring that a person under arrest be tried in court, especially to ascertain the lawfulness of their detention.
⁷⁵ In Greek mythology, the ferryman carrying souls over the river of death, the Lethe.
⁷⁶ A devil. Biblical reference: see I *Samuel* 2.12.
⁷⁷ Charles James Fox (1749-1806) and William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806) were political antagonists – the former a Whig, the latter a Tory.
⁷⁸ The pseudonymous author of a famous series of epistles published between 1769 and 1772, which criticized George III’s policies over civil liberties, America and Ireland. The true identity of ‘Junius’ was never discovered.
⁷⁹ A British man who had become rich in the Asian colonies controlled by the East India Company.
⁸⁰ A type of magic lantern show popular between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when it was used to produce frightening images in keeping with the ‘Gothic’ taste for horror and terror.
⁸¹ Reference to the prisoner, who died in 1703, mysteriously masked and incarcerated on the orders of King Louis XIV of France.
⁸² See Act IV, sc. ii in Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s *The Rivals* (1775).
⁸³ Edmund Burke (1729-97), politician and aesthetics theorist.
⁸⁴ The writer John Horne Tooke (1736-1812), who wrote against Junius.
⁸⁵ The politician Sir Philip Francis (1740-1818), who made his fortune in India as a gambler (see the reference to *nabob*, above).
⁸⁶ In the early nineteenth century the river Niger in Africa was still enveloped in mystery: the locations of its source and mouth were unknown, and it was unclear if it was the same as the Nile and whether it flowed east, west, north or south.
⁸⁷ Erroneously indented.
⁸⁸ Erroneously indented.
⁸⁹ The title page of the original edition of the Letters of Junius bore the Latin inscription “Stat nominis umbra”.
⁹⁰ First President of the United States (1732-99).
⁹¹ The writer John Horne Tooke (1729-97) supported the Americans’ cause during the War of Independence.
⁹² Benjamin Franklin (1706-90), American politician and writer.

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- ⁹³ A devil. See the Book of Tobit in the Old Testament and Alain René Lesage's *Le Diable boiteux* (1707).
- ⁹⁴ Erroneously not indented.
- ⁹⁵ A demonic presence haunting asleep humans.
- ⁹⁶ Mountain in the Lake District, visible from Greta Hall, Robert Southey's house in Keswick.
- ⁹⁷ Biblical reference: see *Numbers* 22.22-31.
- ⁹⁸ See Horace, *Ars Poetica*, ll. 372-3.
- ⁹⁹ Henry James Pye (1745-1813), Robert Southey's predecessor as Poet Laureate.
- ¹⁰⁰ Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh (1769-1822), Foreign Secretary who represented Britain at the Congress of Vienna. Byron hated him above all other political figures.
- ¹⁰¹ St Peter allegedly wrote the Letters known as *Peter I* and *II* in the New Testament.
- ¹⁰² *Felony* "de se": Suicide.
- ¹⁰³ *Wat Tyler*: pro-revolutionary tragedy written by Robert Southey in 1794 and pirated in 1817; "Rhymes on Blenheim" refers to "The Battle of Blenheim" (1798), one of Southey's most popular poems; and "Waterloo" to *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo* (1816).
- ¹⁰⁴ Reference to Robert Southey's "Lines on Marten the Regicide" (1797), which commemorates the imprisonment in Chepstow Castle of Henry Marten, a lawyer and politician who had sat in judgment over King Charles I.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Pantisocracy* was the name given by Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the utopian community they planned to set up on the banks of the Susquehannah river in North America.
- ¹⁰⁶ Erroneously not indented.
- ¹⁰⁷ Misprint for *e'er*.
- ¹⁰⁸ Robert Southey's *The Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism* was published in 1820.
- ¹⁰⁹ See Robert Southey's *Remains of Henry Kirke White, with an Account of his Life* (1807).
- ¹¹⁰ Reference to the alleged scepticism of King Alfonso X of Castile (1221-84), which Byron found in Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* (1697).
- ¹¹¹ See chapter 9 in Walter Scott's *The Antiquary* (1816).
- ¹¹² I.i.9 in Philip Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (c. 1625).
- ¹¹³ Misprint of "at the body" for "at the bottom", which appears correctly in Byron's MS. (The list of errata reads: "Page 38, in the note, for 'body,' read 'bottom'").

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF “MY
GRANDMOTHER’S REVIEW.”^{1*}

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BRITISH REVIEW.

MY DEAR ROBERTS,

As a believer in the Church of England—to say nothing of the State—I have been an occasional reader, and great admirer of, though not a subscriber to, your Review, which is rather expensive. But I do not know that any part of its contents ever gave me much surprise till the eleventh article of your twenty-seventh number made its appearance. You have there most vigorously refuted a calumnious accusation of bribery and corruption,² the credence of which in the public mind might not only have damaged your reputation as a barrister and an editor, but, what would have been still worse, have injured the circulation of your journal; which, I regret to hear, is not so extensive as the “purity (as you well observe) of its,”³ &c. &c. and the present taste for propriety, would induce us to expect. The charge itself is of a solemn nature, and, although in verse, is couched in terms of such circumstantial gravity, as to induce a belief little short of that generally accorded to the thirty-nine articles,⁴ to which you so frankly subscribed on taking your degrees. It is a charge the most revolting to the heart of man, from its frequent occurrence; to the mind of a lawyer, from its occa-

* Author: Lord Byron / Transcribed and annotated by Gioia Angeletti.

sional truth; and to the soul of an editor, from its moral impossibility. You are charged then in the last line of one octave stanza, and the whole eight lines of the next, viz. 209th and 210th of the first canto of that “pestilent poem,”⁵ Don Juan,⁶ with receiving, and still more foolishly acknowledging the receipt of, certain monies,⁷ to eulogize the unknown author, who by this account must be known to you, if to nobody else. An impeachment of this nature, so seriously made, there is but one way of refuting; and it is my firm persuasion, that whether you did or did not (and *I* believe that you did not) receive the said monies, of which I wish that he had specified the sum, you are quite right in denying all knowledge of the transaction. If charges of this nefarious description are to go forth, sanctioned by all the solemnity of circumstance, and guaranteed by the veracity of verse (as Counsellor Phillips⁸ would say) what is to become of readers hitherto implicitly confident in the not less veracious prose of our critical journals? what is to become of the reviews? And, if the reviews fail, what is to become of the editors? It is common cause, and you have done well to sound the alarm. I myself, in my humble sphere, will be one of your echoes. In the words of the tragedian Liston,⁹ “I love a row,”¹⁰ and you seem justly determined to make one.

It is barely possible, certainly improbable, that the writer might have been in jest; but this only aggravates his crime. A joke, the proverb says, “breaks no bones;” but it may break a bookseller, or it may be the cause of bones being broken. The jest is but a bad one at the best for the author, and might have been a still worse one for you, if your copious contradiction did not certify to all whom it may concern your own indignant innocence, and the immaculate purity of the British Review. I do not doubt your word, my dear Roberts,

yet I cannot help wishing that in a case of such vital importance, it had assumed the more substantial shape of an affidavit¹¹ sworn before the Lord Mayor.¹²

I am sure, my dear Roberts, that you will take these observations of mine in good part; they are written in a spirit of friendship not less pure than your own editorial integrity. I have always admired you; and not knowing any shape which friendship and admiration can assume more agreeable and useful than that of good advice, I shall continue my lucubrations, mixed with here and there a monitory hint as to what I conceive to be the line you should pursue, in case you should ever again be assailed with bribes, or accused of taking them. By the way, you don't say much about the poem, except that it is "flagitious."¹³ This is a pity—you should have cut it up; because, to say the truth, in not doing so, you somewhat assist any notions which the malignant might entertain on the score of the anonymous asseveration which has made you so angry.

You say, no bookseller "was willing to take upon himself the publication, though most of them disgrace themselves by selling it."¹⁴ Now, my dear friend, though we all know that those fellows will do any thing for money, methinks the disgrace is more with the purchasers; and some such, doubtless, there are, for there can be no very extensive selling (as you will perceive by that of the *British Review*) without buying. You then add, "what can the critic say?" I am sure I don't know; at present he says very little, and that not much to the purpose. Then comes, "for praise, as far as regards *the poetry*, many passages might be exhibited; for condemnation, as far as regards the morality, all." Now, my dear good Roberts, I feel for you and for your reputation; my heart bleeds for both; and I do ask you, whether or not such language does not come positively under the

description of “the puff collusive,” for which see Sheridan’s farce of “The Critic”¹⁵ (by the way, a little more facetious than your own farce under the same title) towards the close of scene second, act the first.

The poem is, it seems, sold as the work of Lord Byron; but you feel yourself “at liberty to suppose it not Lord B.’s “composition.” Why did you ever suppose that it was? I approve of your indignation—I applaud it—I feel as angry as you can; but perhaps your virtuous wrath carries you a little too far, when you say that “no misdemeanour, not even “that of sending into the world obscene and blasphemous “poetry, the product of studious lewdness and laboured impiety, appears to you in so detestable a light as the acceptance of a present by the editor of a review, as the “condition of praising an author.” The devil it doesn’t!—Think a little. This is being critical overmuch. In point of Gentile benevolence or Christian charity, it were surely less criminal to praise for a bribe, than to abuse a fellow creature for nothing; and as to the assertion of the comparative innocence of blasphemy and obscenity, confronted with an editor’s “acceptance of a present,”¹⁶ I shall merely observe, that as an editor you say very well, but as a Christian barrister, I would not recommend you to transplant this sentence into a brief.

And yet you say, “the miserable man (for miserable he is, “as having a soul of which he cannot get rid”)—But here I must pause again, and inquire what is the meaning of this parenthesis. We have heard of people of “little soul,” or of “no soul at all,” but never till now of “the misery of having “a soul of which we cannot get rid;”¹⁷ a misery under which you are possibly no great sufferer, having got rid apparently of some of the intellectual part of your own when you penned this pretty piece of eloquence.

But to continue. You call upon Lord Byron, always supposing him *not* the author, to disclaim "with all gentlemanly haste," &c. &c. I am told that Lord B. is in a foreign country, some thousand miles off it may be; so that it will be difficult for him to hurry to your wishes. In the mean time, perhaps you yourself have set an example of more haste than gentility; but "the more haste the worse speed."

Let us now look at the charge itself, my dear Roberts, which appears to me to be in some degree not quite explicitly worded:

"I bribed my *Grandmother's Review*, the British."¹⁸

I recollect hearing, soon after the publication, this subject discussed at the tea-table of Mr. S. the poet¹⁹, who expressed himself, I remember, a good deal surprised that you had never reviewed his epic poem, nor any of his six tragedies, of which, in one instance, the bad taste of the pit, and in all the rest, the barbarous repugnance of the principal actors, prevented the performance. Mrs. and the Misses S. being in a corner of the room perusing the proof sheets of some new poems on Italy (I wish, by the by, Mrs. S. would make the tea a little stronger) the male part of the *conversazione*²⁰ were at liberty to make a few observations on the poem and passage in question, and there was a difference of opinion. Some thought the allusion was to the "British Critic;" others, that by the expression, "my Grandmother's Review," it was intimated that "my grandmother" was not the reader of the review, but actually the writer; thereby insinuating, my dear Roberts, that you were an old woman; because, as people often say, "Jeffrey's Review,"²¹ "Gifford's Review,"²² in lieu of *Edinburgh and Quarterly*; so "my Grandmother's Review" and Roberts's might be also synonymous. Now, whatever colour this insinuation might derive from the cir-

cumstance of your wearing a gown, as well as from your time of life, your general style, and various passages of your writings,—I will take upon myself to exculpate you from all suspicion of the kind, and assert, without calling Mrs. Roberts in testimony, that if ever you should be chosen Pope, you will pass through all the previous ceremonies with as much credit as any pontiff since the parturition of Joan.²³ It is very unfair to judge of sex from writings, particularly from those of the *British Review*. We are all liable to be deceived; and it is an indisputable fact, that many of the best articles in your journal, which were attributed to a veteran female,²⁴ were actually written by you yourself; and yet to this day there are people who could never find out the difference. But let us return to the more immediate question.

I agree with you that it is impossible Lord Byron should be the author, not only because, as a British peer,²⁵ and a British poet, it would be impracticable for him to have recourse to such facetious fiction, but for some other reasons which you have omitted to state. In the first place, his lordship has no grandmother. Now the author—and we may believe him in this—doth expressly state that the “British” is his “Grandmother’s Review;” and if, as I think I have distinctly proved, this was not a mere figurative allusion to your supposed intellectual age and sex, my dear friend, it follows, whether you be she or no, that there is such an elderly lady still extant. And I can the more readily credit this, having a sexagenary aunt of my own, who perused you constantly, till unfortunately falling asleep over the leading article of your last number, her spectacles fell off and were broken against the fender, after a faithful service of fifteen years, and she has never been able to fit her eyes since; so that I have been forced to read you aloud to her; and this is in fact the way in which I became acquainted with the sub-

ject of my present letter, and thus determined to become your public correspondent.

In the next place, Lord B.'s destiny seems in some sort like that of Hercules²⁶ of old, who became the author of all unappropriated prodigies. Lord B. has been supposed the author of the "Vampire," of a "Pilgrimage to Jerusalem," "To the Dead Sea," of "Death upon the Pale Horse," of odes to "La Valette," to "Saint Helena," to the "Land of the Gaul," and to a sucking child²⁷. Now he turned out to have written none of these things. Besides, you say, he knows in what a spirit of, &c. you criticise—Are you sure he knows all this? that he has read you like my poor dear aunt? They tell me he is a queer sort of a man; and I would not be too sure, if I were you, either of what he has read or of what he has written. I thought his style had been the serious and terrible. As to his sending you money, this is the first time that ever I heard of his paying his reviewers in *that coin*; I thought it was rather in *their own*, to judge from some of his earlier productions. Besides, though he may not be profuse in his expenditure, I should conjecture that his reviewer's bill is not so long as his tailor's.

Shall I give you what I think a prudent opinion? I don't mean to insinuate, God forbid! but if, by any accident, there should have been such a correspondence between you and the unknown author, whoever he may be, send him back his money: I dare say he will be very glad to have it again: it can't be much, considering the value of the article and the circulation of the journal; and you are too modest to rate your praise beyond its real worth.—Don't be angry,—I know you won't,—at this appraisal of your powers of eulogy; for on the other hand, my dear friend, depend upon it your abuse is worth, not its own weight,—that's a feather,—but *your weight* in gold. So don't spare it: if he has bargained for *that*,

give it handsomely, and depend upon your doing him a friendly office.

But I only speak in case of possibility; for, as I said before, I cannot believe in the first instance, that you would receive a bribe to praise any person whatever; and still less can I believe that your praise could ever produce such an offer. You are a good creature, my dear Roberts, and a clever fellow; else I could almost suspect that you had fallen into the very trap set for you in verse by this anonymous wag, who will certainly be but too happy to see you saving him the trouble of making you ridiculous. The fact is, that the solemnity of your eleventh article does make you look a little more absurd than you ever yet looked, in all probability, and at the same time does no good; for if any body believed before in the octave stanzas, they will believe still, and you will find it not less difficult to prove your negative, than the learned Partridge found it to demonstrate his not being dead, to the satisfaction of the readers of almanacs.

What the motives of this writer may have been for (as you magnificently translate his quizzing you) “stating, with the “particularity which belongs to fact, the forgery of a ground-“less fiction,” (do pray, my dear R., talk a little less “in “King Cambyzes’ vein”²⁸) I cannot pretend to say; perhaps to laugh at you, but that is no reason for your benevolently making all the world laugh also. I approve of your being angry; I tell you I am angry too; but you should not have shown it so outrageously. Your solemn “*if* somebody per-“sonating the Editor of the,” &c. &c. “has received from “Lord B. or from any other person,” reminds me of Charley Incledon’s²⁹ usual exordium when people came into the tavern to hear him sing without paying their share of the reckoning —“If a maun, or *ony* maun, or *ony other* maun,” &c. &c.;

you have both the same redundant eloquence. But why should you think any body would personate you? Nobody would dream of such a prank who ever read your compositions, and perhaps not many who have heard your conversation. But I have been inoculated with a little of your prolixity. The fact is, my dear Roberts, that somebody has tried to make a fool of you, and what he did not succeed in doing, you have done for him and for yourself.

With regard to the poem itself, or the author, whom I cannot find out (can you?) I have nothing to say; my business is with you. I am sure that you will, upon second thoughts, be really obliged to me for the intention of this letter, however far short my expressions may have fallen of the sincere good will, admiration, and thorough esteem, with which I am ever, my dear Roberts,

Most truly yours,

WORTLEY CLUTTERBUCK.³⁰

Sept.—,—.
*Little Pidlington.*³¹

P.S. My letter is too long to revise, and the post is going. I forget whether or not I asked you the meaning of your last words, "the forgery of a groundless fiction." Now, as all forgery is fiction, and all fiction a kind of forgery, is not this tautological? The sentence would have ended more strongly with "forgery;" only it hath an awful Bank of England sound, and would have ended like an indictment, besides sparing you several words, and conferring some meaning upon the remainder. But this is mere verbal criticism. Good bye—once more yours truly,

W. C.

P. S. 2nd.—Is it true that the Saints make up the losses of the review?—It is very handsome in them to be at so great an expence—Pray pardon my taking up so much of your time from the bar, and from your clients, who I hear are about the same number with the readers of your journal. *Twice* more yours,

W. C.

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¹ Reference to the *British Review and London Critical Journal* (1811-25) and its editor, William Roberts (1767-1849). In *Don Juan* I.209 (1819), Byron called *The British* “My Grandmother’s Review”, claiming to have bribed it in order to write a positive review of his poem. Roberts responded to this accusation in his article “Don Juan” (art. XI in *The British Review*, vol. 14, 1819), denying said charges. Byron replied to Roberts in “Letter to the Editor of ‘My Grandmother’s Review’”, written in 1819 but published only in 1822 in *The Liberal*. No further response from Roberts ever appeared.

² Reference to Lord Byron’s *Don Juan* I.209-10: “For fear some prudish readers should grow skittish, / I’ve bribed My Grandmother’s Review, – the British!”

³ Reference to “Don Juan”, *The British Review* 14 (1819), p. 267: “A Review which has long maintained, in the cause of public and private virtue, its consistency and purity”.

⁴ *Thirty-nine Articles of Religion* (1571), doctrinal statements of the Church of England.

⁵ Reference to “Don Juan”, *The British Review* 14 (1819), p. 267: “The miserable man [...] who has given birth to this pestilent poem”.

⁶ Lord Byron’s *Don Juan*, the first two cantos of which appeared in 1819.

⁷ Plural of “money”, a form frequently used at this time.

⁸ Charles Phillips (1786-1859), Irish poet and barrister.

⁹ John Liston (1776-1846), English comedian.

¹⁰ Untraced quotation.

¹¹ A sworn statement in writing, especially one made under oath before a magistrate or an officer.

¹² Reference to John Atkins (1760-1838), Lord Mayor of London in 1818 and 1819.

¹³ (Latin) Shameful thing. Reference to “Don Juan”, *The British Review* 14 (1819), p. 266: “Of a poem so flagitious that no bookseller has been willing to take upon himself the publication”.

¹⁴ “Don Juan”, *The British Review* 14 (1819).

¹⁵ Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Critic; or, a Tragedy Rehearsed* (produced at Drury Lane in 1779 and published in 1781), a burlesque drama in three acts. In Act I, sc. 2, the “Puff collusive” assumes “as circumstances require, the various forms of Letter to the Editor, Occasional Anecdote, Impartial Critique, Observation from Correspondent, or Advertisement from the party”; the “puff collusive” also “acts in the disguise of determined hostility. It is much used by bold booksellers and enterprising poets”.

¹⁶ See “Don Juan”, *The British Review* 14 (1819), p. 267: “The product of ‘studious lewdness’, and ‘laboured impiety’, appears to us in so detestable a light as the acceptance of a present by an editor of a review as the condition of praising an author”.

¹⁷ Reference to “Don Juan”, *The British Review* 14 (1819), p. 267: “For miserable he is, as having a soul of which he cannot get rid”.

¹⁸ Lord Byron, *Don Juan* I.209-10.

¹⁹ William Sotheby (1757-1833), English poet and translator. Sotheby was the author of the epic poem *Saul; A Poem, in Two Parts* (1807), *Five Tragedies* (1814), and *Farewell to Italy* (1818).

²⁰ (Italian) Conversation. During the Romantic period, the term *Conversazione* was used to refer to social gatherings also dedicated to intellectual discussions about art, literature or music.

²¹ The *Edinburgh Review* (1802-1929), Whig periodical published by Archibald Constable (1774-1827) and edited by Francis Jeffrey (1773-1850) during the Romantic period.

²² The *Quarterly Review* (1809-1967), Tory periodical published by John Murray and edited by William Gifford (1756-1826) during the Romantic period.

²³ Pope Joan, a legendary female pope said to have reigned from 855 to 858.

²⁴ With a nod to the title of this “letter”, Byron mockingly refers to Roberts as an elderly woman.

²⁵ See “Don Juan”, *The British Review* 14 (1819), p. 267: “Lord Byron could not have been the author of this assertion concerning us [...] not only because he is a British peer”.

²⁶ Heracles (or Hercules), in Greek mythology the son of Zeus and Alcmene.

²⁷ Here Byron takes some liberty with the titles of works that were falsely attributed to him, whether by error or with fraudulent intent.

²⁸ In William Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* (1597), Act II, sc. 4, Falstaff speaks “in King Cambyses’ vein”, mocking the pretentious style of monarchs in medieval plays.

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²⁹ Charles Incledon (1763-1826), Cornish tenor singer.

³⁰ See Lord Byron's letter to John Murray of 23 August 1819: "I send you a letter to R**ts, signed 'Wortley Clutterbuck', which you may publish in what form you please, in answer to this article".

³¹ Fictional place, possibly Piddington in Oxfordshire.

THE FLORENTINE LOVERS.**

AT the time when Florence was divided into the two fierce parties of Guelfs and Ghibelines,¹ there was great hostility between two families of the name of Bardi and Buondelmonti.² It was seldom that love took place between individuals of houses so divided; but, when it did, it was proportionately vehement, either because the individuals themselves were vehement in all their passions, or because love, falling upon two gentle hearts, made them the more pity and love one another, to find themselves in so unnatural a situation.

Of this latter kind was an affection that took place between a young lady of the family of the Bardi, called Dianora d'Amerigo, and a youth of the other family, whose name was Ippolito.³ The girl was about fifteen, and in the full flower of her beauty and sweetness. Ippolito was about three years older, and looked two or three more, on account of a certain gravity and deep regard in the upper part of his face. You might know by his lips that he could love well, and by his eyes that he could keep the secret. There was a likeness, as sometimes happens, between the two lovers; and perhaps this was no mean help to their passion; for as we find painters often giving their own faces to their heroes, so the more ex-

* The groundwork of this story is in a late Italian publication called the *Florentine Observer*⁴, descriptive of the old buildings and other circumstances of local interest in the capital of Tuscany.

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Gioia Angeletti.

cusable vanity of lovers delights to find that resemblance in one another, which Plato⁵ said was only the divorced half of the original human being rushing into communion with the other.

Be this as it may (and lovers in those times were not ignorant of such speculations) it needed but one sight of Dianora d'Amerigo to make Ippolito fall violently in love with her. It was in church on a great holiday. In the South the church has ever been the place where people fall in love. It is there that the young of both sexes oftenest find themselves in each other's company. There the voluptuous that cannot fix their thoughts upon heaven find congenial objects, more earthly, to win their attention; and there, the most innocent and devotional spirits, voluptuous also without being aware of it, and not knowing how to vent the grateful pleasure of their hearts, discover their tendency to repose on beings that can shew themselves visibly sensible to their joy. The paintings, the perfumes, the music, the kind crucifix, the mixture of aspiration and earthly ceremony, the draperies, the white vestments of young and old, the boys' voices, the giant candles, typical of the seraphic ministrants about God's altar, the meeting of all ages and classes, the echoings of the aisles, the lights and shades of the pillars and vaulted roofs, the very struggle of day-light at the lofty windows, as if earth were at once present and not present,—all have a tendency to confuse the boundaries of this world and the next, and to set the heart floating in that delicious mixture of elevation and humility, which is ready to sympathize with whatever can preserve to it something like its sensations, and save it from the hardness and definite folly of ordinary life. It was in a church that Boccaccio,⁶ not merely the voluptuous Boccaccio, who is but half-known by the half-witted, but Boccaccio, the future painter of the Falcon

and the Pot of Basil,⁷ first saw the beautiful face of his Fiammetta.⁸ In a church, Petrarch⁹ felt the sweet shadow fall on him that darkened his life for twenty years after. And the fond gratitude of the local historian for a tale of true love, has left it on record, that it was in the church of St. Giovanni at Florence, and on the great day of Pardon,¹⁰ which falls on the 13th of January, that Ippolito de' Buondelmonte became enamoured of Dianora d'Amerigo. [How delicious it is to repeat these beautiful Italian names, when they are not merely names. We find ourselves almost unconsciously writing them in a better hand than the rest; not merely for the sake of the printer, but for the pleasure of lingering upon the sound.]

When the people were about to leave church, Ippolito, in turning to speak to an acquaintance, lost sight of his unknown beauty. He made haste to plant himself at the door, telling his companion that he should like to see the ladies come out; for he had not the courage to say which lady. When he saw Dianora appear, he changed colour, and saw nothing else. Yet though he beheld, and beheld her distinctly, so as to carry away every feature in his heart, it seemed to him afterwards that he had seen her only as in a dream. She glided by him like a thing of heaven, drawing her veil over her head. As he had not had the courage to speak of her, he had still less the courage to ask her name; but he was saved the trouble. "God and St. John¹¹ bless her beautiful face!" cried a beggar at the door; "she always gives double of any "one else."—"Curse her!" muttered Ippolito's acquaintance; "she is one of the Bardi." The ear of the lover heard both these exclamations, and they made an indelible impression. Being a lover of books and poetry, and intimate with the most liberal of the two parties, such as Dante Alighieri (afterwards so famous) and Guido Cavalcanti,¹² Ippolito,

though a warm partisan himself, and implicated in a fierce encounter that had lately taken place between some persons on horseback, had been saved from the worst feelings attendant on political hostility; and they now appeared to him odious. He had no thought, it is true, of forgiving one of the old Bardi, who had cut his father down from his horse; but he would now have sentenced the whole party to a milder banishment than before; and to curse a female belonging to it, and that female Dianora!—he differed with the stupid fellow that had done it whenever they met afterwards.

It was a heavy reflection to Ippolito to think that he could not see his mistress in her own house. She had a father and mother living as well as himself, and was surrounded with relations. It was a heavier still that he knew not how to make her sensible of his passion; and the heaviest of all, that being so lovely, she would certainly be carried off by another husband. What was he to do? He had no excuse for writing to her; and as to serenading her under her window, unless he meant to call all the neighbours to witness his temerity and lose his life at once in that brawling age, it was not to be thought of. He was obliged to content himself with watching, as well as he could, the windows of her abode, following her about whenever he saw her leave it, and with pardonable vanity trying to catch her attention by some little action that should give her a good thought of the stranger; such as anticipating her in giving alms to a beggar. We must even record, that on one occasion he contrived to stumble against a dog and tread on his toes, in order that he might ostentatiously help the poor beast out of the way. But his day of delight was church-day. Not a fast, not a feast did he miss; not a Sunday, nor a saints'-day. "The devotion of that young gentleman," said an old widow-lady, her aunt, who was in the habit of accompanying Dianora, "is indeed edifying;

“and yet he is a mighty pretty youth, and might waste his “time in sins and vanities with the gayest of them.” And the old widow lady sighed, doubtless out of a tender pity for the gay. Her recommendation of Ippolito to her niece’s notice would have been little applauded by her family; but, to say the truth, she was not responsible. His manœuvres and constant presence had already gained Dianora’s attention; and, with all the unaffected instinct of an Italian, she was not long in suspecting who it was that attracted his devotions, and in wishing very heartily that they might continue. She longed to learn who he was, but felt the same want of courage as he himself had experienced. “Did you “observe,” said the aunt, one day after leaving church, “how the poor boy blushed, because he did but catch my “eye? Truly, such modesty is very rare.” “Dear aunt,” replied Dianora, with a mixture of real and affected archness, of pleasure and of gratitude, “I thought you never wished “me to notice the faces of young men.” “Not of young men, “niece,” returned the aunt, gravely; “not of persons of “twenty-eight, or thirty or so, nor indeed of youths in “general, however young; but then this youth is very different; and the most innocent of us may look, once in a “way or so, at so very modest and respectful a young gentleman. I say respectful, because when I gave him a slight “curtesy of acknowledgment, or so, for making way for me “in the aisle, he bowed to me with so solemn and thankful “an air as if the favour had come from me, which was extremely polite; and if he is very handsome, poor boy, how “can he help that? Saints have been handsome in their “days, aye, and young, or their pictures are not at all like, “which is impossible; and I am sure St. Dominic¹³ himself “in the wax-work, God forgive me! hardly looks sweeter and “humbler at the Madonna and Child,¹⁴ than he did at me and

“you, as we went by.” “Dear aunt,” rejoined Dianora, “I did not mean to reproach you, I’m sure; but, sweet aunt, we do not know him, you know; and you know—” “Know,” cried the old lady, “I’m sure I know him as well as if he were my own aunt’s son, which might not be impossible, though she is a little younger than myself; and if he were my own, I should not be ashamed.” “And who then,” inquired Dianora, scarcely articulating her words, “who then is he?” “Who?” said the aunt; “why the most edifying young gentleman in all Florence, that’s who he is; and it does not signify what he is else, manifestly being a gentleman as he is, and one of the noblest, I warrant; and I wish you may have no worse husband, child, when you come to marry, though there is time enough to think of that. Young ladies, now-a-days, are always for knowing who every body is, who he is, and what he is, and whether he is this person or that person, and is of the Grand Prior’s¹⁵ side, or the Archbishop’s¹⁶ side, and what not; and all this before they will allow him to be even handsome, which, I am sure, was not so in my youngest days. It is all right and proper, if matrimony is concerned, or they are in danger of marrying below their condition, or a profane person, or one that’s hideous, or a heretic; but to admire an evident young saint, and one that never misses church, Sunday or saints-day, or any day for aught that I see, is a thing that, if any thing, shews we may hope for the company of young saints hereafter; and if so edifying a young gentleman is also respectful to the ladies, was not the blessed St. Francis¹⁷ himself of his opinion in that matter? And did not the seraphical St. Teresa¹⁸ admire him the more for it? And does not St. Paul,¹⁹ in his very epistles,²⁰ send his best respects to the ladies Tryphœna and Tryphosa?²¹ And was there ever woman in the New

“Testament (with reverence be it spoken, if we may say “women of such blessed females) was there ever woman, I “say, in the New Testament, not even excepting Madonna “Magdalen²² who had been possessed with seven devils²³ (which “is not so many by half as some ladies I could mention) nor “Madonna, the other poor lady, whom the unforgiving “hypocrites wanted to stone²⁴” (and here the good old lady wept, out of a mixture of devotion and gratitude) “was “there one of all these women, or any other, whom our “Blessed Lord himself” (and here the tears came into the gentle eyes of Dianora) “did not treat with all that sweetness, and kindness, and tenderness, and brotherly love, “which like all his other actions, and as the seraphical Father Antonio said the other day in the pulpit, proved him “to be not only from heaven, but the truest of all nobles on “earth, and a natural gentleman born?”

We know not how many more reasons the good old lady would have given, why all the feelings of poor Dianora’s heart, not excepting her very religion, which was truly one of them, should induce her to encourage her affection for Ippolito. By the end of this sentence they had arrived at their home, and the poor youth returned to his. We say “poor” of both the lovers, for by this time they had both become sufficiently enamoured to render their cheeks the paler for discovering their respective families, which Dianora had now done as well as Ippolito.

A circumstance on the Sunday following had nearly discovered them, not only to one another, but to all the world. Dianora had latterly never dared to steal a look at Ippolito, for fear of seeing his eyes upon her; and Ippolito, who was less certain of her regard for him than herself, imagined that he had somehow offended her. A few Sundays before she had sent him home bounding for joy. There had been two

places empty where he was kneeling, one near him, and the other a little farther off. The aunt and the niece, who came in after him, and found themselves at the spot where he was, were perplexed which of the two places to chuse;²⁵ when it seemed to Ippolito, that by a little movement of her arm, Dianora decided for the one nearest him. He had also another delight. The old lady, in the course of the service, turned to her niece, and asked her why she did not sing as usual. Dianora bowed her head, and in a minute or two afterwards, Ippolito heard the sweetest voice in the world, low indeed, almost to a whisper, but audible to him. He thought it trembled; and he trembled also. It seemed to thrill within his spirit, in the same manner that the organ thrills through the body. No such symptom of preference occurred afterwards. The ladies did not come so near him, whatever pains he took to occupy so much room before they came in, and then make room when they appeared. However, he was self-satisfied as well as ingenious enough in his reasonings on the subject, not to lay much stress upon this behaviour, till it lasted week after week, and till he never again found Dianora looking even towards the quarter in which he sat: for it is our duty to confess, that if the lovers were two of the devoutest of the congregation, which is certain, they were apt also, at intervals, to be the least attentive; and, furthermore, that they would each pretend to look towards places at a little distance from the desired object, in order that they might take in, with the sidelong power of the eye, the presence and look of one another. But for some time Dianora had ceased even to do this; and though Ippolito gazed on her the more steadfastly, and saw that she was paler than before, he began to persuade himself that it was not on his account. At length, a sort of desperation urged him to get nearer to her, if she would not condescend to

come near himself; and, on the Sunday in question, scarcely knowing what he did, or how he saw, felt, or breathed, he knelt right down beside her. There was a pillar next him, which luckily kept him somewhat in the shade; and, for a moment, he leaned his forehead against the cold marble, which revived him. Dianora did not know he was by her. She did not sing; nor did the aunt ask her. She kept one unaltered posture, looking upon her mass-book, and he thought she did this on purpose. Ippolito, who had become weak with his late struggles of mind, felt almost suffocated with his sensations. He was kneeling side by side with her; her idea, her presence, her very drapery, which was all that he dared to feel himself in contact with, the consciousness of kneeling with her in the presence of him whom tender hearts implore for pity on their infirmities, all rendered him intensely sensible of his situation. By a strong effort, he endeavoured to turn his self-pity into a feeling entirely religious; but when he put his hands together, he felt the tears ready to gush away so irrepressibly, that he did not dare it. At last the aunt, who had in fact looked about for him, recognized him with some surprise, and more pleasure. She had begun to suspect his secret; and though she knew who he was, and that the two families were at variance, yet a great deal of good nature, a sympathy with pleasures of which no woman had tasted more, and some considerable disputes she had lately with another old lady, her kinswoman, on the subject of politics, determined her upon at least giving the two lovers that sort of encouragement, which arises not so much from any decided object we have in view, as from a certain vague sense of benevolence, mixed with a lurking wish to have our own way. Accordingly, the well-meaning old widow-lady, without much consideration, and loud enough for Ippolito to hear, whispered her niece to

“let the gentleman next her read in her book, as he seemed “to have forgotten to bring his own.” Dianora, without lifting her eyes, and never suspecting who it was, moved her book sideways, with a courteous inclination of the head, for the gentleman to take it. He did so. He held it with her. He could not hinder his hand from shaking; but Dianora’s reflections were so occupied upon one whom she little thought so near her, that she did not perceive it. At length the book tottered so in his hand, that she could not but notice it. She turned to see if the gentleman was ill; and instantly looked back again. She felt that she herself was too weak to look at him, and whispering to her aunt, “I am very unwell,” the ladies rose and made their way out of the church. As soon as she felt the fresh air she fainted, and was carried home; and it happened, at the same moment, that Ippolito, unable to keep his feelings to himself, leaned upon the marble pillar at which he was kneeling, and groaned aloud. He fancied she had left him in disdain. Luckily for him, a circumstance of this kind was not unknown in a place where penitents would sometimes be overpowered by a sense of their crimes; and though Ippolito was recognized by some, they concluded he had not been the innocent person they supposed. They made up their minds in future that his retired and bookish habits, and his late evident suffering, were alike the result of some dark offence; and among these persons, the acquaintance who had cursed Dianora when he first beheld her, was glad to be one; for without knowing his passion for her, much less her return of it, which was more than the poor youth knew himself, he envied him for his accomplishments and popularity.

Ippolito dragged himself home, and after endeavouring to move about for a day or two, and to get as far as Dianora’s abode,—an attempt he gave up for fear of being unable to

come away again,—was fairly obliged to take to his bed. What a mixture of delight, with sorrow, would he have felt, had he known that his mistress was almost in as bad a state! The poor aunt, who soon discovered her niece's secret, now found herself in a dreadful dilemma; and the worst of it was, that being on the female side of the love, and told by Dianora that it would be the death of her if she disclosed it to "*him*," or any body connected with him, or, indeed, any body at all, she did not know what steps to take. However, as she believed that at least death might possibly ensue if the dear young people were not assured of each other's love, and certainly did not believe in any such mortality as her niece spoke of, she was about to make her first election out of two or three measures which she was resolved upon taking, when, luckily for the salvation of Dianora's feelings, she was surprised by a visit from the person, whom of all persons in the world she wished to see,—Ippolito's mother.

The two ladies soon came to a mutual understanding, and separated with comfort for their respective patients. We need not wait to describe how a mother came to the knowledge of her son's wishes; nor will it be necessary to relate how delighted the two lovers were to hear of one another, and to be assured of each other's love. But Ippolito's illness now put on a new aspect; for the certainty of his being welcome to Dianora, and the easiness with which he saw his mother give way to his inclinations, made him impatient for an interview. Dianora was afraid of encountering him as usual in public; and he never ceased urging his mother, till she consented to advise with Dianora's aunt upon what was to be done. Indeed, with the usual weakness of those, who take any steps, however likely to produce future trouble, rather than continue a present uneasiness, she herself thought it high time to do something for the poor boy; for the house began to remark

on his strange conduct. All his actions were either too quick, or too slow. At one time he would start up to perform the most trivial office of politeness, as if he were going to stop a conflagration; at another, the whole world might move before him without his noticing. He would now leap on his horse, as if the enemy were at the city-gates; and next day, when going to mount it, stop on a sudden, with the reins in his hands, and fall a musing. "What is the matter with the boy?" said his father, who was impatient at seeing him so little his own master; "has he stolen a box of jewels?" for somebody had spread a report that he gambled, and it was observed that he never had any money in his pocket. The truth is, he gave it all away to the objects of Dianora's bounty, particularly to the man who blessed her at the church door. One day his father, who loved a bitter joke, made a young lady, who sat next him at dinner, lay her hand before him instead of the plate; and upon being asked why he did not eat, he was very near taking a piece of it for a mouthful. "Oh, the gallant youth!" cried the father, and Ippolito blushed up to the eyes; which was taken as a proof that the irony was well-founded. But Ippolito thought of Dianora's hand, how it held the book with him when he knelt by her side; and, after a little pause, he turned and took up that of the young lady, and begged her pardon with the best grace in the world. "He has the air of a prince," thought his father, "if he would but behave himself like other young men." The young lady thought he had the air of a lover; and as soon as the meal was over, his mother put on her veil, and went to seek a distant relation called Signora Veronica.

Signora Veronica was in a singular position with regard to the two families of Bardi and Buondelmonti. She happened to be related at nearly equal distances to them both; and she hardly knew whether to be prouder of the double relationship,

or more annoyed with the evil countenances they shewed her, if she did not pay great attention to one of them, and no attention to the other. The pride remained uppermost, as it is apt to do; and she hazarded all consequences for the pleasure of inviting now some of the young de' Bardi, and now some of the young de' Buondelmonti; hinting to them when they went away, that it would be as well for them not to say that they had heard any thing of the other family's visiting her. The young people were not sorry to keep the matter as secret as possible, because their visits to Gossip Veronica were always restrained for a long time, if anything of the sort transpired; and thus a spirit of concealment and intrigue was sown in their young minds, which might have turned out worse for Ippolito and Dianora, if their hearts had not been so good.

But here was a situation for Gossip Veronica! Dianora's aunt had been with her some days, hinting that something extraordinary, but as she hoped not unpleasant, would be proposed to the good Gossip, which for her part had her grave sanction; and now came the very mother of the young Buondelmonte to explain to her what this intimation was, and to give her an opportunity of having one of each family in her house at the same time! There was a great falling off in the beatitude, when she understood that Ippolito's presence was to be kept a secret from all her visitors that day, except Dianora; but she was reconciled on receiving an intimation that in future the two ladies would have no objection to her inviting whom she pleased to her house, and upon receiving a jewel from each of them as a pledge of their esteem. As to keeping the main secret, it was necessary for all parties.

Gossip Veronica, for a person in her rank of life, was rich, and had a pleasant villa at Monticelli, about half a mile from the city. Thither, on a holiday in September, which was

kept with great hilarity by the peasants, came Dianora d'Amerigo de' Bardi, attended by her aunt Madonna²⁶ Lucrezia, to see, as her mother observed, that no "improper persons" were there;—and thither, before daylight, let in by Signora²⁷ Veronica herself, at the hazard of her reputation and of the furious jealousy of a young vine-dresser²⁸ in the neighbourhood, who loved her good things better than any thing in the world except her waiting-maid, came the young Ippolito Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti, looking, as she said, like the morning star.

The morning-star hugged and was hugged with great good will by the kind Gossip, and then twinkled with impatience from a corner of her chamber window till he saw Dianora. How his heart beat when he beheld her coming up through the avenue! Veronica met her near the garden-gate, and pointed towards the window, as they walked along. Ippolito fancied she spoke of him, but did not know what to think of it, for Dianora did not change countenance, nor do any thing but smile good-naturedly on her companion, and ask her apparently some common question. The truth was, she had no suspicion he was there; though the Gossip, with much smirking and mystery, said she had a little present there for her, and such as her lady-mother approved. Dianora, whom, with all imaginable respect for her, the Gossip had hitherto treated, from long habit, like a child, thought it was some trifle or other, and forgot it next moment. Every step which Ippolito heard on the stair-case he fancied was her's,²⁹ till it passed the door, and never did morning appear to him at once so delicious and so tiresome. To be in the same house with her, what joy! But to be in the same house with her, and not to be able to tell her his love directly, and ask her for her's, and fold her into his very soul, what impatience and misery! Two or three times there was a knock of some one

to be let in; but it was only the Gossip, come to inform him that he must be patient, and that she did not know when Madonna Lucrezia would please to bring Dianora, but most likely after dinner, when the visitors retired to sleep a little. Of all impertinent things, dinner appeared to him the most tiresome and unfit. He wondered how any thinking beings, who might take a cake or a cup of wine by the way, and then proceed to love one another, could sit round a great wooden table, patiently eating of this and that nicety; and, above all, how they could sit still afterwards for a moment, and not do any thing else in preference,—stand on their heads, or toss the dishes out of window. Then the Festival! God only knew how happy the peasantry might chuse to be, and how long they might detain Dianora with their compliments, dances, and songs. Doubtless, there must be many lovers among them; and how they could bear to go jigging about in this gregarious manner, when they must all wish to be walking two by two in the green lanes, was to him inexplicable. However, Ippolito was very sincere in his gratitude to Gossip Veronica, and even did his best to behave handsomely to her cake and wine; and after dinner his virtue was rewarded.

It is unnecessary to tell the reader, that he must not judge of other times and countries by his own. The real fault of those times, as of most others, lay, not in people's loves, but their hostilities; and if both were managed in a way somewhat different from our own, perhaps neither the loves were less innocent, nor the hostilities more ridiculous. After dinner, when the other visitors had separated here and there to sleep, Dianora, accompanied by her aunt and Veronica, found herself, to her great astonishment, in the same room with Ippolito; and in a few minutes after their introduction to each other, and after one had looked this way, and the other that,

and one taken up a book and laid it down again, and both looked out of the window, and each blushed, and either turned pale, and the gentleman adjusted his collar, and the lady her sleeve, and the elder ladies had whispered one another in a corner, Dianora, less to her astonishment than before, was left in the room with him alone. She made a movement as if to follow them, but Ippolito said something she knew not what, and she remained. She went to the window, looking very serious and pale, and not daring to glance towards him. He intended instantly to go to her, and wondered what had become of his fierce impatience; but the very delay had now something delicious in it. Oh, the happiness of those moments! oh, the sweet morning-time of those feelings! the doubt which is not doubt, and the hope which is but the coming of certainty! Oh, recollections enough to fill faded eyes with tears of renovation, and to make us forget we are no longer young, the next young and innocent beauty we behold! Why do not such hours make us as immortal as they are divine? Why are we not carried away, literally, into some place where they can last for ever, leaving those who miss us to say, "they were capable of loving, and they are gone to heaven!"

Reader. But, sir, in taking these heavenly flights of yours, you have left your two lovers.

Author. Surely, madam, I need not inform you that lovers are fond of being left—at least to themselves.

Reader. But, sir, they are Italians; and I did not think Italian lovers were of this bashful description. I imagined that the moment your two Florentines beheld one another, they would spring into each others arms, sending up cries of joy, and—and—

Author. Tumbling over the two old women by the way. It is a very pretty imagination, madam; but Italians partake

of all the feelings common to human nature; and modesty is really not confined to the English, even though they are always saying it is.

Reader. But I was not speaking of modesty, sir, I was only alluding to a sort of,—what shall I say—a kind of irrepressible energy, that which in the Italian character is called violence.

Author. I meant nothing personal, madam, believe me, in using the word modesty. You are too charitable, and have too great a regard for my lovers. I was not speaking myself of modesty in any particular sense, but of modesty in general; and all nations, not excepting our beloved and somewhat dictatorial countrymen, have their modesties and immodesties too, from which perhaps their example might instruct one another. With regard to the violence you speak of, and which is energy sometimes, and the weakest of weaknesses at others, according to the character which exhibits it, and the occasion that calls it forth, the Italians, who live in an ardent climate, have undoubtedly shewn more of it than most people; but it is only where their individual character is most irregular, and education and laws at their worst. In general it is nothing but pure self-will, and belongs to the two extremes of the community—the most powerful whose passions have been indulged, and the poorest whose passions have never been instructed. True energy manifests itself, not in violence, but in strength and intensity; and intensity is by its nature discerning, and not to be surpassed in quietness, where quietness is becoming. Besides, in the age we are writing of,³⁰ there was as much refinement in love matters with some, as there was outrage and brutality with others. All the faculties of humanity, bad and good, may be said to have been making their way at that period, and trying for the mastery; and if on the one hand we are

presented with horrible spectacles of lust, tyranny, and revenge, on the other we find philosophy and even divinity refining upon the passion of love, and emulating the most beautiful subtleties of Plato in rendering it a thing angelical.

Reader. You have convinced me, sir; pray let us proceed.

Author. Your *us*, madam, is flattering; I fancy we are beholding the two lovers in company. We are like Don Cleofas and his ghostly friend, in the Devil on Two Sticks,³¹ when they saw into the people's houses; I, of course, the devil; and you the young student, only feminine—Donna Cleofasia, studying humanity.

Reader. Well, sir, as you please; only let us proceed.

Author. Madam, your sentiments are engaging to the last degree; so I proceed with pleasure.

We left our two lovers, madam, standing in Signora Veronica's bed-chamber, one at the window, the other at a little distance. They remained in this situation about the same space of time in which we have been talking. Oh! how impossible it is to present to ourselves two grave and happy lovers trembling with the approach of their mutual confessions, and not feel a graver and happier sensation than levity resume its place in one's thoughts!

Ippolito went up to Dianora. She was still looking out of the window, her eyes fixed upon the blue mountains in the distance, but conscious of nothing outside the room. She had a light green and gold net on her head, which enclosed her luxuriant hair without violence, and seemed as if it took it up that he might admire the white neck underneath. She felt his breath upon it; and beginning to expect that his lips would follow, raised her hands to her head, as if the net required adjusting. This movement, while it disconcerted him, presented her waist in a point of view so impossible not to touch, that taking it gently in both his hands, he pressed one

at the same time upon her heart, and said, "It will forgive me, even for doing this." He had reason to say so, for he felt it beat against his fingers, as if it leaped. Dianora, blushing and confused, though feeling abundantly happy, made another movement with her hands as if to remove his own, but he only detained them on either side. "Messer Ippolito," said Dianora, in a tone as if to remonstrate, though suffering herself to remain a prisoner, "I fear you must think me"—"No, no," interrupted Ippolito, "you can fear nothing that I think, or that I do. It is I that have to fear your lovely and fearful beauty, which has been ever at the side of my sick bed, and I thought looked angrily upon me—upon me alone of the whole world." "They told me you had been ill," said Dianora in a very gentle tone, "and my aunt perhaps knew that I—thought that I—Have you been very ill?" And without thinking, she drew her left hand from under his, and placed it upon it. "Very," answered Ippolito; "do not I look so?" and saying this, he raised his other hand, and venturing to put it round to the left side of her little dimpled chin, turned her face towards him. Dianora did not think he appeared so ill, by a good deal, as he did in the church; but there was enough in his face, ill or well, to make her eyesight swim as she looked at him; and the next moment her head was upon his shoulder, and his lips descended, welcome, upon hers.

There was a practice in those times, generated, like other involuntary struggles against wrong, by the absurdities in authority, of resorting to marriages, or rather plightings of troth³², made in secret, and in the eye of heaven. It was a custom liable to great abuse, as all secrecies are; but the harm of it, as usual, fell chiefly on the poor, or where the condition of the parties was unequal. Where the families were powerful and on an equality, the hazard of violating the

engagement was, for obvious reasons, very great, and seldom encountered; the lovers either foregoing their claims on each other upon better acquaintance, or adhering to their engagement the closer for the same reason, or keeping it at the expense of one or the other's repentance for fear of the consequences. The troth of Ippolito and Dianora was indeed a troth. They plighted it on their knees, before a picture of the Virgin and Child, in Veronica's bed-room, and over a mass-book which lay open upon a chair. Ippolito then, for the pleasure of revenging himself of the pangs he suffered when Dianora knelt with him before, took up the mass-book and held it before her, as she had held it before him, and looked her entreatingly in the face; and Dianora took and held it with him as before, trembling as then, but with a perfect pleasure; and Ippolito kissed her twice and thrice out of a sweet revenge.—[We find we are in the habit of using a great number of *ands* on these occasions. We do not affect it, though we are conscious of it. It is partly, we believe, owing to our recollections of the good faith and simplicity in the old romances, and partly to a certain sense of luxury and continuance which these *ands* help to link together. It is the fault of "the accursed critical spirit"³³, which is the bane of these times, that we are obliged to be conscious of the matter at all. But we cannot help not having been born six hundred years ago, and are obliged to be base and *reviewatory*³⁴ like the rest. To affect not to be conscious of the critical in these times, would itself be a departure from what is natural; but we notice the necessity only to express our hatred of it, and hereby present the critics (ourselves included, as far as we belong to them) with our hearty discommendations.]

The thoughtless old ladies, Donna Lucrezia and the other (for old age is not always the most considerate thing in the

world, especially the old age of one's aunts and gossips) had now returned into the room where they left the two lovers; but not before Dianora had consented to receive her bridegroom in her own apartment at home, that same night, by means of that other old good-natured go-between, yclept³⁵ a ladder of ropes. The rest of the afternoon was spent, according to laudable custom, in joining in the diversions of the peasantry. They sung, they danced, they eat the grapes that hung over their heads, they gave and took jokes and flowers, they flaunted with all their colours in the sun, they feasted with all their might under the trees. You could not say which looked the ripest and merriest, the fruit or their brown faces. In Tuscany they have had from time immemorial little rustic songs or stanzas that turn upon flowers. One of these, innocently addressed to Dianora by way of farewell, put her much out of countenance—"Voi siete un bel fione,"³⁶ sung a peasant girl, after kissing her hand:—

You are a lovely flower. What flower? The flower
That shuts with the dark hour:—
Would that to keep you awake were in my power!

Ippolito went singing it all the way home, and ran up against a hundred people.

Ippolito had noticed a ladder of ropes which was used in his father's house for some domestic purposes. To say the truth, it was an old servant, and had formerly been much in request for the purpose to which it was now about to be turned by the old gentleman himself. He was indeed a person of a truly orthodox description, having been much given to intrigue in his younger days, being consigned over to avarice in his older, and exhibiting great submission to every thing established, always. Accordingly, he was considered as a personage equally respectable for his virtues, as

important from his rank and connexions; and if hundreds of ladders could have risen up in judgment against him, they would only have been considered as what are called in England "wild oats,"³⁷—wild ladders, which it was natural for every gentleman to plant.

Ippolito's character, however, being more principled, his privileges were not the same; and on every account he was obliged to take great care. He waited with impatience till midnight, and then letting himself out of his window, and taking the ropes under his cloak, made the best of his way to a little dark lane which bordered the house of the Bardi. One of the windows of Dianora's chamber looked into the lane, the others into the garden. The house stood in a remote part of the city. Ippolito listened to the diminishing sound of the guitars and revellers in the distance, and was proceeding to inform Dianora of his arrival by throwing up some pebbles, when he heard a noise coming. It was some young men taking a circuit of the more solitary streets, to purify them, as they said, from sobriety. Ippolito slunk into a corner. He was afraid, as the sound opened upon his ears, that they would turn down the lane; but the hubbub passed on. He stepped forth from his corner, and again retreated. Two young men, loiterers behind the rest, disputed whether they should go down the lane. One, who seemed intoxicated, swore he would serenade "the little foe," as he called her, if it was only to vex the old one, and "bring him out with his cursed long sword." "And a lecture twice as long," said the other. "Ah, there you have me," quoth the musician; "his sword is—a sword; but his lecture's the devil: reaches the other side of the river—never stops till it strikes one sleepy. But I must serenade." "No, no," returned his friend; "remember what the Grand Prior said, and don't let us commit ourselves in a petty brawl. We'll have it out of

their hearts some day." Ippolito shuddered to hear such words, even from one of his own party. "Don't tell me," said the pertinacious drunken man; "I remember what the Grand Prior said. He said, I must serenade; no, he didn't say I must serenade—but *I* say it; the Grand Prior said, says he,—I remember it as if it was yesterday—he said—gentlemen, said he, there are three good things in the world, love, music, and fighting; and then he said a cursed number of other things by no means good; and all to prove, philosophically, you rogue, that love was good, and music was good, and fighting was good, philosophically, and in a cursed number of paragraphs. So I must serenade." "False logic, Vanni," cried the other; "so come along, or we shall have the enemy upon us in a heap, for I hear another party coming, and I am sure they are none of ours." "Good again," said the musician, "love and fighting, my boy, and music; so I'll have my song before they come up." And the fellow began roaring out one of the most indecent songs he could think of, which made our lover ready to start forth and dash the guitar in his face; but he repressed himself. In a minute he heard the other party come up. A clashing of swords ensued, and to his great relief the drunkard and his companion were driven on. In a minute or two all was silent. Ippolito gave the signal—it was acknowledged; the rope was fixed; and the lover was about to ascend, when he was startled with a strange diminutive face, smiling at him over a light. His next sensation was to smile at the state of his own nerves; for it was but a few minutes before, that he was regretting he could not put out a lantern that stood burning under a little image of the Virgin. He crossed himself, offered up a prayer for the success of his true love, and again proceeded to mount the ladder. Just as his hand reached the window, he thought he heard other steps. He

looked down towards the street. Two figures evidently stood at the corner of the lane. He would have concluded them to be the two men returned, but for their profound silence. At last one of them said out loud, "I am certain I saw a shadow of somebody by the lantern, and now you find we have not come back for nothing. Who's there?" added he, coming at the same time down the lane with his companion. Ippolito descended rapidly, intending to hide his face as much as possible in his hood and escape by dint of fighting, but his foot slipped in the ropes, and he was at the same instant seized by the strangers. The instinct of a lover, who above all things in the world cared for his mistress's reputation, supplied our hero with an artifice as quick as lightning. "They are all safe," said he, affecting to tremble with a cowardly terror, "I have not touched one of them." "One of what?" said the others; "what are all safe?" "The jewels," replied Ippolito; "let me go for the love of God, and it shall be my last offence, as it was my first. Besides, I meant to restore them." "Restore them!" cried the first spokesman; "a pretty jest truly. This must be some gentleman gambler by his fine would-be conscience; and by this light we will see who he is, if it is only for your sake, Filippo, eh?" For his companion was a pretty notorious gambler himself, and Ippolito had kept cringing in the dark. "Curse it," said Filippo, "never mind the fellow; he is not worth our while in these stirring times, though I warrant he has cheated me often enough." To say the truth, Messer Filippo was not a little afraid the thief would turn out to be some inexperienced desperado, whom he had cheated himself, and perhaps driven to this very crime; but his companion was resolute, and Ippolito finding it impossible to avoid his fate, came forward into the light. "By all the saints in the calendar," exclaimed the enemy, "a Buondelmonte! and

no less a Buondelmonte than the worthy and very magnificent Messer Ippolito Buondelmonte! Messer Ippolito, I kiss your hands; I am very much your humble servant and thief-taker. By my faith, this will be fine news for to-morrow."

To-morrow was indeed a heavy day to all the Buondelmonti, and as merry a one to all the Bardi, except poor Dianora. She knew not what had prevented Ippolito from finishing his ascent up the ladder; some interruption it must have been; but of what nature she could not determine, nor why he had not resumed his endeavours. It could have been nothing common. Was he known? Was *she* known? Was it all known? And the poor girl tormented herself with a thousand fears. Madonna Lucrezia hastened to her the first thing in the morning, with a full, true, and particular account. Ippolito de' Buondelmonti had been seized, in coming down a rope-ladder from one of the front windows of the house, with a great drawn sword in one hand and a box of jewels in the other. Dianora saw the whole truth in a moment, and from excess of sorrow, gratitude, and love, fainted away. Madonna Lucrezia guessed the truth too, but was almost afraid to confess it to her own mind, much more to speak of it aloud; and had not the news, and the bustle, and her niece's fainting, furnished her with something to do, she could have fainted herself very heartily, out of pure consternation. Gossip Veronica was in a worse condition when the news reached her; and Ippolito's mother, who guessed but too truly as well as the others, was seized with an illness, which joining with the natural weakness of her constitution, threw her into a stupor, and prevented her from attending to any thing. The next step of Madonna Lucrezia, after seeing Dianora out of her fainting fit, and giving the household to understand that the story of the robber had alarmed her, was to go to Gossip Veronica and concert measures of

concealment. The two women wept very sincerely for the poor youth, and admired his heroism in saving his mistress's honour; but with all their good-nature, they agreed that he was quite in the right, and that it would be but just to his magnanimity, and to their poor dear Dianora, to keep the secret as closely. Madonna Lucrezia then returned home, to be near Dianora, and help to baffle enquiry; while Gossip Veronica kept close in doors, too ill to see visitors, and alternately praying to the saint her namesake, and taking reasonable draughts of Montepulciano.³⁸

In those days there were too many wild young men of desperate fortunes to render Ippolito's confession improbable. Besides, he had been observed of late to be always without money; reports of his being addicted to gambling had arisen; and his father was avaricious. Lastly, his groaning in the church was remembered, under pretence of pity; and the magistrate (who was of the hostile party) concluded, with much sorrow, that he must have more sins to answer for than they knew of, which in so young a man was deplorable. The old gentleman had too much reason to know, that in elder persons it would have been nothing remarkable.

Ippolito, with a grief of heart which only served to confirm the bye-standers in their sense of his guilt, waited in expectation of his sentence. He thought it would be banishment, and was casting in his mind how he could hope some day or other to get a sight of his mistress, when the word Death fell on him like a thunderbolt. The origin of a sentence so severe was but too plain to every body; but the Bardi were uppermost that day; and the city, exhausted by some late party excesses, had but too much need of repose. Still it was thought a dangerous trial of the public pulse. The pity felt for the tender age of Ippolito was increased by the anguish which he found himself unable to repress. "Good

"God!" cried he, "must I die so young? And must I never see—must I never see the light again, and Florence, and my dear friends?" And he fell into almost abject intreaties³⁹ to be spared; for he thought of Dianora. But the bystanders fancied that he was merely afraid of death; and by the help of suggestions from the Bardi partisans, their pity almost turned into contempt. He prostrated himself at the magistrate's feet; he kissed his knees; he disgusted his own father; till finding every thing against him, and smitten at once with a sense of his cowardly appearance and the necessity of keeping his mistress's honour inviolable, he declared his readiness to die like a man, and at the same time stood wringing his hands, and weeping like an infant. He was sentenced to die next day.

The day came. The hour came. The Standard of Justice⁴⁰ was hoisted before the door of the tribunal, and the trumpet blew through the city, announcing the death of a criminal. Dianora, to whom the news had been gradually broken, heard it in her chamber, and would have burst forth and proclaimed the secret but for Madonna Lucrezia, who spoke of her father, and mother, and all the Bardi, and the inutility of attempting to save one of the opposite faction, and the dreadful consequences to *every* body if the secret were betrayed. Dianora heard little about every body; but the habit of respecting her father and mother, and dreading their reproaches, kept her, moment after moment, from doing anything but listen and look pale; and, in the meantime, the procession began moving towards the scaffold.

Ippolito issued forth from the prison, looking more like a young martyr than a criminal. He was now perfectly quiet, and a sort of unnatural glow had risen into his cheeks, the result of the enthusiasm and conscious self-sacrifice into which he had worked himself during the night. He had only

prayed, as a last favour, that he might be taken through the street in which the house of the Bardi stood; for he had lived, he said, as every body knew, in great hostility with that family, and he now felt none any longer, and wished to bless the house as he passed it. The magistrate, for more reasons than one, had no objection; the old confessor, with tears in his eyes, said that the dear boy would still be an honour to his family, as surely as he would be a saint in heaven; and the procession moved on. The main feeling of the crowd, as usual, was that of curiosity, but there were few, indeed, in whom it was not mixed with pity; and many females found the sight so intolerable, that they were seen coming away down the streets, weeping bitterly, and unable to answer the questions of those they met.

The procession now began to pass the house of the Bardi. Ippolito's face, for an instant, turned of a chalky whiteness, and then resumed its colour. His lips trembled, his eyes filled with tears; and thinking his mistress might possibly be at the window, taking a last look of the lover that died for her, he bowed his head gently, at the same time forcing a smile, which glittered through his watery eyes. At that instant the trumpet blew its dreary blast for the second time. Dianora had already risen on her couch, listening, and asking what noise it was that approached. Her aunt endeavoured to quiet her with her excuses; but this last noise aroused her beyond controul;⁴¹ and the good old lady, forgetting herself in the condition of the two lovers, no longer attempted to stop her. "Go," said she, "in God's name, my child, "and Heaven be with you."

Dianora, her hair streaming, her eye without a tear, her cheek on fire, burst, to the astonishment of her kindred, into the room where they were all standing. She tore them aside from one of the windows with a preternatural strength, and,

stretching forth her head and hands, like one inspired, cried out, "Stop! stop! it is my Ippolito! my husband!" And, so saying, she actually made a movement as if she would have stepped to him out of the window; for every thing but his image faded from her eyes. A movement of confusion took place among the multitude. Ippolito stood rapt on the sudden, trembling, weeping, and stretching his hands towards the window, as if praying to his guardian angel. The kinsmen would have prevented her from doing any thing further; but, as if all the gentleness of her character was gone, she broke from them with violence and contempt, and rushing down stairs into the street, exclaimed, in a frantic manner, "People! Dear God! Countrymen! I am a Bardi; he is a Buondelmonte; he loved me; and that is the whole crime!" and, at these last words, they were locked in each other's arms.

The populace now broke through all restraint. They stopped the procession; they bore Ippolito back again to the seat of the magistracy, carrying Dianora with him; they described in a peremptory manner the mistake; they sent for the heads of the two houses; they made them swear a treaty of peace, amity, and unity;⁴² and in half an hour after the lover had been on the road to his death, he set out upon it again, the acknowledged bridegroom of the beautiful creature by his side.

Never was such a sudden revulsion of feeling given to a whole city. The women who had retreated in anguish, came back the gayest of the gay. Every body plucked all the myrtles⁴³ they could find, to put into the hands of those who made the former procession, and who now formed a singular one for a bridal; but all the young women fell in with their white veils; and instead of the funeral dirge, a song of thanksgiving was chaunted. The very excess of their sensations enabled

the two lovers to hold up. Ippolito's cheeks, which seemed to have fallen away in one night, appeared to have plumped out again faster; and if he was now pale instead of high coloured, the paleness of Dianora had given way to radiant blushes which made up for it. He looked, as he ought,—like the person saved; she, like the angelic saviour.

Thus the two lovers passed on, as if in a dream tumultuous but delightful. Neither of them looked on the other; they gazed hither and thither on the crowd, as if in answer to the blessings that poured upon them; but their hands were locked fast; and they went like one soul in a divided body.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Guelphs and Ghibellines, two rival political factions in medieval Italy. The Guelfs supported the papacy, whereas the Ghibellines aligned with the Holy Roman Emperor.

² The House of the Bardi and the House of the Buondelmonti were two influential rival Florentine families: the former were Guelphs, the latter Ghibellines.

³ Dianora de' Bardi and Ippolito Buondelmonti feature in Leon Battista Alberti's novella *Istorietta amorosa fra Leonora de' Bardi e Ippolito Buondelmonti* (1471), a star-crossed love story between two young Florentines from rival families.

⁴ See Marco Lastri, *L'osservatore fiorentino sugli edifizii della sua patria per servire alla storia della medesima*, 6 vols (1776-78), second edition in 8 vols (1797).

⁵ Plato (427-348 BCE), ancient Greek philosopher.

⁶ Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-75), Italian writer and poet.

⁷ Two novellas in Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1349-53), respectively about Federigo degli Alberighi (day V, tale 9) and Lisabetta da Messina (day IV, tale 5).

⁸ Fiammetta, a female literary character who appears in several of Boccaccio's works. Allegedly, she was Boccaccio's muse and lover and is traditionally associated with the Neapolitan noblewoman Maria D'Aquino (dates of birth and death unknown).

⁹ Francesco Petrarca (1304-74), Italian scholar, poet, and humanist.

¹⁰ A Catholic festival, Pardon Day is a day dedicated to forgiveness and reconciliation.

¹¹ In Leon Battista Alberti's *Istorietta amorosa fra Leonora de' Bardi e Ippolito Buondelmonti*, Ippolito and Dianora's first meeting happens on the Feast of St John, the patron of Florence.

¹² Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) and Guido Cavalcanti (c. 1250-1300), Italian poets. Both Alighieri and Cavalcanti were Guelphs, like the Buondelmonti family.

¹³ Saint Dominic (1170-1221), Castilian Catholic priest and founder of the Dominican order.

¹⁴ Reference to *Madonna and Child with St Dominic and St Thomas Aquinas* (1438), a fresco fragment by the Italian Renaissance painter Fra Angelico (1395-1455).

¹⁵ In medieval Italy, the Grand Prior was the leader of a religious order within a specific region, such as Florence.

¹⁶ In medieval Florence, the Archbishop was the leading church authority in the city.

¹⁷ Francis of Assisi (1181-1226), Italian mystic, poet, and friar.

¹⁸ Saint Teresa (1515-82), Spanish Carmelite nun and religious reformer.

¹⁹ Saint Paul (5-65), Christian Apostle.

²⁰ Reference to the Pauline Epistles, also known as Epistles of Paul or Letters of Paul, the thirteen books of the New Testament attributed to the Apostle Paul.

²¹ Tryphoena and Tryphosa, Christian women mentioned by the Apostle Paul (*Romans*, 16:12) as "workers of the Lord".

²² Mary Magdalen, one of Jesus' disciples.

²³ Biblical reference (*Luke* 8:2 and *Mark* 16:9). Mary Magdalene was possessed by seven demons before Jesus healed her.

²⁴ Biblical reference. In *John* 8:7, the Pharisees sought to stone an adulterous woman, but, instead of condemning her, Jesus responded with compassion: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her".

²⁵ (Archaic) To choose.

²⁶ In medieval and Renaissance Italy, "Madonna" was a common way to address noblewomen or women of high status.

²⁷ In medieval Italy, the term "Signora" was used to address or refer to a noblewoman, a lady of rank, or the wife of a "Signore" (Lord), who often held significant political and territorial power.

²⁸ A person who grows and prunes vines.

²⁹ Misprint for *hers*.

³⁰ The story is set in fourteenth-century Florence.

³¹ Alain-René Lesage, *Le Diable boiteux* (1707), translated into English as *The Devil on Two Sticks* (1708).

³² (Archaic) To plight one's troth to someone: to bind oneself to someone in marriage.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ³³ Untraced quotation.
- ³⁴ (Obsolete) “Being critical, reflective, or evaluative”. Neologism coined by Leigh Hunt in this text.
- ³⁵ (Archaic) Called, named.
- ³⁶ Misprint of *fiore* (“flower” in Italian). The sentence can be translated as: “You are a beautiful flower”.
- ³⁷ *Wild oats* originates from the idiom “sowing one’s wild oats”, which refers to the unrestrained actions of youth, also of a sexual nature.
- ³⁸ A medieval hilltop town in the Tuscan province of Siena.
- ³⁹ (Archaic) Entreaty.
- ⁴⁰ A physical flag or banner symbolizing the official authority of the court or the ruling government. In this passage, the blowing of the trumpet and the hoisting of the Standard of Justice before the door of the tribunal were solemn public announcements that the convicted individual would soon be executed.
- ⁴¹ Obsolete spelling of “control”.
- ⁴² In 1342, the Baldi family made peace with the Buondelmonti in front of a notary.
- ⁴³ Metaphorically, “plucking all the myrtles” indicates the preparation of a joyful event, turning what might have been a moment of grief into one of renewal, love, and celebration.

RHYME AND REASON;
OR A NEW PROPOSAL TO THE PUBLIC RESPECTING POETRY
IN ORDINARY.^{1*}

A FRIEND of ours the other day, taking up the miscellaneous poems of Tasso,² read the title-page into English as follows:—"The Rhimes of the Lord Twisted Yew, Amorous, Bosky, and Maritime."* The Italian exhibit a modesty worthy of imitation in calling their Miscellaneous Poems, Rhimes. Twisted Yew himself, with all his genius, has put forth an abundance of these terminating blossoms, without any fruit behind them: and his countrymen of the present day do not scruple to confess, that their living poetry consists of little else. The French have a game at verses, called Rhymed Ends (*Bouts Rimees*) which they practise a great deal more than they are aware; and the English, though they are a more poetical people, and lay claim to a character of a less vain one, practice the same game to a very uncandid extent, without so much as allowing that the title is applicable to any part of it.

Yet how many "Poems" are there among all these nations, of which we require no more than the Rhymes, to be acquainted with the whole of them? You know that the rogues have done, by the ends they come to. For instance,

* *Rime del Signor Torquato Tasso, Amoroſe, Boſchereccie, Marittime, &c.*

*Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed by Elena Spandri; Annotated by Maria Elena Capitani.

what more is necessary to inform us of all which the following gentleman has for sale, than the bell which he tinkles at the end of his cry? We are as sure of him, as of the muffin-man.

Grove,	Heart	Kiss
Night,	Prove,	Blest
Rove,	Impart,	Bliss
Delight.	Love.	Rest.

Was there ever per-oration more eloquent? Ever a series of catastrophes more explanatory of their previous history? Did any Chinese gentleman ever shew the amount of his breeding and accomplishments more completely, by the nails which he carries at his fingers' ends?

The Italian Rimatori are equally comprehensive. We no sooner see the majority of their rhymes, than we long to save the modesty of their general pretensions so much trouble in making out the case. Their *cores* and *amores* are not to be disputed. Cursed is he that does not put implicit reliance upon their *fedeltà!*—that makes inquisition why the possessor *più superbo va*. They may take the oaths and their seat at once. For example—

Ben mio	Fuggito
Oh Dio	Rapito
Da me	La fe.

And again—

Amata
Sdegnata
Turbata
Irata
Furore
Dolore
Non so.

With—

O Cielo
 Dal cielo
 Tradire
 Languire
 Morire
 Soffrire
 Non può.

Where is the dull and inordinate person that would require these rhymes to be filled up? If they are brief as the love of which they complain, are they not pregnant in conclusions, full of a world of things that have past, infinitely retrospective, embracing, and enough? If not “vast”, are they not “voluminous?”

It is doubtless an instinct of this kind that has made so many modern Italian poets intersperse their lyrics with those frequent single words, which are at once line and rhyme, and which some of our countrymen have in vain endeavoured to naturalize in the English opera. Not that they want the same pregnancy in our language, but because they are neither so abundant nor so musical; and besides, there is something in the rest of our verses, however common-place, which seems to be laughing at the incursion of these vivacious strangers, as if it were a hop suddenly got up, and unseasonably. We do not naturally take to any thing so abrupt and saltatory.

This objection however does not apply to the proposal we are about to make. Our rhymers *must* rhyme; and as there is a great difference between single words thus mingled with long verses, and the same rhymes in their proper places, it has struck us, that a world of time and paper might be saved to the ingenious *rimatore*, whether Italian or English,

by foregoing at once all the superfluous part of his verses; that is to say, all the rest of them; and confining himself, entirely, to these very sufficing terminations. We subjoin some specimens in the various kinds of poetry; and inform the intelligent bookseller, that we are willing to treat with him for any quantity at a penny the hundred; which considering our characters, and how much more is obtained by the Laureate,³ and divers other tinkling old gentlemen about town, we trust will not be reckoned presuming.

A PASTORAL.

Dawn	Each	Fair	Me	Ray
Plains	Spoke	Mine	Too	Heat
Lawn	Beech	Hair	Free	Play
Swains.	Yoke.	Divine.	Woo.	Sweet.
Tune	Fields	Shades	Adieu	Farewell
Lays	Bowers	Darts	Flocks	Cows
Moon	Yields	Maids	Renew	Dell
Gaze.	Flowers.	Hearts.	Rocks.	Boughs.

Here, without any more ado, we have the whole history of a couple of successful rural lovers comparing notes. They issue forth in the morning; fall into the proper place and dialogue; record the charms and kindness of their respective mistresses; do justice at the same time to the fields and shades; and conclude by telling their flocks to wait as usual, while they renew their addresses under yonder boughs. How easily is all this gathered from the rhymes! and how worse than useless would it be in two persons, who have such interesting avocations, to waste their precious time and the reader's in a heap of prefatory remarks, falsely called verses!

Of Love-songs we have already had specimens; and by the bye, we did not think it necessary to give any French examples of our involuntary predecessors in this species of writing. The *yeux* and *dangereux*, *moi*, and *foi*, *charmes* and *larmes*, are too well-known as well too numerous to mention. We proceed to lay before the reader a Prologue; which, if spoken by a pretty actress, with a due sprinkling of nods and becks, and a judicious management of the pauses, would have an effect equally novel and triumphant. The reader is aware that a Prologue is generally made up of some observations on the drama in general, followed by an appeal in favour of the new one, some compliments to the nation, and a regular climax in honour of the persons appealed to. We scarcely need observe, that the rhymes should be read slowly, in order to give effect to the truly understood remarks in the intervals.

PROLOGUE.

Age	Fashion	Applause
Stage	British Nation.	Virtue's Cause
Mind		Trust
Mankind	Young	Just
Face	Tongue	Fear
Trace	Bard	Here
Sigh	Reward	Stands
Tragedy	Hiss	Hands
Scene	Miss	True
Spleen	Dare	You.
Pit	British fair	
Wit		

Here we have some respectable observations on the advan-

tages of the drama in every age, on the wideness of its survey, the different natures of tragedy and comedy, the vicissitudes of fashion, and the permanent greatness of the British empire. Then the young bard, new to the dramatic art, is introduced. He disclaims any hope of reward for any merit of his own, except that which is founded on a proper sense of the delicacy and beauty of his fair auditors, and his zeal in the cause of virtue. To this, and all events, he is sure his critics will be just; and though he cannot help feeling a certain timidity, standing where he does, yet upon the whole, as becomes an Englishman, he is perfectly willing to abide by the decision of his countrymen's hands, hoping that he shall be found

—— to sense, if not to genius, true,
And trusts his cause to virtue, and — to You.⁴

Should the reader, before he comes to this explication of the Prologue, have had any other ideas suggested by it, we will undertake to say, that they will at all events be found to have a wonderful general similitude; and it is to be observed, that this very flexibility of adaptation is one of the happiest and most useful results of our proposed system of poetry. It comprehends all the possible common-places in vogue; and it also leaves to the ingenuous reader something to fill up; which is a compliment, that has always been held due to him by the best authorities.

The next specimen is what, in a more superfluous condition of metre, would have been entitled *Lines* on Time. It is much in that genteel didactic taste, which is at once thinking and non-thinking, and has certain neat and elderly dislike of innovation in it, greatly to the comfort of the seniors who adorn the circles.

ON TIME.

Time	Child	Race	Hold
Sublime	Beguil'd	Trace	Old
Fraught	Boy	All	Sure
Thought	Joy	Ball	Endure
Power	Man	Pride	Death
Devour	Span	Deride	Breath
Rust	Sire	Aim	Forgiven
Dust	Expire.	Same	Heaven.
Glass		Undo	
Pass	So	New	
Wings	Go		
Kings.			

We ask any impartial reader, whether he could possibly want a more sufficing account of the progress of this author's piece of reasoning upon Time? There is first the address to a hoary god, with all his emblems and consequence about him, the scythe excepted; that being an edge-tool to rhymers, which they judiciously keep inside the verse, as in sheath. Then we are carried through all the stages of human existence, the caducity of which the writer applied to the world at large, impressing upon us the inutility of hope and exertion, and suggesting of course the propriety of thinking just as he does upon all subjects, political and moral, past, present, and to come. We really expect the thanks of the blue-stocking societies for this new-old piece of ethics, or at least of one of Mr. Southey⁵'s deputations of old women.

In Acrostics, the utility of the system would be too obvious to mention. But in nothing would it be more felicitous than in matters of Satire and Lampoon. Contempt is brief. Bitterness and venom are the better for being concentrated. A generous indignation wishes to save itself trouble:—a scan-

dal-monger would save himself detection and a beating; and every one would willingly be as safe as possible from the law. Now what can be briefer and more contemptuous than the mode in question? What a more essential salt or vitriolic aced, distilling in solitary and biting drops? What less exhausting to the writer's feelings? What more baffling to scrutiny, because able to dispense with all that constitutes style and peculiarity? What safer from the law, as far as any thing can be safe that is not supremely unlawful? Upon principles equally obvious it will be the same with flattery and panegyric, epithalamiums, odes on birth-days, &c. For instance—

A PANEGRICAL ADDRESS TO A CERTAIN HOUSE.

What	Tools	Backs	Seat
Use	Host	Throne	Sell
Rot	Fools	Tax	Complete
Abuse.	Most.	Alone.	Hell.
Part	Reform	Hire	Set
Vocation	Within	Breath	About
"Start	Storm	Tire	Get
Indignation."	Begin.	Death.	Out.

A CAT-O'-NINE-TAILS FOR LORD C.

Packing	Washy	Loathing
Hacking	Splashy	Frothing
Racking.	Flashy.	Nothing.

ANOTHER, WITH KNOTS IN IT.

Hydrophoby	Turn about on	Go get your
Of troops	Yourselves,	Self taught
Quoth the looby,	Quoth the spout on,	Beat your feature,
The booby.	The doat on.	Your creature.

A SOLILOQUY, BY THE SAME.

Folk	Say	Fate
Zoun's!	Blunder;	So
Smoke	Nay,	Great
Nouns:	Dunder!	Low.
Else	Hammer	Curse 'em
Miracles.	Grammar.	Disperse 'em.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ In “Rhyme and Reason”, Hunt suggests that the English imitate the Italian *rimatori* in their use of one-word lines of verse. In Byron’s view the piece was meant as a satire on Thomas Moore’s love poetry.

² Torquato Tasso (1544-95), the greatest Italian poet of the late Renaissance, known for his 1581 heroic epic poem in ottava rima *Gerusalemme liberata* (*Jerusalem Delivered*), dealing with the capture of Jerusalem during the First Crusade.

³ Robert Southey (1774-1843), English poet and prose writer, mainly remembered for his close association with Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth. After initially embracing the ideals of the French Revolution, he gradually became more conservative and was accused by Byron of siding with the Establishment. In 1813 Southey was appointed Poet Laureate, a post he held until his death.

⁴ Untraced quotation.

⁵ Robert Southey (1774-1843), English poet and prose writer, Poet Laureate (1813-43).

A GERMAN APOLOGUE.*

THE other day Jupiter gave Mercury a remarkable commission. Whether the God had grown older since the times of Plato and of Horace, or that the tempers of Diana and Minerva had not sweetened, or that there was something in the existing state of the world which alarmed him for the continuance of his authority, we know not; but certain it is, that great complaints had been made for some time past against three persons, whose names will surprise the reader, in conjunction with such a circumstance; to wit, the Graces.¹

One body of persons represented, that they were grown much to philosophic for their taste: another (which seemed odd) that they were much too vivacious. A third asserted (which was still more singular, considering they are goddesses) that they had no religion. Another admitted they might have some little religion, because they are the same as the Charities; but that there was nothing vital in it, and that they had been heard to speak ill of Pluto. A number of old ladies and gentlemen declared that they were no longer any such things as Graces. But the most remarkable sight was to see all the puritans and debauchees assembled together, and maintaining that the Graces were no longer modest.

By way of counter-petition to all this, a numerous body of persons, dressed in the extremest point of the fashion, declared that they knew the Graces very well, that they were the best good-natured creatures in the world, and had helped

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed by Elena Spandri; Annotated by Maria Elena Capitani.

them to dress that morning. We are sorry to say, that this petition was rejected as frivolous and vexatious. The presenters however did not appear to be disconcerted. They smiled in a manner which seemed to say that conviction ought to follow it; and their smile, like that of the whole assembly, was changed into a convulsion of laughter by a poor crazy poet, who half stalking and half tottering forward, with an old laurel on his head, asserted that he could settle the whole matter at once; and being asked in that way, replied, "*I am the three Graces.*"

The Graces were then called into court, but nobody came. Again they were called; but a dead silence prevailed over the vast assembly. Some old prophecies made Jupiter look uneasy. After waiting as long as he well could, he had them called, more solemnly, a third time. Not a Grace was to be seen. The old ladies and gentlemen could not help chuckling at this, as a proof of what they had said; but one of the most ancient of the females coming forward, and swearing she had seen them, and now say them, in the likeness of three beautiful women of her own age, in stomachers and toupees, the laugh was turned in favour of the young ones. The laugh seemed to be echoed at a great distance but three of the most charming laughs in the world; which made somebody cry out, "*There are the Graces!*" upon which he was fined in a great passion by Mr. Justice Minos,² for interrupting business. Indeed all the Judges, but one, seemed to be in a great passion; which was thought to be owing to a loyal interest they took in the anxiety of the King of Gods and Men. The one in question was in so great a passion, that he seemed to be in none at all. He was only considering all the while, how he should put the Graces to the torture, if ever he caught them.

At length Jupiter, not knowing what was to be done,

asked the opinion of the great men present, particularly of the three ordinary looking persons, who though not of the priesthood, piqued themselves upon being the holiest of his vice-gerents. Their opinion was (and it was also the unanimous opinion of the judges, of the most orthodox of the priests, of the female writers on Tartarus, and indeed of every one who had a right to give an opinion; that is to say, who had a respectable superfluity of possession, particularly of nonsense) that the three goddesses, hitherto known by the name of Graces, ought to be deprived of their name and offices, and other three ladies, properly deified for the occasion, appointed in their stead. The warrant was accordingly drawn up by three commissioners instantly nominated for that purpose; to wit, the dissipate Judge above-mentioned, one of the female writers on Tartarus, and an old Scotch lord, whose past profligacy of life, and extreme filthiness of conversation, did not hinder him from knowing what was quite right and delicate in his old age, and having a becoming zeal for it. The warrant was drawn up with a rapidity proportionate to the zeal. It purported, that whereas the three very irregular, anti-Tartar, and indecorous personages, the Charities, better known by the style and title of the Three Graces, had utterly lost, ruined, and abolished their reputations, as well by certain wicked compliances with pretended humanists and philosophers, as by certain other abominable non-compliances with their right lords, masters, and mistresses,—the said Three Graces, commonly so called, are from this day forward, in their own persons and existence, utterly abolished, done away, va-viad, driven out with uplifted hands and eyes, reprobated, non-elected, and altogether nihili-vili-pilified,—any apparent life, vitality, beauty, or entity of their notwithstanding:—And in the room of the said Three Graces, commonly so called, three certain other

Graces, hereafter to be more especially nominated, are to prevail and be received with all due worship in their stead, and to preside in particular over all elegancies, proprieties, decorums, withdrawing-rooms, female influences, prudes, prostitutes (for their better undoing) old generals, nice distinctions, in short, all that exquisite moral order of things genteel, which, in the midst of every vice, maintains, as it were, every virtue, and by the mere strength of a close, thick, and hard-grained integrity in the few, would suffice, if necessary, for the utter rottenness of virtue and felicity in all the rest:—The said three new Graces to be of equal heights, bearings and accomplishments, like the former ones; only to be dressed, instead of undressed, except when they go to court; and to be undeniably beautiful, unexceptionably orthodox, and irreversibly chaste.

For the discovery of these requisite trinal triplicities, Mercury was immediately dispatched on his travels. We luckily need not accompany him, for he sought every where, like the Squire of Dames;³ and though he was not in a dilemma, so extremely one and indivisible, as that in which the Squire is represented by the courtly poet who has related his adventures,* yet he was hampered quite enough. He could not for the life of him meet with the three ultra-qualified perfections altogether. Many ladies were undeniably beautiful, but not unexceptionably orthodox. The lovelier their style of beauty, the more heterodox they were as Tartars. A great number were undeniably beautiful, but by no means irreversibly chaste. Some who claimed the merit of being irreversibly chaste, as well as unexceptionably orthodox, were a great way off indeed from being undeniably beautiful,—not to say truly *what* they were. In short, the young

* See Faerie Queene, Book 3^d.

deity, who carried his scrupulosity of proof somewhat further, we suspect, than his employers intended, found plenty of women who pretended to all the qualifications, but none who completely stood the test of investigation. In direct proportion to their claims in some respects, they were apt to fail in others; and even when they made no pretensions at all, but were at once unaffectedly beautiful, virtuous, and chaste, Mercury found that in proportion to the trusting simplicity of their goodness, the *irreversible* part of the business stood very awkwardly in the way.

At length, to his great joy, he had accounts which he could rely on, of three persons who completely answered the description in request. Without further delay, he wrote about them to Jupiter, and proceeded to the place they lived in to claim them: when unluckily he had the mortification to find, that they had been taken away by Pluto the day before, for the Three Furies.⁴

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¹ Also known as the Charities. In Greek mythology, sister goddesses who personified charm, grace, beauty, human creativity, and fertility. Hesiod describes three Graces (Aglaea, Euphrosyne, and Thalia), but their number varies depending on the source.

² In Greek mythology, the mighty king of Crete. Minos was the son of Zeus and Europa. After his death, he became a judge of the dead in Hades.

³ A comic character in Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (III. vii). This knight is assigned an unusual task by his lady, Columbell, who challenges him to seduce as many women as possible in a year's time. After being successful with three hundred ladies, he is sent forth to receive an equal number of rejections. However, in three years he finds only three virgins refusing his services and views this as a proof that women do not value chastity, the virtue upon which Book III is centred.

⁴ Also known as the Erinyes or the Eumenides. In Greek mythology, the chthonic goddesses of vengeance and retribution who punished men for crimes against the natural order.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.*

LETTER I.—PISA.

WE have adopted the present form of communication with the reader for these articles, because we found the use of one's plural privileges inconvenient in travelling. An author must reverse on these occasions the custom of his legitimate brother *we's*, and travel *cognito*; otherwise his personal experiences will sometimes have a very ludicrous and inconsistent effect. He will not be able to move about with so much freedom, or give the results of his impressions and encounters with such vivacity, as if he were unhampered with a body corporate. It is not every body, like Cerberus or a king, who can be "three gentlemen at once," and at the same time lose nothing of his loco-motion. Therefore, be it known once for all, that when we travel, though in company, we are one, and shall use the first person accordingly; being, nevertheless, at all other times, more than one, and ready to prove it beyond a doubt upon the head of any one else, who shall dispute our miscellaneousness.

Pisa, one of the oldest cities in Europe, and supposed to have originated in a colony from its Grecian namesake, was at one time the most flourishing city in Tuscany. But the sea deserted it; and with the sea gradually departed all its modern importance. What it retained longest, and up to a late period, was its renown as a place of learning and education. But even that has departed now. It has indeed an

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed by Elena Spandri; Annotated by Maria Elena Capitani.

university, whose name is loth to abandon it; and the education, to those who are very much in earnest about it, is worth procuring, because private tuition, of a very attentive kind, is to be had for a trifle; and the university lectures may be attended gratuitously.* The science most in request is medicine, or rather surgery. The name of Professor Vaccà¹ (a man in the prime of life, with an intelligent and pleasing countenance) is known all over Europe. There is also another liberality, truly becoming the study of letters, and worth the imitation of countries that pique themselves on their advances beyond superstition:—men of any sect or religion can take all the degrees in the university, except those in divinity or canonical law. One of the most interesting sights now in Pisa is a venerable Greek Archbishop, who takes his walk on the Lungarno every evening. It is understood that he is superintending the education of some Greek youths, and that he puts the receipts of his office to the noble purpose of assisting it. Prince Alexander Mavrocordato,² who joined his countrymen last year in their great struggle, and to whom Mr. Shelley has dedicated his *Hellas*,³ was studying here when his glorious duty called him off. I know not on what errand a rich Russian comes to the same place; but the other evening, in the cathedral, I saw one of the sons of the late Marshal S. His semi-barbarous, fair, active-looking, and not ill-natured face, formed a curious contrast with the procession of dark southern heads, that was passing him up the middle of the church. His brother, who is said to be handsome, is here also. I was told they

* The writer of this article, for some weeks, had the pleasure of interchanging some English and Italian reading with the Abate Giuliani, an elegant scholar; and there is a young man of the name of Giannetti, who made a very kind and attentive master to his children, and promises to be an excellent instructor.

had been in Pisa about a year, and were *ricchissimi* (very rich)—a word which an Italian utters with a peculiar gravity.

What renders Pisa interesting now, and will continue to render it so as long as it exists, is its being left to a comparative solitude, and its containing one of the most singular, and many of the most ancient specimens of the arts, in Italy. It now stands five miles from the sea, and so completely out of the ordinary roads of communication, that the writers of elaborate works upon Italy do not think it incumbent upon them to notice it. Such however as have a true taste for their subject, cannot be well satisfied with themselves for the omission. Let the reader imagine a small white city, with a tower also white, leaning very distinctly in the distance at one end of it, trees on either side, and blue mountains for the back-ground. Such is their first sight of Pisa, as the traveller sees it in coming from Leghorn. Add to this, in summer-time, fields of corn on all sides, bordered with hedge-row trees, and the festoons of vines, of which he has so often read, hanging from tree to tree; and he may judge of the impression made upon an enthusiastic admirer of Italy, who is in Tuscany for the first time. It looks like a thing you have dreamt of, and answers most completely to the imagination.

In entering the city, the impression is beautiful. What looked white in the distance remains as pure and fair on closer acquaintance. You cross a bridge, and cast your eye up the whole extent of the city one way, the river Arno (the river of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio) winding through the middle of it under two more bridges; and fair elegant houses of good size bordering the wide pavement on either side. Thus is the Lung'arno, or street along the Arno. The mountains, in which you now discover the look of their marble veins (for it is from these that the marble of Carrara comes)

tower away beautifully at the further end, and seem much nearer than they are. The Arno, which is about as wide perhaps as the Isis at Oxford, is sandy coloured, and in the summer-time shrunken; but still it is the river of the great Tuscan writers, the visible possessor of the name we have all heard a thousand times, and we feel what a true thing is that which is called ideal.

The first novelty that strikes you, after your dreams and matter-of-fact have recovered from the surprise of their introduction to one another, is the singular fairness and new look of houses that have been standing hundreds of years. This is owing to the Italian atmosphere. Antiquity everywhere refuses to look ancient; it insists upon retaining its youthfulness of aspect. The consequence at first is a mixed feeling of admiration and disappointment; for we miss the venerable. The houses seem as they ought to have sympathized more with humanity, and were as cold and as hard-hearted as their materials. But you soon find that Italy is the land, not of the venerable, but the beautiful; and cease to look for old age in the chosen country of the Apollo and the Venus. The only real antiquities are those in Dante and the oldest painters, who treat the Bible in an ancient style. Among the mansions of the Lungarno is one entirely fronted with marble, and marble so pure and smooth that you can see your face in it. It is in a most graceful style of architecture, and has a curious symbol and motto over the door, which is the second Pisan mystery. The symbol is an actual fetter, attached with great nicety of taste to the middle stone over the door-way: the motto, *Alla Giornata* (For the Day, or the Day's Work). The allusion is supposed to be some captivity undergone by one of the Lanfreducci family, the proprietors: but nobody knows. Further up on the same side of the way, is the old ducal palace,

said to be the scene of the murder of Don Garcia by his father, which is the subject of one of Alfieri's tragedies:⁴ and between both, a little before you come to the old palace, is the mansion still belonging to the family of the Lanfranchi, formerly one of the most powerful in Pisa. Part of the inside is said to have been built by Michael Angelo. The Lanfranchi were among the nobles, who conspired to pull down the traitorous ascendancy of Count Ugolino,⁵ and wreaked that more infamous revenge on him and his young children. I need not remind the reader of the passage in Dante; but perhaps he is not aware, that Chaucer has worthily related the story after him, referring, with his usual modesty, for a more sufficing account, to "the grete poete of Itaille." See the Monk's Tale,⁶ part the last, entitled "Hugelin of Pise." The tower in which Ugolino was starved, was afterwards called the Tower of Famine. Chaucer, who is supposed to have been in Italy, says that it stood "a littel out" of Pisa; Villani⁷ says, in the Piazza of the Anziani. It is understood to be no longer in existence, and even its site is disputed. It is curious to feel oneself sitting quietly in one of the old Italian houses, and think of all the interests and passions that have agitated the hearts of so many generations of its tenants; all the revels and the quarrels that have echoed along its walls; all the guitars that have tinkled under its windows; all the scuffles that have disputed its doors. Along the great halls, how many feet have hurried in alarm! how many stately beauties have drawn their quiet trains! how many huge torches have ushered magnificence up the staircases! how much blood perhaps been shed! The ground-floors of all the great houses in Pisa, as in other Italian cities, have iron bars at the windows, evidently for security in time of trouble. The look is at first very gloomy and prison-like, but you get used to it. The bars

also are thin, round, and painted white, and the interstices large; and if the windows are towards a garden, and bordered with shrubs and ivy, as in the Casa Lanfranchi, the imagination makes a compromise with their prison-like appearance, and persuades itself they are guards only in time of war, but trellises during a peace-establishment. All the floors are made for separate families, it having been the custom in Italy from time immemorial for fathers and mothers, sons and daughters-in-law, or vice versa, with as many other relations as might be "agreeable," to live under the same roof. Spaciousness and utility were the great objects with the builder; and a stranger is sometimes surprised with the look of the finest houses outside, particularly that of the ground-floor. The stables used often to be there, and their place is now as often occupied by shops. In the inside of the great private houses there is always a certain majestic amplitude; but the entrances of the rooms and the staircase on the ground floor are often placed irregularly, so as to sacrifice everything to convenience. In the details there is sure to be a noble eye to proportion. You cannot look at the elevation of the commonest door-way, or the ceiling of a room appropriated to the humblest purposes, but you recognize the land of the fine arts. You think Michael Angelo has been at the turning of those arches,—at the harmonizing of those beautiful varieties of shape, which by the secret principles common to all the arts and sciences, affect the mind like a sort of inaudible music. The very plasterer who is hired to give the bare walls of some old unused apartment an appearance of ornament, paints his door-ways, his pilasters, and his borders of leaves, in a bold style of relief and illusion, which would astonish the doubtful hand of many a gentleman "in the higher walks of art." It must be observed however, that this is a piece of good

taste which seems to have survived most others, and to have been kept up by the objects upon which it works; for the arts are at present lying fallow in Italy, waiting for more strenuous times.

I was so taken up, on my arrival at Pisa, with friends and their better novelties, that I forgot even to look about me for the Leaning Tower. You lose sight of it on entering the town, unless you come in at the Lucca gate. On the Sunday following however I went to see it, and the majestic spot in which it stands, with Mr. Shelley. Good God! what a day that was, compared with all that have followed it! I had my friend with me, arm-in-arm, after a separation of years: he was looking better than I had ever seen him—we talked of a thousand things—we anticipated a thousand pleasures — — — I must plunge again into my writing, that I may try to forget it.

The Leaning Tower stands in a solitary quarter of the city, but in illustrious company. Mr. Forsythe,⁸ a late traveller of much shrewdness and pith, (though a want of ear, and an affectation of ultra good sense, render him sometimes extremely unfit for a critic on Italy,—as where he puts music and perfumery on a level,) has been beforehand with the spot itself in putting this idea in my head. "Pisa," says he, "while the capital of a republic, was celebrated for its profusion of marble, its patrician towers, and its grave magnificence. It still can boast some marble churches, a marble palace, and a marble bridge. Its towers, though no longer a mark of nobility, may be traced in the walls of modernized houses. Its gravity pervades every street; but its magnificence is now confined to one sacred corner. There stand the Cathedral, the Baptistery, the Leaning Tower, and the Campo Santo; all built of the same marble, all varieties of the same architecture, all venerable with

“years, and fortunate both in their society and in their solitude.”—Forsythe’s Italy, 1801.

I know not whether my first sensation at the sight of the Leaning Tower, was admiration of its extreme beauty, or its threatening attitude. I remember being exceedingly struck with both. Its beauty has never been sufficiently praised. Its overhanging aspect seems to menace the houses near it with instant destruction. The inclination is fourteen feet out of the perpendicular, and has singularly escaped the exaggerations of travellers and pictures. We wonder that people should build houses underneath it, till we recollect that it has probably stood thus ever since it was built, that is to say, for nearly six hundred and fifty years; and that habit reconciles us to any thing. “The Leaning Tower at first sight,” says Mr. Matthews, in his *Diary of an Invalid*,⁹ “is quite terrific, and exceeds expectation. There is, I believe, no doubt of the real history of this tower. The foundation-ground gave way during the progress of the building, and the architect completed his work in the direction thus accidentally given to it. Accordingly, we find in the construction of the upper part, that the weight is supported in a way to support the equilibrium.” He means, that something of a curve backwards is given to it. Mr. Forsythe seems to ridicule opinions to this effect; but I can only say, that such was the impression on my own eyes, before I called to mind anything that had been said about it. The structure was begun by a German artist, William of Inspruck,¹⁰ and finished by Italians. Several other towers in Pisa, including the Observatory, have a very visible inclination, owing to the same cause,—the sinking of the soil, which is light, sandy, and full of springs; and surely nothing is more probable than an attempt on the part of the builders of so beautiful a structure to counteract the consequences of

the foundation's having given way. The tower is a campanile or belfry to the Cathedral. It was the custom in Italy to make the belfry a separate building, and the custom was a good one; for it afforded variety, and prevented barbarism. The height of the tower is about 150 feet, but it looks more, on account of its happy situation and the lowness of the houses near it. Let the reader imagine the Monument of London sheathed in an open work of eight stories of little columns, and leaning in a fine open situation, and he will have some idea of this noble cylinder of marble. The sheath is its great beauty, and gives it an extraordinary aspect of richness and simplicity.

With regard to the company in which it stands, let the reader suppose the new square at Westminster Abbey, converted into a broad grass walk, and standing in a much more solitary part of the town. Let him suppose at one end of this walk the Leaning Tower, with some small but elegant houses on one side of it, looking down the grass plot; the Baptistery, a rotunda, standing by itself at the opposite end; the public hospital, an extremely neat and quiet building, occupying the principal length of the road which borders the grass plot on one side; on the other side, and on the grass itself, the Cathedral, stretching between the Leaning Tower and the Baptistery; and lastly, at the back of the Cathedral, and visible between the openings at its two ends, the Campo Santo or Burial Ground, a set of walled marble cloisters full of the oldest paintings in Italy. All these buildings are detached; they all stand in a free, open situation; they all look as if they were built but a year ago; they are all of marble; the whole place is kept extremely clean,—the very grass in a state of greenness not common to turf in the South; and there are trees looking upon it over a wall next the Baptistery. Let the reader add to this scene a few boys playing

about, all ready to answer your questions in pure Tuscan,—women occasionally passing with veils or bare heads, or now and then a couple of friars; and though finer individual sights may be found in the world, it will be difficult to come upon an assemblage of objects more rich in their communion.

The Baptistery is a large rotunda, richly carved, and appropriated solely to the purpose after which it is christened. It is in a mixed style, and was built in the twelfth century. Mr. Forsythe, who is deep in arches and polygons, objects to the crowd of unnecessary columns; to the “hideous” tunnel which conceals the fine swell of the cupola; and to the appropriation of so large an edifice to a christening. The “tunnel” may deserve his wrath; but his architectural learning sometimes behaves as ill as the tunnel, and obscures his better taste. A christening, in the eyes of a good Catholic, is at least as important an object as a rotunda; and there is a religious sentiment in the profusion with which ornament is heaped upon edifices of this nature. It forms a beauty of itself, and gives even mediocrity a sort of abundance of intention that looks like the wealth of genius. The materials take leave of their materiality, and crowd together into a worship of their own. It is no longer, “let every ‘thing,’ only, ‘that has *breath*, praise the Lord;” but let every thing else praise him, and take a meaning and life accordingly. Let column obscure column, as in a multitude of men; let arch strain upon arch, as if to ascend to heaven; let there be infinite details, conglomerations, mysteries, lights, darkneses; and let the birth of a new soul be well and worthily celebrated in the midst of all.

The Cathedral is in the Greek style of the middle ages, a style which Mr. Forsythe thinks should rather be called the Lombard, “as it appeared in Italy first under the Lombard princes.” He says, that it includes “whatever was grand or

“beautiful in the works of the middle ages;” and that “this “was perhaps the noblest of them all.” He proceeds to find fault with certain incongruities, amongst which are some remains of Pagan sculpture left standing in a Christian church; but he enthusiastically admires the pillars of oriental granite that support the roof. The outside of the building consists of mere heaps of marble, mounting by huge steps to the roof; but their simplicity as well as size gives them a new sort of grandeur; and Mr. Forsythe has overlooked the extraordinary sculpture of the bronze doors, worthy of the same hand that made those others at Florence, which Michael Angelo said were fit to be the gates of Paradise. It is divided into compartments, the subjects of which are taken from Scripture; and if the doors at Florence surpass it, they must be divine indeed. The relief is the most graceful and masterly conceivable; the perspective astonishing, as if in a drawing; and equal justice is done to the sharp monstrosities of the devil with his bat-wings, and the gentle graces of the Saviour. There is a great number of pictures in the Cathedral, good enough to assist rather than spoil the effect, but not remarkable. I have not been present when the church-service has been at its best; but the leader does not seem to rely much on his singers, by the noise which he makes in behalf of time. His vehement roll of paper, sounds like the lashing of a whip. One evening, in August, I saw the whole inside of the Cathedral lit up with wax in honour of the Assumption. The lights were disposed with much taste, but soon produced a great heat. There was a gigantic picture of the Virgin displayed at the upper end, who was to be supposed sitting in heaven, surrounded with the celestial ardours; but she was “dark with excess of bright.” It is impossible to see this profusion of lights, especially when one knows their symbolical meaning, without being struck

with the source from which Dante took his idea of the beatified spirits. His heaven, filled with lights, and lights too arranged in figures, which glow with lustre in proportion to the beatitude of the souls within them, is clearly a sublimation of a Catholic church. And it is not the worse for it, that nothing escapes the look of definiteness and materiality like fire. It is so airy, joyous, and divine a thing, when separated from the idea of pain and an ill purpose, that the language of happiness naturally adopts its terms, and can tell of nothing more rapturous than burning bosoms and sparkling eyes. The Seraph of the Hebrew theology was a Fire. But then the materials of heaven and hell are the same? Yes; and a very fine piece of moral theology might be made out of their sameness, always omitting the brute injustice of eternal punishment. Is it not by our greater or less cultivation of health and benevolence, that we all make out our hells and heavens upon earth? by a turning of the same materials and passions of which we are all composed, to different accounts? Burning now in the horrors of hell with fear, hatred, and uncharitableness, and now in the joys or at least the happier sympathies of heaven, with good effort, courage, gratitude, generosity, love? When Dante was asked where he found his hell, *he* answered, "upon earth." He found his heaven in the same place; and no disparagement either to a future state. If it is impossible for the mass of matter to be lost, or even diminished, it seems equally impossible for the mass of sensations to be lost; and it is surely worth while, whatever our creeds may be, to take as much care as possible that what we have to do with it, may be done well, and rendered worth the chance of continuance.*

* See an ingenious article on this subject in Tucker's *Light of Nature*,¹¹ which however is not imagined as highly as it might be, or illustrated with as much as he could reasonably have deduced from nature.

The crowning glory of Pisa is the Campo Santo. I entered for the first time at twilight, when the indistinct shapes, colours, and antiquity of the old paintings wonderfully harmonized with the nature of the place. I chose to go towards evening, when I saw it again; and though the sunset came upon me too fast to allow me to see all the pictures as minutely as I could have wished, I saw enough to warrant my giving an opinion of them; and I again had the pleasure of standing in the spot at twilight. It is an oblong inclosure, about the size of Stratford Place,¹² and surrounded with cloisters wider and lighter than those of Westminster. At least, such is my impression. The middle is grassed earth, the surface of which, for some depth, is supposed to have been brought from Palestine at the time of the crusades, and to possess the virtue of decomposing bodies in the course of a few hours. The tradition is, that Ubaldo Lanfranchi,¹³ Archbishop of Pisa, who commanded the forces contributed by his countrymen, brought the earth away with him in his ships; but though such a proceeding would not have been impossible, the story is now, I believe, regarded as a mere legend. The decomposition of the bodies might have been effected by other means. Persons are buried both in this enclosure and in the cloisters, but only persons of rank or celebrity. Most of the inscriptions for instance (of which there are some hundreds, all on marble, and mixed with busts and figures) are to the memory of Pisans in the rank of nobility; but there are several also to artists and men of letters. The most interesting grave is that of Benozzo,¹⁴ one of the old painters, who lies at the foot of his own works. Here is a handsome monument, with a profile, to Algarotti,¹⁵ erected by Frederick of Prussia. Pignotti,¹⁶ the fabulist, has another; and Fabroni,¹⁷ the late eulogist of eminent Italians on handsome paper, has a bust so good-natured and full of

a certain jolly gusto, that we long to have eat olives with him. In truth, these modern gettings up of renown, in the shape of busts and monuments to middling men of talent, appear misplaced, when you come to notice them. They look in the way. But the old pictures, which they seem to contradict and interfere with, reconcile them at last. Any thing and every thing mortal has its business here. The pretensions of mediocrity are exalted into the claims of the human being. One blushes to deny the writers of amiable books what one would demand for one's own common nature; or to think of excluding a man for doing better than hundreds of the people there, merely because he has not done so well as some who are not there. Pignotti and Algarotti, at last, even harmonize with some sprightly figures who play their harps and their love-songs in the pictures, and who flourished hundreds of years ago, as their readers flourish now; and even the bustling and well-fed amenity of Monsignor Fabroni is but a temporary contradiction, which will be rendered serious some day by the crumbling away of his marble cheeks, or the loss of some over-lively feature. Let him, for God's sake, live in inscription, and look treats in stone.

Besides these modern pieces of sculpture, there has been for some years a collection of ancient marbles, chiefly urns and sarcophagi, together with some fragments of the early Italian school. It is so impossible to pay proper attention to any large collection of art, without repeated visits, that I do not pretend to have given it to the old pictures, much less to the marbles. The first impression is not pleasant,—their orderly array, the numerals upon them, and the names of the donors upon the walls behind, giving the whole too much the air of a shew-room or common gallery. The pictures form part of the sentiment of the place as a burial

ground, and would certainly be better by themselves; but the antiquity of the marbles reconciles us at last. From the glance I took at them, many appear to be poor enough, but several very good. I noticed in particular one or two sarcophagi with reliefs of Bacchus and Ariadne, and a head supposed to be that of a Roman Emperor, and looking quite brutal enough. As to the Paganism, I do not quarrel, like Mr. Forsythe, with the presence of things Pagan in a Christian edifice; not only because the Pagan and Catholic religions have much that is in common externally, their draperies, altars, incense, music, winged genii, &c.; but because from a principle which the author of a new Comment on Dante¹⁸ has noticed, there is in fact an identity of interests and aspirations in all these struggles of mortal man after a knowledge of things supernatural.*

The paintings on the walls, the great glory of Pisa, are by Orgagna,¹⁹ Simon Memmi,²⁰ Giotto,²¹ Buffalmacco,²² Benozzo, and others,—all more or less renowned by illustrious pens; all, with more or less gusto, the true and reverend harbingers of the greatest painters of Italy. Simon Memmi is the artist celebrated by Petrarch for his portrait of Laura; Buffalmacco is the mad wag (grave enough here) who cuts such a figure in the old Italian novels; and Giotto, the greatest of them all, is the friend of Dante, the hander down of his like-

* See a "Comment on the Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri," just published. It is written in the style of one who has been accustomed to speak another language, and ventures upon some singularly gratuitous assumptions respecting the doctrine of eternal punishment: but the poetical reader will consider it a valuable addition to the stock of criticism on Dante, and wish that the author may continue it. It contains some happy local illustrations, a complete account of the real history of Paulo and Francesca, a settlement of the question respecting Beatrice, and a variety of metaphysico-theological remarks in as good and deep a taste as those above-mentioned are idle.

ness to posterity, and himself the Dante of his art. High as this eulogy is, nobody will think it too high who has seen his works in the Campo Santo. They are of the same fine old dreaming character, the same imaginative mixture of things familiar with things unearthly, the same strenuous and (when they choose) gentle expression,—in short, the same true discernment of the “differences of things,” now grappling with a fiend or a fierce thought, now sympathising with fear and sorrow, now setting the muscles of grim warriors, now dissolving in the looks and flowing tresses of women, or setting a young gallant in an attitude to which Raphael might have traced his cavaliers. And this is more or less the character of the very oldest pictures in the Campo Santo. They have the germs of beauty and greatness, however obscured and stiffened, the struggle of true pictorial feeling with the inexperience of art. As you proceed along the walls, you see gracefulness and knowledge gradually helping one another, and legs and arms, lights, shades, and details of all sorts taking their proper measures and positions, as if every separate thing in the world of painting had been created with repeated efforts, till it answered the original and always fair idea. They are like a succession of quaint dreams of humanity during the twilight of creation.

I have already mentioned that the pictures are painted on the walls of the four cloisters. They occupy the greater part of the elevation of these walls, beginning at top and finishing at a reasonable distance from the pavement. The subjects are from the Old Testament up to the time of Solomon, from the legends of the middle ages, particularly St. Ranieri (the patron saint of Pisa) and from the history of the Crucifixion, Resurrection, &c. with the Day of Judgment. There is also a Triumph of Death. The colours of some of them, especially of the sky and ship in the voyage of St. Ranieri, are

wonderfully preserved. The sky looks as intensely blue as the finest out of doors. But others are much injured by the sea air, which blows into Pisa; and it is a pity that the windows of the cloisters in these quarters are not glazed, to protect them from further injury. The best idea perhaps which I can give an Englishman of the general character of the paintings, is by referring him to the engravings of Albert Durer,²³ and the serious parts of Chaucer. There is the same want of proper costume—the same intense feeling of the human being, both in body and soul—the same bookish, romantic, and retired character—the same evidences, in short, of antiquity and commencement, weak (where it is weak) for want of a settled art and language, but strong for that very reason in first impulses, and in putting down all that is felt. An old poet however always has the advantage of an old painter, because he is not obliged to a literal description of arms, legs, and attitudes, and thus escapes half his quaintness. But they truly illustrate one another. Chaucer's *Duke Theseus*,²⁴ clothed and behaving accordingly—his yawning courtiers, who thank king Cambuscan²⁵ for dismissing them to bed—his god Janus keeping Christmas with his fire-side and his dish of brawn, &c.—exhibit the same fantastic alternations of violated costume and truth of nature. The way in which he mingles together personages of all times, nations, and religions, real and fictitious, Samson and Turnus with Socrates, Ovid with St. Augustin, &c. and his descriptions of actual “purtreyings on a wall,” in which are exhibited at once, Narcissus, Solomon, Venus, Cræsus, and “the porter Idleness,”²⁶ resemble the manner in which some of the painters of the Campo Santo defy all perspective, and fill one picture with twenty different solitudes. There is a painting for instance devoted to the celebrated anchorites or hermits of the desert. They are represented according to their seve-

ral legends—reading, dying, undergoing temptations, assisted by lions, &c. At first they all look like fantastic actors in the same piece; but you dream, and are reconciled. The contempt of every thing like interval, and of all which may have happened in it, makes the ordinary events of life seem of as little moment; and the mind is exclusively occupied with the sacred old men and their solitudes, all at the same time, and yet each by himself. The manner in which some of the hoary saints in these pictures pore over their books and carry their decrepit old age, full of a bent and absorbed feebleness—the set limbs of the warriors on horseback—the sidelong unequivocal looks of some of the ladies playing on harps, and conscious of their ornaments—the people of fashion, seated in rows, with Time coming up unawares to destroy them—the other rows of elders and doctors of the church, forming part of the array of heaven—the uplifted hand of Christ denouncing the wicked at the Day of Judgment—the daring satires occasionally introduced against hypocritical monks and nuns—the profusion of attitudes, expressions, incidents, broad draperies, ornaments of all sorts, visions, mountains, ghastly looking cities, fiends, angels, sybilline old women, dancers, virgin brides, mothers and children, princes, patriarchs, dying saints;—it is an injustice to the superabundance and truth of conception in all this multitude of imagery, not to recognise the real inspirers as well as harbingers of Raphael and Michael Angelo, instead of confining the honour to the Massacios²⁷ and Peruginos.²⁸ The Massacios and Peruginos, for all that ever I saw, meritorious as they are, are no more to be compared with them, than the sonnetteers of Henry the Eighth's time are to be compared with Chaucer. Even in the very rudest of the pictures, where the souls of the dying are going out of their mouths in the shape of little children, there are passages not unworthy of Dante or Mi-

chael Angelo,—angels trembling at the blowing of trumpets, men in vain attempting to carry their friends into heaven; and saints, who have lived ages of temperance, sitting in calm air upon hills far above the triumphant progress of Death, who goes bearing down the great, the luxurious, and the young. The picture by Titian,²⁹ in which he has represented the three great stages of existence, bubble-blowing childhood, love-making manhood, and death-contemplating old age, is not better conceived, and hardly better made out, than some of the designs of Orgagna and Giotto. Since I have beheld the Campo Santo, I have enriched my day-dreams and my stock of the admirable, and am thankful that I have names by heart, to which I owe homage and gratitude. Tender and noble Orgagna, be thou blessed beyond the happiness of thine own heaven! Giotto, be thou a name to me hereafter, of a kindred brevity, solidity, and stateliness, with that of thy friend Dante!*

The air of Pisa is soft and balmy to the last degree. Mr. Forsythe thinks it too moist, and countenance is given to his opinion by the lowness and flatness of the place, which lies in a plain full of springs and rivers, between the Apennines and the sea. The inhabitants also have a proverb,—*Pisa pesa a chi posa*,—which may be translated,

Pisa sits ill
On those who sit still.

To me the air seemed as dry as it is soft; and most people will feel oppressed every where, if they do not take exercise. The lower rooms of the houses are reckoned how-

* There is a good description of the pictures in the Campo Santo, written by Professor Rosini,³⁰ of Pisa, and enriched with some criticisms by his friend the Cavaliere de Rossi.

ever too damp in winter, at least on the Lungarno; though the winter season is counted delicious, and the Grand Duke always comes here to spend two months of it. The noon-day sun in summer-time is formidable, resembling more the intense heat struck from burning metal, than any thing we can conceive of it in England. But a sea-breeze often blows of an evening, when the inhabitants take their exercise. A look out upon the Lungarno at noon-day is curious. A blue sky is overhead—dazzling stone underneath—the yellow Arno gliding along, generally with nothing upon it, sometimes a lazy sail; the houses on the opposite side, sleeping with their green blinds down; and nobody passing but a few labourers, carmen, or countrywomen in their veils and handkerchiefs, hastening with bare feet, but never too fast to forget a certain air of strut and stateliness. Dante, in one of his love poems, praises his mistress for walking like a peacock, nay even like a crane, *strait above herself*:—

Soave a guisa va di un bel pavone,
Diritta sopra se, coma una grua.³¹

Sweetly she goes, like the bright peacock; strait
Above herself, like to the lady crane.³²

This is the common walk of Italian women, rich and poor. The step of Madame Vestris³³ on the stage resembles it. To an English eye at first it seems wanting in a certain modesty and moral grace; but you see what the grave poet has to say for it, and it is not associated in an Italian mind with any such deficiency: that it has a beauty of its own is certain.

Solitary as Pisa may look at noon-day, it is only by comparison with what you find in very populous cities. Its desolate aspect is much exaggerated. The people, for the most part, sit in shade at their doors in the hottest weather, so

that it cannot look so solitary as many parts of London at the same time of the year; and though it is true that grass grows in some of the streets, it is only in the remotest. The streets, for the most part, are kept very neat and clean, not excepting the poorest alleys, a benefit arising not only from the fine pavement which is every where to be found, but from the wise use to which criminals are put. The punishment of death is not kept up in Tuscany. Robbers, and even murderers, are made to atone for the ill they have done by the good works of sweeping and keeping clean. A great murderer on the English stage used formerly to have a regular suit of brick-dust. In Tuscany, or at least in Pisa, robbers are dressed in a red livery, and murderers in a yellow. A stranger looks with a feeling more grave than curiosity at these saffron-coloured mysteries, quietly doing their duty in the open streets, and not seeming to avoid observation. But they look just like other men. They are either too healthy by temperance and exercise to exhibit a conscience, or think they make up very well by their labour for so trifling an ebullition of animal spirits. And they have a good deal to say for themselves, considering their labour is in chains and for life.

The inhabitants of Pisa in general are not reckoned a favourable specimen of Tuscan looks. You are sure to meet fine faces in any large assembly, but the common run is certainly bad enough. They are hard, prematurely aged, and what expression there is, is worldly. Some of them have no expression whatever, but are as destitute of speculation and feeling as masks. The bad Italian face and the good Italian face are the extremes of insensibility and the reverse. But it is rare that the eyes are not fine, and the females have a profusion of good hair. Lady Morgan³⁴ has justly remarked the promising countenances of Italian

children, compared with what they turn out to be as they grow older; and adds with equal justice, that it is an evident affair of government and education. You doubly pity the corruptions of a people, who besides their natural genius, preserve in the very midst of their sophistication a frankness distinct from it, and an entire freedom from affectation. An Italian annoys you neither with his pride like an Englishman, nor with his vanity like a Frenchman. He is quiet and natural, self-possessed without wrapping himself up sulkily in a corner, and ready for cheerfulness without grimace. His frankness sometimes takes the air of a simplicity, at once singularly misplaced and touching. A young man who exhibited a taste for all good and generous sentiments, and who, according to the representation of his friends, was a very worthy as well as ingenious person, did not scruple to tell me one day, as a matter of course, that he made a point of getting acquainted with the rich families, purely to be invited to their houses and partake of their good things. Many an Englishman would undoubtedly do this, but he would hardly be so frank about it to a stranger; nor would an Englishman of the same tastes in other respects be easily found to act so. But it is the old story of "following a multitude to do evil," and is no doubt accounted a mere matter of necessity and good sense.

The Pisans claim the merit of speaking as pure Italian, if not purer, as any people in Tuscany; and there is a claim among the poorer orders in this part of Italy, which has been too hastily credited by foreigners, of speaking a language quite as pure as the educated classes. It is certainly not true, whatever may be claimed for their Tuscan as ancient or popular Tuscan. The Pisans in general also seem to have corrupted their pronunciation, and the Florentines too, if report is to be believed. They use a soft aspirate

instead of the C, as if their language was not genteel and tender enough already. *Casa* is *hasa*,—*cuoco* (a cook) *hoho*,—*locando*, *lohando*,—*cocomero*, *hohomero*,—and even *crazie* (a sort of coin) *hrazie*. But they speak well out, trolling the words clearly over the tongue. There seems a good deal of talent for music among them, which does not know how to make its way. You never hear the poorest melody, but somebody strikes in with what he can muster up of a harmony. Boys go about of an evening, and parties sit at their doors, singing popular airs, and hanging as long as possible on the last chord. It is not an uncommon thing for gentlemen to play their guitars as they go along to a party. I heard one evening a voice singing past a window, that would not have disgraced an opera; and I once walked behind a common post-boy, who in default of having another to help him to a harmony, contrived to make chords of all his notes, by rapidly sounding the second and treble one after the other. The whole people are bitten with a new song, and hardly sing any thing else till the next: there were two epidemic airs of this kind, when I was there, which had been imported from Florence, and which the inhabitants sung from morning till night, though they were nothing remarkable. And yet Pisa is said to be the least fond of music of any city in Tuscany.

I must not omit a great curiosity which is in the neighbourhood of Pisa, towards the sea;—namely, the existence of a race of camels, which was brought from the East during the crusades. I have not seen them out of the city, though the novelty of the sight in Europe, the sand of the sea-shore, and the vessels that sometimes combine with the landscape in the distance, are said to give it a look singularly Asiatic. They are used for agricultural purposes, and may be some-

times met within the walls. The forest between Pisa and another part of the sea-shore, is extensive and woody.

Pisa is a tranquil, an imposing, and even now a beautiful and stately city. It looks like the residence of an university: many parts of it seem made up of colleges; and we feel as if we ought to “walk gowned.”³⁵ It possesses the Campo Santo, rich above earthly treasure; its river is the river of Tuscan poetry, and furnished Michael Angelo with the subject of his cartoon; and it disputes with Florence the birth of Galileo.³⁶ Here at all events he studied and he taught: here his mind was born, and another great impulse given to the progress of philosophy and Liberal Opinion.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Andrea Vaccà Berlinghieri (1772-1826), internationally renowned Italian surgeon, academic, and member of the Pisan Circle. He was the son of Francesco Vaccà Berlinghieri, a medical scholar and political figure, involved in the 1798-99 uprisings and the Republican Triennium in Pisa. After studying in Paris, Andrea's brother, Leopoldo, became a Napoleonic officer and died while returning home. Thanks to his widow, Sophie Caudeiron, who animated the literary salon at Pisa's Palazzo Lanfranchi, Andrea Vaccà met Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron.

² Prince Alexandros Mavrokordatos (1791-1865), an exile from Turkish rule in Greece who studied at Padua and gave Mary Shelley Greek lessons in exchange for English instruction in Pisa. He played a significant role in the struggle for Greek independence and in Byron's decision to join the Greek Revolution.

³ The last major poem that appeared in his lifetime, Shelley's verse drama *Hellas* was written in 1821 in Pisa and published in 1822 in London. Dedicated to Prince Alexandros Mavrokordatos, it celebrated the Greek Revolution against Turkish rule.

⁴ Count Vittorio Amedeo Alfieri (1749-1803), Italian tragic poet whose main theme was the overthrow of tyranny, precursor of the Risorgimento. Set in Pisa, his tragedy *Don Garzia* (*Don Garcia*) was first published in 1789.

⁵ Count Ugolino della Gherardesca (c. 1214-89), Pisan nobleman, politician, and naval commander. He was accused of treason, imprisoned in a tower with his sons and grandsons, and rumoured to have eaten them in the face of starvation. The character of Ugolino features in Dante's *Divine Comedy* (*Inferno*, XXXII-XXXIII).

⁶ Dante's account was retold by Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343-1400) in "The Monk's Tale" from *The Canterbury Tales* (1387-1400). The Monk relates seventeen tragedies based on the disastrous endings of a selection of biblical, classical, and contemporary figures, including Count Ugolino.

⁷ Giovanni Villani (c. 1276-1348), Florentine banker, official, diplomat, and writer, author of the *Nuova Cronica* (*New Chronicles*) on the history of Florence, in which the story of Count Ugolino was reported. After his death, Villani's work on the *Nuova Cronica* was continued by his brother Matteo and his nephew Filippo.

⁸ Joseph Forsyth (1763-1815) was a Scottish writer on Italy, admired by Byron and Shelley. His *Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters, during an Excursion in Italy in the Years 1802 and 1803* were published in London in 1813. Several later editions appeared in the following years.

⁹ Henry Matthews (1789-1828), author of the travelogue *The Diary of an Invalid: Being the Journal of a Tour in Pursuit of Health in Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, and France, in the Years 1817, 1818, and 1819* (1820).

¹⁰ William of Innsbruck (Meister Wilhelm von Innsbruck), sculptor and architect active in Pisa in the twelfth century.

¹¹ Abraham Tucker (1705-74), English country gentleman, who devoted himself to the study of philosophy. He wrote his *magnum opus* *The Light of Nature Pursued* (1768-77), originally published in three volumes, under the pseudonym of Edward Search. An abridged edition by William Hazlitt appeared in 1807.

¹² Located in the heart of London's West End, Stratford Place is a quiet cul-de-sac situated to the north of Oxford Street.

¹³ Ubaldo Lanfranchi (d. 1207), consecrated Archbishop of Pisa in 1176. He participated in the Third Crusade. According to the legend, the sacred soil of Golgotha was spread on the ground where Pisa's Campo Santo arose.

¹⁴ Benozzo Gozzoli (1420-97), Italian Renaissance painter from Florence (a pupil of Fra Angelico). Mainly active in Tuscany, he also worked in Rome and Umbria.

¹⁵ Francesco Algarotti (1712-64), Venetian polymath, philosopher, and art critic. In 1740 Frederick the Great (1712-86), King of Prussia, conferred on him the title of Count and later paid for the funeral monument to his memory in Pisa.

¹⁶ Lorenzo Pignotti (1739-1812), physician, historian, poet, and writer, regarded by several critics as the best of the Italian fabulists. He taught Physics at the University of Pisa, where he later became Rector.

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¹⁷ Angelo Fabroni (1732-1803), Italian biographer, historian, and clergyman. Dean of the University of Pisa.

¹⁸ Reference to John Taaffe (b. 1787/88), Irish writer and translator, companion of Shelley and Byron in Italy, where he died in 1862. He wrote *A Comment on the Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*, published in London in 1822 by John Murray.

¹⁹ Andrea di Cione di Arcangelo (c. 1308-68), known as Orcagna, was the most prominent Florentine painter, sculptor, and architect of the mid-fourteenth century. He was employed as architect in the Duomo of Florence.

²⁰ Simone Martini (1284-1344), exponent of Gothic painting born in Siena. Thought to be a pupil of Duccio di Buoninsegna, according to Giorgio Vasari, he was instead a pupil of Giotto di Bondone. Martini's brother-in-law was the artist Lippo Memmi.

²¹ Giotto di Bondone (1266/67-1337), Florentine painter and architect, regarded as the first of the great Italian masters. Probably the pupil of Cimabue, he decorated chapels and churches in Florence, Rome, Padua, Assisi, and Naples with frescoes and paintings.

²² Buonamico di Martino, known as Buffalmacco (c. 1290-1340), Italian Renaissance painter who worked in Florence, Bologna, and Pisa. He is assumed to be the author of some spectacular frescoes located in the Campo Santo, including *The Triumph of Death*.

²³ Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), the greatest painter, printmaker, and theorist of the German Renaissance, whose work was highly regarded and influential across Europe.

²⁴ Reference to Theseus, the Duke of Athens, one of the main characters in "The Knight's Tale", the first story in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

²⁵ In Chaucer's unfinished "The Squire's Tale", Cambuscan (possibly Genghis Khan) is the King of Sarra, in Tartary.

²⁶ See Chaucer, "The Knight's Tale".

²⁷ Tommaso di Giovanni di Simone Guidi (1401-28), known as Masaccio, was a famous Florentine artist. Despite his brief career, his work exerted a powerful influence on other painters and he is regarded as a pioneering figure of the Early Renaissance in Italy.

²⁸ Pietro Vannucci (c. 1446/52-1523), known as Perugino, was a Renaissance painter of the Umbrian school and the teacher of Raphael. His work anticipated the ideals of the High Renaissance.

²⁹ Tiziano Vecellio (c. 1488/90-1576), known as Titian, was the greatest Renaissance painter of the Venetian school. He is considered as an extraordinary master of colour.

³⁰ Giovanni Rosini (1776-1855), philologist, Professor of Italian Eloquence at the University of Pisa, writer, art historian, publisher, and cultural mediator. He was the first to publish Shelley's pastoral elegy for John Keats *Adonais* (Pisa, July 1821).

³¹ Misattribution. According to tradition, these poetic lines were wrongly attributed to Dante. In truth, the canzone "Io guardo i crespi e i biondi capelli" (*Rime*, III) was written by the fourteenth-century Italian poet Fazio degli Uberti. See Fazio degli Uberti, *Rime*, ed. by Cristiano Lorenzi (Pisa: ETS, 2013), pp. 308-312 (p. 311).

³² English translation.

³³ Lucia Elizabeth Bartolozzi (1797-1856), known as Madame Vestris, was a British actress, opera singer, theatre producer, and manager. She had a profound influence on the development of stagecraft.

³⁴ Sydney Owenson (1781?-1859), known as Lady Morgan, was an Irish writer, mainly remembered for her controversial personality and work. Her continental travelogue *Italy* was published in 1821 and attacked by *The Quarterly Review*. Percy Shelley and Byron were among her supporters.

³⁵ See, for instance, Charles Lamb, Sonnet VIII, "Written at Cambridge" (1819).

³⁶ Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), Italian astronomer, physicist, natural philosopher, and mathematician born in Pisa, regarded as the father of modern science.

MAY-DAY NIGHT.^{1*}

[THE following is a translation by Mr. Shelley of the May-day Night scene in the tragedy of Faust.² A few passages were not filled up in the manuscript; and one or two others, perhaps of a like nature, have been omitted,³ not out of an idle squeamishness, but that the true spirit of them might not be mistaken for want of being accompanied by the context of the whole work. The scene is the first specimen, we believe, of a poetical English translation⁴ of that extraordinary production, to which no man was better able to do justice than our lamented friend.⁵ The poetical reader will feel with what vivacity he has encountered the ghastly bustle of the revellers, —with what apprehensiveness of tact, yet strength of security, he has carried us into the thick of “the witch element.” These are strong terms of praise for a translation; but Mr. Shelley went to his work in a kindred spirit of genius, and Goëthe has so completely made his work a work of creation, it seems a thing so involuntarily growing out of the world he has got into, like the animated rocks and crags⁶ which he speaks of,—that a congenial translator in one’s own language seems to step into his place as the abstract observer, and to leave but two images present to one’s mind, the work and himself. In other words, he is the true representative of his author. This is the very highest triumph both of poetry and translation.

Webster⁷ and Middleton⁸ would have liked this scene. Every body will like it, who can feel at all what the poet feels most, the secret analogies that abound in all things,—the sympathies, of which difference and even antipathy cannot get rid. How we pity Faust in this play, who refines and hardens himself out of his faith in things good, and acquires the necessity of inordinate excitement! How we congratulate even the Devil, who, having got a pitch still further, discovers a kind of faith in faithlessness itself, and extracts a good, wretched as it is, out of his laughing at every thing! And how delightful, is it not, to see the blankest scepticism itself thus brought round to poetry and imagination by the very road which seemed to lead

* Author: Percy Bysshe Shelley / Transcribed and annotated by Alessia Testori.

farthest from it, and the misfortune of worldly-mindedness inculcated by the very charities which the poet finds out in its behalf!

We have sometimes thought of attempting a work, in which beasts and birds should speak, not as in *Æsop*,⁹ but as they might be supposed to talk, if they could give us the result of their own actual perceptions and difference of organisation. Goëthe would handle such a subject to perfection.]

MAY-DAY NIGHT.

SCENE—*The Hartz Mountain,*¹⁰ *a desolate Country.*

FAUST,¹¹ MEPHISTOPHELES.¹²

Meph. Would you not like a broomstick? As for me
I wish I had a good stout ram to ride;
For we are still far from the appointed place.

Faust. This knotted staff is help enough for me,
Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What good
Is there in making short a pleasant way?
To creep along the labyrinths of the vales,
And climb those rocks where ever-babbling springs
Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,
Is the true sport that seasons such a path.
Already Spring kindles the birchen spray,
And the hoar pines already feel her breath:
Shall she not work also within our limbs?

Meph. Nothing of such an influence do I feel.
My body is all wintry, and I wish
The flowers upon our path were frost and snow.
But see how melancholy rises now,
Dimly uplifting her belated beam,
The blank unwelcome round of the red moon,
And gives so bad a light, that every step
One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With your permission,
I'll call an Ignis-fatuus¹³ to our aid:
I see one yonder burning jollily.
Halloo, my friend! may I request that you

Would favour us with your bright company?
 Why should you blaze away there to no purpose?
 Pray be so good as light us up this way.

Ignis-f. With reverence be it spoken, I will try
 To overcome the lightness of my nature;
 Our course you know is generally zig-zag.

Meph. Ha, ha! your worship thinks you have to deal
 With men. Go strait on, in the Devil's name,
 Or I will blow your flickering life out.

Ignis-f. Well,
 I see you are the master of the house;
 I will accommodate myself to you.
 Only consider, that to-night this mountain
 Is all enchanted, and if Jack-a-lantern
 Shews you his way, though you should miss your own,
 You ought not to be too exact with him

(Faust, Mephistopheles, and Ignis-fatuus, in alternate chorus.)

The limits of the sphere of dream,
 The bounds of true and false, are past.
 Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,
 Lead us onward, far and fast,
 To the wide, the desert¹⁴ waste.

But see how swift advance, and shift,
 Trees behind trees, row by row,—
 How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift
 Their fawning foreheads as we go.
 The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
 How they snort and how they blow!

Through the mossy sods and stones
 Stream and streamlet hurry down —

A rushing throng! A sound of song
Beneath the vault of Heaven is blown!
Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones
Of this bright day, sent down to say
That Paradise on Earth is known,
Resound around, beneath, above.
All we hope and all we love
Finds a voice in this blithe strain,
Which wakens hill, and wood, and rill,
And vibrates far o'er field and vale,
And which echo, like the tale
Of old times, repeats again.

To whoo! to whoo! Near, nearer now
The sound of song, the rushing throng!
Are the screech, the lapwing, and the jay,
All awake as if 'twere day?
See, with long legs and belly wide,
A salamander in the lake!
Every root is like a snake,
And along the loose hill side,
With strange contortions through the night,
Curls, to seize or to affright;¹⁵
And, animated, strong, and many,
They dart forth polypus-antennæ,
To blister with their poison spume
The wanderer. Through the dazzling gloom
The many-coloured mice, that thread
The dewy turf beneath our tread,
In troops each others motions cross,
Through the heath and through the moss;
And, in legions intertangled,

The fire-flies flit, and swarm, and throng,
Till all the mountain depths are spangled.

Tell me, shall we go or stay?
Shall we onward? Come along!
Every thing around is swept
Forward, onward, far away!
Trees and masses intercept
The sight, and wisps on every side
Are puffed up and multiplied.

Meph. Now vigorously seize my skirt, and gain
This pinnacle of isolated crag.
One may observe with wonder from this point,
How Mammon¹⁶ glows among the mountains.

Faust. Aye—
And strangely through the solid depth below
A melancholy light, like the red dawn,
Shoots from the lowest gorge of the abyss
Of mountains, lightning hitherward: there rise
Pillars of smoke, here clouds float gently by;
Here the light burns soft as the enkindled air,
Or the illumined dust of golden flowers;
And now it glides like tender colours spreading,
And now bursts forth in fountains from the earth;
And now it winds, one torrent of broad light,
Through the far valley with a hundred veins;
And now once more within that narrow corner
Masses itself into intensest splendour.
And near us, see! sparks spring out of the ground,
Like golden sand scattered upon the darkness;
The pinnacles of that black wall of mountains
That hems us in, are kindled.

Meph. Rare, in faith!
Does not Sir Mammon gloriously illuminate
His palace for this festival . . . it is
A pleasure which you had not known before.
I spy the boisterous guests already.

Faust. Now
The children of the wind rage in the air!
With what fierce strokes they fall upon my neck!

Meph. Cling tightly to the old ribs of the crag.
Beware! for if with them thou warrest
In their fierce flight towards the wilderness,
Their breath will sweep thee into dust, and drag
Thy body to a grave in the abyss.

A cloud thickens the night.
Hark! how the tempest crashes through the forest!
The owls fly out in strange affright;
The columns of the evergreen palaces
Are split and shattered;
The roots creak, and stretch, and groan;
And ruinously overthrown,
The trunks are crushed and shattered
By the fierce blast's unconquerable stress.
Over each other crack and crash they all
In terrible and intertangled fall;
And through the ruins of the shaken mountain
The airs hiss and howl.
It is not the voice of the fountain,
Nor the wolf in his midnight prowling.
Dost thou not hear?
Strange accents are ringing
Aloft, afar, anear;¹⁷
The witches are singing!

The torrent of a raging wizard song
Streams the whole mountain along.

Chorus of Witches.

The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,
Now to the Brocken¹⁸ the witches go;
The mighty multitude here may be seen
Gathering, wizard and witch, below.
Sir Urean¹⁹ is sitting aloft in the air;
Hey over stock! and hey over stone!
'Twixt²⁰ witches and incubi,²¹ what shall be done?
Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!

A Voice.

Upon a sow swine, whose farrows were nine,
Old Baubo²² rideth alone.

Chorus.

Honour her to whom honour is due,
Old mother Baubo, honor to you!
An able sow, with old Baubo upon her,
Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honour!
The legion of witches is coming behind,
Darkening the night, and outspeeding the wind.

A Voice.

Which way comest thou?

A Voice.

Over Ilsenstein;²³

The owl was awake in the white moon-shine;
I saw her at rest in her downy nest,
And she stared at me with her broad, bright eye.

Voices.

And you may now as well take your course on to Hell,
Since you ride by so fast on the headlong blast.

A Voice.

She dropt poison upon me as I past.
Here are the wounds——

Chorus of Witches.

Come away! come along!
 The way is wide, the way is long,
 But what is that for a bedlam throng?
 Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom.
 The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,
 And the mother is clapping her hands.

Semi-Chorus of Wizards I.

We glide in
 Like snails, when the women are all away;
 And from a house once given over to sin
 Woman has a thousand steps to stray.

Semi-Chorus II.

A thousand steps must a woman take,
 Where a man but a single spring will make.

Voices above.

Come with us, come with us, from Felumee.²⁴

Voices below.

With what joy would we fly through the upper sky!
 We are washed, we are 'nointed,²⁵ stark naked are we;
 But our toil and our pain is for ever in vain.

Both Chorusses.

The wind is still, the stars are fled,
 The melancholy moon is dead;
 The magic notes, like spark on spark,
 Drizzle, whistling through the dark.
 Come away!

Voices below.

Stay, oh, stay!

Voices above.

Out of the crannies of the rocks,
 Who calls?

Voices below.

Oh, let me join your flocks!
I three hundred years have striven
To catch your skirt and mount to Heaven,—
And still in vain. Oh, might I be
With company akin to me!

Both Chorusses.

Some on a ram, and some on a prong,
On poles and on broomsticks we flutter along;
Forlorn is the wight who can rise not to-night.

A Half-witch below.

I have been tripping this many an hour:
Are the others already so far before?
No quiet at home, and no peace abroad!
And less methinks is found by the road.

Chorus of Witches.

Come onward, away! aroint thee, aroint!
A witch to be strong must anoint—anoint—
Then every trough will be boat enough;
With a rag for a sail we can sweep through the sky,
Who flies not to-night, when means he to fly?

Both Chorusses.

We cling to the skirt, and we strike on the ground;
Witch legions thicken around and around;
Wizard swarms cover the heath all over.

(They descend.)

Mephistopheles.

What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling;
What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling;
What glimmering, spurting, stinking, burning,
As Heaven and Earth were overturning.
There is a true witch element about us.
Take hold on me, or we shall be divided.
Where are you?

Faust. (*From a distance.*)—Here!

Meph. I must exert my authority in the house.
Place for young Voland!²⁶ pray make way, good people.
Take hold on me, doctor, and with one step
Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd:
They are too mad for people of my sort.
Just there shines a peculiar kind of light—
Something attracts me in those bushes. Come
This way; we shall slip down there in a minute.

Faust. Spirit of Contradiction! Well, lead on—
'Twere a wise feat indeed to wander out
Into the Brocken upon May-day night,
And then to isolate oneself in scorn,
Disgusted with the humours of the time.

Meph. See yonder, round a many coloured flame
A merry club is huddled all together:
Even with such little people as sit there
One would not be alone.

Faust. Would that I were
Up yonder in the glow and whirling smoke,
Where the blind million rush impetuously
To meet the evil ones; there might I solve
Many a riddle that torments me!

Meph. Yet
Many a riddle there is tied anew
Inextricably. Let the great world rage!
We will stay here safe in the quiet dwellings.
'Tis our old custom. Men have ever built
Their own small world in the great world of all.
I see young witches naked there, and old ones
Wisely attired with greater decency.
Be guided now by me, and you shall buy
A pound of pleasure with a dram of trouble.

I hear them tune their instruments—one must
 Get used to this damned scraping. Come, I'll lead you
 Among them; and what you there do and see,
 As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.
 How say you now? this space is wide enough—
 Look forth, you cannot see the end of it—
 An hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they
 Who throng around them seem innumerable:
 Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,
 And cooking, are at work. Now tell me, friend,
 What is there better in the world than this?

Faust. In introducing us, do you assume
 The character of wizard or of devil?

Meph. In truth, I generally go about
 In strict incognito; and yet one likes
 To wear one's orders upon gala days.
 I have no ribbon at knee; but here
 At home the cloven foot is honourable.
 See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,
 And with her feeling eyes has smelt out something.
 I could not, if I would, mask myself here.
 Come now, we'll go about from fire to fire:
 I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the lover.

*(To some old women, who are sitting round a heap of
 glimmering coals.)*

Old gentlewomen, what do you do out here?
 You ought to be with the young rioters
 Right in the thickest of the revelry—
 But every one is best content at home.

General.

Who dare confide in night or a just claim?
 So much as I had done for them! and now—
 With women and the people 'tis the same,

Youth will stand foremost ever,—age may go
To the dark grave unhonoured.

Minister.

Now-a-days
People assert their rights: they go too far;
But as for me, the good old times I praise;
Then we were all in all, 'twas something worth
One's while to be in place and wear a star;
That was indeed the golden age on earth.

*Parvenu.**

We too are active, and we did and do
What we ought not, perhaps; and yet we now
Will seize, whilst all things are whirled round and round,
A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep our ground.

Author.

Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense
And wonderous volume? 'tis impertinence
To write what none will read, therefore will I
To please the young and thoughtless people try.

Meph. (Who at once appears to have grown very old.)

I find the people ripe for the last day,
Since I last came up to the wizard mountain;
And as my little cask runs turbid now,
So is the world drained to the dregs.

Pedlar-Witch. Look here,

Gentlemen; do not hurry on so fast
And lose the chance of a good pennyworth.
I have a pack full of the choicest wares
Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle
Is nothing like what may be found on earth;
Nothing that in a moment will make rich

* A sort of fundholder.

Men and the world with fine malicious mischief—
 There is no dagger drunk with blood; no bowl
 From which consuming poison may be drained
 By innocent and healthy lips; no jewel
 The price of an abandoned maiden's shame;
 No sword which cuts the bond it cannot loose,
 Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the back;
 No——

Meph. Gossip, you know little of these times.
 What has been, has been; what is done, is past.
 They shape themselves into the innovations,
 They breed, and innovation drags us with it.
 The torrent of the crowd sweeps over us:
 You think to impel, and are yourself impelled.

Faust. Who is that yonder?

Meph. Mark her well. It is
 Lilith.²⁷

Faust. Who?

Meph. Lilith, the first wife of Adam.
 Beware of her fair hair, for she excels
 All women in the magic of her locks;
 And when she winds them round a young man's neck,
 She will not ever set him free again.

Faust. There sit a girl and an old woman—they
 Seem to be tired with pleasure and with play.

Meph. There is rest to night for any one:
 When one dance ends another is begun;
 Come, let us to it! We shall have rare fun.

*(Faust dances and sings with a girl, and Mephistopheles
 with an old woman.)*²⁸

*Brocto-phantasmist.*²⁹ What is this cursed multitude about?

Have we not long since proved to demonstration
That ghosts move not on ordinary feet?
But these are dancing just like men and women.

The Girl. What does he want then at our ball?

Faust. Oh! he

Is far above us all in his conceit:
Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoyment;
And any step which in our dance we tread,
If it be left out of his reckoning,
Is not to be considered as a step.
There are few things that scandalize him not:
And when you whirl round in the circle now,
As he went round the wheel in his old mill,
He says that you go wrong in all respects,
Especially if you congratulate him
Upon the strength of the resemblance.

Broct. Fly!

Vanish! Unheard of impudence! What, still there!
In this enlightened age too, since you have been
Proved not to exist!—But this infernal brood
Will hear no reason and endure no rule.
Are we so wise, and is the *pond* still haunted?
How long have I been sweeping out this rubbish
Of superstition, and the world will not
Come clean with all my pains!—it is a case
Unheard of!

The Girl. Then leave off teasing us so.

Broct. I tell you spirits, to your faces now,
That I should not regret this despotism
Of spirits, but that mine can wield it not.
To night I shall make poor work of it,
Yet I will take a round with you, and hope

Before my last step in the living dance
To beat the poet and the devil together.

Meph. At last he will sit down in some foul puddle;
That is his way of solacing himself;
Until some leech, diverted with his gravity,
Cures him of spirits and the spirit together.

(To Faust, who has seceded from the dance.)

Why do you let that fair girl pass from you,
Who sung so sweetly to you in the dance?

Faust. A red mouse in the middle of her singing
Sprung from her mouth.

Meph. That was all right, my friend.
Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.
Do not disturb your hour of happiness
With close consideration of such trifles.

Faust. Then saw I——

Meph. What?

Faust. Seest thou not a pale
Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?
She drags herself now forward with slow steps,
And seems as if she moved with shackled feet:
I cannot overcome the thought that she
Is like poor Margaret.³⁰

Meph. Let it be—pass on—
No good can come of it—it is not well
To meet it—it is an enchanted phantom,
A lifeless idol; with a numbing look,
It freezes up the blood of man; and they
Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,
Like those who saw Medusa.³¹

Faust. Oh, too true!
Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse

Which no beloved hand has closed, alas!
That is the heart which Margaret yielded to me—
Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoyed!

Meph. It is all magic, poor deluded fool!
She looks to every one like his first love.

Faust. Oh, what delight! what woe! I cannot turn
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.
How strangely does a single blood-red line,
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,
Adorn her lovely neck!

Meph. Aye, she can carry
Her head under her arm upon occasion;
Perseus³² has cut it off for her. These pleasures
End in delusion.—Gain this rising ground,
It is as airy here as in a []
And if I am not mightily deceived,
I see a theatre—What may this mean?

Attendant. Quite a new piece, the last of seven, for 'tis
The custom now to represent that number.
'Tis written by a Dilettante,³³ and
The actors who perform are Dilettanti;
Excuse me, gentlemen; but I must vanish.
I am a Dilettante curtain-lifter.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Reference to the night between 30th April and 1st May. Also known as “Walpurgis Night”, it is the eve of the Christian feast day of Saint Walpurga and commemorates her canonization on 1st May 870 CE. In Germany, Saint Walpurga was worshipped as a protector against pest, rabies, whooping cough and witchcraft. “May Day” is, instead, a Europe-wide festival, also held on 1st May, which, in contrast to the night of Walpurga, celebrates the arrival of summer.

² Percy Bysshe Shelley’s translation of the *Walpurgisnacht auf dem Brocken* scene from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Faust* (Part I, Scene XXI) (1808).

³ This translation was published after Shelley’s death. It is highly likely that some corrections were made by other editors of *The Liberal* before its first issue was printed. Mary Shelley, in particular, heavily edited the majority of her husband’s lyrical pieces, changing, omitting, and removing several lines. Mary was also the editor of two posthumous collections of Shelley’s works: *Posthumous Poems* (1824) and *Poetical Works* (1839).

⁴ The definition of “poetical English translation” indicates that Shelley’s is not a word-for-word rendition of the original.

⁵ Percy Bysshe Shelley.

⁶ Sharp, detached fragments of rocks.

⁷ John Webster (c. 1578-c. 1632), dramatist.

⁸ Thomas Middleton (1580-1627), dramatist.

⁹ Æsop (620-564 BCE), alleged author of a collection of Greek fables (known in English as *Æsop’s Fables*), almost certainly a legendary figure.

¹⁰ The Harz Mountains are a highland area in northern Germany.

¹¹ Johann Georg Faust (c. 1480-c. 1541), itinerant alchemist, astrologer, and magician of the German Renaissance. He became the subject of folk legends in the years after his death, as well as of several literary works, most famously Christopher Marlowe’s *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (c. 1592) and Goethe’s *Faust* (1808).

¹² Mephistopheles, also known as Mephisto, a demon in German folklore. In *Faust* legends, the protagonist makes a deal with the devil at the price of his own soul. Mephistopheles acts as the devil’s agent.

¹³ (Latin) A flitting phosphorescent light seen at night, chiefly over marshy ground.

¹⁴ Obsolete spelling of “desert”.

¹⁵ (Archaic) To frighten, to alarm.

¹⁶ In the New Testament, Mammon is negatively associated with any entity that promises wealth; medieval writers commonly interpreted it as an evil demon or a God.

¹⁷ (Archaic) Near, close.

¹⁸ Highest of the Harz Mountains (1142 metres).

¹⁹ In early modern Germany the expression *Herr Urian* or *Meister Urian* denoted a proverbial unwanted guest. Here used to indicate the devil.

²⁰ (Middle English) Between (short for *betwixt*).

²¹ In folklore, a demon believed to lie upon sleeping persons. From Latin *incubāre*: to lie upon.

²² Ancient Greek Goddess, also known as the goddess of Obscenity.

²³ A formation of granite rocks in the Harz Mountains.

²⁴ In the original manuscript, Goethe here uses the term “Felsensee” (“Rock Lake”), a lake in the Palatinate Forest (Pfälzerwald), now in the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate. In *Posthumous Poems* (1824) and *Poetical Works* (1839), “Felunsee”. In *Relics of Shelley* (1862), Percy’s use of “Felunsee” is considered erroneous and it is corrected with “Felsensee”.

²⁵ (Archaic) To anoint: to smear or rub with oil or an oily substance.

²⁶ (German) Old term for “Devil”.

²⁷ Feminine figure in Christian mythology, the first wife of Adam and a primordial she-demon. She was banished from the Garden of Eden for disobeying Adam. In some religious texts, Lilith is believed to be the serpent in the Garden of Eden. In Jewish folklore, Lilith is considered to be a raven-haired demon who preys on helpless newborn infants and seduces unsuspecting men, using their seed to produce hordes of demon babies.

EDITORIAL NOTES

²⁸ A few stanzas from the original *Faust* are omitted here (lines 300-316).

²⁹ Shelley here keeps the name given by Goethe in the original manuscript and in the first edition of *Faust*. Goethe used this term in reference to Christoph Friedrich Nicolai (1733-1811), a Berlin author who had harshly criticized him. Nicolai's most famous attack on Goethe was a parody of *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774), which Nicolai entitled *The Joys of Werther* (1775). In 1791, Nicolai was visited with a terrible malady and was finally relieved by the application of leeches about the end of the spine. Hence Goethe's use of the term *Proktophantamist*, which Bayard Taylor aptly rendered as "Rump-visionary". See *Faust: A Tragedy* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1870), p. 314.

³⁰ Also known as "Gretchen", Margaret is the young woman with whom Faust falls in love (and whom he eventually destroys).

³¹ In Greek Mythology, a winged female creature with a head of hair consisting of snakes. Medusa had the power of turning into stone whoever looked at her.

³² In Greek Mythology, the son of Zeus and Danaë. He killed Medusa by cutting off her head.

³³ Someone with a superficial interest in a branch of the arts or knowledge generally.

ARIOSTO'S EPISODE OF CLORIDAN,
MEDORO, AND ANGELICA.^{1*}

It is no great boast to say, that this is perhaps the first time an English reader has had any thing *like* a specimen given him of the Orlando Furioso. Harrington,² the old translator, wrote with a crab-stick, and Hoole³ with a rule. (The rhyme is lucky for him, and perhaps for our gentilities; for he provokes one of some sort.) The characteristics of Ariosto's style are great animal spirits, great ease and flow of versification, and great fondness for natural and strait-forward expressions, particularly in scenes of humour and tenderness. What approaches Harrington makes to these with his sapless crutches, or Hoole with his conventional stilts, let those discover who can. Harrington has perhaps twenty good stanzas in his whole work; and he is to be preferred to Hoole, because he has at all events an air of greater good faith in what he does. Hoole is a mere bundle of common-places. He understood nothing of his author but the story. He sometimes apologizes for the difficulty he feels in "raising the style," and when he comes to a passage more than usually familiar, thinks that the most "tolerable" way of rendering it is by doing away all its movement and vivacity. "Most tolerable" it is certainly, and "not to be endured." Yet a friend once quoted to us one good line out of Hoole. "It was something," he said, "about

"Neptune's⁴ white herds lowing o'er the deep."

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Alessia Testori.

He had mended the version unconsciously. Hoole could hardly, by any chance, have given a line of such deep and varied intonation, particularly as he was obliged to have *rave* and *wave* in a passage about a storm. His line is—

And Neptune's white herds low above the wave;

which is very different. It does justice neither to the sound of the original, nor to the idea of extent suggested by the word *mare*, or *deep*; not to mention that Ariosto says nothing about Neptune, but leaves you to that indefinite and mysterious sense of the resemblance between roaring white billows and something animated, which strikes every one who has been at sea, and doubtless suggested the ancient popular superstition to which he may also allude. But it is doing too much honour to Hoole to find fault with him for a particular passage. Let the reader, if he has any curiosity, only dip into his first book, and he may judge of all the rest by a few of his *hearts* and *smarts*,—*man*, *span*,—*side*, *spy'd*, &c.

“The beautiful and pathetic tale of the two friends “Medoro and Cloridano,” says Dr. Wharton,⁵ speaking of this episode, “is an artful and exact copy of the Nisus and “Euryalus of Virgil;⁶ yet the author hath added some “original beauties to it, and in particular hath assigned a more “interesting motive for this midnight excursion, than what “we find in Virgil; for Medoro and Cloridan venture into “the field of battle to find out among the heaps of slain “the body of their lord. This perhaps is one of the most “excellent passages in this wild and romantic author, who “yet abounds in various beauties, the merit of which ought not “to be tried by the established rules of classical criticism.” *Postscript to his Virgil, quoted by Hoole.*⁷ Hoole further observes on his own part (for he sometimes writes a respect-

able note) that in Virgil “the attempt of exploring the “enemy’s camp is first suggested by Nisus, and that the “young Euryalus takes fire at the proposal; but in Ariosto “the youth is the first mover, instigated by love and gratitude to his dead prince, which circumstance greatly elevates his character and adds to the pathos of the story.”—It may be added, that Ariosto has contrived to write the story of Angelica with that of Medoro in a manner singularly new and beautiful, and to reward the youth’s virtue with life and love, without depriving the episode of its pathos. The danger also into which Medoro is brought by refusing to throw aside his master’s dead body, and save himself by flight, is a circumstance exquisitely touching. On the other hand, if these are great additions, Virgil has one or two circumstances extremely natural and dramatic, which Ariosto seems to have thought it as well for his new incidents to omit; such as the discovery of Euryalus by means of the glittering belt he had carried off:—then the care he takes to provide for his mother before he sets out on the adventure, and her introduction after his death, where she gazes on his exposed head in a state of distraction, are both in the best style of the pathetic: and in short, if Virgil had been more improved upon by Ariosto than he has been, his merits would have been on a level with him, because he invented the episode. To say the truth, in comparing two good things, we are never very anxious to lean to this side or that. We are better pleased to relish them both to the full; and to like what they differ in, as well as what they have in common. Our great object is to make others sensible of the merits of as many good things as possible.

ALL night, the Saracens,⁸ in their battered stations,
Feeling but ill secure, and sore distressed,
Gave way to tears, and groans, and lamentations,
Only as hushed as possible, and suppressed;
Some for the death of friends and of relations
Left on the field; others for want of rest,
Who had been wounded, and were far from home;
But most for dread of what was yet to come.

Among the rest, two Moorish⁹ youths were there,
Born of a lowly stock in Ptolemais;¹⁰
Whose story furnishes a proof so rare
Of perfect love, that it must find a place.
Their names Medoro and Cloridano were.
They had shewn Dardinel the same true face,
Whatever fortune waited on his lance,
And now had crossed the sea with him to France.

The one, a hunter used to every sky,
Was of the rougher look, but prompt and fleet:
Medoro had a cheek of rosy die,
Fair, and delightful for its youth complete:
Of all that came to that great chivalry,
None had a face more lively or more sweet.
Black eyes he had, and sunny curls of hair;
He seemed an angel, newly from the air.

These two with others, where the ramparts lay,
Were keeping watch to guard against surprise,
What time the night, in middle of its way,
Wonders at heaven with its drowsy eyes.
Medoro there, in all he had to say,
Could not but talk, in melancholy wise,

Of Dardinel his master, and complain
That he had won no honour that campaign.

Turning at last, he said, "O Cloridan,
I cannot tell thee how it swells my blood
To think our lord lies left upon the plain
To wolves and crows; alas, too noble food!
When I reflect how pleasant and humane
He always was to me, I feel I could
Let out this life that he might not be so,
And yet not pay him half the debt I owe.

I will go forth,—I will,—and seek him yet,
That he may want not a grave's covering:
And God perhaps will please that I shall get
Even to the quiet camp of the great king.
Do thou remain; for if my name is set
For death in heav'n, thou mayst relate the thing:
So that if fate cuts short the glorious part,
The world may know, at least, I had the heart.

Struck with amaze was Cloridan to see
Such heart, such love, such nobleness in a youth;
And laboured (for he loved him tenderly)
To turn a thought so dangerous to them both;
But no—a sorrow of that high degree
Is no such thing to comfort or to soothe.
Medoro was disposed, either to die,
Or give his lord a grave wherein to lie.

Seeing that nothing bent him or could move,
Cloridan cried, "My road then shall be thine:—"¹¹

I too will join in such a work of love;
I too would clasp a death-bed so divine.
Life—pleasure—any thing—what would it behove,
Remaining without thee, Medoro mine!
Such death with thee would better far become me,
Than die for grief, shouldst thou be taken from me.

Thus both resolv'd, they put into their place
The next on guard, and slip from the redoubt.
They cross the ditch, and in a little space
Enter our quarters, looking round about.
So little dream we of a Saracen face,
Our camp is hush'd, and every fire gone out.
'Twixt heaps of arms and carriages they creep,
Up to the very eyes in wine and sleep.

Cloridan stopp'd a while, and said, "Look here!
We must not lose this opportunity:
Some of the race who cost our lord so dear,
Surely, Medoro, by this arm must die.
Do thou meanwhile keep watch, all eye and ear,
Lest any one should come:—I'll push on, I,
And lead the way, and make through bed and board
A bloody passage for thee with my sword."

He said; and hushing, push'd directly through
The tent where Alpheus¹² lay, a learned Mars,¹³
Who had but lately come to court,¹⁴ and knew
Physic, and magic, and a world of stars.
This was a cast they had not help'd him to:
Indeed their flatteries had been all a farce;
For he had found, that after a long life
He was to die, poor man, beside his wife:

And now the careful Saracen has put
His sword, as true as lancet, in his weasand.
Four mouths close by are equally well shut,
Before they can find time to ask the reason.
Their names are net in Turpin;¹⁵ and I cut
Their lives as short, not to be out of season.
Next Palidon¹⁶ died, a man of snug resources,
Who had made up his bed between two horses.

They then arrived, where pillowing his head
Upon a barrel, lay unhappy Grill.¹⁷
Much vow'd had he, and much believ'd indeed,
That he, that blessed night, would sleep his fill.
The reckless Moor beheads him on his bed,
And wastes his blood and wine at the same spill:
For he held quarts; and in his dreams that very
Moment had fill'd, but found his glass miscarry.

Near Grill, a German and a Greek there lay,
Andropono and Conrad,¹⁸ who had pass'd
Much of the night *al fresco*,¹⁹ in drink and play;
A single stroke a-piece made it their last.
Happy, if they had thought to play away
Till daylight on their board his eye had cast!
But fate determines all these matters still,
Let us forecast them for her as we will.

Like as a lion in a fold of sheep,
Whom desperate hunger has made gaunt and spare,
Kills, bleeds, devours, and mangles in a heap
The feeble flock collected meekly there;
So the fierce Pagan²⁰ bleeds us in our sleep,
And lays about, and butchers every where:

And now Medoro joins the dreadful sport,
But scorns to strike among the meaner sort.

Upon a duke he came, Labrett, who slept
Fast in his lady's arms, embrac'd and fix'd;
So close they were, so fondly had they kept,
That not the air itself could get betwixt.
O'er both their necks at once the faulchion swept.
O happy death! O cup too sweetly mix'd!
For as their bosoms and their bodies were,
Ev'n so, I trust, their souls went clasp'd in air.

Malindo and Ardalico next are slain,
Sons of the prince, of whom the Flemings held:
They had been just made knights by Charlemagne,
And had the lilies added to their shield,
Because, the hardest day of the campaign,
He saw them both turn blood-red in the field.
Lands too he said he'd give; and would have done it,
Had not Medoro put his veto on it.

The wily sword was reaching now the ring,
Which the pavilions of the Paladins
Made round the high pavilion of the King.
They were his guard by turns. The Saracens
Here make a halt, and think it fit to bring
Their slaughter to a close, and get them hence;
Since it appears impossible to make
So wide a circuit, and find none awake.

They might have got much booty if they chose,
But save themselves, and they'll have done their good.
Cloridan leads as heretofore, and goes

Picking the safest way out that he could.
At last they come, where, amidst shields and bows,
And swords, and spears, in a red, plash of blood,
Lie poor and rich, the monarch and the slave,
And men and horses heap'd without a grave.

The horrible mixture of the bodies there,
(For all the field was reeking round about)
Would have made vain their melancholy care
Till day-time, which 'twas best to do without,
Had not the moon, at poor Medoro's prayer,
Put from a darksome cloud her bright horn out.
Medoro to the beam devoutly raised
His head, and thus petitioned as he gazed:—

“O holy queen, who by our ancestors
Justly wert worshipp'd by a triple name;
Who shew'st in heav'n, and earth, and hell, thy powers
And beauteous eye, another and the same;
And who in forests, thy old favourite bowers,
Art the great huntress, following the game;
Shew me, I pray thee, where my sovereign lies,
Who while he lived found favour in thine eyes.”

At this, whether 'twas chance or faith, the moon
Parted the cloud, and issued with a stoop,
Fair, as when first she kissed Endymion,
And to his arms gave herself naked up.
The city, at that light, burst forth and shone,
And both the camps, and all the plain and slope,
And the two hills that rose on either quarter,
Far from the walls, Montlery and Montmartre.

Most brilliantly of all the lustre showered
Where lay the son of great Almontes,²¹ dead.
Medoro, weeping, went to his dear lord,
Whom by his shield he knew, part white and red.
The bitter tears bathed all his face, and poured
From either eye, like founts along their bed.
So sweet his ways, so sweet his sorrows were,
They might have stopt the very winds to hear.

But low he wept, and scarcely audible;
Not that he cared what a surprise might cost,
From any dread of dying; for he still
Felt a contempt for life, and wished it lost;
But from the dread, lest ere he could fulfil
His pious business there, it might be crost.
Raised on their shoulders is the crowned load;
And shared between them thus, they take their road.

With the dear weight they make what speed they may,
Like an escaping mother to a birth;
And now comes he, the lord of life and day,
To take the stars from heav'n, the shade from earth;
When the young Scottish prince, who never lay
Sleeping, when things were to be done of worth,
After continuing the pursuit all night,
Came to the field with the first morning light.

And with him came, about him and behind,
A troop of knights, whom they could see from far,
All met upon the road, in the same mind
To search the field for precious spoils of war.
"Brother," said Cloridan, "we must needs, I find,

“Lay down our load, and see how fleet we are.
“It would be hardly wise to have it said,
“We lost two living bodies for a dead.

And off he shook his burden, with that word,
Fancying Medoro would do just the same;
But the poor boy, who better loved his lord,
Took on his shoulders all the weight that came.
The other ran, as if with one accord,
Not guessing what had made his fellow lame.
Had he, he would have dared, not merely one,
But heaps of deaths, rather than fled alone.

The knights, who were determined that those two
Should either yield them prisoners or die,
Disperse themselves, and without more ado
Seize every pass which they might issue by.
The chief himself rode on before, and drew
Nearer and nearer with an earnest eye;
For seeing them betray such marks of fear,
He plainly saw that enemies were there.

There was an old forest there in those days,
Thick with oershadowing trees and underwood,
Which, like a labyrinth, ran into a maze
Of narrow paths, and was a solitude.
The pagans reckoned on its friendly ways,
For giving them close covert while pursued:—
But he that loves these chaunts of mine in rhyme,
May chuse to hear the rest another time.*

* Here the 18th Canto ends, and the 19th begins.

NONE knows the heart in which he may confide,
As long as he sits high on Fortune's wheel;
For friends of all sorts then are by his side,
Who shew him all the self-same face of zeal:
But let the goddess roll him from his pride,
The flattering set are off upon their heel;
And he who loved him in his heart alone
Stands firm, and will, even when life is gone.

If eyes could see the heart as well as face,
Many a great man at court who tramples others,
And many an humble one in little grace,
Would change their destiny for one another's;
This would mount up into the highest place—
That go and help the scullions and their mothers.
But turn we to Medoro, good and true,
Who lov'd his lord, whatever fate could do.

The unhappy youth, now in the thickest way
Of all the wood, would fain have hidden close;
But the dead weight that on his shoulders lay,
Hampers his path, whichever side he goes.
Strange to the country too, he goes astray,
And turns and tramples 'midst the breaks and boughs.
Meanwhile his friend, less burdened for the race,
Has got in safety to a distant place.

Cloridan came to where he heard no more
The hue and cry that sent him like a dart;
But when he turned about and missed Medore,
He seemed to have deserted his own heart.
"Good God!" he cried; "not to see this before!

“How could I be so mad! How could I part
“With thee, Medoro, and come driving here,
“And never dream I left thee, when or where!”

So saying, he returns in bitter wise
Into the tangled wood, by the same path,
And keeps it narrowly with yearning eyes,
And treads with zeal the track of his own death.
And all the while, horses he hears, and cries,
And threatening voices that take short his breath:
And last of all he hears, and now can see,
Medoro, press'd about with cavalry.

They are a hundred, and all round him. He,
While the chief cries to take him prisoner,
Turns like a wheel, and faces valiantly
All that would seize him, leaping here and there,
Now to an elm, an oak, or other tree,
Nor ever parts he with his burden dear.
See!—he has laid it on the ground at last,
The better to controul and keep it fast.

Like as a bear, whom men in mountains start
In her old stony den, and dare, and goad,
Stands o'er her children with uncertain heart,
And roars for rage and sorrow in one mood:
Anger impels her, and her natural part,
To use her nails and bathe her lips in blood;
Love melts her, and for all her angry roar,
Holds her eyes back to look on those she bore.

Cloridan knows not how to give his aid,
And yet he must, and die too:—that he knows:

But ere he changes from alive to dead,
He casts about to settle a few foes.
He takes an arrow,—one of his best made,—
And works so well in secret, that it goes
Into a Scotchman's head, right to the brains,
And jerks his lifeless fingers from the reins.

The horsemen in confusion turn about,
To see by what strange hand their fellow died,
When a new shaft's in middle of the rout,
And the man tumbles by his fellow's side.
He was just wondering, and calling out,
And asking questions, fuming as he cried;
The arrow comes, and dashes to his throat,
And cuts him short in middle of his note.

Zerbin, the leader of the troop, could hold
His rage no longer at this new surprise,
But darting on the boy, with eyes that roll'd,
"You shall repent this insolence," he cries;
Then twisting with his hand those locks of gold,
He drags him back, to see him as he dies;
But when he set his eyes on that sweet face,
He could not do it, 'twas so hard a case.

The youth betook him to his prayers, and said,
"For God's sake, sir, be not so merciless
"As to prevent my burying the dead:
"Tis a king's body that's in this distress:
"Think not I ask, from any other dread;
"Life could give me but little happiness.
"All the life now which I desire to have,
"Is just enough to give my lord a grave.

“If you’ve a Theban²² heart, and birds of prey
“Must have their food before your rage can cool,
“Feast then on me; only do let me lay
“His limbs in earth, that has been used to rule.”
So spake the young Medoro, in a way
To turn a rock, it was so beautiful.
As for the prince,²³ so deeply was he moved,
That all at once he pardoned and he loved

A ruffian, at this juncture, of the band,
Little restrain’d by what restrain’d the rest,
Thrust with his lance across the suppliant’s hand,
And pierc’d his delicate and faithful breast.
The act,—in one too under his command,—
Displeas’d the princely chief, and much distress’d;
The more so, as the poor boy dropp’d his head,
And fell so pale, that all believ’d him dead.

Such was his grief, and such was his disdain,
That crying out, “The blood be on his head!”
He turned in wrath to give the thrust again;
But the false villain, ere the words were said,
Put spurs into his horse and fled amain,²⁴
Stooping his rascal shoulders, as he fled.
Cloridan, when he sees Medoro fall,
Leaps from the wood, and comes defying all;

And casts away his bow, and almost mad,
Goes slashing round among his enemies,
Rather for death, than any hope he had
Of cutting his revenge to its fit size.
His blood soon coloured many a dripping blade,
And he perceives with pleasure that he dies;

And so his strength being fairly at an end,
He lets himself fall down beside his friend.

The troop then follow'd where their chief had gone,
Pursuing his stern chase along the trees,
And leave the two companions there alone,
One surely dead, the other scarcely less.
Long time Medoro lay without a groan,
Losing his blood in such large quantities,
That life would surely have gone out at last,
Had not a helping hand been coming past.

There came, by chance, a damsel passing there,
Dress'd like a shepherdess in lowly wise,
But of a royal presence, and an air
Noble as handsome, with sweet maiden eyes.
'Tis so long since I told you news of her,
Perhaps you know her not in this disguise.
This, you must know then, was Angelica,
Proud daughter of the Khan of great Cathay.

You know the magic ring and her distress?
Well, when she had recovered this same ring,
It so increased her pride and haughtiness,
She seem'd too high for any living thing.
She goes alone, desiring nothing less
Than a companion, even though a king:
She even scorns to recollect the flame
Of one Orlando,²⁵ or his very name.

But above all she hates to recollect
That she had taken to Rinaldo²⁶ so;
She thinks it the last want of self-respect,

Pure degradation, to have looked so low.
“Such arrogance,” said Cupid,²⁷ “must be checked.”
The little God betook him with his bow,
To where Medoro lay, and standing by,
Held the shaft ready with a lurking eye.

Now when the princess saw the youth all pale,
And found him grieving, with his bitter wound,
Not for what one so young might well bewail,
But that his king should not be laid in ground,
She felt a something, strange and gentle, steal
Into her heart by some new way it found,
Which touched its hardness, and turned all to grace;
And more so, when he told her all his case.

And calling to her mind the little arts
Of healing, which she learnt in India,
(For ’twas a study valued in those parts,
Even for those who were in sovereign sway,
And yet so easy too, that like the heart’s,
’Twas more inherited than learnt, they say)
She cast about, with herbs and balmy juices,
To save so fair a life for all its uses.

And thinking of an herb that caught her eye
As she was coming, in a pleasant plain,
(Whether ’twas panacea, dittany,
Or some such herb accounted sovereign,
For staunching blood, quickly and tenderly,
And winning out all spasm and bad pain)
She found it not far off, and gathering some,
Returned with it to save Medoro’s bloom.

In coming back she met upon the way
A shepherd, who was riding through the wood
To find a heifer, that had gone astray,
And been two days about the solitude.
She took him with her where Medoro lay,
Still feebler than he was, with loss of blood:
So much he lost, and drew so hard a breath,
That he was now fast fading to his death.

Angelica got off her horse in haste,
And made the shepherd get as fast from his;
She ground the herbs with stones, and then expressed
With her white hands the balmy milkiness;
Then dropped it in the wound, and bathed his breast,
His stomach, feet, and all that was amiss:
And of such virtue was it, that at length
The blood was stopped, and he looked round with strength.

At last he got upon the shepherd's horse,
But would not quit the place till he had seen
Laid in the ground his lord and master's corse;
And Cloridan lay with it, who had been
Smitten so fatally with sweet remorse.
He then obeys the will of the fair queen;
And she, for very pity of his lot,
Goes and stays with him at the shepherd's cot.

Nor would she leave him, she esteem'd him so,
Till she had seen him well with her own eye;
So full of pity did her bosom grow,
Since first she saw him faint and like to die.
Seeing his manners now, and beauty too,

She felt her heart yearn somehow inwardly;
She felt her heart yearn somehow, till at last
'Twas all on fire, and burning warm and fast.

The shepherd's house was good enough, and neat,
A little shady cottage in a dell:
The man had just rebuilt it all complete,
With room to spare, in case more births befell.
There with such knowledge did the lady treat
Her handsome patient, that he soon grew well;
But not before she had, on her own part,
A secret wound much greater in her heart.

Much greater was the wound, and deeper far,
The invisible arrow made in her heart-strings;
'Twas from Medoro's lovely eyes and hair;
'Twas from the naked archer with the wings.
She feels it now; she feels, and yet can bear
Another's less than her own sufferings.
She thinks not of herself: she thinks alone
How to cure him, by whom she is undone.

The more his wound recovers and gets ease,
Her own grows worse, and widens day by day.
The youth gets well; the lady languishes,
Now warm, now cold, as fitful fevers play.
His beauty heightens like the flowering trees;
She, miserable creature, melts away
Like the weak snow, which some warm sun has found
Fall'n, out of season, on a rising ground.

And must she speak at last, rather than die?
And must she plead, without another's aid?

She must, she must;—the vital moments fly—
 She lives—she dies, a passion-wasted maid.
 At length she bursts all ties of modesty;
 Her tongue explains her eyes; the words are said;
 And she asks pity underneath that blow,
 Which he perhaps that gave it did not know.

O County²⁸ Orlando! O King Sacripant!²⁹
 That fame of yours, say, what avails it ye?
 That lofty honour, those great deeds ye vaunt,
 Say, what's their value with the lovely she?
 Shew me—recal to memory (for I can't)—
 Shew me, I beg, one single courtesy
 That ever she vouchsafed ye, far or near,
 For all you've done and have endured for her.

And you, if you could come to life again,
 O Agrican,³⁰ how hard 'twould seem to you,
 Whose love was met by nothing but disdain,
 And vile repulses, shocking to go through!
 O Ferragus!³¹ O thousands, who in vain
 Did all that loving and great hearts could do,
 How would ye feel, to see, with all her charms,
 This thankless creature in a stripling's arms!

The young Medoro had the gathering
 Of the world's rose, the rose untouched before;
 For never, since that garden blush'd with spring,
 Had human being dared to touch the door.
 To sanction it,—to honestize³² the thing,*
 The priest was called to read the service o'er,
 (For without marriage what can come but strife?)
 And the bride-mother was the shepherd's wife.

* Per onestar la cosa.

All was performed, in short, that could be so
In such a place, to make the nuptials good;
Nor did the happy pair think fit to go,
But spent the month and more, within the wood.
The lady to the stripling seemed to grow.
His step her step, his eyes her eyes pursued;
Nor did her love lose any of its zest,
Though she was always hanging on his breast.

In doors and out of doors, by night, by day,
She had the charmer by her side for ever:
Morning and evening they would stroll away,
Now by some field, or little tufted river;
They chose a cave in middle of the day,
Perhaps not less agreeable or clever
Than Dido and Æneas³³ found to screen them,
When they had secrets to discuss between them.

And all this while there was not a smooth tree,
That stood by stream or fountain with glad breath,
Nor stone less hard than stones are apt to be,
But they would find a knife to carve it with;
And in a thousand places you might see,
And on the walls about you and beneath,
ANGELICA AND MEDORO, tied in one,
As many ways as lovers' knots can run.

And when they thought they had out-spent their time,
Angelica the royal took her way,
She and Medoro, to the Indian clime,
To crown him king of her fair realm, Cathay.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Translation of cantos XVIII (stanzas 164-192) and XIX (stanzas 1-36, plus stanza 37, lines 1-4) of Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* (1516). Cloridano and Medoro are two Moorish warriors serving under King Dardinello of the Saracens in their war against the Christians; Angelica is the daughter of the King of Cathay.

² Sir John Harington (1560-1612), author and translator at Queen Elizabeth I's court.

³ John Hoole (1727-1803), English translator and playwright.

⁴ In ancient Roman mythology, the God of freshwater and the sea.

⁵ Joseph Warton (1722-1800), English clergyman, academic, and literary critic.

⁶ Reference to Virgil's *Aeneid* (19 BCE). Nisus and Euryalus are warriors serving under Æneas; they are known for their deep friendship and loyalty to each other. They appear in Book V (lines 294-361) and Book IX (lines 176-502) of Virgil's *Aeneid*, a passage that Byron himself translated into English.

⁷ Reference to Thomas Wharton, *Postscript to Virgil*, quoted in John Hoole's *Orlando furioso: Translated from the Italian of Ludovico Ariosto* (1783), vol. 2, 346.

⁸ Any person professing the religion of Islam; in this case an Arab tribe.

⁹ Adjective used to refer to Muslim populations.

¹⁰ An ancient port city on the Canaanite coast in the ancient region of Phoenicia, in the location of present-day Acre (Israel).

¹¹ (Archaic) Yours.

¹² Reference to Pietro da Pisa, a warrior at the court of Charlemagne (748-814), King of the Franks (768-814), King of the Lombards (774-814), and Emperor of the Carolingian Empire (800-814). The name "Alpheus" also recalls the city of Pisa, which, between the 1st century BCE and the 1st century CE, appears in the works of several Roman authors with the name of "Alfea" (Virgil refers to Pisa as "Alphean Pisa" in his *Aeneid*).

¹³ Reference to Mars, the Roman God of war.

¹⁴ In the original manuscript, Ariosto specifies that the court mentioned is that of Charlemagne.

¹⁵ Turpin (died in 794 or 800), Bishop of Reims from 748 until his death. For many years regarded as the author of *Historia Caroli Magni*, he appears in several *chansons de geste* (such as the *Song of Roland*).

¹⁶ In the original manuscript, "Palidon da Moncalieri" (fictional character).

¹⁷ In the original manuscript, "Grillo" (fictional character).

¹⁸ In the original manuscript, "Andropono" and "Conrado" (fictional characters).

¹⁹ (Italian) Outdoors in a cold climate.

²⁰ Cloridan is referred to as "Pagan" here because he is a Saracen, a non-Christian character.

²¹ Dardinell, King of the Sacarens.

²² From Thebes, an ancient Egyptian city.

²³ Zerbin, prince of Scotland (in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*).

²⁴ (Archaic) In great haste.

²⁵ Also known as Rolando (736-778), a military leader under Charlemagne.

²⁶ Also known as Renaud, a legendary knight, and Roland's cousin in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*.

²⁷ In classical mythology, the God of desire, erotic love, attraction, and affection.

²⁸ (Archaic) Count.

²⁹ King of Circassia and one of the leading Saracen knights in Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*.

³⁰ King of Mongolia and emperor of Tartary in Matteo Maria Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato* (1495).

³¹ A Saracen paladin in several Italian epics, including Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*.

³² To legitimize.

³³ Dido, Queen of Carthage, and Æneas, a Trojan hero, from Virgil's *Aeneid* (19 BCE). The cave mentioned by Ariosto is where the two characters consummate their love.

THE COUNTRY MAIDEN.

FROM POLITIAN.^{1*}

LA pastorella si leva per tempo
Menando le caprette a pascere fuora;
Di fuora, fuora, la traditora
Co suoi begli occhi la m'innamora,
E fa di mezza notte apparir giorno.

Poi se ne giva a spasso a la fontana
Calpestando l'erbette tenerelle,
(O) tenerelle, galanti e belle,
Sermollin fresco, fresche mortelle,
E 'l grembo ha pien di rose e di viole.

Poi si sbraccia e si lava il suo bel viso,
Le man, la gamba, il suo pulito petto,
Pulito petto, con gran diletto,
Con bianco aspetto,
Che ride intorno intorno (o) le campagne.

E qualche volta canta una canzona,
Che le pecore balla e gli agnelletti:
E gli agnelletti fanno i scambietti,
Così le capre con li capretti,
E tutti fanno a gara (o) le lor danze.

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Alessia Testori.

E qualche volta in sur un verde prato
 La tesse ghirlandette (o) di bei fiori,
 (O) di bei fiori, di bei colori,
 Così le ninfe con li pastori,
 E tutti imparan da la pastorella.

Poi la sera ritorna a la sua stanza
 Con la vincastra in man discinta e scalza,
 Discinta le scalza
 Ride e saltella per agni balza.
 Così la pastorella passa il tempo.

TRANSLATION.

THE sweet country maiden she gets up betimes,
 Taking her kids to feed out on the grass,—
 On the grass, on the grass,—ah! the sly little lass,
 Her eyes make me follow with mine as they pass;
 I am sure they'd make day in the middle of night.

Then she goes, the first thing, to the fountain hard by,
 Treading the turf with her fresh naked feet,—
 Naked feet, naked feet,—O so light and so sweet,
 Through the thyme and the myrtles they go so complete,
 And she makes up a lap, which she fills full of flowers.

Then she tucks up her sleeve to wash her sweet face,
 And her hands, and her legs, and her bosom so white,—
 Her bosom so white,—with a gentle delight;
 I never beheld such a beautiful sight,
 It makes the place smile, wheresoever it turns.

And sometimes she sings a rustical song,
 Which makes the kids dance, and the sheep alsò—

The sheep also,—they hark, and they go;
 The goats with the kids, all so merrily O!
 You would think they all tried to see who could dance best.

And sometimes, upon a green meadow, I've seen her
 Make little garlands of beautiful flowers,—
 O, most beautiful flowers,—which last her for hours,
 And the great ladies make them for their paramours,
 But all of them learn from my sweet country lass.

And then in the evening she goes home to bed,
 Bare-footed, and loos'ning her laces and things,—
 Her laces and things,—and she laughs and she sings,
 And leaps all the banks with one of her springs;
 And thus my sweet maiden she passes her time.

EPIGRAM OF ALFIERI,

UPON THE TREATMENT OF THE WORD "CAPTAIN" BY
 THE ITALIANS, FRENCH, AND ENGLISH.

Capitano è parola
 Sonante, intera, e nell'Italia nata;
Capitèn, già sconsola,
 Nasalmente dai Galli smozzicata;
Keptn poi dentro gola
 De' Britanni aspri sen sta straspolpata.

IMITATED AND ANSWERED.

Poor Italy, one needs must own,
 Has the word "Captain," and the word alone;

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ¹ Angelo Poliziano (1454-94), Italian classical scholar and poet of the Florentine Renaissance.

The sheep also,—they hark, and they go;
 The goats with the kids, all so merrily O!
 You would think they all tried to see who could dance best.

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IMITATED AND ANSWERED.

Poor Italy, one needs must own,
 Has the word “Captain,” and the word alone;

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Alessia Testori.

France had the man, but gave him those
Whom he had taken for her by the nose;
England had her's, and has him still,
Who'll cut her own throat for her, if she will

EPIGRAMS ON LORD CASTLEREAGH.

Oh, CASTLEREAGH! thou art a patriot now;
Cato died for his country, so did'st thou;
He perish'd rather than see Rome enslav'd,
Thou cut'st thy throat, that Britain may be sav'd.

So CASTLEREAGH has cut his throat!—The worst
Of this is,—that his own was not the first.

So *He* has cut his throat at last!—He! Who?
The man who cut his country's long ago.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ¹ Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), Italian dramatist and poet.

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Whom he had taken for her by the nose;
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The man who cut his country's long ago.

* Author: Lord Byron / Transcribed and annotated by Alessia Testori.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Robert Stewart (1769-1822), Marquess of Londonderry. British statesman and politician known as Lord Castlereagh owing to his courtesy title Viscount Castlereagh.

² Marcus Porcius Cato Uticensis, or Cato the Younger (95 BC-46 BC), conservative senator during the late Roman Republic.

³ After the defeat of the forces loyal to the Roman Senate at the Battle of Thapsus (46 BCE), Cato refused to surrender to Caesar and to live under a regime he considered illegitimate; he chose death as the ultimate act of defiance and resistance. His suicide was a deliberate political statement, and turned him into a martyr.

⁴ Robert Stewart, Lord Castlereagh, took his own life in 1822, exacerbated by intense political pressure.

THE
LIBERAL.

No. II.

HEAVEN AND EARTH,
A MYSTERY,*

FOUNDED ON THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN GENESIS, CHAP. VI.

“And it came to pass that the sons of God saw the daughters of men
that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.”¹

“And woman wailing for her demon lover.”²—COLERIDGE.

PART I.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.³

Angels.—SAMIASA.⁴

AZAZIEL.⁵

RAPHAEL the Archangel.

Men.—NOAH and his Sons.

IRAD.⁶

Women.—ANAH.⁷

AHOLIBAMAH.⁸

Chorus of Spirits of the Earth.—Chorus of Mortals.

SCENE I.

*A woody and mountainous district near Mount Ararat.*⁹—*Time,*
midnight.—Enter ANAH and AHOLIBAMAH.

Anah. Our father sleeps: it is the hour when they
Who love us are accustomed to descend
Through the deep clouds o’er rocky Ararat:—
How my heart beats!

M

* Author: Lord Byron / Transcribed and annotated by Carlotta Farese.

Aho. Let us proceed upon
Our invocation.

Anah. But the stars are hidden.
I tremble.

Aho. So do I, but not with fear
Of aught save their delay.

Anah. My sister, though
I love Azazel more than—oh, too much!
What was I going to say? my heart grows impious.

Aho. And where is the impiety of loving
Celestial natures?

Anah. But, Aholibamah,
I love our God less since his angel loved me:
This cannot be of good; and though I know not
That I do wrong, I feel a thousand fears
Which are not ominous of right.

Aho. Then wed thee
Unto some son of clay,¹⁰ and toil and spin!
There's Japhet¹¹ loves thee well, hath loved thee long;
Marry, and bring forth dust!

Anah. I should have loved
Azazel not less were he mortal; yet
I am glad he is not. I can not outlive him.
And when I think that his immortal wings
Will one day hover o'er the sepulchre
Of the poor child of clay which so adored him,
As he adores the Highest, death becomes
Less terrible; but yet I pity him;
His grief will be of ages, or at least
Mine would be such for him, were I the Seraph,
And he the perishable.

Aho. Rather say,
That he will single forth some other daughter
Of Earth, and love her as he once loved Anah.

Anah. And if it should be so, and she so loved him,
Better thus than that he should weep for me.

Aho. If I thought thus of Samiasa's love,
All Seraph as he is, I'd spurn him from me.
But to our invocation! 'Tis the hour.

Anah. Seraph!

From thy¹² sphere!

Whatever star contain thy glory;
In the eternal depths of heaven
Albeit thou watchest¹³ with "the seven,"*
Though through space infinite and hoary
Before thy bright wings worlds be driven,
Yet hear!

Oh! think of her who holds thee dear!

And though she nothing is to thee,
Yet think that thou art all to her.

Thou canst not tell,—and never be
Such pangs decreed to aught save me,—
The bitterness of tears.

Eternity is in thine years,
Unborn, undying beauty in thine eyes;
With me thou canst not sympathize,
Except in love, and there thou must
Acknowledge that more loving dust
Ne'er wept beneath the skies.

Thou walk'st thy many worlds, thou see'st

The face of him who made thee great,
As he hath made me of the least

Of those cast out from Eden's gate:

Yet, Seraph dear!

Oh hear!

* The Archangels, said to be seven in number.

For thou hast loved me, and I would not die
 Until I know what I must die in knowing,
 That thou forget'st in thine eternity
 Her whose heart death could not keep from
 o'erflowing
 For thee, immortal essence as thou art!
 Great is their love who love in sin and fear;
 And such, I feel, are waging in my heart
 A war unworthy: to an Adamite¹⁴
 Forgive, my Seraph! that such thoughts appear,
 For sorrow is our element;
 Delight
 An Eden kept afar from sight,
 Though sometimes with our visions blent.
 The hour is near
 Which tells me we are not abandoned quite.—
 Appear! Appear!
 Seraph!
 My own Azazel! be but here,
 And leave the stars to their own light.
Aho. Samiasa!
 Wheresoe'er
 Thou rulest in the upper air—
 Or warring with the spirits who may dare
 Dispute with him
 Who made all empires, empire; or recalling
 Some wandering star, which shoots through the abyss,
 Whose tenants dying, while their world is falling,
 Share the dim destiny of clay in this;
 Or joining with the inferior cherubim,
 Thou deignest to partake their hymn—
 Samiasa!
 I call thee, I await thee, and I love thee.

Many may worship thee, that will I not:
If that thy spirit down to mine may move thee,
Descend and share my lot!
Though I be formed of clay,
And thou of beams
More bright than those of day
On Eden's streams,
Thine immortality can not repay
With love more warm than mine
My love. There is a ray
In me, which, though forbidden yet to shine,
I feel was lighted at thy God's and thine.
It may be hidden long: death and decay
Our mother Eve bequeath'd us—but my heart
Defies it: though this life must pass away,
Is *that* a cause for thee and me to part?
Thou art immortal—so am I: I feel—
I feel my immortality o'ersweep
All pains, all tears, all time, all fears, and peal,
Like the eternal thunders of the deep,
Into my ears this truth—"thou liv'st for ever!"
But if it be in joy
I know not, nor would know;
That secret rests with the Almighty giver
Who folds in clouds the founts of bliss and woe.
But thee and me he never can destroy;
Change us he may, but not o'erwhelm; we are
Of as eternal essence, and must war
With him if he will war with us: with *thee*
I can share all things, even immortal sorrow;
For thou hast ventured to share life with *me*,
And shall *I* shrink from thine eternity?

No! though the serpent's sting should pierce me thorough,
 And thou thyself wert like the serpent, coil
 Around me still! and I will smile
 And curse thee not; but hold
 Thee in as warm a fold
 As——but descend; and prove
 A mortal's love

For an immortal. If the skies contain
 More joy than thou canst give and take, remain!

Anah. Sister! sister! I view them winging
 Their bright way through the parted night.

Aho. The clouds from off their pinions flinging
 As though they bore to-morrow's light.

Anah. But if our father see the sight!

Aho. He would but deem it was the moon
 Rising unto some sorcerer's tune
 An hour too soon.

Anah. They come! *he* comes!—Azazel!

Aho. Haste

To meet them! Oh! for wings to bear
 My spirit, while they hover there,
 To Samiasa's breast!

Anah. Lo! they have kindled all the west,
 Like a returning sunset;—lo!

On Ararat's late secret crest
 A mild and many-colour'd bow,
 The remnant of their flashing path,
 Now shines! and now, behold! it hath
 Returned to night, as rippling foam,

Which the leviathan¹⁵ hath lash'd
 From his unfathomable home,
 When sporting on the face of the calm deep,

Subsides soon after he again hath dash'd
Down, down, to where the ocean's fountains sleep.

Aho. They have touch'd earth! Samiasa!

Anah. My Azaziel!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter IRAD and JAPHET.

Irada. Despond not: wherefore wilt thou wander thus
To add thy silence to the silent night,
And lift thy tearful eye unto the stars?
They cannot aid thee.

Japh. But they soothe me—now
Perhaps she looks upon them as I look.
Methinks a being that is beautiful
Becometh more so as it looks on beauty,
The eternal beauty of undying things.
Oh, *Anah!*

Irada. But she loves thee not.

Japh. Alas!

Irada. And proud Aholibamah spurns me also.

Japh. I feel for thee too.

Irada. Let her keep her pride,
Mine hath enabled me to bear her scorn;
It may be, time too will avenge it.

Japh. Canst thou
Find joy in such a thought?

Irada. Nor joy, nor sorrow.
I loved her well; I would have loved her better,
Had love been met with love: as 'tis, I leave her
To brighter destinies, if so she deems them.

Japh. What destinies?

Irada. I have some cause to think
She loves another.

Japh. Anah!

Irada. No; her sister.

Japh. What other?

Irada. That I know not; but her air,
If not her words, tells me she loves another.

Japh. Ay, but not Anah: she but loves her God.

Irada. Whate'er she loveth, so she loves thee not,
What can it profit thee?

Japh. True, nothing; but
I love.

Irada. And so did I.

Japh. And now thou lov'st not,
Or think'st thou lov'st not, art thou happier?

Irada. Yes.

Japh. I pity thee.

Irada. Me! why?

Japh. For being happy,
Deprived of that which makes my misery.

Irada. I take thy taunt as part of thy distemper,
And would not feel as thou dost, for more shekels
Than all our father's herds would bring if weigh'd
Against the metal of the sons of Cain—
The yellow dust they try to barter with us,
As if such useless and discolour'd trash,
The refuse of the earth, could be received
For milk, and wool, and flesh, and fruits, and all
Our flocks and wilderness afford.—Go, Japhet,
Sigh to the stars as wolves howl to the moon—
I must back to my rest.

Japh. And so would I
If I could rest.

Irada. Thou wilt not to our tents then?

Japh. No, *Irada*; I will to the cavern, whose
Mouth they say opens from the internal world
To let the inner spirits of the earth
Forth when they walk its surface.

Irada. Wherefore so?
What wouldst thou there?

Japh. Soothe further my sad spirit
With gloom as sad: it is a hopeless spot,
And I am hopeless.

Irada. But 'tis dangerous;
Strange sounds and sights have peopled it with terrors.
I must go with thee.

Japh. *Irada*, no; believe me
I feel no evil thought, and fear no evil.

Irada. But evil things will be thy foe the more
As not being of them: turn thy steps aside,
Or let mine be with thine.

Japh. No; neither, *Irada*;
I must proceed alone.

Irada. Then peace be with thee!

[*Exit IRADA.*

Japh. (solus). Peace! I have sought it where it should be
found,

In love—with love too, which perhaps deserved it;
And, in its stead, a heaviness of heart—
A weakness of the spirit—listless days,
And nights inexorable to sweet sleep—
Have come upon me. Peace! what peace? the calm
Of desolation, and the stillness of
The untrodden forest, only broken by
The sweeping tempest through its groaning boughs;
Such is the sullen or the fitful state

Of my mind overworn. The earth's grown wicked,
 And many signs and portents have proclaim'd
 A change at hand, and an o'erwhelming doom
 To perishable beings. Oh, my Anah!
 When the dread hour denounced shall open wide
 The fountains of the deep,¹⁶ how mightest thou
 Have lain within this bosom, folded from
 The elements; this bosom, which in vain
 Hath beat for thee, and then will beat more vainly,
 While thine——Oh, God! at least remit to her
 Thy wrath! for she is pure amidst the failing
 As a star in the clouds, which cannot quench,
 Although they obscure it for an hour. My Anah!
 How would I have adored thee, but thou wouldst not;
 And still would I redeem thee—see thee live
 When Ocean is Earth's grave, and, unopposed
 By rock or shallow, the leviathan,
 Lord of the shoreless sea and watery world,
 Shall wonder at his boundlessness of realm.¹⁷

[*Exit* JAPHET.

Enter NOAH and SHEM.

Noah. Where is thy brother Japhet?

Shem.

He went forth,

According to his wont, to meet with Irad,
 He said; but, as I fear, to bend his steps
 Towards Anah's tents, round which he hovers nightly
 Like a dove round and round its pillaged nest;
 Or else he walks the wild up to the cavern
 Which opens to the heart of Ararat.

Noah. What doth he there? It is an evil spot
 Upon an earth all evil; for things worse
 Than even wicked men resort there: he
 Still loves this daughter of a fated race,¹⁸

Although he could not wed her if she loved him,
 And that she doth not. Oh, the unhappy hearts
 Of men! that one of my blood, knowing well
 The destiny and evil of these days,
 And that the hour approacheth,¹⁹ should indulge
 In such forbidden yearnings! Lead the way;
 He must be sought for!

Shem. Go not forward, father:
 I will seek Japhet.

Noah. Do not fear for me:
 All evil things are powerless on the man
 Selected by Jehovah—let us on.

Shem. To the tents of the father of the sisters?

Noah. No; to the cavern of the Caucasus.

[*Exeunt NOAH and SHEM.*]

SCENE III.

The mountains.—A cavern, and the rocks of Caucasus.

Japh. (solus). Ye wilds, that look eternal; and thou cave,
 Which seem'st unfathomable; and ye mountains,
 So varied and so terrible in beauty;
 Here, in your rugged majesty of rocks
 And toppling trees that twine their roots with stone
 In perpendicular places, where the foot
 Of man would tremble, could he reach them—yes,
 Ye look eternal! Yet, in a few days,
 Perhaps even hours, ye will be changed, rent, hurled
 Before the mass of waters; and yon cave,
 Which seems to lead into a lower world,
 Shall have its depths search'd by the sweeping wave,

And dolphins gambol in the lion's den!
And man——Oh, men! my fellow-beings! Who
Shall weep above your universal grave,
Save I? Who shall be left to weep? My kinsmen,
Alas! what am I better than ye are,
That I must live beyond ye? Where shall be
The pleasant places where I thought of Anah
While I had hope? or the more savage haunts,
Scarce less beloved, where I despair'd for her?
And can it be!—Shall yon exulting peak,
Whose glittering top is like a distant star,
Lie low beneath the boiling of the deep?
No more to have the morning sun break forth,
And scatter back the mists in floating folds
From its tremendous brow? no more to have
Day's broad orb drop behind its head at even,
Leaving it with a crown of many hues?
No more to be the beacon of the world,
For angels to alight on, as the spot
Nearest the stars? And can those words "*no more*"
Be meant for thee, for all things, save for us,
And the predestined creeping things reserved
By my sire to Jehovah's bidding?²⁰ May
He preserve *them*, and *I not* have the power
To snatch the loveliest of earth's daughters from
A doom which even some serpent, with his mate,
Shall 'scape to save his kind to be prolong'd,
To hiss and sting through some emerging world,
Reeking and dank from out the slime, whose ooze
Shall slumber o'er the wreck of this until
The salt morass subside into a sphere
Beneath the sun, and be the monument,
The sole and undistinguish'd sepulchre,

Of yet quick myriads of all life? How much
 Breath will be still'd at once! All beauteous world!
 So young, so mark'd out for destruction, I
 With a cleft heart look on thee day by day,
 And night by night, thy numbered days and nights.
 I cannot save thee, cannot save even her
 Whose love had made me love thee more; but as
 A portion of thy dust, I cannot think
 Upon thy coming doom without a feeling
 Such as—Oh God! and canst thou—— [He pauses.

*A rushing sound from the cavern is heard and shouts of laughter
 —afterwards a Spirit passes.*

Japh. In the name
 Of the Most High, what art thou?
Spirit. (laughs.) Ha! Ha! Ha!
Japh. By all that earth holds holiest, speak!
Spirit. (laughs.) Ha! Ha!
Japh. By the approaching deluge! by the earth
 Which will be strangled by the ocean! by
 The deep which will lay open all her fountains!
 The heaven which will convert her clouds to seas,
 And the Omnipotent who makes and crushes!
 Thou unknown, terrible, and indistinct,
 Yet awful Thing of Shadows, speak to me!
 Why dost thou laugh that horrid laugh?
Spirit. Why weep'st thou?
Japh. For earth and all her children.
Spirit. Ha! Ha! Ha! [*Spirit vanishes.*
Japh. How the fiend mocks the tortures of a world,
 The coming desolation of an orb,
 On which the sun shall rise and warm no life!

How the earth sleeps! and all that in it is
Sleep too upon the very eve of death!
Why should they wake to meet it? What is here,
Which look like death in life, and speak like things
Born ere this dying world? They come like clouds!
[*Various Spirits pass from the cavern.*]

Spirit. Rejoice!
The abhorred race
Which could not keep in Eden their high place,
But listen'd to the voice
Of knowledge without power,
Are nigh the hour
Of death!
Not slow, not single, not by sword, nor sorrow,
Nor years, nor heart-break, nor time's sapping motion,
Shall they drop off. Behold their last to-morrow!
Earth shall be ocean!
And no breath,
Save of the winds, be on the unbounded wave!
Angels shall tire their wings, but find no spot:
Not even a rock from out the liquid grave
Shall lift its point to save,
Or show the place where strong Despair hath died,
After long looking o'er the ocean wide
For the expected ebb which cometh not:
All shall be void,
Destroyed!
Another element shall be the lord
Of life, and the abhorr'd
Children of dust be quench'd; and of each hue
Of earth nought left but the unbroken blue;
And of the variegated mountain

Shall nought remain
 Unchanged, or of the level plain;
 Cedar²¹ and pine shall lift their tops in vain:
 All merged within the universal fountain,
 Man, earth, and fire, shall die,
 And sea and sky
 Look vast and lifeless in the eternal eye.
 Upon the foam
 Who shall erect a home?
Japh. (coming forward.) My sire!
 Earth's seed shall not expire;
 Only the evil shall be put away
 From day.
 Avaunt! ye exulting demons of the waste!
 Who howl your hideous joy
 When God destroys whom you dare not destroy;
 Hence! haste!
 Back to your inner caves!
 Until the waves
 Shall search you in your secret place,
 And drive your sullen race
 Forth, to be roll'd upon the tossing winds
 In restless wretchedness along all space!
Spirit. Son of the saved!²²
 When thou and thine have braved
 The wide and warring element;
 When the great barrier of the deep is rent,
 Shall thou and thine be good or happy?—No!
 Thy new world and new race shall be of woe—
 Less goodly in their aspect, in their years
 Less than the glorious giants, who
 Yet walk the world in pride,

The Sons of Heaven²³ by many a mortal bride.
Thine shall be nothing of the past, save tears.
 And art thou not ashamed
 Thus to survive,
 And eat, and drink, and wive?
With a base heart so far subdued and tamed,
As even to hear this wide destruction named,
Without such grief and courage, as should rather
 Bid thee await the world-dissolving wave,
Than seek a shelter with thy favour'd father,
 And build thy city o'er the drown'd Earth's grave?
 Who would outlive their kind,
 Except the base and blind?
 Mine
 Hateth thine
 As of a different order in the sphere,
 But not our own.
There is not one who hath not left a throne
 Vacant in heaven to dwell in darkness here,
Rather than see his mates endure alone.
 Go, wretch! and give
A life like thine to other wretches—live!
 And when the annihilating waters roar
 Above what they have done,
Envy the Giant Patriarchs²⁴ then no more,
 And scorn thy sire as the surviving one!
 Thyself for being his son!

Chorus of Spirits issuing from the cavern.

Rejoice!
No more the human voice
Shall vex our joys in middle air

With prayer;
 No more
 Shall they adore;
 And we, who ne'er for ages have adored
 The prayer-exacting Lord,
 To whom the omission of a sacrifice
 Is vice;
 We, we shall view the deep's salt sources pour'd
 Until one element shall do the work
 Of all in chaos; until they,
 The creatures proud of their poor clay,
 Shall perish, and their bleached bones shall lurk
 In caves, in dens, in clefts of mountains, where
 The Deep shall follow to their latest lair;
 Where even the brutes, in their despair,
 Shall cease to prey on man and on each other,
 And the striped tiger shall lie down to die
 Beside the lamb, as though he were his brother;
 Till all things shall be as they were,
 Silent and uncreated, save the sky:
 While a brief truce
 Is made with Death, who shall forbear
 The little remnant of the past creation,
 To generate new nations for his use;
 This remnant, floating o'er the undulation
 Of the subsiding deluge, from its slime,
 When the hot sun hath baked the reeking soil
 Into a world, shall give again to Time
 New beings—years—diseases—sorrow—crime—
 With all companionship of hate and toil,
 Until——
Japh. (interrupting them.) The eternal will

Shall deign to expound this dream
 Of good and evil; and redeem
 Unto himself all times, all things;
 And, gather'd under his almighty wings,
 Abolish hell!
 And to the expiated Earth
 Restore the beauty of her birth,
 Her Eden in an endless paradise,
 Where man no more can fall as once he fell,
 And even the very demons shall do well!
Spirits. And when shall take effect this wond'rous spell?
Japh. When the Redeemer cometh; first in pain,
 And then in glory.
Spirit. Meantime still struggle in the mortal chain,
 Till earth wax hoary;
 War with yourselves, and hell, and heaven, in vain,
 Until the clouds look gory
 With the blood reeking from each battle plain;
 New times, new climes, new arts, new men; but still
 The same old tears, old crimes, and oldest ill,
 Shall be amongst your race in different forms;
 But the same moral storms
 Shall oversweep the future, as the waves
 In a few hours the glorious Giant's graves.*

Chorus of Spirits.

Brethren, rejoice!
 Mortal, farewell!

* "And there were Giants in those days, and after; mighty men, which were of old men of renown."—*Genesis*.

Hark! hark! already we can hear the voice
 Of growing ocean's gloomy swell;
 The winds, too, plume their piercing wings!
 The clouds have nearly filled their springs;
 The fountains of the great deep shall be broken,
 And heaven set wide her windows; while mankind
 View, unacknowledged, each tremendous token—
 Still, as they were from the beginning, blind.
 We hear the sound they cannot hear,
 The mustering thunders of the threatening sphere;
 Yet a few hours their coming is delay'd;
 Their flashing banners, folded still on high,
 Yet undisplay'd,
 Save to the Spirits' all-pervading eye.
 How! how! oh Earth!
 Thy death is nearer than thy recent birth:
 Tremble, ye mountains, soon to shrink below
 The ocean's overflow!
 The wave shall break upon your cliffs; and shells,
 The little shells, of ocean's least things be
 Deposed where now the eagle's offspring dwells—
 How shall he shriek o'er the remorseless sea!
 And call his nestlings up with fruitless yell,
 Unanswered, save by the encroaching swell;—
 While man shall long in vain for his broad wings,
 The wings which could not save:—
 Where could he rest them, while the whole space brings
 Nought to his eye beyond the deep, his grave?
 Brethren, rejoice!
 And loudly lift each superhuman voice—
 All die,
 Save the slight remnant of Seth's seed—²⁵
 The seed of Seth,

Exempt for future Sorrow's sake from death.

But of the sons of Cain

None shall remain;

And all his goodly daughters

Must lie beneath the desolating waters;

Or, floating upward, with their long hair laid

Along the wave, the cruel heaven upbraid,

Which would not spare

Beings even in death so fair.

It is decreed,

All die!

And to the universal human cry

The universal silence shall succeed!

Fly, brethren, fly!

But still rejoice!

We fell!

They fall!

So perish all

These petty foes of Heaven who shrink from Hell!

[The Spirits disappear, soaring upwards.]

Japh. (solus.) God hath proclaimed the destiny of Earth;

My father's ark of safety hath announced it;

The very demons shriek it from their caves;

The scroll* of Enoch prophesied it long

In silent books, which, in their silence, say

More to the mind than thunder to the ear:

And yet men listen'd not, nor listen; but

Walk darkling to their doom; which, though so nigh,

Shakes them no more in their dim disbelief,

Than their last cries shall shake the Almighty purpose,

Or deaf obedient Ocean, which fulfils it.

* The Book of Enoch, preserved by the Ethiopians, is said by them to be anterior to the Flood.

No sign yet hangs its banner in the air;
The clouds are few, and of their wonted texture;
The sun will rise upon the earth's last day
As on the fourth day of creation, when
God said unto him, "Shine!" and he broke forth
Into the dawn, which lighted not the yet
Unform'd forefather of mankind—but roused
Before the human orison the earlier
Made and far sweeter voices of the birds,
Which in the open firmament of heaven
Have wings like angels, and like them salute
Heaven first each day before the Adamites:
Their matins now draw nigh—the East is kindling—
And they will sing! and day will break! Both near,
So near the awful close! For these must drop
Their outworn pinions on the deep; and Day,
After the bright course of a few brief morrows,—
Ay, day will rise; but upon what? A chaos,
Which was ere day; and which, renew'd, makes time
Nothing! for, without life, what are the hours?
No more to dust than is eternity
Unto Jehovah, who created both.
Without him, even Eternity would be
A void: without man, Time, as made for man,
Dies with man, and is swallow'd in that Deep
Which has no fountain; as his race will be
Devour'd by that which drowns his infant world.—
What have we here? Shapes of both earth and air?
No—*all* of heaven, they are so beautiful.
I cannot trace their features; but their forms,
How lovelily they move along the side
Of the gray mountain, scattering its mist!
And after the swart savage spirits, whose

Infernal Immortality pour'd forth
 Their impious hymn of triumph, they shall be
 Welcome as Eden. It may be they come
 To tell me the reprieve of our young world,
 For which I have so often pray'd—They come!
 Anah! oh, God! and with her——

Enter SAMIASA, AZAZIEL, ANAH and AHOLIBAMAH.

Anah. Japhet!

Sam. Lo!

A son of Adam!

Aza. What doth the earth-born here,
 While all his race are slumbering?

Japh. Angel! what
 Dost thou on earth when thou should'st be on high?

Aza. Know'st thou not, or forget'st thou, that a part
 Of our great function is to guard thine earth?

Japh. But all good angels have forsaken earth,
 Which is condemn'd; nay, even the evil fly
 The approaching Chaos. Anah! Anah! my
 In vain, and long, and still to be beloved!
 Why walk'st thou with this Spirit, in those hours
 When no good spirit longer lights below?

Anah. Japhet, I cannot answer thee; yet, yet
 Forgive me——

Japh. May the Heaven, which soon no more
 Will pardon, do so! for thou art greatly tempted.

Aho. Back to thy tents, insulting son of Noah!
 We know thee not.

Japh. The hour may come when thou
 May'st know me better; and thy sister know
 Me still the same which I have ever been.

Sam. Son of the Patriarch, who hath ever been

Upright before his God, whate'er thy griefs,
 And thy words seem of sorrow, mix'd with wrath,
 How have Azazel, or myself, brought on thee
 Wrong?

Japh. Wrong! the greatest of all wrongs; but thou
 Say'st well, though she be dust, I did not, could not,
 Deserve her. Farewell, Anah! I have said
 That word so often! but now say it, ne'er
 To be repeated. Angel! or whate'er
 Thou art, or must be soon, hast thou the power
 To save this beautiful—*these* beautiful
 Children of Cain?

Aza. From what?

Japh. And is it so,
 That ye too know not? Angels! angels! ye
 Have shared man's sin, and, it may be, now must
 Partake his punishment; or at the least
 My sorrow.

Sam. Sorrow! I ne'er thought till now
 To hear an Adamite speak riddles to me.

Japh. And hath not the Most High expounded them?
 Then ye are lost, as they are lost.

Aho. So be it!
 If they love as they are loved, they will not shrink
 More to be mortal, than I would to dare
 An immortality of agonies
 With Samiasa!

Anah. Sister! sister! speak not
 Thus.

Aza. Fearest thou, my Anah?

Anah. Yes, for thee;
 I would resign the greater remnant of
 This little life of mine, before one hour
 Of thine eternity should know a pang.

Japh. It is for *him*, then! for the Seraph thou
Has left me! That is nothing, if thou hast not
Left thy God too! for unions like to these,
Between a mortal and immortal, cannot
Be happy or be hallow'd. We are sent
Upon the earth to toil and die; and they
Are made to minister on high unto
The Highest; but if he can *save* thee, soon
The hour will come in which celestial aid
Alone can do so.

Anah. Ah! he speaks of death.

Sam. Of death to *us*! and those who are with us!
But that the man seems full of sorrow, I
Could smile.

Japh. I grieve not for myself, nor fear;
I am safe, not for my own deserts, but those
Of a well-doing sire, who hath been found
Righteous enough to save his children. Would
His power was greater of redemption! or
That by exchanging my own life for hers,
Who could alone have made mine happy, she,
The last and loveliest of Cain's race, could share
The Ark which shall receive a remnant of
The seed of Seth!

Aho. And dost thou think that we,
With Cain's, the eldest born of Adam's, blood
Warm in our veins,—strong Cain! who was begotten
In Paradise,—would mingle with Seth's children?
Seth, the last offspring of old Adam's dotage?
No, not to save all earth, were earth in peril!
Our race hath alway²⁶ dwelt apart from thine
From the beginning, and shall do so ever.

Japh. I did not speak to thee, Aholibamah!
 Too much of the forefather, whom thou vauntest,
 Has come down in that haughty blood which springs
 From him who shed the first, and that a brother's!
 But thou, my Anah! let me call thee mine,
 Albeit thou art not; 'tis a word, I cannot
 Part with, although I must from thee. My Anah!
 Thou who dost rather make me dream that Abel
 Had left a daughter, whose pure pious race
 Survived in thee, so much unlike thou art
 The rest of the stern Cainites, save in beauty,
 For all of them are fairest in their favour——

Aho. (interrupting him.) And would'st thou have
 her like our father's foe

In mind, in soul? If *I* partook thy thought,
 And dream'd that aught of *Abel* was in *her*!—
 Get thee hence, son of Noah; thou mak'st strife.

Japh. Offspring of Cain, thy father did so!

Aho. But

He slew not Seth; and what hast thou to do
 With other deeds between his God and him?

Japh. Thou speakest well: his God hath judged him, and
 I had not named his deed, but that thyself
 Didst seem to glory in him, nor to shrink
 From what he had done.

Aho. He was our fathers' father;
 The eldest born of man, the strongest, bravest,
 And most enduring:—Shall I blush for him,
 From whom we had our being? Look upon
 Our race; behold their stature and their beauty,
 Their courage, strength, and length of days——

Japh. They are number'd.——

Aho. Be it so! but while yet their hours endure,
I glory in my brethren and our fathers!

Japh. My sire and race but glory in their God,
Anah! and thou?—

Anah. Whate'er our God decrees,
The God of Seth as Cain, I must obey,
And will endeavour patiently to obey:
But could I dare to pray in his dread hour
Of universal vengeance (if such should be),
It would not be to live, alone exempt
Of all my house. My sister! Oh, my sister!
What were the world, or other worlds, or all
The brightest future without the sweet past—
Thy love—my father's—all the life, and all
The things which sprung up with me, like the stars,
Making my dim existence radiant with
Soft lights which were not mine? Aholibamah!
Oh! if there should be mercy—seek it, find it:
I abhor death, because that thou must die.

Aho. What! hath this dreamer, with his father's ark,
The bugbear he hath built to scare the world,
Shaken *my* sister? Are *we* not the loved
Of seraphs? and if we were not, must we
Cling to a son of Noah for our lives?
Rather than thus——But the enthusiast dreams
The worst of dreams, the phantasies engender'd
By hopeless love and heated vigils. Who
Shall shake these solid mountains, this firm earth,
And bid those clouds and waters take a shape
Distinct from that which we and all our sires
Have seen them wear on their eternal way?
Who shall do this?

Japh. He, whose one word produced them.

Aho. Who *heard* that word?

Japh. The Universe, which leap'd
To life before it. Ah! smil'st thou still in scorn?
Turn to thy seraphs; if they attest it not,
They are none.

Sam. Aholibamah, own thy God!

Aho. I have ever hailed Our Maker, Samiasa,
As thine, and mine: a God of love, not sorrow.

Japh. Alas! what else is Love but Sorrow? Even
He who made earth in love, had soon to grieve
Above its first and best inhabitants.

Aho. 'Tis said so.

Japh. It is even so.

Enter NOAH and SHEM.

Noah. Japhet! What
Dost thou here with these children of the wicked?
Dread'st thou not to partake their coming doom?

Japh. Father, it cannot be a sin to seek
To save an earth-born being; and behold,
These are not of the sinful, since they have
The fellowship of angels.

Noah. These are they then,
Who leave the throne of God, to take them wives
From out the race of Cain; the sons of Heaven,
Who seek Earth's daughters for their beauty?

Aza. Patriarch!
Thou hast said it.

Noah. Woe, woe, woe to such communion!
Has not God made a barrier between earth
And heaven, and limited each, kind to kind?

Sam. Was not man made in high Jehovah's image?
Did God not love what he had made? And what
Do we but imitate and emulate
His love unto created love?

Noah. I am
But man, and was not made to judge mankind,
Far less the sons of God; but as our God
Has deign'd to commune with me, and reveal
His judgments, I reply, that the descent
Of seraphs from their everlasting seat
Unto a perishable and perishing,
Even on the very *eve* of *perishing*, world,
Cannot be good.

Aza. What! though it were to save?

Noah. Not ye in all your glory can redeem
What he who made you glorious hath condemn'd.
Were your immortal mission safety, 't would
Be general, not for two, though beautiful,
And beautiful they are, but not the less
Condemn'd.

Japh. Oh father! say it not.

Noah. Son! son!
If that thou would'st avoid their doom, forget
That they exist; they soon shall cease to be,
While thou shalt be the sire of a new world,
And better.

Japh. Let me die with *this*, and *them*!

Noah. Thou *should'st* for such a thought, but shalt not; he
Who *can*, redeems thee.

Sam. And why him and thee,
More than what he, thy son, prefers to both?

Noah. Ask him who made thee greater than myself
And mine, but not less subject to his own

Almightiness. And lo! his mildest and
Least to be tempted Messenger appears!

Enter RAPHAEL the Archangel.

Raph. Spirits!
Whose seat is near the throne,
What do ye here?
Is thus a seraph's duty to be shown
Now that the hour is near
When earth must be alone?
Return!
Adore and burn
In glorious homage with the elected "seven."
Your place is heaven.

*Sam.*²⁸ Raphael!
The first and fairest of the sons of God,
How long hath this been law,
That earth by angels must be left untrod?
Earth! which oft saw
Jehovah's footsteps not disdain her sod!
The world he loved, and made
For love; and oft have we obey'd
His frequent mission with delighted pinions.
Adoring him in his least works display'd;
Watching this youngest star of his dominions:
And as the latest birth of his great word,
Eager to keep it worthy of our Lord.
Why is thy brow severe?
And wherefore speak'st thou of destruction near?
Raph. Had Samiasa and Azazel been
In their true place, with the angelic choir,
Written in fire
They would have seen

Jehovah's late decree,
 And not enquired their Maker's breath of me:
 But ignorance must ever be
 A part of sin;
 And even the spirits' knowledge shall grow less
 As they wax proud within;
 For Blindness is the first-born of Excess.
 When all good angels left the world, ye staid,
 Stung with strange passions, and debased
 By mortal feelings for a mortal maid;
 But ye are pardon'd thus far, and replaced
 With your pure equals: Hence! away! away!
 Or stay,
 And lose eternity by that delay!
Aza. And Thou! if earth be thus forbidden
 In the decree
 To us until this moment hidden,
 Dost thou not err as we
 In being here?
*Raph.*²⁹ I came to call ye back to your fit sphere,
 In the great name and at the word of God!
 Dear, dearest in themselves, and scarce less dear
 That which I came to do: till now we trod
 Together the eternal space, together
 Let us still walk the stars. True, earth must die!
 Her race, return'd into her womb, must wither,
 And much which she inherits; but oh! why
 Cannot this earth be made, or be destroy'd,
 Without involving ever some vast void
 In the immortal ranks? immortal still
 In their immeasurable forfeiture.
 Our brother Satan fell, his burning will

Rather than longer worship dared endure!
 But ye who still are pure!
 Seraphs! less mighty than that mightiest one,
 Think how he was undone!
 And think if tempting man can compensate
 For heaven desired too late?
 Long have I warred,
 Long must I war
 With him who deem'd it hard
 To be created, and to acknowledge him
 Who midst the cherubim
 Made him as suns to a dependent star,
 Leaving the archangels at his right hand dim.
 I loved him—beautiful he was: oh heaven!
 Save *his* who made, what beauty and what power
 Was ever like to Satan's! Would the hour
 In which he fell could ever be forgiven!
 The wish is impious: but oh ye!
 Yet undestroyed, be warned! Eternity
 With him, or with his God, is in your choice:
 He hath not tempted you, he cannot tempt
 The angels, from his further snares exempt;
 But man hath listen'd to his voice,
 And ye to woman's—beautiful she is,
 The serpent's voice less subtle than her kiss,
 The snake but vanquish'd dust; but she will draw
 A second host from heaven, to break heaven's law.
 Yet, yet, oh fly!
 Ye cannot die,
 But they
 Shall pass away,
 While ye shall fill with shrieks the upper sky
 For perishable clay,

Whose memory in your immortality
Shall long outlast the sun which gave them day.
Think how your essence differeth from theirs
In all but suffering! Why partake
The agony to which they must be heirs—
Born to be plough'd with years, and sown with cares,
And reap'd by Death, lord of the human soil?
Even had their days been left to toil their path
Through time to dust, unshorten'd by God's wrath,
Still they are Evil's prey and Sorrow's spoil.
Aho. Let them fly!
I hear the voice which says that all must die,
Sooner than our white-bearded Patriarchs died;
And that on high
An ocean is prepared,
While from below
The deep shall rise to meet heaven's overflow.
Few shall be spared,
It seems; and, of that few, the race of Cain
Must lift their eyes to Adam's God in vain.
Sister! since it is so,
And the eternal Lord
In vain would be implored
For the remission of one hour of woe,
Let us resign even what we have adored,
And meet the wave, as we would meet the sword,
If not unmoved, yet undismay'd,
And wailing less for us than those who shall
Survive in mortal or immortal thrall,
And, when the fatal waters are allay'd,
Weep for the myriads who can weep no more.
Fly, Seraphs! to your own eternal shore,
Where winds nor howl nor waters roar.

Our portion is to die,
 And yours to live for ever:
 But which is best, a dead eternity,
 Or living, is but known to the great Giver:
 Obey him, as we shall obey;
 I would not keep this life of mine in clay
 An hour beyond his will;
 Nor see ye lose a portion of his grace,
 For all the mercy which Seth's race
 Find still.

Fly!

And as your pinions bear ye back to heaven,
 Think that my love still mounts with thee on high,
 Samiasa!

And if I look up with a tearless eye,
 'Tis that an angel's bride disdains to weep—
 Farewell! Now rise, inexorable Deep!

Anah. And must we die?
 And must I lose thee too,
 Azazel?

Oh, my heart, my heart!
 Thy prophecies were true,
 And yet thou wert so happy too!
 The blow, though not unlook'd for, falls as new;
 But yet depart!
 Ah, why?

Yet let me not retain thee—fly!
 My pangs can be but brief; but thine would be
 Eternal, if repulsed from heaven for me.
 Too much already hast thou deign'd
 To one of Adam's race!

Our doom is sorrow: not to us alone,
 But to the spirits who have not disdained

To love us, cometh anguish with disgrace.
The first who taught us knowledge hath been hurled
From his once archangelic throne
Into some unknown world:
And thou, Azazel! No—
Thou shalt not suffer woe
For me. Away! nor weep!
Thou canst not weep; but yet
Mayst suffer more, not weeping: then forget
Her, whom the surges of the all-strangling Deep
Can bring no pang like this. Fly! Fly!
Being gone, 'twill be less difficult to die.
Japh. Oh say not so!
Father! and thou, archangel, thou!
Surely celestial Mercy lurks below
That pure severe serenity of brow:
Let them not meet this sea without a shore,
Save in our ark, or let me be no more!
Noah. Peace, child of passion, peace!
If not within thy heart, yet with thy tongue
Do God no wrong!
Live as he wills it—die, when he ordains,
A righteous death, unlike the seed of Cain's.
Cease, or be sorrowful in silence; cease
To weary Heaven's ear with thy selfish plaint.
Would'st thou have God commit a sin for thee?
Such would it be
To alter his intent
For a mere mortal sorrow. Be a man!
And bear what Adam's race must bear, and can.
Japh. Ay, father! but when they are gone,
And we are all alone,
Floating upon the azure desart,³⁰ and

The depth beneath us hides our own dear land,
 And dearer, silent friends and brethren, all
 Buried in its immeasurable breast,
 Who, who, our tears, our shrieks, shall then command?
 Can we in desolation's peace have rest?
 Oh God! be thou a God, and spare
 Yet while 'tis time!
 Renew not Adam's fall:³¹
 Mankind were then but twain,
 But they are numerous now as are the waves
 And the tremendous rain,
 Whose drops shall be less thick than would their graves,
 Were graves permitted to the seed of Cain.
Noah. Silence, vain boy! each word of thine's a crime!
 Angel! forgive this stripling's fond despair.
Raph. Seraphs! these mortals speak in passion: Ye!
 Who are, or should be, passionless and pure,
 May now return with me.
Sam. It may not be:
 We have chosen, and will endure.
Raph. Say'st thou?
Aza. He hath said it, and I say, Amen!
Raph. Again!
 Then from this hour,
 Shorn as ye are of all celestial power,
 And aliens from your God,
 Farewell!
Japh. Alas! where shall they dwell?
 Hark, hark! Deep sounds, and deeper still,
 Are howling from the mountain's bosom:
 There's not a breath of wind upon the hill,
 Yet quivers every leaf, and drops each blossom:
 [E]arth³² groans as if beneath a heavy load.

Noah. Hark, hark! the sea-birds cry!
In clouds they overspread the lurid sky
And hover round the mountain, where before
Never a white wing, wetted by the wave,
Yet dared to soar,
Even when the waters waxed too fierce to brave.
Soon it shall be their only shore,
And then, no more!
Japh. The sun! the sun!
He riseth, but his better light is gone;
And a black circle, bound
His glaring disk around,
Proclaims earth's last of summer days hath shone!
The clouds return into the hues of night,
Save where their brazen-coloured edges streak
The verge where brighter morns were wont to break.
Noah. And lo! yon flash of light,
The distant thunder's harbinger, appears!
It cometh! hence, away,
Leave to the elements their evil prey!
Hence to where our all-hallowed ark uprears
Its safe and wreckless sides.
Japh. Oh, father, stay!
Leave not my Anah to the swallowing tides!
Noah. Must we not leave all life to such? Begone!
Japh. Not I.
Noah. Then die
With them!
How dar'st thou look on that prophetic sky,
And seek to save what all things now condemn,
In overwhelming unison
With just Jehovah's wrath?
Japh. Can rage and justice join in the same path?

Noah. Blasphemer! dar'st thou murmur even now?

Raph. Patriarch, be still a father! smoothe³³ thy brow:

Thy son, despite his folly, shall not sink;

He knows not what he says, yet shall not drink

With sobs the salt foam of the swelling waters;

But be, when Passion passeth, good as thou,

Nor perish like Heaven's children with Man's daughters.

Aho. The Tempest cometh; Heaven and Earth unite

For the annihilation of all life.

Unequal is the strife

Between our strength and the Eternal Might!

Sam. But ours is with thee: we will bear ye far

To some untroubled star,

Where thou and Anah shalt partake our lot:

And if thou dost not weep for thy lost earth,

Our forfeit heaven shall also be forgot.

Anah. Oh! my dear father's tents, my place of birth!

And mountains, land, and woods, when ye are not,

Who shall dry up my tears?

Aza.

Thy Spirit-lord.

Fear not, though we are shut from heaven,

Yet much is ours, whence we can not be driven.

Raph. Rebel! thy words are wicked, as thy deeds

Shall henceforth be but weak: the flaming sword,

Which chased the first-born out of Paradise,

Still flashes in the angelic hands.

Aza. It cannot slay us: threaten dust with death,

And talk of weapons unto that which bleeds!

What are thy swords in our immortal eyes?

Raph. The moment cometh to approve thy strength;

And learn at length

How vain to war with what thy God commands:

Thy former force was in thy faith.

*[Enter Mortals, flying for refuge.
Chorus of Mortals.]*

The heavens and earth are mingling—God! oh God!
What have we done? Yet spare!
Hark! even the forest beasts howl forth their pray'r!
The dragon crawls from out his den,
To herd in terror innocent with men;
And the birds scream their agony through air.
Yet, yet, Jehovah! yet withdraw thy rod
Of wrath, and pity thine own world's despair!
Hear not Man only but all Nature plead!

Raph. Farewell, thou earth! ye wretched sons of clay,
I cannot, must not aid you. 'Tis decreed!

[Exit RAPHAEL.]

Japh. Some clouds sweep on as vultures for their prey,
While others, fix'd as rocks, await the word
At which their wrathful vials shall be pour'd.
No azure more shall robe the firmament,
Nor spangled stars be glorious: Death hath risen:
In the Sun's place a pale and ghastly glare
Hath wound itself around the dying air.

Aza. Come, Anah! quit this chaos-founded prison,
To which the elements again repair,
To turn it into what it was: beneath
The shelter of these wings thou shalt be safe,
As was the eagle's nestling once within
Its mother's.—Let the coming chaos chafe
With all its elements! Heed not their din!
A brighter world than this, where thou shalt breathe
Ethereal life, will we explore:
These darken'd clouds are not the only skies.

*[AZAZIEL and SAMIASA fly off, and disappear with
ANAH and AHOLIBAMAH.]*

Japh. They are gone! They have disappear'd amidst the
roar
Of the forsaken world; and never more,
Whether they live, or die with all earth's life,
Now near its last, can aught restore
Anah unto these eyes.

Chorus of Mortals.

Oh son of Noah! mercy on thy kind!
What, wilt thou leave us all—all—*all* behind?
While safe amidst the elemental strife,
Thou sit'st within thy guarded ark?
 A Mother (offering her infant to JAPHET.) Oh let this child
 embark!
I brought him forth in woe,
 But thought it joy
To see him to my bosom clinging so.
 Why was he born?
 What hath he done—
 My unwean'd son—
To move Jehovah's wrath or scorn?
What is there in this milk of mine, that Death
Should stir all heaven and earth up to destroy
 My boy,
And roll the waters o'er his placid breath?
Save him, thou seed of Seth!
Or cursed be—with him who made
Thee and thy race, for which we are betray'd!
 Japh. Peace! 'tis no hour for curses, but for pray'r!

Chorus of Mortals.

For prayer!!!
And where

Shall prayer ascend,
When the swoln³⁴ clouds unto the mountains bend
And burst,
And gushing oceans every barrier rend,
Until the very desarts know no thirst?
Accurst
Be he, who made thee and thy sire!
We deem our curses vain; we must expire;
But as we know the worst,
Why should our hymn be raised, our knees be bent
Before the implacable Omnipotent,
Since we must fall the same?
If he hath made earth, let it be his shame,
To make a world for torture:—Lo! they come
The loathsome waters in their rage!
And with their roar make wholesome Nature dumb!
The forest's trees (coeval with the hour
When Paradise upsprung,
Ere Eve gave Adam knowledge for her dower,
Or Adam his first hymn of slavery sung,)
So massy, vast, yet green in their old age,
Are overtopt,
Their summer blossoms by the surges lopt,
Which rise, and rise, and rise.
Vainly we look up to the lowering skies—
They meet the seas,
And shut out God from our beseeching eyes.
Fly, son of Noah, fly, and take thine ease
In thine allotted Ocean-tent;
And view, all floating o'er the Element,
The corpses of the world of thy young days:
Then to Jehovah raise
Thy song of praise!

A Mortal. Blessed are the dead
 Who die in the Lord!
 And though the waters be o'er earth outspread,
 Yet, as *his* word,
 Be the decree adored!
 He gave me life—he taketh but
 The breath which is his own:
 And though these eyes should be for ever shut,
 Nor longer this weak voice before his throne
 Be heard in supplicating tone,
 Still blessed be the Lord,
 For what is past,
 For that which is:
 For all are his,
 From first to last—
 Time—space—eternity—life—death—
 The vast known and immeasurable unknown.
 He made, and can unmake;
 And shall *I*, for a little gasp of breath,
 Blaspheme and groan?
 No; let me die, as I have lived, in faith,
 Nor quiver, though the universe may quake!

Chorus of Mortals.

Where shall we fly?
 Not to the mountains high;
 For now their torrents rush with double roar,
 To meet the ocean, which, advancing still,
 Already grasps each drowning hill,
 Nor leaves an unsearch'd cave.

Enter a Woman.

Woman. Oh, save me, save!

Our valley is no more:
 My father and my father's tent,
 My brethren and my brethren's herds,
 The pleasant trees that o'er our noonday bent
 And sent forth evening songs from sweetest birds,
 The little rivulet which freshen'd all
 Our pastures green,
 No more are to be seen.
 When to the mountain cliff I climb'd this morn,
 I turn'd to bless the spot,
 And not a leaf appear'd about to fall;—
 And now they are not!—
 Why was I born?
 Japh. To die! in youth to die;
 And happier in that doom,
 Than to behold the universal tomb
 Which I
 Am thus condemn'd to weep above in vain.
 Why, when all perish, why must I remain?

[The Waters rise: Men fly in every direction; many are overtaken by the waves; the Chorus of Mortals disperses in search of safety up the Mountains; Japhet remains upon a rock, while the Ark floats towards him in the distance.]

END OF PART FIRST.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Biblical reference. *Genesis* 6:2. All references to biblical texts are based on the King James Bible version.

² S.T. Coleridge, “Kubla Kahn” (1816), l. 16: “By woman wailing for her demon-lover!”

³ Notably, the character of Japhet is not listed among the *dramatis personae*, despite his central role in the text.

⁴ Samiasa, seraph who falls in love with Aholibama. He is identified as a fallen angel in the *Book of Enoch*.

⁵ Azazel, seraph. In the *Book of Enoch*, one of the fallen angels.

⁶ Irad, son of Enoch and grandson of Cain, *Genesis* 4:18.

⁷ Anah, Cainite woman, in love with Azazel. In the Bible, references to Anah’s gender are ambiguous. Anah is referred to as a woman in *Genesis* 36:2, but in *Genesis* 36:24 Anah appears as a man. Anah’s relationship to Aholibamah is different in the Bible: while in Byron she is Aholibamah’s sister, in the Bible she is Aholibamah’s daughter (*Genesis* 36:14).

⁸ Aholibamah, Cainite woman, in love with Samiasa. In the Bible, granddaughter of Cain (*Genesis* 36:18, 36:25).

⁹ Mount Ararat is described in the Bible as the place of rest of Noah’s Ark (*Genesis* 8:4). Later on in the text, Byron specifically mentions the “secret crest”, which is the exact location of the Ark (p. 170).

¹⁰ Probable reference to the son of Adam, as Adam was formed from the clay of earth (*Genesis* 2:7).

¹¹ Japhet is one of Noah’s three sons, along with Ham (also found as Cam) and Shem. All of them were involved in the building of the Ark and saved by it (*Genesis* 7:7).

¹² *thy* (archaic): your.

¹³ The suffix ‘-(e)st’ is used in archaic spelling for the second person singular.

¹⁴ Adamite, Adam’s descendant.

¹⁵ Biblical reference. Personification of chaos, created and later killed by God (*Job* 41; *Psalms* 74:14).

¹⁶ Possible reference to the great flood in Noah’s time (*Genesis* 7:11).

¹⁷ *Peace! ... of realm*: in this soliloquy, Japhet expresses his inability to understand and accept God’s inflexible decisions (See Marshall 1962, 156).

¹⁸ The fated race of the descendants of Cain. For this reason, Anah will have to perish in the Great Flood (*Genesis* 7:2).

¹⁹ The suffix ‘-(e)th’ is used in archaic spelling for the third person singular.

²⁰ *My kinsmen ... Jehovah’s bidding*: in this soliloquy, Japhet questions again the justice of the divine will as well as his privileged position as “Son of the saved” (See Marshall 1962, 157–58).

²¹ Cedar is often mentioned in the Bible as symbol of steadfast faith and spiritual resilience.

²² Reference to Noah’s sons. They and their wives are the only human beings spared from the Great Flood (*Genesis* 6:18).

²³ Possible reference to the Nephilim, mentioned in *Genesis* 6:4 and *Numbers* 13:33. They are the children of the sons of God and mortal women.

²⁴ The Patriarchs in the Bible are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (*Deuteronomy* 1:8).

²⁵ Seth, third son of Adam and Eve, born after Abel’s death (*Genesis* 4:25).

²⁶ *alway* (Old English): *always*.

²⁷ Anomaly in punctuation: missing comma.

²⁸ Erroneously indented.

²⁹ Erroneously indented.

³⁰ *desart*: archaic variant of *desert* (*OED*).

³¹ Reference to Adam and Eve’s disobedience, which caused their fall from Eden (*Genesis* 3:23).

³² The letter “E” is not legible in the copy-text, but it is visible in copies held in other libraries (e.g. Bodleian, Chicago).

³³ *smoothe*: archaic variant of *smooth* (*OED*).

³⁴ *swoln*: archaic variant for *swollen* (*OED*).

³⁵ Misprint: first occurrence of “&c.” in the header after the title.

THE GIULI TRE.*

OUR readers would miss one of the good things that there are in this world, or rather three of them, if they were not made aware of the existence of our facetious friends, the Giuli Tre.¹ The author² says, in one of his sonnets,³ that as there are Three Fates,⁴ and Three Harpies,⁵ and Cerberus⁶ has Three Heads, so Three Giuli contain some fatal mystery of triplicity hieroglyphical of his troubles. Had he lived now, he would have added the three members of the Holy Alliance.⁷ On the other hand, we are rather reminded of something triple and pleasant; of the three corners of his own cocked hat,⁸ or the Three Graces,⁹ or the three Miss Smiths¹⁰ (who were perpetually recurring to a friend of ours), or above all, of the three Mrs. Wigginses¹¹ who haunt an old gentleman of that name in the farce. Had our author been acquainted with those ladies, he would unquestionably have devoted a sonnet to their memory, under the title of the Tre Viginise.¹²

The Giuli Tre (Three Juliuses, so called, we suppose, from a head of one of the Popes of that name)¹³ are three pieces of money, answering to about fifteen-pence of our coin, for which the Italian poet, Casti, says he was pestered from day to day by an unblushing creditor. The poet accordingly had his revenge on him, and incarcerated the vermin in immortal amber, by devoting to the subject no less than 200 sonnets, which he published under the above

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Fabio Liberto.

title. The Abate Casti¹⁴ is known to the English public, by means of Mr. Stewart Rose's pleasant abridgment, as the author of the *Animali Parlanti*;¹⁵ and he is also known to what we suppose must be called the English private, as the writer of a set of tales in verse,¹⁶ which an acquaintance of ours says "every body has read, and nobody acknowledges to have read."¹⁷ The *Animali Parlanti* is justly celebrated throughout Europe. The tales have the undeniable merit which a man of genius puts into whatever work he condescends to perform; but they are a gross mistake in things amatory, and furnish one of those portentous specimens of excess on the side of indecent writing, which they who refer every detail of the world to Providence could only account for by supposing, that some such addition of odd fuel was necessary to the ordinary inflammability of the young and unthinking.

The work before us, as the Florentine editor observes, is in every respect unexceptionable.¹⁸ He informs us, that it is not liable to a charge brought against the Abate's other works, of being too careless in point of style, and unidiomatic. The *Giuli Tre*, according to him, speak the true Italian language; so that the recommendation they bring with them to foreigners is complete;¹⁹ and we really think it would be worth the while of some bookseller to print a London edition. It would make a neat pocket-volume; and we would lend him our copy for the purpose, if he could not get one at home.

We proceed to give some specimens. The fertility of fancy and learned allusion, with which the author has written his 200 sonnets on a man's coming to him every day and asking him for *Tre Giuli*, is inferior only to what Butler²⁰ or Marvell²¹ might have made of it. The very recurrence of the words becomes a good joke. Let statesmen

say what they will of “the principle of resurrection,” the principles of imagination and continuation are the intense things in this our mortal state. As the perpetual accompaniment and exaggeration of one image is the worst thing in sorrow, so it is the merriest thing in a piece of wit. A metaphysician once attempted to persuade us, that there was nothing laughable in Andrew Marvell’s account of the amphibious Dutch and their cousins-german the fishes.²² We answered him by an irrepressible fit of laughter at the recollection. We hope nobody will go about to take our Giuli Tre out of our pockets, or to persuade us that they are not three of the pleasantest, readiest, and yet never-to-be-forthcoming pieces of money extant. We are grateful to the mere sound, to the very chink of their names. It has amply repaid us for our attempt to translate some of it into English metal, though the reader may lose by the exchange. The Giuli Tre are henceforth among our standing jokes, among our Lares and Penates²³ of pleasantry—

“Familiar in our mouths as household words.”²⁴

Nobody that we have met with in Italy could resist the mention of them. The priest did not pretend it. The ladies were glad they could find something to approve in a poet of so erroneous a reputation. The man of the world laughed as merrily as he could. The patriot was happy to relax his mustachios. Even the bookseller, of whom we bought them, laughed with a real laugh, evidently not the mercenary and meretricious grin with which he laughs at the customer instead of the book, when he has the luck to get rid of some heavy facetiousness by a chance sale,—not “the bought smile,

—— Loveless, joyless, unendeared,
Casual fruition.”²⁵

The Giuli Tre are one of those happy thoughts, which are at once inimitably original and universally intelligible. At second hand it would be comparatively nothing, however well done. Nobody can take it up; but every body can feel it. To poetical readers it will come with a peculiar grace, from their sympathy with the natural unmonied faculties of poets in general, and the straits to which they render them liable. Those indeed who love pleasure pushed to a verge of pain, will not fail to discover the kind of fascination which such a subject might well have for too many authors. Casti himself has touched upon this point of attraction; and for our parts, we feel it so sensibly, that like himself we shall proceed to grasp it at once, and see how well we can turn our fears to better purpose. We shall notice all the principal sonnets that struck us throughout the work, partly that we may give as much account of it as possible, and partly because the jest is concerned in shewing to what a length it is carried. It may be as well to mention, that the single instead of double rhymes which the poet uses, and which render the measure exactly similar to that of the translation, have a ludicrous effect to an Italian ear.

In his third sonnet, the poet requests fables and dreams to keep their distance:—

Lungi o favole, o sogni, or voi da me,
Or che la Musa mia tessendo va
La vera istoria delli Giuli Tre.²⁶

Ye dreams and fables, keep aloof, I pray,
While this my Muse keeps spinning, as she goes,
The genuine history of the Giuli Tre.

Sonnet 5.—He complains that after having an ardent desire of renown, and of singing about arms and warriors, he is compelled to exchange those heroic commodities for Giuli Tre.

Son. 8.—His Creditor, he says, ought not to be astonished at his always returning the same answer to his demand for the Giuli Tre, because if a man who plays the organ or the hautboy were always to touch the same notes, the same sounds would always issue forth.

SONNET 10.

Ben cento volte ho replicato a te
 Questa istessa infallibil verità,
 Che a conto mio,²⁷ da certo tempo in quà,
 La razza de' quattrini si perdè.
 Tu non ostante vieni intorno a me
 Con insoffribile importunità,
 E per quei maledetti Giuli Tre²⁸
 Mi perseguiti senza carità.

Forse in disperazion ridur mi vuo',
 Ond'io m'appichi,²⁹ e vuoi vedermi in giù
 Pender col laccio al collo? Oh questo no.
 Risolverommi a non pagarti più,
 E in guisa tal te disperar farò,
 E vo' puittosto³⁰ che ti appichi³¹ tu.

I've said for ever, and again I say,
 And it's a truth as plain as truth can be,
 That from a certain period to this day,
 Pence are a family quite extinct with me.
 And yet you still pursue me, and waylay,
 With your insufferable importunity,

And for those d——d infernal Giuli Tre
Haunt me without remorse or decency.

Perhaps you think that you'll torment me so,
You'll make me hang myself? You wish to say
You saw me *sus. per coll.*—No, Giuli, no.
The fact is, I'll determine not to pay;
And drive *you*, Giuli, to a state so low,
That you shall hang yourself, and I be gay.

Son. 11.—He says, that if he is in the company of beautiful girls, who delight to be talking with him, or if he picks out some solitary and quiet spot to take his walk in, wherever he is, in short, morning or evening, he cannot wean his memory from the Giuli Tre. The image of his Creditor comes before him, and haunts him worse than Asmodeus³² or Beelzebub.³³

Son. 12.—Any one who wishes to meet with the Creditor, is advised to find where the poet is, for he'll be certain to see him there, the Creditor having no other thought or occupation than the business of the Giuli Tre.

Son. 13.—The poet does not know whether there is a plurality of worlds, whether the moon is inhabited, &c. He is inclined to doubt whether there can be a people who had not Adam for their father. But if there is, he longs to go up there and live among them. Nevertheless, he fears it would be of no avail, as his Creditor would get Father Daniel³⁴ to show him the way, and come after him.*

* Father Daniel is author of a work entitled *Travels through the World of Des Cartes*.

SONNET 15.

Importuno il tafan così non è
 Nella stagion che son più caldi i di,³⁵
 Importuno il moscon non è così,
 Come importuno è il creditor con me.
 Che se fresca dal ciel pioggia cadè,
 Ogni moscone, ogni tafan sparì,
 Ma non giammai varia stagion fin qui³⁶
 Tormi d'intorno il creditor³⁷ potè.

E forse come o per la gravità,³⁸
 Ovvero per centripeta virtù,³⁹
 O per attrazione,⁴⁰ o per chi sa,
 Tendon di sua natura i corpi in giù,
 Così per natural tua proprietà
 A me tendi, o Crisofilo, anche tu.

Never did beetle hum so teasingly
 About one's ears, in walking, when it's hot;
 Never did fly return so to one spot,
 As comes my teasing Creditor on me.
 Let it but rain, for instance, and you'll see
 The flies and beetles vanish like a shot;
 But never comes the time,—the day is not,—
 In which this vermin here will let me be.

Perhaps as bodies tend invariably
 Tow'rds other bodies by some force divine,—
 Attraction, gravity, or centripathy,
 (God knows; I'm little vers'd in your right line)
 So by some natural horrid property
 This pretty satellite tends tow'rds me and mine.

Son. 16.—Tormented by the Tre Giuli as Orestes⁴¹ was by the Furies, he speculates, like him, upon seeking repose in some other country.

Son. 17.—The poet, while he is bidding adieu to his dear friends, brought to that bitter pass by the “fatal debit of the Giuli Tre,” is accosted by his Creditor, who says he’ll go with him. He therefore gives up his project in despair.

Son. 19.—The poet is suddenly intoxicated with joy. His Creditor is going out of town. Now he sees him put his boots and spurs on!—Now he mounts on horseback!—Now his horse is in motion!—He has gone, and the poet feels like a mariner when the storm has cleared away.

Son. 20.—Since the Creditor has gone, the poet says he walks about with delight all over the city; just as the mouse, when the cat’s gone, passes from place to place with a certain ardent daring. He hopes that he has gone towards the coast, and that the Turks will carry him into slavery. Not that he wishes him ill: on the contrary, he wishes to God they would make him a Vizier⁴² or Mufti,⁴³ so that he might never see him again.

Son. 21.—An apostrophe to the elements, entreating them to behave in their kindest manner, in order to facilitate the Creditor’s voyage. On the other hand, the voyage being finished, he trusts they will be extremely furious, so as to hinder him, like Noah’s crow,⁴⁴ from ever returning.

Son. 22.—He feels like a city no longer besieged.

Son. 23.—A letter by the post! It is from the Creditor, who tells him to get ready the Giuli Tre, as he shall be in town by Sunday, or by Monday at farthest. “Poffareddio!” exclaims the poet,—“the fellow has found out a way of tormenting me at a distance; and though I do not give him the Tre Giuli, squeezes the amount out of me in this way!”

Son. 24.—He compares a letter demanding payment, to a mode there is said to be of poisoning by paper.

Son. 25.—He is like a little boy who plays and dances when his father is away, but slinks quietly into a corner when he sees him return.

Son. 28.—Like a wheel which goes silently when it goes well, he vented no poetry while he was happy; but like the same wheel which begins creaking and making a noise when something is amiss with it, he was set crying out in verse by the Giuli Tre.

Son. 29.—The unalterable stoicism he once boasted is all overturned by this little debt. Like the lion, who conquered bears and tigers, but was overcome by a gad-fly in his ear.

Son. 31.—When an act has been very often repeated, he says that the organs perform it of their own accord, without any attention on the part of the will. Thus mules go home to the stable, and parrots bid one good morning; and thus, he says, the Creditor has a habit of asking him for the Giuli Tre, and he has a habit of answering "I haven't got 'em."

SONNET 35.

Mai l'uom felice in vita sua non fu.⁴⁵
 Fanciullo un guardo sol tremar lo fa;⁴⁶
 Quindi trapassa la più⁴⁷ fresca età
 Intento alle bell'arti e alle virtù.
 Poi nel fiero bollor di gioventù
 Or d'amore or di sdegno ardendo va;⁴⁸
 Di quà malanni, e cancheri di là,
 E guai cogli anni crescon sempre più.

Alfin vengono i debiti;⁴⁹ e allor sì
 Che più speme di ben allor non v'è,

E anch'io la vita mia trassi così:⁵⁰
 E il debito fatal de' Giuli Tre⁵¹
 Ora ai malanni che passai fin quì
 Solennemente il compimento da.⁵²

No: none are happy in this best of spheres.
 Lo! when a child, we tremble at a look:
 Our freshest age is wither'd o'er a book;
 The fine arts bite us, and great characters.
 Then we go boiling with our youthful peers
 In love and hate, in riot and rebuke;
 By hook misfortune has us, or by crook,
 And griefs and gouts come thick'ning with one's years.

In fine, we've debts:—and when we've debts, no ray
 Of hope remains to warm us to repose.
 Thus has my own life pass'd from day to day;
 And now, by way of climax though not close,
 The fatal debit of the Giuli Tre
 Fills up the solemn measure of my woes.

Son. 36.—He congratulates a happy infant on his ignorance of the miseries of human life, particularly the Giuli Tre.

Son. 41.—He says, that as the sun with his genial energy strikes into the heart of the mountains of Golconda⁵³ and Peru, and hardens substances there into gold and gems, so the hot activity of his Creditor has hardened the poet's heart, till at length it has produced that hard, golden, and adamantine No! which has rendered the Giuli Tre precious.

Son. 44.—He says, that he was never yet bound to the conjugal yoke,—a yoke which is as pleasant to those who have it not, as it is disagreeable to those who have: but that if he

were married, his children would certainly resemble the proprietor of the Giuli Tre, and that he should see Creditor-kins, or little Creditors, all about him;—*Creditorelli*.

Son. 50. 51.—When he thinks to get into a quiet place, the Echo of his words pursues him, and demands the Giuli Tre.

Son. 53.—He says that the day on which his Creditor lent him the Giuli Tre, was to him his Grand Climacteric.

Son. 55.—An invocation to Sleep, requesting the god not to bring Morpheus the god of dreams with him; but that if he must, not to come even himself, lest the Giuli Tre should be worse to him sleeping than waking.

Son. 72.—If a man has a little tumour or scratch on his leg or arm, and is always impatiently touching it, the little wound will become a great one. So, he says, it is with his debt of the Giuli Tre. The debt, he allows, is in itself no very great thing, but the intolerable importunity of his Creditor,—

Considerabilissimo lo fa,—⁵⁴

Makes it a very considerable one.

Son. 78.—As various climates and countries give rise to a variety of characters among mankind,—as the Assyrian and Persian has been accounted luxurious, the Thracian fierce, and the Roman was once upon a time bold and magnanimous, so he suspects that the climate in which he lives must be eminent for producing hard Creditors.

Son. 79.—He wishes that some logician, who understands the art of persuading people, would be charitable enough to suggest to him some syllogism or other form of argument, which may enable him to prove to his Creditor the impossibility of paying money when a man has not got it.

Son. 89.—Philosophers maintain, he says, that if two bodies stand apart from each other, and are distinct, it is

impossible they can both stand in the same place. Otherwise one body also might be in several places at once. He therefore wonders how the devil it is, that his Creditor is to be found here and there and every where.

Son. 96.—He tells us, that his Creditor is fond of accosting him on physical subjects, and wants to know the nature of lightning, of the winds, colours, &c. and whether the system of Tycho Brahe⁵⁵ is better than that of Pythagoras.⁵⁶ The poet answers him, that it is impossible to get at the secrets of Nature; and that all that he knows upon earth is, that a man is perpetually asking him for Tre Giuli, and he has not got them.

SONNET 98.

Non poche volte ho inteso dir da chi
E Galeno ed Ippocrate studiò⁵⁷
Che vi sono fra l'anno alcuni dì,
Ne' quali cavar sangue non si può.
Se ragione vi sia di far così,
Sel vedano i Dottori, io non lo so;⁵⁸
E luogo non mi par questo ch'è qui
Di dire il mio parer sopra di ciò.

So ben che il Creditor de' Giuli Tre⁵⁹
Tanti riguardi e scrupoli non ha,
Nè osserva queste regole con me;
Ch'angi⁶⁰ ogni giorno procurando va
Da me trarre il denar, ch'è un non so che
Ch'ha col sangue una qualche affinità.

Often and often have I understood
From Galen's⁶¹ readers and Hippocrates's,⁶²

That there are certain seasons in diseases
 In which the patient oughtn't to lose blood.
 Whether the reason that they give be good,
 Or doctors square their practice to the thesis,
 I know not; nor is this the best of places
 For arguing on that matter, as I could.

All that I know is this,—that Giuli Tre
 Has no such scruple or regard with me,
 Nor holds the rule himself: for every day
 He does his best, and that most horribly,
 To make me lose my cash; which, I must say,
 Has with one's blood some strange affinity.

Son. 101.—The poet alludes to the account of words freezing at the pole; and says, that if he were there with his Creditor, and a thaw were to take place, nothing would be heard around them but a voice calling for the Giuli Tre.

Son. 104.—He believes that if he were to take to Dædalus's wings⁶³ or Ariosto's Hippogriff,⁶⁴ the Devil would fetch his Creditor after him, to ask him in the air for his Giuli Tre.

Son. 110.—He says that a comet with its⁶⁵ terrible splendour does not so frighten the superstitious people, as the sudden sight of his Creditor shakes him. Besides, Comets have a certain regularity of recurrence, for which a man may be prepared; but "he of the Giuli Tre" has no day set down for his appearance in the calendar.

SONNET 113.

Si mostra il Creditor spesso con me
 Piacevole ed affabile così,
 Come fra amici suol farsi ogni dì,

E par che più non pensi a' Giuli Tre.⁶⁶
 Esolo⁶⁷ vuol saper, se il Prusso Re
 Liberò Praga, e di Boemia uscì;⁶⁸
 Se l'armata naval da Brest partì;⁶⁹
 Se Annover prese il marescial d'Etrè.⁷⁰

E poiche⁷¹ da lontano la pigliò,
 A poco a poco al *quia* calando va,
 E dice,—⁷² “Ebben-quando⁷³ i Tre Giuli⁷⁴ avrò?”
 Così talor col sorcio il gatto fa,
 Ci ruzza, e scherza,⁷⁵ e l'intrattiene un po',
 E la fatal graffiata alfin gli dà.

My Creditor seems often in a way
 Extremely pleasant with me, and polite;
 Just like a friend:—you'd fancy, at first sight,
 He thought no longer of the Giuli Tre.
 All that he wants to know is, what they say
 Of Frederick⁷⁶ now; whether his guess was right
 About the sailing of the French that night;
 Or, What's the news of Hanover and D'Estreès.⁷⁷

But start from whence he may, he comes as truly,
 By little and little, to his ancient pass,
 And says, “Well—when am I to have the Giuli?”
 'Tis the cat's way. She takes her mouse, alas!
 And having purred, and eyed, and tapp'd him duly,
 Gives him at length the fatal *coup de grace*.

SONNET 122.

Oh quanto Scioccamente⁷⁸ vaneggiò,
 Chi Arnaldo, e Lullo, ed il gebèr⁷⁹ seguì

E lavorò nascosto e notte e di,⁸⁰
 Ed i metalli trasformar pensò:
 E intorno ad un crocciuol folle sudo,⁸¹
 In cui mercurii,⁸² e solfi, e sali unì,
 Ne⁸³ finalmente mai gli riuscì⁸⁴
 Coll'arte oprar ciò che natura oprò.

Ma oh!⁸⁵ perchè si⁸⁶ bell'arte in noi non e!⁸⁷
 Perchè all'uom d'imitar vietato fu
 I bei lavori⁸⁸ che natura fe!
 Studiar vorrei la chimica virtù,
 E fatto il capital de' Giuli Tre,⁸⁹
 Rompere il vaso,⁹⁰ e non pensarvi piu.⁹¹

Oh, with what folly did they toil in vain,
 Who thought old Arnald,⁹² Lully,⁹³ or Gabor⁹⁴ wise,
 And night and day labour'd with earnest eyes
 To turn their metals into golden grain!
 How did their pots and they perspire again
 Over their sulphurs, salts, and mercuries,
 And never, after all, could see their prize,
 Or do what Nature does, and with no pain:

Yet oh, good heavens! why, why, dear Nature say,
 This lovely art—why must it be despis'd?
 Why mayn't we follow this thy noblest way?
 I'd work myself; and having realiz'd,
 Good God! a capital of Giuli Tre,
 Break up my tools, content and aggrandiz'd.

Son. 123.—The poet compares himself to a pipkin, which after boiling and fretting on the fire, can no longer contain

itself, but boils over. So, he says, the heat his Creditor puts him in, and the bubble which the Giuli Tre are always making in his head, work his fancy at last in such a manner, that it runs over in an effusion of poetry.

Son. 124.—He supposes that there was no such Creditor as his in the time of David,⁹⁵ because in the imprecations that are accumulated in the hundred and eighteenth psalm,⁹⁶ there is no mention of such a person.

Son. 125.—He relates a horrid dream, in which he fancied, that after death he was sentenced for his sins to the place from which there is no return, and that his Creditor was allotted to him for a tormenting devil.

Son. 127.—His Creditor, he tells us, disputed with him one day, for argument's sake, on the immortality of the soul; and that the great difficulty he started was, how anything that had a beginning could be without an end. Upon which the poet asks him, whether he did not begin one day asking him for the Giuli Tre, and whether he has left off ever since.

Son. 128.—He says that as Languedoc⁹⁷ is still so called from the use of the affirmative particle *oc* in that quarter, as writers in other parts of France used to be called writers of *oui*, and as Italy is denominated the lovely land of *si*,⁹⁸ so his own language, from his constant habit of using the negative particle to the Creditor of the Giuli Tre, ought to be called the language of *no*.

Son. 134.—He informs us, that his Creditor has lately taken to learning French; and conjectures, that finding he has hitherto asked him for the Giuli Tre to no purpose in his own language, he wishes to try the efficacy of the French way of dunning.

SONNET 140.

Armato tutto il Creditor non già
 Di quell'armi che Achille o Enea vesti,
 Onde di tanta poi mortalità
 La Frigia l'un, l'altro⁹⁹ l'Italia empì;
 Ne¹⁰⁰ di quelle onde poscia in altra età
 D'estinti corpi Orlando il suol coprì:¹⁰¹
 Ma di durezza e d'importunità¹⁰²
 E d'aspri modi armato ei m'assalì.

Ed improvviso in contro¹⁰³ mi lanciò
 La richiesta mortal di Giuli Tre;¹⁰⁴
 Io mi schermisco, indi gli scaglio un Nò:¹⁰⁵
 Seguiva la pugna ed infieria;¹⁰⁶ ma il piè
 Da lui volgendo alfin ratto men vò:¹⁰⁷
 E vincitor la fuga sol mi fe'.

My Creditor has no such arms, as he
 Whom Homer trumpets,¹⁰⁸ or whom Virgil sings,¹⁰⁹
 Arms which dismiss'd so many souls in strings,
 From warlike Ilium¹¹⁰ and from Italy.
 Nor has he those of later memory,
 With which Orlando¹¹¹ did such loads of things;
 But with hard hints, and cursed botherings,
 And such rough ways,—with these he warreth me.

And suddenly he launcheth at me, lo!
 His terrible demand, the Giuli Tre;
 I draw me back, and thrust him with a No!
 Then glows the fierce resentment of the fray,
 Till turning round, I scamper from the foe;
 The only way, I find, to gain the day.

Son. 142.—The first time the seaman hears the horrible crashing of the tempest, and sees the fierce and cruel rising of the sea, he turns pale, and loses both his courage and his voice; but if he lives long enough to grow grey in his employment, he sits gaily at the stern, and sings to the accompaniment of the winds. So it is with the poet. His Creditor's perpetual song of the Giuli Tre used to frighten him at first; but now that his ears have grown used to it, he turns it into a musical accompaniment like the billows, and goes singing to the sound.

Son. 144.—He envies Cicero¹¹² for the power attributed to his oratory, of being able to persuade his Creditors out of their demands.

Son. 148.—A friend takes him to see the antiquities in the Capitol, but he is put to flight by the sight of a statue resembling his Creditor.

Son. 183.—The poet relieves his miseries with wine, and gets so full of Bacchus,¹¹³ that finding his Creditor coming up, he asks the God for his thyrsus¹¹⁴ to knock him down with.

Son. 185.—He marks out to a friend the fatal place where his Creditor lent him the Giuli Tre, shewing how he drew out and opened his purse, and how he counted out to him the Giuli with a coy and shrinking hand. He further shews, how it was not a pace distant from this spot, that the Creditor began to ask him for the Giuli; and finishes with proposing to purify the place with lustral water, and exorcise it's¹¹⁵ evil genius.

Son. 189.—He laments that happy age of the world, in which there was a community of goods; and says that the avidity of individuals and the invention of *meum* and *tuum*¹¹⁶ have brought an immense number of evils among mankind, his part of which he suffers by reason of the Giuli Tre.

Son. 200.—Apollo¹¹⁷ makes his appearance, and rebukes the poet for wasting his time, advising him to sing of things that are worthy of immortality. Upon which the poet stops short in a song he was chaunting upon his usual subject, and bids good night for ever to his Creditor and the Giuli Tre.

Not a word of payment.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

- ¹ The *Giulio*, or *Iulius*, was a silver coin that circulated in the Papal territories from 1504 to 1817.
- ² Giambattista Casti (1724-1803), Italian poet and librettist, author of a collection of 200 humorous and satirical sonnets entitled *Li tre Giulj* (1762).
- ³ Sonnet 157. References to Casti's sonnets are from the two-volume edition published between 1817 (vol. 1) and 1818 (vol. 2). Variations in spelling and punctuation form Casti's text will be signalled after a square bracket.
- ⁴ In Greek and Roman mythology, the Fates, or *Moiræ*, were the trio of sisters-goddesses (Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos) who determined human life and fortunes.
- ⁵ In Greek and Roman mythology, the Harpies were winged creatures, sometimes used by the gods as instrument of punishment.
- ⁶ In Greek mythology, Cerberus was the monstrous three-headed dog guarding the entrance to Hades, the realm of the dead.
- ⁷ The Holy Alliance, treaty signed at Paris on 26 September 1815 by the sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and Austria after the final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo. It was based on a common commitment to Christian values, such as peace, justice, and charity.
- ⁸ Casti was seldom portrayed in headwear; only one illustration depicts him wearing a cap. Since Hunt clearly knew what a cocked hat was – he discussed of cocked hats in his essay “Hats, New and Ancient” (*The Indicator*, 8 March 1820) – this and the following allusions might be double entendres or puns, possibly laden with sexual innuendo, hinting at Casti's reputation for his *Novelle Galanti* (1790; 1804). See notes on p. 208.
- ⁹ In Greek mythology, the Graces, or Charites, usually three in number, were goddesses of grace, beauty, and fertility. Hunt's interest in the mythological figures of the Graces is also reflected in “A German Apologue”, published in the first issue of *The Liberal* (1:90-95), which tells the story of Mercury's quest for three women who could replace the three Graces.
- ¹⁰ Possibly a reference to Sarah Bartley (1783?-1850, *DNB*), British actress also known as Miss Smith, and dubbed “the Siddons of Bath” (Baron-Wilson 1844, 141) for her talent in tragic roles. She was one of Byron's protégée during his membership of the management subcommittee at the Drury Lane Theatre (1815-16), (Byron 1899, 237).
- ¹¹ Reference to *Mrs. Wiggins* (1803), a farce by John Till Allingham (1775/6-1812, *DNB*), first performed in London at the Haymarket Theatre on 27 May 1803, with Charles Mathews as Old Mr. Wiggins. The comic element in the farce arises from the presence in the play of three ladies of the same surname: Mrs. Cloe Wiggins, Mrs. Tom Wiggins, and Old Mrs. Wiggins.
- ¹² Hunt's Italianised form of the name ‘Wiggins’.
- ¹³ The *Giulio* was named after Pope Julius II (1443-1513, papacy 1503-1513), who reformed the Papal coinage in 1504 by replacing the *Carlini* with the *Giuli*.
- ¹⁴ In 1747, Casti became a canon in the cathedral of Montefiascone.
- ¹⁵ William Stewart Rose (1775-1843), poet and translator. Rose's *The Court and Parliament of Beasts* is a free and abridged translation from Casti's satirical poem *Animali Parlanti* (1802). Rose's translation first appeared anonymously in 1816 and was later published by John Murray in 1819.
- ¹⁶ Reference to Casti's *Novelle Galanti* (1790; 1804), a collection of forty-eight humorous tales of lascivious and libertine subject.
- ¹⁷ Byron was among the readers of Casti's *Novelle Galanti*, having perused the collection in June 1816 (Byron 1973, 5:80). Casti's *Novelle* very likely provided the stylistic inspiration for Byron's *Beppo* (1818) and *Don Juan* (1819-24).
- ¹⁸ Reference to the preface to the fourth edition of Casti's sonnets, published in 1817 by Regina Luchi in Florence with the title *Li Giulj tre* (Casti 1817, 3-4). The name of the editor is unknown.
- ¹⁹ G. Casti, *Li Giulj tre* (1817, 4).
- ²⁰ Samuel Butler (1612-80), poet and satirist. His poem *Hudibras* (1663-64) was one of the most acclaimed satires of the Restoration period.

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²¹ Andrew Marvell (1621-78), English metaphysical poet and politician. After the restoration of Charles II (1660), Marvell composed several satires against the corruption of court and parliament, including his famous “Last Instructions to a Painter” (1667).

²² Reference to Andrew Marvell’s satirical poem “The Character of Holland” (1665).

²³ In Roman mythology and religion, Lares and Penates were the gods of the household. “Lares and Penates” is an expression used to define the valued or prized possessions of a household.

²⁴ William Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, IV.iii.52. All references from Shakespeare are from the Arden Edition, Third Series.

²⁵ John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1688), IV.765-67.

²⁶ *Giuli Tre*] *Giulj tre* (Casti 1817, 7).

²⁷ *mio, da*] *mio da* (Casti 1817, 14)

²⁸ *Giuli Tre*] *Giulj tre* (Casti 1817, 14).

²⁹ Misspelling of *mappicchi* (Casti 1817, 14).

³⁰ Misspelling of *piuttosto* (Casti 1817, 14).

³¹ Misspelling of *appicchi* (Casti 1817, 14).

³² Asmodeus, demon in the apocryphal *Book of Tobit* 3:8; 3:16; 8:3.

³³ Beelzebub, the prince or ruler of the devils in the Bible (*Matthew* 12:22-30; *Mark* 3:20-27).

³⁴ Gabriel Daniel (1649-1728), French historiographer and theologian. In his *Voyage du monde de Descartes* (1690) Daniel critiques Cartesian theories.

³⁵ Misspelling of *dì* (Casti 1817, 19).

³⁶ *qui*] *quì* (Casti 1817, 19).

³⁷ *creditor*] *Creditor* (Casti 1817, 19).

³⁸ *gravità,*] *gravità* (Casti 1817, 19).

³⁹ *virtù,*] *virtù* (Casti 1817, 19).

⁴⁰ *attrazione,*] *attrazione* (Casti 1817, 19).

⁴¹ In Greek mythology, Orestes was the son of Agamemnon, the king of Mycenae, and Clytemnestra. After Agamemnon’s return from the Trojan War, he was assassinated by Clytemnestra and her lover, Aegisthus. On reaching adulthood, Orestes avenged his father by killing Aegisthus and Clytemnestra. As punishment for having killed his own kin, Orestes became haunted by the Furies.

⁴² Vizier, a high administrative official or minister in Muslim countries.

⁴³ Mufti, an expert in Islamic law in Muslim countries.

⁴⁴ Biblical reference. In *Genesis* 8:6-9, Noah sends out a raven and a dove to determine whether the floodwaters have begun to recede.

⁴⁵ *fu.*] *fu*: (Casti 1817, 59).

⁴⁶ *fa;*] *fa*, (Casti 1817, 59).

⁴⁷ *più*] *piú* (Casti 1817, 59).

⁴⁸ *va;*] *va*, (Casti 1817, 59).

⁴⁹ *debiti;*] *debiti*, (Casti 1817, 59).

⁵⁰ *così;*] *così*; (Casti 1817, 59).

⁵¹ *Giuli Tre*] *Giulj tre* (Casti 1817, 59).

⁵² *da*] *diè* (Casti 1817, 59).

⁵³ Golconda, fortified citadel and ruined city located near Hyderabad, India.

⁵⁴ *fa*] *fè* (Casti 1817, 76).

⁵⁵ Tycho Brahe (1546-1601), Danish astronomer. His Tychonic system was based on a geo-heliocentric model of the Solar System according to which the Sun and Moon revolve around the Earth, while the planets orbit the Sun.

⁵⁶ Pythagoras (c. 570- c. 500 BCE), Greek philosopher and mathematician. According to Pythagorean cosmology and astronomy – which are mostly based on the theories of Pythagoras’s follower Philolaus (c. 470-390 BCE) – the Earth, like all other heavenly bodies, including the Sun and the Moon, move around a “Central Fire”.

⁵⁷ *studio*] *studiò*, (Casti 1817, 102).

⁵⁸ *so;*] *so*, (Casti 1817, 102).

⁵⁹ *Giuli Tre*] *Giulj tre* (Casti 1817, 102).

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- ⁶⁰ Misspelling of *Chànzi* (Casti 1817, 102).
- ⁶¹ Galen (129- c. 216), Greek physician, writer, and philosopher. He wrote extensively on medical subjects.
- ⁶² Hippocrates (c. 460-377 BCE), Greek physician, known as the father of medicine.
- ⁶³ In Greek mythology, Daedalus was an inventor and architect who built the labyrinth for King Minos of Crete. Imprisoned by Minos, he crafted wings from wax to escape with his son Icarus.
- ⁶⁴ The hippogriff is a fabulous creature with the body and hindquarters of a horse and the wings and head of a griffon invented by the Italian poet Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533). In one notable episode of his epic poem *Orlando furioso* (1516), Astolfo flies up to the moon on the hippogriff to bring back the lost wits of Orlando.
- ⁶⁵ *it's*: regional and nonstandard variant form of *its* from 1600s to 1800s (*OED*), frequently used in Hunt's writings.
- ⁶⁶ *Giuli Tre*.] *Giulj tre*, (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁶⁷ Misprint for *E solo* (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁶⁸ *usci*.] *uscì*, (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁶⁹ *parti*.] *partì*, (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁷⁰ *d'Etrè*.] *d'Etrè*; (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁷¹ Misspelling of *poichè* (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁷² *dice*, —] *dice*: (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁷³ *Ebben-quando*] *ebben quando* (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁷⁴ *Tre Giuli*] *tre Giulj* (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁷⁵ *ruzza, e scherza*.] *ruzza e scherza* (Casti 1818, 15).
- ⁷⁶ King Frederick II of Prussia (1712-86, reigned 1740–86), also known as Frederick the Great. The sonnet mentions events and protagonists in the Seven Years' War (1756–63).
- ⁷⁷ Reference to the Battle of Hastenbeck (26 July 1757), when the French army, commanded by Louis Charles d'Estrées (1695-1771), invaded the Electorate of Hanover.
- ⁷⁸ Erroneous use of capitalization: *scioccamente* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁷⁹ Erroneous use of the lowercase: *Gebèr* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸⁰ Misspelling of *dì* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸¹ Misspelling of *sudò* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸² Misspelling of *mercurj* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸³ Misspelling of *Nè*, also present in Casti's text (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸⁴ Misspelling of *riuscì* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸⁵ *oh!*] *oh* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸⁶ Misspelling of *sì*, also present in Casti's text (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸⁷ Misspelling of *è* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸⁸ *lavori*] *lavori*, (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁸⁹ *Giuli Tre*] *Giulj tre* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁹⁰ *vaso*.] *vaso* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁹¹ Misspelling of *più* (Casti 1818, 24).
- ⁹² Arnold of Villanova (c. 1240-1311), Catalan physician, theologian and alchemist. While he adopted the sulphur-mercury theory of metallic constitution, he believed that gold and silver could be prepared by using mercury alone, as he maintained that mercury also contained sulphur.
- ⁹³ Ramon Llull (c. 1232- c. 1316), Catalan mystic, and poet. The reference is to the Pseudo-Llullian tradition of alchemical works associated with the poet's name. These works were published posthumously and are not believed to have been written by Llull, but by anonymous writers who appropriated his name.
- ⁹⁴ Geber (c. 14th century), name adopted by an anonymous Spanish alchemist probably because of the reputation of the renowned Arabian alchemist Jabir ibn Hayyan (died c. 815), whose name was Latinised as Geber. He generally accepted Jabir's alchemical theories and notably described the use of an elixir to turn base metals into gold.
- ⁹⁵ Biblical reference. David was a king of ancient Israel and Judah. He famously defeated the giant Goliath, armed only with a sling and stone (*1 Samuel* 17:1-51).

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⁹⁶ Biblical reference. *Psalm* 118 is a thanksgiving song for delivery from death and for military victory by an anonymous author and sometimes attributed to King David. The psalm contains some references to the speaker's enemies and God's help in defeating them.

⁹⁷ Occitan language (from the French *langue d'oc*), also known as Provençal, is a Romance language spoken in southern France, especially in the province of Languedoc.

⁹⁸ Misspelling of *si* (Casti 1818, 30).

⁹⁹ Misprint for *l'altro* (Casti 1818, 42).

¹⁰⁰ Misspelling of *Nè* (Casti 1818, 42).

¹⁰¹ *copri:] copri;* (Casti 1818, 42).

¹⁰² *d'importunità] d'importunità,* (Casti 1818, 42).

¹⁰³ Misprint for *incontro* (Casti 1817, 42).

¹⁰⁴ *Giuli Tre] Giulj tre* (Casti 1818, 42).

¹⁰⁵ *Nò] nò* (Casti 1818, 42).

¹⁰⁶ Misspelling of *inferia* (Casti 1818, 42).

¹⁰⁷ *vò:] vò,* (Casti 1818, 42).

¹⁰⁸ Reference to Achilles, mythological hero in Homer's epic poem *Illiad* (c. late 8th to early 7th century BCE). Achilles is explicitly mentioned by Casti in the original sonnet.

¹⁰⁹ Reference to Aeneas, hero in Virgil's *Aeneid* (c. 30 to 19 BCE) who played a key role in defending his city during the Trojan War. Aeneas is explicitly mentioned by Casti in the original sonnet.

¹¹⁰ Ilium, Latin name for Troy, ancient city in the northwestern part of Anatolia.

¹¹¹ Reference to Orlando, protagonist of the epic poem *Orlando furioso* (1516) by Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533).

¹¹² Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BCE), Roman writer, scholar, and politician. He is considered the greatest classical Roman orator.

¹¹³ In Roman mythology, Bacchus was the god of wine, equivalent to the Greek god Dionysus.

¹¹⁴ In Greek and Roman mythology, the thyrsus was the wand or staff used by Dionysus, and later by his Roman equivalent, Bacchus.

¹¹⁵ *it's*: regional and nonstandard variant form of *its*.

¹¹⁶ *meum* and *tuum* (Latin): mine and yours.

¹¹⁷ In Greek and Roman mythology, Apollo was the god son of Zeus and was commonly associated with the sun, poetry and prophecy.

ON THE SPIRIT OF MONARCHY.*

“Strip it of its externals, and what is it but a *jest*?”¹

*Charade*² on the word MAJESTY.

“As for politics, I think poets are *Tories*³ by nature, supposing them to be by nature poets. The love of an individual person or family, that has worn a crown for many successions, is an inclination greatly adapted to the fanciful tribe. On the other hand, mathematicians, abstract reasoners, of no manner of attachment to persons, at least to the visible part of them, but prodigiously devoted to the ideas of virtue, liberty, and so forth, are generally *Whigs*.⁴ It happens agreeably enough to this maxim, that the Whigs are friends to that wise, plodding, unpoetical people, the Dutch.”—*Shenstone’s Letters*, 1746.⁵

THE Spirit of Monarchy then is nothing but the craving in the human mind after the Sensible and the One. It is not so much a matter of state-necessity or policy, as a natural infirmity, a disease, a false appetite in the popular feeling, which must be gratified. Man is an individual animal with narrow faculties, but infinite desires, which he is anxious to concentrate in some one object within the grasp of his imagination, and where, if he cannot be all that he wishes himself, he may at least contemplate his own pride, vanity, and passions, displayed in their most extravagant dimensions in a being no bigger and no better than himself. Each individual would (were it in his power) be a king, a God: but as he cannot, the next best thing is to see this reflex image of his self-love, the darling passion of his breast,

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* Author: William Hazlitt / Transcribed and annotated by Fabio Liberto.

realized, embodied out of himself in the first object he can lay his hands on for the purpose. The slave admires the tyrant, because the last *is*, what the first *would be*. He surveys himself all over in the glass of royalty. The swelling, bloated self-importance of the one is the very counterpart and ultimate goal of the abject servility of the other. But both hate mankind for the same reason, because a respect for humanity is a diversion to their inordinate self-love, and the idea of the general good is a check to the gross intemperance of passion. The worthlessness of the object does not diminish but irritate the propensity to admire. It serves to pamper our imagination equally, and does not provoke our envy. All we want is to aggrandize our own vain-glory at second-hand; and the less of real superiority or excellence there is in the person we fix upon as our proxy in this dramatic exhibition, the more easily can we change places with him, and fancy ourselves as good as he. Nay, the descent favours the rise; and we heap our tribute of applause the higher, in proportion as it is a free gift. An idol is not the worse for being of coarse materials: a king should be a common-place man. Otherwise, he is superior in his own nature, and not dependent on our bounty or caprice. Man is a poetical animal, and delights in fiction. We like to have scope for the exercise of our mere will. We make kings of men, and Gods of stocks and stones: we are not jealous of the creatures of our own hands. We only want a peg or loop to hang our idle fancies on, a puppet to dress up, a lay-figure to paint from. It is “THING Ferdinand, and not KING Ferdinand,”⁶ as it was wisely and wittily observed.⁷ We ask only for the stage effect; we do not go behind the scenes, or it would go hard with many of our prejudices! We see the symbols of majesty, we enjoy

the pomp, we crouch before the power, we walk in the procession, and make part of the pageant, and we say in our secret hearts, there is nothing but accident that prevents us from being at the head of it. There is something in the mock-sublimity of thrones, wonderfully congenial to the human mind. Every man feels that he could sit there; every man feels that he could look big there; every man feels that he could bow there; every man feels that he could play the monarch there. The transition is so easy, and so delightful! The imagination keeps pace with royal state,

“And by the vision splendid
Is on its way attended.”⁸

The Madman in Hogarth⁹ who fancies himself a king, is not a solitary instance of this species of hallucination. Almost every true and loyal subject holds such a barren sceptre in his hand; and the meanest of the rabble, as he runs by the monarch's side, has wit enough to think—“There goes my *royal* self!” From the most absolute despot to the lowest slave there is but one step (no, not one) in point of real merit. As far as truth or reason is concerned, they might change situations to-morrow—nay, they constantly do so without the smallest loss or benefit to mankind! Tyranny, in a word, is a farce got up for the entertainment of poor human nature; and it might pass very well, if it did not so often turn into a tragedy.

We once heard a celebrated and elegant historian and a hearty Whig¹⁰ declare, he liked a king like George III.¹¹ better than such a one as Buonaparte;¹² because, in the former case, there was nothing to overawe the imagination but birth and situation; whereas he could not so easily brook the double superiority of the other, mental as well as adventitious. So does the spirit of independence

and the levelling pride of intellect join in with the servile rage of the vulgar! This is the advantage which an hereditary has over an elective monarchy: for there is no end of the dispute about precedence while merit is supposed to determine it, each man laying claim to this in his own person; so that there is no other way to set aside all controversy and heart-burnings, but by precluding moral and intellectual qualifications altogether, and referring the choice to accident, and giving the preference to a nonentity. "A good king," says Swift,¹³ "should be, in all other respects, a mere cypher."¹⁴

It has been remarked, as a peculiarity in modern criticism, that the courtly and loyal make a point of crying up Mr. Young,¹⁵ as an actor, and equally running down Mr. Kean;¹⁶ and it has been conjectured in consequence that Mr. Kean was a *radical*. Truly, he is not a radical politician; but what is as bad, he is a radical actor. He savours too much of the reality. He is not a mock-tragedian, an automaton player—he is something besides his paraphernalia. He has "that within which passes shew."¹⁷ There is not a particle of affinity between him and the patrons of the court-writers. Mr. Young, on the contrary, is the very thing—all assumption and strut and measured pomp, full of self-importance, void of truth and nature, the mask of the characters he takes, a pasteboard figure, a stiff piece of wax-work. He fills the throne of tragedy, not like an upstart or usurper, but as a matter of course, decked out in his plumes of feathers, and robes of state, stuck into a posture, and repeating certain words by rote. Mr. Kean has a heart in his bosom, beating with human passion (a thing for the great "to fear, not to delight in!")¹⁸ he is a living man, and not an artificial one. How should those, who look to the surface, and never probe deeper, endure him? He is the antithesis of a court-

actor. It is the object there to suppress and varnish over the feelings, not to give way to them. His *overt* manner must shock them, and be thought a breach of all decorum. They are in dread of his fiery humours, of coming near his Voltaic Battery¹⁹—they chuse rather to be roused gently from their self-complacent apathy by the application of Metallic Tractors.²⁰ They dare not trust their delicate nerves within the estuary of the passions, but would slumber out their torpid existence in a calm, a Dead Sea—the air of which extin²¹guishes life and motion!

Would it not be hard upon a little girl, who is busy in dressing up a favourite doll, to pull it in pieces before her face in order to shew her the bits of wood, the wool, and rags it is composed of? So it would be hard upon that great baby, the world, to take any of its idols to pieces, and shew that they are nothing but painted wood. Neither of them would thank you, but consider the offer as an insult. The little girl knows as well as you do that her doll is a cheat; but she shuts her eyes to it, for she finds her account in keeping up the deception. Her doll is her pretty little self. In its glazed eyes, its cherry cheeks, its flaxen locks, its finery and its baby-house, she has a fairy vision of her own future charms, her future triumphs, a thousand hearts led captive, and an establishment for life. Harmless illusion! that can create something out of nothing, can make that which is²² good for nothing in itself so fine in appearance, and clothe a shapeless piece of deal-board with the attributes of a divinity! But the great world has been doing little else but playing at *make-believe* all its life-time. For several thousand years its chief rage was to paint larger pieces of wood and smear them with gore and call them Gods and offer victims to them—slaughtered hecatombs, the fat of goats and oxen, or human sacrifices—shewing in this its love of shew, of cruelty, and

imposture; and woe to him who should “peep through the blanket of the dark to cry, *Hold, hold*.”²³—*Great is Diana of the Ephesians*,²⁴ was the answer in all ages. It was in vain to represent to them—“Your Gods have eyes but they see not, ears but they hear not, neither do they understand”²⁵—the more stupid, brutish, helpless, and contemptible they were, the more furious, bigotted, and implacable were their votaries in their behalf.* The more absurd the fiction, the louder was the noise made to hide it—the more mischievous its tendency, the more did it excite all the phrensy of the passions. Superstition nursed, with peculiar zeal, her ricketty, deformed, and preposterous offspring. She passed by the nobler races of animals even, to pay divine honours to the odious and unclean—she took toads and serpents, cats, rats, dogs, crocodiles, goats and monkeys, and hugged them to her bosom, and dandled them into deities, and set up altars to them, and drenched the earth with tears and blood in their defence; and those who did not believe in them were cursed, and were forbidden the use of bread, of fire, and water, and to worship them was piety, and their images were held sacred, and their race became Gods in perpetuity and by divine right. To touch them, was sacrilege: to kill them, death, even in your own defence. If they stung you, you must die: if they infested the land with their numbers and their pollutions, there was no remedy. The nuisance was intolerable, impassive, immortal. Fear, religious horror, disgust, hatred, heightened the flame of bigotry and intolerance. There was nothing so odious or contemptible but it found a sanctuary

* “Of whatsoe’er descent his Godhead be,
 Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,
 In his defence his servants are as bold
 As if he had been made of beaten gold.”—DRYDEN.²⁶

in the more odious and contemptible perversity of human nature. The barbarous Gods of antiquity reigned *in contempt of their worshippers!*²⁷

This game was carried on through all the first ages of the world, and is still kept up in many parts of it; and it is impossible to describe the wars, massacres, horrors, miseries and crimes, to which it gave colour, sanctity, and sway. The idea of a God, beneficent and just, the invisible maker of all things, was abhorrent to their gross, material notions. No, they must have Gods of their own making, that they could see and handle, that they knew to be nothing in themselves but senseless images, and these they daubed over with the gaudy emblems of their own pride and passions, and these they lauded to the skies, and grew fierce, obscene, frantic before them, as the representatives of their sordid ignorance and barbaric vices. TRUTH, GOOD, were idle names to them, without a meaning. They must have a lie, a palpable, pernicious lie, to pamper their crude, unhallowed conceptions with, and to exercise the untameable fierceness of their wills. The Jews were the only people of antiquity who were withheld from running headlong into this abomination; yet so strong was the propensity in them (from inherent frailty as well as neighbouring example) that it could only be curbed and kept back by the hands of Omnipotence.* At length, reason prevailed over imagination so far, that these brute idols and their altars were overturned: it was thought too much to set up stocks and stones, Golden Calves and Brazen Serpents,²⁸ as *bona fide* Gods and Goddesses, which men were to fall down and worship at their peril—

* They *would* have a king in spite of the devil. The image-worship of the Papists is a batch of the same leaven. The apishness of man's nature would not let even the Christian Religion escape.

and Pope²⁹ long after summed up the merits of the whole mythologic tribe in a handsome distich—

“Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust.”³⁰

It was thought a bold stride to divert the course of our imagination, the overflowings of our enthusiasm, our love of the mighty and the marvellous, from the dead to the living *subject*, and there we stick. We have got living idols, instead of dead ones; and we fancy that they are real, and put faith in them accordingly. Oh, Reason! when will thy long minority expire? It is not now the fashion to make Gods of wood and stone and brass, but we make kings of common men, and are proud of our own handy-work. We take a child from his birth, and we agree, when he grows up to be a man, to heap the highest honours of the state upon him, and to pay the most devoted homage to his will. Is there any thing in the person, “any mark, any likelihood,”³¹ to warrant this sovereign awe and dread? No: he may be little better than an idiot, little short of a madman, and yet he is no less qualified for king.* If he can contrive to pass the

* “In fact, the argument drawn from the supposed incapacity of the people against a representative Government, comes with the worst grace in the world from the patrons and admirers of hereditary government. Surely, if government were a thing requiring the utmost stretch of genius, wisdom, and virtue to carry it on, the office of King would never even have been dreamt of as hereditary, any more than that of poet, painter, or philosopher. It is easy here “for the Son to tread in the Sire’s steady steps.” It requires nothing but the will to do it. Extraordinary talents are not once looked for. Nay, a person, who would never have risen by natural abilities to the situation of churchwarden or parish beadle, succeeds by unquestionable right to the possession of a throne, and wields the energies of an empire, or decides the fate of the world with the smallest possible share of human understanding. The

College of Physicians,³² the Heralds' College³³ dub him divine. Can we make any given individual taller or stronger or wiser than other men, or different in any respect from what nature intended him to be? No; but we can make a king of him. We cannot add a cubit to the stature, or instil a virtue into the minds of monarchs—but we can put a sceptre into their hands, a crown upon their heads, we can set them on an eminence, we can surround them with circumstance, we can aggrandise them with power, we can pamper their appetites, we can pander to their wills. We can do every thing to exalt them in external rank and station—nothing to lift them one step higher in the scale of moral or intellectual excellence. Education does not give capacity or temper; and the education of kings is not especially directed to useful knowledge or liberal sentiment. What then is the state of the case? The highest respect of the community and of every individual in it is paid and is due of right there, where perhaps not an idea can take root, or a single virtue be engrafted. Is not this to erect a standard of esteem directly opposite to that of mind and morals? The lawful monarch may be the best or the worst man in his dominions, he may be the wisest or the weakest, the wittiest or the stupidest: still he is equally entitled to our homage as king, for it is the place and power we bow to, and not the man. He may be a sublimation of all the vices and diseases of the human heart; yet we are not to say so, we dare not even think so. “Fear

line of distinction which separates the regal purple from the slabbering-bib is sometimes fine indeed; as we see in the case of the two Ferdinands. Any one above the rank of an idiot is supposed capable of exercising the highest functions of royal state. Yet these are the persons who talk of the people as a swinish multitude, and taunt them with their want of refinement and philosophy.”³⁴—*Yellow Dwarf*, p. 84.³⁵

God, and honour the King,”³⁶ is equally a maxim at all times and seasons. The personal character of the king has nothing to do with the question. Thus the extrinsic is set up over the intrinsic by authority: wealth and interest lend their countenance to gilded vice and infamy on principle, and outward shew and advantages become the symbols and the standard of respect in despite of useful qualities or well-directed efforts through all ranks and gradations of society. “From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness left.”³⁷ The whole style of moral thinking, feeling, acting, is in a false tone—is hollow, spurious, meretricious. Virtue, says Montesquieu,³⁸ is the principle of republics; honour of a monarchy.³⁹ But it is “honour dishonourable, sin-bred”⁴⁰—it is the honour of trucking a principle for a place, of exchanging our honest convictions for a ribbon or a garter. The business of life is a scramble for unmerited precedence. Is not the highest respect entailed, the highest station filled without any possible proofs or pretensions to public spirit or public principle? Shall not the next places to it be secured by the sacrifice of them? It is the order of the day, the understood etiquette of courts and kingdoms. For the servants of the crown to presume on merit, when the crown itself is held as an heir-loom by prescription, is a kind of *lèse majesté*,⁴¹ an indirect attainder of the title to the succession. Are not all eyes turned to the sun of court-favour? Who would not then reflect its smile by the performance of any acts which can avail in the eye of the great, and by the surrender of any virtue, which attracts neither notice nor applause? The stream of corruption begins at the fountain-head of court-influence.⁴² The sympathy of mankind is that on which all strong feeling and opinion floats; and this sets in full in every absolute monarchy to the side of tinsel shew and iron-handed power, in contempt and defiance of right

and wrong. The right and the wrong are of little consequence, compared to the *in* and the *out*. The distinction between Whig and Tory is merely nominal: neither have their country one bit at heart. Phaw! we had forgot—Our British monarchy is a mixed, and the only perfect form of government; and therefore what is here said cannot properly apply to it. But MIGHT BEFORE RIGHT is the motto blazoned on the front of unimpaired and undivided Sovereignty!—

A court is the centre of fashion; and no less so, for being the sink of luxury and vice—

—“Of outward shew
Elaborate, of inward less exact.”⁴³

The goods of fortune, the baits of power, the indulgences of vanity, may be accumulated without end, and the taste for them increases as it is gratified: the love of virtue, the pursuit of truth, grow stale and dull in the dissipation of a court. Virtue is thought crabbed and morose, knowledge pedantic, while every sense is pampered, and every folly tolerated. Every thing tends naturally to personal aggrandisement and unrestrained self-will. It is easier for monarchs as well as other men “to tread the primrose path of dalliance” than “to scale the steep and thorny road to heaven.”⁴⁴ The vices, when they have leave from power and authority, go greater lengths than the virtues; example justifies almost every excess, and “nice customs curtesy to great kings.”⁴⁵ What chance is there that monarchs should not yield to the temptations of gallantry there, where youth and beauty are as wax? What female heart can indeed withstand the attractions of a throne—the smile that melts all hearts, the air that awes rebellion, the frown that kings dread, the hand that scatters fairy wealth, that bestows titles, places, honour, power, the breast on which the star glitters, the head circled with a

diadem, whose dress dazzles with its richness and its taste, who has nations at his command, senates at his controul, “in form and motion so express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a God; the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!”⁴⁶ The power of resistance is so much the less, where fashion extends impunity to the frail offender, and screens the loss of character.

“Vice is undone, if she forgets her birth,
And stoops from angels to the dregs of earth;
But ’tis the fall degrades her to a whore:
Let greatness own her, and she’s mean no more.
Her birth, her beauty, crowds and courts confess,
Chaste matrons praise her, and grave bishops bless.
In golden chains the willing world she draws,
And hers the Gospel is, and hers the laws.”⁴⁷

* A lady of quality abroad, in allusion to the gallantries of the reigning Prince, being told, “I suppose it will be your turn next?” said, “No, I hope not; for you know it is impossible to refuse!” What a satire on the court and fashionables! If this be true, female virtue in the blaze of royalty is no more than the moth in the candle, or ice in the sun’s ray. What will the great themselves say to it, in whom at this rate,

——“the same luck holds,
They all are subjects, courtiers, and cuckolds!”⁴⁸

Out upon it! We’ll not believe it. Alas! poor virtue, what is to become of the very idea of it, if we are to be told that every man within the precincts of a palace is an *hypothetical* cuckold, or holds his wife’s virtue in trust for the Prince? We entertain no doubt that many ladies of quality have resisted the importunities of a throne, and that many more would do so in private life, if they had the desired opportunity: nay, we have been assured by several that a king would no more be able to prevail with them than any other man! If however there is any foundation for the above insinuation, it throws no small light on the Spirit of Monarchy, which by the supposition implies in it the *virtual* surrender of the whole sex at discretion; and at the same time accounts perhaps for the indifference shewn by some monarchs in availing themselves of so mechanical a privilege.

The air of a court is not assuredly that which is most favourable to the practice of self-denial and strict morality. We increase the temptations of wealth, of power, and pleasure a thousand-fold, while we can give no additional force to the antagonist principles of reason, disinterested integrity and goodness of heart. Is it to be wondered at that courts and palaces have produced so many monsters of avarice, cruelty, and lust? The adept in voluptuousness is not likely to be a proportionable proficient in humanity. To feed on plate or be clothed in purple, is not to feel for the hungry and the naked. He who has the greatest power put into his hands, will only become more impatient of any restraint in the use of it. To have the welfare and the lives of millions placed at our disposal, is a sort of warrant, a challenge to squander them without mercy. An arbitrary monarch set over the heads of his fellows does not identify himself with them, or learn to comprehend their rights or sympathise with their interests, but looks down upon them as of a different species from himself, as insects crawling on the face of the earth, that he may trample on at his pleasure, or if he spares them, it is an act of royal grace—he is besotted with power, blinded with prerogative, an alien to his nature, a traitor to his trust, and instead of being the organ of public feeling and public opinion, is an excrescence and an anomaly in the state, a bloated mass of morbid humours and proud flesh! A constitutional king, on the other hand, is a servant of the public, a representative of the people's wants and wishes, dispensing justice and mercy according to law. Such a monarch is the King of England! Such was his late,⁴⁹ and such is his present Majesty George the IVth.⁵⁰—

Let us take the Spirit of Monarchy in its highest state of exaltation, in the moment of its proudest triumph—a Coronation-day.⁵¹ We now see it in our mind's eye; the prepa-

ration of weeks—the expectation of months—the seats, the privileged places, are occupied in the obscurity of night, and in silence—the day dawns slowly, big with the hope of Cæsar⁵² and of Rome—the golden censers are set in order, the tables groan with splendour and with luxury—within the inner space the rows of peeresses are set, and revealed to the eye decked out in ostrich feathers and pearls, like beds of lilies sparkling with a thousand dew-drops—the marshals and the heralds are in motion—the full organ, majestic, peals forth the Coronation Anthem—every thing is ready—and all at once the Majesty of kingdoms bursts upon the astonished sight—his person is swelled out with all the gorgeousness of dress, and swathed in bales of silk and golden tissues—the bow with which he greets the assembled multitude, and the representatives of foreign kings, is the climax of conscious dignity, bending gracefully on its own bosom, and instantly thrown back into the sightless air, as if asking no recognition in return—the oath of mutual fealty between him and his people is taken—the fairest flowers of female beauty precede the Sovereign, scattering roses; the sons of princes page his heels, holding up the robes of crimson and ermine—he staggers and reels under the weight of royal pomp, and of a nation's eyes; and thus the pageant is launched into the open day, dazzling the sun, whose beams seem beaten back by the sun of royalty—there were the warrior, the statesman, and the mitred head—there was Prince Leopold,⁵³ like a panther in its dark glossy pride, and Castle-reagh,⁵⁴ clad in triumphant smiles and snowy satin, unstained with his own blood⁵⁵—the loud trumpet brays, the cannon roars, the spires are mad with music, the stones in the street are startled at the presence of a king:—the crowd press on, the metropolis heaves like a sea in restless motion, the air is thick with loyalty's quick pants in its monarch's arms

—all eyes drink up the sight, all tongues reverberate the sound—

“A present deity they shout around,
A present deity the vaulted roofs rebound!”⁵⁶

What does it all amount to? A shew—a theatrical spectacle! What does it prove? That a king is crowned, that a king is dead! What is the moral to be drawn from it, that is likely to sink into the heart of a nation? That greatness consists in finery, and that supreme merit is the dower of birth and fortune! It is a form, a ceremony to which each successor to the throne is entitled in his turn as a matter of right. Does it depend on the inheritance of virtue, on the acquisition of knowledge in the new monarch, whether he shall be thus exalted in the eyes of the people? No:—to say so is not only an offence in manners, but a violation of the laws. The king reigns in contempt of any such pragmatical distinctions. They are set aside, proscribed, treasonable, as it relates to the august person of the monarch; what is likely to become of them in the minds of the people? A Coronation overlays and drowns all such considerations for a generation to come, and so far it serves its purpose well. It debauches the understandings of the people, and makes them the slaves of sense and show. It laughs to scorn and tramples upon every other claim to distinction or respect. Is the chief person in the pageant a tyrant? It does not lessen, but aggrandise him to the imagination. Is he the king of a free people? We make up in love and loyalty what we want in fear. Is he young? He borrows understanding and experience from the learning and tried wisdom of councils and parliaments. Is he old? He leans upon the youth and beauty that attend his triumph. Is he weak? Armies support him with their myriads. Is he

diseased? What is health to a staff of physicians? Does he die? The truth is out, and he is then—nothing!

There is a cant among court-sycophants of calling all those who are opposed to them, “the *rabble*,” “*fellows*,” “*miscreants*,” &c. This shews the grossness of their ideas of all true merit, and the false standard of rank and power by which they measure every thing; like footmen, who suppose their masters must be gentlemen, and that the rest of the world are low people. Whatever is opposed to power, they think despicable; whatever suffers oppression, they think deserves it. They are ever ready to side with the strong, to insult and trample on the weak. This is with us a pitiful fashion of thinking. They are not of the mind of Pope, who was so full of the opposite conviction, that he has even written a bad couplet to express it:—

“Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow:
The rest is all but leather and prunella.”⁵⁷

Those lines in Cowper⁵⁸ also must sound very puerile or old-fashioned to courtly ears:—

“The only amaranthine flower on earth
Is virtue; the only lasting treasure, truth.”⁵⁹

To this sentiment, however, we subscribe our hearts and hands. There is nothing truly liberal but that which postpones its own claims to those of propriety—or great, but that which looks out of itself to others. All power is but an unabated nuisance, a barbarous assumption, an aggravated injustice, that is not directed to the common good: all grandeur that has not something corresponding to it in personal merit and heroic acts, is a deliberate burlesque, and an insult on common sense and human nature. That which is true, the understanding ratifies: that which is good, the heart

owns: all other claims are spurious, vitiated, mischievous, false—fit only for those who are sunk below contempt, or raised above opinion. We hold in scorn all *right-lined* pretensions but those of rectitude. If there is offence in this, we are ready to abide by it. If there is shame, we take it to ourselves: and we hope and hold that the time will come, when all other idols but those which represent pure truth and real good, will be looked upon with the same feelings of pity and wonder that we now look back to the images of Thor and Woden!⁶⁰

Really, that men born to a throne (limited or unlimited) should employ the brief span of their existence here in doing all the mischief in their power, in levying cruel wars and undermining the liberties of the world, to prove to themselves and others that their pride and passions are of more consequence than the welfare of mankind at large, would seem a little astonishing, but that the fact is so. It is not our business to preach lectures to monarchs, but if we were at all disposed to attempt the ungracious task, we should do it in the words of an author who often addressed the ear of monarchs.

“A man may read a sermon,” says Jeremy Taylor,⁶¹ “the best and most passionate that ever man preached, if he shall but enter into the sepulchres of kings. In the same Escorial⁶² where the Spanish princes live in greatness and power, and decree war or peace, they have wisely placed a cemetery where their ashes and their glory shall sleep till time shall be no more: and where *our* kings have been crowned, their ancestors lie interred, and they must walk over their grand-sire’s head to take his crown. There is an acre sown with royal seed, the copy of the greatest change from rich to naked, from ceiled roofs to arched coffins, from living like Gods to die like men. There is enough to cool the flames

of lust, to abate the height of pride, to appease the itch of covetous desires, to sully and dash out the dissembling colours of a lustful, artificial, and imaginary beauty. There the warlike and the peaceful, the fortunate and the miserable, the beloved and the despised princes mingle their dust, and pay down their symbol of mortality, and tell all the world, that when we die our ashes shall be equal to kings, and our accounts shall be easier, and our pains for our crimes shall be less. To my apprehension, it is a sad record which is left by Athenæus⁶³ concerning Ninus,⁶⁴ the great Assyrian monarch, whose life and death is summed up in these words; “Ninus, the Assyrian, had an ocean of gold, and other riches more than the sand in the Caspian sea; he never saw the stars, and perhaps he never desired it; he never stirred up the holy fire among the Magi; nor touched his God with the sacred rod, according to the laws; he never offered sacrifice, nor worshipped the Deity, nor administered justice, nor spake to the people, nor numbered them; but he was most valiant to eat and drink, and having mingled his wines, he threw the rest upon the stones. This man is dead: behold his sepulchre, and now hear where Ninus is. *Sometime I was Ninus, and drew the breath of a living man, but now am nothing but clay. I have nothing but what I did eat, and what I served to myself in lust is all my portion: the wealth with which I was blest, my enemies meeting together shall carry away, as the mad Thyades carry a raw goat. I am gone to Hell; and when I went thither, I carried neither gold nor horse, nor a silver chariot. I that wore a mitre, am now a little heap of dust!*”⁶⁵

—TAYLOR’S HOLY LIVING AND DYING.⁶⁶

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ “Strip it ... a jest?": probably, a recollection of Edmund Burke's (1729/30-97) remark on the word 'majesty' during a conversation with James Beattie (1735-1803), quoted in Charles McCormick's *Memoirs of the Right and Honourable Edmund Burke* (1797): "Ah! Doctor,' said he, 'strip Majesty of its exteriors,' [the first and the last letters] 'and it becomes a jest.'" (McCormick 1797, 33; see also Gilmartin 2015, 274).

² Charade, enigmatic description or riddle which can be solved by combining or rearranging the different syllables in a word or phrase.

³ Tories, members of one of the two principal political factions in Britain, succeeded by the Conservative Party after the Reform Act of 1832. They supported the monarchy, landed gentry, and the Church of England.

⁴ Whigs, members of one of the two principal political factions in Britain, succeeded by the Liberal Party in the 1860s. They advocated social and economic reform, the reduction of the power of the monarchy, and the right to religious dissent.

⁵ William Shenstone (1714-63), writer, collector and editor. During his studies at Pembroke College, Oxford, he began his friendship with novelist Richard Graves (1715-1804). The letter "To Richard Graves" is dated April 6, 1746 (Shenstone 1939, 78).

⁶ The reference is to Ferdinand VII of Spain (1784-1833). He reigned briefly (March-May 1808) before Napoleon forced him to abdicate his throne and confined him in the castle of Valençay, France, from 1808 to 1813, during the Peninsular War. Uprisings all over Spain followed Joseph Bonaparte's accession to the throne of Spain. Ferdinand was later restored in 1814 and reigned until his death in 1833.

⁷ The joke was Leigh Hunt's. Hazlitt used the same joke in his essay "Definition of Wit" (1829), which Hunt annotated in his copy of Hazlitt's *Literary Remains* (1836): "I beg leave to say (and to be proud of saying, seeing it thus spoken of by such a man) that this joke was mine." (Hazlitt 1967, 20:440).

⁸ William Wordsworth, "Ode: Imitations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" (1804), ll. 73-74.

⁹ William Hogarth (1697-1764), painter and engraver. In Plate 8 of his series of paintings *A Rake's Progress* (1732-34), Hogarth portrays a hospital for lunatics. Hazlitt is referring to the inmate in cell 55, a naked man wearing only a crown and urinating while watching himself in the mirror.

¹⁰ The allusion is to the historian, poet and patron of the arts William Roscoe (1753-1831). Hazlitt, who was a regular presence at Roscoe's soirées at his home in Liverpool, recalls the writer's opinion on George III and Buonaparte in his *Conversations of James Northcote, Esq., R.A.* (1830), "Conversation the Ninth" (Hazlitt 1967, 11:241).

¹¹ George III (1738-1820, reigned 1760-1820), king of Great Britain and Ireland, known for his long and turbulent reign. From 1788, he suffered recurrent bouts of mental illness, until he became unfit to rule in November 1810. In 1811 his son George became Prince Regent (1811-1820).

¹² Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), French general and statesman who played a pivotal role in the French Revolution. He served as first consul of France (1799-1804) and later became the first emperor of France (1804-14).

¹³ Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), Anglo-Irish writer, clergyman and one of the greatest satirists of the early eighteenth century. His masterpiece, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), is an example of his satirical style as well as an important contribution for the emergence of the novel as a literary genre. Other satirical works by Swift include *A Tale of a Tub* (1704) and *A Modest Proposal* (1729), which address the hypocrisies of religion and political tyranny.

¹⁴ Untraced quotation. In "The Lex Talionis Principle" (1814), Hazlitt also attributes a similar opinion to Swift: "It was remarked by Swift that a perfect king should be a figure stuffed with straw." (Hazlitt 1967, 19:124).

¹⁵ Charles Mayne Young (1777-1856), actor. After playing in Liverpool, Glasgow and Bath, he made his debut in London as Hamlet in June 1807 at the Haymarket Theatre. In *A View of the English Stage* (1818), Hazlitt expresses some serious reservations on Young's acting, especially in Shakespearean roles, which he qualifies as "indescribably bad" (Hazlitt 1818, 64).

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¹⁶ Edmund Kean (1787-1833), actor. He debuted on the London stage in 1814 playing Shylock at Drury Lane, receiving a “general, loud, and uninterrupted” applause, according to Hazlitt’s famous account of the performance [*Morning Chronicle*, January 27, 1814, republished in *A View of the English Stage* (1818), (Hazlitt 1818, 2). Kean was one of the leading tragic actors of the day, renowned for his Shakespearean roles, which included Othello, Hamlet, Macbeth, Richard III, and Iago. Hazlitt was one of the few reviewers who immediately recognised Kean’s radical and revolutionary contribution to nineteenth-century acting practices.

¹⁷ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I.ii.85. All references from Shakespeare are from the Arden Edition, Third Series.

¹⁸ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, I.ii.71.

¹⁹ The Voltaic Pile was the first electric battery. It was developed in 1799 by the Italian physicist Alessandro Volta (1745-1827), and it consisted of a succession of alternating discs of zinc and copper separated by round pieces of cloth soaked in either acidulated or saline water.

²⁰ Metallic Tractors, medical device invented in 1795 by the American physician Elisha Perkins (1741-99), consisting of two metallic rods designed to be passed or rubbed over the aching parts of the body. Perkins claimed the device could treat inflammatory and rheumatic pain. It became extremely popular in Britain, being frequently advertised in British magazines and newspapers. In 1801, the device and its inventor were satirised in a caricature by James Gillray.

²¹ Misprint: hyphen is not present in the copy-text.

²² Misprint for *which is*.

²³ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I.v.53-4.

²⁴ Biblical reference. *Acts* 19:28.

²⁵ Biblical reference. *Matthew* 13:13.

²⁶ John Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681), ll. 100-3.

²⁷ Possible allusion to Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790): “he holds his crown in contempt of the choice of the Revolution Society, who have not a single vote for a king amongst them” (Burke 2014, 16). See also Howe (Hazlitt 1967, 19:363) and Mee and Grande (Hazlitt 2021, 375).

²⁸ Biblical reference. The golden calf and the brazen serpent are used in the Bible (*Exodus* 32, and *1 Kings* 12:25-33; *Numbers* 21:8-9) as symbols of the distinction between idolatry and true worship.

²⁹ Alexander Pope (1688-1744), poet, satirist, and critic of the English Augustan period. His most renowned works include the mock-heroic poems *The Rape of the Lock* (1712, 1714) and *The Dunciad* (1728-43), the didactic poem in heroic couplets *An Essay on Criticism* (1711), and the philosophical essay *An Essay on Man* (1733-34).

³⁰ Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*, Epistle III, ll. 257-8.

³¹ Adapted quotation, likely from memory, from Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 1*, III.ii.45: “A fellow of no mark nor likelihood”.

³² The Royal College of Physician of London, established in 1518.

³³ Heralds’ College, or College of Arms, one of the oldest heraldic institutions in Europe, originally established in 1484. It controls the use of coats of arms in England and Wales.

³⁴ Hazlitt quotes his own essay “What is the People?”, originally published in the *Champion*, October 1817, and reprinted in the *Yellow Dwarf*, March 1818 (Hazlitt 1967, 7:274-75).

³⁵ The *Yellow Dwarf* was a “Weekly Miscellany” founded by John Hunt (1775-1848), which ran for 21 issues, from January to March 1818.

³⁶ Biblical reference. *1 Peter* 2:17.

³⁷ Biblical reference. *Isaiah* 1:6.

³⁸ Montesquieu (1689-1755), French political philosopher. His best-known works include the satirical Parisian portrait *Lettres persanes* (1721; *Persian Letters*, 1722), and several studies in political theory. His *De l’esprit des loix* (1748; *The Spirit of the Law*, 1748) is one of the most celebrated treatises in the history of political thought.

³⁹ See Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Law*, pt. I, chap. 3-7.

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- ⁴⁰ John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1688), IV.314-15.
- ⁴¹ Misspelling of *lèse-majesté*.
- ⁴² A similar critique is also present in Hazlitt's article "On Court-Influence", published in the first issue of *The Yellow Dwarf* (Jan. 3, 1818).
- ⁴³ John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, IV.538-39.
- ⁴⁴ "to tread ... to heaven": adapted quotations, likely from memory, from Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I.iii.46-50: "But, good my brother, | Do not as some ungracious pastors do | Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven | Whiles, a puffed and reckless libertine, | Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads".
- ⁴⁵ William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, V.ii.266. Hazlitt discusses about his habit to quote Shakespeare from memory and the trouble he had recalling this specific quotation in his essay "On Application to Study", originally published in *The New Monthly Magazine*, December 1823, and republished in *The Plain Speaker* (1826) (Hazlitt 1967, 12:55-66): "I was at a loss the other day for the line in Henry V. "Nice customs curtesy to great kings." I could not recollect the word *nice*: I tried a number of others, such as *old*, *grave*, &c.—they would none of them do, but seemed all heavy, lumbering, or from the purpose: the word *nice*, on the contrary, appeared to drop into its place, and be ready to assist in paying the reverence required." (Hazlitt 1967, 12:58).
- ⁴⁶ Adapted quotation, possibly from memory, from Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II.ii.270-273: "in form | and moving; how express and admirable in action; how | like an angel in apprehension; how like a god; the | beauty of the world; the paragon of animals."
- ⁴⁷ Alexander Pope, *Epilogue to the Satires* (1738), Dialogue I, ll. 141-48.
- ⁴⁸ Adapted quotation from George Gordon Byron's *Don Juan* (1819-24), II.1647-48: "the same luck holds, | They all were heroes, conquerors, and cuckolds."
- ⁴⁹ George III (1738-1820, reigned 1760-1820).
- ⁵⁰ George IV (1762-1830, reigned 1820-30), king of Great Britain and Ireland. He served as prince regent (1811-20) owing to his father's mental illness. In 1795, as Prince of Wales, he married his cousin, Caroline of Brunswick (1768-1821) to secure a successor to the throne and to be released from debt. After the birth of their only child, Charlotte (1796-1817), Caroline was rejected by her husband and excluded from court.
- ⁵¹ The coronation of George IV (19 July 1821) was one of the most expensive, lavish and extravagant coronation ceremonies in British history, and is fittingly described by Hazlitt as a "theatrical spectacle" (p. 241). The celebrations were spoiled by the return of George's estranged wife, Caroline, to England. She was determined to claim her rights as queen consort, but her attempts to attend the coronation ceremony at Westminster Abbey were unsuccessful. She died shortly after, on 7 August 1821.
- ⁵² Julius Caesar (100-44 BCE), Roman statesman, general, and dictator. He had a key role in the transformation of Rome from a republic to an autocratic empire.
- ⁵³ Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg (1790-1865), later king of the Belgians (1831-65). In 1816 he married Princess Charlotte (1796-1817) – the only child of the future George IV and Caroline of Brunswick – who died giving birth to a stillborn son in 1817. After Charlotte's death, Leopold decided to stay in England and was granted an annual allowance of £50,000. He received the sum until he became King of Belgium in 1831.
- ⁵⁴ Viscount Robert Stewart Castlereagh (1769-1822), British foreign secretary from 1812 to 1822. He led the Grand Alliance against Napoleon and participated in the Congress of Vienna.
- ⁵⁵ Castlereagh was renowned for his repressive policies. His involvement in the sanguinary suppression of the rebellion of 1798 in Ireland earned him the nickname of "Bloody Castlereagh". Suspected of complicity also in the Peterloo Massacre of 1819, Castlereagh is directly invoked in "The Mask of Anarchy" (1819), where P.B. Shelley's personification of Murder wears "a mask like Castlereagh" (l. 6).
- ⁵⁶ John Dryden, "Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music" (1697), ll. 35-6.
- ⁵⁷ Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*, Epistle IV, ll. 203-04.

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⁵⁸ William Cowper (1731-1800), English poet and translator of Homer's *Illiad* and *Odyssey* into English blank verse. His 6000-line poem *The Task* (1785) is a long reflection on different topics – from the blessings of nature to British imperialism – condemning aristocratic immorality and slavery.

⁵⁹ William Cowper, *The Task*, III.268-69.

⁶⁰ Thor and Woden (Old English for Odin) are two important deities in Norse mythology. Thor is the god of sky and thunder, while Odin (who is considered Thor's father in some traditions) is the high god, worshipped as the deity of creation, wisdom, and war.

⁶¹ Jeremy Taylor (*bap.* 1613 - *d.* 1667), writer, Anglican clergyman, and theologian. He wrote a series of devotional handbooks, including *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* (1650) and *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying* (1651).

⁶² El Escorial, monastery-palace built near Madrid by Philip II of Spain (reigned 1556-98). Philip wanted the monastery to be a place where all Spanish sovereigns could be buried.

⁶³ Athenaeus of Naucratis (flourished 200 CE) was a Greek grammarian and writer.

⁶⁴ Ninus, in Greek mythology, king of Assyria in the 3rd century BCE, and the reputed builder of Nineveh. He is mentioned in book 12 of Athenaeus's *Deipnosophistae* (c. 200 CE).

⁶⁵ Athenaeus of Naucratis, *Deipnosophistae*, bk. 12.

⁶⁶ Jeremy Taylor, *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying* (1651), chap. 1, sect. II.

THE DOGS.*

TO THE ABUSERS OF THE LIBERAL.

“GENTLEMEN,”

THIS little poem is dedicated to you. It is not the wish of the Liberal to write satire and personal politics; but if you insist upon our earning a right to be heard with the sword, it must be so. Some persons, it seems, must either do this, or consent to be trampled into silence, let them be as forbearing as they may. That we can forbear, we know well, and so do you:—that we can make you cry out again with non-forbearance, we know also:—but we fight, like the Greeks and Spaniards, to obtain the right and the tranquillity of speech, and not to trample on every body in turn. The satire in the first number of the Liberal was produced by those who attacked us before-hand:—the satire in the second is the result of the attacks on the first. It will be for yourselves to judge how soon we are to leave off this boy’s-play and cutting of knuckles. The moment we can turn our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning-hooks, we shall be happy to cultivate those calmer fields of knowledge, which (with your leave be it spoken) you are a set of prodigious fools for not knowing how to look to at once.

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Franca Dellarosa.

THE DOGS.

“I at this time got a post, being for fatigue, with other four. We were sent to break biscuit, and make a mess for Lord Wellington’s¹ Hounds. I was very hungry, and thought it a good job at the time; as we got our own fill, while we broke the biscuit—a thing I had not got for some days. When thus engaged, the Prodigal Son² was never once out of my mind; and I sighed, as I fed the Dogs, over my humble situation and my ruined hopes.”—*Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regt. during the War in Spain.*³

1.

I SING a matter of some sixty dogs,
That dined in the Peninsula⁴ on biscuit.
Under the old regime the French eat frogs;
Under the new some Englishmen would frisk it
If they had any thing besides their fogs.
I’d thank Apollo⁵ therefore to touch his kit,
While I strike up a dance, that I’ve a notion
Will set the whole of Puppydom in motion.

2.

Attend then to me, puppies of all sorts,
All by whom hangs a tale; including you,
The blacker kind, who practise in the courts,
And from the back of whose strange curls hang two:⁶
And you, of whom I hear such bad reports
In these great times, ye poor inferior crew,
Ye Men—do you too listen to my song:
I mean to shew you that your claims are wrong.

3.

And you, red-coated dogs,⁷ not commonly
 So call'd, for ye are men,—but ye alone,
 Who only when the drum sounds fidget ye,
 And rise like men; and soon as it is done,
 Fall to the earth like proper puppies, *quæ*
Ventri obedientia sunt,⁸ and prone,
 As Sallust⁹ has it,—hear what your Bard says,
 And then (I ask no better) go your ways.

4.

And thou, thou other lucky dog, and diner,
 Who from the Frenchman's biscuit-guiding hand
 Munch'd out side faces of Voltaire,¹⁰ none finer,
 Look from the dog-star down, that rules thy land!
 'Twas thine to eat, no king's bitch *embonpoint-er*,¹¹
 When good-old-times'-men's legs could hardly stand:
 And then thou bit'st, as some would say, for snacks,
 Men out of countenance behind their backs! (1)

5.

Nor thou, great Duke of Wellington, disdain
 To hear about the curs, for they are thine:
 Nay, pardon my poor words, my common strain,
 Disdain thou can'st not, though the strain is mine:
 The subject will excuse me for my brain:
 To write's but human, but of dogs divine.
 I shamefully forgot, great Sir, that when
 Dogs are to be considered, what are men?

6.

Many a jolly dog has been renown'd,
 Especially for eating people's dinners:
 E'en men have merit when like them they're found (2)
 To hold well out, and make their masters winners:
 But all the dogs on earth, cur, whelp, and hound,
 To these I speak of, have but been beginners.
 Even the pack recorded by Herodotus¹³
 Knuckles before them; I declare to God it does.

7.

Herodotus says only that there were
 Four villages allotted for their dogs-meat; (3)
 A handsome pension, I allow: but here
 Warriors stand by, wanting, like proper rogues, meat,
 Bread being even for a few too dear,
 While the Duke's hounds to their respective progs meet.
 Warriors, mind—hollow squares—without whom, marry! an
 Arbiter I could name had now been carrion. (4)

8.

Yes, "Heav'n be prais'd! Thanks to our lucky stars!
 Thanks to our wounds!" the five fatigued men said,
 "This day, the happiest one of all our wars,
 This day, this glorious day, we dine on bread!"
 For why? "For why? look at these glorious scars,
 This one, and this, and this upon my head;
 To day's our turn, by reason of these wounds,
 To break up biscuit for the General's hounds."

9.

“Good God!” says one, “I fancy the bread here!
 I think it’s one o’clock—I think it’s two—
 I think I see my company appear—
 Ah! Jowler,¹⁴ boy—and Towler, how dy’e do?—
 And then the biscuit comes—excuse this tear,
 But I’m to break it—oh, if you but knew—
 But never mind—I know, and that’s enough
 To make me think no biscuit bad or tough.

10.

“A word, Sir, in your ear—The other day,
 I longed to eat a piece of the Duke’s horse.
 Another time, beside a ditch, there lay
 Something,—I hate to think of it—but worse:
 All said,—but never mind what people say—
 The man who eat of it, felt no remorse. (5)
 Twasn’t, he said, like biscuit; and ’twas true:
 But that was for the dogs—the happy few.

11.

“We are but human beings,—common men;
They are uncommon puppies, real riches;
 We do but fight, and fight, and fight again;
 They sometimes take surprising leaps o’er ditches:
 We only are of use to the Duke, when
 Unoccupied with his delightful bitches:
 They are his ornaments, his dogs, his *dulce*,¹⁵
 More fit to pat than our poor linsey-woolsey.¹⁶

12¹⁷

“Again, we only sav’d his officers;
 They sometimes got them taken by the French;
 Our names were always in despatches; theirs
 Were modest, and kept back, like any wench;
 In short, we had the impudence, the bears!
 (For which our necks I own deserve a wrench)
 To save the Duke from Old Mortality:¹⁸
 They, blessed creatures, saved him from ennui.¹⁹

13.

“Accordingly ’twas just that we should fight,
 Hack, hew, stick, kick, be kick’d, stuck, hack’d and hew’d,
 Drown’d also, lose our shoulder-blades and sight,
 Our legs, arms, knee-pans, comforts, friends, and blood,
 And then have nothing, Sir, to eat at night:
 And, on the contrary, ’twas right and good
 That the Duke’s puppies, being no such sinners,
 Should, like good boys, go in and have their dinners.”

14.

Thus spoke the Soldier from the Frith of Forth,²⁰
 Who wrote the “Journal” t’other day; which see;
 He did not say it *all*—he’s “frae the North,”—²¹
 But then his inward man spoke, if not he.
 However, what’s a common soldier worth?
 Or fifty thousand such, ’twixt you and me?
 The man may stuff him with his native fogs:
 But where, I want to know, where are the dogs?

15.

Other great brutes concerned in that campaign
Are kept before the public: others have
Their lives and deeds recorded, to a sprain,
Their genealogies, and faces brave,
Their huntings too, and when they'll hunt again,
And how in drawing-rooms the dogs behave:
I've seen a Paris print of one o' the brutes
Betwixt two ladies, actually in boots. (6)

16.

Now those I speak of are not less than they,
Be sure of that: just as great brutes they are:
Have as good coats and faces, have their day,
At least have had, and should have time to spare;
Live just such lives, now hunting down one's prey,
Now all agog for their respective fair;
And above all, though men should want a dinner,
The dev'l a bit will *they* grow any thinner.

17.

The best of us are proud of being thought
To have the qualities of dogs like these:
The Duke himself, I doubt not, might be caught,
Doing things equally well form'd to please.
I wouldn't swear, that if you went and bought
A horn, or whistled "Molly,"²² or "Green Pease,"²³
You wouldn't see him come, through thick and thin,
Leaping and panting to you, all a-grin.

18.

King Charles²⁴ was famous for a breed of puppies,²⁵
 Which was kept up, and is so I've no doubt on't;
 Lord Chesterfield²⁶ most tenderly brought up his,
 And would have made his son one, but he couldn't:
 In Naples²⁷ a dog's music beats Galuppi's,²⁸
 Though music comes next to it, which it shouldn't;
 For next to pointers, guns, and such resources,
 Long before anything like men, come horses.

19.

"Talk," cries a wag, "of parting with one's studs,
 In decency to Irish famishings,
 At least of lessening them! Why, d—n their bloods,
 Or rather no bloods, for they've no such things,
 (In fact they are but two such precious floods,
 In horses' families, and those of kings) (7)
 I'd not have giv'n them What's-his-name's "quietus,"
 And stopt one gilded oat from Incitatus." (8)

20.

Heliogabalus²⁹ and his horse's mention³⁰
 May render this suspected—for it's³¹ reading;
 I own it seems some Irishman's invention,
 Light in the head perhaps, for want of feeding:
 But then it somehow meets one's apprehension
 In times of human starving and brute breeding:
 And as to learning, you would cease to stare
 If you took up the Racing Calendar.³²

21.

There (not to waste the family-head in books)
 A youth may learn much Latin appellation;
 Much French too, and Italian, if he looks,
 Besides the sense, sly supererogation!
 There he may learn, how Dolthead match'd the Duke's,
 And Blacklegs was thrown out by Acclamation:³³
 How Olive was own cousin to Old Cupid,³⁴
 And how Legitimate was got out of Stupid.

22.

But what he'll find, which is the best of all,
 Is how completely there the human creatures
 Are cast in shade, I mean in general,
 By the dear horses and their Houhyhnm³⁵ natures:
 The Gullivers obey their proper call,
 And wait aloof, and doat upon their features;
 By no means the worst thing they do, poor rogues!
 And this again reminds me of my dogs.

23.

My dogs! Yes, mine—every one's dogs—the nation's,
 For were they not of extreme use to it?
 Did they not give the Great Lord relaxations,
 When taken with his *minor* slaughtering fit? (9)
 And had they not their proper mastications,
 Of which occasional Scotchmen filch'd a bit?
 "Can such things overcome us like a summer
 Cloud,"³⁶ and but serve to make us all the dumber!

24.

I like that patriot in Tiberius³⁷ days,
 Who having propos'd to make him absolute,
 Apologized for such presumptuous ways;
 But said, that being a man, it did not suit
 With his free soul to dread the court's dispraise,
 And in the commonwealth's³⁸ great cause be mute.
 There was another such as bold to Cromwell;³⁹
 Fellows I much prefer to Kettledrumle. (10)

25.

I'll be as free: there's not a stick at court
 Shall beat me in a thing I have to say;
 Tailors sha'nt cut me out, nor tongues cut short,
 Envyng my very independent way;
 Croker⁴⁰ himself shall cry out "That's your sort,"
 And loads of "lofty Scotchmen" cry, Huzza! (11)
 At least if they do not, 'twill only shew
 How far one's rivals' jealousy can go.

26.

'Tis true, the Duke, at my free proposition,
 May think fit to be modest, like a woman;
 May say his brutes are not of that condition
 To warrant it, being only more than human;
 And that base men might get up a petition:
 To all which I should humbly answer, "True, mun;"
 But then, though more than both, a Prince himself
 Is proud to be call'd jolly dog, and Guelph.⁴¹

27⁴²

There was a prince in Italy, call'd Can Grande,⁴³
 Which means Great Dog, the lord too of Verona,
 A mighty petty sovereign, and a dandy,
 Who in his wit once threw a bard a bone a-
 Cross his high board,⁴⁴ which made 'em every man die.
 The bard agreed 'twas princely. (12)⁴⁵ I have known a-
 Nother, of whom the people used to say,
 A greater puppy never had his day.

28.

I do propose then, that a deputation
 First wait upon the dogs and bring them out,
 To glad the eyes of public admiration;
 It being a shame that beasts so cared about,
 And by such hearts, are not before the nation.
 Only conceive the enthusiastic shout
 That would be raised at sight of their sweet faces,
 In all their pride of jowl, in public places!

29.

Fancy the beasts, or any one of them,
 At Drury-Lane,⁴⁶ or in an Opera-box:
 The proper masters have accomplish'd him,
 The dancing ones I mean, and such-like folks!
 He rises, bows, looks mutual esteem;
 The band strikes up; and players and "hearts of oaks"
 (Save here and there a Jacobinic⁴⁷ growler)
 Perfo m⁴⁸ the national anthem of "Old Towler."⁴⁹

30.

Then a procession, with the dogs all seated,
 Is what I next propose. Rouge-Lion⁵⁰ first
 Prepares the way, looking extremely heated;
 Sir William Curtis⁵¹ then, ready to burst
 With beef and joy at being so finely treated.
 He's drest in dog-skin. (13) May the man be curst
 Who does not, as the King does (who's no fool)
 Count him the finest specimen of John Bull.⁵²

31.

Besides, he's biscuit-baker. Next the trumpets
 Appear, some blowing in F sharp and some in E;
 And then the bishops, plump as plates of crumpets,
 Singing the psalm beginning with "Cur, Domine:"⁵³
 A kettle-drummer next with many a thump hits
 His brass, to shew, betwixt those Piccolomini
 Of the Church Militant,⁵⁴ and the state's forces,
 The delicate connexion there of course is.

32.

Then come the soldiers,—but what's this? How odd
 And thin they look, unfit for such a show?
 Excuse me: they look just as soldiers should;
 They've had no dinners for this week or so;
 Just to insinuate, by their want of blood,
 The heroic privilege they have to go
 Without their food, and if required, be starv'd,
 Till all the puppies in the land are serv'd.

33.

Last come the dogs, the climax of the sight,
 All in their coaches, all in due decorum,
 All seated, a la “Sifflé,”⁵⁵ bolt upright,
 The Master of the Hounds being set before ’em.
 They grin, they bow, look sidelong and polite;
 The ladies at the windows all adore ’em.
 See—there’s the King too bowing—and look! there is
 Her Royal Highness Mrs. Wilmot Serres. (14)

34.

After processions, people have a feast:
 The brutes of course must have theirs at Guildhall;⁵⁶
 There’s precedent: so heralds say, at least.
 ’Twas merry formerly, when beards wagg’d all;
 Now tails proclaim the pleasure of the beast:
 The grace is said, the turtle groweth small,
 The talk then rises, but let that be sunk;
 As usual, after dinner, the King’s drunk.

35.

The glee succeeds of “Glorious Apollo”⁵⁷
 By Messrs. Southey⁵⁸ and the Makingfaces;
 “The Duke of York and Army”⁵⁹ used to follow,
 But now the soldiers better know their places:
 The Duke of Wellington and his View Hollow
 Is given, and “May heav’n prosper all their graces:”
 Hip—Hip—Guildhall resounds through all its logs,
 And Bread-street⁶⁰ echoes back “The Dogs! the Dogs!”

36.

The puppy in the chair returns his thanks,
 Like Doctor Johnson, "in his bow-wow way:"⁶¹
 Then Eldon⁶² (cursing, first of all, his shanks)
 Gets up, and weeps⁶³ to see this blessed day:
 Then his gilt chain the new old Lord Mayor clanks;
 Then Mr. Some-one has his blessed say,
 In which he proves that 'tis to save the nation
 When puppies flourish during men's starvation.

37.

I see all England flocking to the sight:
 Peers quit their parks, the peasantry the poor-house;
 Some drive, some die upon the road: it's flight
 All Scotland takes, like "hairpies coming o'or uz:" (15)
 All Wales puts forth, to see to what a height
 Arthur's great name can go, and join in chorus:
 And missing England, as they pierce the fogs,
 Ask where its gone:—cries Echo, "To the Dogs."

38.

But eager most, lo! lo! all Ireland comes—
 All that is left of it at least,—sharp set
 With hungry joy to think upon the crumbs,
 And see how the brutes jollify, and get
 A sight of their great Duke, who picks his gums;
 And wonder if the Absentees have yet
 Any similitude to human faces,
 Seeing them countenanc'd like the canine races.

39.

All eyes, a moment, even on that day,
 Turn at the name of Ireland, to look at
 The nation whom a king's nod made so gay.⁶⁴
 Even some certain members cry "What's that?"
 "Only the Irish."—"Oh—the Irish—eh?"
 What do *they* want? I'd thank ye for some fat."
 "The Irish, eh? Send 'em the soldiery
 And eighteen-pence. Hock, if you please, for me." (16)

40.

Such is the way to treat those sorry fellows,
 Call'd fellow creatures: one should be above
 One's fellows, as all true aspirers tell us,
 And then we rank with dogs, and get the love
 Of hearts enough to make a turnspit⁶⁵ jealous.
 So to return—The next thing that I move,
 Is, that the puppies and their heirs for ever
 Have settlements: for men may want, brutes never.

41.

I say (to use the words of a great poet)
 "That adequate provision should be made" (17)
 For all the race to have their biscuit to eat
 For ever.—Next, that money should be paid
 Into the hands of those here, that cry "go it,"
 For kennels,—palaces I should have said,—
 To be new built (*Mem.* workmen to be bustled)
 Where every puppy may have his own household

42.

'Tis cheap,—these ways of doing public good,
 The world can't do without 'em, take my word for it;
 Besides, if the world could, could isn't should,
 And those who say it is, are a base herd for it.
 The Americans, for instance, have no food,
 No cash, no ships, no land (although preferred for it)
 No name; and all because they want such things
 As puppies with huge pensions, Dukes, and Kings.

43.

Our dogs then have establishments: tis done:
 Recorded too, of course, as others are,
 In a new Red-book,⁶⁶ which may bind in one
 (Calf-gilt)⁶⁷ the Sporting and Court Calendar.
Exempli gra:—Establishment of Hun:
 Comptroller,—No one; Baker and Purvey'r,
 Sir William Curtis; Groom, Sir Hudson Lowe;⁶⁸
 Surveyors of the Collars, George and Co.;

44.

Bed-maker, Mrs. Leech;⁶⁹ Scratcher Extr'or'nary,
 Right Honourable the Earl of Lauderdale;⁷⁰
 Breakers of Bones and Biscuits, Men in or'nary;
 Tickler and Tail-bearer, (some spell it Tale)
 J. W. Croker, chiefly when its borne awry;
 Chaplain (Church Dog-Vane, going with the gale)
 The Reverend Nero Wilson; (18) Scavengers,
 The Beacons, Blackwoods, Bulls, and Gazetteers. (19)

45.

The names of their Canine-nesses—Prince, Jowler,
 Jolly, and Folly, Tippler, Fop, and Tough,
 Duke, Dunder, Slim, Fang, Whistler, Gamester, Growler,
 Standfast, and Steady, Waterloo, Chance, Rough,
 Charge, Trooper, Glutton, Hollo-boy, Old Towler,
 Blucher,⁷¹ Spot, Shriek, Jump, Victor, Old Boy, Puff,
 Rascal, Force, Bourbon, Throat, Spite, Promise, Viper,
 Moonshine, and Betty, Riot, Rage, and Piper:

46.

Hungry, Old England, Hot, Shot, Scot, and Lot,
 Old Soldier, Gaunt, and Grim, Seize-him-boy, Eat-'em,
 Tally-ho, Thief, Fool, Devil, Brute, and Sot.
 A pretty list. Ovid⁷² has one (See *Metam.*
Lib. Ter.)⁷³ but Ovid's pack of hounds was not
 The moral, order-loving, plump, legitim-
 Ate hounds, that these are. These, to run the faster,
 Eat but one's men, but those eat up their master.

47.

And at the last (for oh! indecent fate,
 And envious! even dogs, like men, must die!)
 But at the *last* (for ah! may it be late,
 And every dog have many days, say I!)
 Then with huge shouts, I vote that we translate,
 Exalt, and raise them to the starry sky!
 Men's pious notions have already given,
 To welcome them, much brute renown to heav'n.

48.

The Bull, Crab, Serpent, Scorpion, Wolf, are there,
 The Lion and Unicorn, and glorious Goose;
 Canis the Major too, by which it's clear
 That army-rank with dogs is of old use:
 Canicula⁷⁴ stands next him, little dear!
 Nay, things are there which absolute blocks produce.
 The Altar's next the Wolf: then, there's the Chair,
 The Cup, the Crown, and a strange Head of Hair.⁷⁵

49.

But what is most remarkable, the book
 In which I study my astronomy
 (The new Guide to the Stars by Henry Brooke)⁷⁶
 Shew'd me a thing enough to make a stone o'me,
 So very much astonish'd did I look.
 I saw there, bright as the Duke's physiognomy,
 His dogs, by some divine anticipation,
 Shining already in their proper station.

50.

It's fact. The Dogs, the glorious dogs, are there
 In soul at least, right claimants of the sky:
 Betwixt his namesake Arthur and the Bear
 The whole pack stands—"Canes Venatici."⁷⁷
 And twixt the dogs and the above Head of Hair
 Stands, as it ought to do, "*Cor Caroli*:" (20)
 That is to say, the Heart of Charles the Second:
 Were ever souls, bound heav'nwards, finelier beacon'd?

51.

So here I stop, covering beneath the sight
My fancy's cowering eyes, dash'd with the blaze:
But don't, I beg of you, ye suns of night,
Ye flaming brutes, 'dont hide your precious ways.
Shine on, shine on, and be a burning light
To help us onward to our better days;
And shew us (never to want proof again)
What very different things are brutes and men.

NOTES TO THE DOGS.

(1) *Men out of countenance behind their backs.*

This anecdote is in Grimm, or some of the other late French Memoirs.⁷⁸

(2) *Like them stand fast and make their masters winners.*

Vide Waterloo.⁷⁹

(3) *Four villages allotted for their dog's-meat.*

Herodot. Clio. Sect. 192.⁸⁰

(4) *Arbiter I could name had now been carrion.*

See Note 2.

(5) *The man who eat of it felt no remorse.*

“The short time we remained at Tormes, we were very ill off for provisions. One of our men, Thomas Cadwell, found a piece of meat, near the hospital, on the face of the brae: he brought it home, and cooked it. A good part of it was eaten, before one of the men, perceiving him, said, “What is that you are eating?” Tom said, it was meat he had found. The others looked, and knew it to be the fore-arm of a man: the hand was not at it; it was only the part from a little below the elbow, and above the wrist. The man threw it away, but never looked squeamish; he said it was very sweet, and was never a bit the worse.”—*Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regiment*, p. 158.

(6) *Betwixt two ladies, actually in boots.*

A French caricature of a Great Personage, in his boots and cocked hat; shewing how certain animals conduct themselves in drawing-rooms.

(7) *In horses' families and those of kings.*

It is remarkable that these are the only two races of beings, whose purity of descent has been reckoned of national consequence. Considering the scrupulous delicacy with which the procreation of the former is conducted, there may be some grounds for concluding their descents legitimate: but little as it surpasses in sentiment the nicety of royal arrangements, it is but

too probable that the success is not equal in both instances. Who, in fact, that considers the manners of courts, the lives and loves of queens, &c. &c. shall say, that there is a single legitimate prince now living, our own of course excepted? Who shall say, that thrones are not occupied by a set of involuntary Jacobins and usurpers?—that a Gil Blas⁸¹ or Conde What's-his-name⁸² does not reign at Madrid, a Mazarin⁸³ or La Fleur⁸⁴ at Paris, a Koningsmarck⁸⁵ in other countries, and so forth? To be sure, look, character, and other evidences, say much, especially in extreme cases of countenance: but there may be enough legitimacy for all this, though not enough legitimacy itself and “all that.”

(8) *To stop one gilded oat from Incitatus.*

The horse whom Caligula made a consul, and assigned an establishment.

(9) *When taken with his minor slaughtering fit.*

Hunting, they say, is the image of war, and therefore the favourite pastime of kings, and other great personages, when they cannot be hunting men: just as an ogre might keep a picture of a man to gloat over, when he could not get the original to eat.

(10) *Fellows I much prefer to Kettledrumle.*⁸⁶

See the Roman historians, Noble's Memoirs of the House of Cromwell, and the novel of Old Mortality.

(11) *And loads of lofty Scotchmen cry huzza!*

I see by the Examiner of October 6th, that it is proclaimed in Blackwood's Magazine, that “A loftier and a wiser people (than the Scotch) are not to be found now upon the earth, nor do the records of any such survive.” See the state of the Scotch Boroughs, the Beacon and its patrons, and Mr. Blackwood⁸⁷ himself as a crowning specimen. Tory writers tell you, that the French are a frivolous people; the Italians a people unfit for a constitution; and the Americans, or “Jonathan,” a vulgar and insolent people; but if you characterize a favourite nation of their own with similar freedom, they beg you will make “no national reflections.” Even this maxim may be made a cant of. Nobody can admire more than I do some things about Scotland,—it's music and poetry, it's Wallaces⁸⁸ and other strugglers of old for freedom, it's present strugglers against it's infamous Borough system, and (for their talents though not for their politics) “the Scotch novels.” But all this does not blind any one to the fact, that Scotland as it now is, notwithstanding the strait-laced look of its morality in general, has no pretension whatever to the character of as “pure and lofty” a nation as any existing. The English, the

Americans, the Spaniards, all beat it hollow. How can a nation be called “pure” which has no character for purity of sentiment, or popular cleanliness, or conversational cleanliness? How can it be called “lofty,” when it is at the very feet of the Borough-mongers? How can it be called either pure or lofty, when the writers of such a magazine as Blackwood’s, a book full of falsehoods, impurities, and cowardice, can fancy themselves, even for a moment, its representatives? When Scotland sweeps away all this filth, and raises its head again in opposition to the slaves in power, it may deserve all the epithets which the admirers of its Wallaces and Burns⁸⁹ can wish it.—With respect to the fact mentioned in the text, it is truly a national stain. I have met with otherwise amiable Scotchmen, and with intelligent and eminent Scotchmen; but I never met with one, who was not more or less filthy in his talk;—I do not mean merely indecent, much less voluptuous; but absolutely filthy, in the style of Swift. It is most probably owing to certain modes of life; but it is high time for them to get rid of it, if they would not render a publication like Blackwood’s as injurious to their character by its praises, as it is by its abuse of others.

(13)⁹⁰ *He’s drest in dog-skin.*

When Sir William Curtis went with the King to Edinburgh, he was accoutred like his Illustrious Friend, “all in the Highland dress.” I think the Scotch *must* have felt this.

(14) *Her Royal Highness Mrs. Wilmot Serres.*⁹¹

I am far from insinuating any thing against the pretensions of this lady. Quite the contrary. They are every way royal, saving and excepting perhaps that she has a suspicious amount of wit. Her documents have every right, on the face of them, to be seriously inquired into.

(15) *All Scotland takes, like “hairpies coming o’er uz.”*

That is to say in English, “like harpies coming o’er us.” I should not have made this apparently invidious translation (especially as I am fond of the Scottish dialect in its proper place) if the Scotch of late had not taken it into their heads to give their Southern neighbours lessons in writing! This, I suppose, is a part of the “purity” which their friend Blackwood speaks of. The modesty, as usual, is equal to it.

(16) *And eighteen-pence. Hock, if you please, for me.*

I do not mean to insinuate that *nothing* has been done in answer to the frenzied cries of the Irish for bread. When hanging and violence were

found to be of no use, even with the addition of all the continued recommendation of those amiable and judicious modes of cure, a subscription certainly did take place; and some of the subscribers have a right to think themselves humane. But I say, that in point of the real *spirit* of the whole treatment of Ireland, past and present, the description in the text is no caricature.

(17) *That adequate provision should be made.*

A line, I am sorry to say, of Mr. Wordsworth.⁹² The one that follows it, is

“For the whole people to be taught and trained.”

And there is a third before it in the same style, which I forget. When Mr. Wordsworth first wrote about Milton and Marvell, and his other old republican friends, he did better than when he joined the Straffords and Parkers of the day.⁹³

(18) *The Reverend Nero Wilson.*⁹⁴

A silly Calvinistic Preacher, who frightens timid constitutions, gets the good will of callous ones, and maintaineth that if Nero were now reigning, every one ought to obey him. O the satire of these toad-eaters!

(19) *The Beacons, Blackwoods, Bulls, and Gazetteers.*

A set of Dunciad⁹⁵ gentry, one or two of them cleverer than the others, but all of the same pitch of natural impudence, and sordidness of mind. The Literary Gazetteers are promoted because they had the luck to be noticed by Lord Byron, before his Lordship was informed, to his great mortification, that nobody else thought them worth notice. The others have had similar good fortune in other quarters, or I should certainly not have polluted my ink with any of them.

(20) *Stands, as it ought to do, “Cor Caroli.”*

See the work mentioned in the text, a guide which had long been wanting to the lovers of the starry heavens. Mr. Brooke does his illustrious duty with great care and circumspection. We only miss, to complete the work, an account of the origin of the different names; some of which however, such as the Arabian, it might be difficult, perhaps impossible, to trace. But the meanings of the mere words might be found. The rest would exhibit some curious matter; such as the deification, here recorded, of the heart of Charles the Second!

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¹ Arthur Wellesley, first duke of Wellington (1769-1852, *DNB*), was commander of the British army during the Napoleonic wars, and a Tory prime minister (1828-30). Born in Dublin to an Irish aristocratic family he joined a Highland regiment, fighting at Flanders in 1794, and led the campaign in India (1796-1805). In 1806 he was elected Member of Parliament and soon after appointed Chief Secretary of Ireland. He was commander of the British Army during the Peninsular War in Spain (1808-14), and was given the title Duke of Wellington in 1814. He played a key role in the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo (1815).

² *Luke*, 15:11-32: "And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him" (*KJV*, 16).

³ [Thomas Pococke], *Journal of a Soldier of the 71st or Glasgow Regiment, Highland Light Infantry, from 1806 to 1815* (Edinburgh: W & C. Tait, 1819). The 'War in Spain' is the Peninsular War (1808-14), part of the Napoleonic wars fought in the Iberian Peninsula, and opposing the British, under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Wellesley, in support of Spanish and Portuguese forces, against the French army. Strachan identifies the editor of the memoir as Thomas Howell (Strachan 2003, 6:1), as does the entry in the British Library catalogue; the same source, however, indicates Thomas Pococke as author.

⁴ The Iberian Peninsula, which includes the territories of Spain and Portugal.

⁵ Apollo, the Olympian god of the Arts – music, song and poetry – prophecy and oracles, archery, healing, and the protection of the young. He was represented as a handsome, long-haired youth, with a wreath and branch of laurel, carrying a lyre, or a bow and a quiver of arrows.

⁶ A reference to lawyer wigs. Imported from Europe, the wig became an admired fashion article among the aristocracy during the reign of King Charles II (1660-85), and has been used in the courtroom since as a symbol of authority, status, and power.

⁷ "Red Coats" is a common synecdoche for the British soldiers, from the military garment formerly used by the regiments of the British Army.

⁸ *Quæ Ventri obedientia sunt*: "Who are obedient to their stomachs", Sall, *Bellum Catilinae*, 1-4.

⁹ Gaius Sallustius Crispus, Roman historian and politician (86-34 BCE).

¹⁰ The pseudonym of François-Marie Arouet (1694-1778), French Enlightenment writer, philosopher, historian and satirist.

¹¹ *embonpoint-er*: pun on "embonpoint", meaning well-fed and plump, and "pointer", the English breed of dogs.

¹² Misprint: full stop missing from the copy-text.

¹³ Herodotus, Greek historian and geographer (c. 484- c. 425 BCE). He was the author of the *History* of the Greco-Persian Wars, the first great narrative history produced in the ancient world.

¹⁴ *Jowler*: "A heavy-jawed dog. Used also as quasi-proper name for a dog of this kind" (*OED*).

¹⁵ *dulce* (Latin): sweetness.

¹⁶ The coarse material of the soldiers' uniforms.

¹⁷ Misprint: full stop missing from the copy-text.

¹⁸ In the first chapter of Walter Scott's homonymous novel (1816), the fictional author Peter Pattieson describes meeting Robert Paterson, known as 'Old Mortality', who, towards the end of the 18th century, wandered about Scotland cleaning and repairing the tombs of seventeenth-century Covenanters, who fought against King Charles II.

¹⁹ *ennui* (French): boredom.

²⁰ Firth of Forth, estuary of the Scottish River Forth.

²¹ That is, introverted, as Scotsmen are said to be.

²² This may be *Love Farewell*, which is described as having been popular during the Napoleonic Wars: "So Molly dear do not grieve for me, | I'm going to fight for England's glory. | And if we live we live victorious, | And if we die our souls are glorious, | Love, farewell!". References available at <https://mainlynorfolk.info/folk/songs/lovefarewell.html#mickhennessy>

The song is also known under the title *Britain's Glory*, as collected with the lyrics of three other songs on the same theme in an Edinburgh printed, undated chapbook, digitized by the National Library of Scotland, and available at <https://deriv.nls.uk/dcn23/1177/9601/117796014.23.pdf>

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- ²³ Untraced reference.
- ²⁴ King Charles II Stuart of England (1630-85), king of Scotland from 1649 to 1651, and king of Scotland, Ireland and England from the Stuart Restoration in 1660 to his death in 1685.
- ²⁵ King Charles II was famously fond of toy spaniels; the breed was named after him.
- ²⁶ Philip Dormer Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773, *DIB*), British statesman, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and man of letters.
- ²⁷ At the time of writing, Naples was the capital city of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which was proclaimed in 1816. The city, which had been under the Napoleonic rule since 1806, was restored to the Bourbon monarch Ferdinand IV in 1815, following the Austro-Neapolitan war.
- ²⁸ Baldassarre Galuppi (1706-85, *Treccani*), Italian composer.
- ²⁹ Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, or Heliogabalus (c. 204- 222 CE); Roman emperor from 218 to 222 CE, famous for his being eccentric and sexually promiscuous.
- ³⁰ Heliogabalus translates “Horse of the Sun.”
- ³¹ *it’s*: regional and nonstandard variant form of *its* from 1600s to 1800s (*OED*), frequently used in Hunt’s writings.
- ³² Racing Calendar, the official horseracing publication of the Jockey Club as of 1773.
- ³³ Names of racehorses.
- ³⁴ As John Strachan points out, “Hidden in this genealogy of the turf is a subtle dig at the king.” (Strachan 2003, 6:285). Olivia Serres (1772-1834), painter and writer, was the daughter of Robert Wilmot, a London housepainter. She made the unlikely claim that she was in fact Princess Olive, legitimate daughter of the Duke of Cumberland, and the ‘Princess of Cumberland’. In 1823, Sir Robert Peele, Home secretary, affirmed in Parliament that Serres’ assertions were baseless.
- ³⁵ *Houhyhnm*: misspelling of *Houyhnhnm*, the race of intelligent horses in Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726).
- ³⁶ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, III.iv.110-11.
- ³⁷ Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus (42 BCE-37 CE), second Roman emperor from 14 to 37 CE.
- ³⁸ The government period between the execution of King Charles I in 1649 and the reign of King Charles II, beginning in 1660.
- ³⁹ Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), English politician and general, Lord Protector of England, Ireland and Scotland during the republican Commonwealth.
- ⁴⁰ John Wilson Croker (1780-1857, *DIB*), conservative politician and author, he was First Secretary to the Admiralty from 1809 to 1827, and was an opponent of the 1832 Reform Bill. A founder of the *Quarterly Review*, to which he contributed over 250 articles, he published a scathing review of Keats’s *Endymion* in the issue of April 1818. The article, “often and misleadingly cited as the blow that broke Keats’s spirits and hastened his death, condemns Keats because of his political as well as his aesthetic associations with Hunt.” (Cox and Kucich 2003, 2:170).
- ⁴¹ Guelph, medieval political faction supporting the Pope against the Holy Roman Emperor.
- ⁴² Misprint: full stop missing from the copy-text.
- ⁴³ Can Grande della Scala (1291-1329), Lord and ruler of Verona from 1311 to 1329, and the leading figure of the Ghibelline faction.
- ⁴⁴ Dante Alighieri (1265-1321). Dante was in the service of Cangrande I della Scala between 1313 and 1318. Cangrande, who was Dante’s patron, is the addressee of his Epistle XIII, in which the poet dedicated his *Paradise cantica* to him.
- ⁴⁵ Note 12 is missing in the source text.
- ⁴⁶ One of the two *patent theatres*, i.e., the London playhouses endowed with a royal license at the time of writing.
- ⁴⁷ *Jacobinic*: of or relating to the Jacobins of France; revolutionary. The Jacobins were members of a radical French political club founded in 1789. The group played a crucial role during the French Revolution. The earliest known use of the adjective Jacobinic is in the late 1700s (*OED*).
- ⁴⁸ *Perfo m*: misprint for *Perform*.

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⁴⁹ Also called “Old Jowler”, a Scottish march written by John O’Keefe (1747-1833) and composed by William Shield (1748-1829), and published in the early 1790s. See stanza 9, above.

⁵⁰ Rouge-Lion, a heraldic dignitary.

⁵¹ Sir William Curtis, 1st Baronet (1752-1829), Lord Mayor of London (1795-96); a businessman, banker and politician. His family originated in Nottinghamshire, but his grandfather had established a business at Wapping as a ships’ biscuit baker (see stanza 31, below). “A portly and bottlenosed *bon vivant* and unconscious buffoon, Curtis was the best-known of the City Members in this period, the leading spokesman for the corporation and mercantile interests and the most irresistible butt of the caricaturists” (*The History of Parliament*, accessed 4 March 2025 <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/curtis-william-1752-1829>). His friendship with the King is satirized in Byron’s *Don Juan*, X. 685-8: “Tell them Sir W—ll— C—t—s is a bore | Too dull even for the dullest of excesses – | The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal, | A fool whose bells have ceased to ring at all; —”.

⁵² John Bull, a national personification of England, or English culture, represented as a middle-aged gentleman wearing a Union Jack waistcoat, and often appearing in cartoons and caricatures. Leigh Hunt evokes John Bull satirically in the ‘Preface’ to Volume 1 of *The Liberal*.

⁵³ See the Golden Calf episode in *Exodus* 32:11: “*Moses autem orabat Dominum Deum suum dicens: ‘Cur, Domine, irascitur furor tuus contra populum tuum, quem eduxisti de terra Aegypti in fortitudine magna et in manu robusta?’*” A ferocious pun may be intended in the use of the word “cur” – standing for “why” in Latin.

⁵⁴ The House of Piccolomini was an Italian noble family in Siena, whose influence extended from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries, and had among its members a Pope of the Catholic Church, Pius II (1405-64). Given the heavily ironic context and the collocation, a pun on the surname, meaning ‘Little Men’ in Italian, may be intended.

⁵⁵ Sifflé, meaning “by the whistle” – i.e., ready to spring on their paws.

⁵⁶ Guildhall, home to the City of London Corporation, and still the centre of government in the City of London. Its Great Hall has been the setting of Lord Mayor’s Annual Banquet since 1502.

⁵⁷ English air composed by Samuel Webbe in 1787.

⁵⁸ Robert Southey (1774-1843), British poet and man of letters, and English poet laureate. He was the constant target of satire for his political apostasy of his early radical stances (See Craig 2007; Andrews 2011).

⁵⁹ Possibly “The Duke of York’s March”, composed towards the end of the eighteenth century.

⁶⁰ Bread-street, a street in the City of London, where the ancient city’s bread market was located.

⁶¹ “Lord Pembroke said once to me at Wilton, with a happy pleasantry, and some truth, that ‘Dr. Johnson’s sayings would not appear so extraordinary, were it not for his bow-wow way:’ but I admit the truth of this only on some occasions” (Boswell [1785] 1852, 5).

⁶² John Scott, First Earl of Eldon (1751-1838), British politician, Lord High Chancellor of Britain between 1801 and 1806, then again from 1807 to 1827. Together with Castlereagh and Sidmouth, he backed all the government’s most reactionary measures. The three of them famously appear in the opening stanzas of Shelley’s *Mask of Anarchy*, as the embodiments of, respectively, Fraud, Murder, and Hypocrisy, in a form of reversed allegory.

⁶³ Eldon’s inclination to tears was well known. See *The Mask of Anarchy* (1832), stanza 4: “Next came Fraud, and he had on, | Like Eldon, an ermined gown; | His big tears, for he wept well, | Turned to mill-stones as they fell.”

⁶⁴ King George IV (1762-1830, reigned 1820-30) visited Ireland to great acclaim between August and September 1821.

⁶⁵ Turnspit, a dog trained to run within a tread-wheel made to turn a rod on which meat was skewered, to cook it.

⁶⁶ *Red-book*: “A title given to any of various official books, usually distinguished by having a red binding, of political, administrative, or economic significance” (*OED*).

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- ⁶⁷ Calf-gilt, the most common form of leather book binding.
- ⁶⁸ Sir Hudson Lowe (1769-1844), Napoleon's jailer at Saint Helena.
- ⁶⁹ Untraced reference.
- ⁷⁰ James Maitland, Eighth Earl of Lauderdale (1759-1839), a Scottish representative in the House of Lords, he shifted from his early radical political stance to staunch conservatism.
- ⁷¹ Marshall Blücher (1742-1819), the formidable Prussian general.
- ⁷² Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BCE- 17/18 CE), Augustan Roman poet, and author of *Metamorphoses*.
- ⁷³ In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Actaeon's hunting dogs eat him alive after the goddess Diana turns him into a stag as a punishment for seeing her bathe (III.138-255).
- ⁷⁴ Sirius, the Dog Star.
- ⁷⁵ Still other constellations.
- ⁷⁶ Henry Brooke, *Guide to the Stars* (London: Printed for Taylor and Hessey, 1820).
- ⁷⁷ New punning intended: Canes Venatici ('Hunting Dogs') is a constellation that lies between Ursa Major and Coma Berenices.
- ⁷⁸ As John Strachan notes, there is no relevant reference in Grimm's four volumes of *Historical and Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes* (1815), though an anecdote about M. de Saint Fargeau's dog biting Jean-Jacques Rousseau is reported (Cf. Strachan 2003, 6:286, n. 33).
- ⁷⁹ The battle of Waterloo (18 June 1815).
- ⁸⁰ "He ["The governor of Babylon"] kept, too, such a number of Indian dogs that four considerable towns in the plains were exempted from all other taxes, and appointed to find food for the dogs." *The Histories of Herodotus*, vol. I: *Clio*, 192 (tr. Henry Cary, New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1899, 75).
- ⁸¹ Gil Blas, the protagonist of Alain-René Lesage's picaresque novel *L'Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* (1715-35).
- ⁸² Louis II de Bourbon, 4^e Prince de Condé (1621-86), a French general and prince who led the last in the series of aristocratic insurrections in France branded as La Fronde (1648-53). He later became one of the greatest generals in the service of King Louis XIV.
- ⁸³ Cardinal Jules Mazarin (1602-61), who served as chief minister in France from 1642.
- ⁸⁴ La Fleur, Yorick's French servant in Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (1768).
- ⁸⁵ A likely reference to Count Philip Christoph von Königsmarck (1665-94), the alleged German lover of Sophia Dorothea, who was married to the Hanoverian electoral prince George (later King George I of England). Their assumed liaison led to Königsmarck's probable murder; George divorced Sophia Dorothea, who died after a thirty-two-year imprisonment at Schloss Ahlden, Lower Saxony.
- ⁸⁶ *Kettledrumle*: misspelling of *Kettledrummle*, a character from Scott's *Old Mortality*.
- ⁸⁷ William Blackwood (1776-1834), British publisher and owner of the William Blackwood and Sons firm. He was the founder of Tory British magazine and miscellany *Blackwood's Magazine*, the arch-enemy of Leigh Hunt and his circle. See also 267n and 371n below.
- ⁸⁸ William Wallace (c. 1270-1305), the epitome of Scotland's national heroes and symbol of Scottish resistance against the English rule.
- ⁸⁹ Robert Burns (1759-96), considered as Scotland's national poet.
- ⁹⁰ Note 12 is not present in the copytext. See stanza 27, p. 255.
- ⁹¹ I.e., Princess Olive.
- ⁹² Misquoted from William Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814), IX.358.
- ⁹³ That is, supporters of the Church and King, the likes of Charles I's chief minister and adviser Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford (1593-1641), and Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford (1640-88).
- ⁹⁴ John Wilson (1785-1854), Scottish poet, literary critic and novelist. Hunt's longtime rival, Wilson was a key contributor to *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, for which he wrote hundreds of articles under the pseudonym of 'Christopher North'. He and J. G. Lockhart were behind the fierce 'Cockney School' articles on Hunt and his circle.
- ⁹⁵ The masterpiece of mock-heroic poetry by Alexander Pope, first published in 1728, and in its final four-book form, in 1743, *The Dunciad* carries out a fierce critique of literary mediocrity.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.*

LETTER II.—GENOA.

GENOA is truly “Genoa the Superb.”¹ Its finest aspect is from the sea, and from the sea I first beheld it. Imagine a glorious amphitheatre of white houses, with mountains on each side and at the back. The base is composed of the city with its churches and shipping; the other houses are country seats, looking out, one above the other, up the hill. To the left are the Alps with their snowy tops: to the right, and for the back, are the Appennines.² This is Genoa. It is situate at the very angle of the pointed gulf, which is called after its name, and which presents on either side, as you sail up it, white villages, country seats, and olive groves. I sailed up this gulf in summer-time. The lucid Mediterranean sea washed against our vessel, like amber: a sky, blue indeed, was above our heads: inconveniences and dangers were left behind us; health, hope, and Italy, were before us. With what contented anxiety did we not ask the names of the towns and villages, as we saw them one after the other, seated on the shore like ladies, to prepare for the approach of voyagers to the great Queen!³ How did we not reconnoitre the great Queen herself with our ship’s glass, counting the miles as they lessened between us! At length we see her clearly. Her marble pomp opens upon us! We fancy we see the palace of her great son Doria!⁴ How truly does she realize our expectations, poetical as they were! There

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Serena Baiesi.

she sat between her mountains, having the sea as of old at her feet, and “abating not a tittle⁵ of her state,” albeit my countrymen had forsaken her.

As Genoa was the first city in Italy which I beheld, and as first impressions are not only liveliest, but liveliest in the order in which they occurred, I will resort to the journal I kept, and notice objects as they struck me day by day. It was at two o'clock on the 15th of June that our vessel entered the harbour. After travelling the great “world of waters wide and deep,”⁶ it was every way a pleasant thing to feel one's-self embraced in the Genoese harbour, which is one of the most encircling there are. We were full, at that time, of happy thoughts of a dear friend; and we felt as if the country he was in embraced us for him.

June 15. Our arrival in the harbour did not diminish our idea of Genoa: but our notions of the Italian countenance were formidably startled by the pilot-boat, which came out to offer it's⁷ assistance in conducting us by the mole. The mole had been injured greatly by the storms of the preceding winter. The boat contained, I think, as ugly a set of faces as could well be brought together. It was a very neat boat, and the pilots were singularly neat and clean in their persons; but their faces! My wife looked at me as much as to say, “are these our fine Southern heads.” The children looked at me: we all looked at one another: and what was very inhospitable, the pilots all looked at us. The sun was in their eyes; and there they sat on their oars, grinning up at us, and bargaining with the Captain. The older ones were like monkies;⁸ the younger like half-withered masks—hard, stony, and even pale. One young man however was handsome both in face and person: he had the fine black eyes and brown colour we expected to meet with; and luckily, driving a less hard bargain than the rest (which was to

be expected of him), the Captain agreed with him, and he came on board. His dress and appearance we found might be taken as a specimen, and by no means an uncommon specimen, of the better order of boatmen, upon this and the Tuscan coast: for we soon had the pleasure of being agreeably disappointed with regard to the slovenliness we had looked for. It was that of a smart English apprentice with his coat off. He had a very neat black hat on, in the modern style, good shoes and silk handkerchief, and blue linen pantaloons coming up high, and fastened over his shoulders with braces. Though aware that one style of dress, with little modification, prevails now-a-days all over Europe, one cannot help feeling a kind of disappointment, and even surprise, at seeing Italians dressed like Englishmen. It seems a disgrace to them, not because they are like us, but because they look unlike themselves and their climate, and disappoint us of a becoming variety. We thought how well our pilot would have looked in his cap and cloak. But we were thankful for his face. I asked him where the Doria palace stood. "Behold it!" said he, pointing to the left; and we looked upon the handsome yet comparatively humble mansion, which Andrew Doria built for himself and his descendants, when he was at the height of his power. It is a low long building, with an arcade, and a garden before it, and looks over the harbour which he rendered so eminent. We were in the Genoese harbour for two weeks, and it was no small pleasure to us to have this republican palace always in sight.

We had scarcely got rid of our ugly men, when we were assailed with a much worse sight, a gang of ugly boys. They were a set of young knaves, poking about for what they could lay their hands on; and came loitering and hanging about the vessel under pretence of asking charity. Their

fathers and mothers, or *their* fathers and mothers, or manners and customs *ad infinitum*,⁹ had much to answer for in contriving such a set of juvenile vagabonds. They clung about the sides of the vessel, with faces, and hands too, like monkies. They had no foreheads, and moved their hands as if they were paws. Never did we see a more striking look of something removed from humanity; and the worst of it was, they had no sort of comfort in their faces; their laugh was as melancholy yet unfeeling, as their abject and canting whine. They looked like impudent squalid old men of the world, in the shape of boys; and were as pale, and almost as withered. They were like the sordid imps of Massinger or Decker.¹⁰ Sinbad's old man of the sea¹¹ would have had such children, only stronger. Certainly both men and boys might have made a huntsman himself hypochondriacal.

Boats with awnings were rowing backwards and forwards, many of them, particularly as the afternoon advanced, containing bathers, who dressed and undressed themselves, as they went along, in the most unscrupulous manner. One of the very commonest sights was to see men in their shirts; and not a very uncommon one, ladies in their company. People bathed among the shipping at all times of the day, and ladies would pass them, nothing wondering, in boats. This grossness, which indecency itself would diminish, I witnessed afterwards at Leghorn;¹² and I have seen people bathing in the Arno in the very middle of Pisa. I am not squeamish; and think some of our northern notions as gross as any thing else; but where there is neither innocence nor even a refined sensuality, there is something more than gross in these public expositions of the person; the extreme of formality is better, inasmuch as it approaches nearer to one of the two. But something, in the progress of such customs, is to be allowed for difference of climate.

The first handsome countenance that came near us, after the pilot's, was that of a boy who accompanied a custom-house officer, and who was going to bathe. But he had no modesty in his aspect, and the want of it was not bettered by his ear-rings and the cut of his hair, which made him look like a girl. Numbers of lads had the same look, on the same accounts; even when apparently seventeen or eighteen years old. The short, thick custom-house officer, grave, obsequious, and yet indifferent, was like a man made of dough; and he had the most exaggerated cocked-hat and worsted epaulets which we had ever beheld out of the pale of a pantomime.

The first sight of Italian women disappointed us almost as much as Italian men, because we expected still more of them. Of course, had we seen them first, they would have disappointed us more. But I afterwards found, that as you ascended among the more educated classes, the faces improved; and I have reason to believe, that most of the women whom we saw in boats, deceived us as to their rank in this respect. In Italy, gentlemen do not look so much like gentlemen as in England, but there are greater numbers of women who look like ladies. This is partly owing to their dress. In Genoa particularly, the out-of-door head-dress for women of all ranks is a white veil; and an Englishman, unaccustomed to see this piece of drapery upon common heads, and observing besides the stateliness with which female Italians carry themselves, thinks he is oftener looking at gentlewomen than he is.

We had not been long in harbour before we inquired, with all the eagerness of voyagers, for our fresh provisions. In Italy, we also looked for our heaps of fruit; and we had them—in all the luxury of baskets and vine-leaves, and a cheapness that made us laugh. Grapes were not in season; but

there were figs, apricots, fresh almonds, oranges, pears, and gigantic cherries, as fine as they were large. We also took leave of our biscuit for excellent bread; and had milk brought to us in bottles, which were stopped with vine-leaves. The mutton turned out to be kid, and lean enough; but it was a novelty, and we eat it upon a principle of inquiry. An excellent light wine accompanied our repast, drunk, not in little cautious glasses, like our "hot intoxicating liquor,"¹³ but out of tumblers. It was just three-pence English a quart. It had, notwithstanding its lightness, a real vinous body, and both looked and tasted like a sort of claret; but we were sorry to find it was French, and not Italian. As to the fruit,—to give a specimen in one word,—the apricots, very fine ones, were two-pence a gallon.

16. To-day I went on shore. I shall never forget the sensations with which I first set foot in Italy;—but they will not do to dwell upon now. The quay is a handsome one, profuse of good pavement, gate, &c. and the abundance of stone every where, the whiteness of the houses, and the blueness of the sky, cast, at first sight, an extraordinary look of lightness and cleanliness upon every thing. Nor are you disappointed in Genoa, as people are at Lisbon, between the fairness of the look outside and the dirt within. The large wrinkled features of the old women, with their uncapped grey hair, strike you at first as singularly plain: so do the people in general: but every thing looks clean and neat, and full of the smart bustle of a commercial city. What surprises you is the narrowness of the streets. As soon as you have passed the gate, you think you have entered upon a lane, remarkably good indeed for a lane,—a sort of Bond-street¹⁴ of an alley,—but you have no conception that it is a street, and of the ordinary dimensions. The shops also, though neat, are blind and open,

like English potatoe¹⁵ shops, or at best like some of the little comb shops now rarely to be seen in London. I mean, they have no windows, whether they have counters or not. After entering this street, you soon come upon the public place, or exchange, which is a very fair one. You cross over this into the principal street, or street of Goldsmiths, full of shops in which trinkets are sold, including a world of crosses and other Christian emblems, and huge ear-rings. It is the custom in several parts of Italy for girls to carry their marriage-portion about with them in the shape of gold ear-rings and crosses; and no maid-servant thinks herself properly drest on mass-days without announcing, in this way, that she is equally fit for Heaven and a husband. The gold is very thin, but solidity is made up for by the length and width of the ornaments; and the ear-rings are often heavy enough to tear through the lobes of the ears. Imagine a brown, black-eyed girl, with her thick hair done up in combs, a white veil over it, a coloured, sometimes a white gown, large dangling gold ornaments at her ears and bosom, and perhaps bare feet or tattered shoes, and you have the complete portrait of an Italian maid-servant or peasant-girl, issuing forth to church or a dance. The men of all classes dress more like the same classes in other countries, with an exception however, as before noticed, in favour of the humbler ones. Yet you often see the old Genoese cap, evidently the still older Phrygian;¹⁶ and in Genoa you notice a set of porters from Bergamo, who wear a puckered kilt. They are a good-looking race, and are esteemed for their honesty. The burdens they carry are enormous. The labourer of Italy often shews his propensity to a piece of drapery, by hanging his jacket over his shoulders with the sleeves dangling; a custom naturally prompted by the heat.

But I forget that I am in Genoa for the first time. In England we have delicate names for some of our streets and alleys. There is Love-lane, Maiden-lane, Garden-court, Green Arbour-court, &c. but in Italy they beat us hollow. Pisa has not only Love-street and Lily-street, but Beautiful Ladies'-lane, and the Lane of the Beautiful Towers. In Genoa, after passing through Goldsmith-street, and another that leads up from it, you come out by the post-office upon the Piazza della Fontane Amoroze,¹⁷—the Place of the Amorous Fountains. There is a magnificent mansion in it, containing baths, and another adorned on the outside with paintings of festive women. But here all the houses begin to be magnificent mansions, and you again recognize "Genova la Superba." From the Piazza della Fontane Amoroze you turn into the Strada Nuova, which leads round through another sumptuous street into the Strada Balbi, fit, says Madame de Staël,¹⁸ for a congress of kings.¹⁹ This has become a poor compliment. It is fit for a congress of great men. If intellect, and not childishness, settled the destinies of the world, here might such spirits meet as the Dorias, the Miltons, the Sidneys, the Hôpitals, and the Washingtons,²⁰ and put an end at once to the tiresome farce of kings being taught to no purpose. These three streets are literally a succession of palaces on each side the way; and these palaces are of costly architecture, and are adorned inside with the works of the Italian masters. Marble is lavished every where. It is like a street raised by Aladdin,²¹ to astonish his father-in-law the Sultan. Yet there is one lamentable deficiency. Even these streets are narrow. I do not think the Strada Nuova is wider than Bond-street *without* the pavements. "A lane!" you cry. Yes, a lane of Whitehalls,²² encrusted with the richest architecture. Imagine how much the buildings lose by this confinement, and then wonder how it could

have taken place. The alleged reason is,²³ that in a hot country shade is wanted, and therefore beauty is sacrificed to utility. But the reason is a bad one: for porticos might have been used, as at Bologna,²⁴ and the street made so wide, as to render the disadvantage to the architecture a comparative nothing. The circumstance probably originated in some reasons connected with the ground, or the value of it, and the pressure of the population within the then city-walls. Some other magnificent streets built subsequently, are wider, though still a good deal too narrow. The Genoese have found out before ourselves, the folly of calling a street, New Street; but have not very wisely corrected it by naming one of their last, *Newest* Street,—Strada Nuovissima. Upon this principle, they must call the next street they build, Newer-than-all street, or Extremely-new Street, or New-of-the-very-newest-description Street. But perhaps they are somewhat hampered at present with regard to names.

I had scarcely set foot in Genoa (which was the first time I had been in the South) when I encountered a religious procession. I found chairs brought out in one of the streets, and well-dressed company seated on each side, as in a music-room. In Genoa some of the streets are paved all over. In the rest, the flat pavement is in the middle, and used both for traffic and walking. This, I suppose, originated in a vile custom which they have in several cities of Italy,—the same which Smollet²⁵ delights to speak of in Edinburgh. Accidents frequently occur in consequence; but any thing is sooner mended than a habit originating in idleness or moral indifference; and the inhabitants and the mules go on in their old way. To return to the procession. —The reader must imagine a narrow street with the company, as above-mentioned, and an avenue left for the passage of the spectacle. The curiosity expressed in the company²⁶

faces was of a very mild description, the next thing to indifference. The music is heard at a little distance, then a bustling sound of feet, and you see the friars coming up. Nearly at the head of the procession was a little live Virgin about four years old, walking in much state with a silver-looking crown on her head, and a sceptre in her hand. A pleased relation helped her along, occasionally righting the crown and sceptre, which she bore with all that royal gravity which children so soon understand. By her side was another grown person equally pleased, supporting a still smaller St. John, dressed in a lamb-skin, and apparently selected for his office on account of his red little waxen cheeks and curly flaxen hair. He did not seem quite as *au fait*²⁷ in the matter as the Virgin, but was as grave as need be, and not a little heated. A string of clergy followed in their gowns, carrying large lighted wax candles, and each one assisted by a personage, whose appearance was singularly striking to a foreigner from a Protestant country. These coadjutors were neither more nor less than the very raggedest and dirtiest fellows, old and young, in all Genoa. There was one to every light. His object was to collect the wax that fell from the candles, which he did in a piece of twisted paper; and the candle appeared purposely held low, to oblige him with as much as possible. The wax is sold by him, as consecrated. I dare say this accompaniment of pauperism has a reference to the best doctrines of the Christian religion; but it is a singular mistake, and has a most unedifying appearance. Poverty should not be in this squalid condition, especially by the side of comfortable clergymen. The faces too of the poor fellows had, for the most part, all the signs of bad education. Now and then there was a head like the beggar who sat for Sir Joshua's Ugolino,²⁸—a fine head, but still a beggar. Some were of a

portentous raffishness. As to the priests and friars (for there followed a variety) I could not help observing throughout, that with very few exceptions the countenances grew indifferent and worldly as they grew old. A few of the young ones were worthy of the heads in Raphael.²⁹ One young man had a saint-like manner with him, casting down his eyes and appearing absorbed in meditation; but I thought, when he did cast them up (which he instantly followed by casting them down again) it was in approaching the young ladies. He had certainly a head fit for an Abelard.³⁰—I spoke just now of a bustle of feet. You do not know at first to what the loudness of it is owing, but the secret is explained as a large machine approaches, preceded by music. This is a group of wax-work as large as life, carried on the shoulders of ambling friars; for they are obliged to get into that step on account of the weight. It represented, on the present occasion, St. Antonio kneeling before the Virgin, around whom were little angels fluttering like Cupids. It is impossible not to be reminded of Paganism by these spectacles. Indeed, as the Jupiter of the Capitol³¹ still sits there under his new name of St. Peter,³² so there is no doubt that the ancients, under other names, had these identical processions. The Cupids remain unaltered³³ The son of Myrrha³⁴ himself could not look more lover-like than St. Antonio, nor Venus more polite than the Virgin; and the flowers stuck all about (the favourite emblem of the Cyprian youth)³⁵ completed the likeness of an ancient festival of Adonis.³⁶ So also would the priests have looked in their ancient garments; so would have come the music and the torches (paupers excepted); and so would the young priests have looked, in passing by the young ladies. To see the grandeurs of the Catholic religion, you must consult its rarest and most serious festivals, its pictures, and its poet Dante.³⁷ I

must not forget, that among the musical instruments were violins. One set of friars wore cowls over their faces, having holes only to see through, and looking extremely hideous,—like executioners. Among those that shewed their faces, and did not seem at all ashamed of them, was one good-natured, active personage, who ran back, with much vivacity, to encourage the machine-bearers. He looked as much as to say, “It is hot enough for you, God knows;” and so it was.

Somebody has said, that in the South all the monks look like soldiers, and all the soldiers like monks. I dare say this might have been the case before the late spread of liberal opinions; but it is so no longer. In Spain and Portugal it cannot be so; though the Sardinian troops at present quartered in Genoa³⁸ are for the most part under-grown and poor-looking men. The officers however are better. They have a propensity, common I am told in the South, to over-grown caps and epaulets; but they have otherwise a manly aspect, and look more like gentlemen than any one else. This indeed is always the case, where there is any difference; military habits begetting an air of self-possession. The Piedmontese soldiery are remarkably well-dressed. They have a bad way of learning their exercise. They accompany every motion,—the whole set of men,—with a loud Ho! just as if a multitude of quick paviours were at work. This, besides encouraging noise, must take away from a ready dependance on the eye.

I went into the churches every day, when I was on shore. I liked their quiet, their coolness, and their richness. Besides, I find my own religion in some part or other of all imaginative religions. In one of the churches are pillars of porphyry, and several are very imposing; but they struck me upon the whole as exhibiting the genius of a commercial

rather than a tasteful country, and as being more weighty and expensive than any thing else. There are some good pictures; but by far the greater number adorn the houses of the nobility. In all Catholic churches, there is an unfortunate mixture of petty ornaments with great, of dusty artificial flowers with fine altar-pieces, and of wretched little votive pictures, and silver hearts and legs, stuck up by the side of the noblest pieces of art. This is another custom handed down from antiquity. I was reminded of Horace's Ode to Pyrrha,³⁹ by a painting of a shipwreck, in which the wind blew one way, and the sails another. If a man has got rid of a pain in the pericardium, he dedicates a little silver heart to the saint whose assistance he prayed for. If a toe has been the complaining party, he hangs up a toe. The general feeling is good, but not so the detail. It is affecting, however, to think, that many of the hearts hung up (and they are by far the most numerous) have been owing to pangs of the spirit. The most interesting thing I met with in the Genoese churches, next to a picture by Raphael and Giulio Romano in that of St. Stephen,⁴⁰ was a sermon by a friar on Weeping. He seemed a popular preacher, and held the attention of his audience for a good hour. His exordium was in a gentle and restrained voice, but he warmed as he went on, and became as loud and authoritative as the tenderness of his subject could well allow. He gave us an account of all sorts of Tears,—of the tears of joy, and the tears of sorrow, of penitent tears, tears of anger, spite, ill-temper, worldly regret, love, patience, &c. and from what I could collect, with an ear unaccustomed to hear Italian spoken, a very true, as well as full and particular account, it was. The style was much more florid than in our northern sermons. He spoke of murmuring rills and warbling nightingales, and admitted all the merits of poetical luxury; but

in denouncing luxury in general, it was curious to hear a stout, jovial-looking friar exhorting his auditors to value above all other enjoyments that of weeping in solitude. The natives are not likely to be too much softened by injunctions of this description.

(I find I have not dated my journal between the 16th and 22nd.)⁴¹ The houses in Genoa are very high as well as large. Many of them are painted on the outside, not only with pictures, but with imitations of architecture; and whatever we may think of such a taste, must have looked magnificent when the paintings were first executed. Some of them look so now, colours in this beautiful climate retaining their vividness for centuries out of doors. But in some instances, the paintings being done upon stucco, the latter has partly crumbled away; and this gives a shabby, dilapidated appearance to houses otherwise excellent. Nobody seems to think of repairing them. It is the same with many of the houses unpainted, and with common garden walls, most of which must have once made a splendid appearance⁴² The mere spirit of commerce has long succeeded to its ancient mixture with a better one; or Genoa would not be what it is in many respects. But a Genoese must have grand notions of houses, especially as in this city as well as the rest of Italy, shopkeepers sometimes occupy the ground floors of the finest mansions. You shall see a blacksmith or a carpenter looking out of a window where you should expect a duchess.

How I hailed the first sight of the vines and orange-trees! Neither Genoa nor even the country about it abounds in either. It is a splendid sea-port of stone and marble, and the mountains immediately about it are barren, though they soon begin to be clothed with olive-trees. But among the gigantic houses and stone walls you now and then detect a garden, with its statues and orange-trees; some of the windows have

vines trailed over them, not in the scanty fashion of our creepers, but like great luxuriant green hair hanging over the houses' eyes: and sometimes the very highest stories have a terrace along the whole length of the house embowered with them. Calling one day upon a gentleman who resided in an elevated part of the suburbs, and to get at whose abode I had walked through a hot sun and a city of stone, I was agreeably surprised, when the door opened, with a long yellow vista of an arcade of vines, at once basking in the sun and defending from it. In the suburbs there are some orchards in all the southern luxuriance of leaves and fruit. In one of these I walked among heaps of vines, olives, cherry, orange and almond trees, and had the pleasure of plucking fresh lemons from the bough, a merry old brown gardener, with a great straw-hat and bare legs, admiring all the while my regard for those common-places, and encouraging me with a good-natured paternity to do what I pleased. The cherries were Brobdignagian,⁴³ and bursting with juice. Next the orchard was a *wine-garden*, answering to our *tea-gardens*, with vine-arbours and seats as with us, where people come to drink wine and play at their games. Returning through the city, I saw a man in one of the bye streets alternately singing and playing on a pipe, exactly as we conceive of the ancient shepherds.

One night I went to the opera, which was indifferent enough, but I understand it is a good deal better sometimes. The favourite composer here, and all over Italy, is Rossini,⁴⁴ for which, as well as the utter neglect of Mozart,⁴⁵ some national feelings may enter into others less pardonable. But Rossini is undoubtedly good enough to make us glad to see genius of any sort appreciated. My northern faculties were scandalized at seeing men in the pit with *fans*! Effeminacy

is not always incompatible with courage, but it is a very dangerous help towards it; and I wondered what Doria would have said, had he seen a captain of one of his gallies indulging his cheeks in this manner.

23.⁴⁶ To-night the city was illuminated, and bonfires and rockets put in motion, in honour of St. John the Baptist.⁴⁷ The effect from the harbour was beautiful; fire, like the stars, having a brilliancy in this pure atmosphere, of which we have no conception. The scent of the perfumes employed in the bonfires was very perceptible on board ship.

24. You learn for the first time in this climate, what colours really are. No wonder it produces painters. An English artist of any enthusiasm might shed tears of vexation, to think of the dull medium through which blue and red come to him in his own atmosphere, compared with this. To-day we saw a boat pass us, which instantly reminded us of Titian,⁴⁸ and accounted for him: and yet it contained nothing but an old boatman in a red cap, and some women with him in other colours, one of them in a bright yellow petticoat. But a red cap in Italy goes by you, not like a mere cap, much less any thing vulgar or butcher-like, but like what it is, an intense specimen of the colour of red. It is like a scarlet bud in the blue atmosphere. The old boatman, with his brown hue, his white shirt, and his red cap, made a complete picture; and so did the women and the yellow petticoat. I have seen pieces of orange-coloured silk hanging out against a wall at a dyer's, which gave the eye a pleasure truly sensual. Some of these boatmen are very fine men. I was rowed to shore one day by a man the very image of Kemble.⁴⁹ He had nothing but his shirt on, and it was really grand to see the mixed power and gracefulness with which all his limbs came into play as he pulled

the oars, occasionally turning his heroic profile to give a glance behind him at other boats. They generally row standing, and pushing from them.

The most interesting sight, after all, in Genoa, was the one we first saw,—the Doria palace. Bonaparte⁵⁰ lodged there when he was in Genoa; but this, which would have been one of its greatest praises, had he done all he could have done for liberty, is one of its least. Andrew Doria dwelt there after a long life, which he spent in giving security and glory to his country, and which he crowned by his refusal of sovereign power. “I know the value,” said he, “of the liberty I have earned for my country, and shall I finish by taking it from her?” When upwards of eighty, he came forward and took the command of an armament in a rough season. His friends remonstrated, “Excuse me,” said he, “I have never yet stopped for any thing when my duty was in the way, and at my time of life one cannot get rid of one’s old habits.” This is the very perfection of a speech,—a mixture of warrantable self-esteem, modesty, energy, pathos, and pleasantry: for it contains them all. He died upwards of ninety. I asked for Doria’s descendants, and was told they were rich. The Pallavicini,⁵¹ with whom the Cromwell⁵² family were connected, are extant. I could ascertain nothing more of the other old families, except that they had acquired a considerable dislike of the English; which under all circumstances is in their favour. I found one thing however which they *did*, and I must correct, in favour of this one thing, what I have said about the Doria palace; for the sight of it upon the whole gave me still greater satisfaction; and having since returned to the neighbourhood of Genoa to live there awhile, I have had particular pleasure in going over the ground which it has rendered honourable. This is the overthrow of the Genoese

Inquisition.⁵³ There was a wish the other day to rebuild it; but this, I am told, the old families opposed; and the last ruins of it are now being cleared away. It is pleasant to see the workmen knocking its old marble jaws about.

You must take this as a mere superficial sketch of Genoa, the result of first impressions. But it is correct as far as it goes. Since my visit in the summer, I have lived in the neighbourhood for some weeks, and found nothing to alter. I have not spoken however of one main thing, the insides of the great houses. I have hitherto seen but two, and those slightly; but writers give us magnificent accounts of them, worthy of the outside. One is described as having terraces on every floor, adorned with orange-trees: and there are paintings in most from the hands of the great masters. Upon the character of the nation I feel myself still less warranted to speak from personal acquaintance; but I may observe generally, that they seem to partake of the usual faults and capabilities of an active people brought up in habits of money-getting. In an historical point of view, it is certain that Genoa has shewn both how much and how little can be done by mere commerce. A great man here and there in former times is an exception; and the princely mansions, the foundations of schools and hospitals, and the erection of costly churches, attest that in similar periods money-getting had not degenerated into miserliness. But the Genoese did not cultivate mind enough to keep up the breed of patriots; and it remained for an indignant spirit to issue out of a neighbouring arbitrary monarchy and read them lectures on their absorption in money-getting. Alfieri,⁵⁴ in his *Satire on Commerce*, ranks them with their mules.⁵⁵ It avails nothing to a people to be merely acquiring money, while the rest of the world are acquiring ideas;—a truth which more powerful governments than the late Genoese will find before long, if

they are traitors enough to their own reputation to set their faces against that nobler traffic. But this, at the present time of day, is surely impossible. It turns out, that Genoa and its neighbourhood have no pretensions to Columbus;⁵⁶ which is lucky for her. He was born at Cuccaro⁵⁷ in the province of Aqui,⁵⁸ not far from Asti,—Alfieri's birth-place. Chiabrera,⁵⁹ who is sometimes called the Italian Pindar,⁶⁰ was born near Genoa, at Savona. I have read little of him; but he must have merit to be counted an Italian Classic: and it says little for the Genoese, that I could not find a copy of his works at their principal bookseller's. Frugoni,⁶¹ their other poet, was born, I believe, in the same place. He is easy and lively, but wrote a great deal too much, probably for bread. There is a pleasant petition of his in verse to the Genoese senate, about some family claims, in which he gives an account of his debts, that must have startled the faculties of that prudent and opulent body. A few more Frugonis however, and a few less rich men, would have been better for Genoa. The best production I ever met with from a Genoese pen, is a noble sonnet by Giambattista Pastorini,⁶² a Jesuit; written, I believe, after the bombardment of the city by the troops of Louis XIV.⁶³ It begins, "Genova mia, se con asciutto ciglio." I am sorry I have it not by me to copy out. The poet glories in the resistance made by Genoa, and kisses the ruins caused by the bombardment with transport. What must have been his mortification, when he saw the Doge⁶⁴ and a number of senators set out for France, to go and apologise to Louis XIVth, for having been so erroneous as to defend their country!

There is a proverb which says of Genoa, that it has a sea without fish, land without trees, men without faith, and women without modesty. Ligurian trickery is a charge as old as Virgil.⁶⁵ But M. Millin very properly observes (*Voyage en Savoie, &c.*) that accusations of this description are gene-

rally made by jealous neighbours, and that the Genoese have most likely no more want of good faith than other Italians who keep shops.⁶⁶ I must confess, at the same time, that the most barefaced trick ever attempted to be practised on myself, was by a Genoese. The sea, it is said, has plenty of fish, only the duty on it is very high, and the people prefer butchers' meat. This is hardly a good reason why fish is not eaten at a sea-port. Perhaps it is naturally scarce at the extreme point of a gulf like that of Genoa. The land is naked enough, certainly, in the immediate vicinity, though it soon begins to be otherwise. As to the women, they have fine eyes and figures, but by no means appear destitute of modesty; and modesty has much to do with appearance. The charge of want of modesty is, at all times and in all places, the one most likely to be made by those who have no modesty themselves.

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- ¹ Epithet used by the Italian poet Francesco Petrarca (1304-74) in one of his epigraphs (“Epigrafe III”, l. 21).
- ² Misprint (possible language transfer from the Italian *Appennini*) for *Apennines*.
- ³ The city of Genoa.
- ⁴ Reference to Villa del Principe in Genoa, where the Genoese explorer and statesman Andrea Doria (1466-1560) spent many years.
- ⁵ Misspelling of *title*.
- ⁶ John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1688), III.11.
- ⁷ *it’s*: nonstandard variant form of *its*, frequent in Hunt’s writings.
- ⁸ Misprint for *monkeys*.
- ⁹ *ad infinitum* (Latin): again and again; forever.
- ¹⁰ *sordidimps* ... or *Decker*: reference to the spirits in Philip Massinger (1583-1640) and Thomas Dekker’s (c.1572-1632) play *The Virgin Martyr* (1620).
- ¹¹ Reference to *The Thousand and One Nights* (1706, first English translation), where Sinbad the Sailor, one of the protagonists of the saga, encounters the character during one of his voyages.
- ¹² Leghorn (Livorno in Italian), Italian city in the region of Tuscany.
- ¹³ Reference to William Hazlitt’s essay (possibly co-authored with Leigh Hunt) “Brummelliana” (1820), (Hazlitt 2007, 332).
- ¹⁴ Bond Street, one of the most important streets in the city centre of London, renowned for its shops.
- ¹⁵ Misspelling of *potato*.
- ¹⁶ Phrygian cap, typical headdress made of wood or felt with a conical shape originating in the country of Phrygia, Anatolia.
- ¹⁷ Piazza delle Fontane Amoroze (Hunt’s misspelling in the text), square in the city centre of Genoa.
- ¹⁸ Germaine de Staël (1766-1817), French-Swiss writer, political activist, and author of the novel *Corinne, or Italy* (*Corinne, ou l’Italie*) (1807).
- ¹⁹ *fit ... for a congress of kings*: remark commonly attributed to Madame de Staël.
- ²⁰ *the Dorias ... the Washingtons*: references to the Genoese statesman Andrea Doria (1466-1560), the English poet John Milton (1608-74), the English poet Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86), probably the French mathematician Guillaume de l’Hôpital (1661-1704), and the president of the United States, George Washington (1732-99).
- ²¹ Aladdin, character in one of the most famous stories collected in *The Thousand and One Nights*.
- ²² Whitehall, street and area in central London.
- ²³ Mispunctuation.
- ²⁴ Bologna, city in northern Italy, in the Emilia Romagna region, well known for its porticos.
- ²⁵ Tobias Smollett (1721-71), Scottish writer, here mentioned by Hunt for his *Travels Through France and Italy* (1766).
- ²⁶ Misprint for *company’s*.
- ²⁷ *au fait* (French): to be well instructed or ‘up to the mark’ (*OED*).
- ²⁸ Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-92), British painter. Hunt refers to his painting “Count Ugolino and his Children in the Dungeon” (1773).
- ²⁹ Raphael (1483-1520), Italian painter, one of the finest artists of the Italian Renaissance.
- ³⁰ Pierre Abélard (Peter Abelard in English) (1079-1142), French theologian and philosopher, condemned for heresy for his tragic love affair with one of his pupils.
- ³¹ Reference to the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, or Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, sited on the Capitoline Hill in Rome. It was the most important temple serving as a religious centre.
- ³² Reference to St. Peter’s Cathedral, located in the Vatican City.
- ³³ Mispunctuation: full stop missing from the copy-text.
- ³⁴ In Greek mythology, Adonis, son of Myrrha and Theias, was a youth of remarkable beauty and the lover of the goddesses Aphrodite, also known as Venus.

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³⁵ *the flowers ... Cyprian youth*: reference to Adonis, who, according to the legend, spent time with his lover Aphrodite in Cyprus. After his death, Adonis became an anemone flower.

³⁶ Comparison between the Christian procession and a pagan rite.

³⁷ Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), Italian poet and prose writer. His best-known work is the epic poem *The Divine Comedy* (*La Divina Commedia*, c. 1307-20).

³⁸ Genoa became part of the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont after the Congress of Vienna (1815). The kingdom comprised the island of Sardinia, the region of Piedmont (northwestern part of Italy), Savoy (a territory west of the Alps, now southeastern France), and Nice.

³⁹ *Ad Pyrrham* (23 BCE), ode by Horace (65- 8 BCE), Roman lyric poet.

⁴⁰ Reference to the *Stoning of St Stephen* (1521), painting by Giulio Romano (1492-1546), Raphael's assistant, displayed in church di Santo Stefano, Genoa.

⁴¹ The text under brackets was possibly not intended for publication, as it was not included in the relevant section of *The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt* (1850).

⁴² Mispunctuation: full stop missing from the copy-text.

⁴³ Brobdingnagian, huge, of large proportion. The adjective was used by Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) in his *Gulliver's Travels* (1726).

⁴⁴ Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), the most internationally successful and influential Italian composer of operas in the early nineteenth century.

⁴⁵ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91), Austrian composer and pianist, one of the most celebrated musicians in the Western world.

⁴⁶ This and the following number are references to the dates (23 and 24 June 1822) that Hunt kept in his journal. They were probably not intended for publication, as they are not mentioned in *The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt* (1850).

⁴⁷ St. John the Baptist, Patron Saint of the city of Geona, who is celebrated on 24 June.

⁴⁸ Tiziano Vecellio (c. 1485-1576), Italian painter of the Renaissance period.

⁴⁹ John Philip Kemble (1757-1823), British actor and manager of two theatres in London: the Drury Lane and Covent Garden. He was renowned for his gentleness and grace of his acting.

⁵⁰ Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), French general and statesman who played a pivotal role in the French Revolution. Napoleon was in Genoa in 1805.

⁵¹ The Pallavicini family, one of the oldest and most influential noble families in northern Italy, had two main branches, one in Lombardy and one in Genoa.

⁵² The Cromwell family, English aristocratic family. Among its most prominent members is Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), statesman who played a key role in the English Civil Wars and who was awarded the title of Lord Protector (1653-58) during the republican Commonwealth (1649-60).

⁵³ Reference to the Inquisition in Genoa. The inquisition was originally established to combat heresy in the Middle Ages.

⁵⁴ Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), Italian poet and dramatist, particularly renowned for his tragedies, such as *Mirra* (1789) and *Saul* (1782).

⁵⁵ Reference to Vittorio Alfieri's "Satira XII. Il Commercio" (1804), l. 148.

⁵⁶ Cristoforo Colombo (1451-1506), Italian explorer associated with the discovery of the new world.

⁵⁷ Columbus's birthplace is conventionally considered to be Genoa. Hunt refers to the hypothesis that Columbus may have been born in Cuccaro, near Alessandria. This theory is based on the alleged family relation between Columbus and the marquises of Cuccaro Monferrato.

⁵⁸ Acqui Terme, city in Piedmont, Italy, near Asti.

⁵⁹ Gabriello Chiabrera (1552-1638), Italian poet.

⁶⁰ Pindar (c. 518-446 BCE), Greek lyric poet, renowned for his odes.

⁶¹ Carlo Innocenzo Frugoni (1692-1768), Italian poet, satirist and librettist, member of the Arcadian Academy.

⁶² Giovanni Battista Pastorini (1650-1732), Italian writer, Jesuit, and professor of theology and philosophy. Hunt refers to Pastorini's sonnet "Genova mia" (1684), written when the city was bombarded by the French in 1684.

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⁶³ Louis XIV (1638-1715, reigned 1643-1715), king of France, and among the highest representatives of the monarchical absolutism.

⁶⁴ The Doge was the chief magistrate in the Republic of Genoa between 1339 and 1797.

⁶⁵ Virgil (70-19 BCE), Roman poet whose most renowned work is the epic poem the *Aeneid*.

⁶⁶ Aubin-Louis Millin (1759-1818), French antiquarian and art historian. Hunt refers to his *Voyages en Savoie, en Piémont, à Nice, et à Gênes* (1866), 2:272.

A TALE OF THE PASSIONS.*

AFTER the death of Manfred,¹ King of Naples, the Ghibellines² lost their ascendancy throughout Italy. The exiled Guelphs³ returned to their native cities; and not contented with resuming the reins of government, they prosecuted their triumph until the Ghibellines in their turn were obliged to fly, and to mourn in banishment over the violent party spirit which had before occasioned their bloody victories, and now their irretrievable defeat. After an obstinate contest the Florentine Ghibellines were forced to quit their native town; their estates were confiscated; their attempts to reinstate themselves frustrated; and receding from castle to castle, they at length took refuge in Lucca, and awaited with impatience the arrival of Corradino⁴ from Germany, through whose influence they hoped again to establish the Imperial supremacy.

The first of May⁵ was ever a day of rejoicing and festivity at Florence. The youth of both sexes, of the highest rank, paraded the streets, crowned with flowers, and singing the canzonets⁶ of the day. In the evening they assembled in the *Piazza del Duomo*,⁷ and spent the hours in dancing. The *Carroccio*⁸ was led through the principal streets, the ringing of its bell drowned in the peals that rang from every belfry in the city, and in the music of fifes and drums which made a part of the procession that followed it. The triumph of the reigning party in Florence caused them to celebrate the

* Author: Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley / Transcribed and annotated by Fabio Liberto.

anniversary of the first of May, 1268, with peculiar splendour. They had indeed hoped that Charles d'Anjou,⁹ King of Naples, the head of the Guelphs in Italy, and then *Vicare*¹⁰ of their republic, would have been there to adorn the festival by his presence. But the expectation of Corradino had caused the greater part of his newly conquered and oppressed kingdom to revolt, and he had hastily quitted Tuscany to secure by his presence those conquests of which his avarice and cruelty endangered the loss. But although Charles somewhat feared the approaching contest with Corradino, the Florentine Guelphs, newly reinstated in their city and possessions, did not permit a fear to cloud their triumph. The principal families vied with each other in the display of their magnificence during the festival. The knights followed the *Carrocchio* on horseback, and the windows were filled with ladies who leant upon gold-inwoven carpets, while their own dresses, at once simple and elegant, their only ornaments flowers, contrasted with the glittering tapestry and the brilliant colours of the flags of the various communities. The whole population of Florence poured into the principal streets, and none were left at home, except the decrepid and sick, unless it were some discontented Ghibelline, whose fear, poverty, or avarice, had caused him to conceal his party, when it had been banished from the city.

It was not the feeling of discontent which prevented Monna¹¹ Gegia de' Becari¹² from being among the first of the revellers; and she looked angrily on what she called her "Ghibelline leg," which fixed her to her chair on such a day of triumph. The sun shone in all its glory in an unclouded sky, and caused the fair Florentines to draw their *fazioles*¹³ over their dark eyes, and to bereave the youth of those beams more vivifying than the sun's rays. The same sun poured its full light into the lonely apartment of Monna

Gegia, and almost extinguished the fire which was lighted in the middle of the room, over which hung the pot of *minestra*,¹⁴ the dinner of the dame and her husband. But she had deserted the fire and was seated by her window, holding her beads in her hand, while every now and then she peeped from her lattice (five stories high) into the narrow lane below,—but no creature passed. She looked at the opposite window; a cat slept there beside a pot of heliotrope, but no human being was heard or seen;—they had all gone to the *Piazza del Duomo*.

Monna Gegia was an old woman, and her dress of green *calrasio*¹⁵ shewed that she belonged to one of the *Arti Minori*.¹⁶ Her head was covered by a red kerchief, which, folded triangularly, hung loosely over it; her grey hairs were combed back from her high and wrinkled brow. The quickness of her eye spoke the activity of her mind, and the slight irritability that lingered about the corners of her lips might be occasioned by the continual war maintained between her bodily and mental faculties.—“Now, by St. John!”¹⁷ she said, “I would give my gold cross to make one of them; though by giving that I should appear on a *fiesta*¹⁸ without that which no *fiesta* yet ever found me wanting.”—And as she spoke she looked with great complacency on a large but thin gold cross which was tied round her withered neck by a ribbon, once black, now of a rusty brown.—“Methinks this leg of mine is bewitched; and it may well be that my Ghibelline husband has used the black art to hinder me from following the *Carrocio*¹⁹ with the best of them.”—A slight sound as of footsteps in the street far below interrupted the good woman’s soliloquy.—“Perhaps it is Monna Lisabetta, or Messer²⁰ Giani dei Agli,²¹ the weaver, who mounted the breach first when the castle of Pagibonzi²² was taken.”—She looked down, but could see no one, and was about to relapse into her old

train of thoughts, when her attention was again attracted by the sound of steps ascending the stairs: they were slow and heavy, but she did not doubt who her visitant was when a key was applied to the hole of the door; the latch was lifted up, and a moment after, with an unassured mien and downcast eyes, her husband entered.

He was a short stunted man, more than sixty years of age; his shoulders were broad and high; his legs short; his lank hair, though it grew now only on the back of his head, was still coal-black; his brows were overhanging and bushy; his eyes black and quick; his complexion dark and weather-beaten: his lips as it were contradicted the sternness of the upper part of his face, for their gentle curve betokened even delicacy of sentiment, and his smile was inexpressibly sweet, although a short, bushy, grey beard somewhat spoiled the expression of his countenance. His dress consisted of leather trowsers and a kind of short, coarse, cloth tunic, confined at the waist by a leathern girdle. He had on a low-crowned, red, cloth cap, which he drew over his eyes, and seating himself on a low bench by the fire, he heaved a deep sigh. He appeared disinclined to enter into any conversation, but Monna Gegia, looking on him with a smile of ineffable contempt, was resolved that he should not enjoy his melancholy mood uninterrupted.—“Have you been to mass, Cincolo?”—she asked; beginning by a question sufficiently removed from the point she longed to approach.—He shrugged his shoulders uneasily, but did not reply.—“You are too early for your dinner,” continued Gegia; “Do you not go out again?”—Cincolo answered, “No!” in an accent that denoted his disinclination to further questioning. But this very impatience only served to feed the spirit of contention that was fermenting in the bosom of Gegia.—“You are not used,” she said, “to pass your May days under your chimney.”—No answer.—“Well,” she

continued, "if you will not speak, I have done!"—meaning that she intended to begin—"but by that lengthened face of thine I see that some good news is stirring abroad, and I bless the Virgin for it, whatever it may be. Come, if thou be not too curst, tell me what happy tidings make thee so woe-begone."—

Cincolo remained silent for awhile, then turning half round but not looking at his wife, he replied,—“What if old Marzio the lion²³ be dead?”—Gegia turned pale at the idea, but a smile that lurked in the good-natured mouth of her husband reassured her. “Nay, St. John defend us!” she began;—“but that is not true. Old Marzio’s death would not drive you within these four walls, except it were to triumph over your old wife. By the blessing of St. John, not one of our lions have died since the eve of the battle of Monte Aperto;²⁴ and I doubt not that they were poisoned; for Mari, who fed them that night, was more than half a Ghibelline in his heart. Besides, the bells are still ringing, and the drums still beating, and all would be silent enough if old Marzio were to die. On the first of May too! Santa Reparata²⁵ is too good to us to allow such ill luck;—and she has more favour, I trust, in the seventh heaven than all the Ghibelline saints in your calendar. No, good Cincolo, Marzio is not dead, nor the Holy Father, nor Messer Carlo of Naples;²⁶ but I would bet my gold cross against the wealth of your banished men, that Pisa²⁷ is taken—or Corradino—or—” — “And I here! No, Gegia, old as I am, and much as you need my help (and that last is why I am here at all) Pisa would not be taken while this old body could stand in the breach; or Corradino die, till this lazy blood were colder on the ground than it is in my body. Ask no more questions, and do not rouse me: there is no news, no good or ill luck, that I know. But when I saw the Neri, the Pulci, the Buon-

delmonti,²⁸ and the rest of them, ride like kings through the streets, whose very hands are hardly dry from the blood of my kindred; when I saw their daughter crowned with flowers, and thought how the daughter of Arrigo dei Elisei was mourning for her murdered father, with ashes on her head, by the hearth of a stranger—my spirit must be more dead than it is if such a sight did not make me wish to drive among them; and methought I could scatter their pomp with my awl for a sword. But I remembered thee, and am here unstained with blood.”

“That thou wilt never be!” cried Monna Gegia, the colour rising in her wrinkled cheeks:—“Since the battle of Monte Aperto, thou hast never been well washed of that shed by thee and thy confederates;—and how could ye? for the Arno²⁹ has never since run clear of the blood then spilt.”—“And if the sea were red with that blood, still while there is any of the Guelphs’ to spill, I am ready to spill it, were it not for thee. Thou dost well to mention Monte Aperto, and thou wouldst do better to remember over whom its grass now grows.”—“Peace, Cincolo; a mother’s heart has more memory in it than thou thinkest; and I well recollect who spurned me as I knelt, and dragged my only child, but sixteen years of age, to die in the cause of that misbeliever Manfred. Let us indeed speak no more. Woe was the day when I married thee! but those were happy times when there was neither Guelph nor Ghibelline;—they will never return.”—“Never,—until, as thou sayest, the Arno run clear of the blood shed on its banks;—never while I can pierce the heart of a Guelph;—never till both parties are cold under one bier.”—“And thou and I, Cincolo?”—“Are two old fools, and shall be more at peace under ground than above it. Rank Guelph as thou art, I married thee before I was a Ghibelline; so now I must eat from the same platter

with the enemy of Manfred, and make shoes for Guelphs, instead of following the fortunes of Corradino, and sending them, my battle-axe in my hand, to buy their shoes in Bologna.”³⁰—“Hush! hush! good man, talk not so loud of thy party; hearest thou not that some one knocks?”—

Cincolo went to open the door with the air of a man who thinks himself ill used at being interrupted in his discourse, and is disposed to be angry with the intruder, however innocent he might be of any intention of breaking in upon his eloquent complaint. The appearance of his visitor calmed his indignant feelings. He was a youth whose countenance and person shewed that he could not be more than sixteen, but there was a self-possession in his demeanour and a dignity in his physiognomy that belonged to a more advanced age. His figure though not tall was slight; and his countenance though of wonderful beauty and regularity of feature, was pale as monumental marble; the thick and curling locks of his chestnut hair clustered over his brow and round his fair throat; his cap was drawn far down on his forehead. Cincolo was about to usher him with deference into his humble room, but the youth staid him with his hand, and uttered the words “*Swabia, Cavalieri!*”³¹ the words by which the Ghibellines were accustomed to recognize each other. He continued in a low and hurried tone: “Your wife is within?”—“She is.”—“Enough; although I am a stranger to you, I come from an old friend. Harbour me until nightfall; we will then go out, and I will explain to you the motives of my intrusion. Call me Ricciardo de’ Rossini of Milan, travelling to Rome. I leave Florence this evening.”

Having said these words, without giving Cincolo time to reply, he motioned that they should enter the room. Monna Gegia had fixed her eyes on the door from the moment he had opened it with a look of impatient curiosity; when she

saw the youth enter she could not refrain from exclaiming —“Gesu Maria!”³²—so different was he from any one she had expected to see.—“A friend from Milan,” said Cincolo.—“More likely from Lucca,” replied his wife, gazing on her visitant:—“You are doubtless one of the banished men, and you are more daring than wise to enter this town: however, if you be not a spy, you are safe with me.”—Ricciardo smiled and thanked her in a low, sweet voice:—“If you do not turn me out,” he said, “I shall remain under your roof nearly all the time I remain in Florence, and I leave it soon after dusk.”

Gegia again gazed on her guest, nor did Cincolo scrutinize him with less curiosity. His black cloth tunic reached below his knees and was confined by a black leather girdle at the waist. He had on trowsers of coarse scarlet stuff, over which were drawn short boots, such as are now seen on the stage only: a cloak of common fox’s fur, unlined, hung from his shoulder. But although his dress was thus simple, it was such as was then worn by the young Florentine nobility. At that time the Italians were simple in their private habits: the French army led by Charles d’Anjou into Italy first introduced luxury into the palaces of the Cisalpines.³³ Manfred was a magnificent prince, but it was his saintly rival who was the author of that trifling foppery of dress and ornaments, which degrades a nation, and is a sure precursor of their downfall. But of Ricciardo—his countenance had all the regularity of a Grecian head; and his blue eyes, shaded by very long, dark eyelashes, were soft, yet full of expression: when he looked up, the heavy lids, as it were, unveiled the gentle light beneath, and then again closed over them, as shading what was too brilliant to behold. His lips expressed the deepest sensibility, and something perhaps of timidity, had not the placid confidence of his demeanour forbidden such

an idea. His appearance was extraordinary, for he was young and delicate of frame, while the decision of his manner prevented the feeling of pity from arising in the spectator's mind: you might love him, but he rose above compassion.

His host and hostess were at first silent; but he asked some natural questions about the buildings of their city, and by degrees led them into discourse. When mid-day struck, Cincolo looked towards his pot of *minestra*, and Ricciardo following his look, asked if that was not the dinner. "You must entertain me," he said, "for I have not eaten to-day." A table was drawn near the window, and the *minestra* poured out into one plate was placed in the middle of it, a spoon was given to each, and a jug of wine filled from a barrel. Ricciardo looked at the two old people, and seemed somewhat to smile at the idea of eating from the same plate with them; he ate, however, though sparingly, and drank of the wine, though with still greater moderation. Cincolo, however, under pretence of serving his guest, filled his jug a second time, and was about to rise for the third measure, when Ricciardo, placing his small white hand on his arm, said, "Are you a German, my friend, that you cease not after so many draughts? I have heard that you Florentines were a sober people."

Cincolo was not much pleased with this reproof; but he felt that it was timely; so, conceding the point, he sat down again, and somewhat heated with what he had already drank, he asked his guest the news from Germany, and what hopes for the good cause? Monna Gegia bridled at these words, and Ricciardo replied, "Many reports are abroad, and high hopes entertained, especially in the North of Italy, for the success of our expedition. Corradino is arrived at Genoa,³⁴ and it is hoped that, although the ranks

of his army were much thinned by the desertion of his German troops, that they will be quickly filled by Italians, braver and truer than those foreigners, who, strangers to our soil, could not fight for his cause with our ardour.”—“And how does he bear himself?”—“As beseems one of the house of Swabia, and the nephew of Manfred. He is inexperienced and young, even to childishness. He is not more than sixteen. His mother would hardly consent to this expedition, but wept with agony at the fear of all he might endure: for he has been bred in a palace, nursed in every luxury, and habituated to all the flattering attentions of courtiers, and the tender care of a woman, who, although she be a princess, has waited on him with the anxious solicitude of a cottager for her infant. But Corradino is of good heart; docile, but courageous; obedient to his wiser friends, gentle to his inferiors, but noble of soul, the spirit of Manfred seems to animate his unfolding mind; and surely, if that glorious prince now enjoys the reward of his surpassing virtues, he looks down with joy and approbation on him who is, I trust, destined to fill his throne.”

The enthusiasm with which Ricciardo spoke suffused his pale countenance with a slight blush, while his eyes swam in the lustre of the dew that filled them. Monna Gegia was little pleased with his harangue, but curiosity kept her silent, while her husband proceeded to question his guest. “You seem to be well acquainted with Corradino?”—“I saw him at Milan, and was closely connected with his most intimate friend there. As I have said, he has arrived at Genoa, and perhaps has even now landed at Pisa: he will find many friends in that town?” “Every man there will be his friend. But during his journey southward he will have to contend with our Florentine army, commanded by the Marshals of the usurper Charles, and assisted by his troops.

Charles himself has left us, and is gone to Naples to prepare for this war. But he is detested there, as a tyrant and a robber, and Corradino will be received in the Regno³⁵ as a saviour: so that if he once surmount the obstacles which oppose his entrance, I do not doubt his success, and trust that he will be crowned within a month at Rome, and the week after sit on the throne of his ancestors in Naples."

"And who will crown him?" cried Gegia, unable to contain herself: "Italy contains no heretic base enough to do such a deed, unless it be a Jew; or he send to Constantinople³⁶ for a Greek, or to Egypt for a Mahometan.³⁷ Cursed may the race of the Frederics³⁸ ever be! Thrice cursed one who has affinity to that miscreant Manfred! And little do you please me, young man, by holding such discourse in my house." Cincolo looked at Ricciardo, as if he feared that so violent a partisan for the house of Swabia would be irritated at his wife's attack; but he was looking on the aged woman with a regard of the most serene benignity; no contempt even was mingled with the gentle smile that played round his lips. "I will restrain myself," he said; and turning to Cincolo, he conversed on more general subjects, describing the various cities of Italy that he had visited; discussing their modes of government, and relating anecdotes concerning their inhabitants, with an air of experience that, contrasted with his youthful appearance, greatly impressed Cincolo, who looked on him at once with admiration and respect. Evening came on. The sound of bells died away after the *Ave Maria*³⁹ had ceased to ring; but the distant sound of music was wafted to them by the night air, and its quick time indicated that the music was already begun. Ricciardo was about to address Cincolo, when a knocking at the gate interrupted him. It was Buzeccha,⁴⁰ the Saracen,⁴¹ a famous chess-player, who was used to parade about

under the colonnades of the Duomo,⁴² and challenge the young nobles to play; and sometimes much stress was laid on these games, and the gain and loss became the talk of Florence. Buzeccha was a tall ungainly man, with all that good-natured consequence of manner, which the fame he had acquired by his proficiency in so trifling a science, and the familiarity with which he was permitted to treat those superior to him in rank, who were pleased to measure their forces with him, might well bestow. He was beginning with, "Eh, Messere!" when perceiving Ricciardo, he cried, "Who have we here?" "A friend to good men," replied Ricciardo, smiling. "Then, by Mahomet, thou art my friend, my stripling." "Thou shouldst be a Saracen, by thy speech?" said Ricciardo. "And through the help of the Prophet, so am I. One who in Manfred's time—but no more of that. We won't talk of Manfred, eh, Monna Gegia? I am Buzeccha, the chess-player, at your service, Messer lo Forestiere."

The introduction thus made, they began to talk of the procession of the day. After a while, Buzeccha introduced his favourite subject of chess-playing; he recounted some wonderfully good strokes he had achieved, and related to Ricciardo how before the *Palagio del Popolo*,⁴³ in the presence of Count Guido Novello de' Giudi,⁴⁴ then *Vicare* of the city, he had played an hour at three chess-boards with three of the best chess-players in Florence, playing two by memory, and one by sight; and out of three games which made the board, he had won two.⁴⁵ This account was wound up by a proposal to play with his host. "Thou art a hard-headed fellow, Cincolo, and make better play than the nobles. I would swear that thou thinkest of chess only as thou cobblest thy shoes; every hole of your awl is a square of the board, every stitch a move, and a finished pair, paid

for, check-mate to your adversary; eh! Cincolo? Bring out the field of battle, man." Ricciardo interposed, "I leave Florence in two hours, and before I go, Messer Cincolo promised to conduct me to the *Piazza del Duomo*." "Plenty of time, good youth," cried Buzeccha, arranging his men; "I only claim one game, and my games never last more than a quarter of an hour; and then we will both escort you, and you shall dance a set into the bargain with a black-eyed Hour, all Nazarene as thou art. So stand out of my light, good youth, and shut the window, if you have heeding, that the torch flare not so."

Ricciardo seemed amused by the authoritative⁴⁶ tone of the chess-player; he shut the window and trimmed the torch, which, stuck against the wall, was the only light they had, and stood by the table, over-looking the game. Monna Gegia had replaced the pot for supper, and sat somewhat uneasily, as if she were displeased that her guest did not talk with her. Cincolo and Buzeccha were deeply intent on their game, when a knock was heard at the door. Cincolo was about to rise and open it, but Ricciardo saying, "Do not disturb yourself," opened it himself, with the manner of one who does humble offices as if ennobling them, so that no one action can be more humble to them than another. The visitant was welcomed by Gegia alone, with "Ah! Messer Beppe, this is kind, on May-day night." Ricciardo glanced slightly on him, and then resumed his stand by the players. There was little in Messer Beppe to attract a favourable regard. He was short, thin, and dry; his face long-drawn and liny; his eyes deep-set and scowling; his lips straight, his nose hooked, and his head covered by a close scull-cap, his hair cut close all round. He sat down near Gegia, and began to discourse in a whining, servile voice, complimenting her on her good looks, launching

forth into praise of the magnificence of certain Guelph Florentines, and concluded by declaring that he was hungry and tired.—“Hungry, Beppe?” said Gegia, “that should have been your first word, friend. Cincolo, wilt thou give thy guest to eat? Cincolo, art thou deaf? Art thou blind? Dost thou not hear? Wilt thou not see?—Here is Messer Giuseppe de’ Bosticchi.”⁴⁷

Cincolo slowly, his eyes still fixed on the board, was about to rise. But the name of the visitant seemed to have the effect of magic on Ricciardo. “Bosticchi!” he cried—“Giuseppe Bosticchi! I did not expect to find that man beneath thy roof, Cincolo, all Guelph as thy wife is—for she also has eaten of the bread of the Elisei. Farewell! thou wilt find me in the street below; follow me quickly.” He was about to go, but Bosticchi placed himself before the door, saying in a tone whose whine expressed mingled rage and servility, “In what have I offended this young gentleman? Will he not tell me my offence?”—“Dare not to stop my way,” cried Ricciardo, passing his hand before his eyes, “nor force me again to look on thee—Begone!” Cincolo stopt him: “Thou art too hasty, and far too passionate, my noble guest,” said he: “however this man may have offended thee, thou art too violent.” “Violent!” cried Ricciardo, almost suffocated by passionate emotion—“Aye, draw thy knife, and shew the blood of Arrigo dei Elisei with which it is still stained.”

A dead silence followed. Bosticchi slunk out of the room; Ricciardo hid his face in his hands and wept. But soon he calmed his passion and said:—“This is indeed childish. Pardon me; that man is gone; excuse and forget my violence. Resume thy game, Cincolo, but conclude it quickly, for time gains on us—Hark! an hour of night sounds from the Campanile.”⁴⁸ “The game is already concluded,” said

Buzeccha, sorrowfully, "thy cloak overthrew the best check-mate this head ever planned—so God forgive thee!" "Check-mate!" cried the indignant Cincolo, "Check-mate! and my queen mowing you down, rank and file!"—"Let us begone," exclaimed Ricciardo: "Messer Buzeccha, you will play out your game with Monna Gezia.⁴⁹ Cincolo will return ere long." So taking his host by the arm, he drew him out of the room, and descended the narrow high stairs with the air of one to whom those stairs were not unknown.

When in the street he slackened his pace, and first looking round to assure himself that none overheard their conversation, he addressed Cincolo:—"Pardon me, my dear friend; I am hasty, and the sight of that man made every drop of my blood cry aloud in my veins. But I do not come here to indulge in private sorrows or private revenge, and my design ought alone to engross me. It is necessary for me to see, speedily and secretly, Messer Guielmo Lostendardo,⁵⁰ the Neapolitan commander. I bear a message to him from the Countess Elizabeth,⁵¹ the mother of Corradino, and I have some hope that its import may induce him to take at least a neutral part during the impending conflict. I have chosen you, Cincolo, to aid me in this, for not only you are of that little note in your town that you may act for me without attracting observation, but you are brave and true, and I may confide to your known worth. Lostendardo resides⁵² at the *Palagio del Governo*;⁵³ when I enter its doors I am in the hands of my enemies, and its dungeons may alone know the secret of my destiny. I hope better things. But if after two hours I do not appear or let you hear of my welfare, carry this packet to Corradino at Pisa: you will then learn who I am, and if you feel any indignation at my fate,

let that feeling attach you still more strongly to the cause for which I live and die."

As Ricciardo spoke he still walked on; and Cincolo observed, that without his guidance he directed his steps towards the *Palagio del Governo*. "I do not understand this," said the old man;—"by what argument, unless you bring one from the other world, do you hope to induce Messer Guielmo to aid Corradino? He is so bitter an enemy of Manfred, that although that Prince is dead, yet when he mentions his name he grasps the air as it were a dagger. I have heard him with horrible imprecations curse the whole house of Swabia." A tremor shook the frame of Ricciardo, but he replied, "Lostendardo was once the firmest support of that house and the friend of Manfred. Strange circumstances gave birth in his mind to this unnatural hatred, and he became a traitor. But perhaps now that Manfred is in Paradise, the youth, the virtues, and the inexperience of Corradino may inspire him with more generous feelings and reawaken his ancient faith. At least I must make this last trial. This cause is too holy, too sacred, to admit of common forms of reasoning or action. The nephew of Manfred must sit upon the throne of his ancestors; and to achieve that I will endure what I am about to endure."

They entered the palace of government. Messer Guielmo was carousing in the great hall. "Bear this ring to him, good Cincolo, and say that I wait. Be speedy, that my courage, my life, do not desert me at the moment of trial."—Cincolo, casting one more inquisitive glance on his extraordinary companion, obeyed his orders, while the youth leant against one of the pillars of the court and passionately cast up his eyes to the clear firmament. "Oh, ye stars!" he cried in a smothered voice, "ye are eternal; let my purpose, my will, be as constant as ye!" Then, more calm, he folded

his arms in his cloak, and with strong inward struggle endeavoured to repress his emotion. Several servants approached him and bade him follow them. Again he looked at the sky and said, "Manfred," and then he walked on with slow but firm steps. They led him through several halls and corridors to a large apartment hung with tapestry, and well lighted by numerous torches; the marble of the floor reflected their glare, and the arched roof echoed the footsteps of one who paced the apartment as Ricciardo entered. It was Lostendardo. He made a sign that the servants should retire; the heavy door closed behind them, and Ricciardo stood alone with Messer Guielmo; his countenance pale but composed, his eyes cast down as in expectation, not in fear; and but for the convulsive motion of his lips, you would have guessed that every faculty was almost suspended by intense agitation.

Lostendardo approached. He was a man in the prime of life, tall and athletic; he seemed capable with a single exertion to crush the frail being of Ricciardo. Every feature of his countenance spoke of the struggle of passions, and the terrible egotism of one who would sacrifice even himself to the establishment of his will: his black eyebrows were scattered, his grey eyes deep set and scowling, his look at once stern and haggard. A smile seemed never to have disturbed the settled scorn which his lips expressed; his high forehead, already becoming bald, was marked by a thousand contradictory lines. His voice was studiously restrained as he said: "Wherefore do you bring that ring?"—Ricciardo looked up and met his eye, which glanced fire as he exclaimed—"Despina!" He seized her hand with a giant's grasp—"I have prayed for this night and day, and thou art now here! Nay, do not struggle; you are mine; for by my salvation I swear that thou shalt never again escape me."

Despina replied calmly—"Thou mayst well believe that in thus placing myself in thy power I do not dread any injury thou canst inflict upon me,—or I were not here. I do not fear thee, for I do not fear death. Loosen then thy hold, and listen to me. I come in the name of those virtues that were once thine; I come in the name of all noble sentiment, generosity, and ancient faith; and I trust that in listening to me your heroic nature will second my voice, and that Lostendardo will no longer rank with those whom the good and great never name but to condemn."

Lostendardo appeared to attend little to what she said. He gazed on her with triumph and malignant pride; and if he still held her, his motive appeared rather the delight he felt in displaying his power over her, than any fear that she would escape. You might read in her pale cheek and glazed eye, that if she feared, it was herself alone that she mistrusted; that her design lifted her above mortal dread, and that she was as impassive as the marble she resembled to any event that did not either advance or injure the object for which she came. They were both silent, until Lostendardo leading her to a seat, and then standing opposite to her, his arms folded, every feature dilated by triumph, and his voice sharpened by agitation, he said: "Well, speak! What wouldst thou with me?"—"I come to request, that if you can not be induced to assist Prince Corradino in the present struggle, you will at least stand neutral, and not oppose his advance to the kingdom of his ancestors." Lostendardo laughed. The vaulted roof repeated the sound, but the harsh echo, though it resembled the sharp cry of an animal of prey whose paw is on the heart of its enemy, was not so discordant and dishuman as the laugh itself. "How," he asked, "dost thou pretend to induce me to comply? This dagger," and he touched the hilt of one, that was half con-

cealed in his vesture, "is yet stained by the blood of Manfred; ere long it will be sheathed in the heart of that foolish boy."

Despina conquered the feeling of horror these words inspired, and replied: "Will you give me a few minutes' patient hearing?"—"I will give you a few minutes' hearing, and if I be not so patient as in the Palagio Reale,⁵⁴ fair Despina must excuse me. Forbearance is not a virtue to which I aspire."—"Yes, it was in the Palagio Reale at Naples, the palace of Manfred, that you first saw me. You were then the bosom friend of Manfred, selected by that choice specimen of humanity as his confidant and counsellor. Why did you become a traitor? Start not at that word: if you could hear the united voice of Italy, and even of those who call themselves your friends, they would echo that name. Why did you thus degrade and belie yourself? You call me the cause, yet I am most innocent. You saw me at the court of your master, an attendant on Queen Sibilla,⁵⁵ and one who unknown to herself had already parted with her heart, her soul, her will, her entire being, an involuntary sacrifice at the shrine of all that is noble and divine in human nature. My spirit worshipped Manfred as a saint, and my pulses ceased to beat when his eye fell upon me. I felt this, but I knew it not. You awoke me from my dream. You said that you loved me, and you reflected in too faithful a mirror my own emotions: I saw myself and shuddered. But the profound and eternal nature of my passion saved me. I loved Manfred. I loved the sun because it enlightened him; I loved the air that fed him; I deified myself for that my heart was the temple in which he resided. I devoted myself to Sibilla, for she was his wife, and never in thought or dream degraded the purity of my affection towards him. For this you hated him. He was ignorant of my passion:

my heart contained it as a treasure which you having discovered came to rifle. You could more easily deprive me of life than my devotion for your king, and therefore you were a traitor.

“Manfred died, and you thought that I had then forgotten him. But love would indeed be a mockery if death were not the most barefaced cheat. How can he die who is immortalized in my thoughts—my thoughts, that comprehend the universe, and contain eternity in their graspings? What though his earthly vesture is thrown as a despised weed beside the verde,⁵⁶ he lives in my soul as lovely, as noble, as entire, as when his voice awoke the mute air: nay, his life is more entire, more true. For before, that small shrine that encased his spirit was all that existed of him; but now, he is a part of all things; his spirit surrounds me, interpenetrates; and divided from him during his life, his death has united me to him for ever.”

The countenance of Lostendardo darkened fearfully.—When she paused, he looked black as the sea before the heavily charged thunder-clouds that canopy it dissolve themselves in rain. The tempest of passion that arose in his heart seemed too mighty to admit of swift manifestation; it came slowly up from the profoundest depths of his soul, and emotion was piled upon emotion before the lightning of his anger sped to its destination. “Your arguments, eloquent Despina,” he said, “are indeed unanswerable. They work well for your purpose. Corradino is I hear at Pisa: you have sharpened my dagger; and before the air of another night rust it, I may by deeds have repaid your insulting words.”

“How far do you mistake me! And is praise and love of all heroic excellence insult to you? Lostendardo, when you first knew me, I was an inexperienced girl; I loved

but knew not what love was, and circumscribing my passion in narrow bounds, I adored the being of Manfred as I might love an effigy of stone, which, when broken, has no longer an existence. I am now much altered. I might before have treated you with disdain or anger, but now these base feelings have expired in my heart. I am animated but by one feeling—an aspiration to another life, another state of being. All the good depart from this strange earth; and I doubt not that when I am sufficiently elevated above human weaknesses, it will also be my turn to leave this scene of woe. I prepare myself for that moment alone; and in endeavouring to fit myself for a union with all the brave, generous, and wise, that once adorned humanity, and have now passed from it, I consecrate myself to the service of this most righteous cause. You wrong me, therefore, if you think there is aught of disdain in what I say, or that any degrading feelings are mingled with my devotion of spirit when I come and voluntarily place myself in your power. You can imprison me for ever in the dungeons of this palace, as a returned Ghibelline and spy, and have me executed as a criminal. But before you do this, pause for your own sake; reflect on the choice of glory or ignominy that you are now about to make. Let your old sentiments of love for the house of Swabia have some sway in your heart; reflect that as you are the despised enemy, so you may become the chosen friend, of its last descendant, and receive from every heart the praise of having restored Corradino to the honours and power to which he was born.

“Compare this prince to the hypocritical, the bloody and mean-spirited Charles. When Manfred died, I went to Germany, and have resided at the court of the Countess Elizabeth; I have, therefore, been an hourly witness of the great and good qualities of Corradino. The bravery of his spirit

makes him rise above the weakness of youth and inexperience: he possesses all the nobility of spirit that belongs to the family of Swabia, and, in addition, a purity and gentleness that attracts the respect and love of the old and wary courtiers of Frederic and Conrad.⁵⁷ You are brave, and would be generous, did not the fury of your passions, like a consuming fire, destroy in their violence every generous sentiment: how then can you become the tool of Charles? His scowling eyes and sneering lips betoken the selfishness of his mind. Avarice, cruelty, meanness, and artifice, are the qualities that characterise him, and render him unworthy of the majesty he usurps. Let him return to Provence, and reign with paltry despotism over the luxurious and servile French; the free-born Italians require another Lord. They are not fit to bow to one whose palace is the change-house of money-lenders, whose generals are usurers, whose courtiers are milliners or monks, and who basely vows allegiance to the enemy of freedom and virtue, Clement,⁵⁸ the murderer of Manfred. Their king, like them, should be clothed in the armour of valour and simplicity; his ornaments, his shield and spear; his treasury, the possessions of his subjects; his army, their unshaken loves. Charles will treat you as a tool; Corradino as a friend—Charles will make you the detested tyrant of a groaning province; Corradino the governor of a prosperous and happy people.

“I cannot tell by your manner if what I have said has in any degree altered your determination. I cannot forget the scenes that passed between us at Naples. I might then have been disdainful: I am not so now. Your execrations of Manfred excited every angry feeling in my mind; but, as I have said, all but the feeling of love expired in my heart when Manfred died, and methinks that where love is, excellence must be its companion. You said you loved me;

and though, in other times, that love was twin-brother to hate,—though then, poor prisoner in your heart, jealousy, rage, contempt, and cruelty, were its handmaids,—yet if it were love, methinks that its divinity must have purified your heart from baser feelings; and now that I, the bride of Death, am removed from your sphere, gentler feelings may awaken in your bosom, and you may incline mildly to my voice.

“If indeed you loved me, will you not now be my friend? Shall we not hand in hand pursue the same career? Return to your ancient faith; and now that death and religion have placed the seal upon the past, let Manfred’s spirit, looking down, behold his repentant friend the firm ally of his successor, the best and last scion of the house of Swabia.”

She ceased; for the glare of savage triumph which, as a rising fire at night time, enlightened with growing and fearful radiance the face of Lostendardo, made her pause in her appeal. He did not reply; but when she was silent he quitted the attitude in which he had stood immoveably opposite to her, and pacing the hall with measured steps, his head declined, he seemed to ruminate on some project. Could it be that he weighed her reasonings? If he hesitated, the side of generosity and old fidelity would certainly prevail. Yet she dared not hope; her heart beat fast; she would have knelt, but she feared to move, lest any motion should disturb his thoughts, and curb the flow of good feeling which she fondly hoped had arisen within him: she looked up and prayed silently as she sat. Notwithstanding the glare of the torches, the beams of one small star struggled through the dark window pane; her eye resting on it, her thoughts were at once elevated to the eternity and space which that star symbolized: it seemed to her the spirit of Manfred, and

she inwardly worshipped it, as she prayed that it would shed its benign influence on the soul of Lostendardo.

Some minutes elapsed in this fearful silence, and then he approached her. "Despina, allow me to reflect on your words; to-morrow I will answer you. You will remain in this palace until the morning, and then you shall see and judge of my repentance and returning faith."—He spoke with studious gentleness. Despina could not see his face, for the lights shone behind him. When she looked up to reply, the little star twinkled just above his head, and seemed with its gentle lustre to reassure her. Our minds, when highly wrought, are strangely given to superstition, and Despina lived in a superstitious age. She thought that the star bade her comply, and assured her of protection from heaven:—from where else could she expect it? She said therefore, "I consent. Only let me request that you acquaint the man who gave you my ring that I am safe, or he will fear for me."—"I will do as you desire."—"And I will confide myself to your care. I cannot, dare not, fear you. If you would betray me, still I trust in the heavenly saints that guard humanity."

Her countenance was so calm,—it beamed with so angelic a self-devotion and a belief in good, that Lostendardo dared not look on her. For one moment—as she, having ceased to speak, gazed upon the star—he felt impelled to throw himself at her feet, to confess the diabolical scheme he had forged, and to commit himself body and soul to her guidance, to obey, to serve, to worship her. The impulse was momentary: the feeling of revenge returned on him. From the moment she had rejected him, the fire of rage had burned in his heart, consuming all healthy feeling, all human sympathies and gentleness of soul. He had sworn never to sleep on a bed, or to drink aught but water, until his first cup of wine was

mingled with the blood of Manfred. He had fulfilled this vow. A strange alteration had worked within him from the moment he had drained that unholy cup. The spirit, not of a man, but of a devil, seemed to live within him, urging him to crime, from which his long protracted hope of more complete revenge had alone deterred him. But Despina was now in his power, and it seemed to him as if fate had preserved him so long only that he might now wreak his full rage upon her. When she spoke of love, he thought how from that he might extract pain. He formed his plan; and this slight human weakness now conquered, he bent his thoughts to its completion. Yet he feared to stay longer with her; so he quitted her, saying that he would send attendants who would shew her an apartment where she might repose. He left her, and several hours passed; but no one came. The torches burnt low, and the stars of heaven could now with twinkling beams conquer their feebler light. One by one these torches went out, and the shadows of the high windows of the hall, before invisible, were thrown upon its marble pavement. Despina looked upon the shade, at first unconsciously, until she found herself counting, one, two, three, the shapes of the iron bars that lay so placidly on the stone. "Those grates are thick," she said: "this room would be a large but secure dungeon." As by inspiration, she now felt that she was a prisoner. No change, no word, had intervened since she had walked fearlessly in the room, believing herself free. But now no doubt of her situation occurred to her mind; heavy chains seemed to fall around her; the air to feel thick and heavy as that of a prison; and the star-beams that had before cheered her, became the dreary messengers of fearful danger to herself, and of the utter defeat of all the hopes she had dared nourish of success to her beloved cause.

Cincolo waited, first with impatience, and then with anxiety, for the return of the youthful stranger. He paced up and down before the gates of the palace; hour after hour passed on; the stars arose and descended, and ever and anon meteors shot along the sky. They were not more frequent than they always are during a clear summer night in Italy; but they appeared strangely numerous to Cincolo, and portentous of change and calamity. Midnight struck, and at that moment a procession of monks passed, bearing a corpse and chaunting a solemn *De Profundis*.⁵⁹ Cincolo felt a cold tremour shake his limbs when he reflected how ill an augury this was for the strange adventurer he had guided to that palace. The sombre cowls of the priests, their hollow voices, and the dark burthen they carried, augmented his agitation even to terror: without confessing the cowardice to himself, he was possessed with fear lest he should be included in the evil destiny that evidently awaited his companion. Cincolo was a brave man; he had often been foremost in a perilous assault: but the most courageous among us sometimes feel our hearts fail within us at the dread of unknown and fated danger. He was struck with panic;—he looked after the disappearing lights of the procession, and listened to their fading voices: his knees shook, a cold perspiration stood on his brow: until, unable to resist the impulse, he began slowly to withdraw himself from the Palace of Government, and to quit the circle of danger which seemed to hedge him in if he remained on that spot.

He had hardly quitted his post by the gate of the palace, when he saw lights issue from it, attendant on a company of men, some of whom were armed, as appeared from the reflection their lances' heads cast; and some of them carried a litter hung with black and closely drawn. Cinculo⁶⁰ was rooted to the spot. He could not render himself any reason

for his belief, but he felt convinced that the stranger youth was there, about to be carried out to death. Impelled by curiosity and anxiety, he followed the party as they went towards the Porta Romana:⁶¹ they were challenged by the sentinels at the gate; they gave the word and passed. Cincolo dared not follow, but he was agitated by fear and compassion. He remembered the packet confided to his care; he dared not draw it from his bosom, lest any Guelph should be near to overlook and discover that it was addressed to Corradino; he could not read, but he wished to look at the arms of the seal, to see whether they bore the imperial ensigns. He returned back to the *Palagio del Governo*: all there was dark and silent; he walked up and down before the gates, looking up at the windows, but no sign of life appeared. He could not tell why he was thus agitated, but he felt as if all his future peace depended on the fate of this stranger youth. He thought of Gegia, her helplessness and age; but he could not resist the impulse that impelled him, and he resolved that very night to commence his journey to Pisa, to deliver the packet, to learn who the stranger was, and what hopes he might entertain for his safety.

He returned home, that he might inform Gegia of his journey. This was a painful task, but he could not leave her in doubt. He ascended his narrow stairs with trepidation. At the head of them a lamp twinkled before a picture of the Virgin. Evening after evening it burnt there, guarding through its influence his little household from all earthly or supernatural dangers. The sight of it inspired him with courage; he said an *Ave Maria* before it; and then looking around him to assure himself that no spy stood on the narrow landing place, he drew the packet from his bosom and examined the seal. All Italians in those days were conversant in heraldry, since from ensigns of the shields of the knights they

learned, better than from their faces or persons, to what family and party they belonged. But it required no great knowledge for Cincolo to decypher these arms; he had known them from his childhood; they were those of the Elisei, the family to whom he had been attached as a partisan during all these civil contests. Arrigo de' Elisei had been his patron, and his wife had nursed his only daughter, in those happy days when there was neither Guelph nor Ghibelline. The sight of these arms reawakened all his anxiety. Could this youth belong to that house? The seal shewed that he really did; and this discovery confirmed his determination of making every exertion to save him, and inspired him with sufficient courage to encounter the remonstrances and fears of Monna Gegia.

He unlocked his door; the old dame was asleep in her chair, but awoke as he entered. She had slept only to refresh her curiosity, and she asked a thousand questions in a breath, to which Cincolo did not reply: he stood with his arms folded looking at the fire, irresolute how to break the subject of his departure. Monna Gegia continued to talk: "After you went, we held a consultation concerning this hot-brained youth of this morning; I, Buzeccha, Beppe de' Bosticchi who returned, and Monna Lissa from the Mercato Nuovo.⁶² We all agreed that he must be one of two persons; and be it one or the other, if he have not quitted Florence, the *Stinchi**⁶³ will be his habitation by sun-rise. Eh! Cincolo, man! you do not speak; where did you part with your Prince?"—"Prince, Gegia! Are you mad?—what Prince?" "Nay, he is either a Prince or a baker; either Corradino himself, or Ricciardo the son of Messer Tommaso de' Manelli; he that lived o'th' Arno, and baked for all that Sesto,⁶⁴ when

* The name of the common prison at Florence.

Count Guido de Giudi was *Vicario*. By this token, that Messer Tommaso went to Milan with Ubaldo de' Gargalandi,⁶⁵ and Ricciardo, who went with his father, must now be sixteen. He had the fame of kneading with as light a hand as his father, but he liked better to follow arms with the Gargalandi: he was a fair, likely youth, they said; and so, to say the truth, was our youngster of this morning. But Monna Lisa will have it that it must be Corradino himself——”

Cincolo listened as if the gossip of two old women could unravel his riddle. He even began to doubt whether the last conjecture, extravagant as it was, had not hit the truth. Every circumstance forbade such an idea; but he thought of the youth and exceeding beauty of the stranger, and he began to doubt. There was none among the Elisei who answered to his appearance. The flower of their youth had fallen at Monte Aperto; the eldest of the new generation was but ten; the other males of that house were of a mature age. Gegia continued to talk of the anger that Beppe de Bosticchi evinced at being accused of the murder of Arrigo dei Elisei. “If he had done that deed,” she cried, “never more should he have stood on my hearth; but he swore his innocence; and truly, poor man, it would be a sin not to believe him.” Why, if the stranger were not an Elisei, should he have shewn such horror on viewing the supposed murderer of the head of that family?—Cincolo turned from the fire; he examined whether his knife hung safely in his girdle, and he exchanged his sandal-like shoes for stronger boots of common undressed fur. This last act attracted the attention of Gegia. “What are you about, good man?” she cried. “This is no hour to change your dress, but to come to bed. To-night you will not speak; but to-morrow I hope to get it all out from you. What are you about?” “I am about to leave you, my dear Gegia;

and heaven bless and take care of you! I am going to Pisa.” Gegia uttered a shriek, and was about to remonstrate with great volubility, while the tears rolled down her aged cheeks. Tears also filled the eyes of Cincolo, as he said, “I do not go for the cause you suspect. I do not go into the army of Corradino, though my heart will be with it. I go but to carry a letter, and will return without delay.” “You will never return,” cried the old woman: “the Commune will never let you enter the gates of this town again, if you set foot in that traitorous Pisa. But you shall not go; I will raise the neighbours; I will declare you mad——” — “Gegia, no more of this! Here is all the money I have: before I go, I will send your cousin ’Nunziata to you. I must go. It is not the Ghibelline cause, or Corradino, that obliges me to risk your ease and comforts; but the life of one of the Elisei is at stake; and if I can save him, would you have me rest here, and afterwards curse you and the hour when I was born?” “What! is he——? But no; there is none among the Elisei so young as he; and none so lovely, except her whom these arms carried when an infant—but she is a female. No, no; this is a tale trumped up to deceive me and gain my consent; but you shall never have it. Mind that! you will never have it; and I prophecy that if you do go, your journey will be the death of both of us.” She wept bitterly. Cincolo kissed her aged cheek, and mingled his tears with hers; and then recommending her to the care of the Virgin and the saints, he quitted her, while grief choaked her utterance, and the name of the Elisei had deprived her of all energy to resist his purpose.

It was four in the morning before the gates of Florence were opened and Cincolo could leave the city. At first he availed himself of the carts of the *contadini*⁶⁶ to advance on his

journey; but as he drew near Pisa, all modes of conveyance ceased, and he was obliged to take by-roads, and act cautiously, not to fall into the hands of the Florentine out-posts, or of some fierce Ghibelline, who might suspect him, and have him carried before the Podestà⁶⁷ of a village; for if once suspected and searched, the packet addressed to Corradino would convict him, and he would pay for his temerity with his life. Having arrived at Vico Pisano,⁶⁸ he found a troop of Pisan horse there on guard: he was known to many of the soldiers, and he obtained a conveyance for Pisa; but it was night before he arrived. He gave the Ghibelline watch-word, and was admitted within the gates. He asked for Prince Corradino: he was in the city, at the palace of the Lanfranchi.⁶⁹ He crossed the Arno, and was admitted into the palace by the soldiers who guarded the door. Corradino had just returned from a successful skirmish in the Lucchese⁷⁰ states, and was reposing; but when Count Gherardo Doneratico,⁷¹ his principal attendant, saw the seal of the packet, he immediately ushered the bearer into a small room, where the Prince lay on a fox's skin thrown upon the pavement. The mind of Cincolo had been so bewildered by the rapidity of the events of the preceding night, by fatigue and want of sleep, that he had over-wrought himself to believe that the stranger youth was indeed Corradino; and when he had heard that that Prince was in Pisa, by a strange disorder of ideas, he still imagined that he and Ricciardo were the same; that the black litter was a phantom, and his fears ungrounded. The first sight of Corradino, his fair hair and round Saxon features, destroyed this idea: it was replaced by a feeling of deep anguish, when Count Gherardo, announcing him, said, "One who brings a letter from Madonna Despina dei Elisei, waits upon your Highness."

The old man sprang forward, uncontrolled by the respect

he would otherwise have felt for one of so high lineage as Corradino. "From Despina! Did you say from her? Oh! unsay your words! Not from my beloved, lost, foster-child."

Tears rolled down his cheeks. Corradino, a youth of fascinating gentleness, but, as Despina had said, "young, even to childishness," attempted to reassure him. "Oh! my gracious Lord," cried Cincolo, "open that packet, and see if it be from my blessed child—if in the disguise of Ricciardo I led her to destruction." He wrung his hands. Corradino, pale as death with fear for the destiny of his lovely and adventurous friend, broke the seal. The packet contained an inner envelope without any direction, and a letter, which Corradino read, while horror convulsed every feature. He gave it to Gherardo. "It is indeed from her. She says, that the bearer can relate all that the world will probably know of her fate. And you, old man, who weep so bitterly, you to whom my best and lovely friend refers me, tell me what you know of her." Cincolo told his story in broken accents. "May these eyes be for ever blinded!" he cried, when he had concluded, "that knew not Despina in those soft looks and heavenly smiles. Dotard that I am! When my wife railed at your family and princely self, and the sainted Manfred, why did I not read her secret in her forbearance? Would she have forgiven those words in any but her who had nursed her infancy, and been a mother to her when Madonna Pia died? And when she taxed Bosticchi with her father's death, I, blind fool, did not see the spirit of the Elisei in her eyes. My Lord, I have but one favour to ask you. Let me hear her letter, that I may judge from that what hopes remain:—but there are none—none." "Read it to him, my dear Count," said the Prince; "I will not fear as he fears. I dare not fear that one so

Father his forces, and humiliate him by this show of success. The Cardinals, who beheld the lengthened line and good order of the army, hastened to the Papal palace.⁷³ Clement was in his oratory, praying; the frightened monks, with pale looks, related how the excommunicated heretic dared to menace the town where the Holy Father himself resided; adding, that if the insult were carried to the pitch of an assault, it might prove dangerous warfare. The Pope smiled contemptuously. "Do not fear," he said; "the projects of these men will dissipate in smoke." He then went on the ramparts, and saw Corradino and Frederic of Austria,⁷⁴ who defiled the line of knights in the plain below. He watched them for a time; then turning to his Cardinals, he said, "They are victims, who permit themselves to be led to sacrifice."

His words were a prophecy. Notwithstanding the first successes of Corradino, and the superior numbers of his army, he was defeated by the artifice of Charles in a pitched battle. He escaped from the field, and, with a few friends, arrived at a tower called Asturi,⁷⁵ which belonged to the family of Frangipani,⁷⁶ of Rome. Here he hired a vessel, embarked, and put out to sea, directing his course for Sicily, which, having rebelled against Charles, would, he hoped, receive him with joy. They were already under weigh, when one of the family of the Frangipani seeing a vessel filled with Germans making all sail from shore, suspected that they were fugitives from the battle of Tagliacozzo,⁷⁷ he followed them in other vessels, and took them all prisoners. The person of Corradino was a rich prey for him; he delivered him into the hands of his rival, and was rewarded by the donation of a fief near Benevento.

The dastardly spirit of Charles instigated him to the

basest revenge; and the same tragedy was acted on those shores which has been renewed in our days. A daring and illustrious Prince was sacrificed with the mock forms of justice, at the sanguinary altar of tyranny and hypocrisy. Corradino was tried. One of his Judges alone, a Provençal, dared condemn him, and he paid with his life the forfeit of his baseness. For scarcely had he, solitary among his fellows, pronounced the sentence of death against this Prince, than Robert of Flanders,⁷⁸ the brother-in-law of Charles himself, struck him on the breast with a staff, crying, "It behoves not thee, wretch, to condemn to death so noble and worthy a knight." The judge fell dead in the presence of the king, who dared not avenge his creature.

On the 26th of October, Corradino and his friends were led out to die in the Market-place of Naples, by the sea-side. Charles was present with all his court, and an immense multitude surrounded the triumphant king, and his more royal adversary, about to suffer an ignominious death. The funereal procession approached its destination. Corradino, agitated, but controlling his agitation, was drawn in an open car. After him came a close litter, hung with black, with no sign to tell who was within. The Duke of Austria and several other illustrious victims followed. The guard that conducted them to the scaffold was headed by Lostendardo; a malicious triumph laughed in his eyes, and he rode near the litter, looking from time to time, first at it and then at Corradino, with the dark look of a tormenting fiend. The procession stopped at the foot of the scaffold, and Corradino looked at the flashing light which every now and then arose from Vesuvius,⁷⁹ and threw its reflection on the sea. The sun had not yet risen, but the halo of its approach illuminated the bay of Naples, its mountains, and its islands. The summits of the distant hills of

Baiæ gleamed with its first beams. Corradino thought, "By the time those rays arrive here, and shadows are cast from the persons of these men,—princes and peasants, around me, my living spirit will be shadowless." Then he turned his eyes on the companions of his fate, and for the first time he saw the silent and dark litter that accompanied them. At first he thought, "It is my coffin." But then he recollected the disappearance of Despina, and would have sprung towards it: his guards stopped him; he looked up, and his glance met that of Lostendardo, who smiled—a smile of dread: but the feeling of religion which had before calmed him again descended on him; he thought that her sufferings, as well as his, would soon be over.

They were already over. And the silence of the grave is upon those events which had occurred since Cincolo beheld her carried out of Florence, until now that she was led by her fierce enemy to behold the death of the nephew of Manfred. She must have endured much; for when, as Corradino advanced to the front of the scaffold, the litter being placed opposite to it, Lostendardo ordered the curtains to be withdrawn, the white hand that hung inanimate from the side was thin as a winter leaf, and her fair face, pillowed by the thick knots of her dark hair, was sunken and ashy pale, while you could see the deep blue of her eyes struggle through the closed eyelids. She was still in the attire in which she had presented herself at the house of Cincolo: perhaps her tormentor thought that her appearance as a youth would attract less compassion than if a lovely woman were thus dragged to so unnatural a scene.

Corradino was kneeling and praying when her form was thus exposed. He saw her, and saw that she was dead! About to die himself; about, pure and innocent, to die ignominiously, while his base conqueror, in pomp and glory,

was spectator of his death, he did not pity those who were at peace; his compassion belonged to the living alone, and as he rose from his prayer he exclaimed, "My beloved mother, what profound sorrow will the news thou art about to hear cause thee!" He looked upon the living multitude around him, and saw that the hard-visaged partisans of the usurper wept; he heard the sobs of his oppressed and conquered subjects; so he drew his glove from his hand and threw it among the crowd, in token that he still held his cause good, and submitted his head to the axe.

During many years after those events, Lostendardo enjoyed wealth, rank, and honour. When suddenly, while at the summit of glory and prosperity, he withdrew from the world, took the vows of a severe order in a convent, in one of the desolate and unhealthy plains by the sea-shore in Calabria; and after having gained the character of a saint, through a life of self-inflicted torture, he died murmuring the names of Corradino, Manfred, and Despina.

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¹ Manfred of Swabia (c. 1232-66, reigned 1258-66), king of Sicily, and son of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen (1194-1250, reigned 1220-50). After the death of his half-brother Conrad IV (1228-54, reigned 1237-54), Manfred became regent on behalf of his nephew Conradin and had himself crowned king of Sicily in 1258. During his reign, he tried to maintain the Hohenstaufen family's control over Sicily and Italy, facing the opposition from the papacy and Charles d'Anjou (1226-85). Charles eventually defeated Manfred at the Battle of Benevento in 1266, becoming King of Naples and Sicily as Charles I.

² Ghibellines, members of one of the two main political factions in Italian communal history. They supported the Holy Roman Emperor's intervention in local politics as opposed to the Pope's. They supported Manfred's, and later Conradin's, claim to the throne.

³ Guelphs, members of one of the two main political factions in Italian communal history. They supported the Pope and Charles d'Anjou against the Holy Roman Emperor.

⁴ Conradin (1252-68), Duke of Swabia (1254-68) and Manfred's nephew. When Manfred usurped his throne in 1258, he was compelled to return to Germany. After Manfred's defeat at the Battle of Benevento (1266), the Ghibellines invited Conradin back into Italy to reclaim his right to the throne. He entered Italy in September 1267, acclaimed by the Italians, but was defeated by Charles d'Anjou at Tagliacozzo on 23 August 1268. He was sentenced to death and executed in Naples on 29 October 1268.

⁵ May Day, festivity in Europe, usually celebrated on the first day of May, dedicated to the return of spring.

⁶ *canzonets*: a borrowing from Italian (etym. *canzonetta*), a little or short song (*OED*).

⁷ Piazza del Duomo, square in the heart of Florence, where the church of Santa Reparata stood until 1375.

⁸ *Carroccio* (Italian): a large war chariot used in medieval Italy, bearing the standards of the communes engaged in battle. Also used as ceremonial chariot and displayed during processions and civic ceremonies.

⁹ Charles d'Anjou (1226-85), king of Naples and Sicily as Charles I from 1266 to 1285 after the Battle of Benevento (1266).

¹⁰ *Vicare* (Italian): erroneous spelling of the Italian word *vicario* (vicar).

¹¹ *Monna* (Italian): syncopated form of the Italian word *Madonna*, an honorific used in Medieval Italy before female nouns as a mark of courtesy or respect.

¹² *Becari*: possible misspelling of the Italian surname *Beccai*, deriving from *beccaro* or *beccaiolo* (butcher). In medieval Florence, the *arte de' beccai* (Butchers' Guild) was one of the *arti minori* (minor guilds). The guild is mentioned several times by Giovanni Villani in his *Croniche* (1537), a key historical account of Florentine history, which Mary Shelley read — along with the historical writings of J.-C.-L. Sismondi and L.A. Muratori — between 1820 and 1821.

¹³ *faziotes*: erroneous spelling of the Italian word *fazzoletto*, a veil used to cover the heads of women. Shelley probably had in mind the lexical variant *fazolus*, a latinized form attested in Venice from the thirteenth century, since she uses the same term when describing Venetian women in her "Recollections of Italy" (1824): "the dark eyes and finely-shaped brows of the women peeping from beneath their faziotes".

¹⁴ *minestra* (Italian): a soup or thick stew usually served as first dish in a meal.

¹⁵ *calrasio*: possibly Shelley's misspelling of the late Latin word *coloratio*, the root of the modern Italian term *colorazione* (colouring).

¹⁶ *Arti Minori* (Italian): the minor guilds. Together with the *arti maggiori* (major guilds), they formed the foundation of the economic and trade organization in medieval Florence. The *arti minori* were less prestigious and powerful than the major guilds and comprised various tradespeople, including craftsmen, artisans, merchants, and butchers ('*beccai*').

¹⁷ St. John, patron saint of Florence. The Baptistry of St. John was erected in 1059 in front of the church of Santa Reparata.

¹⁸ *fiesta* (Italian): celebration, festival.

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- ¹⁹ Misprint for *Carroccio*.
- ²⁰ *Messer* (Italian, obsolete): honorific used before male nouns as a mark of respect.
- ²¹ The family name *Agli* was typical of the city of Florence. Its presence is documented in Villani's *Croniche*.
- ²² The Castle of Pogibonzi (Shelley's misspelling in the text) was located in present-day Poggibonsi, Tuscan town near Siena. The castle was erected on the orders of Manfred in 1252 and became a Ghibelline stronghold. Shelley is referring to the Florentine Guelphs' attack of Poggibonsi in 1267, as documented in Villani's *Croniche* (1537, bk 7, ch. 21), and in J.-C.-L. Simonde de Sismondi's *Histoire des républiques italiennes du moyen âge* (1809–18), (1818, bk 3, ch. 21:367–68).
- ²³ Possible reference to the heraldic lion (the *marzocco*) symbolizing the city of Florence and associated with the Guelph party.
- ²⁴ The battle of Montaperti (Shelley's misspelling in the text), 4 September 1260, was fought near Siena between the Guelph army of Florence and the Ghibelline army of Siena.
- ²⁵ Santa Reparata, co-patron saint of the city of Florence.
- ²⁶ Messer Carlo of Naples, *i.e.* Charles d'Anjou.
- ²⁷ Pisa, Italian city in the region of Tuscany, and a Ghibelline stronghold at the time.
- ²⁸ The Nerli (Shelley's misspelling in the text), the Pulci, and the Buondelmonti were prominent Guelph families mentioned in Villani's *Croniche*.
- ²⁹ Arno, one of the most important rivers in central Italy and the principal river of Tuscany.
- ³⁰ Bologna, Italian city in the region of Emilia-Romagna, well known in medieval times as a centre for trade, craftsmanship, and leatherworking, including shoemaking.
- ³¹ "*Swabia, Cavalieri!*" (Italian): "Swabia, Knights!". Sismondi cites the expression "*Souabe Chevaliers!*" as a battlecry used in support of the Hohenstaufen dynasty (Sismondi 1818, bk 3, ch. 21:350).
- ³² *Gesu Maria!*: Shelley's misspelling of *gesummaria*, Italian colloquial interjection, variant of the expression *Gesù e Maria!* (Jesus and Mary!).
- ³³ Cisalpine, term used to indicate the regions in northern Italy, literally the territories "on this side of the Alps" from the perspective of Rome.
- ³⁴ Genoa, Italian city and seaport in the region of Liguria. In early 1268, Conradin passed through Genoa during his campaign to reclaim the kingdom of Sicily from Charles d'Anjou.
- ³⁵ *Regno* (Italian): kingdom.
- ³⁶ Constantinople, present-day Istanbul, Turkey. It was restored in 1261 as the capital of the Byzantine Empire.
- ³⁷ At the time, Jews, Greeks and Muslims were minority groups that suffered hostility and persecutions from both the Pope and Charles d'Anjou.
- ³⁸ Reference to the "Frederics" in the Hohenstaufen dynasty: Frederick I Barbarossa (1122–90), Holy Roman Emperor from 1155 to 1190; his son Frederick V of Hohenstaufen (1164–70), Duke of Swabia from 1167 until his death; Frederick II (1194–1250), king of Sicily from 1198 to 1250, and Holy Roman Emperor from 1220 to 1250; and Frederick I of Baden (1249–68), Duke of Austria from 1250 to 1268.
- ³⁹ *Ave Maria* (Italian): Hail Mary, traditional Catholic prayer in honour of the Virgin Mary.
- ⁴⁰ Buzeccha, historical character mentioned in Giovanni Villani's *Croniche* (1537, bk 7, ch. 12).
- ⁴¹ *Saracen*: term used in medieval Europe to refer to Muslims or people from the Islamic world.
- ⁴² *Duomo* (Italian): cathedral.
- ⁴³ *Palagio del Popolo* (Italian): The Palace of the People (*palagio*: northern Italian variant and obsolete form of the word "palazzo"). Shelly is probably referring to present-day Palazzo del Bargello, which was erected in Florence between 1255 and 1261 to house the Captain of the People, an administrative figure in charge of public authority in medieval Italy. When the construction was concluded, the palace came to serve as the seat of the *Podestà*, the chief officer and executive of the city government.

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⁴⁴ Count Guido Novello Guidi (1227-93) (Shelley's misspelling of the surname in the text), Italian politician, member of one of the most prominent Ghibelline families in Florence in the second half of the thirteenth century. He was Manfred's vicar in Tuscany and was forced to leave Florence after Manfred's defeat in the Battle of Benevento.

⁴⁵ For this anecdote, Shelley closely draws from Giovanni Villani's *Croniche* (1537, bk 7, ch. 12:66).

⁴⁶ Misprint for *authoritative*.

⁴⁷ Reference to the Guelph family of the Bostichi (Shelley's misspelling in the text), mentioned in Giovanni Villani's *Croniche* (1537, bk 6, ch. 33:48).

⁴⁸ *Campanile* (Italian): bell tower.

⁴⁹ Misprint for *Gegia*.

⁵⁰ Guillaume Étendard (1217-71), mentioned as "Guielmo lo Stendardo" by Giovanni Villani (1537, bk 7, ch. 4:63), was a French admiral and general who served Charles d'Anjou. He took part in the Battle of Benevento against Manfred and in the Battle of Tagliacozzo (1268) against Conradin.

⁵¹ Elisabeth of Bavaria (c. 1227-73), Conradin's mother and former wife to the Emperor Conrad IV. She supported Conradin in asserting his claim to the throne of Sicily.

⁵² *re sides*: *re-sides*, hyphen not present (probably effaced) in the copy-text.

⁵³ *Palagio del Governo* (Italian): Palace of the Government. Shelley is likely referring to the Palazzo del Popolo, which served as the seat of the city government at the time.

⁵⁴ *Palagio Reale* (Italian): Royal Palace. Shelly is probably referring to Castel Capuano (Naples), royal residence in the second half of the thirteenth century.

⁵⁵ *Queen Sibilla*: Helena Doukaina (1242-71), daughter of Michael II, despot of Epirus (c. 1206-68, reigned 1230-68), and queen of Sicily as the second wife of Manfred from 1259 to 1266. While all of Shelley's historical sources mention Manfred's second wife, Shelley misnamed her as 'Sibilla' after Sismondi (1818, bk 3, ch. 21:352) and Muratori (1744, bk 7:371). Shelley also refers to Manfred's second wife as Sibilla in her article "Giovanni Villani", published in the fourth issue of *The Liberal*, p. 193.

⁵⁶ A reference to the river in purgatory, mentioned by the character of Manfred in Dante's *Divine Comedy*: "l'ossa del corpo mio sarieno ancora | in co del ponte presso a Benevento, | [...] Or le bagna la pioggia e move il vento | di fuor dal regno, quasi lungo 'l Verde, | dov'è le trasmutò a lume spento" (trans. "The bones of my body would still be | at the bridge, near Benevento, [...] | Now the rain wets them, and the wind moves them | beyond the realm, almost beside the Verde, | where he transported them with extinguished light"), *Purg.* III.127-32.

⁵⁷ Frederick II and his son Conrad IV.

⁵⁸ Clement IV (c.1200-68; pope 1265-68). He continued the policy of Urban IV (c.1195-1264; pope 1261-64) by remaining faithful to the house d'Anjou. He confirmed the sentence of excommunication ordered by his predecessor against Manfred and invited Charles d'Anjou into Italy after Manfred had declared himself king. Clement's support of Charles was decisive in the defeat and killing of Manfred in the battle of Benevento (1266).

⁵⁹ *De Profundis* (Latin): out of the depths. Opening words of the Latin version of *Psalm* 130, whose subject is repentance. The expression is commonly used in the Catholic funeral liturgy as a prayer for the dead.

⁶⁰ Misprint for *Cincolo*.

⁶¹ Porta Romana, the southernmost gate in Florence's city walls. The reference is anachronistic, as Porta Romana was constructed around 1326. Villani also mentions the gate in his *Croniche* (Villani 1537, bk 9, ch. 257:159-60).

⁶² *Mercato Nuovo* (Italian): New Marketplace, area in Florence created to supplement the existing market, used in medieval times for trade and commercial activities.

⁶³ Carcere delle Stinche (Shelley's misspelling in the text), medieval prison in Florence, located near the present-day Piazza della Repubblica. The reference to the prison is anachronistic, as its construction was authorised in 1297 (Wolfgang 1960, 155) and the first inmates were incarcerated in 1304 (Villani 1537, bk 8, ch. 74:116 [sic]).

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ⁶⁴ Sesto di Oltrarno, district covering the area south of the Arno River.
- ⁶⁵ Gangalandi (Shelley's misspelling in the text) is both the name of a Ghibelline family mentioned by Villani (1537, bk 4, ch. 2:24) and Sismondi (1818, bk 2, ch. 17:329) and the name used to designate the lands owned by the Gangalandi family in Tuscany.
- ⁶⁶ *contadini* (Italian): farmers.
- ⁶⁷ *Podesta* (Italian): Shelley's misspelling of *Podestà*, chief officer and executive of the city government in Italian communal history.
- ⁶⁸ Vicopisano (Shelley uses Villani's spelling in the text), town in Tuscany, near Pisa.
- ⁶⁹ *the palace of the Lanfranchi*: the Lanfranchi were a Pisan Ghibelline family, mentioned by Villani (1537, bk 7, ch. 120:89). Shelley likely refers to one of the palaces owned by the family at the time, and not to present-day Palazzo Lanfranchi, which became the residence of the Lanfranchi family in 1539.
- ⁷⁰ Lucchese, area near Lucca, city in Tuscany.
- ⁷¹ Count Gherardo Donoratico (Shelley uses Villani's spelling of the surname in the text), Pisan aristocrat and supported of Conradin. According to the historical sources, he was beheaded in Naples after Conradin's execution in 1268 (Villani 1537, bk 7, ch. 29:71; Muratori 1744, bk 7:385; Sismondi 1818, bk 3, ch. 21:389).
- ⁷² Viterbo, city in central Italy, northwest of Rome, where Clement IV set his permanent residence in 1266.
- ⁷³ Palazzo dei Papi (the Palace of the Popes) in Viterbo, completed around 1266.
- ⁷⁴ Frederick I of Baden (1249-68), Duke of Austria from 1250 until his death in 1268. He supported his cousin Conradin during his Italian campaign and fought with him in the Battle of Tagliacozzo.
- ⁷⁵ Torre Astura (Shelley uses Villani's spelling), fortified tower near Rome belonging to the Frangipane family.
- ⁷⁶ The Frangipane family (Shelley uses Sismondi's and Muratori's spelling of the name) was an aristocratic Roman family. According to historical accounts, Giovanni Frangipane captured Conradin at Torre Astura as he attempted to flee toward Rome, and handed him over to Charles d'Anjou (Sismondi 1818, bk 3, ch. 21:385; Muratori 1744, bk 7:384).
- ⁷⁷ The Battle of Tagliacozzo (Shelley's misspelling in the text) was the final conflict in the Angevin-Hohenstaufen struggle for the control of Southern Italy. It was fought on 23 August 1268 on the plain of Tagliacozzo, east of Rome, between the armies of Charles d'Anjou and Conradin. The battle ended with the decisive defeat of Conradin's forces.
- ⁷⁸ Robert of Béthune (1249-1322), count of Flanders from 1305 to 1322. In 1265, he married Blanche d'Anjou (?-1269), daughter of Charles d'Anjou.
- ⁷⁹ Vesuvius, volcano that rises above the Gulf of Naples.

LES CHARMETTES AND ROUSSEAU.*

THERE is a religion in literature as well as in love,—both of a very Pagan description. They abound in superstitions. We gaze upon the portrait of a favourite mistress or a favourite author, worshipping the memory of her kisses and his pages, till it becomes downright idolatry. With what ardent devotion we perform many a pilgrimage to our Lady—not of Loretto!¹ and what a thrill in our bosoms, and how thankful are our hearts, when we approach, as towards some sainted shrine, the dwelling of “one who was great through mortal days, and died of fame unshorn!”² Are we not in a blessed state when we find ourselves in his own garden, his own bed-room, his own parlour? Then if, according to a good custom, everything or something remains the same as when he lived there, they are precious relics working miracles in our imagination. That antique chair in Shakespear’s house!³ A man cannot sit in it five minutes without fancying his modern dress is rapidly metamorphosing itself into ruff, jerkin, doublet, and hose; and in this visionary attire, how easy to persuade oneself that Shakespear “has just stepped out, and will be back again immediately!”⁴ As for his tomb, telling me in very plain prose that he is certainly dead and buried, I look upon it as an insolent piece of matter-of-fact. A poet can have no grave, except in the eyes of those he personally loved; and if they must rear him a monument, let it be an evergreen bower,—it will last their time, and is a more graceful and a more appropriate memorial than their

* Author: Charles Armitage Brown / Transcribed and annotated by Gilberta Golinelli.

cold marble. We know of Milton's⁵ living in too many places,⁶ and want to know which he liked best. One of his houses is in the hands of a man worthy to be its owner;—I wonder why I did no more than peep in at a window. A visit to Burns' cottage⁷ should not be missed. Go and be surrounded by the scenes of his youth, his joy, his hope, when his days were glorious as his imagination. And that part of Ayrshire⁸ is so beautiful! Go, I say, and be like one of his own poems, "with pleasure of the breathing fields yfed."⁹ The worst is, the cottage is not in its original simple state, being altered and enlarged for the accommodation of visitors. Still there is a charm about it; for it was there, as Keats¹⁰ expresses it in one of his unpublished sonnets, written under the very roof,—

"Where thou didst dream alone on budded bays,
Happy, and thoughtless of thy day of doom!"¹¹

I was asked to go into his house at Dumfries,¹² the abode of his wretchedness, his despair. I do not exactly understand such a taste; it seems very Presbyterian.¹³ Owing to this want of taste for the miserable, I never went into Collins' house¹⁴ at the corner of the Cloisters of Chichester Cathedral.¹⁵ How melancholy it looks! There seems contagion in its very walls and window sashes. Often have I stood before it, and before Flaxman's monument to his memory,¹⁶ with as little desire to pass the threshold, as to enter his grave. The *statu quo* position of all sorts of furniture in Garrick's house at Hampton Court¹⁷ is too much for Garrick; besides, it is in obedience to his last Will and Testament. Dr. Johnson's¹⁸ bed-room in Thrale's villa at Streatham¹⁹ was worth seeing, till an auction spoiled it. The bow window looked into the garden; the paper and curtains, at his own request, were of a gay pattern, for the Doctor could not bear any addition to his own gloom; and there were the two desks, fixtures on each side of the

window, on which he wrote his "Lives of the Poets."²⁰ As extremes are sure to meet, it is quite a natural transition from the "great Moralist,"²¹ who left the world's morals as he found them, to the Visionary, as he is called, who really "did our state some service;"²² from the Court Pensioner,²³ who humbly wrote "The False Alarm,"²⁴ and "Taxation no Tyranny,"²⁵ to the independent Citizen of Geneva,²⁶ who chose rather to earn a hard livelihood as a copier of music, than receive a favour either from a Louis or a George.²⁷ Come with me, reader, to Les Charmettes.²⁸

There are many other houses where Rousseau lived, which his admirers may visit as they please, but give me this, and this alone, for here only was he happy. Among these grand mountains, in this beautiful valley, he passed that period of his life, when, generally speaking, the character is stamped for ever. This was his school. As for the extraordinary finish to his education, which Madame de Warens²⁹ was pleased to bestow, that is neither your affair nor mine; nor do I perceive the place is a jot the worse for it. But it was wrong! Grant it was so; yet are we to consider those six previous years he lived under her roof as nothing? "Then is Bohemia nothing!"³⁰ Let the praise that is justly her due be freely allowed, especially as, in her after life, neither sex can offer an apology for her conduct. Her previous history says much in her favour. She was young, handsome, and accomplished, beloved by a host of friends, and enjoying an ample fortune, which she used nobly. Yet friends, fortune, and country, she relinquished for conscience' sake, and retired to Savoy³¹ on a precarious stipend from the King of Sardinia.³² It was then that Rousseau, at the age of sixteen, destitute of every thing, came recommended to her protection. She received him into her house, clothed him, supplied him with all the means in her power to obtain masters for the cultivation of his

mind, constantly interested herself in his behalf, and this, for six years, before those familiarities commenced which have given so much offence. He calls her "the best of women."³³ Truly she was so to him; and though we may smile at those passages in his Confessions, where he endeavours to persuade us she was never in the wrong, still we must confess they do honour to his heart.

About a mile from Chambéry, up the side of the hill to the south of the town, and through a shady and winding lane, you arrive at Les Charmettes. The lane is delightful; with something like an English hedge on one side, and a small tumbling brook on the other; and you walk under the boughs of the walnut, the chesnut, the vine, the fig, and the acacia. A little, ragged, bright-eyed boy stared up full in my face, and cried out, "Ah, Monsieur, I know where you are going!—to Jean Jaques?" Then jumping before me to lead the way, suddenly he turned round and again accosted me with—"Was not that Jean Jaques a very famous man?" This was the only tribute I heard paid to the fame of the philosopher in Savoy. It was spoken by a poor and reckless urchin; others were too prudent to hint their opinions before a stranger. Possibly they were aware that Britain had produced a Castles,³⁴ an Oliver,³⁵ and an Edwards.³⁶ The house had not that ancient appearance I expected. It is at present uninhabited. There is an inscription on a stone placed in the wall, containing some very neat verses, saying just enough on both sides of the question.*

* This inscription, or rather three-fourths of it, is on his house in the *Ile de St. Pierre*.³⁷ It is the complimentary part which is omitted; and, in lieu of it, we have a paltry common-place exclamation. The lines have been attributed to Madame de Franqueville.³⁸ In the garden of the Hermitage at Montmorency,³⁹ where he composed his *New Eloisa*,⁴⁰ are some verses in a complaining mood, and not good of their kind.

Réduit, par Jean Jaques⁴¹ habité,
 Tu me rapelles son génie,
 Sa solitude, sa fierté,
 Et ses malheurs, et sa folie:
 A⁴² la gloire, à la vérité,
 Il osa consacrer sa vie,
 Et fut toujours persécuté
 Ou par lui-même, ou par l'envie.⁴³

“A la gloire, à *la vérité*!”⁴⁴ Is not this “truth” a libel? Why is not the seditious stone torn from its home, and sent to some House of Correction? No; there it stands by consent of the legitimate authorities; and our loving subjects con it by heart, and then run to catch a peep at the backs of his works through that glass case in the library at Chambery, where they are so fearfully placed under lock and key: what an edifying contradiction for these our loving subjects! However, I hate politics when something better is at hand, and, thanks to the old woman with the key of the door, I can now enter the house. In the dining-room are the portraits of Rousseau and Madame de Warens, with their ages ludicrously reversed; she in the first bloom of youth, and he, an old man in a wig, with a face intended to express a staid maturity of thought. As you go up stairs, you see the little chapel with its altar, for which the poor Baroness paid so dearly. Both above and below some remnants of its former furniture are shewn, among which is a truckle-bed, said to have belonged to Jean Jaques. So it was here he passed his happiest days! Here he would lay his music aside to pursue his favourite study of botany upon the hills; or close his books, and ramble abroad to gaze upon the face of nature, in her loveliest and grandest aspect. Often have his young feet speeded across the lane to the green on the

other side,—there, in the orchard—to look upon the Alps. I would have given a Louis⁴⁵ for permission to read, on that very spot, ten pages of any one of his volumes. But my money could not buy that pleasure. Alas! it is too true,—any ten of his pages are worth more than any Louis.

It is certain that had not Rousseau given us his Confessions, his fame would have been greater, as his character would have been more respected. If we knew no more of him than of one of his contemporaries, how readily the apology of “we are however unacquainted with all the particulars,” would run at the heels of every imputed fault; and where there was a doubt, the most malignant biographer must have hesitated. In revealing the whole truth, he trusted to the sympathy of mankind, forgetting or not believing two truths respecting other men: 1st. That few would sympathise with those delinquencies, which they, either from circumstances or education, are never tempted to commit: and 2d. That others who had committed them, would be very apt to pretend they had not, and owe him a grudge for touching their consciences. He has destroyed the charm that hovers over genius by this stripping of his humanity; at least, to me: for he has, doubtless, admirers who think otherwise. We see him among the common crowd of mortals, sometimes better and sometimes worse, but always in the crowd. Were the secret workings of the hearts of all great men disclosed, the lesson might be useful; but our veneration would be decreased in proportion as we saw their nature descend to our level. We would willingly believe that astonishing minds cannot be connected with vulgar weaknesses. The Confessions ought to make us more fearful of ourselves, and more charitable to others. When they have a contrary effect, the reader alone is to

blame. Once allow them to be the true picture of a human being (which is rarely called in question) and it is folly or hypocrisy that exclaims—"I am contaminated!" On the other hand, there are many who contend he wrote with too great a severity against himself, and insist on twisting every thing into some crooked virtue. This, again, does injury, since it provokes the opposite party to dwell upon his vices, without a word of his remorse, and without balancing the good against the evil. Friends and enemies have had their best and worst of him. Unfortunately, either side may be taken without fear of being accused of wilful misrepresentation. Perhaps there never was an author whom it was so difficult to love or to hate by halves. My visit to Les Charmettes warmed my heart to his memory, and I would fain, if possible, steer clear between the two extremes; and the late work of M. de Musset, with its store of facts and anecdotes, comes aptly to my assistance.⁴⁶

Rousseau describes himself, when a child, "timid and yielding in his general conduct, but fiery, proud, unconquerable in his passions;" and, when advanced in life, he said, "I am constitutionally bold and of a timid character."⁴⁷ His life is a running comment upon these two texts; with this exception, that sometimes he "could screw his courage to the sticking-place"⁴⁸ even to magnanimity. That timid and yielding disposition, together with his passions, were constantly leading him into errors, and, in his struggles to extricate himself, he would often plunge in the deeper. Nature intended him for a hero, but the world made him a coward. Thus, while he insisted that every man ought to earn his own livelihood, he was persuaded to accept a pension from the English Government. It is true he soon perceived his mistake. "What now?" said he, "Am I hushed to silence, or am I to be a flatterer?" Instantly he

threw aside the royal pension, and sat in a corner to eat his crust. At any rate he had the courage to recede. The arrears ran on, but no consideration could ever induce him to touch a penny of them. In the same way, while he contended that friends should be on the same footing, he rejected presents because he was too poor to make a return; yet received favours amounting in value to more than any direct present offered him. The fact is, they came accompanied with such kind expressions, and such benevolent countenances, that he had not the heart to refuse. But what was the consequence? No sooner was he left to his own reflections, than he perceived they were, no matter whether intentional or not, nothing less than cajoling him out of his former professions; and therefore these mistaken acts of friendship generally ended in a quarrel. Call it pride, or what you will, still it was acting up to his principles. It does not deserve the name of inconsistency; it is consistency at war with odds, and eventually obtaining the victory. That he was eccentric is undoubted, not only in his opinions but in his dress, which was thought the greater offence of the two, when a gold-laced coat was the acme of gentlemanly existence; though surely eccentricity is not a-kin to the deadly sins. Like all enthusiasts, when he attempted to put his theories into practice, he became ridiculous; and unlike most enthusiasts, there is a practical good to be found in all his theories. Had he never attempted to set an example, his doctrine might have been more followed. What had an Armenian cloak, and many other extravagances, to do with the preceptor of *Emilius*?⁴⁹ Unhappily at that time, in his latter days, his whole conduct betokened a derangement of intellect. Towards the conclusion of his *Confessions*, I think, there is evidence of this infirmity. If that is doubtful, read his last work.—

"The Walks of a Solitary Man,"⁵⁰—which more properly ought to be translated "The Wanderings." Persecution had done little, for he was a stout sufferer; but the being betrayed by men on whom he relied as friends, was a shock from which he never recovered; acting, as it probably did, on some malformation or disorganisation of the brain, since it appears, by his own account, he was always subject to a mysterious affection of the head. From that time he suspected every one except Theresa,⁵¹ who was the only one to be suspected, till the discovery of her treachery drove him to desperation. In this manner was his old age haunted and tormented, even to death.

His worst actions, and the only bad ones of any magnitude, were the theft of the ribbon, followed by the accusation against his innocent fellow-servant, and the sending his children to the Foundling Hospital.⁵² For the first, some apology may be framed: there was certainly no premeditated cruelty against the girl, since it arose from his suddenly acting from the impulse of a timid disposition—a fault he was often guilty of in instances of less moment; nor has he nor any one sufficiently dwelt upon his extreme youth when it was committed. Nothing, however, can be said to palliate the crime of deserting his offspring. The excuses which passed through his mind at the time were precisely the same as are made use of by all unnatural fathers when they abandon their natural children. But there is this difference between him and many others: he bitterly wept over his error; his anguish of heart was never at rest; and if ever penitence could make mankind forgive, he ought to be forgiven. Let the crime be execrated as you will. It is an honest curse; but let it not touch Rousseau. Our Foundling Hospital, it is said, is stocked with the children of the rich. How many thousands are sent to the parish! In

some parishes, I have heard the frightful calculation is, that only one in eleven survives its infancy. There is no country in the world so infamous for this crime as England. Yes; let us curse it, and shut our hands and hearts against those who have been guilty of it, and who can dare to mention it, or hear it mentioned, without remorse. Rousseau was not one of those.

Now for a pleasanter task. We will talk of his virtues,—“close at the heels of his vices.”⁵³ As a literary man he had no envy. While attacked and abused on all sides, he never forgot his own honour and dignity. Voltaire,⁵⁴ his great rival, in his histories, his romances, and his poems, was ever aiming a blow at the Citizen of Geneva, either turning his opinions or his person into ridicule. Rousseau always spoke of his talents with respect, and would not be tempted to retaliate. On the contrary, when a subscription was on foot for a statue to Voltaire during his life, Rousseau cheerfully added his name; which unluckily threw “Philosophy’s Harlequin”⁵⁵ into violent antics and contortions; and there was no peace in Paris till the offensive name was erased from the list. In private life, he was never heard to speak ill of another behind his back. Deception of any kind was his utter abhorrence. When Madame D’Epinay⁵⁶ was in her angriest mood at him, she could not forbear paying the compliment of saying—“If he gives you his word, I believe he may be relied on.”⁵⁷ It is strange, if his writings were insincere, that nothing like insincerity could be discovered in his conversation. When he believed himself treated with duplicity, his indignation was indeed wild and inexorable; nothing offended him so much. In his general manners he was indulgent, gentle, and unassuming. No one quitted his company with a painful sense of inferiority. His smile is represented as having been expressive

of great sweetness. While he toiled hard to earn a subsistence, observing the strictest economy down to the minutest articles, dividing his daily modicum of small wine into equal portions for dinner and supper, and compelled to forego the pleasure of a friend at his table because it was too scantily supplied, this man—this calumniated Rousseau—was supporting an aged aunt in Switzerland. Year after year, for a long series of years, the remittances never failed. A gentleman, travelling in her neighbourhood, heard of the circumstance and called upon her. “What, Sir,”—these were her words,—“and have you seen my Nephew? Is it indeed true that he has no religion? Our Clergymen tell me he is an impious man. But how can that be? It is through his kindness that I am now alive. Poor old woman as I am, above eighty years old, without him I should die, alone and not a soul near me, in a garret, of cold and hunger.” When this was repeated to Rousseau,—“It is a debt,” said he; “she took charge of me when an orphan.” Thanks, M. de Musset, for this anecdote! You have planted an imperishable flower in his laurel. It is a glorious burst of sunshine after all the thunder we have heard against his name.

I sat down to write of Rousseau in his character as a man, not as an author. Yet as some of his opinions, the moral more than the religious, so startling to the prejudices of the world, have brought much odium upon his memory, I am willing to step forward in their defence. Nor can I, as a man myself, omit saying something of his greatest work, to which we are all so much indebted.

Had he not deserted his children, in all probability we should never have seen his “*Emile*.” It appears as if, not able to endure the pain of brooding over his fault, he had appealed to his imagination for relief; and there, once more a father, he cherished and tutored these his “dream-children”

so differently from others, that, shocked at the dissimilarity, he addressed his system to parents, calling upon them to act as nature not as fashion bade them. At the commencement of *Emilius* is a passage in allusion to his own case, which is extremely pathetic. After exhorting fathers to their duty, he says—"Neither poverty, nor labour, nor respect for the world, can excuse us from maintaining our children, and bringing them up ourselves. *You may believe me, reader, that what I say is true.* Should a person of real sensibility neglect this duty, *I may venture to predict he will long bewail his mistake, and nothing can ever console him.*"⁵⁸ He has been laughed at for inculcating a duty where he himself was the greatest delinquent. How blind! Can any of these laughers imagine a more heroic action than a man proclaiming his crime, not idly, but to warn his fellow-creatures against so miserable an error? Let this production, together with his sorrows, be received as an expiation. Its utility is practically acknowledged by all parties, however the "Confessions of the Curate of Savoy,"⁵⁹ and some other parts, may be hated by those who insist on being of a contrary creed. As soon as it appeared, a host of theologians started up, denouncing vengeance against its author, hunting him from place to place; and at Geneva, his own Geneva, it was burnt by the common hangman.⁶⁰ In this persecution the women added no small share of irritation; for they would read the volumes, extolled Rousseau, took their infants to their bosoms, stripped off the horrid swathing clothes, treated them like reasoning beings till they became reasonable, and taught them love instead of fear. After a foolish struggle the women triumphed, as they always do, over the dogmatisms of men,—not to mention priests, who are the first to yield to such an opposition. What individuals under thirty or forty can say they may not be beholden to Rous-

seau? Those who have straight backs, straight limbs, unpinched heads, health, and sound minds, ought in gratitude, next to God and the care of their parents, to thank Jean Jacques. Here in Italy (as far as I have seen, where the light heath yet shows) swathes and a score of barbarous customs are still in use; and the consequence is, there are many dwarfs and a wretched crowd of deformed and helpless creatures. On the contrary, in France and in England these instances are rare. That Rousseau in his education of Emilius puts forth many untenable paradoxes is certain; the wonder is there are no more. At the time he wrote, Nature was quite a theory, and a very puzzling one. How difficult it must have been to give a tolerable guess at what kind of an animal a little boy might turn out, when released from his cumbersome and ridiculous dress, and in the hands of a sensible tutor. Imagine him with bag-wig and sword, embroidered coat and waistcoat, knee-breeches and a cocked-hat; and pursued all day long by a coaxing and cursing nurse, with a rattle in one hand and a rod in the other. Look at Hogarth's⁶¹ prints, or, if you suspect his full-dressed puppets of caricature, look at the family pictures of the last century. Yet it was out of one of these monstrous abortions of folly and finery that he produced that beautiful picture of Emilius at the end of the second book. No one was more aware of the imperfections in his system than himself. He was content to be right in the main. When a gentleman told him he was bringing up his son like another Emilius, the answer he received was—"Then, Sir, you do wrong." One of the most distinguishing features between Voltaire and Rousseau is, that the former was a destroyer and nothing else; while the latter, though he pulled down also, was still careful to build up. We may regard this work as a goodly and graceful piece of architecture, though some of the minor

parts are a little out of proportion. To run this old metaphor out of breath, I would say it is silly to condemn the whole fabric because a window may have a false position, and a chimney-pot a false conclusion; or that the cornice does not run in a true syllogism; or that the pilasters may cry out with King Lear, "Ha! here's three of us are sophisticated!"⁶² The man who can point out these defects can amend them. Let him do so, and be thankful.

The heaviest charge against Rousseau's writings is, that they contain such descriptions as none but the most gross mind could suggest. This word *gross* is often most irreverently misapplied. A Bishop, who bids us fix our affections solely on the world to come, will call all sublunary things gross, except the emoluments of his See and his belly. *Grossness* is too comprehensive, and must be reduced to its simple signification,—pleasure without sentiment. Rousseau is never guilty of inculcating that in any of his works. He inveighs with more than pulpit eloquence against it. I grant he was voluptuous, in the best sense, which means no more than a desire to be loved by all that is good and beautiful. And this desire was so sublimated in his breast, that every woman became a cruel disappointment to him. From youth to age he went sighing through the world, outdoing the jest of Diogenes and his lanthorn,⁶³ seeking some unattainable creature—a Julia, a Clara, or a Sophia⁶⁴—and meeting with none but D'Epinays and D'Houpetots.⁶⁵ Madame D'Houpetot indeed was something; but then M. Saint-Lambert⁶⁶ was her St. Preux,⁶⁷ and in full possession. Rousseau could not be satisfied with thinking a woman was an angel,—no, she must needs be an angel while he thought her a woman. Like his own Pygmalion,⁶⁸ he was always forming faultless Galateas,⁶⁹ while his imagination, like a deity, animated them to his wishes. Then his enjoyment was to

describe their charms, with all the voluptuousness and all the delicacy of a lover.* “The only actual difference between the fabulous solitary and the real one was, unfortunately, that Pygmalion seems to have been willing enough to be contented, had he found a mistress that deserved him; whereas Rousseau, when he was really beloved, and even thought himself so, was sure to be made the ruin of his own comfort, partly by a distrustful morbidity of temperament, and partly perhaps by a fastidious metaphysical subtlety, which turned his eye with a painful sharpness upon the defects instead of humanities of his fellow creatures, and made the individual answer for the whole mass.”⁷⁰ We may laugh at such a man, or we may pity him, but it is impossible to call him a libertine,⁷¹ Surely he has been confounded with his namesake Jean *Baptiste* Rousseau,⁷² the writer of the best French lyrics, the most licentious epigrams, and the most pious psalms. Had our Rousseau been the most gallant of rovers, yet had Theresa been his true and lawful wife, he would have passed for a moderate sort of a man and the best of husbands. The world is a spoiled child, will have its own way, and likes those who dandle and cocker it better than its benefactors. But his writings! His “Julie, ou la nouvelle Heloise!” what are we to say to that?

Truly, our grave-heads tell us this same novel of the New Eloisa is of so immoral a tendency, that it ought never to be put into the hands of any one younger than themselves. “’Tis not good;” quoth Dame Quickly,⁷³ “that children should know any wickedness: old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world.”⁷⁴ On the other hand, Anna Seward,⁷⁵ like a sensible maiden, recommends it should

* This passage ought to have been mine. “Plague take those who anticipate our articles!”⁷⁶—See *Indicators*, 31st and 32nd.⁷⁷

be read by all young men. The reason she gives is to this effect, for I have forgotten the precise words: that, beyond any other work, it proves that the most ardent love, far from being diminished or chilled by the union of sentiment, is the more glowing as well as the more exalted; and therefore it may be the means of weaning the gay men of the town from heartless pleasures. This is good; and I am glad a woman, as times and opinions go, had the courage to write it. Quarrel not with voluptuousness, for he who has none of it will have something infinitely worse. But here I see a whole bench of grave-heads shake fearfully at this doctrine, thinking themselves in no degree the worse for having, in their day, been guilty of a little heartlessness. There is much vulgar talk against this novel, much cant, like a distillation from the last *Ultra* review; and it may be divided (Quarterly) into short-sightedness, misrepresentation, impudence, and hypocrisy. St. Preux is not, in the ordinary sense of the word, the seducer of his pupil. Truth is, he and Julia very unintentionally seduce one another. Rather than blame them, you must blame Nature for having formed two congenial souls that could not be happy apart. The fault then must lie in the factitious modes of society, which form what is misnamed "its well being," and which forbade the marriage of these two loving hearts; as if it were preposterous for a man of no family to wed the daughter of a Baron, however enormous his perriwig, or however extraordinary his gold-headed cane. Rousseau was deeply impressed with the cruelty exercised against those who "love not wisely but too well."⁷⁸ He would not let virtue die, as we kill horses, because she had unluckily made a false step, and broken her leg. He dared to assert,—which was much in his time, and nearly as much in ours,—that what is always stigmatized as impure, is sometimes pure, and that nothing

but depravity could be the ruin of any one. Julia's affection for St. Preux was perhaps as holy (with reverence be it spoken) as any matrimony could make it; and it is scarcely possible to read their history without imagining she was divorced, not from a lover, but from a first husband. This however cannot be said to furnish a bad example, for both of them are unhappy enough, if that will make our virtuous critics happy. She, amidst the cherishing fondness of a crowd of friends, and beloved by her husband, still looks tearfully back to the first hour of her love, and that without a wish it should return; and he is for ever wretched. Be it observed, and this I think very moral, that the man is here more severely punished than the woman, which still remains a novelty, though it ought to be otherwise. And I must notice another point of morality: we are here taught how a Christian and an Atheist may live in harmony and peace together, aye, even as man and wife;—surely this is doing the bitter world some service. Besides, in Clara and Julia, we meet with a fine generous compliment to the women, which doubtless they deserve, though it is not often paid them,—that they can love the same man and love one another at the same time. But the greatest charm in the work is the constant endeavour of the author to discover “a soul of goodness in things evil;”⁷⁹ as if taught this lesson by his favourites the bees, that can extract honey from poisonous flowers. A few more such books, and the race of misanthropes would be at end. Nor has he any faith in such romantic villains as Lovelace,⁸⁰ Blifil,⁸¹ young Thornhill,⁸² Count Fathom,⁸³ and the rest of those bugbears of iniquity, who are every now and then called upon to perform a little gratuitous villany, for the sake of heightening the interest. The only thing I dislike is, that St. Preux, towards the end, becomes a mere puppet; and that Julia arrives at too high a

pitch of female excellence. She is too wonderful, too upright, too buckramed, too theatrical. I get weary of her, and fall in love with Clara. The hussey grows saucy about her acquirements and household economy. I long to hear she has committed another slip; or that one of her servants has given her warning for speaking crossly before breakfast. Why does not she tear her best gown, or tread her shoes down at heel? Is it possible she never fails in metaphysics and the best of rice puddings? Give me something, some little circumstance to her discredit, that I may get rid of her cloying perfections. Quick—hurry over the leaves, and let us come in at the death. Julia's death! Ah! there we love her once more. We fear to rustle the page as we read of all the minute circumstances attending the last hours of one so young, so beautiful, so beloved. "See!" says the story of Addison,⁸⁴ "in what peace a Christian can die!"⁸⁵ And how? Even no more than our criminals on the scaffold. But the Christian Julia not only has peace; she has so pure a sense of gratitude to God, that she can be cheerful to the last. "Death," she says, "is of itself sufficiently painful! Why must it be rendered hideous? The care which others throw away in endeavouring to prolong their lives, I will employ in enjoying mine to the last moment. Shall I make a hospital of my apartment, a scene of disgust and trouble, when my last care ought to be to assemble in it all those who are most dear to me?"⁸⁶ So the curtains are gracefully looped back; she orders fresh flowers to be placed on the chimney-piece; her friends and children dine and sup at her bed-side; while she, "just as in full health, calm and resigned, talked with the same good-sense and the same spirit; putting on, now and then, an air of serenity approaching even to sprightliness."⁸⁷

Orthodox people,—I mean people of all sorts of orthodoxies (except mine) are fond of attributing bad exits to the heterodox,—nay, even of throwing their death-beds at the heads of one another. I wish they would be content with copying the smooth decency of departures like this, and let their animosities die as well.

CARLONE.⁸⁸

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¹ Loreto, town in central Italy, on the Musone River near the Adriatic coast. This place is renowned for the Santa Casa (Holy House of the Virgin), an important pilgrimage site.

² John Keats, "Lines Written in the Highlands after a Visit to Burns's Country" (1818), l. 12.

³ Reference to the courting chair belonging to William Shakespeare (1564-1616) and Anne Hathaway, according to an account by the English engraver Samuel Ireland.

⁴ Unidentified quotation.

⁵ John Milton (1608-74), English poet, pamphleteer, and historian. Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1688) is often seen as one of the greatest epic poems in English Literature.

⁶ Milton lived in several different places throughout his life, including London, Cambridge, Paris, Florence, Rome.

⁷ Robert Burns (1759-96), British poet, remembered for his songs and lyrics in English and Scots and also for his amours and his overt rebellion against orthodox religion and morality. The reference is to his first home in Alloway.

⁸ Ayrshire, historic county, southwestern Scotland. The county is named after Ayr, its historic county town.

⁹ Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (1590), Canto III, Stanza 38, l. 2.

¹⁰ John Keats (1795-1821), one of the most representative poets of the English Romantic movement. In his works, Keats tried to merge a vivid imagery, the sensuous appeal and elements of Classicism.

¹¹ John Keats, "This Mortal Body of a Thousand Days" (1818), ll. 3-4.

¹² Robert Burns's house in Dumfries, Scotland. Here, the author lived the last three years of his life until his death in 1796. Over the years it has attracted many famous visitors including the poets Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats.

¹³ Presbyterian, form of church government which originated during the seventeenth-century Protestant Reformation. Plain in style and historically referred to as the "meeting house", it reflects its function of a place where people meet to worship.

¹⁴ House of William Collins (1721-59), pre-Romantic English poet, in Chichester.

¹⁵ Chichester Cathedral in the city of Chichester, Sussex, southern England.

¹⁶ Monument to the memory of William Collins in Chichester Cathedral by sculptor and designer John Flaxman (1755-1826).

¹⁷ David Garrick (1717-79), English actor, theatre manager and poet. The reference is to his country house in Hampton Court Road, Hampton.

¹⁸ Samuel Johnson (1709-84), English critic, biographer, essayist, poet, and lexicographer. He is considered as one of the greatest figures of eighteenth-century life and letters and one of the first Shakespearean critics and editors.

¹⁹ Thrale's House, belonging to the British politician and entrepreneur Henry Thrale (1724/1730?-81), located south of Tooting Bec Road in Streatham Park. Made famous by the writings of Samuel Johnson, himself a frequent visitor.

²⁰ Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the Poets* (1779), also known as *Prefaces, Biographical and Critical, to the Works of the English Poets*.

²¹ Samuel Johnson's literary reputation was largely built upon his work as a moralist. William Mudford, *A Critical Enquiry Into the Moral Writings of Dr. Samuel Johnson* (1802) further consolidated this reputation.

²² William Shakespeare, *Othello*, V.ii.337. All references from Shakespeare are taken from the Arden Edition, third series.

²³ Samuel Johnson received a royal pension of 300 pounds a year in recognition of his literary achievements.

²⁴ *The False Alarm* (1770), political pamphlet by Samuel Johnson in which the author expresses his endorsement for the House of Commons' resolution not to readmit John Wilkes, previous member of Parliament found guilty of libel. The pamphlet aimed at ridiculing those who believed this case would lead to a constitutional crisis.

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²⁵ *Taxation No Tyranny* (1775), Samuel Johnson's longest tract. The title reflects his stance against the American Continental Congress, which, in 1774, adopted resolutions opposing what they viewed as oppressive taxation by England, particularly given that the colonies lacked representation in Parliament. According to Johnson, the colonists were not denied representation but had rather decided to leave the country in which they had the right to vote. The author also observes that colonists are supposed to support their mother country.

²⁶ Reference to Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), Swiss-born philosopher, writer, and political theorist, who was born in Geneva. His treatises and other literary works served as source of inspiration both for those fighting for the French Revolution and for the Romantic generation. Among his most significant works: *A Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* (*Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*) (1755), *The New Eloise* (*Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse*) (1761), *The Social Contract* (*Du Contrat Social*) (1762), *Emile; or, On Education* (*Émile; ou, de l'éducation*) (1762), and *The Confessions* (*Les Confessions*) (1782-89).

²⁷ Unlike Samuel Johnson, Rousseau never received a royal pension. Louis and George were the French and English sovereigns at the time: Louis XIV (1638-1715, reigned 1643-1715) and George III (1738-1820, reigned 1760-1820).

²⁸ Les Charmettes, country house near Chambéry, southeastern France, was Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Madame de Warens's house.

²⁹ Louise-Éléonore de la Tour du Pil, baroness de Warens (1700-62), aristocrat who had a romantic liaison with Rousseau between 1728 and 1742.

³⁰ William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, I.ii.292.

³¹ Savoy, historical region in southeastern France.

³² Victor Amadeus II (1666-1732), duke of Savoy (1675-1713). Thanks to his diplomatic skills, he managed to become the first king of Sardinia-Piedmont (1720-30) and king of Sicily (1713-20).

³³ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions* (1782-89), bk. 7:374.

³⁴ John Castle, also known as Castles, *agent provocateur* and government spy, acquitted on a charge of treason in 1817.

³⁵ William J. Oliver (1774?-1827), police informer and *agent provocateur* after the Napoleonic Wars.

³⁶ George Edwards, supposed government spy and *agent provocateur*.

³⁷ Peninsula in Lake Biel, Bern, Switzerland.

³⁸ Madame de Franqueville, French noblewoman.

³⁹ Hermitage, house in Montmorency, Île-de-France. The years Rousseau spent here were his most productive ones from a literary point of view.

⁴⁰ *The New Eloise* (1761), novel by Rousseau.

⁴¹ Misspelling of *Jacques*.

⁴² Misspelling of *À*.

⁴³ Trans. "Place inhabited by Jean Jacques, | You remind me of his genius, | His loneliness, his pride, | And his misfortunes, and his madness: | To glory, to truth, | He dared to devote his life, | and was always persecuted | Or by himself, or by desire."

⁴⁴ French for "To glory, to truth!"

⁴⁵ Louis, gold coin circulating in France before the French Revolution (1789).

⁴⁶ *Anecdotes inédites, pour faire suite aux Mémoires de Mme d'Épinai, précédées de l'examen de ces mémoires* (1818) by Victor Donatien de Musset-Pathay. De Musset (1768-1832), French writer and bureaucrat.

⁴⁷ "timid and... timid character.": Both quotations are from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* (1782-89).

⁴⁸ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I.vii.61.

⁴⁹ One of the characters in Rousseau's *Emile, or on Education* (1762).

⁵⁰ *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (1782) is the last and unfinished work by Rousseau. The book combines autobiographical anecdotes, descriptions of sights, and other insights regarding education and political philosophy.

⁵¹ Thérèse Levasseur, partner and then wife of Rousseau.

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⁵² The five children of Rousseau and Thérèse were left to the Paris Foundling Hospital, an institution meant for the reception of abandoned or exposed children.

⁵³ William Shakespeare, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, III.i.314.

⁵⁴ Voltaire (1694-1778), French writer, famous for his writings against tyranny, bigotry and cruelty. His most important works include the fictitious *Philosophical Letters* (*Lettres philosophiques*) (1734) and the novel *Candide* (1759).

⁵⁵ According to Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, "Essai sur J. J. Rousseau", *Oeuvres complètes de Jacques-Henri-Bernardin de Saint-Pierre* (1818), bk. 12:95, Rousseau defined Voltaire as "Philosophy's Harlequin".

⁵⁶ Louise d'Épinay (1726-83), prominent figure in eighteenth-century French literary circles. Despite her extensive literary production, she is renowned for her connection to some important French intellectuals of her age, including Denis Diderot.

⁵⁷ Louise d'Épinay, *Mémoires de Madame d'Épinay* (1876), 2:491.

⁵⁸ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile* (1762), bk. I.

⁵⁹ Fourth chapter of Rousseau's *Emile*.

⁶⁰ The fourth chapter of *Emile* was condemned by the Sorbonne. The book was therefore banned in Paris and Geneva and was burned in public in 1762.

⁶¹ William Hogarth (1697-1764), one of the most prominent English artists of the eighteenth century, well-known for his satirical engravings and paintings.

⁶² William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, III.iv.103-04.

⁶³ Diogenes Laërtius, Greek philosopher of the third century BCE. It was said that he wandered with a lantern in his hands, and whenever he was asked the reason why, he replied that he was searching for a man that could live a happy and authentic life but could not find him anywhere.

⁶⁴ Julia (Julie) and Clara (Claire) are two characters in Rousseau's *The New Eloise*. Sophie is a character in *Emile*.

⁶⁵ Possible reference to Sophie d'Houdetot (1730-1813), noblewoman with whom Rousseau had a passionate and platonic relationship.

⁶⁶ Jean François de Saint-Lambert (1716-1803), French poet, philosopher and military officer that Sophie d'Houdetot chose over Rousseau.

⁶⁷ Saint-Preux, central character in Rousseau's *The New Eloise*.

⁶⁸ In Greek mythology, Pygmalion was the sculptor who fell in love with a female statue he himself had shaped.

⁶⁹ Galatea, in some versions of the Pygmalion story, is the name of Pygmalion's ivory statue.

⁷⁰ Leigh Hunt, *The Indicator*, No. XXXI (1820), 241-42.

⁷¹ Mispunctuation: comma erroneously placed instead of full stop.

⁷² Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1671-1741), French dramatist and poet, gained great popularity within the Parisian society of his age.

⁷³ Mistress Quickly is a character who appears in four Shakespeare's plays: *I Henry IV*, *II Henry IV*, *Henry V* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

⁷⁴ William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, II.ii.120-23.

⁷⁵ Anna Seward (1742-1809), English poet, literary critic, and writer, had connections with many intellectuals of her age, including Samuel Johnson, Erasmus Darwin, George Romney, Helen Maria Williams, Hester Lynch Piozzi, Robert Southey and Walter Scott. Her poems "Elegy on Captain Cook" (1780) and "Monody on Major André" (1781) made her well-known both in Europe and America.

⁷⁶ Leigh Hunt, *The Indicator*, No. XXXII (1820), 249. Hunt is reporting the Latin saying "Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt", often attributed to the Roman grammarian Aelius Donatus (4th century CE).

⁷⁷ *The Indicator*, periodical launched by Leigh Hunt on 13 October 1819. It would be published every Wednesday morning in the Strand by Joseph Appleyard (who worked for *The Examiner*). Each issue contained 8 pages dealing with different topics and mainly occupied by Hunt's writing. Keats, Shelley, and Lamb partly contributed to *The Indicator*, until Hunt gave it up on 21 March 1821, after the publication of the seventy-sixth issue.

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- ⁷⁸ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, V.ii.342.
- ⁷⁹ William Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, IV.i.4.
- ⁸⁰ Robert Lovelace, character in Samuel Richardson's novel *Clarissa* (1747-48).
- ⁸¹ Mr. Blifil, character in Henry Fielding's novel *Tom Jones* (1749).
- ⁸² Squire Thornhill, character in Oliver Goldsmith's novel *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766).
- ⁸³ Count Fathom, character in Tobias Smollett's novel *The Adventures of Ferdinand, Count Fathom* (1753).
- ⁸⁴ Joseph Addison (1672-1719), English essayist, poet, and dramatist, was one of the main contributors to the periodicals *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* along with Richard Steele. His writing skills granted him important roles in the Whig government.
- ⁸⁵ These are supposedly Addison's dying words to his stepson, Lord Warwick. See Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition*, (1759), 102.
- ⁸⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The New Eloise*, (1761), vol. 2.
- ⁸⁷ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The New Eloise*, (1761), vol. 2.
- ⁸⁸ Leigh Hunt and Charles Brown wanted "Les Charmettes" to be published under the pseudonym "Carluccio", but the signature in the final version was "Carlone".

LONGUS.*

WHENEVER the Ancients were about to commence any important undertaking, they were extremely attentive to the omens which preceded it; and if any disagreeable sight, or any painful sound, obtruded itself, they desisted from their attempts, and waited for a more propitious opportunity.

Plutarch¹ tells us, that on one occasion the election of the Consuls at Rome was set aside, because some rats had been heard to squeak during the time of polling. Now, although a rat is an odious animal, this seems to be going a little too far; for, if that principle were introduced into our law of Parliament, and if all returns were to be set aside, whenever a rat had taken a part in the election, it is quite clear that no Representatives would ever be duly chosen, and that we should linger out a wretched state of untaxed existence, in a most deplorable destitution of distress-warrants, and utterly abandoned by excisemen and collectors.

But happily there is no reason to apprehend that we shall ever be given up to such a frightful solitude, this delicacy of the Romans being only a piece of religious superstition, and we are now, as is sufficiently obvious, quite free from superstitions of every kind.

It may be worth while, notwithstanding, to consider how far the attention paid by the Ancients to omens is worthy of imitation, not on superstitious grounds, for in this age any revival of superstition must be quite hopeless, but be-

* Author: Thomas Jefferson Hogg / Transcribed and annotated by Serena Baiesi and Franca Dellarosa.

cause in all things first impressions are of no small importance: to some men they are every thing; to all men, they are much.

As for example, in the study of Greek, who can say that his zeal is not somewhat abated by the recollection of what were his feelings when he was first introduced to what is called a great Grecian? He had been doubtless often told, that of all studies this is the most important: "Above all things, Greek!" had often been inculcated, and he naturally expected to see in such a character somewhat of the original brightness of what, he had been assured, was above all things bright.

And what did he see? A great Grecian.² A voluminous wig clotted with powder and pomatum, surmounting a pimpled and greasy face, which expressed all that is disgusting in grossness, sullen in tyranny, and despicable in servile meanness; whilst it hung brooding over a rusty black coat and waistcoat, of a more barbarous structure than is commonly deemed consistent even with those barbarian vestments, the apparel of a stomach strutting out with the bold projection of an Alderman's, but wanting that generous sweep of flowing outline;—to say nothing of the wide buckled shoes, the grey stockings, and the breeches begrimed with snuff.

And when he tarried with the Grecian, and found him vulgar in mind, brutal in manners; for ever wallowing in the base sensualities of inordinate eating; always muzzy in a middle state, with too little temperance to keep sober, and with too little spirit to get drunk outright;—when he found that he was a man, who never touched upon the substantial beauties of the language, but dwelt in the quantities of doubtful vowels, in the diversities of unsettled dialects, and in the various readings of unimportant words:

and that even this was not for the purpose of teaching, but in order to insnare; that he might at any moment find a pretext to cut his victim to shreds with the rod, and thus appease the malignity of his mind and the crudities of his stomach;—since it is under a Government so truly paternal that the first impressions are received, the wonder is, not that so little relish for this language in general remains, but that it is ever any thing else than an object of abhorrence;—it almost seems as if it was in revenge for our sufferings in this branch of education, that we are so nearly unanimous in endeavouring to retain under the legitimate sway of the Turks the descendants of the great Grecians, the prototypes of those, by whose hands we smarted in the days of our boyhood.

Be this as it may, we are too apt to forget that we owe to Greece the invention of all things; of all that is great, of all that is good, of all that is lovely, of all that is agreeable; and, amongst other agreeable things, of novels.

The first Greek novel³ was written in the time of Alexander the Great;⁴ it has perished, and all we know of it is, that it was of the marvellous cast. This was followed by several of what may be called the French school,⁵ of a warm complexion; they are now no more, and all that remains besides their names is the tradition that, like some others of that school, they were a little too warm.

Then sprung up a great crop of erotic or amatory writers, who flourished, as is conjectured, in the fifth century of the Christian æra; of whose works some have been published, some have been lost, and others still remain in MSS. in public libraries. "*Seges eroticorum, seculi quinti, partim edita, partim deperdita, partim e bibliothecis adhuc expromenda.*"⁶ The prince of these is Longus,⁷ who has deservedly gained the title of "*Suavissimus,*"⁸ the sweetest of writers; he is a more

pure and simple sophist than any of the rest, but he is still a sophist.

There are perhaps no books in the world of any merit less read, than "Longus the Sophist's four Books of Pastorals concerning Daphnis and Chloe."⁹ It would be a humourous, but by no means a light penance, if the penitent were enjoined to wander about the land, until he could find some one to absolve him, who was acquainted with these four books. A certain scholar, who was, as sometimes happens, much admired by his own university in his day, and by no one else at any other time, upon being asked if he had read Longus, answered: "Longus! O yes, Longus. I know Longus; he wrote a book in queer, crampt, crabbed Greek. I know Longus."¹⁰ The penitent himself, however foot-sore, could hardly satisfy his conscience with absolution pronounced in this form, at least if he had read one sentence of our author.

A learned man resembles the unlearned in nothing more (although the likeness is in many respects very striking) than in his unwillingness to say, I know nothing about the matter, even when this may be said without at all violating the truth.

In order to keep up this resemblance, some learned men have written that the *Pastoralia*, which are manifest prose, are in verse: and the editors of the Encyclopedia Britannica, by dividing the title of the book, have made it into two works: they teach us, that "Longus is the author of a book entitled *Pæmenica*, or Pastorals, and a romance, containing the loves of Daphnis and Chloe." A book-making trick, which we should hardly have looked for in the editors of an Encyclopedia.

In palliation of these, and of many other mistakes, which might be enumerated, it may be alleged that the book is

very scarce; that, although it may be met with in public libraries, it is rarely to be found in private hands. One, who affected the singularity of being the possessor of a copy, sought for it in vain in the catalogues of, at least, ten or twelve of the principal booksellers in London: one of them, however, it must be owned, had the book in his catalogue, although not in his library. An edition, printed at Leipsic in 1777, was at last procured,¹¹ which shewed that this dearth prevailed as well on the Continent as in England; for the editor, M. B. G. L. Boden, a learned Professor of Poetry, complains that he had long been desirous to publish this book himself, but had sought in vain for a copy for that purpose: he tells us, that he formed that wish, because for a long period of time it had been recommended again and again to the common admiration of mankind by many learned men, whom he names. "*Liber communi admirationi sat diu a Politianis, Muretis, Barthiis, Scaligeris, Trilleris, Christiis, Hereliis, etiam atque etiam commendatus.*"¹²

From this scarcity we should hardly have supposed that there are nine or ten different editions in existence; but of some of them a small number of copies were printed; others were in an expensive form, and therefore probably their sale was very limited. A splendid edition published at Paris,¹³ with plates from designs by the Duke of Orleans,¹⁴ was of course expensive, and besides a few copies only were struck off.

The sight of a dear friend, who has been unexpectedly rescued from death, is delightful to the eyes, and the narrative of his escape is above all things interesting. Where shall we find more dear, more faithful friends, than the Greek writers? How many of them have perished miserably, even in sight of land (like some of their worshippers, who also carried away with them too large a portion of that scanty

remnant of virtue, which as yet remained to our poverty) and to what frightful hazards have most of the survivors been exposed, before the art of printing brought salvation to letters.

On this account few curiosities are more agreeable than the *editio princeps*¹⁵ of a Greek book. The first edition of Longus is extremely scarce.¹⁶ It is a small thin quarto, printed at Florence, in 1598, or, as it is expressed in the title-page, and, as far as respects the numerals, somewhat quaintly, "*Florentiæ, apud Philippum Junctam MDIIC.*" As is commonly the case with these primitive productions, its simplicity is uncorrupted by the impurities of a Latin translation, and it has only a few notes at the end, and a short dedicatory preface by Raphael Columbanus. The prefaces of first editions must always be read with interest, as they contain a public acknowledgment of that superior excellence in the author, which induced some meritorious persons, always at a considerable expense, and too often with a great loss, to secure to us, by means of the press, the perpetual possession of inestimable treasures. It may be worth while, therefore, to hear what reasons Columbanus has to offer for saving the life of the sweetest of writers; they are these: "Having myself attentively read the Pastorals of Longus, and having also persuaded several learned men to read them, the author seemed so delightful to all of us, as well on account of the purity and elegance of his language, as of the gaiety of his subject, that we could not help thinking we should be guilty of no small offence, if we did not all in our power to prevent such a work remaining any longer in concealment: more especially as I well knew that many scholars were most anxious that it should be published."¹⁷

"Quæ cum diligenter legissem, et cum doctis sanè viris lectionem illam communicâsem, ita nobis arridere cæpit hic auctor,

tum ob sermonis puritatem atque elegantiam, tum ob materiæ festivitatem, ut prope facinus nos admissuros fuisse duxerimus si (quantum in nobis esset) hujusmodi opus diutius in tenebris delitesceret: præser tim, cum scirem illud a studiosis vehementer desiderari."

Another specimen of the editions, of which only a limited number of copies were printed, is a neat little volume in 12mo., equally undefiled by Latin or disfigured by notes, the pages of which are ruled with bright red lines, like a Prayer-book or Testament.¹⁸ The benevolent reader is addressed in a short preface by Lud. Dutens, who ungenerously printed at Paris, in 1776, only 200 copies, but generously distributed 100 of these to his private friends.

Another of the expensive class is a quarto, beautifully printed at Parma, in the luscious types of Bodoni.¹⁹

There is an old translation into English,²⁰ and one more modern (London, 1804, 12mo.) by Mr. Le Grice;²¹ the old French translation by Amyot,²² is much esteemed; and there are two, or three, into Italian.²³

Some elegant examples from Longus are introduced in "A Grammar of the Greek Tongue on a New Plan,"²⁴ which Mr. Jones has contrived to make an amusing book, although a grammar; and he has also contrived, which is no common merit in a grammar, to be abused by the Quarterly Review,²⁵ the rule of right, by which we, the people of England, at present form our taste and our morals; together with some little assistance from certain Annual Journals and Daily Annals; for by such congruous names these great masters of language designate their oracular volumes.

Of many of the ancients but little is known; of Longus literally nothing; even Bayle,²⁶ who can tell us every thing about every body, can tell us nothing about him. It is highly creditable to the Sophist, that we find nothing about

himself in his book; this savours of honest antiquity, when a man, who undertook to write of Daphnis and Chloe, could keep faith, and actually write of them and of them only; whereas we moderns discourse about ourselves, our wives, our digestion, our own narrow notions concerning politics or religion,—about any thing, in short, but our subject.

Nor do any of his contemporaries, if he ever had any, which is by no means clear, give us any account of him: from this general silence (unless we suppose that he inhabited the world alone, in which case he could not do any great mischief) we may infer with tolerable certainty, that he must have been an excellent man; because we may be sure that his neighbours would not have proclaimed his virtues, or have been so unneighbourly as to have kept silence respecting his faults, or even his weaknesses, if he had any.

But commentators must needs comment upon every thing; they can permit nothing to rest in peace, not even the memory of the dead. There is one incredible thing,—more incredible than all that is contained in Palæphatus, who wrote a book expressly concerning incredible things,—²⁹and that is, the indefatigable industry with which these men have brought together, for the sole purpose of blocking up the paths to knowledge, huge masses of rubbish, in comparison with which the pyramids of Egypt shrink into insignificance.

Let us hear, in a few words, what Peter Moll, a Doctor of Laws and a Professor of Greek, narrates at some length in an edition of Longus, published by himself, in 1660, with some of these learned notes:³⁰ and it is no very aggravated instance of one of the incursions of those barbarians, by which the republic of letters has taken so much detriment.

He boasts that, after much research, he has been so fortu-

nate as to make the three following valuable discoveries:—First, that *Longus* is a Latin word, and that the Romans used to call a man, who happened to be taller than his neighbours, not only *Longurio* (which Dr. Ainsworth translates “a long gangrel, a tall, long, slim fellow,”³¹) but that they would sometimes even call such a person *Longus*. Secondly, that one John Funck says, that in the year U. C. 749, there was at Rome a consul named Longus, and that he, for any thing that appears to the contrary, was a very tall man.³² Thirdly and lastly, that in the times of Arcadius and Honorius there lived somewhere in Egypt four brothers, all monks, who were severally called Longus, as John Funck sees no reason to doubt, on account of the unusual procerity of their bodies.³³

It is easy to imagine, that a truly learned man may, with his wife’s permission, have a son; but it is not so easy to believe that a truly learned man can ever have a fortune to leave to that son: let him, however, as the next best thing, leave him on his death-bed this piece of advice:—“Never, my dear Boy, never read a note on any pretence whatever.”

It would be very desirable to give some idea of the *Pastoralia*, if it were possible for a curious person to get an idea of a work of the least merit or originality in any other way than by reading it himself. What is this work?—It is a Pastoral Romance. What is it like?—It is like the *Aminta* of Tasso,³⁴ the *Paul and Virginia* of St. Pierre,³⁵ the tales of shepherds which Cervantes has scattered about in his *Don Quixote*:³⁶ but it is different from all these; it is much better. How is it better?—The reader will like it better.

Why we like one thing better than another, has not yet been discovered; let us therefore read the books we like best, and do the things we like best; at least for the present, until some of our Scotch friends find out the why and

the wherefore, which they assure us they are in a fair way for doing.

It can never be supposed, that what is called an argument will give any idea of a book; besides, whenever a new play makes its appearance, the newspapers next morning hang out its skeleton; if however any one's taste be so incurably anatomical, that he is not satiated by the shocking frequency of these chirurgical exhibitions, but must have a dry preparation, let him instantly repair to Mr. Dunlop's *History of Fiction*,³⁷ where he will find the story stripped most carefully of its integuments.

There can be no great harm in arranging, as in a play, the names and characters of the several personages who appear in the course of the novel: it will be much shorter than an abstract of the story, which the reader will in some degree be enabled to make out for himself, and he will find it a more amusing course than the rigid mode of drying an argument. The bill of the supposed play is as follows:—

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE MEN.

LAMON, a goatherd, the adoptive father of Daphnis.

DAPHNIS.

DRYAS, a shepherd, the adoptive father of Chloe.

DORCO, a herdsman, a suitor of Chloe.

PHILETAS, an old herdsman.

BRYAXIS, a Methymnæan general.

HIPPASUS, a Mitylenæan general.

DIONYSOPHANES, the landlord and master of Lamon, and the real father of Daphnis.

EUDROMUS, a servant of Dionysophanes.

LAMPIS, a suitor of Chloe.

ASTYLUS, son of Dionysophanes.

GNATHO, a parasite, the companion of Astylus.

MEGACLES, the real father of Chloe.

THE WOMEN.

CHLOE.

LYCÆNIUM, (the young wife of an old husbandman) who takes an active part in the education of Daphnis.

CLEARISTA, the wife of Dionysophanes, and mother of Daphnis.

MYRTALE, the wife of Lamon.

RHODE, the wife of Megacles, and mother of Chloe.

NAPE, the wife of Dryas.

Pan, the Nymphs, Tyrian Pirates, Shepherds, Suitors of Chloe, and Mithynæan Youths.

The Scene is at Mitylene, and in the adjoining country in the Island of Lesbos.

The most grave objection that has been brought against Longus, is that of Peter Daniel Huet,³⁸ Bishop of Avranches, who asserts that this work is so indecent, that the man who can read it without blushing must of necessity be a cynic. "*Opus alioqui tam obscænum est, ut qui sine rubore legat, eum Cynicum esse necesse est.*"³⁹ What kind of a cynic or what kind of a philosopher a French bishop may be, it is not easy to guess: but bishops in all countries are such an ingenuous, shame-faced race, that there are, notwithstanding, many good books which they are not much inclined to read.

Others of the great and good, or what is precisely the same thing, of those who are the best paid for loudly proclaiming that they belong to those distinguished orders, have spoken of it with abhorrence, and called it filthy—no doubt with perfect sincerity; as a Scotch lady once affirmed, that she abhorred "the filthy practice of smearing the body all over with fresh spring-water."

The work being professedly erotic, and treating solely of love, it is a little unreasonable to expect from an ancient, that he should cautiously abstain from uttering a single syllable on that subject: had he been a modern, the case, to be sure, would have been widely different.

The 10th and 11th chapters of the 3rd Book, “*quand il fait commettre à Daphnis une infidélité par ignorance*”⁴⁰ (to adopt a happy French expression) many persons will doubtless think themselves obliged to censure. But the fault, after all, lies in the very objectionable mode which Nature has adopted for continuing the species: had the world been created in a highly civilized age like the present, we cannot doubt that these things would have been placed upon a much better footing. We should, in that case, be as happy as many of the early Christians were, who, in the days of their apologist, Minucius Felix,⁴¹ as he informs us, enjoyed a perpetual virginity, “*virginitate perpetuâ fruuntur*,”⁴² and shewed therein as much good taste as a gentleman connected with the administration exhibited, “who always enjoyed a bad state of health,” as the late lamented Lord Londonderry,⁴³ in imitation perhaps of this very passage, classically observed.

Another objection, more difficult to answer, is brought by Bayle, who complains that Chloe is too free of her kisses, “*la Bergere de Longus accorde des baisers trop promptement*.”⁴⁴ The objection that “there was too much kissing in it,” was once made to that truly German Pastoral, the Death of Abel,⁴⁵ by an ingenious young Quaker—⁴⁶(may the Society of Friends pardon the incautious expression!)—by an ingenious young person, who was at that period of life when, if he had not been a Quaker, he might without impropriety have been called young. This undue promptitude must indeed be exceedingly offensive, if it can displease even Protestant Dissenters,⁴⁷ who are uniformly remarkable for their erotic propensities.

But there is yet another objection made by the same Huet, which is a greater fault than the former: “*Pejus etiam vitium est*,” says the Right Reverend Bishop;⁴⁸ it is

much worse than that cynical indecency which made the good father blush in such a distressing manner. What can this be? What but the perverse and preposterous conduct of the story, which absurdly begins with the infancy of the hero and heroine, and cannot stop at their marriage, but goes on and on, to tell about their children and their old age. "*Pejus etiam vitium est perversa et præpostera operis æconomia. A Pastorum cunabulis ineptè orditur, et vix in eorum nuptiis desinit: ad eorum usque liberos, imo et senectutem suâ narratione*⁴⁹ *progreditur.*"⁵⁰ Upon which Bayle jeeringly remarks, "*C'est sortir entierement du vrai caractere de cette espèce d'écrits. Il les faut finir au jour des noces, et se taire sur les suites du mariage. Une heroïne de Roman grosse et accouchée est un étrange personnage.*"⁵¹

This is certainly an abomination; but is it true? Is the conduct of the story so perverse and preposterous? Does it begin so absurdly with the cradles and infancy of the parties? The author proposes to tell the history of two foundlings:— is it very unreasonable then to find them first? Is not this rather a very legitimate application of the old rule, "first catch your hare?"⁵² In two short chapters (the work consists of 98) he despatches the infancy, he gets rid of the cradles, which are so odious to the Bishop; and in the very last chapter of the work the lovers are married. Their living to a great age, or having any children, is merely mentioned incidentally. That the accusation of the superior indecency of the book is as unfounded as the greater crime of the preposterous conduct of the story, will be easily divined after this specimen of ecclesiastical criticism.

It will perhaps be asked, are not the erotic writers in a bad taste? Are they not full of absurdity?⁵³ In literature, as in the arts, there are a few works, perhaps some half dozen, in which there is not any thing that we wish to be otherwise

than it is; and we are uniformly delighted and surprised to find that every part is, not only as it ought to be, but far better than we could possibly have imagined. The middle class consists of productions, some passages of which afford us great pleasure, whilst others displease; although in general we cannot tell how to remedy what we feel is offensive or not satisfactory. The lowest class, where we find few or no beauties, and perpetual faults which we are certain we could never have committed, and could easily remedy, ought to be forthwith remitted to our friend the trunk-maker.

It is not pretended that any of the erotic writers, even Longus himself, are to be placed with the immortals, who occupy the first rank; but they certainly all deserve a high station amongst the heroes in the second; for few books afford the reader greater pleasure, and their faults, which it cannot be dissembled are many, most commonly are such as we are sensible do exist, but cannot clearly see how to rectify.

We must bear in mind likewise, that they treat chiefly of love, which is a delicate subject; for making love, it should seem, is not a mere mechanical operation, like making hay. The spectator is rarely satisfied when he sees it made on the stage, even by those who are esteemed by the best judges as artists in their line. It has been conjectured, that this is because every man has a way of his own which he considers the most perfect, and is therefore very intolerant on this subject. But is not Longus in a bad taste? Let us first agree in what kind of taste this little ode is written:—

“Voi, freschi venticelli,
Spirate dolcemente;
Voi, limpidi ruscelli,
Scorrete soavemente;
Voi, delicati fiori,

Intorno a lei crescete;
 Voi, ninfe, e voi, pastori,
 Taciti il pie movete;
 In questa valle ombrosa
 La mia Filli riposa."⁵⁴

To give a clear idea of the peculiar style of the erotic writers, which is artificial but yet very agreeable, by any general description, is impossible; to enter into minute details, and to say that the structure of the sentence is governed by the principle of assigning this place to the adjective and that to the verb, and that a period usually consists of so many members, arranged according to such and such rules, would be insufferably tedious, and would most probably fail of attaining the end proposed. As peculiarities consist altogether in manner, they can only be seized by actual observation.

In return for the pleasure derived from works of fancy, and indeed from almost all our amusements, we must make some pretty liberal concessions: we must bear with a great deal that is unnatural; we must tolerate many absurdities, acquiesce in improbabilities, and sometimes even concede what is impossible; we must allow a certain distance to the juggler, and permit him to be inaccessible on the rear, and strongly entrenched on the flanks; we must be content to view the perspective of a painting from one point only; to consider a motionless statue as a flying Mercury;⁵⁵ to suppose that the hero of an opera is soliloquizing in a perfect solitude, although every word gives præternatural activity to the elbows of fifty fiddlers; and, in spite of ourselves, to feel drowsy during the ballet, in sympathy with the heroine, who, by a fiction of the theatre, sleeps soundly in a horn-pipe.

If the reader should think the demands of Longus rather

high, he must remember that his fare is good; and although some articles may at first seem extravagant, when he becomes a little accustomed to his ways, he will find that on the whole he is not unreasonable.

It has always been usual, in giving an account of any author in an unknown tongue, to offer, by way of specimen, some translations. This is a cruel practice; but cruel as it is, it must be complied with. If the merit of a work is supposed to be comprehended in a thousand particulars, nine hundred and ninety-nine and three quarters of these will always consist in the peculiar manner of the writer, which of course cannot be translated. What is called a free translation, when it is not a cloak for ignorance, is an attempt to improve upon the thing translated, and is consequently high treason against the author, for which the literary reputation of the translator ought to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. Every one who is not hardened in his doings into English, will, when compelled to translate, throw himself upon the reader's mercy, and cry, "I have been literal." As a Form of Prayer for persons in that unhappy situation has never been drawn up, the following is submitted to their consideration at least, until a more approved one is substituted by authority:—

"Gentle Reader, I have brought this delicate piece of workmanship into England out of Greece, by long journies over bad roads. True it is, that the finest parts have been shaken off, and are altogether lost; that the sharp edges are worn and broken; that the masterly joinings are gaping through shocks and joltings; that the colours have faded and changed; and that the exquisite polish has every where disappeared: this is but too true, as you perceive; but such as it remains, it is the very identical piece which I received at Athens. I have made no judicious alterations; not one

improvement: I have neither painted, gilded, nor varnished. Leave me to lament over this involuntary havoc, and spare your reproaches."

The 3d and 4th Chapters of the 2d Book have been selected as the most proper to make an example of: they are as follows:—

Chap. 3.—"An old man came to them, clothed with a frock, shod with sandals, furnished with a scrip, and that scrip an old one. He sat down beside them, and spoke thus:—"I am, my children, the old man Philetas; I, who have many times sung to these nymphs, who have many times piped to that Pan, who have led many a herd of oxen by my music alone. I come to you, to relate what I have seen, to tell what I have heard. I have a garden, the work of my own hands, which I have cultivated ever since I ceased to tend the flocks on account of old age. It produces, according to each season, whatever the seasons bear: in spring, roses, lilies, the hyacinth, and both the violets; in summer, poppies, pears, and all kinds of apples; now, grapes, and figs, and pomegranates, and green myrtle-berries. In this garden flocks of birds assemble in the morning; some to feed, some to sing; for it is overspreading and shady, and watered by three fountains: if the hedge were taken away, it would seem to be a wood. When I went into the garden yesterday about noon, I saw a boy under the pomegranate-trees and myrtles, carrying pomegranates and myrtle-berries; he was fair as milk, and golden-haired as fire, and fresh as one lately bathed; he was naked, he was alone, and he was sporting as if he had been plucking fruit in his own garden. I hastened towards him to lay hold of him, fearing lest in his rudeness he should break the myrtles and the pomegranate-trees. But he escaped me lightly and easily—sometimes running under the rose-bushes, some-

times hiding himself under the poppies, like a young partridge.⁵⁶

“Often have I had much trouble in pursuing sucking kids, often have I toiled in running after new-born calves; but this was an ever-varying and unattainable labour. Being weary, for I am old, and resting upon my staff (watching him meanwhile that he might not escape) I enquired to whom of my neighbours he belonged, and what he meant by gathering fruit in another man’s garden? He made no answer, but, standing beside me, he smiled softly, and pelted me with myrtle-berries. I know not how it was, but he soothed me so that I could no longer be angry. I implored him therefore to come within reach, and to fear nothing; and I swore by the myrtles, that I would let him go, that I would give him apples and pomegranates, and would permit him always to gather the fruit and pluck the flowers, if I could obtain from him one single kiss. At this he laughed heartily, and said in a voice, such as no swallow, no nightingale, no swan (a bird as long-lived as myself) could utter—

‘It is no trouble to me to kiss you, Philetas, for I desire to be kissed even more than you desire to be young: but pray consider, would this favour be suitable to your years? For your old age would be of no avail to deter you from following me, after you had gotten one kiss. I am difficult to be overtaken by a hawk, and by an eagle and by any bird that is swifter even than these. I am not a child; and although I seem to be a child, yet am I older than Saturn, than all Time itself. I knew you, when in early youth you used to feed a wide-spreading herd in yonder marsh, when you loved Amaryllis: but you did not see me, although I used to stand close by the girl. However, I gave her to you, and now your sons are good herdsman and good husbandmen. At present I tend Daphnis and Chloe, and when I have

brought them together in the morning, I come into your garden and please myself with the flowers and plants, and I bathe in these fountains. On this account the flowers and plants are beautiful, for they are watered from my baths. See now whether any one of your plants is broken, whether any fruit has been gathered, whether any flower-root has been trodden down, whether any fountain is troubled. And I say farewell to the only one of men, who in his old age has seen this child!’ With these words he sprang like a young nightingale upon the myrtles, and passing from branch to branch, he crept through the leaves up to the top. I saw his wings upon his shoulders, and I saw a little bow between the wings and the shoulders; and then I saw no longer either them or him.

“Unless I have borne these gray hairs in vain, and unless as I grow older I become more foolish, you are dedicated to Love, and Love has the care of you.”

Chap. 4.—“They were quite delighted, as if they had heard a fable, not a history; and they inquired, ‘What is Love, whether a boy or a bird, and what power has he?’ Philetas answered: ‘My Children, Love is a god, young and beautiful and winged; he therefore delights in youth, follows after beauty, and gives wings to the soul. And he has more power than Jove. He governs the elements; he governs the stars; he governs his peers the Gods. You have not so much power over the goats and sheep. The flowers are all the work of Love; these plants are his productions. Through his influence the rivers flow and the winds breathe. I remember a bull overcome by love, and he bellowed as if he had been stung by a gad-fly; and a he-goat enamoured of a she-goat, and he followed her every where.

“ ‘Even I have been young, and I was in love with Amoryllis. I remembered not food, I sought not after drink, I

took no sleep. My soul grieved; my heart palpitated; my body was chilled. I cried as if beaten; I was silent as if dead. I threw myself into the rivers as if burning. I called upon Pan to help me, for he loved Pity: I blessed the echo for repeating after me the name of Amaryllis: I broke my reeds, for they could charm my oxen but could not bring Amaryllis.

“There is no cure for Love, that is either to be drunken, or to be swallowed, or to be uttered in incantations, except only a kiss, an embrace, and —— unrestrained caresses.”

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Plutarch (c. 46CE- c.120), Greek biographer and essayist. Among his numerous writings, *The Parallel Lives* stands out as particularly influential; it features biographical accounts of Greek and Roman military leaders, orators, and politicians, organized in pairs for comparative analysis.

² For a nuanced discussion of the recurring “Orientalist renderings of Greece” as a “debased version of Hellenes” emerging in European writings in the period, as exemplified in the subsequent two paragraphs, see Grammatikos 2019 (21).

³ The origins of what is now referred to as the Greek novel or romance remain blurred. During the first century CE, large works of prose fiction composed in Greek started to emerge, typically dealing with erotic themes and featuring made-up characters and situations. These works show clear connections with the *Odyssey* and tales from Herodotus. The typical storyline involves a recurring theme where a boy and girl meet, fall in love, face separation due to unfortunate circumstances, and ultimately reunite.

⁴ Alexander the Great (356-23 BCE), king of Macedonia (336-23 BCE) and the most legendary military leader in the classic world. The time reference appears to be incongruous.

⁵ Reference untraced.

⁶ The sentence is the Latin original text for the previous lines. The reference, however, is untraced.

⁷ Longus (flourished between the 2nd and the 3rd centuries CE), Greek writer, commonly referred to as “the Sophist” and author of the pastoral romance *Daphnis and Chloe*. No details of his life are known, except that he appears to have lived on the island of Lesbos.

⁸ *Suavissimus* (Latin): most pleasant. Epithet assigned to prominent writers.

⁹ *Daphnis and Chloe*, Longus’s work, composed between the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE, considered the first pastoral prose romance and one of the most popular of the Greek erotic romances in Western culture. The plot of *Daphnis and Chloe* revolves around the figures of two foundlings who fall in love but are then separated only to reunite at the end. The full text is available online at the Loeb Classical Library.

¹⁰ Reference untraced.

¹¹ Longus, *Longi Pastoralium de Daphnide et Chloe*, Io. Friderici Iunii, ed. M.B.G.L. Boden, Leipsic, 1777.

¹² Latin source text for the previous passage.

¹³ Longus, *Les Amours Pastorales de Daphnis et Chloé*, trans. Jacques Amyot, Quillau, Paris, 1718.

¹⁴ The Parisian edition of 1718 contains 28 plates engraved by Philippe D’Orleans (1674-1723), Duke of Orleans and regent of France (1715-23).

¹⁵ *editio princeps* (Latin): first printed edition of a work previously circulating in manuscript.

¹⁶ Longus, *Longi Pastoralium de Daphnide et Chloë*, ed. Raphael Columbanus, Philippum Iunctam, Florence, 1598.

¹⁷ The English translation precedes the Latin version of the passage. Longus, *Longi Pastoralium de Daphnide et Chloë*, ed. Raphael Columbanus, Philippum Iunctam, Florence, 1598, pp. II-III.

¹⁸ Longus, *Les Amours Pastorales de Daphnis et Chloé*, ed. Lud. Dutens, trans. Jacques Amyot, Bouillon, Paris, 1776.

¹⁹ Longus, *Gli Amori Pastoral di Dafni e di Cloe*, trans. Annibal Caro, Bodoni, Parma, 1786.

²⁰ Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe*, trans. Angell Daye, R. Walde-Grave, London, 1587.

²¹ Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe*, trans. Charles Valentine Le Grice, T. Vigurs, London, 1803.

²² Longus, *Les Amours Pastorales de Daphnis et Chloé*, trans. Jacques Amyot, Vincent Sertenas, 1559.

²³ Longus, *Gli Amori Pastoral di Dafni e Cloe*, trans. Annibal Caro, Forni, Bologna, 1573; Longus, *Gli Amori Innocenti di Dafni e della Cloe*, trans. Giovanni Battista Manzini, Giacomo Monti, Bologna, 1643.

²⁴ John Jones, *A Grammar of the Greek Tongue, on a New Plan*, Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, and Brown, London, 1815.

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- ²⁵ *Quarterly Review*, English literary and political periodical first printed in London in 1809.
- ²⁶ Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), French philosopher, historian, literary critic, journalist, and encyclopaedist. His most significant work is the *Historical and Critical Dictionary* (*Dictionnaire historique et critique*) (1697).
- ²⁷ *me mory*: *me-mory*, hyphen missing, likely faded, in the copy-text.
- ²⁸ *i credible*: *in-credible*, the letter “n” is partially faded and the hyphen is not visible in the copy-text.
- ²⁹ Palaephatus (flourished 4th century BCE), Greek mythographer. His most important work is *On Incredible Things* (*Peri apistōn*).
- ³⁰ Longus, *Longi Pastoralium de Daphnide et Chloe*, ed. Petrus Moll, Joannis Arcerii, Franeker, 1660.
- ³¹ Robert Ainsworth, James Ross, *An Abridgement of Ainsworth's Dictionary*, G. Cowie & Co., London, 1822. See the definitions of *Longurio* as: “A gangrel”; “One slender and tall”; “A slim fellow”; “A tall gangrel fellow”.
- ³² Untraced reference.
- ³³ Longus, *Longi Pastoralium de Daphnide et Chloe*, ed. Petrus Moll, Joannis Arcerii, Franeker, 1660, Notes, p. 1.
- ³⁴ Torquato Tasso (1544-95), one of the most significant Italian poets of the late Renaissance period, and the author of the epic poem *Jerusalem Delivered* (*Gerusalemme liberata*, 1581). He composed *L'Aminta*, a pastoral drama, in 1573. This ‘favola boschereccia’ was performed at the court of Ferrara in the same year and then published in 1580.
- ³⁵ Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (1737-1814), French writer and botanist. His novel *Paul et Virginie* (1788) was a sensation across Europe. It is set in Mauritius, and is described in the authorial preface as a special kind of pastoral, because of its exotic setting.
- ³⁶ Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616), Spanish writer. His masterpiece, the novel *Don Quixote* (1605-1615), is a classic of Western literature.
- ³⁷ John Dunlop (1785-1842), *The History of Fiction: Being a Critical Account of the Most Celebrated Prose Works of Fiction from the Earliest Greek Romances to the Novels of the Present Age*, 3 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Orme, Rees, Brown, 1814), which appears to have been a key source in the making of the essay. The section devoted to Longus and his *Daphnis and Chloe* is located in volume 1; a bio-bibliographical note on Longus is included in Appendix 4 (Cf. Dunlop 1816, 2nd ed., 1:56-75; 479-80).
- ³⁸ Pierre-Daniel Huet (1630-1721), French scholar, philosopher and bishop of Avranches (1692-99).
- ³⁹ Latin original of the previous sentence. See Pierre-Daniel Huet, *Liber de Origine Fabularum Romanensium* (The Hague: Arnout Leers, 1682), 67.
- ⁴⁰ Pierre-Daniel Huet, *Traité de l'Origine des Romans*, Septième Ed. (Paris: George Gallet, 1693), 106.
- ⁴¹ Marcus Minucius Felix (?- c. 250), Roman lawyer and one among the first Christian Apologists to write in Latin.
- ⁴² Marcus Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, (Rotterdam: Jan Daniel Beman, 1743), 332.
- ⁴³ Robert Stewart (1769-1822), 2nd Marquess of Londonderry, title created in 1816 for Lord Castlereagh, a member of Parliament and British foreign secretary who committed suicide in August 1822. He was a long-standing target of Hunt and his circle. On Castlereagh's death, see Hunt's “Preface”, *The Liberal*, vol. 1:ix.
- ⁴⁴ Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* (1697), vol. 9 (Paris: Desoer, 1820), 352.
- ⁴⁵ *The Death of Abel* (*Der Tod Abels*) (1758), an epic poem written by the Swiss author Salomon Gessner (1730-88) which revolves around the biblical characters of Cain and Abel.
- ⁴⁶ Quaker, name assigned to the members of the Religious Society of Friends (also named “Friends Church”), a Protestant Christian group founded in mid-seventeenth-century England and known for its tradition of anti-war commitment. The key tenets of the movement include the central role of the Holy Spirit and advocacy for a priesthood of all believers. The reference is untraced.

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⁴⁷ Dissenters, Protestants who do not follow the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.

⁴⁸ Huet 1682, 66-67.

⁴⁹ *narratione*: the letter “t” is partially effaced in the copy-text.

⁵⁰ Huet 1682, 66-67.

⁵¹ Bayle 1820, 355. Trans. “which is transgressing the rules of this kind of writing. They ought to wind up on the wedding-day, and say nothing of the consequences of marriage. The heroine of a romance, with a big-belly, or lying-in, is a strange image.” Bayle, *The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr. Peter Bayle*, vol. 3, trans. Pierre des Maizeaux, J. J. and P. Knapton, D. Midwinter, J. Brotherton and 27 others (London, 1734), 866.

⁵² A warning against overconfidence, this proverbial expression has been believed to have been used either in *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* (1747) by Mrs Glasse or in *Book of Household Management* (1851) by Mrs. Beeton. It is in fact a misquotation, while a similar expression has a much earlier source, the medieval Latin treatise *De legibus et consuetudinibus Angliae*, attributed to the lawyer Henry of Bratton. See *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 2nd ed., 223.

⁵³ *absurdit* is: misprint for *absurdities*.

⁵⁴ Tommaso Crudeli (1703-45), “Canzonetta”, collected in *Raccolta di poesie del Dottor Tommaso Crudeli. Dedicata all’Illustrissimo Signor Orazio Mann, Ministro in Toscana di S. M. Britannica appresso Sua Maestà Cesarea*. In Napoli, Con Licenza de’ Superiori, MDCCXLVI, 55. It translates a stanza from the *Sixth Pastoral* by Ambrose Phillips (1675?-1749), in *Pastorals* (1710): “Breathe soft ye Winds, ye Waters gently flow; | Shield her, ye Trees; ye Flowers around her grow; | Ye Swains, I beg you, pass in Silence by; | My Love, in yonder Vale asleep does lye.”

⁵⁵ Mercury, Roman god of shopkeepers, merchants, thieves and tricksters.

⁵⁶ Cf. Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe*, bk. II.

ON THE SCOTCH CHARACTER.*

(*A Fragment.*)

THE Scotch nation are a body-corporate. They hang together like a swarm of bees. I do not know how it may be among themselves, but with us they are all united as one man. They are not straggling individuals, but embodied, formidable abstractions—determined personifications of the land they come from. A Scotchman gets on in the world, because he is not one, but many. He moves in himself a host, drawn up in battle-array, and armed at all points against all impugnors. He is a double existence—he stands for himself and his country. Every Scotchman is bond and surety for every other Scotchman—he thinks nothing Scotch foreign to him. If you see a Scotchman in the street, you may be almost sure it is another Scotchman he is arm in arm with; and what is more, you may be sure they are talking of Scotchmen. Begin at the Arctic Circle, and they take Scotland in their way back. Plant the foot of the compasses in the meridian, and they turn it by degrees to “Edina’s darling seat”¹—true as the needle to the Pole. If you happen to say it is a high wind, they say there are high winds in Edinburgh. Should you mention Hampstead² or Highgate,³ they smile at this as a local prejudice, and remind you of the Calton Hill.⁴ The conversation wanders and is impertinent, unless it hangs by this loop. It “runs the great circle, and is still at home.”⁵ You would think there was no other place in the world but Scotland, but that they strive to convince

* Author: William Hazlitt / Transcribed and annotated by Franca Dellarosa.

you at every turn of its superiority to all other places. Nothing goes down but Scotch Magazines and Reviews, Scotch airs, Scotch bravery, Scotch hospitality, Scotch novels, and Scotch logic. Some one the other day at a literary dinner in Scotland apologized for alluding to the name of Shakespear⁶ so often, because he was not a Scotchman. What a blessing that the Duke of Wellington⁷ was not a Scotchman, or we should never have heard the last of him! Even Sir Walter Scott,⁸ I understand, talks of the Scotch Novels in all companies; and by waving the title of the author, is at liberty to repeat the subject *ad infinitum*.

Lismahago⁹ in Smollett is a striking and laughable picture of this national propensity. He maintained with good discretion and method that oat-cakes were better than wheaten bread, and that the air of the old town of Edinburgh was sweet and salubrious. He was a favourable specimen of the class—acute though pertinacious, pleasant but wrong.* In general, his countrymen only plod on with the national character fastened behind them, looking round with wary eye and warning voice to those who would pick out a single article of their precious charge; and are as drawling and troublesome as if they were hired by the hour to disclaim and exemplify all the vices of which they stand accused. Is this repulsive egotism peculiar to them merely in their travelling capacity, when they have to make their way among strangers, and are jealous of the honour of the parent-country, on which they have ungraciously turned their backs? So Lord Erskine,¹⁰ after an absence of fifty years, made an appropriate eulogy on the place of his birth, and having traced the feeling of patriotism in himself to its source in that habitual

* Some persons have asserted that the Scotch have no humour. It is in vain to set up this plea, since Smollett was a Scotchman.

attachment which all wandering tribes have to their places of fixed residence, turned his horses' heads towards England—and farewell sentiment!

The Irish and others, who come and stay among us, however full they may be of the same prejudice, keep it in a great measure to themselves, and do not vent it in all companies and on all occasions, proper or improper. The natives of the sister-kingdom in particular rather cut their country like a poor relation, are shy of being seen in one another's company, and try to soften down the *brogue* into a natural gentility of expression. A Scotchman, on the contrary, is never easy but when his favourite subject is started, treats it with unqualified breadth of accent, and seems assured that every one else must be as fond of talking of Scotland and Scotchmen as he is.

Is it a relic of the ancient system of *clanship*? And are the Scotch pitted against all the rest of the world, on the same principle that they formerly herded and banded together under some chosen leader, and *harried* the neighbouring district? This seems to be the most likely solution. A feeling of antipathy and partisanship, of offensive and defensive warfare, may be considered as necessary to the mind of a Scotchman. He is nothing in himself but as he is opposed to or in league with others. He must be for or against somebody. He must have a cause to fight for; a point to carry in argument. He is not an unit, but an aggregate; he is not a link, but a chain. He belongs to the regiment. I should hardly call a Scotchman *conceited*, though there is often something that borders strongly on the appearance of it. He has (speaking in the lump) no personal or individual pretensions. He is not proud of himself, but of being a Scotchman. He has no existence or excellence except what he derives from some external accident, or shares with some body of men. He is a

Brunonian,¹¹ a Cameronian,¹² a Jacobite,¹³ a Covenanter;¹⁴ he is of some party, he espouses some creed, he is great in some controversy, he was bred in some University, has attended a certain course of lectures, understands Gaelic, and upon occasion wears the Highland dress. An Englishman is satisfied with the character of his country, and proceeds to set up for himself; an Irishman despairs of that of his, and leaves it to shift for itself; a Scotchman pretends to respectability as such, and owes it to his country to make you hate the very name by his ceaseless importunity and intolerance in its behalf. An Irishman is mostly vain of his person, an Englishman of his understanding, a Frenchman of his politeness—a Scotchman thanks God for the place of his birth. The face of a Scotchman is to him accordingly the face of a friend. It is enough for him to let you know that he speaks the dialect that Wilkie¹⁵ speaks, that he has sat in company with the Author of Waverley.¹⁶ He does not endeavour to put forward his own notions so much as to inform you of the school in politics, in morals, in physic, in which he is an adept; nor does he attempt to overpower you by wit, by reason, by eloquence, but to tire you out by dint of verbal logic; and in common-places it must be confessed that he is invincible. There he is *teres et rotundus*.¹⁷ He fortifies himself in these, circumvallation within circumvallation, till his strong-hold is impregnable by art and nature. I never knew a Scotchman give up an argument but once. It was a very learned man, the Editor of an Encyclopedia,—not my friend, Mr. Macvey Napier.¹⁸ On some one's proposing the question why Greek should not be printed in the Roman type, this gentleman answered, that in that case it would be impossible to distinguish the two languages. Every one stared, and it was asked how at this rate we distinguished French from English? It was the for-

lorn hope. Any one else would have laughed, and confessed the blunder. But the Editor was a grave man—made an obstinate defence (the best his situation allowed of) and yielded in the forms and with the honours of war.

A Scotchman is generally a dealer in staple-propositions, and not in rarities and curiosities of the understanding. He does not like an idea the worse for its coming to him from a reputable, well-authenticated source, as I conceive he might feel more respect for a son of Burns¹⁹ than for Burns himself, on the same hereditary or genealogical principle. He swears (of course) by the Edinburgh Review,²⁰ and thinks Blackwood²¹ not easily put down. He takes the word of a Professor in the University-chair in a point of philosophy as he formerly took the Laird's²² word in a matter of life and death; and has the names of the Says, the Bentham's, the Mills, the Malthuses,²³ in his mouth, instead of the Montroses, the Gordons, and the Macullamores.²⁴ He follows in a train; he enlists under some standard; he comes under some collateral description. He is of the tribe of Issachar, and not of Judah. He stickles for no higher distinction than that of his clan, or vicinage.* In a word, the Scotch are the creatures of inveterate habit. They pin their faith on example and authority. All their ideas are cast in a previous mould, and rivetted to those of others. It is not a single blow, but a repetition of blows, that leaves an impression on them. They are strong only in the strength²⁵ of prejudice and numbers.

* This may be in part the reason of the blunder they have made in laying so much stress on what they call the *Cockney School in Poetry*²⁶—as if the people in London were proud of that distinction, and really thought it a particular honour to get their living in the metropolis, as the Scottish “Kernes and Gallowglasses”²⁷ think it a wonderful step in their progress through life to be able to hire a lodging and pay *scot and lot*²⁸ in the good town of Edinburgh.

The genius of their greatest living writer is the genius of national tradition. He has “damnable iteration in him;”²⁹ but hardly one grain of sheer invention. His mind is turned instinctively backward on the past—he cannot project it forward to the future. He has not the faculty of imagining any thing, either in individual or general truth, different from what has been handed down to him for such. Give him *costume*, dialect, manners, popular superstitions, grotesque characters, supernatural events, and local scenery, and he is a prodigy, a man-monster among writers—take these actually embodied and endless materials from him, and he is a common man, with as little original power of mind as he has (unfortunately) independence or boldness of spirit!—

The Scotch, with all their mechanical, wholesale attachment to names and parties, are venal in politics,* and cowardly in friendship. They crouch to power; and would be more disposed to fall upon and crush, than come forward to the support of, a sinking individual. They are not like La Fleur³⁰ in the Sentimental Journey, who advanced three steps forward to his master when the *Gens-d’Armes* arrested him: they are like the *Maitre d’Hotel*, who retired three paces backwards on the same occasion. They will support a generic denomination, where they have numbers to support them again: they make a great gulp, and swallow down a feudal lord with all the retinue he can muster—the more, the merrier—but of a single unprotected straggler they are shy, jealous, scrupulous in the extreme as to character, inquisitive as to connections, curious in all the particulars of birth, parentage and education. Setting his prejudices of

* It was not always so. But by knocking on the head the Jacobite loyalty of the Scotch, their political integrity of principle has been destroyed and dissipated to all the winds of Heaven.

country, religion, or party aside, you have no hold of a Scotchman but by his self-interest. If it is for his credit or advantage to stand by you, he will do it: otherwise, it will go very much against both his stomach and his conscience to do so, and you must e'en shift for yourself. You may trust something to the generosity or magnanimity of an Englishman or an Irishman; they act from an impulse of the blood or from a sense of justice: a Scotchman (the exceptions are splendid indeed) uniformly calculates the consequences to himself. He is naturally faithful to a leader, as I said before, that is, to a powerful head; but his fidelity amounts to little more than servility. He is a bigot to the shadow of power and authority, a slave to prejudice and custom, and a coward in every thing else. He has not a particle of mental courage. Cæsar's wife was not to be suspected; and it is the same with a Scotchman's friend. If a word is said against your moral character, they shun you like a plague-spot. They are not only afraid of a charge being proved true against you, but they dare not disprove it, lest by clearing you of it they should be supposed a party to what had no existence or foundation. They thus imbibe a bad opinion of you from hearsay, and conceal the good they know of you both from themselves and the world. If your political orthodoxy is called in question, they take the alarm as much as if they were apprehensive of being involved in a charge of high treason. One would think that the whole country laboured, as they did SIXTY YEARS SINCE,³¹ under an imputation of disaffection, and were exposed to the utmost vigilance of the police, so that each person had too little character for loyalty himself to run any additional risk by his neighbour's bad name. This is not the case at present: but they carry their precautions and circumspection in this respect to such an idle and stupid excess, as can only be accounted for from

local circumstances and history—that is to say, from the effects of that long system of suspicion, persecution and *surveillance*,³² to which they were exposed during a century of ridiculous (at least of unsuccessful) wars and rebellions, in favour of the House of Stuart.³³ They suffered much for King James³⁴ and the *Good Cause*;³⁵ but since that time their self-love must be excused to look at home. On my once complaining to a Scotchman of what I thought a direliction³⁶ of his client's cause by the counsel for the defendant in a prosecution for libel, I received for answer—That “Mr.—had defended the accused as far as he could, *consistently with his character*,”—though the only character the Learned Gentleman could boast, had been acquired by his skill, if not his courage, in resisting prosecutions of this kind.

The delicate sensibility (not to say soreness) of the Scotch in matters of moral reputation, may in like manner be accounted for (indirectly) from their domiciliary system of church-government, of Kirk-assemblies, and Ruling Elders: and in the unprincipled assurance with which aspersions of this sort are thrown out, and the panic-terror which they strike into the timid or hypocritical, one may see the remaining effects of Penance-Sheets³⁷ and Cutty-Stools!³⁸ Poor Burns! he called up the ghost of Dr. Hornbook,³⁹ but did not lay the spirit of cant and lying in the cunning North! —

Something however, it must be confessed, has been done; a change has been effected. Extremes meet; and the Saint has been (in some instances) merged in the Sinner. The essential character of the Scotch is determined self-will, the driving at a purpose; so that whatever they undertake, they make thorough-stitch work, and carry as far as it will go. This is the case in the pretensions some of their writers have lately set up to a contempt for Cutty-Stools, and to all the freedom of wit and humour. They have been so long under

interdict that they break out with double violence, and stop at nothing. Of all *blackguards* (I use the term for want of any other) a Scotch blackguard is for this reason the worst.⁴⁰ First, the character sits ill upon him for want of use, and is sure to be most outrageously caricatured. He is only just broke loose from the shackles of regularity and restraint, and is forced to play strange antics to be convinced that they are not still clinging to his heels. Secondly, formality, hypocrisy, and a deference to opinion, are the “sins that most easily beset him.”⁴¹ When therefore he has once made up his mind to disregard appearances, he becomes totally reckless of character, and “at one bound high overleaps all bound”⁴² of decency and common sense. Again, there is perhaps a natural hardness and want of nervous sensibility about the Scotch, which renders them (rules and the consideration of consequences apart) not very nice or scrupulous in their proceedings. If they are not withheld by conscience or prudence, they have no *mauvaise honte*,⁴³ no involuntary qualms or tremors, to qualify their effrontery and disregard of principle. Their impudence is extreme, their malice is cold-blooded, covert, crawling, deliberate, without the frailty or excuse of passion. They club their vices and their venality together, and by the help of both together are invincible. The choice spirits who have lately figured in a much-talked-of publication,⁴⁴ with “old Sylvanus at their head,”—

“Leaning on cypress stadle stout,”—⁴⁵

in their “pious orgies”⁴⁶ resemble a troop of Yahoos,⁴⁷ or a herd of Satyrs—

“And with their horned feet they beat the ground!”—⁴⁸

that is to say, the floor of Mr. Blackwood’s shop! There is one other publication, a match for this in flagrant impudence and dauntless dulness, which is the John Bull.⁴⁹ The

Editor is supposed, for the honour of Scotland, to be an Irishman. What the BEACON⁵⁰ might have proved, there is no saying; but it would have been curious to have seen some articles of Sir Walter's undoubted hand proceeding from this quarter, as it has been always contended that Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine was too low and scurrilous a publication for him to have any share in it. The adventure of the BEACON has perhaps discovered to Sir Walter's admirers and the friends of humanity in general, that

"Entire affection scorneth nicer hands!"⁵¹

Old Dr. Burney,⁵² about the middle of the last century, called one morning on Thomson,⁵³ the Author of *The Seasons*, at a late hour, and on expressing his surprise at the poet's not having risen sooner, received for answer,—“I had no motive, young man!” A Scotchman acts always from a motive, and on due consideration; and if he does not act right or with a view to honest ends, is more dangerous than any one else. Others may plead the vices of their blood in extenuation of their errors; but a Scotchman is a machine, and should be constructed on sound moral, and philosophical principles, or should be put a stop to altogether.

[N. B. *A Defence of the Scotch, shortly.*]

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Robert Burns, *Address to Edinburgh* (1786): “Edina! Scotia’s darling seat! | All hail thy palaces and tow’rs, | Where once beneath a Monarch’s feet, | Sat Legislation’s sov’reign pow’rs!”

² Hampstead, wealthy area located in the northwest part of London.

³ Highgate, suburban area in northwest London.

⁴ Calton Hill, a hill rising in the centre of Edinburgh, Scotland.

⁵ William Cowper, *The Task* (1785), bk. 4, “The Winter Evening”, ll. 118-119: “While fancy, like the finger of a clock, | Runs the great circuit, and is still at home”.

⁶ A recurring spelling for Shakespeare at the time of writing.

⁷ Arthur Wellesley (1759-1852), first Duke of Wellington.

⁸ Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), Scottish novelist, poet and historian.

⁹ Lieutenant Obadiah Lismahago, a character in the epistolary novel *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771), by Scottish satirical novelist Tobias Smollett (1721-71).

¹⁰ Thomas Erskine, 1st Baron Erskine (1750-1823) was an Edinburgh-born British Whig lawyer and politician. In the course of his professional career, he defended politicians and reformers on charges of treason, during the phase of repressive home policy carried out by the British government in the aftermath of the French revolution. He served as Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain between 1806 and 1807. As P.P. Howe’s edition of the Hazlitt essay reports, “Lord Erskine was entertained at a banquet in Edinburgh on Feb. 21, 1820. He had not been in Scotland for more than fifty years.” (Hazlitt 1933, 17:397n).

¹¹ Brunonian, of or relating to John Brown (1735-88), a Scottish physician who theorised that disease was caused by either excessive or inadequate stimulation.

¹² Cameronian, name given to the Scottish Covenanters who followed Presbyterian leader Richard Cameron (1648-80).

¹³ Jacobite, supporter of the exiled Stuart King James II (1633-1701) after the Glorious Revolution and of the restoration of the Catholic House of Stuart to the British throne.

¹⁴ Covenanter, name given to Scottish Presbyterians across the seventeenth century, who subscribed to the 1638 National Covenant and the 1643 Solemn League and Covenant, intended to defend their form of church government and worship practices.

¹⁵ Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841), Scottish genre and portrait painter.

¹⁶ Sir Walter Scott.

¹⁷ Horace, *Satires* (II.vii.86): “smooth and round”.

¹⁸ Macvey Napier (1776-1847), Scottish lawyer, professor of conveyancing at the University of Edinburgh, and chief editor of the 7th edition of *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. He became Francis Jeffrey’s successor as editor of *The Edinburgh Review* in 1829.

¹⁹ Robert Burns (1759-96), Scottish poet and lyricist, considered the national poet of Scotland.

²⁰ *The Edinburgh Review*, or *The Critical Journal*, an eminent Scottish political and literary magazine, founded by Francis Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, and Henry Brougham, and published between 1802 and 1929.

²¹ *Blackwood’s Magazine* was a Tory British magazine and miscellany (1817-1980), founded by the Scottish publisher and bookseller William Blackwood (1776-1834). Formerly called *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*, it was soon known as *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, featuring a typically fierce and controversial tone. The magazine was at the centre of the Cockney School controversy (see below).

²² *Laird*: “A member of the Scottish landed gentry; an owner of an estate” (*OED*).

²³ *the Says ... the Malthuses*: a list of eighteenth-century thinkers and economists, including Jean-Baptiste Say (1767-1842); Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832); James Mill (1773-1836); and Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834). Hazlitt would take up the point in *Characteristics* (1823), an essay in the form of a series of aphorisms “in the manner of Rochefoucault’s *Maxims*”, as reads the subtitle. See Hazlitt 1932, 9:227 and Hazlitt 1933, 17:397n.

²⁴ All Scottish clans: the Grahams of Montrose, and Clans Gordon and Macullamore.

²⁵ *strength*: obsolete spelling of *strength*.

EDITORIAL NOTES

²⁶ “Cockney School” was the scornful name coined in 1817 by the *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* to identify and revile the circle of London writers and intellectuals gathering around Leigh Hunt. The group included John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Shelley, William Hazlitt, and painter Benjamin Robert Haydon.

²⁷ Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (I.ii.13). ‘Kernes’ were light-armed Irish or Scottish foot-soldiers. ‘Gallowglasses’ were a class of elite soldiers who served primarily as bodyguards to Celtic chieftains.

²⁸ Duty paid towards municipal expenses; a local or municipal tax (*OED*).

²⁹ Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, Part I, I.ii.101. The quote is also in Hazlitt’s essay “On the Character of Cobbett”, contained in *Table Talks, Essays on Men and Manners* (1822).

³⁰ A character in Laurence Sterne’s comic novel *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy* (1768), which recounts the journey through France of a sensitive young man named Yorick and his servant La Fleur.

³¹ Subtitle of Walter Scott’s novel *Waverley; or ‘Tis Sixty Years Since* (1814).

³² Misspelling of *surveillance*.

³³ House of Stuart, royal house of Scotland from 1371 and of England from 1603. It was interrupted in 1649 by the establishment of the Commonwealth but was restored in 1660. It ended in 1714 when the British crown passed to the house of Hanover.

³⁴ King James VI of Scotland (1567-1625) and I of England (1603-1625).

³⁵ The restoration of the Catholic House of Stuart to the British throne.

³⁶ *direliction*: misprint for *dereliction*.

³⁷ *Penance-Sheets*: a form of public chastisement or atonement, consisting in wearing a white sheet, and still practiced across the eighteenth century.

³⁸ *Cutty-Stools*: stools or seats formerly placed in a conspicuous position in some Scottish churches, intended to seat a person who was required to make a public penance in church (*OED*).

³⁹ See Robert Burns’s poem *Death and Doctor Hornbook* (1785).

⁴⁰ *blackguard*: “A person, esp. a man, who behaves in a dishonourable or contemptible way; someone worthless or despicable; a villain” (*OED*).

⁴¹ See *Hebrews*, 12:1.

⁴² John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667), IV.181: “At one slight bound high overleap’d all bound.” *mauvaise honte*: false shame or modesty (*OED*).

⁴³ *Blackwood’s Magazine*.

⁴⁴ Cf. Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (1590), I.vi.8-15. The same passage is the source for the line that follows below.

⁴⁵ See the oratorio *Judas Maccabaeus* (1746) composed by Georg Friedrich Handel on a libretto written by Thomas Morell.

⁴⁶ In Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726), the Yahoos are a humanoid race of brutes, tamed into submission by the Houyhnhnms, a race of intelligent horses.

⁴⁷ Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I.vi.15.

⁴⁸ *John Bull*, a Sunday newspaper founded in December 1820 by Englishman Theodore Hook (1788-1841).

⁴⁹ *The Beacon* was a short-lived, staunchly conservative Edinburgh publication. It was established in 1820, and Walter Scott was involved both as an investor and contributor, and harshly criticized for this reason. Cf. Wu 2007, 2:90.

⁵⁰ Cf. *The Faerie Queene*, I.viii.40.

⁵¹ Charles Burney (1726-1814), English music historian, musician and composer.

⁵² James Thomson (1700-48), Scottish poet. He published the series of four poems *The Seasons* in 1730.

VIRGIL'S HOSTESS.*

It is a pity that this and other light pieces of Virgil,¹ are omitted in the ordinary editions. A great man is worth listening to, let him say what he will; and nothing is more agreeable than his trifling. It flatters one's common humanity. It also makes us discover, that things trifling are not such trifling things, in one sense, as we took them for. To omit these little evidences of good-humour and fellowship is not only an injustice even to an epic poet, but helps to confirm a certain vulgar instinct in people, which leads them to draw a line between the sympathy with great things and the sympathy with small,—to the great ultimate detriment of both. He is in the healthiest condition of humanity, and best prepared to do it good, who has all his faculties ready for all the perceptions of which it is capable; who has sense at his fingers' ends to touch and feel every possible surface of life, and understanding to judge of its nature and common rights. The greatest genius, it has been said, resembles the trunk of the elephant, which can knock down a tiger and pick up a pin. We should give small things no more value than they are worth; but the end of the very greatest things, what is it but to increase the relish of less? Great rivers send their waters into our houses by means of pipes. The mightiest legislation terminates in making us all comfortable in our every day concerns, and affording us leisure to study and be grateful to mighty things in return. The *Æneid*² relishes

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Gilberta Golinelli.

our tea-tables and our evening walks. In short, a great genius encourages us to attend to him by attending to us. It would, undoubtedly, be injurious to the common cause, if a knowledge of a great poet in his lighter moments should do away a proper sense of him in his grave ones; but this is a mistake only liable to be fallen into by those idle men of the world, who in fact really know nothing at all, great or little.

The Battle of the Frogs and Mice³ has not injured the fame of Homer.⁴ We do not think less of Socrates,⁵ when he uses his grandest arguments for the immortality of the soul, because he could chat pleasantly at other times. Aristophanes,⁶ "a gay fellow about town," might have pretended to do so; and the Athenians might have fancied, for a day, that they agreed with him. But they would only have loved and honoured him the more afterwards; as they did. When we see a man, capable of a good-natured levity, laying so much stress upon things grave, we feel their gravity in proportion. We think they must be interesting indeed, and highly important to all of us, or he would be content with his laughing and seek no further; which on the contrary is the very refuge or vain endeavour of despair. Levity should be the smooth and harmonious buoyancy of things solid, like the lightness of the planets in the æther. To endeavour to shew that there are no things solid, and call that levity, is the madness of Atlas⁷ attempting to disprove his burden.

But, whither are we wandering from our poet's invitation, —from mine hostess of the Tiber,⁸ —from our ancient, but at the same time young, Mrs. Quickly,⁹ when she lived two thousand years ago, and was a buxom little Syrian landlady, who kept a place of entertainment out of the gates of Rome, and danced for the amusement of her customers? There are more genealogies than are dreamt of in Rouge-Lion's philosophy,¹⁰ and this is one of them. Why, here is Falstaff¹¹

himself (only not witty) in the shape of a fat gentleman, an acquaintance of Virgil's, whom the commentators want to turn into his prototype Silenus.¹² It is as palpable as Sir William Curtis,¹³ another "witless Falstaff," that he was an extremely fat gentleman from the Via Sacra,¹⁴ who cut heavy jokes by riding on donkies, and otherwise imitating the Silenus whom he resembled. Virgil's Hostess, in short, is a good-humoured panegyric of the poet's upon a sort of ancient White-Conduit-House or Chalk-Farm,¹⁵ not quite so "respectable" perhaps in one sense as those sub-urbanities of our beloved metropolis, but quite enough so for the manners of those days, and as good still as people expect in the South. The bread and wine, the gourds, the grapes, vine-leaves, and chesnuts, are the ordinary furniture of similar places of entertainment now existing in Italy; and if the hostesses are not musical or love-making by profession, they are generally amateurs, and the cause of much dancing and singing in others. We learn from ancient writers, that women of this profession were accustomed to be Syrians. They appear to have resembled the modern dancing-girls of the East. As to the opinion of some that Virgil was not the author of these verses, we do not think it worth our while to stop and consider it. The verses are good, the poet was good-natured; and that is enough for us. We shall only take this opportunity of observing, that Virgil was eminent in his private character for benignity and simplicity of manners. "Whiter souls," quoth Horace,¹⁶ "do not exist, than Plotius,¹⁷ Varius,¹⁸ and Virgil, nor ones with whom I feel myself more closely bound."¹⁹ He proceeds to tell us how delighted they all were to meet, on his journey to Brundisium;²⁰ and that there is nothing equal, in his opinion, to a pleasant friend:—

——— animæ, quales neque candidiores
 Terra tulit, neque quis me sit devinctior alter.
 O qui complexus! et gaudia quanta fuerunt!
 Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.²¹

From the accounts left us of Virgil, his person, manners, &c. and even the turn of his genius, with all due allowance of its superiority, we should guess that he had a good deal of resemblance to Thomson.²² He was a heavy-looking man, of retired habits, very sincere and affectionate, and beloved by all who knew him.

Copa Syrisca, caput Graia redimita mitella,
 Crispum sub crotalo docta movere latus,
 Ebria fumosæ saltat lasciva taberna,
 Ad cubitum raucos excutiens calamos.
 Quid juvat æstivo defessum pulvere abesse,
 Quam potius bibulo decubuisse toro?
 Sunt cupœ, calices, cyathi, rosa, tibia, chordæ,
 Et trichila umbriferis frigida arundinibus.
 Est et Mænalis quæ garrit dulce sub antro,
 Rustica pastoris fistula more sonans.
 Est et vappa, cado nuper diffusa picato;
 Est strepitans rauco murmure rivus aquæ:
 Sunt etiam croceo violæ de flore corollæ;
 Sertaque purpurea lutea mista rosa;
 Et quæ virgineo libata Achelois ab amne
 Lilia vimineis adtulit in calathis.
 Sunt et caseoli, quos juncea fiscina siccant;
 Sunt autumnali cerea pruna die;
 Castaneæque nuces, et suave rubentia mala:
 Est hic munda Ceres; est Amor, est Bromius:
 Sunt et mora cruenta, et lentis uva racemis;

Est pendens junco cæruleus cucumis.
 Est tuguri custos armatus falce saligna;
 Sed non et vasto est inguine terribilis.
 Huc, Alibida, veni: fessus jam sudat asellus:
 Parce illi; vestrum delictum est asinus.
 Nunc cantu crebro rumpunt arbusta cicadæ.
 Nunc etiam in gelida sede lacerta latet.
 Si sapis, æstivo recubans te prolue vitro;
 Seu vis crystallo ferre novos calices.
 Eia age pampinea fessus requiesce sub umbra;
 Et gravidum roseo necte caput strophio;
 Candida formosæ decerpes ora puellæ:
 Ah! pereat, cui sunt prisca supercilia!
 Quid cineri ingrato servas bene olentia certa?
 Anne coronato vis lapide ista legi?
 Pone merum et talos. Pereant, qui crastina curant.
 Mors aurem vellens,—“Vivite,” ait, “venio.”²³

Our little Syrian Hostess, the diadem'd, the fair,
 Who crisply to the music moves her side with such an air,
 Has dancing at her house to-day, and looks for all her friends
 To see her shake her castanets, all at her fingers' ends.
 What man on earth, I wish to know, would chuse to be
 away,
 Instead of going there to drink, on such a dusty day?
 Instead of going there to drink, and lying on a bed,
 With cups, and cans, and flutes, and flowers, and an arbour
 for his head?
 There's one that plays a pan-pipe within a pretty cave,
 Just like a rustic shepherd;—I wonder what you'd have!
 And there's a very pleasant wine, as neat as it can be;
 And a proper brook, a hoarse one, to run respectably;

And there are garlands for your locks, of yellow mixed with
blue,
Both violets and crocusses, and there are roses too:
And there are lilies such as those that drink the virgin
stream,
Which osier-twisting nymphs collect in baskets of the same;
Cheeses that come in baskets too—I nearly had forgot 'em;
And prunes and other pretty meats, which people make in
autumn.
Chesnuts of course, and apples, whose cheeks go reddening
sweetly;
And bread and wine, and love besides, to relish all com-
pletely.
I needn't speak of heaps of grapes, nor mulberries blood-red;
And you may have a cucumber a hanging by your head.
Take notice—there's a scare-crow, just where the thickest
shade is,
But he has nothing terrible, to frighten the young ladies.

Come, Alibida, my fat friend, who lovest watering-places,
You and your donkey, both of you, come rest, and wipe your
faces.
The grasshoppers all sing so loud, they burst the bushes,
man,
And the lizards run and get, you see, in the coldest nooks
they can.
Come, if you're wise, and give a loose to laughter and your
stays*.
A flask or bottle? You know best the *most genteelest*
ways.

* Before the reader condemns this apparently modern interpolation, let him consult those who have written on the fashions of the ancient world.

Come rest yourself, and take your couch beneath this leafy
 vine,
 And renovate with roses that heavy head of thine;
 Still better flowers are here to pluck,—a pretty mouth and
 kisses;
 Ah! perish those who 'd bring old frowns to such a place as
 this is.
 Why should we keep our odorous flowers to give the thank-
 less dead?
 Will any tombstone feel for us, for all its crowned head?
 The wine! The dice! Tomorrow's turn is but a chance
 dominion;
 "Live, for I come," says Death himself; and I'm of Death's
 opinion.

The reader should be acquainted, by all means, with another minor poem of Virgil, *The Cubex*,²⁴ and with Spenser's²⁵ translation of it. It contains some of the most delicate specimens in existence of what may be called (for want of a better term) the gentle mock-heroic;—mock-heroic, in which the subject is trifling but the treatment of it in a certain mixed style of pretended solemnity and real tenderness, as if we were hand-

He will be surprised at the classical authority which there is for most of our modern habiliments,—breeches perhaps excepted, which did not come up till the lower empire, unless he chuses²⁶ to go for them to the Persians and Goths.²⁷ His pantaloons are undoubtedly Oriental. Boots belong to the heroic ages; and wigs, as Gibbon²⁸ would say, lose themselves in the clouds of antiquity. The Goth and Vandal²⁹ Princes on Trajan's column,³⁰ with wigs prophetic of the 18th century, look no older than the grandfathers of their worthy descendants of Austria and Prussia: but this is nothing. Monuments are brought to light in Persia, upon which the antient kings and heroes have as regular formal-curved caxons as any old stock-jobber or coachman extant.

ling a butterfly. The text is much corrupted, and in some places very obscure; but this did not hinder Spenser from making a most beautiful translation, which Jortin³¹ has criticised like a pedant, and Heyne³² like a man of taste. Jortin is angry that any man should think of translating passages which a critic could not make out. Heyne says, that this is a happy privilege, and envies the poet for being able to forego the trammels of the commentator. "*Patris sermone*," says he, "*octonis versibus in strophas coëuntibus redditum est hoc carmen a Spensero, poëta nobili Britano (Virgil's Gnat), in ejus Opp. Nec sine voluptate illud facile perlegas. Adeo mihi vel hoc exemplo patuit, quanto expeditius esset poëtam carmine vernaculo reddere, quam verba subtiliter interpretari. Nihil enim vetabat sententias integras summatim effere, ejusve partes in quemcunque placeret sensum deflectere, aut verba corrupta aptis et idoneis permutare.*"³³

What a delightful edition, by the bye, is Heyne's Virgil altogether, and how every gentleman ought to have it! It is a work of true love on the part of the critic, and hung with gems and intaglios and all that he could bestow upon it; and yet he had sense enough to know that Virgil, in pastoral, was not so good as Theocritus.³⁴ His own life, more delightful than all, ought to be translated into Latin, and put at the beginning. Heyne rose from a state of the humblest poverty,—from a boyhood of almost absolute starvation, and became one of the most learned and celebrated, as well as most amiable, of men. His extreme penury, his invincible industry and benevolence, his love of letters, his other love,—are all delicious to read of, seeing that the evil went away and the good remained.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19 BCE), also known as Virgil, Roman poet under the Augustan Empire.

² *Aeneid*, one of Virgil's most famous epic poems, which tells the story of the Trojan hero Aeneas and his journeys from Troy to Italy.

³ *The Battle of Frogs and Mice*, otherwise known as *Batrachomyomachia*, is a parody of the *Iliad* starring animals instead of human beings.

⁴ Homer (8th century BCE), Greek poet and presumed author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

⁵ Socrates (c. 470-399 BCE), Greek philosopher.

⁶ Aristophanes (c. 466-386 BCE), Athenian comic playwright. Amongst his plays: *The Clouds*, *The Wasps*, and *The Frogs*.

⁷ In Greek mythology, Atlas is a Titan condemned to hold up the sky for eternity due to his rebellion against the gods.

⁸ Tiber, second longest Italian river that flows through the city of Rome.

⁹ Mistress Quickly, Shakespearean character.

¹⁰ Adaptation of Hamlet's remark "there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, | than are dreamt of in your philosophy", Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I.iii.165-66.

¹¹ John Falstaff, Shakespearean character.

¹² Silenus, tutor of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine.

¹³ Sir William Curtis (1752-1829), Tory Member of Parliament and Lord Mayor of London from 1795 to 1796. Known for his banquets and his jovial attitude.

¹⁴ Via Sacra, one of the main streets in ancient Rome, leading from Capitoline Hill to the Colosseum. The street was used by merchants to reach the Forum, the main centre of Roman trade.

¹⁵ Historic locations in London known in the seventeenth and eighteenth century as popular venues for leisure and social gatherings away from the city centre.

¹⁶ Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65-8 BCE), Roman satirist and poet during the reign of Octavian.

¹⁷ Plotius Tucca (probably lived after 19 BCE), Roman poet, philologist and one of Virgil's friends.

¹⁸ Lucius Varius Rufus (c. 74-14 BCE), Roman poet and one of Virgil's friends.

¹⁹ "Whiter souls ... closely bound.": translation of an extract from Horace's *Satires* (bk. 1, Satire 5).

²⁰ Ancient Latin name for the Italian city of Brindisi.

²¹ Extract from Horace's *Satires* (bk. 1, Satire 5): "whitest souls earth ever bore, to whom none can be more deeply attached than I. O the embracing! O the rejoicing! Nothing, so long as I am in my senses, would I match with the joy a friend may bring" (Horace 1926, 67).

²² James Thomson (1700-48), Scottish poet, known for the poem *The Seasons* and for the lyrics of the patriotic song "Rule, Britannia!"

²³ Extract from the poem *Copa* contained in the *Appendix Vergiliana*, a collection of Latin poems traditionally considered to be Virgil's earliest poetry. However, it is likely that many of these poems are spurious.

²⁴ Misspelling of "Culex". The *Culex* is another minor poem attributed to Virgil, included in the *Appendix Vergiliana*.

²⁵ Edmund Spenser (1553-99), English poet, famous for his epic poem dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I, *The Faerie Queene*. In 1591 he translated Virgil's in English and entitled it *Virgil's Gnat*.

²⁶ *chuses*: Old English variant of 'chooses'.

²⁷ Goths, barbarians who threatened the Roman Empire contributing to its fall.

²⁸ Edward Gibbon (1737-94), English historian and politician.

²⁹ Vandals, barbarians who sacked Rome in 455.

³⁰ Trajan's column, historical monument in Rome, completed in 113 CE to celebrate the victory of Emperor Trajan in the Dacian wars.

³¹ John Jortin (1698-1770), English historian.

³² Christian Gottlob Heyne (1729-1812), German archaeologist and director of the Göttingen State and University Library.

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³³ Trans.: “In the Author’s text, this poem (Virgil’s Gnat) was translated by Spenser, a noble British poet, in eighty verses written in strophe, in his Opp. Neither can you easily read it without pleasure. It became clear to me in this example, how much easier it would be to translate the poet’s work in vulgar, instead of translating the words accurately. In fact, nothing stopped him from summarizing entire sentences, or to change them however he liked, or to switch wrong terms with apt and suitable words.”

³⁴ Theocritus (300-260 BCE), Greek poet, famous for his pastoral poetry.

THE SULIOTES.*

PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

THE following Translation is from a brief but simple and interesting Narrative of the sufferings and heroic actions of the Suliote People,¹ the original of which was presented by their Chiefs to the Ionian Government, as a testimony of the virtuous conduct and constancy displayed by their nation, under the most trying circumstances.

The Narrator, Captain Christo Pervò,² is a Greek, well known as the Author of the History of Suli;³ he sojourned many years with the Suliotes, and, as appears by the present relation, was an eye-witness of what he describes.

The original Italian has been translated as closely as the different constructions of the two languages would permit, and there are several obscure passages, which seem to require explanatory notes. These could not be furnished by the Translator, who received the manuscript from a friend, with a request that it might (for reasons which do not require to be stated in this place) be got ready for publication without any delay.

The authentic account of the fate of the celebrated Ali Pacha,⁴ and the immediate cause which led to his destruction, will be read with great interest, as affording a curious insight into the nature of the war now raging in Greece.

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Serena Baiesi.

A compendious Relation of the Adventures of the Suliotes, from the year 1820 to the 2nd of September 1822, at which latter period they quitted the Fortress of Kiafa.⁵ Written at the Lazzaretto of Argostoli⁶ in Cefalonia, the 30th of September, 1822, by Captain Christo Perevò.

HAPPENING to have been at Suli,⁷ I think it useful and fitting to note down in a succinct manner the operations of the Suliotes, and also the events which took place relating to them, from the year 1820 to 1822.

When Ali Pacha had become odious in the eyes of the Sultan Mahmout,* and that the latter had begun to take measures for his destruction, the greatest part of the Suliotes, with the inhabitants of other towns in the neighbourhood of Suli, were living in the Island of Corfu,⁸ gaining their subsistence by their labour. They dared not enter into the service or submit to the protection of the Pacha, because he had declared with an oath that he should never die contented till he had succeeded in reducing the Suliotes to the same state as the people of Gardica.†⁹ When operations against the Pacha were commenced by the Sultan, the latter issued firmans,¹⁰ inviting all those Turks and Greeks, who had incurred the displeasure of the former, and were expatriated on that account to join him, in order to effect the ruin of the Pacha, and to reinstate themselves in the bosom of their country, and in the absolute possession of their property.

The Suliotes, hearing of such an order from their sovereign, and wishing to obtain precise information concerning it, sent four Ambassadors to the Ottoman Vice-Admiral, who

* Mahomet.¹¹

† Destroyed in a cruel manner by Ali, in revenge for some insult offered forty years before to his mother.

were favourably received, and obtained from him a confirmation of the Sultan's proclamation, and a renewed invitation to the same purpose, in consequence of which, about 200 men left Corfu, enrolling themselves under the orders of Ismail Pacha, surnamed Bassobey, to whom they were well known, he being a native of Janina¹² and having been for above twenty years in the service of Ali Pacha.

These 200 Suliotes, continuing in the royal service and behaving with activity and submission, entertained the firm hope of being able to return to their native home, according to the promise of the Pacha and the proclamation of the Sultan. Nevertheless, they were deceived in this hope, for the bravest and most faithful Beys and Agas,¹³ those who were always nearest to Ismail Pacha, being all Albanians, and feeling envious of the Suliotes, were constantly exciting him not to allow that people to return to their native land, according to the royal order, saying, that as soon as the Suliotes should take possession of their native country, they would be always against him, as had been found in times past.

The Pacha, both from his own inclination and from the instigations of the Beys, not only refused to the Suliotes permission to recover their own country, but formed also the project of putting them to death, when an opportunity offered without the risk of shedding the blood of his own troops. He thought the easiest way of effecting his purpose would be to send them back to Corfu, and thus on the shores to put his Ottoman project in execution. In consequence, he gave orders to intercept their passage from the heights, and to massacre the whole, dispersed as they would be here end there.

The Suliotes soon discovered the insidious projects, both of the Pacha and of the Albanian Turks. The peril in which

they found themselves, and their anxiety to return to their native soil, induced them to form an alliance with their first and implacable enemy Ali Pacha, in which, with no small difficulty, they succeeded.

Having then given five hostages into the hands of Ali Pacha, and taken his grandson Hussein Pacha in exchange, they departed in the night for Suli. The Turco Albanians called Ziulachioti, who then inhabited Suli, evacuated the fortress two days after the arrival of the Greek Suliotes; the commander of the Castle of Kiafa opened the gates, and the Suliotes entered, according to the orders of Ali Pacha. They were afterwards joined by three of Ali Pacha's commanders, the Selictar,* Tahir Ambasi, and Ago Muhurdar, having with them a body of nearly seven hundred Albanian Turks. As soon as they had joined the Suliotes, they attacked the enemy in divers parts, driving them from many strong places. After a month, however, the Selictar, the first of the above-mentioned commanders, deserted, taking with him about three hundred Albanian Turks; the other two officers remained with the Suliotes.

In the month of July, 1821, at the time when the town of Arta¹⁴ was besieged, Tahir Ambasi was sent to Messolongio¹⁵ and to the Morea¹⁶ to procure warlike instruments. Being arrived there, and having witnessed the calamities and injuries inflicted by the Greeks upon the Turks, he changed his opinion; and immediately returning to the camp recounted all those events to his countrymen, exciting them at the same time, if they were true Mussulmans, to unite themselves to the royal troops, and to leave the Suliotes; "For," said he, "these also fight for their religion and their liberty, like their countrymen of the Morea and of Romelia."¹⁷

The sword bearer.¹⁸

The words of Tahir Ambasi had the most successful effect on the hearts of the Albanian Turks, who had joined the Greek Suliotes; and with one will and common consent they marched to Janina, where, deceiving Ali Pacha, they delivered him alive into the hands of his enemy, who put him to death. The Greek Suliotes, being thus left alone in the camp, returned to defend their country.

After the death of Ali Pacha, the General in Chief of the Sultan's army, Hursit Pacha,*¹⁹ began to recruit fresh troops in order to march against the Peloponnesus. All the Albanian Beys and Agas dissuaded him from such a project, telling him that none of them would march against the Peloponnesus as long as the Suliotes remained alive in their own country; adducing for a reason, that before they could reach the Peloponnesus, the Suliotes would have reduced their wives and families to slavery.

These words of the Albanian Turks had such effect upon the intentions of Hursit Pacha, that without the least delay he moved with twenty thousand men against the Suliotes. The inhabitants of the villages in the neighbourhood of Suli, much alarmed by the multitude and impetuosity of the enemy, and by the prospect of the devastation which must take place on their approach, took refuge in Suli, carrying with them above fifty thousand beasts—sheep, goats, oxen, and beasts of burthen. The people themselves amounted to ten thousand souls.

On the 18th of May, 1822, the Turks approached Suli, making the attack on all sides. The Suliotes, although they were few compared with the multitude of the enemy, opposed them with great valour on every side; but the foe, after a heavy repulse and much loss of blood,

* Called also Chourchid Pacha.

made himself master of the Castle of Santa Veneranda, of San Donando, of the Gardelina, of the Samonichi, and of the mountains of Cumbolo and Strithozza,²⁰ from whence they attacked the fortress of Kiafa with two mortars.

A few days afterwards the enemy attempted, by a strong effort, to make himself master also of the Davarico,²¹ from whence the Suliotes supplied themselves with water; but these latter shewing themselves boldly to his forces, opposed them heroically, so that the battle lasted for twenty-one hours; and although all the first and bravest commanders among the Turks were present in the conflict, the Turks turned their backs to the Suliotes, retiring with danger to their camp in the mountains of Strithozza. Of this battle, as well as of the preceding, the History of Suli will give the most faithful and precise account.

The siege which the Turks carried on against the Suliotes was so close, that there only remained to the latter a circumference of seven miles,—a stony, inaccessible, and sterile position. The poor animals, not finding pasture, were deaf to the voice of their masters: they went in numbers towards the enemy, who got possession of above one-third of them: some afterwards served for food for the besieged, and the rest perished with hunger, as did all the beasts of burthen. The atmosphere consequently became infected, and a contagious disorder soon made its appearance, the progress of which was so rapid, that from fifteen to twenty persons died each day. The countrymen seeing the destruction of the cattle, the pestilence among the men, the scarcity of their accustomed food, and even in some instances the total want of bread,—and, moreover, being unable to fix any limits to the siege, arrived at such a height of absurd despair, that keeping in their own hands the positions committed to their care, they treated clandestinely with the

enemy, in order to give them up to him; and, what was still more horrid, these same countrymen, in order to render the Turks favourable to them, and to prevent their remembering all the evils which they had committed against them whilst they were united to the Suliotes, promised to give up those situations also which were near to the fortress, and finally to cause the Fortress of Kiafa itself to be delivered up to them. They had it easily in their power to fulfil these promises, their numbers amounting to two thousand, and the Suliotes were scarcely five hundred. The Turks, though they had an opportunity so favourable to their views, were nevertheless so much impressed with the alarm caused by the former and the recent battles, that they supposed that impossible which was perfectly easy to achieve, and gave the countrymen to understand that they would not undertake such an enterprise,—so much did they doubt the promises of these villagers.

The Suliotes, penetrating the sentiments of the countrymen, often assembled them together, representing to them that submission to the Turks could only be ruinous to their families and to themselves,—and this they might judge of from the massacre of so many other Christians. The Suliotes furnished them with as much money and provisions as they could, and begged them to submit to the siege for some months longer, declaring that if in that time the siege should not be raised or some exterior succour arrive, then all would unanimously demand peace, on the condition, however, of honourable capitulations. All these exhortations and prayers to the countrymen were in vain; so that the Suliotes, rendering them responsible towards God for all the evil which might happen to them through their means, consented to let them go out, foreseeing an intestine war if

they any longer opposed their firm resolutions. Even this, however, would not satisfy the countrymen, who insisted that all, without the least exception, and at the same time, should be given up; but the Suliotes answered them, that they should much prefer death to submitting themselves to the Turks.

Being thus forced to try both to escape the danger and to render vain the promises made to the Turks by the countrymen, the Suliotes informed them that they also were desirous of peace, but that they wished to go to the Ionian islands; for which purpose it was necessary to obtain the permission of the British Government.²²

The Suliotes having thus agreed with the countrymen, proposed this plan to the Turks, who immediately sent emissaries to the British Consul at Prevesa.²³ The consent of the Suliotes to surrender, and to emigrate to the Ionian islands, had in view to prolong the time for their surrender, and to drive away the countrymen, hoping during this delay for some succour or some change of circumstances,—also in order to quiet the enemy, and to lull him; and that with good reason, because, being weak in numbers, they could not guard their respective posts from an invasion on the part of the enemy. In the mean time, the emissaries could not succeed in obtaining their demand, because the British Consul had left Prevesa three days before for Zante,²⁴ there to meet the Governor-General of the Ionian States. The emissaries therefore went on to Zante, and there having a conference with the Governor on the object of their mission, received a flattering but not an affirmative answer.

From the ambiguity of the General's answer, the countrymen felt all their fears renewed, and though they had before taken the resolution of not separating themselves from the Suliotes, they now surrendered themselves.

In consequence, the Turks, still more animated by the diminution of the troops of the Suliotes since the surrender of the countrymen, and impatient at the General's answer, changed their sentiments, resolving on the violation of the treaties. Two days afterwards, therefore, they proposed to the Suliotes, in an imperious manner, that they should surrender the fortress and pass to Suli, to Zieurati,²⁵ or to Athlanza,²⁶ with their families,—after, however, having given the guarantee of twenty hostages, which should be delivered up to the Turks. Also, that in one of these places they should wait for the decisive answer of the General, to whom the Suliotes had again sent to demand one, and at the same time to request the ships necessary to transport them. The Suliotes answered them, that, wise and great men as they were, they ought not to break the convention: but the Turks were but little attentive to the words of the Suliotes, concluding that they arose entirely from fear.

The Suliotes, seeing the obstinacy of the Turks in demanding the fortress in the above manner, wrote to them to abide by the treaties already made, or to have recourse to arms; and that the Lord God, who knows the just and the unjust, would reward every one according to his deeds. Moreover, the Suliotes swore unanimously amongst themselves, rather to die with arms in their hands than to go out of the fortress at the order of the Turks. The second day after taking this determination, which was on the 14th of August, they all received the sacrament, preparing themselves for death. This firm and heroic resolution, being made known to the Turks by means of their spies, intimidated them and confirmed the first conventions, which were as follows:—

1st. That both sides should send letters and emissaries to the Commander-in-chief of the Ionian Islands, that the Su-

liotes might know if they should be received in those islands.

2dly. That all provisions and military stores belonging to the Suliotes, whether public or private property, should be paid for by the Turks according to their price in the neighbourhood.

3dly. That the Turks should be answerable at Noli²⁷ for the ships which were to convey them, but which should nevertheless be furnished with Ionian flags.

4thly. That the Turks should take care to transport the baggage of the Suliotes, their wives and families.

5thly. That the Turkish troops encamped at Glechi,²⁸ by which place the Suliotes would have to pass, should retire farther.

6thly. That the Turks should give to the Suliotes, as hostages, the nearest relations of the most notable Pachas, Beys, and Agas, who were present at the siege of Kiafa, until the Suliotes should be all embarked.

7thly. Until the respective ships should have all arrived at Athlanza, and until the Suliotes should have received the hostages, neither men nor baggage should quit the fortress.

All these conditions were scrupulously respected by both sides, until the arrival of the answer of the Most Excellent Arch General* and Governor, Adam,²⁹ who generously permitted the Suliotes to take refuge in the Ionian Islands, and magnanimously acceded to the prayers of both parties; who also, for the complete safety of the Suliotes, sent three ships of war, to secure by their presence the embarkation of the Suliotes, and subsequently accompany them to Asso³⁰ in Cefalonia, where they are ordered for thirty-one days, to *abate their obstinacy*†.

* Arci Generale.

† Scontare la contumacia.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ The Suliotes were a tribe of Greeks of the area of Souli in Epirus. They were active in the resistance to the Turks during the Greek war for independence (1821-32), a revolt by the Greeks against the Ottoman Empire, leading to the creation of an independent kingdom of Greece. Byron mentions the Suliotes in his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812), Canto II.

² Christoforos Perraivos (1773-1863), Greek officer during the Greek War of Independence and author.

³ Perraivos's *History of Suli and Parga* (1815, trans. 1823) was a memoir of his service as an officer. It includes historical information about the Suliote refugees in the island of Corfu.

⁴ Ali Pacha Tepelenë (1744-1822), Albanian ruler. He served as the Ottoman Pasha of Janina from 1788 to 1822.

⁵ Fortress located in Souli, which was built by Ali Pacha after 1803. The fortress had a key role in Ali Pacha's strategy to subjugate the Suliotes.

⁶ Argostoli, town on the island of Kefalonia, Greece.

⁷ Suli (Souli), in the region of Epirus, northwestern Greece.

⁸ Corfu, Greek island in the Ionian Sea to which most of the Suliotes had been exiled after Ali Pacha sieged the area of Suli.

⁹ *Gardica*: Hunt's spelling of *Kardhiq*, a village in Albania.

¹⁰ Firman, royal mandate or decree issued by the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire.

¹¹ Mahamud II (1785-1839), Ottoman sultan from 1808 to 1839.

¹² Ismail Pashabey, native of Ioannina, city in the region Epirus, northwestern Greece, was a former ally of Ali Pacha.

¹³ Beys and Agas are Turkish titles for civilians or officers used in the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁴ Arta, city in northwestern Greece, in the Epirus region.

¹⁵ Missolonghi, city situated in western Greece.

¹⁶ Morea was the name used for the Peloponnese peninsula in southern Greece during the Middle Ages and early modern period.

¹⁷ Romelia, historical region administrated by the Ottoman Empire, corresponding to the Balkans.

¹⁸ Mispunctuation: asterisk at the beginning of the note missing from the copy-text.

¹⁹ Hurshid Ahmed Pasha (d. 1822), Ottoman general. He killed Ali Pacha in January 1822.

²⁰ *Castle of Santa Veneranda ... Cumbolo and Strithozza*: Unidentified locations.

²¹ Unidentified reference.

²² Since 1809 the Ionian Islands were under the British rule.

²³ Preveza, city in the region of Epirus, northwestern Greece.

²⁴ Zante, southernmost and third largest of the Ionian Islands of Greece.

²⁵ Unidentified location.

²⁶ Unidentified location.

²⁷ Unidentified location. Considering the geographical context of the article, it is unlikely that Hunt refers to the Italian city in Liguria.

²⁸ Unidentified location.

²⁹ Sir Frederik Adam (1781-1853), a Scottish major general who became Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Island between 1823 and 1832.

³⁰ Asso, village in the west coast of the island of Cephalonia.

MINOR PIECES.*

ALFIERI'S BENEDICTION.¹

SIA pace ai frati
Purchè sfratati:
E pace ai preti,
Ma pochi, e queti:
Cardinalume
Non tolga lume:
Il maggior prete
Torni alla rete:
Leggi, e non re:
L'Italia c'è.

PEACE be to the friars,
But in common attires:
Peace, priests, to you also,
But few, and don't bawl so:
Our cardinals bright
Let 'em leave us our light:
The chief of the set
Let him take to his net:
Then laws, and no king;
And let Italy sing.

* Author: Various authors / Transcribed and annotated by Gilberta Golinelli.

AN ULTRA LICENSE.²

FROM ALFIERI.

APPROVAZIONE
 Di Fra Tozzone
 Per l'impressione
 Di un libruccione
 Che un autorone
 Ai piedi pone
 Di un principone
 Con dedicone.

SI STAMPI PUR, SI STAMPI:

QUI NON C'E NULLA, NE RAGION, NE LAMPI.

THE approbation
 Of Father Stuffation
 For the imprimation
 Of a pamphliteration
 Which a light of the nation
 With all humiliation
 Sends a man in great station
 With a dedication.

PRINT IT BY ALL MEANS, PRINT IT:

THERE'S NOTHING RATIONAL, NOT E'EN A HINT, IN'T.

FROM THE FRENCH.³

ÆGLE, beauty and poet, has two little crimes;
 She makes her own face, and does not make her rhymes.

SONG, WRITTEN FOR AN INDIAN AIR.⁴

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are burning bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me, Who knows how?
To thy chamber window, Sweet.

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream,
The Champak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream.
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart;—
As I must on thine,
Beloved as thou art!

Oh, lift me from the grass!
I die! I faint! I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eye-lids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;—
O! press me to thine own again,
Where it will break at last!

MARTIAL.—LIB. 1. EPIG. 1.⁵

Hic est, quem legis, ille, quem requiris,
 Toto notus in orbe Martialis
 Argutis Epigrammatôn libellis:
 Cui, lector studiose, quod dedisti
 Viventi decus atque sentienti,
 Rari post cineres habent poetæ.

He unto whom thou art so partial,
 Oh, reader! is the well-known Martial,
 The Epigrammatist: while living,
 Give him the fame thou wouldst be giving;
 So shall he hear, and feel, and know it:
 Post-obits rarely reach a poet.

 NEW DUET.⁶

TO THE TUNE OF "WHY HOW NOW, SAUCY JADE?"

Why how now, saucy Tom,
 If you thus must ramble,
 I will publish some
 Remarks on Mister Campbell.⁷

ANSWER:

Why how now, Parson Bowles,⁸
 Sure the priest is maudlin!
 [*To the Public*] How can you, d—n your souls!
 Listen to his twaddling?

PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF,⁹

BY ALFIERI.

SUBLIME specchio di veraci detti,
 Mostrami in corpo e in anima qual sono.
 Capelli, or radi in fronte, e rossi pretti;
 Lunga statura, e capo in terra prono;
 Sottil persona in su due stinchi schietti;
 Bianca pelle, occhi azzurri, aspetto buono;
 Giusto naso, bel labro, e denti eletti;
 Pallido in volto, più che un re sul trono.

Or duro, acerbo; ora piaghevol, mite;
 Irato sempre, e non maligno mai;
 La mente e il cor meco in perpetua lite;
 Per lo più mesto, e talor lieto assai
 Or stimandomi Achille, ed or Tersite.
 Uom, se' tu grande, o vil?—Muori, e il saprai.

THOU lofty mirror, Truth, let me be shewn
 Such as I am, in body and in mind.
 Hair, plainly red, retreating now behind;
 A stature tall, a stooping head and prone;
 A meagre body on two stilts of bone;
 Fair skin, blue eyes, good look, nose well design'd;
 A handsome mouth, teeth that are rare to find,
 And pale in face, more than a king on throne.

Now harsh and crabbed, mild and pleasant soon;
 Always irascible, no malignant foe;
 My head and heart and I never in tune;
 Sad for the most part, then in such a flow
 Of spirits, I feel now hero, now buffoon;—
 Man, art thou great or vile?—Die, and thou'lt know.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Epigram I, by Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), composed in Siena on 15 August 1785 and first appeared in his *Rime* (1789). The English translation is by Leigh Hunt (1784-1859).

² Epigram XXVI, by Vittorio Alfieri, first appeared in *Rime*. The English translation is by Leigh Hunt.

³ Composition by G. G. Byron (1788-1824), first published in *The Liberal*.

⁴ Poem by P.B. Shelley (1792-1822), first published in *The Liberal*.

⁵ Epigram I, by the Roman poet Martial (38/41- c. 103 CE). The English translation is by G. G. Byron. As remarked by W.H. Marshall, the text is actually a translation of Epigram II (Marshall 1960, 140).

⁶ Composition by G. G. Byron, first published in *The Liberal*.

⁷ Thomas Campbell (1777-1844), Scottish poet, mostly appreciated for his lyrics.

⁸ William Lisle Bowles (1762-1850), English poet, critic, and priest, was harshly critical towards Alexander Pope's works and poetry.

⁹ Sonnet CLXVII, by Vittorio Alfieri, first published in *Rime*. The English translation is by Leigh Hunt.

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ERRATA.

Page 6, line 6, instead of “a *worse* king never left a realm undone,” read “a *weaker* king ne’er left a realm undone.”²

Page 7, line 16, instead of “a bad ugly woman,” read “an unhandsome woman.”

Page 20, line 5, for “dwell,” read “well.”

Page 23, line 6, instead of “amidst the *war*,” read “amidst the *roar*.”

Page 38, in the note, for “body,” read “bottom.”

Page 62, lines 29 and 30—and page 68, line 15, for “*Signora* Veronica,” read “*Gossip* Veronica.”

Page 109, line 10, for “about the size of Stratford Place,” read “about *half* the size.”

LONDON:

C. H. REYNELL, PRINTER,
45, BROAD-STREET, GOLDEN-SQUARE.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ¹ “Portrait of Himself” used as title on p. 399.
- ² Misprint for *realm undone*.

THE
LIBERAL.

VERSE AND PROSE FROM THE
SOUTH.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

LONDON, 1823:

PRINTED FOR JOHN HUNT,
22, OLD BOND STREET.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY C.W. REYNELL, BROAD STREET, GOLDEN SQUARE.

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ADVERTISEMENT
TO THE SECOND VOLUME.*

NEVER was a greater outcry raised among the hypocrites of all classes, than against this publication. What with the “great vulgar” protesting, the “small” abusing,¹ lawyers denouncing, “divines” cursing, scandal-mongers bawling, dunces of all sorts shrieking—all the sore places of the community seem to have been touched, and the “body politic” agitated accordingly.²

“As when the long-ear’d, milky mothers wait
At some sick miser’s triple-bolted gate,
For their defrauded, absent foals they make
A moan so loud, that all the Guild³ awake;
Sore sighs Sir Gilbert,⁴ starting at the bray,
From dreams of millions, and three groats to pay:
So swells each windpipe: ass intones to ass,
Harmonic twang! of leather, horn, and brass;
Such as from lab’ring lungs th’enthusiast blows,
High sounds, attempered to the vocal nose;
Or such as bellow from the deep divine:
There, Webster!⁵ peal’d thy voice; and, Whitfield!⁶ thine;
But far o’er all sonorous Blackmore’s⁷ strain:
Walls, steeples, skies, bray back to him again.
In Tottenham fields⁸ the brethren with amaze,
Prick all their ears up, and forget to graze!
Long Chancery Lane,⁹ retentive, rolls the sound,
And courts to courts return it round and round.”—*Dunciad*.

All these people deserve no better answer than a laughing quotation. But we will just admonish some well-meaning persons,

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed by Ilaria Natali; Annotated by Giacomo Ferrari.

not over strong in their understandings, that with respect to the religious part of the business, they are most grossly and “irreligiously” taken in, if they suffer themselves to be persuaded, that it is we who would lessen the divinity of what is really divine. It is these pretended “divines” and their abettors, who lessen it; —those raisers-up of absurd and inhuman imaginations, which they first impudently confound with divine things, and then, because we shew the nonsense of the imaginations, as impudently call their exposers blasphemers. Were we inclined to retort their own terms upon them, we should say that there was nothing in the world more “blasphemous” than such charges of blasphemy. The whole secret is just what we have stated. They first assume unworthy notions of the Divine Spirit, and then because that very Spirit is in fact vindicated from their degradations by an exposure of the absurdity and impossibility of such notions, they assume a divine right to denounce the vindicators, and to rouse up all the fears, weakness, and ignorance of society, in defence of the degradation. Of this stuff have the “Scribes, Pharisees, and Hypocrites”¹⁰ in all ages been made, whenever established opinion was to be divested of any of its corruptions. “He blasphemeth!” quoth the modern tribunal. “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” quoth the Quarterly.¹¹ *This* is the point, which persons who undertake to be didactic in Reviews, should answer; and not a hundred things which we never said.

There is a more generous indignation which we allow might be felt by some persons upon another point, but still owing to real want of information on the subject. We allude to what has been said in the *Liberal* of the late King.¹² *The Vision of Judgment*¹³ was written in a fit of indignation and disgust at Mr. Southey’s¹⁴ nonsense; and we confess that had we seen a copy of it in Italy, before it went to press (for we had none by us) we should have taken more pains to explain one or two expressions with regard to that Prince. Had the Preface¹⁵ also, entrusted to Mr. Murray,¹⁶ been sent, as it ought to have been, to the new publisher, much of the unintended part of the effect produced upon weak minds

would have been explained away at once;—that effect, which the hypocritical enemies of the Liberal at once delighted to assist in producing, and most pretended to deprecate. But the virtues of the late King, though of a negative kind, were of a kind nevertheless exceedingly calculated to excite a great many feelings in favour of him in a society like that of England; while his vices (pardon us, dear self-love of our countrymen, for supposing that you *have* vices) were equally calculated to be overlooked in a certain general blindness prevailing on that subject. Yet to those vices,—extreme self-will for instance, sullenness of purpose, a strong natural vindictiveness, &c. was owing the bloody protraction of the American War:¹⁷ to those vices, as well as to Mr. Pitt's¹⁸ haughty sympathy with them, was mainly owing the general war against liberty which was roused among the despots of the continent: and if certain staid and well-intentioned people suppose, that persons quite as moral and as pious as themselves, could not hold the late King in a light very different from their own, and much more revolting than even we hold it, they are most egregiously mistaken. What was thought of George the Third's natural character by a man of the highest respectability, who knew him intimately at court,—to wit, his own Governor when Prince of Wales,¹⁹—may be seen by those *who wish to do us justice*, in the Memoirs of James, Earl of Waldegrave, published by the aforesaid Mr. Murray.²⁰ See also Dr. Franklin's Life,²¹ Junius,²² and the opinion of Mr. Southey's friend, the author of Gebir.²³ What the Earl of Waldegrave prophesied of that character, may be seen also in Mr. Murray's publication. We think that prophecy came to pass. The most pious and virtuous person we ever knew,²⁴ even in the ordinary sense of those terms (and she might have stood by the side of the most virtuous, in the most extraordinary) thought so too, and taught some of us to think so in our childhood. The ruin of her family and prospects was brought upon her, to her knowledge, by that Prince's temper and obstinacy; and though the strict religious way in which she was brought up might have induced her to carry too far her opinion

of the *cause* of that calamitous and awful affliction under which he suffered,²⁵ the parasites of his memory are under a much greater mistake, when instead of turning their knowledge on that point to its great and proper account (which has never yet been hinted even in this great nation of reasoning freemen!) they fancy they can put down all thoughts upon such subjects, and all the unfortunate consequences of such *facts*, by raising a hypocritical cry against a few hasty expressions, uttered in that very spirit of sympathy with the community at large, which they count as nothing.

We cannot close this Advertisement without adding our cordial voice (truly humble on the present occasion) to the universal harmony prevailing in England on the subject of the glorious rights and equally glorious behaviour of Spain.²⁶ We must also say, how much surprise and relief have been afforded to us by the political plain-speaking (granting even it ends in little more) of the accomplished person who has succeeded that vizor of a statesman, Lord Castlereagh.²⁷

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Reference to Horace, *Ode*, III.i.1-2: "Hence, ye Profane; I hate ye all; / Both the Great, Vulgar, and the Small" (trans. by Abraham Cowley).

² The following verses are a "laughing quotation" (see Hunt below) from the mock-heroic poem *The Dunciad* (247-64) by Alexander Pope (1688-1744). This vitriolic satire against contemporary literature, culture and politics was published in different versions between 1728 and 1743. The excerpt targets the main detractors of the first volume of *The Liberal* mentioned in the previous lines of the "Advertisement to the second volume". Lines 257-58, which were not added until 1743, prove that Hunt here is quoting from *The Dunciad in Four Books* (London: "Printed for M. Cooper at the Globe in Pater-noster-row", 1743), a revised and augmented version of the original three books. This and the following notes on *The Dunciad* are based on Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad in Four Books*, rev. ed., edited by Valerie Rumbold (Harlow: Longman, 2009).

³ The tradesmen's guilds, *i.e.* the City of London.

⁴ Sir Gilbert Heathcote (1651?-1733), Whig merchant, Lord Mayor of London, member of Parliament and co-founder of the Bank of England. Sir Gilbert was a rich commoner, considered by Pope miserly and self-righteous towards the poor.

⁵ William Webster (1689-1758), High-Church clergyman and journalist in the ministerial interest.

⁶ George Whitefield (1714-70), leading preacher of Calvinist Methodism.

⁷ Sir Richard Blackmore (1654-1729), physician and prolific epicist, was among Pope's favourite butts due to his bombastic verses (his "sonorous strain" or braying). The long-lasting feud between the two started with Blackmore's 1717 tirade against Pope's blasphemous writings and never really ended.

⁸ Open country north of Westminster.

⁹ Chancery Lane in London was home to the Court of Chancery, here mocked for its lengthy and expensive procedures.

¹⁰ "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matthew 23:13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29).

¹¹ "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (Acts 19:28, 34) is a reference to the episode of Saint Paul in Ephesus. There he is opposed by an ignorant mob agitated by the silversmiths, whose revenues from selling silver idols of the goddess Diana are threatened by Paul's preaching. Hunt's "Quarterly" is the conservative, tory journal *The Quarterly Review*. The slogan chanted by the biblical mob might be a thrust made at the journal's bigotry or at the recent attacks on Shelley, since *The Quarterly* did not explicitly review *The Liberal*.

¹² King George III (reigned 1760-1820).

¹³ Lord Byron's *The Vision of Judgment*, published in the first issue of *The Liberal*, is a satirical poem depicting a dispute in Heaven over the soul of the late king George III.

¹⁴ The poet laureate Robert Southey (1774-1843) appears in a negative light in several of the contributions in *The Liberal*. He was considered a renegade by Leigh Hunt and Lord Byron for renouncing his radical, revolutionary ideals and supporting the Tory establishment (see "The Blues", 8).

¹⁵ The Preface to the *Vision of Judgment* was supposed to appear in the first issue of *The Liberal* but, according to Hunt, John Murray failed to give John Hunt that part of Byron's manuscript, which instead was included in the second edition (January 1823). The Preface was meant to tone down the critique of George III in *The Vision* and direct it at its true target, Robert Southey.

¹⁶ John Samuel Murray (1778-1843) founded *The Quarterly Review* in 1809 with its editor William Gifford. Murray is often associated with Lord Byron, since he published his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and other poetry. Their long friendship gradually deteriorated and collapsed around the time *The Liberal* was published.

¹⁷ The United States War of Independence (1775-83).

¹⁸ William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806), Tory politician and prime minister in the periods 1783-1801 and 1804-6. Arch-rival of Charles James Fox (1749-1806). Among the counterrevolutionary "vices" mentioned by Hunt might be Pitt's conviction – exacerbated in the 1790s by the escalating threat from revolutionary political doctrines – that the privileges and support of the church hierarchy should be safeguarded.

¹⁹ "Prince of Wales" is, and has been since the thirteenth century, the title traditionally given to the male heir apparent to the throne of England, of the United Kingdom, and Great Britain. Hunt refers here to the future George III.

EDITORIAL NOTES

²⁰ James Earl Waldegrave K G, *Memoirs from 1754 to 1758* (London: John Murray, 1821). James Second Earl Waldegrave (1715-63) was confidant of George II, knight of the Garter ("K G"), and governor – *i.e.* tutor, educator – to the future George III. The assessment of character he gave of twenty-one-year-old George in the *Memoirs* (1758) is all but flattering.

²¹ Benjamin Franklin (1706-90), statesman, political philosopher, and one of the Founding Fathers of the United States of America. The War of Independence changed radically and for the worse his opinion of King George III (See *Benjamin Franklin's Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Carl Van Doren (New York: Viking Press, 1945), p. 701).

²² *Letters of Junius* is a series of pseudonymous letters critical of the reign of King George III, written between 1769 and 1772, and published in 1772. Junius is now thought to have been Sir Philip Francis (1740-1818), Whig politician and pamphleteer.

²³ *Gebir* is an anti-monarchic epic poem published anonymously in 1798 by Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864), revised, and published again in English and Latin in 1803. Robert Southey's originally favourable review of *Gebir* surely contrasted, in Hunt's eyes, with his current reactionary nationalism.

²⁴ Reference to Hunt's mother Mary (Shewell) Hunt (1752-1805). Hunt's father Isaac had to flee America due to his loyalist sympathies, and his American property was confiscated. These circumstances caused the "ruin" of the "prospects" of the Hunt family.

²⁵ King George III suffered from recurrent episodes of an unidentified mental illness.

²⁶ Probable reference to news from Spain concerning the *Trienio liberal* (1820-23), the three-year period during which a liberal government ruled Spain under the reinstated 1812 Cádiz Constitution.

²⁷ Robert Stewart (1769-1822), Viscount Castlereagh and Marquess of Londonderry, British statesman and politician. He was hated by Byron, who celebrated his suicide in the "Epigrams on Lord Castlereagh" (*The Liberal*, issue 1, 164) and by Percy Shelley. Leigh Hunt's "*vizor* [outward show] of a statesman" might be a reference to Shelley's *The Mask of Anarchy* (1819): "I met murder on the way — / He had a mask like Castlereagh —" (II). Hunt is possibly welcoming an unidentified speech by George Canning (1770-1827), Castlereagh's successor as leader of the House of Commons.

THE
LIBERAL.

No. III.

THE BLUES,¹
A LITERARY ECLOGUE.*

“Nimium nè crede colori.”—VIRGIL.²

O trust not, ye beautiful creatures, to hue,
Though your *hair* were *as red* as your *stockings are blue*.

ECLOGUE FIRST.

LONDON.—*Before the Door of a Lecture Room.*

Enter TRACY,³ *meeting* INKEL.⁴

INKEL.

YOU'RE too late.

TRACY.

Is it over?

INKEL.

Nor will be this hour.

But the benches are crammed, like a garden in flower,
With the pride of our Belles, who have made it the fashion;
So instead of “beaux arts,” we may say “la *belle* passion”

VOL. II.

B

* Author: Lord Byron / Transcribed by Ilaria Natali; Annotated by Gicomo Ferrari.

For learning, which lately has taken the lead in
The world, and set all the fine gentlemen reading.

TRACY.

I know it too well, and have worn out my patience
With studying to study your new publications.
There's Vamp,⁵ Scamp,⁶ and Mouthy,⁷ and Wordswords and Co.⁸
With their damnable—

INKEL.

Hold, my good friend, do you know
Whom you speak to?

TRACY.

Right well, boy, and so does "the Row:"⁹
You're an author—a poet—

INKEL.

And think you that I
Can stand tamely in silence, to hear you decry
The Muses?

TRACY.

Excuse me; I meant no offence
To the Nine; though the number who make some pretence
To their favours is such—but the subject to drop,
I am just piping hot from a publisher's shop
(Next door to the pastry-cook's; so that when I
Cannot find the new volume I wanted to buy
On the bibliopole's shelves, it is only two paces,
As one finds every author in one of those places)¹⁰
Where I just had been skimming a charming critique,
So studded with wit, and so sprinkled with Greek!
Where your friend—you know who—has just got such a
threshing,
That it is, as the phrase goes, extremely "*refreshing*."
What a beautiful word!

INKEL.

Very true; 'tis so soft
And so cooling—they use it a little too oft;
And the papers have got it at last—but no matter.
So they've cut up our friend then?¹¹

TRACY.

Not left him a tatter—
Not a rag of his present or past reputation,
Which they call a disgrace to the age and the nation.

INKEL.

I'm sorry to hear this; for friendship, you know—
Our poor friend!—but I thought it would terminate so.
Our friendship is such, I'll read nothing to shock it.
You don't happen to have the Review¹² in your pocket?

TRACY.

No; I left a round dozen of authors and others
(Very sorry, no doubt, since the cause is a brother's)
All scrambling and jostling, like so many imps,
And on fire with impatience to get the next glimpse.

INKEL.

Let us join them.

TRACY.

What, won't you return to the lecture?

INKEL.

Why, the place is so crammed, there's not room for a spectre.
Besides, our friend Scamp is to-day so absurd—

TRACY.

How can you know that till you hear him?

INKEL.

I heard
Quite enough; and to tell you the truth, my retreat
Was from his vile nonsense, no less than the heat.

TRACY.

I have had no great loss then?

INKEL.

Loss!—such a palaver!¹³

I'd inoculate sooner my wife with the slaver
Of a dog when gone rabid, than listen two hours
To the torrent of trash which around him he pours,
Pumped up with such effort, disgorged with such labour,
That—come—do not make me speak ill of one's neighbour.

TRACY.

I make you!

INKEL.

Yes, you! I said nothing until
You compelled me, by speaking the truth——

TRACY.

To speak ill?

Is that your deduction?

INKEL.

When speaking of Scamp ill,
I certainly *follow*, *not set* an example.
The fellow's a fool, an impostor, a zany.

TRACY.

And the crowd of to-day shows that one fool makes many.
But we two will be wise.

INKEL.

Pray, then, let us retire.

TRACY.

I would, but——

INKEL.

There must be attraction much higher
Than Scamp, or the Jews'-harp he nicknames his lyre,
To call *you* to this hot-bed.

TRACY.

I own it—'tis true—

A fair lady——

INKEL.

A spinster?

TRACY.

Miss Lilac!¹⁴

INKEL.

The Blue!

The heiress?

TRACY.

The angel!

INKEL.

The devil! why, man!

Pray, get out of this hobble as fast as you can.

You wed with Miss Lilac! 'twould be your perdition:

She's a poet, a chemist, a mathematician.

TRACY.

I say she's an angel.

INKEL.

Say rather an *angle*.

If you and she marry, you'll certainly wrangle.

I say she's a Blue, man, as blue as the ether.

TRACY.

And is that any cause for not coming together?

INKEL.

Humph! I can't say I know any happy alliance

Which has lately sprung up from a wedlock with science.

She's so learned in all things, and fond of concerning

Herself in all matters connected with learning,

That——

TRACY.

What?

INKEL.

I perhaps may as well hold my tongue;
But there's five hundred people can tell you you're wrong.

TRACY.

You forget Lady Lilac's as rich as a Jew.¹⁵

INKEL.

Is it Miss, or the cash of mamma, you pursue?

TRACY.

Why, Jack, I'll be frank with you—something of both.
The girl's a fine girl.

INKEL.

And you feel nothing loth
To her good lady mother's reversion;¹⁶ and yet
Her life is as good as your own, I will bet.

TRACY.

Let her live; and, as long as she likes, I demand
Nothing more than the heart of her daughter and hand.

INKEL.

Why, that heart's in the inkstand—that hand on the pen.

TRACY.

Apropos—Will you write me a song now and then?

INKEL.

To what purpose?

TRACY.

You know, my dear friend, that in prose
My talent is decent, as far as it goes;
But in rhyme——

INKEL.

You're a terrible stick, to be sure.

TRACY.

I own it; and yet, in these times, there's no lure
For the heart of the fair like a stanza or two;
And so, as I can't, will you furnish a few?

INKEL.

In your name?

TRACY.

In my name. I will copy them out,
To slip into her hand at the very next rout.

INKEL.

Are you so far advanced as to hazard this?

TRACY.

Why,
Do you think me subdued by a Blue-stocking's eye,
So far as to tremble to tell her in rhyme
What I've told her in prose, at the least, as sublime?

INKEL.

As sublime! If it be so, no need of my Muse.

TRACY.

But consider, dear Inkel, she's one of the "Blues."

INKEL.

As sublime!—Mr. Tracy—I've nothing to say.
Stick to prose—As sublime!!—but I wish you good day.

TRACY.

Nay, stay, my dear fellow—consider— I'm wrong;
I own it; but, prithee, compose me the song.

INKEL.

As sublime!!

TRACY.

I but used the expression in haste.

INKEL.

That may be, Mr. Tracy, but shows damned bad taste,

TRACY.

I own it—I know it—acknowledge it—what
Can I say to you more?

INKEL.

I see what you'd be at:

You disparage my parts with insidious abuse,
Till you think you can turn them best to your own use.

TRACY.

And is that not a sign I respect them?

INKEL.

Why that

To be sure makes a difference.

TRACY.

I know what is what:

And you, who're a man of the gay world, no less
Than a poet of t'other, may easily guess
That I never could mean, by a word, to offend
A genius like you, and moreover my friend.

INKEL.

No doubt; you by this time should know what is due
To a man of——but come——let us shake hands.

TRACY.

You knew,

And you *know*, my dear fellow, how heartily I,
Whatever you publish, am ready to buy.

INKEL.

That's my bookseller's business; I care not for sale;
Indeed the best poems at first rather fail.
There were Renegade's epics,¹⁷ and Botherby's plays,¹⁸
And my own grand romance——

TRACY.

Had its full share of praise.

I myself saw it puffed in the "Old Girl's Review."¹⁹

INKEL.

What Review?

TRACY.

'Tis the English "Journal de Trevoux;"²⁰

A clerical work of our Jesuits at home.²¹
Have you never yet seen it?

INKEL.

That pleasure's to come.

TRACY.

Make haste then.

INKEL.

Why so?

TRACY.

I have heard people say,
That it threatened to give up the *ghost* tother day.

INKEL.

Well, that is a sign of some *spirit*.

TRACY.

No doubt.

Shall you be at the Countess of Fiddlecome's rout?²²

INKEL.

I've a card, and shall go; but at present, as soon
As friend Scamp shall be pleased to step down from the
moon

(Where he seems to be soaring in search of his wits)
And an interval grants from his lecturing fits,
I'm engaged to the Lady Bluebottle's²³ collation,
To partake of a luncheon and learn'd conversation:
'Tis a sort of re-union for Scamp, on the days
Of his lecture, to treat him with cold tongue and praise.
And I own, for my own part, that 'tis not unpleasant.
Will you go? There's Miss Lilac will also be present.

TRACY.

That "metal's attractive."²⁴

INKEL.

No doubt—to the pocket.

TRACY.

You should rather encourage my passion than shock it.
But let us proceed; for I think, by the hum——

INKEL.

Very true; let us go, then, before they can come,
Or else we'll be kept here an hour at their levy,
On the rack of cross questions, by all the blue bevy.²⁵
Hark! Zounds, they'll be on us; I know by the drone
Of old Botherby's spouting, ex-cathedrâ tone.
Aye! there he is at it. Poor Scamp! better join
Your friends, or he'll pay you back in your own coin.

TRACY.

All fair; 'tis but lecture for lecture.

INKEL.

That's clear.

But for God's sake let's go, or the bore will be here.

Come, come: nay, I'm off.

[Exit INKEL.]

TRACY.

You are right, and I'll follow;

'Tis high time for a "*Sic me servavit Apollo*."²⁶

And yet we shall have the whole crew on our kibes,²⁷

Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes,

All flocking to moisten their exquisite throttles

With a glass of Madeira²⁸ at Lady Bluebottle's.

[Exit TRACY.]

End of Eclogue First.

ECLOGUE SECOND.

*An Apartment in the House of LADY BLUEBOTTLE.—A Table
prepared.*

SIR RICHARD BLUEBOTTLE²⁹ *solus*.

Was there ever a man who was married so sorry?
 Like a fool, I must needs do the thing in a hurry.
 My life is reversed, and my quiet destroyed;
 My days, which once pass'd in so gentle a void,
 Must now, every hour of the twelve, be employed;
 The twelve, do I say? of the whole twenty-four,
 Is there one which I dare call my own any more?
 What with driving, and visiting, dancing, and dining,
 What with learning, and teaching, and scribbling, and
 shining,
 In science and art, I'll be curst if I know
 Myself from my wife; for although we are two,
 Yet she somehow contrives that all things shall be done
 In a style which proclaims us eternally one.
 But the thing of all things which distresses me more
 Than the bills of the week (though they trouble me sore)
 Is the numerous, humourous, back-biting crew
 Of scribblers, wits, lecturers, white, black, and blue,
 Who are brought to my house as an inn, to my cost
 (For the bill here, it seems, is defrayed by the host)
 No pleasure! no leisure! no thought for my pains,
 But to hear a vile jargon which addles my brains;

A smatter and chatter, gleaned out of reviews,
 By the rag, tag, and bobtail, of those they call "Blues;"
 A rabble who know not——But soft, here they come!
 Would to God I were deaf! as I'm not, I'll be dumb.

Enter LADY BLUEBOTTLE,³⁰ MISS LILAC, LADY BLUE-
 MOUNT,³¹ MR. BOTHERBY, INKEL, TRACY, MISS MA-
 ZARINE,³² *and others, with* SCAMP *the Lecturer, &c. &c.*

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Ah! Sir Richard, good morning; I've brought you some
 friends.

SIR RICHARD *bows, and afterwards aside.*

If friends, they're the first.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

But the luncheon attends.

I pray ye be seated, "*sans ceremonie*."

Mr. Scamp, you're fatigued; take your chair there, next me.
[They all sit.]

SIR RICHARD, *aside.*

If he does, his fatigue is to come.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Mr. Tracy—

Lady Bluemount—Miss Lilac—be pleased, pray, to place ye;
 And you, Mr. Botherby—

BOTHERBY.

Oh, my dear Lady,

I obey.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Mr. Inkel, I ought to upbraid ye;
 You were not at the lecture.

INKEL.

Excuse me, I was;

But the heat forced me out in the best part—alas!
And when——

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

To be sure it was broiling; but then
You have lost such a lecture!

BOTHERBY.

The best of the ten.

TRACY.

How can you know that? there are two more.

BOTHERBY.

Because

I defy him to beat this day's wondrous applause.
The very walls shook.

INKEL.

Oh, if that be the test,
I allow our friend Scamp has this day done his best.
Miss Lilac, permit me to help you?—a wing?

MISS LILAC.

No more, Sir, I thank you. Who lectures next Spring?

BOTHERBY.

Dick Dunder.³³

INKEL.

That is, if he lives.

MISS LILAC.

And why not?

INKEL.

No reason whatever, save that he's a sot.
Lady Bluemount! a glass of Madeira?

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

With pleasure.

INKEL.

How does your friend Wordswords, that Windermere³⁴ treasure?

Does he stick to his lakes, like the leeches he sings,
And their gatherers, as Homer³⁵ sung warriors and kings?

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He has just got a place.

INKEL.

As a footman?

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

For shame!

Nor profane with your sneers so poetic a name.

INKEL.

Nay, I meant him no evil, but pitied his master;
For the poet of pedlars 'twere, sure, no disaster
To wear a new livery; the more, as 'tis not
The first time he has turned both his creed and his coat.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

For shame! I repeat. If Sir George³⁶ could but hear——

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Never mind our friend Inkel; we all know, my dear,
'Tis his way.

SIR RICHARD.

But this place——

INKEL.

Is perhaps like friend Scamp's,

A lecturer's.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Excuse me—'tis one in "the Stamps:"

He is made a Collector.³⁷

TRACY.

Collector!

SIR RICHARD.

How?

MISS LILAC.

What?

INKEL.

I shall think of him oft when I buy a new hat;
There his works will appear——³⁸

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir, they reach to the Ganges.

INKEL.

I shan't go so far—I can have them at Grange's.*

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Oh fie!

MISS LILAC.

And for shame!

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

You're too bad.

BOTHERBY.

Very good!

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

How good?

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He means nought—'tis his phrase.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

He grows rude.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He means nothing; nay, ask him.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Pray, Sir! did you mean

What you say?

INKEL.

Never mind if he did; 'twill be seen
That whatever he means won't alloy what he says.

BOTHERBY.

Sir!

*Grange is or was a famous pastry-cook and fruiterer in Piccadilly.³⁹

INKEL.

Pray be content with your portion of praise;
'Twas in your defence.

BOTHERBY.

If you please, with submission,
I can make out my own.

INKEL.

It would be your perdition.
While you live, my dear Botherby, never defend
Yourself or your works; but leave both to a friend.
Apropos—Is your play then accepted at last?⁴⁰

BOTHERBY.

At last?

INKEL.

Why I thought—that's to say—there had past
A few Green-room⁴¹ whispers, which hinted—you know
That the taste of the actors at best is so so.

BOTHERBY.

Sir, the Green-room's in raptures, and so's the Committee.⁴²

INKEL.

Aye—yours are the plays for exciting our “pity
And fear,” as the Greek says: for “purging the mind,”⁴³
I doubt if you'll leave us an equal behind.

BOTHERBY.

I have written the prologue, and meant to have prayed
For a spice of your wit in an epilogue's aid.

INKEL.

Well, time enough yet, when the play's to be played.
Is it cast yet?

BOTHERBY.

The actors are fighting for parts,
As is usual in that most litigious of arts.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

We'll all make a party, and go the *first* night.

TRACY.

And you promised the epilogue, Inkel.

INKEL.

Not quite.

However, to save my friend, Botherby, trouble,
I'll do what I can, though my pains must be double,

TRACY.

Why so?

INKEL.

To do justice to what goes before.

BOTHERBY.

Sir, I'm happy to say, I've no fears on that score.
Your parts, Mr. Inkel, are——

INKEL.

Never mind *mine*;

Stick to those of your play, which is quite your own line.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

You're a fugitive writer, I think, Sir, of rhymes?⁴⁴

INKEL.

Yes, Ma'am; and a fugitive reader sometimes.
On Wordswords, for instance, I seldom alight,
Or on Mouthey,⁴⁵ his friend, without taking to flight.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir, your taste is too common; but time and posterity
Will right these great men, and this age's severity
Become its reproach.

INKEL.

I've no sort of objection,
So I am not of the party to take the infection.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Perhaps you have doubts that they ever will *take*?

INKEL.

Not at all; on the contrary, those of the lake⁴⁶
Have taken already, and still will continue
To take—what they can, from a groat to a guinea,⁴⁷
Of pension or place;—but the subject's a bore.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Well, Sir, the time's coming.

INKEL.

Scamp! don't you feel sore?

What say you to this?

SCAMP.

They have merit, I own;
Though their system's absurdity keeps it unknown.

INKEL.

Then why not unearth it in one of your lectures!

SCAMP.

It is only time past which comes under my strictures.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Come, a truce with all tartness:—the joy of my heart
Is to see Nature's triumph o'er all that is art.
Wild Nature!—Grand Shakspeare!

BOTHERBY.

And down Aristotle!⁴⁸

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir George thinks exactly with Lady Bluebottle;
And my Lord Seventy-four,⁴⁹ who protects our dear Bard,⁵⁰
And who gave him his place, has the greatest regard
For the poet, who, singing of pedlars and asses,
Has found out the way to dispense with Parnassus.⁵¹

TRACY.

And you, Scamp!—

SCAMP.

I needs must confess, I'm embarrassed.

INKEL.

Don't call upon Scamp, who's already so harassed
With old *schools*, and new *schools*, and no *schools*, and all *schools*.

TRACY.

Well, one thing is certain, that *some* must be fools.
I should like to know who.

INKEL.

And I should not be sorry
To know who are *not*:—it would save us some worry.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

A truce with remark, and let nothing controul
This "feast of our reason, and flow of the soul."⁵²
Oh, my dear Mr. Botherby! sympathise!—I
Now feel such a rapture, I'm ready to fly,
I feel so elastic,—"*so buoyant—so buoyant!*"*

INKEL.

Tracy! open the window.

TRACY.

I wish her much joy on't.

BOTHERBY.

For God's sake, my Lady Bluebottle, check not
This gentle emotion, so seldom our lot
Upon earth. Give it way; 'tis an impulse which lifts
Our spirits from earth; the sublimest of gifts;
For which poor Prometheus was chain'd to his mountain.⁵³
'Tis the source of all sentiment—feeling's true fountain:
'Tis the Vision of Heaven upon Earth: 'tis the gas
Of the soul: 'tis the seizing of shades as they pass,
And making them substance: 'tis something divine:—

INKEL.

Shall I help you, my friend, to a little more wine?

* Fact from life, with the *words*.

BOTHERBY.

I thank you. Not any more, Sir, till I dine.

INKEL.

Apropos!—Do you dine with Sir Humphrey⁵⁴ to day?

TRACY.

I should think with *Duke* Humphrey⁵⁵ was more in your way.

INKEL.

It might be of yore; but we authors now look
To the knight, as a landlord, much more than the Duke.
The truth is—each writer now quite at his ease is,
And (except with his publisher) dines where he pleases.
But 'tis now nearly five, and I must to the Park.

TRACY.

And I'll take a turn with you there till 'tis dark.
And you, Scamp—

SCAMP.

Excuse me; I must to my notes,
For my lecture next week.

INKEL.

He must mind whom he quotes
Out of "Elegant Extracts."⁵⁶

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Well, now we break up;
But remember Miss Diddle⁵⁷ invites us to sup.

INKEL.

Then at two hours past midnight we all meet again,
For the sciences, sandwiches, hock and champagne!

TRACY.

And the sweet lobster sallad!

BOTHERBY.

I honour that meal;
For 'tis then that our feelings most genuinely—feel.

INKEL.

True; feeling is truest *then*, far beyond question;
I wish to the gods 'twas the same with digestion!

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Pshaw!—never mind that; for one moment of feeling
Is worth—God knows what.

INKEL.

'Tis at least worth concealing
For itself, or what follows——But here comes your carriage.

SIR RICHARD (*aside*).

I wish all these people were d—d⁵⁸ with *my* marriage!
[*Exeunt.*

End of Eclogue the Second.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Short for “bluestocking”, a derogatory term for educated, intellectual women, originally the Bluestocking Ladies led by Elizabeth Montagu (1718-1800), the “Queen of the Blues”. Although the motive or occasion of this dramatic satire is unknown, here Byron mocks his female readers of the Regency period and their intellectual coteries: Tracy’s “Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes”. The title, the following quotation and the epigram play on the same theme.

² Quotation from *The Eclogues* (2:17) by the Latin poet Virgil, Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19 BC). In translation, “Trust not too much to complexion”, or colour.

³ The characters of *The Blues* stand for real people. Tracy is possibly Thomas Moore (1779-1852), poet and Byron’s friend, editor and biographer.

⁴ Inkel is a mask for Lord Byron.

⁵ Vamp is unidentified; he might be a dishonest editor from Thomas Love Peacock’s novel *Melincourt* (1817), where he tampers with political pamphlets against corruption.

⁶ Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834, see n. 8 below), or William Hazlitt (1778-1830), essayist, literary critic and philosopher.

⁷ Mouthy is the poet laureate Robert Southey (1774-1843).

⁸ Wordswords is William Wordsworth (1770-1850), English Romantic poet, author, with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, of the *Lyrical Ballads* (first ed. 1798).

⁹ The “Row” is Paternoster Row in the City of London, a hotspot of the publishing trade.

¹⁰ Unsold books were facetiously said to end up as wrapping for pies or as stuffing for hat-boxes.

¹¹ The identity of “our friend” is unclear.

¹² *The Quarterly Review* (see n. 16 “Advertisement to the Second Volume”).

¹³ A tedious or unnecessarily drawn-out process.

¹⁴ Anne Isabella Noel Byron, Lady Byron (1792-1860).

¹⁵ Lady Lilac is Byron’s detested mother-in-law, Lady Noel (1751-1822).

¹⁶ A sum payable upon a person’s death, a life insurance payment.

¹⁷ Robert Southey’s long poems, such as *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) and *Madoc* (1805).

¹⁸ Botherby is William Sotheby’s (1757-1833). His tragedies, such as *Orestes* (1801) and *Ivan* (1816), did not enjoy much success.

¹⁹ Reference to the *British Review and London Critical Journal* (1811-25). See *Don Juan* I.209 (1819), where Byron called *The British Review* “My Grandmother’s Review”. See also Byron’s “Letter to the Editor Of ‘My Grandmother’s Review’ ” in *The Liberal*, issue 1, 41-50.

²⁰ The *Journal de Trévoux* was a diffused and influential literary periodical published monthly in France from 1701 to 1782.

²¹ The *Journal de Trévoux* was edited by the members of the Society of Jesus, hence the dig aimed at the *British Review*.

²² Unidentified reference. “Fiddlecome” is archaic for “nonsensical” or “silly”.

²³ Lady Bluebottle and Sir Richard Bluebottles are Elizabeth Vassall Fox, Baroness Holland (1771-1845) and Henry Richard Vassall-Fox, 3rd Baron Holland (1773-1840).

²⁴ Reference to *Hamlet*, “No, good mother. Here’s metal more attractive” (3.2.116), where Hamlet would rather watch the play sitting next to Ophelia than to Queen Gertrude. The lineation adopted in this and the following notes refer to the Folger open-source texts (<https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/>).

²⁵ “The proper term for a company of maidens or ladies, of roes, of quails, or of larks”, *OED*, “bevy (n.)”. “Blue bevy” exacerbates the sexism intrinsic in the definition-group.

²⁶ Quotation from *Satires* (1:9, 78) by the Latin poet Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, 65-8 BC). In translation, “Thus saved me Apollo”, the guardian deity of poets.

²⁷ “A chapped or ulcerated chilblain, esp. one on the heel”, *OED*, “kibe (n.)”; mistaken – or used as metonym – for “heel”, is probably a reference to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: “the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe” (V.i.145).

²⁸ The Madeira is a fortified wine produced on the island of Madeira, occupied by British troops during the Peninsular War (1807-14).

²⁹ See n. 23 above.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ³⁰ See n. 23 above.
- ³¹ Lady Bluemount is Lady Margaret Beaumont (1756-1829).
- ³² Byron names the character after the adjective “mazarine”, *i.e.*, of a rich deep blue colour, to mock the bluestockings.
- ³³ Dick Dunder is Sir James Mackintosh (1765-1832), political writer and politician. See *Don Juan* XIII, 87, 1, where he is “Dick Dubious, the Metaphysician”.
- ³⁴ William “Wordswords” Wordsworth mentions Windermere, one of the lakes in the Lake District, in *The Prelude* (1850). In 1813 he moved permanently to the Rydal Mount house, near Grasmere and with a view over Windermere.
- ³⁵ Ancient Greek poet (8th century BC), credited as the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.
- ³⁶ Sir George Howland Beaumont (1753-1827), art patron and painter.
- ³⁷ Forced by financial worries, in 1813 William Wordsworth accepted an official position as distributor of stamps for Westmorland and the Penrith area of Cumberland.
- ³⁸ See n. 10 above.
- ³⁹ Piccadilly is one of the main roads in London. Around the years of “The Blues”, ironically, Piccadilly was a favoured place for both booksellers, and inns and bars. “Grange’s” was James Grange’s confectionery, No. 178, Piccadilly.
- ⁴⁰ In 1816 Byron persuaded the management of Drury Lane to accept Sotheby’s *Ivan*, but after three or four rehearsals it was withdrawn. At the time of “The Blues”, the friendship between the two had ended.
- ⁴¹ “A room in a theatre or studio in which performers can relax when they are off stage. Also in extended use: the people who use such a room”, *OED*, “green room (*n.*)”.
- ⁴² The Management Committee of Drury Lane, of which Byron was part.
- ⁴³ References to Aristotle’s discussion of catharsis in his *Poetics*.
- ⁴⁴ Reference to Byron’s first volume of poems, *Fugitive Pieces*, published when he was seventeen and soon suppressed.
- ⁴⁵ Different spelling of Mouthy, see n. 7 above.
- ⁴⁶ The Lakist poets, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey.
- ⁴⁷ The groat, or fourpence, was a denomination of coin worth 1/60 of one pound; figuratively, a very small amount; the Guinea was a gold coin, last coined in 1813.
- ⁴⁸ Commonplace juxtaposition of William Shakespeare’s unorthodoxy and Aristotle’s dramatic theory exposed in the aforementioned *Poetics*.
- ⁴⁹ “Lord Seventy-four” is not William Lord Lowther, earl of Lonsdale (1757-1844), landowner and Wordsworth’s patron, but Sir James Lowther, earl of Lonsdale (1736-1802). In 1782, Sir James offered to build and present to the Government a 74-gun ship to continue the war against France. The project failed due to the troubles that Sir James caused the shipbuilders, and he barely escaped with his life when he ventured to raise men in his estate to man the ship. The story appeared on *Gentleman’s Magazine* (June 1802), where Byron must have read it (see Hugh Owen, *The Lowther Family*, Chichester: Phillimore, 1990, 288).
- ⁵⁰ William Shakespeare’s identification with the Bard dates back to 1769, when the actor David Garrick praised Stratford upon Avon as the birthplace of the “matchless Bard”.
- ⁵¹ The mythological Mount Parnassus where Apollo dwells, surrounded by the Muses.
- ⁵² Alexander Pope, “The feast of reason and the flow of soul” (1733-38, *Imitations of Horace*, “First Satire”, 128).
- ⁵³ In Greek mythology, Zeus chained Prometheus to a rock on the Caucasus for stealing fire from the Olympus and giving it to man.
- ⁵⁴ Sir Humphrey Davy (1778-1829), chemist and inventor, friend to the Lake poets.
- ⁵⁵ “To dine with *Duke Humphrey*” means to go without dinner. The phrase refers to the story of a man who, while visiting the tomb of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, was locked in the abbey—and thus missed dinner (*The Free Dictionary*).
- ⁵⁶ A popular anthology of prose writings by well-known authors, first published in 1783.

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⁵⁷ Possibly Lydia White (1760-1827), a woman of wit and talent and a social celebrity in her day, famous for hosting dinners and events.

⁵⁸ “damned”.

MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH POETS.

My father was a Dissenting Minister¹ at W—m in Shropshire;² and in the year 1798 (the figures that compose that date are to me like the “dreaded name of Demogorgon”)³ Mr. Coleridge came to Shrewsbury, to succeed Mr. Rowe in the spiritual charge of a Unitarian Congregation⁴ there. He did not come till late on the Saturday afternoon before he was to preach; and Mr. Rowe, who himself went down to the coach in a state of anxiety and expectation, to look for the arrival of his successor, could find no one at all answering the description but a round-faced man in a short black coat (like a shooting-jacket) which hardly seemed to have been made for him, but who seemed to be talking at a great rate to his fellow-passengers. Mr. Rowe had scarce returned to give an account of his disappointment, when the round-faced man in black entered, and dissipated all doubts on the subject, by beginning to talk. He did not cease while he staid; nor has he since, that I know of. He held the good town of Shrewsbury in delightful suspense for three weeks that he remained there, “fluttering the *proud Salopians* like an eagle in a dove-cote;”⁵ and the Welch mountains that skirt the horizon with their tempestuous confusion,⁶ agree to have heard no such mystic sounds since the days of

“High-born Hoel’s harp or soft Llewellyn’s lay!”⁷

As we passed along between W—m and Shrewsbury, and I eyed their blue tops seen through the wintry branches, or

* Author: William Hazlitt / Transcribed by Ilaria Natali; Annotated by Giacomo Ferrari.

the red rustling leaves of the sturdy oak-trees by the road-side, a sound was in my ears as of a Siren's song; I was stunned, startled with it, as from deep sleep; but I had no notion then that I should ever be able to express my admiration to others in motley imagery or quaint allusion, till the light of his genius shone into my soul, like the sun's rays glittering in the puddles of the road. I was at that time dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the way-side, crushed, bleeding, lifeless; but now, bursting from the deadly bands that "bound them,

"With Styx nine times round them,"⁸

my ideas float on winged words, and as they expand their plumes, catch the golden light of other years. My soul has indeed remained in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unsatisfied; my heart, shut up in the prison-house of this rude clay, has never found, nor will it ever find, a heart to speak to; but that my understanding also did not remain dumb and brutish, or at length found a language to express itself, I owe to Coleridge. But this is not to my purpose.

My father lived ten miles from Shrewsbury, and was in the habit of exchanging visits with Mr Rowe, and with Mr. Jenkins of Whitchurch⁹ (nine miles farther on) according to the custom of Dissenting Ministers in each other's neighbourhood. A line of communication is thus established, by which the flame of civil and religious liberty is kept alive, and nourishes its smouldering fire unquenchable, like the fires in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, placed at different stations, that waited for ten long years to announce with their blazing pyramids the destruction of Troy.¹⁰ Coleridge had agreed to come over to see my father, according to the courtesy of the

country, as Mr. Rowe's probable successor; but in the mean time I had gone to hear him preach the Sunday after his arrival. A poet and a philosopher getting up into a Unitarian pulpit to preach the Gospel, was a romance in these degenerate days, a sort of revival of the primitive spirit of Christianity, which was not to be resisted.

It was in January, 1798, that I rose one morning before day-light, to walk ten miles in the mud, and went to hear this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798.—*Il y a des impressions que ni le tems ni les circonstances peuvent effacer. Dussé-je vivre des siècles entiers, le doux tems de ma jeunesse ne peut renaitre pour moi, ni s'effacer jamais dans ma mémoire.*¹¹ When I got there, the organ was playing the 100th psalm, and, when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, "And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF, ALONE."¹² As he gave out this text, his voice "rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes,"¹³ and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The idea of St. John came into mind, "of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose food was locusts and wild honey."¹⁴ The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon peace and war; upon church and state—not their alliance, but their separation—on the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had "inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore." He made

a poetical and pastoral excursion,—and to shew the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, “as though he should never be old,” and the same poor country-lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an alehouse, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long cue at his back,¹⁵ and tricked out in the loathsome finery of the profession of blood.

“Such were the notes our once-lov’d poet sung.”¹⁶

And for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and Philosophy had met together, Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still labouring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the *good cause*; and the cold dank drops of dew that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle, had something genial and refreshing in them; for there was a spirit of hope and youth in all nature, that turned every thing into good. The face of nature had not then the brand of JUS DIVINUM¹⁷ on it:

“Like to that sanguine flower inscrib’d with woe.”¹⁸

On the Tuesday following, the half-inspired speaker came. I was called down into the room where he was, and went half-hoping, half-afraid. He received me very graciously, and I listened for a long time without uttering a word. I did not suffer in his opinion by my silence. “For those two hours,” he afterwards was pleased to say, “he was conversing with W.H.’s forehead!”¹⁹ His appearance was different from what I had anticipated from seeing him before. At a

distance, and in the dim light of the chapel, there was to me a strange wildness in his aspect, a dusky obscurity, and I thought him pitted with the small-pox. His complexion was at that time clear, and even bright—

“As are the children of yon azure sheen.”²⁰

His forehead was broad and high, light as if built of ivory, with large projecting eyebrows, and his eyes rolling beneath them like a sea with darkened lustre. “A certain tender bloom his face o’erspread,”²¹ a purple tinge as we see it in the pale thoughtful complexions of the Spanish portrait-painters, Murillo and Velasquez.²² His mouth was gross, voluptuous, open, eloquent; his chin good-humoured and round; but his nose, the rudder of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing-like what he has done. It might seem that the genius of his face as from a height surveyed and projected him (with sufficient capacity and huge aspiration) into the world unknown of thought and imagination, with nothing to support or guide his veering purpose, as if Columbus had launched his adventurous course for the New World in a scallop, without oars or compass. So at least I comment on it after the event. Coleridge in his person was rather above the common size, inclining to the corpulent, or like Lord Hamlet, “somewhat fat and porsy.”²³ His hair (now, alas! grey) was then black and glossy as the raven’s, and fell in smooth masses over his forehead. This long pendulous hair is peculiar to enthusiasts, to those whose minds tend heavenward; and is traditionally inseparable (though of a different colour) from the pictures of Christ. It ought to belong, as a character, to all who preach *Christ crucified*, and Coleridge was at that time one of those!

It was curious to observe the contrast between him and

my father, who was a veteran in the cause, and then declining into the vale of years. He had been a poor Irish lad, carefully brought up by his parents, and sent to the University of Glasgow (where he studied under Adam Smith)²⁴ to prepare him for his future destination. It was his mother's proudest wish to see her son a Dissenting Minister. So if we look back to past generations (as far as eye can reach) we see the same hopes, fears, wishes, followed by the same disappointments, throbbing in the human heart; and so we may see them (if we look forward) rising up for ever, and disappearing, like vapourish bubbles, in the human breast! After being tossed about from congregation to congregation in the heats of the Unitarian controversy, and squabbles about the American war, he had been relegated to an obscure village, where he was to spend the last thirty years of his life, far from the only converse that he loved, the talk about disputed texts of Scripture and the cause of civil and religious liberty. Here he passed his days, repining but resigned, in the study of the Bible, and the perusal of the Commentators,—huge folios, not easily got through, one of which would outlast a winter! Why did he pore on these from morn to night (with the exception of a walk in the fields or a turn in the garden to gather brocoli-plants or kidney-beans of his own rearing, with no small degree of pride and pleasure)?—Here were “no figures nor no fantasies,”²⁵—neither poetry nor philosophy—nothing to dazzle, nothing to excite modern curiosity; but to his lack-lustre eyes there appeared, within the pages of the ponderous, unwieldy, neglected tomes, the sacred name of JEHOVAH in Hebrew capitals: pressed down by the weight of the style, worn to the last fading thinness of the understanding, there were glimpses, glimmering notions of the patriarchal wanderings, with palm-trees hovering in the horizon, and processions of camels at

the distance of three thousand years; there was Moses with the Burning Bush, the number of the Twelve Tribes, types, shadows, glosses on the law and the prophets; there were discussions (dull enough) on the age of Methuselah, a mighty speculation! there were outlines, rude guesses at the shape of Noah's Ark and of the riches of Solomon's Temple;²⁶ questions as to the date of the creation, predictions of the end of all things; the great lapses of time, the strange mutations of the globe were unfolded with the voluminous leaf, as it turned over; and though the soul might slumber with an hieroglyphic veil of inscrutable mysteries drawn over it, yet it was in a slumber ill-exchanged for all the sharpened realities of sense, wit, fancy, or reason. My father's life was comparatively a dream; but it was a dream of infinity and eternity, of death, the resurrection, and a judgment to come!

No two individuals were ever more unlike than were the host and his guest. A poet was to my father a sort of non-descript: yet whatever added grace to the Unitarian cause was to him welcome. He could hardly have been more surprised or pleased, if our visitor had worn wings. Indeed, his thoughts had wings; and as the silken sounds rustled round our little wainscoted parlour, my father threw back his spectacles over his forehead, his white hairs mixing with its sanguine hue; and a smile of delight beamed across his rugged cordial face, to think that Truth had found a new ally in Fancy!* Besides, Coleridge seemed to take considerable notice of me, and that of itself was enough. He talked very

* My father was one of those who mistook his talent after all. He used to be very much dissatisfied that I preferred his Letters to his Sermons. The last were forced and dry; the first came naturally from him. For ease, half-plays on words, and a supine, monkish, indolent pleasantry, I have never seen them equalled.

familiarly, but agreeably, and glanced over a variety of subjects. At dinner-time he grew more animated, and dilated in a very edifying manner on Mary Wolstonecraft²⁷ and Mackintosh.²⁸ The last, he said, he considered (on my father's speaking of his *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* as a capital performance)²⁹ as a clever scholastic man—a master of the topics,—or as the ready warehouseman of letters, who knew exactly where to lay his hand on what he wanted, though the goods were not his own. He thought him no match for Burke,³⁰ either in style or matter. Burke was a metaphysician, Mackintosh a mere logician. Burke was an orator (almost a poet) who reasoned in figures, because he had an eye for nature: Mackintosh, on the other hand, was a rhetorician, who had only an eye to common-places. On this I ventured to say that I had always entertained a great opinion of Burke, and that (as far as I could find) the speaking of him with contempt might be made the test of a vulgar democratical mind. This was the first observation I ever made to Coleridge, and he said it was a very just and striking one. I remember the leg of Welsh mutton and the turnips on the table that day had the finest flavour imaginable. Coleridge added that Mackintosh and Tom. Wedgwood³¹ (of whom, however, he spoke highly) had expressed a very indifferent opinion of his friend Mr. Wordsworth, on which he remarked to them—"He strides on so far before you, that he dwindles in the distance!" Godwin³² had once boasted to him of having carried on an argument with Mackintosh for three hours with dubious success; Coleridge told him—"If there had been a man of genius in the room, he would have settled the question in five minutes." He asked me if I had ever seen Mary Wolstonecraft, and I said, I had once for a few moments, and that she seemed to me to turn off Godwin's objections to something she advanced with quite a playful, easy air. He

replied, that “this was only one instance of the ascendancy which people of imagination exercised over those of mere intellect.” He did not rate Godwin very high* (this was caprice or prejudice, real or affected) but he had a great idea of Mrs. Wolstonecraft’s powers of conversation, none at all of her talent for book-making. We talked a little about Holcroft.³³ He had been asked if he was not much struck *with* him, and he said, he thought himself in more danger of being struck *by* him. I complained that he would not let me get on at all, for he required a definition of every the commonest word, exclaiming, “What do you mean by a *sensation*, Sir? What do you mean by an *idea*?” This, Coleridge said, was barricading the road to truth:—it was setting up a turnpike-gate at every step we took.³⁴ I forget a great number of things, many more than I remember; but the day passed off pleasantly, and the next morning Mr. Coleridge was to return to Shrewsbury. When I came down to breakfast, I found that he had just received a letter from his friend, T. Wedgwood, making him an offer of £150. a-year if he chose to wave his present pursuit, and devote himself entirely to the study of poetry and philosophy.³⁵ Coleridge seemed to make up his mind to close with this proposal in the act of tying on one of his shoes. It threw an additional damp on his departure. It took the wayward enthusiast quite from us to cast him into Deva’s winding vales,³⁶ or by the shores of old romance.³⁷ Instead of living at ten miles distance, of being the pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Shrewsbury, he was henceforth to inhabit the

* He complained in particular of the presumption of his attempting to establish the future immortality of man, “without” (as he said) “knowing what Death was or what Life was”³⁸—and the tone in which he pronounced these two words seemed to convey a complete image of both.

Hill of Parnassus, to be a Shepherd on the Delectable Mountains.³⁹ Alas! I knew not the way thither, and felt very little gratitude for Mr. Wedgwood's bounty. I was presently relieved from this dilemma; for Mr. Coleridge, asking for a pen and ink, and going to a table to write something on a bit of card, advanced towards me with undulating step, and giving me the precious document, said that that was his address, *Mr. Coleridge, Nether-Stowey, Somersetshire*;⁴⁰ and that he should be glad to see me there in a few weeks' time, and, if I chose, would come half-way to meet me. I was not less surprised than the shepherd-boy (this simile is to be found in *Cassandra*)⁴¹ when he sees a thunder-bolt fall close at his feet. I stammered out my acknowledgments and acceptance of this offer (I thought Mr. Wedgwood's annuity a trifle to it) as well as I could; and this mighty business being settled, the poet-preacher took leave, and I accompanied him six miles on the road. It was a fine morning in the middle of winter, and he talked the whole way. The scholar in Chaucer is described as going

——“Sounding on his way.”⁴²

So Coleridge went on his. In digressing, in dilating, in passing from subject to subject, he appeared to me to float in air, to slide on ice. He told me in confidence (going along) that he should have preached two sermons before he accepted the situation at Shrewsbury, one on Infant Baptism, the other on the Lord's Supper, shewing that he could not administer either, which would have effectually disqualified him for the object in view. I observed that he continually crossed me on the way by shifting from one side of the foot-path to the other. This struck me as an odd movement; but I did not at that time connect it with any instability of purpose or involuntary change of principle, as I have done since. He

seemed unable to keep on in a strait line. He spoke slightly of Hume⁴³ (whose Essay on Miracles⁴⁴ he said was stolen from an objection started in one of South's Sermons⁴⁵—*Credat Judæus Apella!*).⁴⁶ I was not very much pleased at this account of Hume, for I had just been reading, with infinite relish, that completest of all metaphysical *choke-pears*,⁴⁷ his *Treatise on Human Nature*,⁴⁸ to which the *Essays*, in point of scholastic subtlety and close reasoning, are mere elegant trifling, light summer-reading. Coleridge even denied the excellence of Hume's general style, which I think betrayed a want of taste or candour. He however made me amends by the manner in which he spoke of Berkeley.⁴⁹ He dwelt particularly on his *Essay on Vision*⁵⁰ as a masterpiece of analytical reasoning. So it undoubtedly is. He was exceedingly angry with Dr. Johnson⁵¹ for striking the stone with his foot, in allusion to this author's Theory of Matter and Spirit,⁵² and saying, "Thus I confute him, Sir."⁵³ Coleridge drew a parallel (I don't know how he brought about the connection)⁵⁴ between Bishop Berkeley and Tom Paine.⁵⁵ He said the one was an instance of a subtle, the other of an acute mind, than which no two things could be more distinct. The one was a shop-boy's quality, the other the characteristic of a philosopher. He considered Bishop Butler⁵⁶ as a true philosopher, a profound and conscientious thinker, a genuine reader of nature and of his own mind. He did not speak of his *Analogy*, but of his *Sermons at the Rolls' Chapel*,⁵⁷ of which I had never heard. Coleridge somehow always contrived to prefer the *unknown* to the *known*. In this instance he was right. The *Analogy* is a tissue of sophistry, of wire-drawn, theological special-pleading; the *Sermons* (with the Preface to them) are in a fine vein of deep, matured reflection, a candid appeal to our observation of human nature, without pedantry and without bias. I told Coleridge I had written a few remarks, and was

sometimes foolish enough to believe that I had made a discovery on the same subject (the *Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind*)⁵⁸—and I tried to explain my view of it to Coleridge, who listened with great willingness, but I did not succeed in making myself understood. I sat down to the task shortly afterwards for the twentieth time, got new pens and paper, determined to make clear work of it, wrote a few meagre sentences in the skeleton-style of a mathematical demonstration, stopped half-way down the second page; and, after trying in vain to pump up any words, images, notions, apprehensions, facts, or observations, from that gulph of abstraction in which I had plunged myself for four or five years preceding, gave up the attempt as labour in vain, and shed tears of helpless despondency on the blank unfinished paper. I can write fast enough now. Am I better than I was then? Oh no! One truth discovered, one pang of regret at not being able to express it, is better than all the fluency and flippancy in the world. Would that I could go back to what I then was! Why can we not revive past times as we can revisit old places? If I had the quaint Muse of Sir Philip Sidney⁵⁹ to assist me, I would write a *Sonnet to the Road between W—m and Shrewsbury*, and immortalise every step of it by some fond enigmatical conceit. I would swear that the very milestones had ears, and that Harmer-hill⁶⁰ stooped with all its pines, to listen to a poet, as he passed! I remember but one other topic of discourse in this walk. He mentioned Paley,⁶¹ praised the naturalness and clearness of his style, but condemned his sentiments, thought him a mere time-serving casuist, and said that “the fact of his work on Moral and Political Philosophy being made a text-book in our Universities was a disgrace to the national character.” We parted at the six-mile stone; and I returned homeward, pensive but much pleased. I had met with unexpected

notice from a person, whom I believed to have been prejudiced against me. "Kind and affable to me had been his condescension, and should be honoured ever with suitable regard."⁶² He was the first poet I had known, and he certainly answered to that inspired name. I had heard a great deal of his powers of conversation, and was not disappointed. In fact, I never met with any thing at all like them, either before or since. I could easily credit the accounts which were circulated of his holding forth to a large party of ladies and gentlemen, an evening or two before, on the Berkeleian Theory, when he made the whole material universe look like a transparency of fine words; and another story (which I believe he has somewhere told himself)⁶³ of his being asked to a party at Birmingham, of his smoking tobacco and going to sleep after dinner on a sofa, where the company found him to their no small surprise, which was increased to wonder when he started up of a sudden, and rubbing his eyes, looked about him, and launched into a three-hours' description of the third heaven, of which he had had a dream, very different from Mr. Southey's Vision of Judgment, and also from that other Vision of Judgment,⁶⁴ which Mr. Murray, the Secretary of the Bridge-street Junto, has taken into his especial keeping!⁶⁵

On my way back, I had a sound in my ears, it was the voice of Fancy: I had a light before me, it was the face of Poetry. The one still lingers there, the other has not quitted my side! Coleridge in truth met me half-way on the ground of philosophy, or I should not have been won over to his imaginative creed. I had an uneasy, pleasurable sensation all the time, till I was to visit him. During those months the chill breath of winter gave me a welcoming; the vernal air was balm and inspiration to me. The golden sun-sets, the silver star of evening, lighted me on my way to

new hopes and prospects. *I was to visit Coleridge in the Spring.* This circumstance was never absent from my thoughts, and mingled with all my feelings. I wrote to him at the time proposed, and received an answer postponing my intended visit for a week or two, but very cordially urging me to complete my promise then. This delay did not damp, but rather increase my ardour. In the mean time, I went to Llangollen Vale,⁶⁶ by way of initiating myself in the mysteries of natural scenery; and I must say I was enchanted with it. I had been reading Coleridge's description of England, in his fine *Ode on the Departing Year*,⁶⁷ and I applied it, *con amore*,⁶⁸ to the objects before me. That valley was to me (in a manner) the cradle of a new existence: in the river that winds through it,⁶⁹ my spirit was baptised in the waters of Helicon!⁷⁰

I returned home, and soon after set out on my journey with unworn heart and untried feet. My way lay through Worcester and Gloucester, and by Upton, where I thought of Tom Jones and the adventure of the muff.⁷¹ I remember getting completely wet through one day, and stopping at an inn (I think it was at Tewkesbury) where I sat up all night to read Paul and Virginia.⁷² Sweet were the showers in early youth that drenched my body, and sweet the drops of pity that fell upon the books I read! I recollect a remark of Coleridge's upon this very book, that nothing could shew the gross indelicacy of French manners and the entire corruption of their imagination more strongly than the behaviour of the heroine in the last fatal scene, who turns away from a person on board the sinking vessel, that offers to save her life, because he has thrown off his clothes to assist him in swimming. Was this a time to think of such a circumstance? I once hinted to Wordsworth, as we were sailing in his boat on Grasmere lake,⁷³ that I thought he had borrowed

the idea of his *Poems on the Naming of Places*⁷⁴ from the local inscriptions of the same kind in Paul and Virginia. He did not own the obligation, and stated some distinction without a difference, in defence of his claim to originality. Any the slightest variation would be sufficient for this purpose in his mind; for whatever he added or omitted would inevitably be worth all that any one else had done, and contain the marrow of the sentiment.—I was still two days before the time fixed for my arrival, for I had taken care to set out early enough. I stopped these two days at Bridgewater, and when I was tired of sauntering on the banks of its muddy river, returned to the inn, and read *Camilla*.⁷⁵ So have I loitered my life away, reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy; but wanting that, have wanted every thing!

I arrived, and was well received. The country about Nether Stowey is beautiful, green and hilly, and near the sea-shore. I saw it but the other day, after an interval of twenty years, from a hill near Taunton. How was the map of my life spread out before me, as the map of the country lay at my feet! In the afternoon, Coleridge took me over to All-Foxden, a romantic old family-mansion of the St. Aubins,⁷⁶ where Wordsworth lived. It was then in the possession of a friend of the poet's, who gave him the free use of it. Somehow that period (the time just after the French Revolution) was not a time when *nothing was given for nothing*.⁷⁷ The mind opened, and a softness might be perceived coming over the heart of individuals, beneath "the scales that fence" our self-interest.⁷⁸ Wordsworth himself was from home, but his sister kept house, and set before us a frugal repast; and we had free access to her brother's poems, the

Lyrical Ballads,⁷⁹ which were still in manuscript, or in the form of *Sybilline Leaves*.⁸⁰ I dipped into a few of these with great satisfaction, and with the faith of a novice. I slept that night in an old room with blue hangings, and covered with the round-faced family-portraits of the age of George I. and II.⁸¹ and from the wooded declivity of the adjoining park that overlooked my window, at the dawn of day, could

——“hear the loud stag speak.”⁸²

In the outset of life (and particularly at this time I felt it so) our imagination has a body to it. We are in a state between sleeping and waking, and have indistinct but glorious glimpses of strange shapes, and there is always something to come better than what we see. As in our dreams the fullness of the blood gives warmth and reality to the coinage of the brain, so in youth our ideas are clothed, and fed, and pampered with our good spirits; we breathe thick with thoughtless happiness, the weight of future years presses on the strong pulses of the heart, and we repose with undisturbed faith in truth and good. As we advance, we exhaust our fund of enjoyment and of hope. We are no longer wrapped in *lamb's-wool*, lulled in Elysium.⁸³ As we taste the pleasures of life, their spirit evaporates, the sense palls; and nothing is left but the phantoms, the lifeless shadows of what *has been!*

That morning, as soon as breakfast was over, we strolled out into the park, and seating ourselves on the trunk of an old ash-tree that stretched along the ground, Coleridge read aloud with a sonorous and musical voice, the ballad of *Betty Foy*.⁸⁴ I was not critically or sceptically inclined. I saw touches of truth and nature, and took the rest for granted.

But in the *Thorn*, the *Mad Mother*, and the *Complaint of a Poor Indian Woman*,⁸⁵ I felt that deeper power and pathos which have been since acknowledged,

“In spite of pride, in erring reason’s spite,”⁸⁶

as the characteristics of this author; and the sense of a new style and a new spirit in poetry came over me. It had to me something of the effect that arises from the turning up of the fresh soil, or of the first welcome breath of Spring,

“While yet the trembling year is unconfirmed.”⁸⁷

Coleridge and myself walked back to Stowey that evening, and his voice sounded high

“Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix’d fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,”⁸⁸

as we passed through echoing grove, by fairy stream or waterfall, gleaming in the summer moonlight! He lamented that Wordsworth was not prone enough to belief in the traditional superstitions of the place, and that there was a something corporeal, a *matter-of-fact-ness*, a clinging to the palpable, or often to the petty, in his poetry, in consequence. His genius was not a spirit that descended to him through the air; it sprung out of the ground like a flower, or unfolded itself from a green spray, on which the gold-finch sang. He said, however (if I remember right) that this objection must be confined to his descriptive pieces, that his philosophic poetry had a grand and comprehensive spirit in it, so that his soul seemed to inhabit the universe like a palace, and to discover truth by intuition, rather than by deduction. The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at Coleridge’s cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend’s description of him, but was more gaunt

and Don Quixote-like.⁸⁹ He was quaintly dressed (according to the *costume* of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge in his gait, not unlike his own Peter Bell.⁹⁰ There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance) an intense high narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantry's bust⁹¹ wants the marking traits; but he was teased into making it regular and heavy: Haydon's head of him, introduced into the *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*,⁹² is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression. He sat down and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr*,⁹³ like the crust on wine. He instantly began to make havoc of the half of a Cheshire cheese on the table, and said triumphantly that "his marriage with experience had not been so unproductive as Mr. Southey's in teaching him a knowledge of the good things of this life." He had been to see the *Castle Spectre* by Monk Lewis,⁹⁴ while at Bristol, and described it very well. He said "it fitted the taste of the audience like a glove." This *ad captandum* merit⁹⁵ was however by no means a recommendation of it, according to the severe principles of the new school, which reject rather than court popular effect. Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, "How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank!" I thought within myself, "With what eyes these poets see nature!" and ever after, when I saw the sun-set stream upon the objects facing it, conceived I had made a

discovery, or thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me! We went over to All-Foxden again the day following, and Wordsworth read us the story of Peter Bell in the open air; and the comment made upon it by his face and voice was very different from that of some later critics! Whatever might be thought of the poem, "his face was as a book where men might read strange matters,"⁹⁶ and he announced the fate of his hero in prophetic tones. There is a *chaunt* in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearer, and disarms the judgment. Perhaps they have deceived themselves by making habitual use of this ambiguous accompaniment. Coleridge's manner is more full, animated, and varied; Wordsworth's more equable, sustained, and internal. The one might be termed more *dramatic*, the other more *lyrical*. Coleridge has told me that he himself liked to compose in walking over uneven ground, or breaking through the straggling branches of a copsewood;⁹⁷ whereas Wordsworth always wrote (if he could) walking up and down a strait gravel-walk, or in some spot where the continuity of his verse met with no collateral interruption. Returning that same evening, I got into a metaphysical argument with Wordsworth, while Coleridge was explaining the different notes of the nightingale to his sister, in which we neither of us succeeded in making ourselves perfectly clear and intelligible. Thus I passed three weeks at Nether Stowey and in the neighbourhood, generally devoting the afternoons to a delightful chat in an arbour made of bark by the poet's friend Tom Poole,⁹⁸ sitting under two fine elm-trees, and listening to the bees humming round us, while we quaffed our *flip*.⁹⁹ It was agreed, among other things, that we should make a jaunt down the Bristol-Channel, as far as Linton. We set off together on foot, Coleridge, John Chester,¹⁰⁰ and I. This Chester was a native of

Nether Stowey, one of those who were attracted to Coleridge's discourse as flies are to honey, or bees in swarming-time to the sound of a brass pan. He "followed in the chace, like a dog who hunts, not like one that made up the cry."¹⁰¹ He had on a brown cloth coat, boots, and corduroy breeches, was low in stature, bow-legged, had a drag in his walk like a drover, which he assisted by a hazel switch, and kept on a sort of trot by the side of Coleridge, like a running footman by a state coach, that he might not lose a syllable or sound, that fell from Coleridge's lips. He told me his private opinion, that Coleridge was a wonderful man. He scarcely opened his lips, much less offered an opinion the whole way: yet of the three, had I to chuse during that journey, I would be John Chester. He afterwards followed Coleridge into Germany, where the Kantian philosophers¹⁰² were puzzled how to bring him under any of their categories. When he sat down at table with his idol, John's felicity was complete; Sir Walter Scott's, or Mr. Blackwood's,¹⁰³ when they sat down at the same table with the King, was not more so. We passed Dunster on our right, a small town between the brow of a hill and the sea. I remember eying it wistfully as it lay below us: contrasted with the woody scene around, it looked as clear, as pure, as *embrowned* and ideal as any landscape I have seen since, of Gaspar Poussin's or Domenichino's.¹⁰⁴ We had a long day's march—(our feet kept time to the echoes of Coleridge's tongue)—through Minehead and by the Blue Anchor,¹⁰⁵ and on to Linton, which we did not reach till near midnight, and where we had some difficulty in making a lodgment. We however knocked the people of the house up at last, and we were repaid for our apprehensions and fatigue by some excellent rashers of fried bacon and eggs. The view in coming along had been splendid. We walked for miles and miles on dark brown heaths

overlooking the channel, with the Welsh hills beyond, and at times descended into little sheltered valleys close by the sea-side, with a smuggler's face scowling by us, and then had to ascend conical hills with a path winding up through a coppice to a barren top, like a monk's shaven crown, from one of which I pointed out to Coleridge's notice the bare masts of a vessel on the very edge of the horizon and within the red-orbed disk of the setting sun, like his own spectre-ship in the *Ancient Mariner*.¹⁰⁶ At Linton the character of the sea-coast becomes more marked and rugged. There is a place called the *Valley of Rocks* (I suspect this was only the poetical name for it) bedded among precipices overhanging the sea, with rocky caverns beneath, into which the waves dash, and where the sea-gull for ever wheels its screaming flight. On the tops of these are huge stones thrown transverse, as if an earthquake had tossed them there, and behind these is a fretwork of perpendicular rocks, something like the *Giant's Causeway*.¹⁰⁷ A thunder-storm came on while we were at the inn, and Coleridge was running out bareheaded to enjoy the commotion of the elements in the *Valley of Rocks*, but as if in spite, the clouds only muttered a few angry sounds, and let fall a few refreshing drops. Coleridge told me that he and Wordsworth were to have made this place the scene of a prose-tale, which was to have been in the manner of, but far superior to, the *Death of Abel*,¹⁰⁸ but they had relinquished the design. In the morning of the second day, we breakfasted luxuriously in an old-fashioned parlour, on tea, toast, eggs, and honey, in the very sight of the bee-hives from which it had been taken, and a garden full of thyme and wild flowers that had produced it. On this occasion Coleridge spoke of Virgil's *Georgics*,¹⁰⁹ but not well. I do not think he had much feeling for the classical or elegant. It was in this room that we found a little worn-out copy of the *Seasons*,¹¹⁰ lying in a

window-seat, on which Coleridge exclaimed, “*That* is true fame!” He said Thomson¹¹¹ was a great poet, rather than a good one; his style was as meretricious as his thoughts were natural. He spoke of Cowper¹¹² as the best modern poet. He said the *Lyrical Ballads* were an experiment about to be tried by him and Wordsworth, to see how far the public taste would endure poetry written in a more natural and simple style than had hitherto been attempted; totally discarding the artifices of poetical diction, and making use only of such words as had probably been common in the most ordinary language since the days of Henry II.¹¹³ Some comparison was introduced between Shakespear and Milton.¹¹⁴ He said “he hardly knew which to prefer. Shakespear seemed to him a mere stripling in the art; he was as tall and as strong, with infinitely more activity than Milton, but he never appeared to have come to man’s estate; or if he had, he would not have been a man, but a monster.” He spoke with contempt of Gray,¹¹⁵ and with intolerance of Pope.¹¹⁶ He did not like the versification of the latter. He observed that “the ears of these couplet-writers might be charged with having short memories, that could not retain the harmony of whole passages.” He thought little of Junius¹¹⁷ as a writer; he had a dislike of Dr. Johnson; and a much higher opinion of Burke as an orator and politician, than of Fox¹¹⁸ or Pitt.¹¹⁹ He however thought him very inferior in richness of style and imagery to some of our elder prose-writers, particularly Jeremy Taylor.¹²⁰ He liked Richardson,¹²¹ but not Fielding;¹²² nor could I get him to enter into the merits of *Caleb Williams*.^{*123} In short, he was profound and discriminating with

* He had no idea of pictures, of Claude or Raphael,¹²⁴ and at this time I had as little as he. He sometimes gives a striking account at present of the Cartoons at Pisa, by Buffamalco¹²⁵ and others; of one in particular, where Death is seen in the air brandishing his scythe, and the great and mighty of the earth

respect to those authors whom he liked, and where he gave his judgment fair play; capricious, perverse, and prejudiced in his antipathies and distastes. We loitered on the “ribbed sea-sands,”¹²⁶ in such talk as this, a whole morning, and I recollect met with a curious sea-weed, of which John Chester told us the country name! A fisherman gave Coleridge an account of a boy that had been drowned the day before, and that they had tried to save him at the risk of their own lives. He said “he did not know how it was that they ventured, but, Sir, we have a *nature* towards one another.” This expression, Coleridge remarked to me, was a fine illustration of that theory of disinterestedness which I (in common with Butler) had adopted. I broached to him an argument of mine to prove that *likeness* was not mere association of ideas. I said that the mark in the sand put one in mind of a man’s foot, not because it was part of a former impression of a man’s foot (for it was quite new) but because it was like the shape of a man’s foot. He assented to the justness of this distinction (which I have explained at length elsewhere, for the benefit of the curious) and John Chester listened; not from any interest in the subject, but because he was astonished that I should be able to suggest any thing to Coleridge that he did not already know. We returned on the third morning, and Coleridge remarked the silent cottage-smoke curling up the valleys where, a few evenings before, we had seen the lights gleaming through the dark.

In a day or two after we arrived at Stowey, we set out, I on my return home, and he for Germany. It was a Sunday morning, and he was to preach that day for Dr. Toulmin of Taunton.¹²⁷ I asked him if he had prepared any thing for the

shudder at his approach, while the beggars and the wretched kneel to him as their deliverer. He would of course understand so broad and fine a moral as this at any time.

occasion? He said he had not even thought of the text, but should as soon as we parted. I did not go to hear him,—this was a fault,—but we met in the evening at Bridgewater. The next day we had a long day's walk to Bristol, and sat down, I recollect, by a well-side on the road, to cool ourselves and satisfy our thirst, when Coleridge repeated to me some descriptive lines from his tragedy of *Remorse*;¹²⁸ which I must say became his mouth and that occasion better than they, some years after, did Mr. Elliston's and the Drury-lane boards,¹²⁹—

“Oh memory! shield me from the world's poor strife,
And give those scenes thine everlasting life.”¹³⁰

I saw no more of him for a year or two, during which period he had been wandering in the Hartz Forest in Germany; and his return was cometary, meteorous, unlike his setting out. It was not till some time after that I knew his friends Lamb¹³¹ and Southey. The last always appears to me (as I first saw him) with a common-place book¹³² under his arm, and the first with a *bon-mot*¹³³ in his mouth. It was at Godwin's that I met him with Holcroft and Coleridge, where they were disputing fiercely which was the best—*Man as he was, or man as he is to be*. “Give me,” says Lamb, “man as he is *not* to be.” This saying was the beginning of a friendship between us, which I believe still continues.—Enough of this for the present.

“But there is matter for another rhyme,
And I to this may add a second tale.”¹³⁴

W. H.¹³⁵

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¹ A minister who separates himself from the communion of the Established Church of England. Hazlitt's father (William Hazlitt, 1737-1820), in particular, was a Unitarian minister. This and many of the following notes on "My First Acquaintance with the Poets" are indebted to William Hazlitt, *The Fight and Other Writings*, edited by Tom Paulin and David Chandler (London: Penguin, 2000).

² Wem, town in Shropshire where Hazlitt's family moved in 1787.

³ John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667, book II, 964-65).

⁴ In 1798, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) worked for a short period in Shrewsbury, in Shropshire, as substitute of the local Unitarian minister, Mr. Rowe.

⁵ William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus* (V.vi.135-7).

⁶ "Welch" is a variant of "Welsh"; the Welsh mountains "skirt" the horizon west of Shrewsbury which is near the Welsh border.

⁷ Thomas Gray, "The Bard" (1757, 28); The harp of "Hoel" (the historical Hywel) and Llewellyn's lay (*i.e.* short lyric or poem meant to be sung) are evoked by Gray's Bard in his curse directed at King Edward I, conqueror of Wales. Hazlitt praises the eloquence of Coleridge's preaching first in Shakespeare's, now in Gray's epic terms. Hazlitt's admiration is intended to contrast sharply with the fact that by the time he had written the essay, he considered Coleridge an apostate of his liberal ideas, ready to uphold the theory of the divine right of kings to rule.

⁸ Alexander Pope's "Ode for Musick. On St Cecilia's Day", 90-1. In Greek mythology, the Styx is a river of the underworld.

⁹ Thomas Jenkins (c1745-1815) was a schoolmaster in Bristol and for 33 years the Unitarian minister of Whitchurch in Shropshire.

¹⁰ Reference to Aeschylus's tragedy *Agamemnon*, 281-386. In the tragedy, the Greeks had placed bonfires between Troy and Mycenae that would quickly announce the fall of the enemy city.

¹¹ "The passage resembles several sentences in Rousseau's *Confessions* and *La Nouvelle Héloïse*", see George Sampson, ed., *Hazlitt. Selected Essays*, 1917, p. 152.

¹² A combination of Matthew 14:23 and John 6:15.

¹³ John Milton, *Comus. A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle* (1634).

¹⁴ See Matthew 3:3-4.

¹⁵ *I.e.* Pigtail.

¹⁶ Alexander Pope, "Epistle to Robert, Earl of Oxford", 1.

¹⁷ Divine right of Kings.

¹⁸ See John Milton, "Lycidas" (1637), 106.

¹⁹ *I.e.*, William Hazlitt's.

²⁰ James Thomson (1700-48), *The Castle of Indolence*, ii, 295.

²¹ James Thomson (1700-48), *The Castle of Indolence*, i, 507.

²² Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-82) and Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599-1660), Spanish Baroque painters.

²³ Conflation of *Hamlet* 5.2.313 and 3.4.160.

²⁴ Adam Smith (1723-90), moral philosopher and political economist.

²⁵ William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* (II.i.250).

²⁶ Moses and the Burning Bush, the Twelve Tribes, etc., are episodes and people from the Old Testament, and object of somewhat sterile speculation and disquisition – the age of Methuselah, the shape of Noah's Ark, the riches of Solomon's Temple – by the Commentators studied by William Hazlitt's father.

²⁷ Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97), author and advocate of women's rights, mother of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (later Mary Shelley, 1797-1851).

²⁸ James Mackintosh (1765-1832), political writer and politician.

²⁹ In *Vindiciae Gallicae: a Defence of the French Revolution and its English Admirers* (1791), James Mackintosh takes a philosophically liberal stance on the French Revolution he would later move away from, due to the excesses of the revolutionaries.

³⁰ Edmund Burke (1729/30-1797), politician and philosopher.

³¹ Thomas Wedgwood (1771-1805) was a chemist, author of early experiments in photography, and Coleridge's patron and friend.

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³² William Godwin (1756-1836), philosopher and novelist, atheist for most of his life (see n. 38 below), father of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (later Mary Shelley).

³³ Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), dramatist, poet, novelist, translator. Famously a supporter of reformist ideas and an enthusiast of the French Revolution, in 1794 Holcroft had been tried for high treason under governmental measures banning seditious meetings and publications.

³⁴ Hazlitt and Holcroft had met in London in 1798.

³⁵ See n. 31 above. Thomas and his brother Josiah – who actually wrote the letter – paid Coleridge the annuity until 1812.

³⁶ See John Milton, *Lycidas* (1637), 55.

³⁷ See William Wordsworth, “A narrow girdle of rough stones and crags”, 38.

³⁸ In *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice* (1793, vol. 2, 393), William Godwin, an atheist, had conjectured: “Let us here return to the sublime conjecture [...] ‘that mind will one day become omnipotent over matter.’ If over all other matter, why not over the matter of our own bodies? [...] why may not man be one day immortal.”

³⁹ A reference to the allegorical landscape in John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress from This World, to That Which Is to Come* (1678).

⁴⁰ Coleridge lived here in 1797-98. Wordsworth lived nearby, in the Alfoxden mansion, about which Hazlitt writes below.

⁴¹ Gauthier de Costes de la Calprenède, *Cassandra: The Fam’d Romance* (1652), II, v.

⁴² A recollection that confuses the Prologue of Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* (1387-1400) 307, and William Wordsworth’s *The Excursion* (1814) iii, 701.

⁴³ David Hume (1711-76), famous philosopher and historian.

⁴⁴ “Of Miracles” is a section of David Hume’s *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748).

⁴⁵ Robert South (1634-1716), Church of England clergyman and theologian, is remembered for his published sermons.

⁴⁶ In translation, “Let the Jew Apella believe it!” (Horace, *Satires*, 1:5, 100). The Jews were considered by the Romans very credulous, and ready to believe any improbable story. Hazlitt was evidently sceptical about Coleridge’s observation about Hume.

⁴⁷ Literally, a fruit difficult to swallow because of its rough nature, and so, metaphorically, anything hard to understand.

⁴⁸ David Hume’s *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739-40), a milestone in scepticism, empiricism and naturalism, perhaps his most important work.

⁴⁹ George Berkeley (1685-1753), philosopher and father of immaterialism.

⁵⁰ In *An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision* (1709) George Berkeley examined visual distance, magnitude, position, and problems of sight and touch.

⁵¹ Samuel Johnson (1709-84), writer and philosopher, is author of major pieces of poetry, drama and literary criticism. He was also an eminent essayist, moralist, sermonist, and lexicographer.

⁵² Berkeley’s theory that denies the existence of matter as a metaphysical substance, in favour of ideas and spirits.

⁵³ The episode is recounted in Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, under date 1763 (Charles Grosvenor Osgood (ed.), *Boswell’s Life of Johnson*, New York, Chicago and Boston: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1917, 130). Johnson’s words, as he kicks a stone away from him as he would Berkeley’s theory, are “I refute it *thus*”.

⁵⁴ As in the case of the parallel between Hume’s essay and South’s sermon, Hazlitt points out Coleridge’s tendency to draw far-fetched resemblances.

⁵⁵ Thomas Paine (1737-1809) was a political and religious writer. His 1792-93 book *Rights of Man* was prosecuted by the English government, and he was forced to escape to France.

⁵⁶ Joseph Butler (1692-1750), Bishop of Durham, was one of the great English theologians.

⁵⁷ Hazlitt refers to *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature* (1736) and *Sermons* (1726).

⁵⁸ The full title of Hazlitt’s essay is *An Essay on the Principles of Human Action: being an Argument in Favour of the Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind* (1805).

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⁵⁹ Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86) was an English poet and courtier. Possibly, Hazlitt had in mind sonnet 84 in Sidney's 1580 collection *Astrophel and Stella*: here the "highway" is the poet's Parnassus and his Muse "tempers her words to trampling horses' feet".

⁶⁰ A small village on the road from Wem to Shrewsbury.

⁶¹ William Paley (1743-1805), theologist. The work Coleridge refers to below is *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785).

⁶² Compare to John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667, book VIII, 648-50).

⁶³ In the tenth chapter of his *Biographia Literaria* (1817, vol. 1), Coleridge tells a different version of the story.

⁶⁴ Robert Southey's *A Vision of Judgement* (1821) describes King George III's soul entering heaven triumphantly. "That other Vision" is Lord Byron's satirical poem *The Vision of Judgment* (1822, in *The Liberal*, issue 1, 3-39) was written in response: it was critical of George III and depicted Southey's failure to enter heaven. In these lines, the difference in spelling between the two is lost.

⁶⁵ A Junto is a society with a common purpose. Hazlitt refers to the Constitutional Association, based in Bridge Street, a loyalist voluntary organisation that pursued lawsuits against radical publishers. Hazlitt finds ironical that John Murray (1778-1843), publisher of Byron's *Vision*, was a member of the Association.

⁶⁶ See the essay "On Going a Journey" (1822) for a description of the Vale: "The valley at this time 'glittered green with sunny showers,' and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr Coleridge's poems!".

⁶⁷ "Ode on the Departing Year" is a 1796 poem by Coleridge.

⁶⁸ "with love".

⁶⁹ The River Dee, flowing through North Wales and Cheshire.

⁷⁰ In Greek mythology, Helicon is a mountain favoured by the Muses where the Hippocrene spring, source of poetic inspiration, is located.

⁷¹ A muff is a covering into which both hands may be placed for warmth. See Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones* (1749), vol. 3, X, v.

⁷² A translation of *Paul and Virginie* (1787), a novel by Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (1737-14).

⁷³ William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy lived at Grasmere in their "Dove Cottage" from late 1799 to 1806.

⁷⁴ A series of poems on the naming of otherwise unnamed places, in the second Volume of *Lyrical Ballads*, second edition (1800).

⁷⁵ A 1796 novel by Frances Burney (1752-1840).

⁷⁶ Wordsworth lived in the Alfoxden House, a mansion three miles from Nether Stowey in Somerset, from 1797 to 1799. As for the St. Aubyn family, the family "probably came to England with William the Conqueror in 1066, and was given lands in Devon, [...] later branching out in Somerset and Cornwall, although some believe they were first heard of in Somerset" (see Diana Hartley, *The St. Aubyns of Cornwall*, Chesham: Barracuda Books, 1977, 10). The property of Alfoxden was for several centuries the home of the St. Aubyns of Somerset.

⁷⁷ Possibly a reference to Shakespeare's *King Lear*: "Nothing can be made out of nothing" (I.iv.136).

⁷⁸ Unidentified reference.

⁷⁹ The *Lyrical Ballads* is a collection of poems, the result of the recent collaboration and friendship between Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth. The first version of the *Ballads* was published in 1798, and successive editions followed in 1800, 1802 and 1805.

⁸⁰ Unbound sheets, possibly "Sybilline" because loose as abrupt oracular sentences; clearly a reference to Coleridge's collection of poems *Sibylline Leaves* (1817).

⁸¹ King George I (reigned 1688-1727) and King George II (1727-60).

⁸² Quotation from Ben Jonson's poem "To Sir Robert Wroth", 22.

⁸³ Given the context, probably Homer's Elysium – Hesiod's Isles of the Blessed. Placed at the end of the world, Elysium is destined for heroes favoured by the gods and spared from death.

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- ⁸⁴ William Wordsworth's "The Idiot Boy", included in the first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798).
- ⁸⁵ Three Wordsworth's poems from the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798). The third poem is entitled "The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman" in the *Ballads*.
- ⁸⁶ Quotation from Alexander Pope's poem *An Essay on Man* (1733-34), epistle I, 293.
- ⁸⁷ Loose quotation from James Thomson's 1726-30 cycle of poems *The Seasons*, "Spring", 18.
- ⁸⁸ John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667, book II, 559-60).
- ⁸⁹ *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1605-15) is a Spanish novel by Miguel de Cervantes, one of the first modern novels and a masterpiece of Western literature. The eponymous hero is described, in an English translation of the late eighteenth century, as "of a tough constitution, extremely meagre, and hard featured" (*The History and Adventures of the Renowned Don Quixote*, translated by Tobias Smollet, London: 1792).
- ⁹⁰ The eponymous character of his narrative poem *Peter Bell* (1819) has, like William Wordsworth in Hazlitt's essay, "a dark and sidelong walk", and a "long and slouching [...] gait" (316-17).
- ⁹¹ Francis Leggatt Chantrey, *Bust of William Wordsworth*, white-painted plaster, 1820, now in Abbotsford House, the home of Sir Walter Scott.
- ⁹² In Benjamin Haydon's *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem*, oil on canvas, 1814-20, now in Mount St Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati, Wordsworth is used as model for one of the figures to the fore on the right-hand side.
- ⁹³ "A rough sounding of the letter r [...] characteristic of the county of Northumberland", *OED*, "burr (n.6)".
- ⁹⁴ Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818), called "Monk" from his romance, *Ambrosio, or the Monk. The Castle Spectre* (1797) was a dramatic romance, very successful at the time, interspersed with songs and choruses.
- ⁹⁵ A phrase used adjectively for attempts to win popular favour.
- ⁹⁶ Adapted quotation from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*: "Your face, my thane, is a book where men / May read strange matters" (I.v.73-4).
- ⁹⁷ Archaic of "coppice" or "copse": "a thicket of small trees or underwood periodically cut for economic purposes", *OED*, "copse (n.)".
- ⁹⁸ Thomas Poole (1766-1837), native of Nether Stowey, was a tanner, a radical philanthropist, and a friend of Coleridge.
- ⁹⁹ "A drink of heated, sweetened beer and spirit", *OED*, "flip (n.2)".
- ¹⁰⁰ Very little is known of John Chester, besides what Hazlitt tells. Coleridge mentions him only briefly in his letters and gives little information concerning their relation.
- ¹⁰¹ Hazlitt's quotation adapts the lines from Shakespeare's *Othello* (c.1603): "I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry" (II.iii.384-85). Unlike Shakespeare's Roderigo, Coleridge was "the hound that hunts", the one that picks up and follows the trail, not one from the useless barking pack behind.
- ¹⁰² Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was among the greatest Western philosophers. His thought was diffused in England by, among others, Coleridge and De Quincey. The "categories" in the following line are a reference to the twelve categories of human understanding in Kant's greatest work, *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781).
- ¹⁰³ Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), Scottish poet and novelist; William Blackwood (1776-1834), Scottish publisher, founder and editor of the *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. Hazlitt is probably referring to the visit of King George IV to Scotland in 1822, and the spectacular celebration organised by Scott himself.
- ¹⁰⁴ Gaspard Duguet, or Gaspard Poussin, (1615-75), French painter whose landscapes were popular and influential in eighteenth-century England; Domenico Zampieri, known as Domenichino (1581-1641), specialised in dramatic landscapes.
- ¹⁰⁵ The Blue Anchor is a seventeenth-century inn overlooking Blue Anchor Bay, in Somerset. Both were depicted in an 1818 watercolour by Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851).

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¹⁰⁶ Hazlitt's reference is surely to the following lines from Coleridge's famous *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1797-98): "The western wave was all aflame, / The day was well nigh done! / Almost upon the western wave / Rested the broad, bright Sun; / When that strange shape drove suddenly / Betwixt us and the Sun. / And straight the Sun was fleck'd with bars / (Heaven's Mother send us grace!), / As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd / With broad and burning face" (171-80).

¹⁰⁷ The dramatic appeal of this famous location in Ireland, now World Heritage Site, must have been equally inspiring at the time.

¹⁰⁸ "Solomon Gessner's enormously successful *Der Tod Abels* (1758). The 'prose-tale' Coleridge referred to was the incomplete *Wanderings of Cain*, published in 1828" (Paulin and Chandler's note in William Hazlitt, *The Fight and Other Writings*, 281).

¹⁰⁹ The *Georgics* is the second major poem by the Latin poet Virgil, Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19 BC).

¹¹⁰ James Thomson's 1726-30 cycle of poems *The Seasons*.

¹¹¹ James Thomson (1700-48), Scottish poet and playwright.

¹¹² William Cowper (1731-1800), hymn writer and poet, one of the most influential of his time.

¹¹³ Henry II (reigned 1154-89).

¹¹⁴ William Shakespeare (1564-1616), the aforementioned Bard, playwright and poet, one of the most popular and influential of all times. John Milton (1608-74), poet and polemicist, author of the immensely influential poem *Paradise Lost* (1667).

¹¹⁵ Thomas Gray (1716-71), English poet and literary scholar, author of *Elegy Written in a Country-Churchyard* (1750-51).

¹¹⁶ Alexander Pope (1688-1744), one of the most important English poets of the eighteenth century.

¹¹⁷ See n. 22 "Advertisement to the Second Volume".

¹¹⁸ Charles James Fox (1749-1806), Whig politician, friend of Edmund Burke until their rupture in 1791.

¹¹⁹ See n. 18 "Advertisement to the Second Volume".

¹²⁰ Jeremy Taylor (1613-67), Church of Ireland bishop of Down and Connor and religious writer.

¹²¹ Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), writer and printer, author of the epistolary novels *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa* (1748), and *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753).

¹²² Henry Fielding (1707-54), novelist and magistrate, author of *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749).

¹²³ *Caleb Williams* is a 1794 novel by William Godwin.

¹²⁴ Claude Lorraine, "Claude" in English (1600-82), French Baroque painter; Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino, "Raphael" (1483-1520), Italian master painter and architect.

¹²⁵ Buonamico di Cristofano (1262-1351), "Buffalmacco" (not Buffamalco) was a Florentine painter. Vasari and Boccaccio are the main sources of details concerning Buffalmacco, but most of his works are now attributed to other artists.

¹²⁶ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1797-98, 227).

¹²⁷ Joshua Toulmin of Taunton (1740-1815), theologian and Presbyterian, Baptist and then Unitarian minister.

¹²⁸ Coleridge's tragedy *Remorse* – originally *Osorio*, 1797 – was a success at Drury Lane in 1813.

¹²⁹ Hazlitt's squib is directed at Robert William Elliston (1774-1831), theatre manager, and famous and excessive actor who took the lead role in Coleridge's *Remorse* at Drury Lane in 1813.

¹³⁰ Quotation from Robert Bloomfield's poem, "On Revisiting the Place of My Nativity", published in the second edition of *The Farmer's Boy* (1800), 100.

¹³¹ Charles Lamb (1775-1834), essayist and Hazlitt's longtime friend.

¹³² A personal journal in which quotations, literary excerpts, and comments are written.

¹³³ A clever and fitting remark.

¹³⁴ Quotation from Wordsworth's poem "Hart-Leap Well" (95-6), published in the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800).

¹³⁵ William Hazlitt (1778-1830).

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.*¹

LETTER III.—ITALY.

MY DEAR N.²

I WRITE you, as you request, a very long letter, “on the largest sized paper, and in the smallest hand-writing.” You call the request a modest one, and I cannot but allow it has some pretensions to bashfulness, not only inasmuch as it comes in the corner of another, but because it is—let me see—just twenty lines long. However, you see what I think your twenty lines worth: and you are so accustomed, in matters of intercourse, to have the part of obliger to yourself, that it would be indecent to haggle with you about the tare and tret of an epistle. If you send me forty lines, I suppose I must write you a quarto.

You ask me to tell you a world of things about Italian composers, singers, &c. Alas! my dear N., I may truly say to you, that for music you must “look at home;” at least as far as my own experience goes. Even the biographies which you speak of, are, I fear, not to be found in any great quantity; but I will do my best to get them together. Both Pisa and Genoa have little pretensions either to music or books. We ought to be at Rome for one, and Milan for the other. Florence perhaps has a reasonable quantity of both, besides being rich in its Gallery:³ but I will tell you

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed by Ilaria Natali; Annotated by Gicomo Ferrari.

one thing, which, albeit you are of Italian origin, will mortify you to hear; viz. that Mozart⁴ is nothing in Italy, and Rossini⁵ every thing. Nobody even says any thing of Mozart, since *Figaro*⁶ (tell it not in Gothland!)⁷ *was hissed at Florence*. His name appears to be suppressed by agreement; while Rossini is talked of, written of, copied, sung, hummed, whistled, and demi-semi-quavered from morning to night. If there is a portrait in a shop-window, it is Rossini's. If you hear a song in the street, it is Rossini's. If you go to a music-shop to have something copied,—“An air of Rossini's?” Mayer,⁸ I believe, is the only German who takes the turn with him at the Opera here; but Mozart, be assured, never. I believe they would shut their ears at a burst of his harmony, as your friends the Chinese did at Lord Macartney's band.⁹

I suspect, however, that there are more reasons than one for this extraordinary piece of intolerance, and not altogether so unhandsome as they appear at first sight. As to theatres, I need not tell you the dislike which singers have to compositions that afford them no excuse for running riot in their own quavers and cadences. They hate to be

“Married to immortal verse.”¹⁰

They prefer a good, flimsy, dying sort of a “do-me-no-harm, good-man,” whom they can twist about and desert as they please. This is common to theatres every where. But in Italy, besides a natural prejudice in favour of their own composers, there has always been another, you know, against that richness of accompaniment, with which the Germans follow up their vocal music, turning every air, as it were, into a triumphal procession. They think that if a melody is full of nature and passion, it should be oftener suffered to

make out its own merit, and triumph by its own sufficing beauty: like Adam in the poem, when he walked forth to meet the angel,—

Without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections:

or Eve afterwards, when she received him,—

Undeck'd, save with herself; more lovely fair
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove.
— — — — — No veil
She needed, virtue-proof: no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek.¹¹

(What poetry is there! what sentiment! what delicacy! what words full of meaning!) You know what I think on this subject, when the composer is a truly great one like Paesiello:¹² and I know what you think too, when the air is one of his divinest, like *Il Mio Ben* in the opera of *Nina*.¹³ But Rossini is not Paesiello? True. He gives us a delightful air now and then; but in the hurry of his industry and his animal spirits, pours forth a torrent of common-places. His is not a flow of music,—

“Whose stream is amber, and whose gravel gold.”¹⁴

It is, for the most part, common water, brisk in its course, and bringing down only grains of gold, however worth sifting. Nevertheless, he *has* animal spirits, he runs merrily; his stream is for the most part native; and the Italians are as willing to be made merry with “thin potations”¹⁵ as with old hock.¹⁶ I meant to shew you how it was that they were prepared to undervalue Mozart; and I think I can now explain to you, in one word, how it is that they contrive to render themselves deaf to the rest of his merits, and to the

inspiration which he himself drank at an Italian source. Mozart was a *German*. I do not mean simply that he was a German in music; but he was a German by birth. The Germans in Italy, the lords over Italian freedom and the Italian soil, trumpet his superiority over Italian composers; and however right they may be, at all events with regard to modern ones, this is enough to make the Italians hate him. It mortifies them the more, because they know that he is an exception to the general dulness of their conquerors; and not even the non-chalance of his own conduct towards kings and composers (which was truly edifying*) could reconcile

* Even when this great musician was a child, he felt the superiority of genius over rank. If his flatterers, however high their station, exhibited no real feeling for the art, he played nothing but trifling pieces for their amusement, and was insensible even to their flattery. When called upon to display the astonishing prematurity of his powers before the Emperor Francis the First, he said to his Majesty, with a simplicity that must have been somewhat frightful at court, "Is not Mr. Wagenseil¹⁷ here? We must send for him; *he understands the thing*." The Emperor sent for Wagenseil, who took his Majesty's place by the side of the performer. "Sir," said Mozart, "I am going to play one of your concertos; you must turn over the leaves for me." The Emperor Joseph the Second¹⁸ said to him once, speaking of his opera the *Enlèvement du Sérail*,¹⁹ "My dear Mozart, this is too fine for my ears: there are too many notes." "I beg your Majesty's pardon," replied Mozart, "there are just as many as are necessary."—See the "Lives of Haydn and Mozart."²⁰ The genius of Haydn was not of this self-sufficing and jacobinical turn. He was eminently loyal and orthodox,—the reason, no doubt, why the *Quarterly Review*²¹ mentions his parting with his wife, and "attaching himself to the society of Signora Borelli,"²² with so much indifference, or rather a tone of approbation. "Flesh and blood," they say, "could no longer bear it."²³ We have no sort of objection, for our parts, if this was the case; especially as his wife was "a prude and a devotee," who made him write masses for the monks;²⁴ whereas Signora Borelli was a "lovely" woman, who sympathized in his pursuits till she died. But how the *Quarterly Reviewers* settle all this with their conventional consciences,

them to the misery of preferring *any thing* German to the least thing Italian.

The Genoese are not a musical specimen of the Italians; but the national talent seems lurking wherever you go. The most beggarly minstrel gets another to make out a harmony with him, on some sort of an instrument, if only a gourd with a string or two. Such at least appeared to me a strange-looking “wild-fowl” of a fiddle, which a man was strumming the other day,—or rather a gourd stuck upon a long fiddle of deal. Perhaps you know of such an instrument. I think I have seen something like it in pictures. They all sing out their words distinctly, some accompanying themselves all the while in the guitar style, others putting in a symphony now and then, even if it be nothing better than two notes always the same. There is one blind beggar who seems an enthusiast for Rossini. Imagine a sturdy-looking fellow in rags, laying his hot face against his fiddle, rolling his blind eyeballs against the sunshine, and vociferating with all the true open-mouth and syllabical particularity of the

we leave it to themselves to explain, and shall be glad to hear. As the singers say, we shall be “all attention.” They are bound to cant in their most choral style, to make amends for this incautious and profane ebullition,—this *extra-cathedram* chaunt,²⁵—this whistle in church-time; as strange as if a Bishop, instead of the Athanasian creed,²⁶ or rather the Seventh Commandment, were to strike up “In the merry month of May.”²⁷ (See an article on the Lives abovementioned, in the Review for October, 1817.)

The example of Mozart might be instructive to certain German men of talent, who do not blush to fall in with all the nonsense of the Allied Sovereigns.²⁸ How delightful would it be, for instance, if M. Gentz,²⁹ when about to write some legislation under his master’s eye, were to say, “Is Mr. Bentham³⁰ here? we must send for him: he understands the thing.” Or if the Emperor should say to him, “My dear Gentz, this is too free for my notions: there are too many popular provisions,” for M. Gentz to answer, “I beg your Majesty’s pardon: there are just as many as are necessary.”

Italians, a part of one of the duets of that lively master. Ilis³¹ companion having his eye-sight and being therefore not so vivacious, sings his part with a sedater vigour; though even when the former is singing a solo, I have heard him throw in some unisons at intervals, as if his help were equally wanting to the blind man, vocal as well as corporal.

Among the novelties that impress a stranger in Italy, I have not before noticed the vivacity prevalent among all classes of people. The gesticulation is not French. It has an air of greater simplicity and sincerity, and has more to do with the eyes, and expression of countenance. But after being used to it, the English must look like a nation of scorers and prudes. When serious, the women will walk with a certain piquant stateliness, evidently the same which impressed the ancient as well as modern poets of Italy, Virgil in particular; but it has no haughtiness. You might imagine them walking up to a dance, or priestesses of Venus³² approaching a temple. When lively, their manner out of doors is that of our liveliest women within. If they make a quicker movement than usual, if they recognise a friend, for instance, or call out to somebody, or dispatch somebody with a message, they have all the life, simplicity, and unconsciousness of the happiest of our young women, who are at ease in their gardens or parks. I must add, that since I have known more of Genoa, I have found out that it possesses multitudes of handsome women; and what surprised me, many of them with beautiful northern complexions. But an English lady tells me, that for this latter discovery I am indebted to my short sight. This is probable. You know that I have often been in raptures at faces that have passed me in London, whose only faults were being very coarse and considerably bilious. But never mind. It is not desirable to have a Brobdingnagian³³ sight; and where the mouth is

sweet and the eyes intelligent, there is always the look of beauty with me. Now I have seen heaps of such faces in Genoa. The superiority of the women over the men is indeed remarkable, and is to be accounted for perhaps by the latter being wrapt and screwed up in money-getting. Yet it is just the reverse, I understand, at Naples; and the Neapolitans are accused of being as sharp at a bargain as any body. What is certain, however, from the testimonies of all I have met with, is, that in almost all parts of Italy, gentility of appearance is on the side of the females. The rarity of a gentlemanly look in the men is remarkable. The commonness of it among women of all classes, is equally so. Now the former was certainly not the case in old times, if we are to trust the portraits handed down to us; nor indeed could it easily have been believed, if left upon record. What is the cause then of this extraordinary degeneracy? Is it, after all, an honourable one to the Italians? Is it that the men, thinking of the moral and political situation of their country, and so long habituated to feel themselves degraded, acquire a certain instinctive carelessness and contempt of appearance; while the women, on the other hand, more taken up with their own affairs, with the consciousness of beauty, and the flattery which is more or less always paid them, have retained a greater portion of their self-possession and esteem? The alteration, whatever it is owing to, is of the worst kind. The want of gentility is not supplied, as it so often is with us, by a certain homely simplicity and manliness, quite as good in its way, and better, where the former does not include the better part of it. The appearance, to use a modern cant phrase, has a certain *raffishness* in it, like that of a suspicious-looking fellow in England, who lounges about with his hat on one side, and a flower in his mouth. Nor is it at all confined to men in trade, whether high or

low; though at the same time I must observe, that all men, high or low (with the exceptions, of course, that take place in every case) are notoriously given to pinching and saving, keeping their servants upon the lowest possible allowance, and eating as little as may be themselves, with the exception of their favourite *minestra*,³⁴ of which I will speak presently, and which being a cheap as well as favourite dish, they gobble in a sufficient quantity to hinder their abstinence in other things from being regarded as the effect of temperance. In Pisa, the great good of life is a hot supper; but at Pisa and Genoa both, as in “the city” with us, if you overhear any thing said in the streets, it is generally about money. *Quatrini*, *soldi*, and *lire*,³⁵ are discussing at every step. I do not know how the case may have been in Spain of late years. It is certainly better now. But a stranger, full of the Italian poets and romances, is surprised to find the southern sunshine overgrown with this vile scurf. One thinks sometimes that men would not know what to do with their time, if it were not for that succession of petty hopes and excitements, which constitutes the essence of trade. It looks like a good-humoured invention of nature to save the foolish part of mankind from getting tired to death with themselves. But we know, from a comparison of different times and nations, that this is not the case. The dancing African and the dozing Asiatic are equally sufficed with a hundredth part of it; and the greater activity of the European has, in times quite as active and a great deal more healthy and pleasurable, dispensed with at least half of it, devoting the rest of his hours to sports and society. Mammon³⁶ has undoubtedly been the god of these later times; and philosophy will have a harder task in displacing him, than it has had in shaking the strong holds of his colleague, Superstition: for though men cannot serve “God and Mammon”

together (a truth which the Mammonites³⁷ are always practically disputing, in the very teeth of their own alleged doctrines) they can serve Superstition fast enough. Selfishness is the soul of both, as money formed the inside of Dagon.³⁸ I believe, for my part, that both the causes above-mentioned have had great effect in forming the character of the modern Italians; but I believe also that the greatest of all (and I need not hesitate to mention it to a man of Catholic stock, out of the pale of the Pope's dominion)³⁹ is the extraordinary blight that has been thrown in the course of time over all the manlier part of the Italian character, by the notorious ill example, chicanery, worldliness, and petty feeling of all sorts, exhibited by the Court of Rome. I do not allude to the present Pope;⁴⁰ and a Pope here and there is of course to be excepted. I believe the reigning Pontiff is a well-meaning, obstinate old gentleman enough, whom events have rendered a little romantic; a character which is nobleness itself compared with that of the majority of his brethren, or indeed with most characters. But the Italians, for centuries, have been accustomed to see the most respected persons among them, and a *sacred* Court, full of the pettiest and most selfish vices; and if they have instinctively lost their respect for the persons, they have still seen these persons the most flourishing among them, and have been taught by their example to make a distinction between belief and practice, that would startle the saving grace of the most impudent of Calvinists. From what I have seen myself (and I would not mention it if it had not been corroborated by others who have resided in Italy several years) there is a prevailing contempt of truth in this country, that would astonish even an oppressed Irishman. It forms an awful comment upon those dangers of *catechising* people into insincerity, which Mr. Bentham has pointed out in his Church-of-Englandism.⁴¹

We are far enough, God knows, from this universality of evil yet. May such writers always be found to preserve us from it! See Mr. Shelley's admirable preface to the tragedy of the Cenci, where the religious nature of this profanation of truth is pointed out with equal acuteness and eloquence.⁴² I have heard instances of falsehood, not only among money-getters, but among "ladies and gentlemen" in ordinary, so extreme, so childish, and apparently so unconscious of wrong, [t]hat⁴³ the very excess of it, however shocking in one respect, relieved one's feelings in another, and shewed how much might be done by proper institutions to exalt the character of a people naturally so ingenuous and so ductile. The great Italian virtues, under their present governments, are being catholic, not being "taken in" by others, and taking in every body else. Persons employed to do the least or the greatest jobs, will alike endeavour to cheat you through thick and thin. It is a perpetual warfare, in which you are at last obliged to fight in self-defence. If you pay any body what he asks you, it never enters into his imagination that you do it from any thing but folly. You are pronounced a *minchione* (a ninny) one of their greatest terms of reproach. On the other hand, if you battle well through your bargain, a perversion of the natural principle of self-defence leads to a feeling of real respect for you. A dispute may arise; the man may grin, stare, threaten, and pour out torrents of reasons and injured innocence, as they always do; but be firm, and he goes away equally angry and admiring. If you take them in, doubtless the admiration as well as the anger is still in proportion, like that of the gallant knights of old when they were beaten in single combat. An English lady told me an amusing story the other day, which will shew you the spirit of this matter at once. A friend of hers at Pisa was in the habit of dealing with a man, whose knaveries, as

usual, compelled her to keep a reasonable eye to her side of the bargain. She said to this man one day, "Ah, so-and-so, no doubt you think me a great *minchione*." The man, at this speech, put on a look of the sincerest deference and respect; and in a tone of deprecation, not at all intended, as you might suppose, for a grave joke, but for the most serious thing in the world, replied, "*Minchione! No! E gran furba lei.*"—"You a ninny! Oh no, Ma'am: *you* are a great thief!") This man was a Jew: but then what dealer in Italy is not? They say, that Jews cannot find a living in Genoa. I know of one, however, who both lives and gets fat. I asked him one day to direct me to some one who dealt in a particular article. He did so; adding, in an under tone, and clapping his finger at the same time against his nose, "He'll ask you such and such a sum for it; but take care you don't pay it though." The love of getting and saving pervades all classes of the community, the female part, however, I have no doubt, much less than the male. The love of ornament, as well as a more generous passion, interferes. The men seem to believe in nothing but the existence of power, and as they cannot attain to it in its grander shapes, do all they can to accumulate a bit of it in its meanest. The women retain a better and more redeeming faith; and yet every thing is done to spoil them. Cicisbeism⁴⁴ (of which I will tell you more at another opportunity) is the consequence of a state of society, more nonsensical in fact than itself, though less startling to the present habits of the world; but it is managed in the worst possible manner; and, singularly enough, is almost as gross, more formal, and quite as hypocritical as what it displaces. It is a stupid system. The poorer the people, the less of course it takes place among them: but as the husband, in all cases, has the most to do for his family, and is the person least cared for, he is resolved to get what he can before marriage; and a

vile custom prevails among the poorest, by which no girl can get married, unless she brings a certain dowry. Unmarried females are also watched with exceeding strictness; and in order to obtain at once a husband and freedom, every nerve is strained to get this important dowry. Daughters scrape up and servants pilfer for it. If they were not obliged to ornament themselves, as a help towards their object, I do not know whether even the natural vanity of youth would not be sacrificed, and girls hang out rags as a proof of their hoard, instead of the "outward and visible sign"⁴⁵ of crosses and ear-rings. Dress, however, disputes the palm with saving; and as a certain consciousness of their fine eyes and their natural graces survives every thing else among southern womankind, you have no conception of the high hand with which the humblest females carry it at a dance or an evening party. Hair dressed up, white gowns, satins, flowers, fans, and gold ornaments, all form a part of the glitter of the evening, amidst (I have no doubt) as great, and perhaps as graceful a profusion of compliments and love-making, as takes place in the most privileged ball-rooms. Yet it is twenty to one, that nine out of ten persons in the room have dirty stockings on, and shoes out at heel. Nobody thinks of saving up articles of that description; and they are too useful, and not shewy enough, to be cared for *en passant*. Therefore Italian girls may often enough be well compared to flowers; —with head and bodies all ornament, their feet are very likely in the earth; and thus they go nodding forth for sale, "growing, blowing, and all alive." A foolish English servant whom we brought out with us, fell into an absolute rage of jealousy at seeing my wife give a crown of flowers to a young Italian one, who was going to a dance. The latter, who is of the most respectable sort, and looks as lady-like as you please when dressed, received the flowers with gratitude,

though without surprise; but both of them were struck speechless, when, in addition to the crown, my wife gave her a pair of her own shoes and stockings. They were doubtless the triumph of the evening. Next day we heard accounts of the beautiful dancing,—of Signor F. the English valet⁴⁶ opening the ball with the handsome chandler's-shop woman, &c. and our poor countrywoman was ready to expire.

As the miscellaneous poetry of Alfieri⁴⁷ is little known in England, I will take this occasion of sending you the commencement of a satire of his on money-getting. I was going to translate the whole of it, but it turned off into allusions of too local a nature. He does not spare the English; though he would have found some distinction, I trust, between us and the Dutch, in this matter, could he have heard the shouts sent up the other day upon Change⁴⁸ in honour of the Spanish patriots,⁴⁹ and seen the willingness which nine tenths of us evince to open our purses in behalf of that glorious cause. May God speed it, and contrive to make *all* our rich men as much poorer, and our poor as much richer, as they ought to be! But I am forgetting my satire. The close of the extract, I think, presents a very ludicrous image.

E in te pur, d'ogni lucro Idolo ingordo
Nume di questo secolo borsale,
Un pocolin la penna mia qui lordo:

Ch'ove oggi tanto, oltre il dover, prevale
Quest'acciecatto culto, onde ti bei,
Drittè, che ti saetti alcun mio strale.

Figlio di mezza libertade, il sei;
Nè il niego io già; ma in un mostrarti padre
Vo' di servaggio doppio e d'usi rei.

Ecco, ingombri ha di prepotenti squadre
La magra Europa i mari tutti, e mille
Terre farà di pianto e di sangue adre.

Sian belligere genti, o sian tranquille,
Abbiano o no metalli, indaco, o pepe,
Di selve sieno o abitator di ville,

Stuzzicar tutti densi, ovunque repe
Quest'insetto tirannico Européo,
Per impinguar le sua famelichèpe.

Stupidi e inguisti,⁵⁰ noi sprezziam l'Ebreo,
Che compra e vende, e vende e compra, e vende;
Ma siam ben noi popol più vile e reo:

Che, non contenti a quanto il suol ci rende,
Dell'altrui ladris⁵¹ ove il furar sia lieve,
Facciam pel globo tutto a chi più prende.

Taccio del sangue American, cui bene
L'atroce Ispano; e il vitto agl'Indi tolto
Dall'Anglo, che il suo vitto agl'Indi deve.

Se in fasce orrende al nascer suo ravvolto
Mostrar volessi il rio commercio, or fora
Il mio sermone (e invan) prolisso molto.

Basta ben sol, che la sua infamia d'ora
Per me si illustri, appalesando il come
L'iniqua Europa sue laidezze indora.

Annichillate, impoverite, o dome
Par lei le genti di remote spiagge,
Di alloro no, di Baccalà le chiome,

*Orniamle, &c. &c.*⁵²

YES, glutton of the land and sea,
This pursy age's deity,
I'll dirt my pen awhile with thee.

For since this gloating in a purse,
Which blinds mankind, grows worse and worse,
'Tis fit I smite thee with a verse.

Half-freedom's child, I know thou art:
I'll prove thee father, ere we part,
Of two-fold slavery and no heart.

Lo, dry-drawn Europe sends her brood
Of traders out, like a new flood,
To sow the earth with tears and blood.

Whether a land's at war or peace,
Produces metals, tops, or teas,
Or lives in towns, or villages,

This vermin, mightiest thing alive,
Makes them all herd, and crowd, and drive,
To fatten up it's⁵³ hungry hive.

Unjust and stupid, we despise
The Jew that buys, and sells, and buys,
As if we acted otherwise!

Nay, we are worse; for not content,
Like other thieves, with a home rent,
We rob on every continent.

I pass the Americans that bled
For Spain's fierce thirst, and English bread,
Torn from the Indians it should feed:

Were I to track through all his woes
The monster to his swaddling clothes,
Where I should end, God only knows.

Enough for me, if I can tear
The mask off now, and show the care
Hag Europe takes to be thought fair.

How should we crown her, having trod
Whole nations down for this her god?
With laurel? No,—with salted cod.

This species of dried fish being greatly in request in Catholic countries, the image becomes very ludicrous to an Italian. There is a propriety, and yet a beautiful want of propriety in it. Were Satirists to strike coins as well as verses, a head of Italy some centuries hence, with a crown of dried fish on it, would puzzle the antiquaries.

If Italy is famous at present for any two things, it is for cicisbeism and *minestra*. Wherever you find shops, you see baskets full of a yellow stuff, made up in long stripes like tape, and tied up in bundles. This is the main compound of *minestra*, or to use the Neapolitan term, your old acquaintance *macaroni*.⁵⁴ I need not explain the nature of it to you; but some of your fellow readers may chuse to be informed, that it is

nothing but common paste, made up into interminable pipes. Much of it is naturally of a yellowish colour, but the Genoese die it deeper with saffron. When made into a soup it is called *minestra*, and mixed sometimes with meat, sometimes with oil or butter, but always, if it is to be had, with grated cheese, and that cheese Parmesan. An Italian has no notion of eating any thing plain. If he cannot have his minestra and his oil, he is thrown out of all his calculations, physical and moral. He has a great abstract respect for fasting; but fights hard for an indulgence. The Genoese in particular, being but Canaanites or borderers⁵⁵ in Italy, and accustomed to profane intercourse by their maritime situation, as well as to an heterodox appetite by their industry and sea-air, appear to be extremely restive on the subject of fasting. They make pathetic representations to the Archbishop respecting beef and pudding, and allege their health and their household economies. Fish is luckily dear. I have now before me a Genoese Gazette of the 8th February last,⁵⁶ in which there is an extract from the circular of the Archbishop respecting the late Lent indulgences. He says, that "the Holiness of Our Lord" (for so the Pope is styled)⁵⁷ "has seen with the greatest displeasure, that the ardent desire which he has always nourished" (an aukward word!)⁵⁸ "of restoring the ancient rigour of Lent, is again rendered of no effect, by representations which he finds it impossible to resist." He therefore permits the inhabitants of the Archbishop's diocese to make "one meal a-day of eggs and white-meats (*latticini*) during Lent; and such of them as have really need of it, the use of flesh:" but he says; that this latter permission "leaves a heavy load on his conscience,"⁵⁹ and that he positively forbids the promiscuous use of flesh and fish. I must add, for my part, that I think the Pope has reason in this roasting of eggs. In all countries

the devil (to speak after the received theory of good and ill) seems to provide for a due diminution of health and happiness by something in the shape of meat and drink. The northern nations exasperate their bile with beer, the southern with oil, and all with butter and meat. I would swear, that Dante was a great eater of minestra. Poor Lord Castle-reagh⁶⁰ (for *you* will readily believe, that in the abstract, and setting aside his Six Acts⁶¹ and other tyrannous doings, the Liberal can pity even him) had had his buttered toast, I see, served up for breakfast the day he killed himself; a very mock-heroic help, I allow, towards a political catastrophe; but not the less likely for that. If wars have been made, and balances of power overturned, by a quarrel about a pair of gloves,⁶² or a tap of the fan from a king's mistress,⁶³ it is little to expedite the death of a minister by teasing his hypochondres⁶⁴ with fried butter.

God bless you and all friends. If I write another word, my illegitimate signature will stare the postman in the face.

P.S. Nothing which has here been said upon the faults of the Italians, can of course prejudice those finer characters among them, who, by the very excess of the corruptions and foreign oppression they see on all sides, are daily excited more and more to a patriotic wish to get rid of them. You may rest satisfied, that the multitude of these characters is daily increasing. I have just lit upon a sonnet of Alfieri's, by which it appears that the Genoese in his time were as fast bound in the Styx of superstition as of money-getting. It is not so now at any rate:—the folds are neither so strong nor so numerous.⁶⁵—The first quatrain is a fine and true picture of the city.

TO GENOA.⁶⁶

Nobil città, che delle Liguri onde
 Liede a specchio, in sembiante altera tanto,
 E, torreggiando al ciel da curve sponde,
 Fai scorno ai monti, onde hai da tergo ammanto;
 A tue moli superbe, a cui seconde
 Null'altre Italia d'innalzare ha il vanto,
 Dei cittadini tuoi chè non risponde
 L'aspetto, il cor, l'alma, o l'ingegno alquanto?

Loro sudato, che adunasti e aduni,
 Puoi seppellir con minor costo in grotte
 Ove ascondon se stessi *e i lor digiuni*.
 Tue ricchezze non spese, eppur corrotte,
 Fan dignoranza un denso velo agli uni;
 Superstizion tien gli altri; a tutti è notte.

Proud city, that by the Ligurian sea
 Sittest as at a mirror, lofty and fair;
 And towering from thy curving banks in air,
 Scornest the mountains that attend on thee;
 Why, with such structures, to which Italy
 Has nothing else, though glorious, to compare,
 Hast thou not souls, with something like a share,
 Of look, heart, spirit, and ingenuity?

Better to bury at once ('twould cost thee less)
 Thy golden-sweating heaps, where cramp'd from light,
 They and their pinch'd fasts ply their old distress.
 Thy rotting wealth, unspent, like a thick blight,
 Clouds the close eyes of these:—dark hands oppress
 With superstition those:—and all is night.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ This is the third of four “Letters from Abroad” in *The Liberal*, one per issue.

² Vincent Novello (1781-1861), organist, composer and music publisher who lived in England, son of an Italian father, Giuseppe, of Piedmontese origins. Novello was Hunt’s correspondent and an admirer of his work in *The Liberal*.

³ Hunt devotes several pages of his *Autobiography* (vol. 2, 1850, 202-8) to describing the structure and treasures of the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence.

⁴ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91), Austrian composer, one of the most important in history. Among his better known works, the opera buffa *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786, mentioned below) and the dramma giocoso *Il dissoluto punito, ossia il Don Giovanni* (1787).

⁵ Gioachino Antonio Rossini (1792-1868), Italian composer eminently famous for his many operas. Among the most famous, the opera buffa *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1816) and the dramma giocoso *La Cenerentola* (1817).

⁶ Mozart’s *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786).

⁷ Hunt’s reworking of the biblical expression “Tell it not in Gath” (2 Samuel 1:20), meaning not to mention something that your enemies might gloat over. Hunt’s “Gothland” probably refers not to the Swedish territory of Gothland, but to the territorial “equivalent” of the sixth-century Ostrogothic Kingdom and therefore, by metonymy and ironically, to the Austrian Empire and northern Italy. Hunt’s reworking of the proverbial expression also changes the meaning into “do not mention something to those who might resent it”: as Hunt writes below, “Germans in Italy, the lords over Italian freedom and the Italian soil, trumpet [Mozart’s] superiority over Italian composers”.

⁸ Johannes Simon Mayr (sometimes spelled Mayer, 1763-45), German composer, one of the most respected operatic composers in Italy at the time. His popularity peaked with the premiers of *Tamerlano* (1812, Milan) and *La rosa bianca e la rosa rossa* (1813, Geona).

⁹ Hunt refers to the 1793 Macartney embassy in China, led by George Earl Macartney (1737-1806), that was said to have failed owing due to his inability or refusal to perform the *kowtow* (nine ceremonial bows), or to the absence of shared political and cultural language. Hunt’s ironic comparison must rely on accounts of the Chinese appreciation (or lack thereof) of the “band” of musicians that Macartney brought along on the embassy. One of these accounts reports how “the Chinese seemed wholly unmoved by the perfect execution of the best pieces, of the best composers in Europe” (Charles Burney, “Chinese music”, in *The Cyclopaedia; or, Universal Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Literature*, vol. vii, ed. Abraham Rees, London: 1819, sig. 4S3’).

¹⁰ Quotation from John Milton’s pastoral poem *L’Allegro* (1645), 137.

¹¹ Quotations from John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667, book V, 351-3, 380-5).

¹² Giovanni Paisiello (or Paesiello, 1740-1816), Italian operatic composer whose influence was decisive to Mozart and Rossini’s work. His masterpiece, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1782), is now only infrequently staged.

¹³ “Il mio ben quando verrà” is an aria in the first act of Giovanni Paisiello’s *Nina, o sia La pazza per amore* (1789).

¹⁴ Loose quotation from John Denham’s poem “Coopers-Hill”: “Whose *foam* is Amber, and their Gravel Gold”.

¹⁵ Quotation from Falstaff in William Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, part 2*, IV.ii.129.

¹⁶ “The wine called in German *Hochheimer*, produced at Hochheim on the Main; hence, commercially extended to other white German wines”, *OED*, “hock (n.4)”.

¹⁷ Georg Christoph Wagenseil (1715-77), Austrian composer, worked at court from 1739 to his death.

¹⁸ Joseph II (1741-90), Holy Roman Emperor (1765-90).

¹⁹ *L’Enlèvement au sérail* (“Die Entführung aus dem Serail”, 1782), is a *singspiel* in three acts by Mozart.

²⁰ Stendhal [Marie-Henri Beyle], *The Lives of Haydn and Mozart, with observations on Metastasio, and on the present state of music in France and Italy*. Translated from the French of L.A.C. Bombet, London: John Murray, 1818 (quotations from pp. 342-43, 389).

²¹ *The Quarterly Review* (1809-1967), periodical launched and published by John Murray and William Gifford as tory counterblast to the successful, Whiggish *Edinburgh Review*.

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²² In *The Quarterly Review*, “Haydn attached himself to the society of Signora *Boselli*, a lovely singer in Prince Esterhazy’s orchestra” (October 1817, 79).

²³ *The Quarterly Review*, October 1817, 79.

²⁴ *The Quarterly Review*, October 1817, 79.

²⁵ Theological phrase meaning “outside the chair of Peter”, that is, not in one’s official capacity, as a private person. In this case, for Hunt, out of character for a conservative, traditionalist journal.

²⁶ A Christian statement of belief named after the theologian Athanasius of Alexandria (296/98-373).

²⁷ A canzonet by the 17th century composer Henry Youll (or Youell).

²⁸ The sovereigns of Austria, Prussia, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Sweden, Sardinia, and a number of German states that defeated and exiled Napoleon.

²⁹ Friedrich von Gentz (1764-1832), Prussian-Austrian diplomat, imperial councillor to the Emperor Francis, and advisor to Von Metternich. He took part in the Congress of Vienna in 1814, and in December 1822, shortly before Hunt wrote the present letter, in the Congress of Verona.

³⁰ Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), philosopher, jurist, and reformer. His ambitions as codifier of laws resulted in an involvement with early liberalism, especially in Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Latin America. This involvement began with the *Trienio liberal* (1820-23), the three-year period during which a liberal government ruled Spain under the reinstated 1812 Cádiz Constitution.

³¹ In some copies, misprint for “His”.

³² In Roman mythology, goddess of love, beauty, and desire.

³³ “Of huge dimensions; immense; gigantic”, *OED*, “Brobdingnagian (*adj.* & *n.*)”. Adjective deriving from Brobdingnag, the giants’ land in Jonathan Swift’s 1726 *Gulliver’s Travels*.

³⁴ Main course made with (Hunt’s) *macaroni*; similar to present-day *pasta*.

³⁵ Terms indicating currency.

³⁶ In the New Testament, money and greed personified, and in stark opposition to God.

³⁷ “A worshipper of Mammon; a person dedicated to the acquisition of wealth”, *OED*, “Mammonite (*n.*)”.

³⁸ Dagon was a major deity in the Philistine pantheon. A statue of Dagon is mentioned in 1 Samuel 5:1-7, where it falls to the ground and breaks when the Ark of the Covenant is placed in its temple. Although there is no trace of the inside of Dagon being “formed” by money, it is the Ark which is plated in gold, inside and out (Exodus 25:11). Hunt is arguably conflating the two.

³⁹ Vincent Novello’s father was Italian, from Piedmont. A pale is a district or territory within determined bounds, or subject to a particular jurisdiction, in this case the Pope’s.

⁴⁰ Pope Pius VII (1800-23).

⁴¹ In *Church of Englandism and its catechism examined* [...], London: Effingham Wilson, 1818, Jeremy Bentham claims that “a Church of England education” had as objective “the securing of an *habit* of insincerity throughout life” (xxi-xxii).

⁴² Hunt might have been thinking of the following excerpt: “Religion coexists, as it were, in the mind of an Italian Catholic with a faith in that of which all men have the most certain knowledge. It is interwoven with the whole fabric of life. It is adoration, faith, submission, penitence, blind admiration; not a rule for moral conduct. It has no necessary connexion with any one virtue” (Percy Bysshe Shelley, “Preface”, in *The Cenci*, London, 1819, xi).

⁴³ In some copies, misprint for “that”.

⁴⁴ The practice of attending a married woman as *cicisbeo*, her recognized gallant or *cavalier servente*.

⁴⁵ Jeremy Bentham, *The Church of England Catechism Examined*, in *Church-of-Englandism and its catechism examined* [...], 49.

⁴⁶ Unidentified reference.

⁴⁷ Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), Italian poet and dramatist, forerunner of the ideals of Italian Risorgimento. He was author of poem collections (*Rime*, 1804), an autobiography (*Vita*), and nineteen tragedies (1776-86), among which *Saul* (1788) and *Mirra* (1792). His treatises *Della tirannide* (1777) and *Del principe e delle lettere* (1778-86) are concerned with freedom and the struggle against tyranny.

⁴⁸ At the Royal Exchange, on the stock exchange. The Royal Exchange in Capel Court, modelled on the Antwerp Bourse, was built by Thomas Gresham in 1565-7 in the City of London.

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⁴⁹ Reference to the Spanish *liberales* of the *Trienio liberal* (1820-23), the three-year period during which a liberal government ruled Spain under the reinstated 1812 Cádiz Constitution.

⁵⁰ Misprint for “ingiusti”.

⁵¹ Misprint for “ladri”.

⁵² Vittorio Alfieri, “Satira decimaseconda. Il commercio”, in *Satire* (1777-98).

⁵³ The possessive form of “it” without apostrophe (“its”) is only recent; until the 19th century the form “it’s” was very diffused.

⁵⁴ See n. 34 above.

⁵⁵ A native or original inhabitant of ancient Canaan prior to the Israelite conquest. Canaan was the forefather of the various nations who peopled the seacoast of Palestine. In Job 41:6 and Proverbs 31:24, the Hebrew word for Canaanite is used as a synonym for merchant.

⁵⁶ *Gazzetta di Genova*, 8th February 1823. The article is nevertheless dated 8th January.

⁵⁷ “N.S.”, *i.e.* “Nostro Signore”.

⁵⁸ The irony of using the Italian word “nutrito” in this context – correctly translated as “nourished” – is not lost on Hunt.

⁵⁹ *I.e.* The Archbishop’s conscience.

⁶⁰ Robert Stewart (1769-1822), Viscount Castlereagh, British statesman and politician. He committed suicide on 12th August 1822. See n. 27 “Advertisement to the Second Volume”.

⁶¹ In 1819, Castlereagh supported the infamous Six Acts, suppressing any form of meeting that would foster radical reforms, in response to the Peterloo Massacre (16th August 1819).

⁶² Unidentified reference.

⁶³ Unidentified reference, possibly to an historical episode involving Madame de Pompadour and King Louis XV. The use of hand fans evolved into the elaborate, intimate language of “fanology” in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe.

⁶⁴ “Either of the two regions of the upper abdomen located beneath the ribs on either side of the epigastrium”, *OED*, “hypochondre (*n.*)”.

⁶⁵ In Greek and Roman mythology, the Styx is a river in the underworld. In *Inferno* by Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), it forms a marshy lake, the “fifth round” where the wrathful are punished. Despite this, the fact that Hunt’s Styx binds the Genoese with “strong” and “numerous folds” – though not as strong and numerous as in Alfieri’s time – suggests a debt towards Dantesque imagery.

⁶⁶ Vittorio Alfieri, *Rime varie*, LXXXV.

MADAME D'HOUTETOT.*¹

HUMAN nature is in general fond of riddles. We delight to unravel a knotty point, and we study with the greatest pleasure those characters, whose ruling feeling we do not entirely comprehend. They oblige us to disentangle our ideas with delicate precision, and to make subtle differences, at once exercising our talents and our patience. It is for this reason, in a great measure, that so many books have been written about Rousseau.² His sensibility, his genius, his pride, his alleged ingratitude and subsequent madness, have made him one of the most interesting personages of modern times: the misrepresentations of his enemies have given a spur to our researches: and we may safely assert that we know more of his character and actions than his contemporaries: just as we are better acquainted with the course of a river, looking down on it from a distant eminence, than sitting on its banks, listening to the murmur of its waters. From the character of Rousseau, our attention has been turned to that of his friends; we have become familiar with them also, and the merits of Diderot,³ Grimm,⁴ Madame d'Epinay,⁵ and Therese,⁶ have undergone a severe scrutiny, and their falsehood or truth have received their merited judgment.

Among these last, no one more excites our sympathy than Madame d'Houtetôt, the object of his passionate love and the cause of so many of his misfortunes. Madame d'Hou-

* Author: Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley / Transcribed by Fernando Cioni; Annotated by Giacomo Ferrari.

tetôt was a woman of talent, and of the gentlest and most affectionate disposition. But unpretending and unnoticed, we should probably never have heard of her existence but for the passionate remembrance of Rousseau. It is the attribute of genius to gift with immortality all the objects it deigns to hallow by its touch. The memory of the feelings of the heart, however amiable and prized, expires with that heart which was their shrine. But genius cannot die. The present moment passes with the sun that hastens to its repose in the deep; and oblivion, like night, descends upon its world of suffering, enjoyment, or thought, did not genius prolong it to an eternity. The wisest hand down to us the actions of the best. When the chain of such spirits is snapt we emphatically call those times the "Dark Ages;" we turn shuddering from a time when men acted, but were unable to record their acts, and we seek with fresh avidity those remains of our fellow creatures which are more lasting than regal mausoleums, and more akin to our nature than the very body, preserved in a thousand folds of the embalmer's cloth.

It is on Rousseau's account therefore that we feel curious concerning the character of Madame d'Houtetôt. But while satisfying that curiosity we become interested on her own account, and although she has left little behind her by which we may trace her life, yet we are touched and pleased, and finish by declaring her worthy for her own sake of that attention, which we at first bestowed on her for another's. Elizabeth-Sophie-Françoise de la Live de Bellegarde⁷ was the daughter of M. de Bellegarde, Farmer-General,⁸ and the father of M. d'Epinay. Madame d'Epinay and she were therefore sisters-in-law, and lived together under the same roof until the marriage of the latter.⁹ Mademoiselle de la Live¹⁰ was born in the year 1730; she was five years younger

than her sister-in-law; and from her earliest years was distinguished by her sensibility, her gaiety, and her talent. Loving every one, she was much beloved; and this extraordinary tenderness of disposition which characterised her infancy, continued to adorn her to the end of her life. She was married in the year 1747 to the Count d'Houtetôt.¹¹ The preliminaries of this marriage are a curious specimen of the manners of the age. Madame d'Epinay describes Count d'Houtetôt as "a young nobleman without fortune; twenty-two years of age; a gamester by profession; as ugly as the devil, and of low rank in the army; in a word, ignorant, and apparently formed by nature to continue so."¹² She says further, that when she first heard of the proposal she could not have restrained her laughter, had she not feared that the consequences of this ridiculous affair would render her sister-in-law unhappy. In addition to this, it is affirmed that at the moment of his marriage Count d'Houtetôt was passionately attached to another woman, to whom he was unable to unite himself.

Such circumstances offend and even disgust those who are accustomed to look upon any disposal of the person of woman, however legalized, as disgraceful, unless it be sanctioned by the feelings of the heart. The individual character of Sophie¹³ is the redeeming ore amidst this loam; her acknowledged excellence attaches us to her, and we desire to follow her through her path of life, to read a new page in the volume of human nature, and to see how this amiable and gifted creature conducted herself in circumstances the most unfavourable to the developement of the nobler virtues of our nature. The passions of Sophie were in repose; she therefore permitted herself to be disposed of according to the customs of her country, though her unsophisticated nature shuddered at the formation of a tie, intended to be the dearest link among

human beings, on this occasion degraded to little other than a tangible chain.

The proposal of marriage was made on the part of Count d'Houtetôt by M. de Rinvile, his distant relation. M. de Bellegarde declared that his first wish was to please his daughter, and agreed to meet the young Count the next day at a dinner given by M. de Rinvile, where the young people should be introduced to each other. The family of Bellegarde were present at this meeting, and found assembled at the house of M. de Rinvile, the Marquess and Marchioness d'Houtetôt, the young Count their son, and a whole host of relations. The Marchioness rose eagerly to receive them as they entered, and embraced them all with cordiality. The first introduction over, she took the young Sophie aside, talked to her, complimented her, and was struck with sudden admiration of her attractions and understanding. At table the young people were placed near each other, and the parents of the bridegroom seized upon M. de Bellegarde. They were determined to take the poor girl by storm; they employed every art to cajole her and her relations, and solicited an immediate *yes* or *no* to their proposition. Sophie blushed, and was praised, her father was caressed, and Madame d'Esclavelle (the mother of Madame d'Epinay)¹⁴ alone retarded the final decision. She turned to the lady of the house, saying: "It appears to me, Madam, that M. de Rinvile is too hasty in this affair. The particulars are not sufficiently arranged for our young friends to decide; and if, in expectation of an union, they should become mutually attached, and obstacles should afterwards arise"——"You are quite right," exclaimed M. de Rinvile, clapping his hands; "good counsel for ever! We had better first arrange the articles, and while we are thus engaged, the young people may converse and become better acquainted; that's the best

way! that's the best way!" Then taking the parents of the young Count by the hand, he led them to a corner near M. de Bellegarde and Madame d'Esclavelle, calling out to the younger part of the company: "Amuse yourselves, my dears; we are going to employ ourselves in finding means to render you both happy." The fortune of the young Count was then declared, and the old Countess d'Houtetôt, regarding the relations of Sophie with eager solicitude, cried: "I understand nothing of business; but I will give all I have to give, and above all, my diamonds:—my diamonds, Sir, which are very fine. I do not know their exact value; but I will give them all to my daughter-in-law, independent of my son."—"This, my good friend," said M. de Rinvillle to M. de Bellegarde, "is a very handsome present, and what is more, very handsomely bestowed. What say you to our propositions?" M. de Bellegarde declared himself satisfied, but still insisted on consulting the happiness of his daughter. He was interrupted by an eulogium on the young Count: his wife, it was declared, must be the most fortunate of women. M. de Bellegarde was overcome: he stated the dowry of his daughter, and M. de Rinvillle instantly demanded that the contract should be signed that evening, the first banns published on the following Sunday, dispensation for the rest procured, and the nuptials celebrated on Monday. The family of d'Houtetôt applauded this arrangement; the relations of Sophie hesitated, but the importunity of the officious M. de Rinvillle was triumphant. The families of both parties were assembled; all unknown one to the other, they looked on each other with distrust, while the reserve, suspicion, and anxiety, inspired by so sudden an event, gave them all an air of stupidity. The marriage-articles were read, the Marchioness presented Sophie with two cases of diamonds,

the contract was signed, the assembly went to supper, and the marriage was fixed for the following Monday.

During this short interval, rumours not very creditable to the family of d'Houtetôt reached the ears of M. d. Bellegarde; but it was too late; the fate of Sophie was decided. She was passive during the arrangement of the contract, but her spirits became agitated as the decisive moment approached. If she appeared thoughtless and gay in company, yet she wept in secret. It was on the eve of her marriage that she saw Rousseau for the first time. She shewed him the suite of rooms that had been prepared for her, and conversed with him for a long time with that fascinating ease that was natural to her. The next morning, when Madame d'Epinay assisted at her toilette, she was very sorrowful, and had been weeping bitterly. She was going to live among strangers, and to submit her future happiness to the guidance of a man whom she hardly knew by sight.

She married, and became one of that society which has been handed down to us as a model of all that we can know of elegant, refined, well-informed and amusing,— but over which, the strange mode in which their domestic ties were arranged casts an air of heartlessness and intrigue. The conduct of Madame d'Houtetôt was influenced by the opinions of those around her; but she was nevertheless unblemished by those cardinal defects; and every one of every party unites in celebrating the warmth of her heart and the almost childish ingenuousness of her nature. Her person and character have been so vividly described, that we feel as if we knew her, and that her form flitted before us as we depict it upon paper. She was not handsome. Her face was even plain; her forehead low, her nose large, her complexion yellow and deeply marked by the small-pox; but

this irregularity of feature was compensated by the vivacity and sweetness of her expression. Her person was remarkably elegant, her hands and arms fair, her feet small, and she danced with extreme grace. She was vivacious, absent even, frank, and unaffected; her wit was spontaneous and her imagination lively: Her soul was penetrated and made up of love. This unrestrained affectionateness of her disposition was indeed her characteristic. Given up to the enjoyment of the emotions of her heart, she never permitted her ill-wishers to have the satisfaction of exciting in any degree a mutual sentiment in her pure and angerless mind. Her intellect was richly adorned by every talent, but her natural modesty prevented her from making any display. Possessed of great poetical talent, she neither published nor permitted her friends to make copies of her verses: she probably shrunk from any competition of wit with St. Lambert,¹⁵ who was a *Poët de Compagnie*,¹⁶ and whose laboured and dull productions form a striking contrast with her simple and spirited effusions. Both Rousseau and St. Lambert have left descriptions of her character. The one by the latter is almost the only passage of interest in his superficial "Catéchisme Universelle." "She has devoted herself," he says, "from infancy to the pleasure of loving, and has enjoyed all the happiness which an affectionate nature can bestow. She is passionately attached to all who are amiable in her own family and among her friends; and the ingratitude and treachery with which her sentiments have been repaid, have not diminished the strength of her affections, but only forced her to change their object. She has never hated those whom she has ceased to love; and she desires more to be assured of the happiness of her friends than of their attachment to her. Gratitude, benevolence, and generosity, are her attributes; and now in the flower of womanhood, she preserves

all the artlessness and candour of a child. Her understanding is penetrating, just, and delicate; but she has abstained from all abstruse studies. She delights in the fine arts, and writes verses full of feeling and sweetness. She is, from her extreme goodness, often the dupe of the malice of others, but she shuts her eyes to all evil, and the native purity of her mind hinders her from understanding the petty meannesses of those around her."¹⁷

It was doubtless to this fortunate blindness and her extreme vivacity that Madame d'Houtetôt owed the tranquillity and happiness she enjoyed; for otherwise her delicate tact would have been perpetually wounded by the sight of the vices and defects of her associates. She began however to suffer early from the bad character of her husband. Count d'Houtetôt proceeded legally against M. de Bellegarde for the dowry of his wife. We are unable to explain the circumstances; but Count d'Houtetôt was universally blamed, and M. de Bellegarde so much irritated that he refused to see him. Poor Sophie threw herself at the feet of her father, and entreated him not to confound her in the anger he felt against her husband. M. de Bellegarde was deeply hurt by the conduct of his son-in-law: he was moved by the dutiful affection of Sophie, but he was unable to distinguish in his own mind the different feelings with which he ought to have regarded her and her husband. He was cold and reserved. Madame d'Houtetôt was afflicted by this injustice; she was told that it was more of manner than of sentiment, but it must have estranged her from her paternal house, and it may have contributed not a little to the formation of her attachment for St. Lambert. During the first years of our entrance into life we still cling to our early affections; the name of a father is sacred, and the companion of our infancy and the chosen friend of our heart are regarded

with encreased love. But at the same time, our heart, opened to a thousand new emotions, requires tenderness and warmth in return for the treasure of affection it so readily bestows. We may easily put ourselves in the situation of Sophie. The attentions of her husband were cold and heartless; his unworthy conduct destroyed the sensation of tender friendship which she at first felt for him; his parents, given up to dissipation, could not win her esteem. Her father was estranged from her: her sister-in-law, Madame d'Epinay, was engrossed by her own intrigues. Her heart overflowed with the necessity of loving; her joys were all centered in the exercise of her affections. She saw St. Lambert; she loved and was beloved. In the society to which she was confined, her passion was not considered criminal as long as she covered it with the veil of what was called decency. Her husband required no more; and thus, without blame, or the consciousness of a fault, Madame d'Houtetôt became the friend, the constant, passionately attached and faithful friend of her lover, from the moment her connexion with him began until death.¹⁸

St. Lambert was a poor noble of Lorraine, and his pecuniary circumstances constrained him at one time to serve in a regiment of infantry. He was introduced into notice after the death of Madame du Chastelêt,¹⁹ as the successful rival of Voltaire in the favours of that lady. Soon after her death he appeared, for the first time, in Paris. He was received in all the best society, and became a partaker of the *petits soupers*²⁰ of Mademoiselle Quinault, the French actress,²¹ who assembled at her house the leading characters among the French literati. During the life of King Stanislaus²² he divided his time between Paris and Lorraine, where he had the place of *Exempt*²³ in the body-guard of the King of Poland; he afterwards sold his batôn²⁴ and obtained a colonel's commis-

sion in the French service. During the first part of his Parisian career, Madame d'Epinay mentions him in strong terms of favour and admiration. She was pleased with his society, and describes him as possessing great talent, delicate taste, and poetical imagination. He took a principal part in the society to which he belonged, and, as a philosopher and poet, attracted the admiration of his associates. He has since published the result of his philosophical studies and the verses long dormant in his portfolio. The one is without originality or truth; the latter display neither imagination nor passion. But in society these things wear a different aspect; and the brilliancy of his conversation, and the vivacity of his delivery, stood in place of profundity or wit.

Madame d'Houtetôt became attached to St. Lambert with all the warmth of her affectionate heart; and her attachment to him compensated for the keen disappointment she must have felt from the conduct of her husband. His meanness, his avidity for money, his avarice, became every day more apparent, and the coarseness of his manners admitted of no disguise. She turned an indulgent eye on his faults; she did not reproach him with his want of integrity; she bore his caprices with equanimity, whenever her mind, ever blind to the evil side of human nature, permitted her to perceive it; her greatest revenge was a madrigal, where a perception of the ridiculous, and not satirical bitterness, made the point of her reproof. Her life under the roof of his parents was passed in a routine of pleasure, which at intervals was exchanged for the solitude of their country seat on the seaside, in Normandy. She made one at the parties of Madame d'Epinay, and was one of the performers at her private theatre. She took a part in the "Engagement Temeraire,"²⁵ a comedy by Rousseau, who also had a part in it, and at that

time was often in the society of his afterwards beloved Sophie. They took long walks together, and conversation never flagged between them: he thought her very agreeable, but he was far from foreseeing that she was to become the destiny of his life, and the innocent cause of so many of his misfortunes. We may guess the reason why his heart was at that time less susceptible of passion. He lived in society, and his literary efforts were of a political and philosophical nature. Besides, at that time, just awakened to the consciousness of his powers, his mind was too full of its own identity and exertions, to expend itself upon sympathy with another. But during his romantic residence at the Hermitage, his solitary wanderings in the wood of Montmorenci,²⁶ and his impassioned day-dreams, when he created Julie and St. Preux,²⁷ his heart was awakened, and he was prepared for the reception of that love which he so eloquently described. In the mean time, years passed over the head of Madame d'Houtetôt; she continued gay, simple, and enthusiastic, forgetful of all except her constant and unalterable attachment towards her friends. To them she was a sympathizing companion during their joyous hours, an angel of consolation in their adversity; the sensibility that filled her heart gave a touching amiability to her manners, and her vivacity never wounded, because it was always animated by the truest spirit of delicacy.

St. Lambert was often absent during the campaigns. On occasion of one of these absences, she came to the Hermitage, where Rousseau then resided, to bring him news of his friend. Her journey thither was full of adventures. Her coachman lost his way, her carriage stuck in the mud, she alighted to walk, but her slight shoes were soon destroyed, and she arrived at the hermitage in boots, laughing heartily at her misfortune. Rousseau was delighted with her frank

and amiable demeanour; her stay was short, but they parted mutually pleased, and she promised to renew her visit.

She executed her promise the following year. M. d'Houtetôt and St. Lambert, who both served, were absent. Her husband had wished her to retire to their estate in Normandy, but her friends opposed themselves to so melancholy a separation; her ill health was a pretext, and she was permitted to rent a small house at Eaubonne, situated midway between the Hermitage and La Chevrette, the seat of Madame d'Epinay. She came over from Eaubonne to the Hermitage on horseback, and in man's attire. Rousseau would not have been pleased with this disguise in another, but the natural grace of Madame d'Houtetôt embellished every action of her life; she even lent an air of romance to this visit, and the first emotions of the most passionate love were awakened in the heart of Rousseau. He was then occupied in the composition of "*La Nouvelle Heloise*,"²⁸ and his imagination was excited by his extatic reveries; he was in love without an object, and this love fascinated his sight. At first he saw his Julie in Madame d'Houtetôt; but soon Julie was forgotten, and this amiable woman endowed with all the perfections of the idol of his heart. Madame d'Houtetôt made him the confidant of her affection for St. Lambert; she spoke of him with enthusiastic tenderness, and the contagion of passion was communicated to her unfortunate hearer. For a long time he was unaware of the feeling that had taken possession of him; he attributed his agitation and deep sympathy to the warmth of his friendship. It was not until he found, during his noon-day reveries, the idea of Madame d'Houtetôt substituted for Julie, that he opened his eyes, and saw the extent of his misfortune.

At first, shame and timidity rendered him silent: his agitation betrayed him, and Madame d'Houtetot found that

she was beloved. Her gentle nature would not permit her to be angry with a man whose fault was his attachment to her, and she hesitated to deprive St. Lambert of a friend whom he prized. She saw a middle course, and, unread in the human heart, she trusted that utter hopelessness would destroy the ill-placed love, while her sincere friendship would preserve the happiness of Rousseau. She talked to him of St. Lambert; she drew a lively picture of the delightful intercourse that might exist between all three, when he should have restrained his feelings within reasonable bounds; she exhorted him to put in exercise his virtuous principles, and she reproached him for his treason towards his friend. Rousseau listened with docility; and his own understanding added force to her arguments. There was one, however, that she did not use, but which speedily suggested itself to his mind, and which became a spur instead of a check to his passion. He thought of his age, and of the unalterable fidelity of Madame d'Houtetôt to her lover. What, he thought, can St. Lambert, the tenderly beloved St. Lambert, have to fear from me? Old, unattractive, sick, my folly can hurt myself alone, and I may love and weep, fearless of being guilty of any treachery towards my young and favoured friend.

Rousseau having thus silenced his remorse, he gave himself entirely up to his destructive passion. Madame d'Houtetôt never flattered his delusion, or ceased to remonstrate against it; but she treated him with gentleness, and falsely trusted that her friendship would suffice to content a sentiment, which ever requires entire sympathy and unconditional return. This misjudged kindness led them both to the brink of a precipice. They spent much of their time together; they took long walks in the romantic country they inhabited; they passed evenings together, under the shade

of trees in a small wood. Love made Rousseau eloquent, even beyond his natural talent, but the fidelity of Madame d'Houtetôt remained unshaken; she was moved to tears, but St. Lambert occupied solely the shrine of her heart; his idea was perpetually present to her; she recalled it to the memory of Rousseau, and he saw with despair the insurmountable bounds that she eternally placed to his vainly towering passion.

This state of things could not continue long; it could not have endured of itself, and it was broken in upon by the intervention of others. His love became known, and attracted universal attention; an anonymous letter awakened the suspicions of St. Lambert. He did justice to the constancy of Madame d'Houtetôt; but she had concealed the love of Rousseau from him, and this occasioned some diffidence in his mind. Angry with herself for her injudicious indulgence, and fearful of its consequences, Madame d'Houtetôt declared to Rousseau, that he must forget his unhappy passion, or he could see her no more. The suspicions which he conceived of Madame d'Epinay's interference, and the return of St. Lambert, brought on the catastrophe. St. Lambert reproached him with gentleness, and Rousseau was humiliated. On the departure of the Marquess, Madame d'Houtetôt was altered; she became cold and estranged, and even asked him to return her letters. Rousseau saw that the dream was over; he saw the necessity of exerting all his powers to extinguish his ill-fated passion. Madame d'Houtetôt was conscious that gentleness had been fuel to the fire that filled his heart: her visits to the Hermitage were relinquished; he was no longer received with the same cordiality at Eaubonne, and he ceased to visit there. Soon after St. Lambert was taken ill, Madame d'Houtetôt became

solely occupied by his welfare; she quitted Eaubonne, and all intimate connexion between her and Rousseau was at an end.*

On his recovery, St. Lambert quitted the French service, and came to live at Paris. Madame d'Houtetôt, who endured much painful solicitude during his absences at the army, was doubly gay and contented on this change. St. Lambert gave himself entirely up to literature; he became a Member of the French Academy,²⁹ was subsequently elected its Secretary, and afterwards succeeded Buffon³⁰ as its Director. He published his "Saisons,"³¹ a work he had long before composed and read to his friends, and on which his poetical reputation chiefly rested. The publication, however, destroyed the drawing-room poet; it was declared with one voice (a voice which all into whose hands it falls must echo) tame, dull, and unreadable; nor could the notes and tales by which it was accompanied give feathers to the leaden-footed Muse. Some time afterwards he published his Catechisme

*As we are not writing either a justification or a life of Rousseau, we pass over the various contradictory accounts that have been published concerning his conduct in this affair, and the accusations that have been heaped upon him. His own statement by no means exculpates him, and the tone of sensuality that reigns throughout is in conformity to the style of "La Nouvelle Heloise," but takes from his passion that purity and exaltation of sentiment which make the best part of our sympathy for a lover's sufferings. We confine ourselves in our present account to Madame d'Houtetôt, who held a clear course; she was divided between compassion for Rousseau and her constant attachment to St. Lambert. Her mistakes were owing to the tenderness of her heart; and to the end she demonstrated the sweetness of her disposition, tinctured, as was usual to her, by a little indiscretion of conduct and incongruity in her reasoning faculties. Nor have we entered here upon those extensive questions which might naturally be raised on such a subject. We are only drawing a portrait, and leave the criticism upon it to others.

Universelle; a book of false and superficial philosophy. The best parts are borrowed from Rousseau, but the sentiments, so eloquently expressed in the *Emile*,³² meet you despoiled and arid under the shape of St. Lambert's aphorisms and conclusive arguments. With his youth St. Lambert seems also to have lost the amiable and brilliant qualities that once distinguished him. Not so Madame d'Houtetôt; her mind seemed endowed with perpetual youth; age did not diminish either the gaiety of her spirits or the affectionateness of her disposition. She nursed St. Lambert in ill health; she humoured his foibles, and ever continued his constant and unequalled friend. The lady to whom M. d'Houtetôt had been attached died, and he transferred to his wife the attentions and friendship of which she had hitherto been bereaved. The fragments of poetry which remain of hers were chiefly written during old age; and amidst all its displeasures, she fondly dwells upon those affections which formed her only consolations.

It would have given us great pleasure if we could have traced Madame d'Houtetôt through the remaining years of her long life, but we know of no record that can aid us in this research. She was a witness of those tremendous vicissitudes that shook our moral world as an earthquake; she beheld the fall of what in her younger days must have appeared to her as firm set as the earth's foundations—the Bourbon dynasty. She saw the rise and fall of Napoleon.³³ The last years of her life were spent at Eaubonne. Her husband and lover were both dead; all that before had lent life and interest to the Vale of Montmorenci had passed away. The Hermitage was gone, Rousseau was no more. She remained the sole land-mark of a strange country, which the waves of time had washed over even to obliteration. The hearts that had beat for her were cold, but hers was yet

warm. She was surrounded by her grandchildren, and sought consolation in new friendships for a fresh race. As she sat over her embroidery frame, she sang the songs she had composed in years long gone by, and composed others adapted to her present circumstances. Her imagination and feelings were vanquished by death alone.

She died in the year 1813, aged 83, and we lost in her the last relic of the age of Louis XV.³⁴

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Elisabeth Françoise Sophie de la Live de Bellegarde, comtesse d'Houdetot (1730-1813), French noblewoman. Mary Shelley became well-acquainted with Rousseau's works and letters over the period 1815-22.

² Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), Genevan philosopher and writer whose thought influenced greatly the European Enlightenment. Among his most important works, *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761), and *Émile ou sur l'éducation* and *Contrat social* (1762).

³ Denis Diderot (1713-84), one of the main representatives of the French Enlightenment. His – and D'Alembert's – major contribution is the project and realisation of the *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751-72).

⁴ Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1723-1807), German writer, art critic, journalist, and contributor to the *Encyclopédie*.

⁵ Louise-Florence-Pétronille Tardieu d'Esclavelles, known as Madame d'Épinay (1726-83), was a French writer and *saloniste*, author of the autobiography *Mémoires de madame d'Épinay* (1818), and the pedagogical treatise *Conversations d'Émilie* (1781). She also contributed to Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire philosophique et critique* (1753).

⁶ Marie-Thérèse Levasseur (1721-1801) partner and wife of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

⁷ Madame d'Houdetot (or d'Houtetot).

⁸ "In pre-revolutionary France, a person who rents the right to set and collect the taxes or duties of a particular district on behalf of the king, retaining a share of the revenue", *OED*, "farmer general (*n.*)".

⁹ Madame d'Épinay was raised in the care of her aunt and uncle, Marie-Josèphe Prouveur and Louis-Denis de La Live de Bellegarde, Madame d'Houdetot's parents.

¹⁰ Madame d'Houdetot (or d'Houtetot).

¹¹ Claude Constant César, Comte d'Houdetot (1724-1806), army brigadier.

¹² Translation from Madame D'Épinay, *Mémoires et correspondance de Madame d'Épinay*, 8th March 1747.

¹³ Madame d'Houdetot (or d'Houtetot).

¹⁴ Florence-Angélique Prouveur (1694-1762).

¹⁵ Jean François de Saint-Lambert (1716-1803), French poet and writer, author several entries in the *Encyclopédie*, and of the pastoral poem *Les saisons* (1769) which is considered his masterpiece. He pursued a military career until 1758.

¹⁶ *I.e.*, Poet of the French Academy.

¹⁷ English translation from Jean François de Saint-Lambert, *Principes des moeurs chez toutes les nations ou Catéchisme universel*, Paris: Agasse, 1798, 222-3.

¹⁸ Jean François de Saint-Lambert was Madame d'Houdetot's companion from 1752 until his death.

¹⁹ Gabrielle Émilie Le Tonnelier de Breteuil, Marquise du Châtelet (1706-49), French writer, mathematician and natural philosopher. In 1748 she began an affair with Jean François de Saint-Lambert, and died a few days after giving birth to their daughter, Stanislas-Adélaïde.

²⁰ Dinner parties with selected guests.

²¹ Jeanne-Françoise Quinault (1699-1783), French actress, playwright and *saloniste*.

²² Stanisław I Leszczyński (reigned 1704-9, 1737-66), King of Poland and Duke of Lorraine.

²³ *I.e.*, sub-officer.

²⁴ A staff carried as the symbol of office, *i.e.*, he sold his position in the bodyguard.

²⁵ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *L'Engagement temeraire*, 1746-7.

²⁶ In 1756, Madame d'Épinay provided Rousseau with a cottage, which she called *Ermitage*, located in the Vale of Montmorency.

²⁷ Two of the main characters in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's epistolary novel *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761).

²⁸ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761).

²⁹ Jean François de Saint-Lambert became member of the *Académie Française* in 1770.

³⁰ Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707-88), French naturalist and mathematician.

³¹ Jean François de Saint-Lambert, *Les saisons* (1769).

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- ³² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile ou sur l'éducation* and *Contrat social* (1762).
- ³³ Napoleone Buonaparte (1769-1821), French general, statesman and Emperor (1804-1814, 1815).
- ³⁴ Louis XV (reigned 1715-74), King of France.

SHAKESPEAR'S FOOLS.*

I WAS of half a dozen minds how to begin, till at last I fixed upon gravity. So here goes:—

“If a man were to introduce a Fool, to do nothing but speak folly, it were foolishness itself,”¹ as was well said or sung by Mr. Coleridge (and he is a grave man) among other good things touching motley gentry, in an extempore lecture; for his pocket was picked of the written one in his way to the Institution. It was pleasant to see Kant’s philosophy, once in a way, hand-in-hand with Tom-foolery. Just then I heard there was extant a huge production on Shakespear’s Fools, by one Douce.² A friend lent me the volumes, assuring me it was a “standard work,” and so were all the books in his library;—they were ever standard. With what joy I soiled my white handkerchief in flapping away the dust, how snugly they lay under my arm, and what care I promised to take of them! Ah, thought I, now I have a treasure! —What a disappointment!³ Why this man, Douce, had no more to do with Shakespear, than the housewife who sacrilegiously steals one of his pages to tie down a pickle-jar. The deuce was in Douce.⁴ It was an antiquarian treatise on Fools’ dresses, grounded on authorities from Shakespear, all up-side-down. For instance, because one of them says, “I did impetticoat thy gratuity,”⁵ he gravely proves that Fools wore petticoats, blind to the staring fact that it was the sweetheart’s petticoat intended,⁶ and follows it up with

* Author: Charles Armitage Brown / Transcribed by Fernando Cioni; Annotated by Giacomo Ferrari.

copies from monstrous old wood-cuts. Again, he affirms this particular Fool was not quite an idiot, and this one only half a natural, and so on, classing them as a gardener does cabbages. Touchstone⁷ half a natural! Oh, Mr. Douce, what are you? That a man should knock his head against a wall is pardonable; but that he should obstinately keep it there, through two such big volumes, is by no means pardonable,—it is only astonishing.

It is said, in Shakespear's time Fools became less tolerable. Most likely. In his days there was an inquiring spirit abroad, which made truth insupportable; though once it was pretty sport to hear it spoken when no one else believed in it, as a beauty enjoys the joke of being called ugly; but when her charms begin to fade, it becomes a serious matter, a very intolerable piece of insolence.

Now to speak of them as individuals. It is a blank mistake to imagine, because they are all in motley, that their characters are of one colour. They are not like our harlequins in a Christmas pantomime,⁸ always the same identical harlequins, whether under the influence of a Mother Goose,⁹ a Friar Bacon,¹⁰ or a little silver fairy, jumping out of a full-blown tinsel rose. Even Douce could distinguish between them in his dousing way. Come forth, my merry gentles, all four of you (I wish there were a dozen) and let me take you by the hand, one by one, that I may introduce you in a particular manner to our friends and acquaintance.

The lady Olivia's Fool¹¹ shall be first,—not for his own merits, but purely in compliment to the lady. There is something suspicious about him. Would you believe it?—he hath a leman!¹² yea, and absents himself from the house, we don't know how long, and will not confess where he has been. This is the more inexcusable, as there happens to be a touch of prudery among the good qualities of his noble

mistress. He is a wild young rogue, and ought not to be amended. Besides, I don't half dislike him on another score. I pass by his cutting a joke about hell "to ears polite,"¹³ and his contending he "lives by the church;"¹⁴ the most orthodox have been guilty of the like. But what are we to think of him when he puts on the gown of Sir Topaz the curate?¹⁵ Soon as it is thrown over his shoulders, he speaks this pertinence—"I will dissemble myself in it; and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown."¹⁶ Then he pays a visit to a poor wretch¹⁷ in the clutches of his masters, with the text of "Peace in this prison!"—declaring he is "one of those gentle ones, that will use the devil himself with courtesy,"¹⁸ and, at the same time, falls into most intolerant abuse. So, this is his idea of a Sir Topaz! After endeavouring to persuade the prisoner he is vexed by a fiend, is a lunatic, and that a dark room is a light one, he questions him as to the tenets of a particular kind of faith, which was once held most sacred.¹⁹ When this is answered, his catechism comes to that fearful point of "What think'st thou of his opinion?" "I think," says the prisoner, "nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion."²⁰ This, considering it was impossible for him to believe, seems moderate. But his Reverence, who (you must all the while understand) is the Fool, immediately puts on the sullens, croaks out, "Fare thee well: remain thou still in darkness!"—insists on his giving credence to an incredible faith, and then, with another "Fare thee well," leaves him to his evil fate.²¹ If these mysteries are too sublime, gentlemen, for your understanding, it is pitiful. But as this Fool, who "wore not motley in his brain,"²² did not choose to apply them to his times, I will even follow so wise an example. What's this, my boy? A tabor!²³ Ah! I know thou art very fond of music, and hast "a sweet breath to sing," "a mellifluous voice," "a contagious breath,"—no

wonder thou hast a leman! Thou canst sing "a love-song, or a song of good life," or join in a catch that shall "rouse the night owl, and draw three souls out of one weaver," or chaunt a pathetic tender ditty, which

—— "is silly sooth,
And dallies with the innocence of love,
Like the old age."²⁴

But your epilogue-song, I hear, from good authority, is the most despairing thing your father ever wrote. With submission I think these five stanzas are not more despairing than the "Seven Ages;"²⁵ though in a song, and with the original music, the bare history of man falls upon the heart with greater melancholy. I had always regarded it in no other light than as a hint to the audience, after having laughed, through a pleasant comedy, at the frailties and passions of their fellows, to look to themselves. At all events, I contend it does but "dally with the innocence"²⁶ of despair.

Next, "good Mr. Lavatch,"²⁷ as thou art highly titled by the crest-fallen Parolles,²⁸ step forth thou whose wit is like a "barber's chair."²⁹ You may see, with half an eye, he has not the same jaunty air with the rest; though, when occasion serves, he can "make a leg, put off's cap, kiss his hand, and say nothing."³⁰ His knowledge is somewhat limited; he has never been much beyond the walls of the Castle of Rousillon;³¹ yet when he visits the court he comes off with a passable grace. "My lord, that's gone, made himself much sport out of him;"³² and as every one must love the memory of the old count, this is the brightest feather in his cap. He too can sing, though he treats us with only one specimen, and that is the most appropriate to his situation, a fragment from the old Troubadours of Provence;³³ albeit a little twisted—"corrupted," the countess calls it³⁴—to serve his own pur-

poses. He should be designated in the *Dramatis Personæ* as an uneasy bachelor. Benedick rails at love and marriage,³⁵ but not at womankind, as they are to him quite an abstract species; but this Fool, having a mind to marry, especially "Isbel the woman,"³⁶ looks forward to his chance in the lottery with strange misgivings, and, in his fears, finds fault with all the sex together. A marrying man is often thus. Our experienced dames know how to translate this language of general abuse, and when they meet with a likely young man shockingly guilty of it, entertain high hopes, and are remarkably busy in thrusting daughters and nieces in his way. Hannah More has but sublimated the first part of the character of Mr. Lavatch in her "Cœlebs in search of a Wife."³⁷ Both give their special reasons for matrimony, only the Fool's are the more unanswerable, and both bewail the uncertainty of their approaching fate with sundry insinuations against the good qualities of all expecting maidens. The only difference is, that one sets out with a sweetheart in his eye, and the other sets his eye agog for a sweetheart. Colebs at last finds an angelic nonpareil; but as Shakespear had no acquaintance with such young ladies, he finishes his bachelor otherwise, and down falls the curtain without a wife for Mr. Lavatch. He had been to court, forsooth! and returns home with "no mind to Isbel. The brain," quoth he, "of my Cupid's knock'd out; and I begin to love, as an old man loves money, with no stomach."³⁸ Upon this theme, a married man, with plenty of leisure and industry, might furnish a considerable folio; but that is none of my business; besides, *Touchstone*³⁹ is growing impatient.

Here he comes, lugging in something after him. What, Audrey!⁴⁰ I can't speak to thee now, Audrey. Go along, Audrey. "The Gods have not made thee poetical."⁴¹—This fellow is the reverse of Mr. Lavatch; he has been brought up at court, and

then becomes fixed in a country life. He is a philosopher, but his humour is melancholy and satirical. It is not surprising that Jacques⁴² should take so strong a liking to him, as their minds are much of the same hue; only Touchstone is no misanthrope, because he had been no libertine. There never yet was satirist, who did not "rail on lady Fortune," and waste his time in reflections on its fleeting nature; however he does it "wisely and in good set terms."⁴³ His education among courtiers, and his daily experience with shepherds, afford him everlasting subjects of discourse. Nothing escapes him, not Audrey herself; at every step he starts fresh game for his wit to shoot at; and is a mighty hunter in the forest of Arden.⁴⁴ All base metals are tried and proved counterfeit by this Touchstone.⁴⁵ Who will set our pious sermons and moral treatises on the sin of duelling against his "finding the quarrel on the seventh cause?"⁴⁶ What ridicule he throws upon those nice distinctions which are to make a gentleman draw his sword and put it up again; and how he sneers at the masked poltroonery of these men of—(valour, I was about to say, but mine Host of the Garter⁴⁷ reminds me of a better word)—of "mock-water."⁴⁸ These rules for quarrelling still exist, much in the same fashion, among our pistol-mongers; and I am convinced it is because they cannot study Shakespear. Touchstone's satire flies more direct to its object than that of any other of the motley tribe, and is more caustic and personal. He is a walking Juvenal⁴⁹ "under the shade of melancholy boughs."⁵⁰ Though he gives us a scrap of a stanza, and can rhyme to "the right butter-woman's rate to market,"⁵¹ he neither sings nor loves singing. From mere idleness he asks the Pages for a song, and then makes a most ungracious return.⁵² His having "no music in himself"⁵³ is quite in character; and indeed I have read that the jaundice⁵⁴ is often attended by a

partial loss of hearing. Audrey's admiration of him, and her being, I have no doubt, a comely, brown, black-eyed girl, may have effected somewhat; though I suspect the chief cause of his paying court to her, with no hurry to be married, was the want of a mental excitement in a pastoral life. I cannot love him so well as the others, but perhaps I love to read him more, as he, like Jacques, is "full of matter."⁵⁵

"Now, our joy, though last, not least,"⁵⁶ my dearest of all Fools, Lear's Fool! Ah, what a noble heart, a gentle and a loving one, lies hid beneath that party-coloured jerkin. Thou hast been cruelly treated. Regan and Goneril could but hang thee,⁵⁷ while the unfeeling players did worse; for they tainted thy character, and at last thrust thee from the stage, as one unfit to appear in their worshipful company.⁵⁸ Regardless of that warning voice, forbidding them to "speak more than is set down for them,"⁵⁹ they have put into thy mouth words so foreign to thy nature,* that they might, with as much propriety, be given to Cardinal Wolsey.⁶⁰ But let me take thee, without addition or diminution, from the hands of Shakespear, and then art thou one of his most perfect creations. Look at him! It may be your eyes see him not as mine do, but he appears to me of a light delicate

* There are three passages, foisted in by the players, and adopted by the printers, which ought to be for ever expunged from the text. They are the following:—the couplet at the end of the first act; the whole of Merlin's prophecy during the storm, beginning with "This is a brave night," &c. as the Fool should go out with Lear; and those brutal words, "And I'll go to bed at noon," when the old king sinks into sleep. Such contradictions puzzled me for a long time, till looking among the Annotations, a profitable task once in a hundred times, I discovered that none of these three passages are in the quarto editions, printed eight years before Shakespear's death, but are introduced into the folio one, printed seven years after it. This, together with their absurdity, makes it plain they are not Shakespear's.⁶¹

frame, every feature expressive of sensibility even to pain, with eyes lustrously intelligent, a mouth blandly beautiful, and withal a hectic flush upon his cheek. O, that I were a painter! O, that I could describe him as I knew him in my boyhood, when the Fool made me shed tears, while Lear did but terrify me!

"But where's my Fool? I have not seen him these two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, the Fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well."⁶²

I have sometimes speculated on filling an octavo sheet on Shakespear's admirable introduction of characters; but a little reflection showed me that I must write a volume, and that's a fearful thing. This would rank among his best. We are prepared to see him with his mind full of the fatal "division of the kingdom,"⁶³ and oppressed with "thick-coming fancies;"⁶⁴ and when he appears before us, we are convinced of both, though not in an ordinary way. Those who have never read any thing but the French Theatre, or the English plays of the last century, would expect to see him upon the scene, wiping his eyes with his cloak; as if the worst of sorrows did not frequently vent themselves in jests, and that there are not beings who dare not trust their nature with a serious face when the soul is deeply struck. Besides, his profession compels him to raillery and a seeming jollity. The very excess of merriment is here an evidence of grief; and when he enters throwing his coxcomb at Kent, and instantly follows it up with allusions to the miserable rashness of Lear, we ought to understand him from that moment to the last.⁶⁵ Throughout this scene his wit, however varied, still aims at the same point; and in spite of

threats, and regardless how his words may be construed by Goneril's⁶⁶ creatures, with the eagerness of a filial love he prompts the old King to "resume the shape which he had cast off."⁶⁷ "This is not altogether Fool, my Lord."⁶⁸ But alas! it is too late. And when driven from the scene by Goneril, he turns upon her with an indignation that knows no fear of the "halter" for himself:—

"A fox when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter."⁶⁹

That such a character should be distorted by players, printers, and commentators! Observe every word he speaks; his meaning, one would imagine, could not be misinterpreted; and when he at length finds his covert reproaches can avail nothing, he changes his discourse to simple mirth, in order to distract the sorrows of his master. When Lear is in the storm, who is with him? None—not even Kent—

"None but the Fool; who labours to outjest
His heart-struck injuries."⁷⁰

The tremendous agony of Lear's mind would be too painful, and even deficient in pathos, without this poor faithful servant at his side. It is he that touches our hearts with pity, while Lear fills the imagination to aching. "The explosions of his passion," as Mr. Lamb⁷¹ has written in an excellent criticism, "are terrible as a volcano; they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that sea, his mind, with all its vast riches."⁷² Such a scene wanted relief, and Shakespeare, we may rely upon it, gives us the best. But it is acted otherwise,—no, it is Tate⁷³ that is acted. Let

them, if they choose, bring this tragedy on the stage; but, by all means, let us not be without the Fool. I can imagine an actor in this part, with despair in his face, and a tongue for ever struggling with a jest, that should thrill every bosom. What! banish him from the tragedy, when Lear says, "I have one part in my heart that's sorry yet for thee;" and when he so feelingly addresses him with "Come on, my boy: How dost, my boy? Art cold? I am cold myself."⁷⁴ At that pitch of rage, "Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here!" could we but see the Fool throw himself into his master's arms, to stay their fury, looking up in his countenance with eyes that would fain appear as if they wept not, and hear his pathetic entreaty, "Pr'ythee, nuncle, be contented!"⁷⁵—Pshaw! these players know nothing of their trade. While Gloster⁷⁶ and Kent are planning to procure shelter for the King, whose wits at that time "begin to unsettle,"⁷⁷ he remains silent in grief; but afterwards, in the farm-house, we find him endeavouring to divert the progress of Lear's madness, as it becomes haunted by the visions of his daughters, and that in the most artful manner, by humouring the wanderings of his reason, and then striving to dazzle him with cheerfulness. At the last, we behold him, when all his efforts are proved unavailing, utterly dumb! "And my poor Fool is hanged!"⁷⁸

"With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
For the rain it raineth every day."⁷⁹

Yes—there must be something very despairing in that epilogue-song, or it could not have entered my head at such a time.

I have said there are only four Fools in Shakespear, but we have the skull of a fifth. "Alas, poor Yorick!"⁸⁰ And

this conjures to one's mind the idea of Hamlet in petticoats. Without this fact staring me in the face, I could have as soon thought of Juliet⁸¹ grown older than her old Nurse. But it is very true. Hamlet must have once been a squalling⁸² baby; and soon after, in little breeches, "with shining morning face."⁸³ Nor could his infancy be better ennobled, than by telling us he kissed the King's Jester "I know not how oft," and was "borne on his back a thousand times."⁸⁴

CARLUCCIO.⁸⁵

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- ¹ Unidentified reference.
- ² Francis Douce, *Illustrations of Shakspeare, and of ancient manners: with dissertations on the clowns and fools of Shakspeare*, 299-332, London: 1807.
- ³ Misprint for “disappointment”.
- ⁴ The deuce is the personification or spirit of mischief, the devil, as in the exclamation “The deuce is in it!”. See *OED*, “deuce (n.2)”.
- ⁵ A reading of Feste’s line in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, II.iii.27: “I did impetico thy gratil- lity”, i.e. “I pocketed your gratuity”, where “impetico” is a nonce-word compounded of “petticoat” and the verb “impocket”.
- ⁶ Actually Feste “impockets” Sir Andrew’s gratuity in his own motley coat because, as can be gathered from his ensuing non-sensical explanation, he needs money to drink and neither Malvolio nor Olivia give him any.
- ⁷ The two fools mentioned are Feste and Touchstone, respectively in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*.
- ⁸ Thomas John Dibdin’s pantomime *Harlequin and Mother Goose, or The Golden Egg*, (music by W. Ware, Covent Garden Theatre, 1806), a successful combination of elements from the Italian *commedia dell’arte* and British folklore.
- ⁹ The character from Charles Perrault’s fairy tale collection *Contes de ma Mère l’Oye* (1697). The author is referring to the Mother Goose in *Harlequin and Mother Goose*, see n. 8 above.
- ¹⁰ The skillful but careless sorcerer in Robert Greene’s play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (c.1590).
- ¹¹ I.e., Feste. Lady Olivia, the countess in *Twelfth Night*, attracts both Malvolio and Sir Andrew Aguecheek, and eventually marries Sebastian.
- ¹² I.e., a sweetheart. “Leman” is the archaic word used by Shakespeare (II.iii.25), out of place in that context.
- ¹³ Reference to Alexander Pope’s poem *Moral Essays, in Four Epistles* (1731-35, ep. IV, 150). “Never mention hell to ears polite” means being overly cautious about taboos and uncomfortable matters when in a refined company.
- ¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, III.i.3.
- ¹⁵ Feste disguises as a priest in 4.2. and assumes the name of Sir Topaz, or Topas in the 1623 Folio. The name alludes to *The Tale of Sir Thopas* in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* and to the braggart knight Sir Tophas in John Lily’s *Endimion*. Also, the changeable colours of the gemstone might allude to Feste’s change of identity and to the colours of his motley coat.
- ¹⁶ William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, IV.ii.4-6.
- ¹⁷ I.e., Malvolio.
- ¹⁸ William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, IV.ii.34-5.
- ¹⁹ Irreverent mention of Pythagoras’s theory of *metempsychosis*.
- ²⁰ William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, IV.ii.56-8.
- ²¹ William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, IV.ii.59-63
- ²² William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, I.v.55. Feste claims to be a fool only by profession, not by nature.
- ²³ A drum hanging from the neck or belt, traditionally played by stage fools.
- ²⁴ William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II.iii.21, 54-55, 36, 59-60, II.iv.53-55.
- ²⁵ Jaques’s monologue in William Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*, in which the world is compared to a stage where everyone plays his part, divided into the seven ages of man’s life.
- ²⁶ William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II.iv.54.
- ²⁷ Lavatch is the clown in the Countess of Roussillon’s household in William Shakespeare, *All’s Well That Ends Well*, V.ii.1.
- ²⁸ Parolles is Bertram’s disloyal follower in William Shakespeare, *All’s Well That Ends Well*.
- ²⁹ I.e., “Like a barber’s chair that fits all buttocks” or “serve all man”, fitting every occasion.
- ³⁰ William Shakespeare, *All’s Well That Ends Well*, II.ii.10-11.
- ³¹ Bertram and the Countess’ household in *All’s Well That Ends Well*.
- ³² William Shakespeare, *All’s Well That Ends Well*, IV.v.65-6.

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³³ Brown is probably being ironic. The song is meant to resemble a ballad about the infidelity of nine out of ten women.

³⁴ William Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*, I.iii.81.

³⁵ Reference to the Benedick, who despises marriage, in William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, especially 1.1.

³⁶ William Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*, I.iii.20.

³⁷ The moralist Hannah More's novel, *Coelebs in Search of a Wife. Comprehending Observations on Domestic Habits and Manners, Religion and Morals*, London: T. Cadle and W. Davies, 1808.

³⁸ William Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*, III.ii.12-16.

³⁹ Court fool in William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.

⁴⁰ A simple country girl, a goat-keeper, whom Touchstone tries to woo and eventually marries.

⁴¹ Adapted quotation from William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, III.iii.15.

⁴² The melancholic gentleman, famous for the aforementioned speech on the Seven ages of man, who eventually remains in the Forest of Arden and leads a religious life.

⁴³ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II.vii.16-23.

⁴⁴ The forest where most of the action in William Shakespeare's *As You Like It* takes place. Be it a reference to the Forest of Arden in Warwickshire, or the French Ardennes, it holds a mythical status.

⁴⁵ A Touchstone is "a very smooth, fine-grained, black or darkcoloured variety of quartz or jasper [...] used for testing the quality of gold and silver alloys by the colour of the streak produced by rubbing them upon it", *OED*, "Touchstone (*n.1*)".

⁴⁶ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, V.iv.52-3.

⁴⁷ A character in William Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

⁴⁸ William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, II.iii.58. The word's exact meaning is obscure, but the context is of some help: the Host of the Garter is mocking the French Doctor Caius with made-up words that have the opposite meaning of the definition he then gives the Doctor. Therefore "mock-water" would probably mean the opposite of "valour".

⁴⁹ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II.vii.116.

⁵⁰ Decimus Junius Juvenalis (Juvenal, 55-135/40 AD), Latin satirical poet.

⁵¹ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, III.ii.98. Today most editions read "the right butter-women's *rank* to market", but the meaning is similar, "exactly the monotonous jog-trot of dairy-women taking butter to market" (Folger Shakespeare, edited by Barbara A. Mowatt and Paul Werstine, 96).

⁵² William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, V.iii.8-47.

⁵³ William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, V.i.92.

⁵⁴ "Jaundice" meaning here the supposed effects of the condition on disposition, *i.e.*, "bitterness".

⁵⁵ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II.i.72.

⁵⁶ Adapted quotation from William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, I.i.91-92, spoken by Lear who is actually referring to his daughter Cordelia.

⁵⁷ Regan and Goneril are King Lear's daughters and sisters of Cordelia. Towards the end of the play, after contributing to most of the tragic events, Goneril poisons Regan and then commits suicide. Soon before Lear's death, the old king has the line "And my poor fool is hanged! No, no, no life?" (William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, V.iii.369). Today's commentators of the play generally interpret "fool" as "a term of endearment or pity, typically with the implication of innocence" (*OED*, "fool (*n.1* & *adj.*)"), therefore actually referring to Cordelia rather than to the Fool.

⁵⁸ Brown's "unfeeling players" are probably actors such as David Garrick (1717-79), John Philip Kemble (1757-1823), and Edmund Kean (1787-1833), who staged Nahum Tate's 1681 adaptation of *Lear*, which has a happy ending and omits the Fool. Kean did eventually restore the tragic ending, but not until 1823: too late for Brown's essay – already in Hunt's hands before November 1822 – to report, and still omitting the Fool.

⁵⁹ Hamlet's warning to the actors is "And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them" (William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III.ii.40-2).

⁶⁰ Thomas Wolsey (1473-1530), English cardinal, is also a hostile and Machiavellian character in William Shakespeare and John Fletcher's 1613 history play *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*.

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⁶¹ Without going into the details of the textual history of *King Lear*, it suffices to say that Brown's note is based mainly on taste, and has been made obsolete by recent criticism: of the three passages listed by Brown, only "the couplet at the end of the first act" is considered an interpolation by numerous modern editors but, despite what Brown writes, it is both in the Quarto (Q) and in the Folio (F). Merlin's prophecy and the "brutal words" are indeed only in F. Critics today tend to consider F the fruit of revision and, in general, to take F and Q as two equally worthy versions of the same play (or two different plays altogether). As for the argument of the supposed temporal shortcomings of F, it is of course unjustified, since there is no proof that F was not based on an authoritative text.

⁶² William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, I.iv.71-5.

⁶³ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, I.i.4.

⁶⁴ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V.iii.47.

⁶⁵ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, I.iv.96-108. Kent is an earl who remains loyal to Lear throughout the tragedy. The Fool gives him his coxcomb – a jester's hat – to protect him from the cold in case he does not take the winner's side ("not smile as the wind sits"). The gesture will prove prophetic as the three – Lear, Kent, the Fool – will wander together on the heath later.

⁶⁶ See n. 57 above.

⁶⁷ Adapted quotation from William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, I.iv.326-7.

⁶⁸ Quotation from Kent in William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, I.iv.155.

⁶⁹ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, I.iv.335-8.

⁷⁰ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, III.i.19-20.

⁷¹ Charles Lamb (1775-1834), English essayist and poet, author, with his sister Mary Lamb (1764-1847) of *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807). His essay "On the Tragedies of Shakespeare Considered with Reference to their Fitness for Stage Representation", published in John Hunt's *Reflector* in 1811, was one of the reasons for Kean's 1823 restoration of the tragic *Lear*. See n. 58 above.

⁷² Charles Lamb, "On the Tragedies of Shakespeare Considered with Reference to their Fitness for Stage Representation", in *Specimens of Modern English Literary Criticism*, edited by William T. Brewster, New York: Macmillan, 1907, 231.

⁷³ Nahum Tate (1652-1715), poet and playwright, adapted *King Lear* in 1681. See n. 58 above.

⁷⁴ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, III.i.74-80.

⁷⁵ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, III.iv.115-17.

⁷⁶ The Earl of Gloucester remains, like Kent, loyal to Lear.

⁷⁷ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, III.iv.170.

⁷⁸ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, V.iii.369; but see n. 57 above.

⁷⁹ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, III.ii.82-4.

⁸⁰ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, V.i.190-1. Yorick was the jester at the court of Elsinore when Hamlet was a boy. It is his skull that Hamlet handles in the celebrated scene.

⁸¹ Juliet Capulet in William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*.

⁸² I.e., crying noisily.

⁸³ Jaques' line in William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II.vii.153. The "shining morning face" belongs to the "whining schoolboy" in the second of the aforementioned seven ages of man. See n. 25 above.

⁸⁴ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, V.i.192-5.

⁸⁵ Pseudonym of Charles Armitage Brown (1787-1842), English writer and friend of the poet John Keats (1795-1821) and Leigh Hunt (1784-1859). Hunt and Brown decided that his contributions to *The Liberal* "Les Charmettes and Rousseau" (issue 2) and "Shakspear's Fools" (issue 3) would be signed "Carluccio", but the former is signed "Carlone". Brown's "Letter-Writing" (issue 4) is not signed.

THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS.*

Ἀρχετε, Μῶσαι φίλαι, ἀρχετ' αἰδας.—THEOCRITUS.

Begin, dear Muses, *but* begin.¹

I.

“Twenty sweet summers I will tie together,”²
Said the rejoicing bridegroom in the play,
Who was to have one month of honied weather,
And then, to please the tyrant, die next day. (1)³
The vile, hard-hearted—yet I don’t know either—
However, what I was about to say
Was this,—that in these light poetic spinnings,
I tie together twenty sweet beginnings.

II.

Exordiums are my theme.—Thou great “O thou!”
Whoe’er thou art, whom poets thou by thousands,
Whether thou sit’st upon the Olympian brow
Of epic bard, or wonderest at the cow’s hands
Of rude invoker, rhyming any how,
Allow me to be clerk for both advowsons;⁴
For if my own rhyme’s nothing of itself,
It sings of others worthy of thy shelf.

VOL. II.

H

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed by Fernando Cioni; Annotated by Giacomo Ferrari.

III.

I want, in fact, to finish a whole poem
At once; and to write properly, I find
I can't have flow'rs as quickly as I sow 'em
Something will still take place, not to my mind,
Some weakness, lameness, some hard buddings (blow 'em!)
Some graftings, which I hate to leave behind:
So I must take my time with such grave matters,
And sow, meanwhile, my cresses in these tatters. (2)⁵

IV.

I must have light refreshment, relishes quick,
Fruits that I can dispatch with a brief eating,
And yet that I can eat too in the thick
Of trees and gardens; sketches of one sitting,
But then of looks, at which a painter's stick
Might feel the life return to it, ev'n to beating.
When I want more, I go and wrap me round
In Milton's, Chaucer's, Spenser's holy ground.⁶

V.

I'm like a knight of old. I'm fierce to-day,
Desperate and grim, in middle of the fight;
Nothing will serve me but to hack my way
At kings and chieftains, trampers of the right:
Anon, I'm gentle as a morn of May,
Am all for flow'rs, and loving dreams at night,
And must go waken blossoms in the bushes,
Warblings of birds, and worlds of rosy blushes.

VI.

See,—the word “May” disturb’d my simile,
 And took me with it, like a lass-led boy.
 I meant to say, that as the knight would be
 Now all for fighting, and the terrible joy
 Of riding plumed battle like a sea,
 And now would be rapt off, far from annoy,
 Into the arms of fairies and their bowers,
 So frown and smile my party-colour’d hours.

VII.

So when my turn comes to repose, I read
 My magic books, and then with a bird’s eye
 Dart me far off, as he does to his bed,
 Now to some piping vale of Arcady,⁷
 Now to some mountain-top, which I’ve heard said,
 Holds the most ghastly breath in Tartary;⁸
 And then I’m cradled ’twixt my Appenines,⁹
 Spying the blue sky through the yellow vines.

VIII.

And then I’m all with Ovid and his changes,¹⁰
 Or all with Spenser and his woods, or all
 With Ariosto and his endless ranges,
 Riding his Hippogriff,¹¹ till I grow too small
 For eye to see:—then lo! I’m by the Ganges,
 Quick as that fatal wight, who gave a call
 To Solomon to send him out o’ the way
 Of Death, and met him there that very day. (3)¹²

IX.

And then again I'm playing fast and loose
With girls, in isles that stud the Grecian sea: (4)¹³
And then I'm in old Greece, and Edipus
Holding his blind eyes up, creeps quietly
By his dear daughter's side, whom I would chuse,
Were I a god, my worshipp'd wife to be: (5)¹⁴
And then I'm in the valley, "wonder deep,"
Where the cold waters lull old Sleep to sleep. (6)¹⁵

X.

And then I'm all for Araby, my first love;
I'm Giafar, I'm a "genie," I'm a jar;
I'm Sindbad in some very horrid grove,—
Which is delicious: I'm the Calendar,
Who with the lady was *one* hand and glove;¹⁶
I am the prince, who shot his bow so far,
And found that cellar, with a stock divine
Of lips to kiss, still redder than the wine. (7)¹⁷

XI.

And then I take a pen, pluck'd from the wing
Of the rich hour, and let my fancy flow,
Dipping delighted in my ebony spring,
(For Sindbad would have call'd my ink-stand so);
And first of all (which you will think a thing
Not needing to be mention'd, but 'tis though,
For it's my subject, and I hold me in,
Not to have done too quickly) I *begin!*

XII.

Beginnings are high moments. I appeal
To you, musicians, when you're all prepar'd
To pour some storm of harmony you know well;
Painters, to you, when after studying hard,
You've got a subject, that you're sure you feel;
Readers, to you, when suddenly your regard
Is cast upon a packet, square, tight, brown,—
“Ah, you mean books?”—I do,—the new from town.

XIII.

“Dinner on table” after a long walk
Has it's exordium: so has going to sleep,—
Fading by fine degrees from a friend's talk:
Reaching a wood is not to be held cheap,
After a ride through sun, and dust, and chalk:
But the beginning the most sweet and deep,
The first of firsts,—ah, you know what it is,—
Is the first trembling, touching, trusting kiss.

XIV.

I give up that. But not the breathing wood,
Enter'd, with hat off, after sun and dust;
Not going to sleep in smiling gratitude;
Nor meal that we approach, as walkers must;
Not cutting string from books; nor subject good,
Hit on by finger'd pencil; nor the gust
Of Philharmonic winds, waked all at once, (8)¹⁸
Touch like a bard's pen, tilted for the nonce.¹⁹

XV.

Gravely I feel it, lightly though I say.
 All bards have felt it, great as well as small,
 And shew the proud delight with which they lay
 Their hand to pen. Lo, listen first of all,
 To Homer,²⁰ opening his triumphant way!
 What Horace²¹ says of modesty withal
 And meek beginnings, must be read *cum grano*,²²
 Or what becomes of arms *virumque cano*?²³

XVI.

The opening, like the ending, must be settled
 By nature and the occasion. Homer, treating
 Of the wise wanderer,²⁴ and how well he battled
 Through his long ills by patient wit (and cheating),
 As calmly brings him in; but when the high-mettled
 And fierce Achilles is to give us greeting,
 He strikes a trumpet up in his first line,
 Fit for the coming of a wrath divine.

XVII.

Beginnings please us, some for the mere style,
 Some for the sentiment, and some for both.
 All should be musical; and most, the while,
 Seem full of a sure pleasure, nothing loth,
 Whether their business be to mourn or smile,
 Whether the Delphic voice be sweet or wroth:²⁵
 For 'tis a task so noble, that of verse,
 It aye must taste the pleasure it confers.

XVIII.

Hesiod's Theogony commences well,²⁶
 He puts the Muses first with such delight,
 Their bathings, and their dances amiable,
 And that delicious voice they send at night
 Over the mountain-tops on which they dwell,
 Like choral nuns, and take a hymning flight.
 He heard them under Helicon,²⁷ he says,
 A shepherd; and they fill'd his hand with bays. (9)²⁸

XIX.

E'en Burns's holly must submit to this,
 True as it is, and blithe with berries red;
 For Hesiod really pass'd those nights of his
 Under the mountain with it's laurell'd head,
 Where those fair birds were thought to live in bliss.
 But fancies are facts too:—let that be said.
 Besides, we've Fairy-land. The Muse, I grant her,
 Kept house in Greece; but then we've Tam o' Shanter.²⁹

XX.

Dante's first lines are simple, grave, sincere,
 Too full of awe for shew (10):³⁰— Milton's the same.³¹
 Dryden's Religio Laici³² takes my ear
 With an exordium, that should put to shame
 All the monotonous lines we hold so dear,
 Time-beaters for dull heads (11).³³ Think not I blame
 Nevertheless the glorious Rape o' the Lock,³⁴
 The airiest wit that ever rais'd a joke. (12)³⁵

XXI.

Pope was a true-born poet, modified
By his infirm complexion and small sphere;
But then so great in that, that he could hide
Scores of us dwarfs in our savannahs here:
His rooms were not mere rooms, but worlds beside
Of spirits, who hung pearls in every ear.
Wit, lover, friend, his lays were like his lawns;
His face, as rich and sensitive as a fawn's. (13)³⁶

XXII.

Yet what is fit for miniature, may not suit
With oils, and lets more trifling copiers pass.
But to return. The learn'd will think me a brute,
But I must own, such is my taste, alas!
For what is natural, and new to boot,
That I could wish it proved (granting it was
As foreign to his subject too as Pegu),³⁷
That Virgil did begin with *Ille ego*.³⁸

XXIII.

The bard was a dear lover of the woods,
He loved their loving nymphs, he lov'd their dreams;
Glens and philosophy were his two great goods;
And when he thought of quitting his mild streams
For seats of war and their ensanguin'd floods,
It was as natural he should turn his beams
Once more to look on what he left, as men,
When the drum calls them, kiss their wives again. (14)³⁹

XXIV.

Lucretius⁴⁰ opens nobly with his hymn
 To Venus, and her warm Dædalian sway:⁴¹
 You bask in it; nor wonder that Mars grim
 Doats on her face in that devouring way. (15)⁴²
 I like all poets, who thus seem to swim
 Into their subject, proud of the sweet play:
 The lordly swan, let out on his own river,
 Feels not the dimpling with a sweeter shiver.

XXV.

“Le donne, i cavalier, l’arme, gli amori, (16)⁴³
 Le cortesie, l’audaci imprese, io canto,
 Che furo al tempo che passaro i Mori
 D’Africa il mare, e in Francia nocquer tanto,
 Seguendo l’ire e i giovenil furore
 D’Agramante lor re, che si diè vanto
 Di vendicar la morte di Trojano
 Sopra re Carlo, imperator Romano.”⁴⁴

XXVI.

“Ladies, and cavaliers, and loves, and arms,
 And courtesies, and haughty deeds I sing,
 What time the Moors of Africa in swarms
 Came o’er the sea with Agramant their king,
 And did such harm in France, and blew the alarms
 He made in his young rage, vowing to bring
 To fierce account, for his old father slain,
 The illustrious Roman emperor, Charlemagne.”

XXVII.

So enters on his task, with gallant joy,
 The Ferrarese,⁴⁵ whose very name's a pleasure.
 Nor scarcely less charms he, who chose to employ
 His time in polishing another's treasure: (17)⁴⁶
 He brings his wine, like the Idæan boy;⁴⁷
 Like pleasant friendship, comes he on our leisure;
 For our own sakes he comes, as well as his,
 Touching a brilliant lute;—and here he is:—

XXVIII.

“Leggiadri amanti, e donne innamorate,
 Vaghe d'udir piacevol cose e nuove,
 Benignamente, vi prego, ascoltate
 La bella istoria, che'l mio canto muove;
 E udirete l'opre alte e lodate,
 Le gloriose, egregie, inclite pruove,
 Che fece il conte Orlando⁴⁸ per amore,
 Regnando in Francia Carlo imperadore.”

XXIX.

“Gallants in love, and ladies touch'd as they,
 Who love to hear delightful things, and new,
 Benignly lend your gentle ears, I pray,
 To the high story I'm preluding to;
 And you shall hear the great, the glorious way,
 In which a thousand wonders were gone through
 By County Orlando, for a loving glance,
 What time the Emperor Charles was king in France.”

XXX.

'Tis music truly,—tis a myrtle tree,—
 Incense lit up,—a bunch of heart's-ease roots:
 Remember too, these rhymes of Italy
 Once on a time were really sung to lutes:
 Petrarch⁴⁹ sung his: and such a taste had he,
 Not only in voice, which warbled like a flute's,
 Or rather was brimful of liquid power,
 But his own airs were sung in every bower. (18)⁵⁰

XXXI.

Our only lyrist, now-a-days, in the sense
 Of Greece and Tuscany, is Thomas Moore:⁵¹
 But all should write, as under influence
 Of modulated sounds and their full store;
 And then, and only then, they may commence
 With their "O Thou's,"—"I sing's,"—and harps of yore;
 And this reminds me of that prelate merry,
 Who has a name so militant, Forteguerri.⁵²

XXXII.

"Emmi venuta certa fantasia, (19)⁵³
 Che non posso cacciarmi da la testa,
 Di scriver un istoria in poesia
 Affatto ignota, o poco manifesta.
 Non è figlia del Sol la Musa mia,
 Nè ha cetra d'oro, o d'ebano contesta:
 E rozza villanella, e si trastulla
 Cantando a aria, conforme le frulla.

XXXIII.

“Ma con tutto che avezza a le boscaglie,
E beva acqua di rio, e mangi ghiande,
Cantar vuole d'eroi e di battaglie,
E d'amori e d'imprese memorande;
E se avverrà, che alcuna volta sbaglie,
Piccolo fallo è in lei ogni error grande,
Perchè non studiò mai; e il suo soggiorno
Or fu presso un abete, or presso un orno.

XXXIV.

“E intanto canterà d'armi e d'amori,
Perchè in Arcadia nostra oggi son scesi
Così sublimi e nobili pastori,
Che son di tutte le scienze intesi:
Vi son poeti, vi sono oratori
Che passan quelli de gli altri paesi:
Or ella, che fra loro usa è di stare
Si è messo in testa di saper cantare.

XXXV.

“Ma, come voi vedrete, spesso spesso
S'imbroghierà ne la geografia,
Come formica in camminar sul gesso,
O su la polve, o farina che sia;
O come quel pittor, ch' alto cipresso
Nel bel turchino mare coloria,
E le balene poi su gli erti monti;
Così forse saranno i suoi racconti.

XXXVI.

“Ma non per questo maltrattar si dee,
Nè farle lima lima, e vella vella:
La semplicità non ha certe idee,
Che fan l'istoria luminosa e bella;
Nè lesse mai in su le carte Achee,
Ovver di Roma, o di nostra favella,
Le cose belle che cantar' coloro,
Ch' ebber mente divina e plettro d'oro.

XXXVII.

“Ma cantar per istar allegramente,
E acciò che si rallegri ancor chi l'ode:
Nè sa, nè bada a regole niente,
Sprezzatrice di biasimo e di lode,
Che tiraneggia cotanto la gente;
Che v'è infino chi l'ugna si rode,
E il capo si stropiccia, e'l crin si strazia,
Per trovar rime ch'abbian qualche grazia.

XXXVIII.

“Voi la vedrete ancor (tanto è ragazza)
Or qua, or là, saltar, come un ranocchio;
Nè in ciò la biasmo, nè fa cosa pazza;
Che da gli omeri infin sotto il ginocchio
La poesia ha penne onde svolazza;
E va più presto che in un batter d'occhio
Or quinci, or quindi; e così tiene attente
L'orecchie di chi l'ode, e in un la mente.

XXXIX.

“Così veggiamo nel furor de l’armi,
Tra il sangue, tra le stragi e le ruine,
In un momento rivoltarsi i carmi
Ai dolci amori; e quindi a le divine
Cose, e parlar di templi e sagri marmi;
Indi volare su l’onde marine,
E raccontar le lagrime e il cordoglio
D’Arianna lasciata in su lo scoglio.

XL.

“Ma già si è posta in man la sua zampogna,
E canta sotto voce, e non si attenda.
Non la guardate ancor, che si vergogna,
E come rosa il volto le diventa:
Ma presto passa un poco di vergogna:
Principiato che ell’ ha, non si spaventa:
E già incomincia: or noi, dov’ ella siede,
Taciti andiamo, ed in punta di piede.”

XLI.

“A certain freak has got into my head,
Which I can’t conquer for the life of me,
Of taking up some history little read,
Or known, and writing it in poetry.
My Muse is no Sun’s daughter, be it said;⁵⁴
She has no harp of gold and ebony:
She is a little clown, one of your singers
Who sport it to the snapping of their fingers.

XLII.

“And yet for all she has been used to keep
Within the woods, drinks water, and eats nuts,
She’s fain to sing of arms and soldiership,
And loves, and lofty cuttings of one’s throats:
So that, if any time she makes a slip,
You must not give her very savage cuts;
Because she never studied. Her degrees
Have all been taken underneath the trees.

XLIII.

“But she must sing of warriors and amours,
Because of late so many noble swains
Have come down to this Arcady of ours,
Who’ve been through all the sciences and their reigns:
There are your poets, there your orators,
Not to be found on any other plains! (20)⁵⁵
Now she being used to hear them, the vain thing,
Has got it in her head, she too can sing.

XLIV.

“But, as you’ll find, she will embroil herself
Often and often with geography,
Just like an ant poking about a shelf
Midst plaister, dust, and bits of cookery;
Or as the painter did, who in a gulf
Of fine blue water put a cypress-tree,
And made his craggy mountains produce whales:
Such, very probably, will be her tales.

XLV.

“But you must not abuse her for all that,
Nor keep on finding fault, and teasing her:
The little simpleton was never pat
At things that render histories fine and clear;
She never read Greek books, never look’d at
Latin ones, nay, knows not one’s own, poor dear!
She never knew the fine things, new or old,
Done by the mind divine and harp of gold.

XLVI.

“All that she sings is for her own pure pleasure,
Including, it is true, the hearer’s too:
She neither knows nor cares for rules and measure;
Deaf to the blames or praises, false or true,
Which make such holes in other people’s leisure,
Making this bite his nails, and that look blue,
And t’other claw his head and tear his hair,
For rhymes that may look pretty here and there.

XLVII.

“You’ll find her also (she is such a romp).
Leaping, like frog, about her on all sides;
And yet you mustn’t set her down *non comp.*,⁵⁶
For every Muse has feathers which she hides,
Enabling her at will to frisk and jump;
And in the twinkling of an eye she glides,
Now here, now there; and so in occupation
Holds all that witness her divine flirtation.

XLVIII.

Thus we shall see, amidst the rage of arms,
 Midst blood and slaughter and huge overthrow,
 That in a wink she'll turn with all her charms
 To love and joy, and then get up and go
 To church, and talk of shrines and saints in swarms;
 And then she'll whisk me to the sea-shore, lo!
 And tell us of the tears and the sad shock
 That Ariadne met with on the rock.⁵⁷

XLIX.

But see,—her hand is placed upon her reed;
 She preludes *sotto voce*,⁵⁸—she composes;—
 Don't you look yet;—she'll blush,—she will indeed;
 Her little cheeks will be all over roses;
 'Tis but a touch of bashfulness, soon fled;
 When once begun, there's nothing she refuses:
 Now she begins;—there,—now then let us go
 Near where she sits,—but softly,—on tip-toe.”

L.

The reason why I turn this toy so long,
 Is, that I took it up but t'other day.
 It spins, as it proceeds, too coarse a song;
 But then refines, and makes a pretty play
 Of giddy colours. You may think it wrong
 To say, he came to scoff, but stayed to pray;
 But the fact is, our laughter at romance
 Grew fond of his wild partner in the dance.

LI.

How could he help it, seeing that she had
Through all her laughing ways so sweet an eye,
Such stories for him, grave as well as glad,
And unaffected tears, when grief went by;
A face, as Chaucer says, "sweet, glad, and sad?"⁵⁹
I'm none of those who take to misery
To rouse a callous palate; but the very
Profoundest want of mirth's profoundly merry.

LII.

Our lively prelate,⁶⁰ living in a sphere
Of hypocrites, and courtiers, and gay nothings,
And having got perhaps he scarce knew where,
Was much inclined to laugh at high and low things;
But being in his nature kind, sincere,
And much a man, for all his lordly clothings,
He grew in love with his romantic shelves,
And only mock'd the hypocrites themselves.

LIII.

Tyrannous ills, that patriots would pull down,
Slaveries, and slaughters, inequalities
Extreme and insolent, and of use to none,
Cause tears indeed, that from all human eyes
Brave hands should seek to wipe; but if but one
Huge, glaring, broad-eyed mirth laugh'd in our skies,
'Twould dry up all kind things, tears, smiles, and flowers,
And make our hearts as wither'd as our bowers.

LIV.

Alas! I need not speak in the behalf
Of tears, the very best, I who have long
Seen what a cup the world consents to quaff,
Doing sweet smiles and sacred nature wrong:
'Tis Melancholy's laugh, and Mockery's laugh,
I speak of; and ev'n they utter a strong
And shuddering voice against the ills they clasp,
E'en while they kiss the beldams, and cry "Grasp!"

LV.

But I digress; so here I stop; for *Finis*
Coronat opus,—"a good end's a crown;"
A maxim,⁶¹ that in my mind so divine is,
That heartily, and with "devocioun,"⁶²
As Chaucer says, I wish that every Highness
And Majesty (but ours)⁶³ may soon lie down,
And treat their realms with the sole coronations
That give a perfect finish to their stations.

NOTES TO THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS.

(1) *"Twenty sweet summers I will tie together."*—Fletcher's *Wife for a Month*.⁶⁴—What divine plays would not Beaumont and Fletcher⁶⁵ have left us, if they had not been "fine gentlemen about town"⁶⁶ as well as poets, and ambitious to please a perishing generation. Their Muse is like an accomplished country beauty, of the most exquisite kind, seduced up to town, and made familiar with the most devilish parts of it, yet retaining through all her debauchery a sweet regret, and an adoring fondness for nature. She has lilies about her paint and patch-boxes, and loves them almost as much as when she was a child.

(2) *And sow, meanwhile, my cresses in these tatters.*—It is well known that this species of small salad will spring up in the course of a few hours in a piece of flannel.

(3) *Of Death, and met him there that very day.*—A fine story, illustrative of the great Eastern dogma of fatality, has been told somewhere by Voltaire.⁶⁷ He says, that Solomon was one day walking out of doors with somebody, when the latter, with much consternation, said, "Who is this terrible figure approaching? He fills me with horror. Send me, I pray thee, to the remotest mountain of India." Solomon, in his quality of magician, sent him thither accordingly. The figure by this time had come up, and addressing the monarch, said, "Solomon, how came that person to be walking here? I was to have fetched him from the remotest mountain of India." "*Angel of Death,*" replied Solomon, "thou wilt find him there."⁶⁸

(4) *With girls in isles that stud the Grecian sea.*—An allusion to a modern Greek dance, supposed to have been handed down from antiquity, and to represent the story of Theseus and Ariadne in the Labyrinth.⁶⁹

(5) *Were I a god, my worshipp'd wife to be.*—With the exception of the Philoctetes, I have but lately had the happiness to become acquainted with the divine dramas of Sophocles.⁷⁰ I do not quote dramatic exordiums, because they speak the feelings of the author's characters, rather than his own; and my business is with a sort of personal consciousness of commencement: but the allusion in the text is to the beginning of the *Œdipus in Colonus*,⁷¹—which see. Let no one imagine however he will find the least resemblance of Sophocles in a translator like Franklin, who, albeit he was an University Professor, could not write common English, much less translate some of the noblest poetry in the world.⁷² It is a pity that so many glorious works are lost to readers of taste, who do not happen to understand the ancient languages. Why does not Mr. Jones, the author of the Greek and English Grammar,⁷³ oblige his countrymen with it's natural successor, a Greek and English Dictionary?⁷⁴ Many might be allured to the study of a single language, who are deterred by the alarming necessity of understanding two, and by the comparatively frigid medium of Latin; for the Romans do not present themselves to the minds of people in general in the same glowing and poetical light as the Greeks; and this deduction from their history is a just one. Latin compared with Greek is a statue compared with a spirit.

(6) *Where the cold waters lull old Sleep to sleep.*—See *Chaucer's Dream*, beginning

I have great wonder, by this light,
How I live:—

for there is another under the same title.⁷⁵ The poem in question is full of the deepest imagination and sentiment. The beginning conveys some touching information respecting the poet himself; and

nothing can surpass the faculty of abstraction in the account of the Valley of Sleep, or the living presence of his portrait of a woman afterwards, perhaps the completest ever painted.⁷⁶

(7) *Of lips to kiss, still redder than the wine.*—“The Story of Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari Banou.”⁷⁷ The reader knows it, of course; but I write the words for the pleasure of repeating them.

(8) *Of Philharmonic winds waked all at once.*—*Audi* the Philharmonic Society;⁷⁸ or if you cannot do that as soon as you wish, go to the Portuguese Ambassador’s chapel in South-street, Grosvenor-square,⁷⁹ and hear the organ there waked up by the hand of a master. I, to wit, one of the “Satanic School”⁸⁰ (Oh Bob!)⁸¹ have stood in that chapel, under the influence of that organ, and with a tenderness for which an ill state of health must excuse me to my Scottish friends (whose ancestors called an instrument of that description “a grit box o’ whistles”)⁸² have felt the tears run down my cheeks at the crowd of thoughts that came upon me. “Aye,” quoth the Laureat, “you were sorry that you had no longer a faith.”⁸³ Excuse me; I have a faith, though not in your damnatory one, or your verses: but I was struck to think of all the miseries and bloody wars that had accompanied the spread of the kindest of doctrines: and wondered how it was possible for men to look upon the altar-piece before me, and hear the music that melted towards it, and not find out, that to injure and damn one another to eternity, was unbecoming even the wrath of charity.

(9) *A shepherd; and they fill’d his hand with bays.*

Μουσαων Ἑλικωνιάδων αρχωμεθ’ αειδειν,
 Ἄιθ’ Ἑλικωνος εχουσιν ορος μεγα τε ζαθεοντε,
 Και τε προ κρηνην ιοειδεα ποσσ’ ἀπαλοισιν
 Ορχευνται, και βωμον ερισθενεος Κρονιωνος
 Και τε λοεσσαμεναι τερενα χροα Τερμησσοιο,
 Η’ ιππου κρηνης, η Ολμειου ζαθεσιο,

Ακροτατῶ Ἑλικωνι χοροὺς ἐνεποίησαντο
 Καλοὺς , ἱμεροενταὶς ἐπερρώσαντο δὲ ποσσίν.
 Ἐνθεν ἀπορρυννόμεναι, κεκαλυμμέναι περὶ πολλῶ,
 Ἐννυχίαι χεῖρον, περικαλλέα οὔσαν ἰεῖσαι,
 Ὑμνοῦσαι Δία τ' αἰγιοχόν, κ. τ. λ.⁸⁴

With it's own Muses be our strain begun,
 Who hold the top of haunted Helicon,
 Who make a choral altar of the mountain
 To Jove, and dance about the dark-blue fountain.
 With delicate feet they dance, first having been
 With their sweet limbs inside of Hippocrene,⁸⁵
 Or other sacred waters of the hill;
 And then they mount its starriest pinnacle,
 And weave the dance, the lovely, the desired,
 Warming it more and more, because their souls are fired.
 Thence, rapt away, and wrought up to delight,
 Veil'd by the dark, they follow through the night,
 Uttering a charming voice, and singing hymns
 To Jove,⁸⁶ who hangs a shadow on his limbs:
 &c. &c.

There follows a list of deities, with the translation of which I have not time to please myself; nor can I add the Muse's visit to Hesiod, which succeeds. It is hardly necessary to observe, that the translations attempted in this article are only intended to furnish the English reader with some idea of the originals, in default of a better. Ricciardetto is a trifle;⁸⁷ but exordiums like those of Hesiod, are to be approached with reverence.

(10) *Too full of awe for shew:—Milton's the same.*—I do not mean to say that both these exordiums are not very impressive, particularly Dante's; but see the beginning of Note 5. The following is the commencement of the great saturnine Italian,⁸⁸ who, except in the bitterness of his intolerance, was more a northern genius than a southern. The strong apprehension of the literal imagery in unison with the metaphorical, announces at once the hand of a great poet. The trunks of his trees are tangible and gigantic: and every thing

admirably expresses the fierce and gloomy doubts likely to fall upon a mind subject to violent passions, but capable of reflection.

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
 Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,
 Che la diritta via era smarrita:
 E quanto a dir qual'era, è cosa dura,
 Questa *selva selvaggia* ed aspra e *forte*,
 Che nel pensier rinnuova la paura
 Tanto è amara, che poco è più morte.

"In the midway of this our mortal life
 I found me in a gloomy wood, astray,
 Gone from the path direct: and e'en to tell
 It were no easy task, how savage wild
 That forest, how robust and rough it's growth,
 Which to remember only, my dismay
 Renews, in bitterness not far from death."

CARY.⁸⁹

(11) *Time-beaters for dull heads*.—This passage of noble and various music is as follows:—

Dim as the borrowed beams of Moon and stars
 To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
 Is Reason to the soul:—and as on high,
 Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
 Not light us here; so Reason's glimmering ray
 Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
 But guide us upward to a better day.
 And as those nightly tapers disappear,
 When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere,
 So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight,
 So dies,—and so dissolves,—in supernatural light.⁹⁰

I never repeat this dignified strain of verse, without being at once soothed and elevated. Nor are my feelings without an echo to the sentiment, though by the word Reason I take leave to understand "common reasoning," and by Religion something very different from what is irrational. It is possible, perhaps, that the ear might have had a greater glut of satisfaction by a shifting of one of the pauses,

and the insertion of another couplet between the last two; but I do not know: and it might have hurt the earnestness of the thoughts, and so re-acted in an injurious manner upon itself. Dryden, after all, was only writing an epistolary style; but he could not deny himself the pleasure of this noble exordium. The first four lines are perfect; and how divinely, and like the image it presents to the mind, does the last couplet linger, and fade away! Spenser himself has not a more glorious Alexandrine.⁹¹

It was hardly my intention to bring examples of commencement from poems so short as this of Dryden; but I could not resist the recollection of an old favourite. Dryden abounds in spirited exordiums, worthy of his conscious power of versification. The opening of *Absalom and Achitophel* is another instance, and that of the *Hind and Panther*⁹² a third. It is observable, that in the last, where he begins with a description of his spotless favourite the Hind, he adopts a smooth and lady-like versification like that of Pope;—but see how with one vigorous touch,—one fervid and unhalting union of one of his couplets with another,—he rescues his softness from monotony.

A milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest rang'd;
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin:
Yet had she oft been chas'd with horns and hounds
And Scythian shafts, and many winged wounds
Aim'd at her heart; had oft been forc'd to fly,
And doom'd to death, though fated not to die.⁹³

Dryden was the last English poet who studied versification, or in another word, *numbers*, which are the soul of it. The word itself has now become obsolete; at least it is never mentioned in connexion with modern poetry. Of Pope, I have no scruple to repeat, especially as the public are now used to the repetition from others, that he had a poor ear for the music of his art, as well as for all other music. But it was good enough to discover, and to be satisfied with, the softest and most obvious melodies in the poetry of Dryden and Wal-

ler;⁹⁴ and, what is called his system of versification, was made up of nothing but their unvaried repetition. The ears of the multitude of readers are no better, especially in the North; and as they are not only satisfied with the versification when they read, but find it very easy to imitate when they write, their self-love has completed the delusion, and they cry up that as the finest *system* of verse, which by their own facility in copying it, they must feel to be no system at all. It may be asked,—why not be content with this sort of melody, or why not even think it the best, if it pleases the greatest number of people? I answer, first, that the greatest poets have not been satisfied with it themselves; secondly, that the object of the finest poetry is not to please the greatest multitude of readers, but the greatest number of readers who have wit and sensibility enough to be moved by it; and thirdly, that as this wit and sensibility may be extended, and rendered more common, by the very circumstance of the poet's not truckling to every thing which he finds established, so the general ear, like a particular one, may undoubtedly be rendered better or worse, according to the music to which the reigning poets accustom it.—Before any body however quotes the opinion here expressed of Pope, let him do me the justice to consult the two following Notes, 12 and 13.

Among other poets, who begin small compositions in a spirited and enjoying manner, I must not omit Theocritus and Chaucer.—There is scarcely an idyl of the former, which might not be adduced as an example; and though the construction of most of his pieces is dramatic, we have more right to identify a moral dramatist with his speakers, than any other, because his subject is generally of a more willing and ordinary nature, and turns upon pleasures common to every body's apprehension. How delightfully Theocritus opens his volume with that mention of the breathing pine-tree, the water, and the goat-herd's pipe!

Ἄδῃ τι το ψιθυρισμα καὶ ἀπιτυς, αἰπολε, τηνα
 Ἄ ποτι ταις παῖαισι, μελισδεταὶ ἄδῃ δε καὶ τυ
 Ευρισδες.

Goat-herd, the pine-tree, over the springs there,
Has a delicious whisper in it's hair;
And you too play us a delicious air.⁹⁵

We imagine that the goat-herd has been playing something on his pipe,—that a silence of admiration has taken place, in which the pine-tree was heard over those fresh little plashes of water,—and that his friend the shepherd suddenly breaks out into that beautiful comparison. But I must apologize for this sorry translation. Theocritus makes the comparison completer by saying that the whisper, or *ψιθυρισμα*, of the pine-tree (what a charming word!) “sings something delicious,” — *αδν τι μελίσσεται*. I could willingly spend a whole morning in trying to turn the passage better; but I did not intend to write notes of such a length as have grown upon me; and though the excuse is a very bad one in general, the periodical nature of this publication really does not allow me time to linger upon them more than I do. Turning to Creech,⁹⁶ who had a real genius for translation, if he could have been more patient with it, I find he has very properly retained the word in question:—

Goat-herd, that pine-tree's boughs, by yonder spring,
In pleasing murmurs mix, and sweetly sing;
And thou dost sweetly pipe.⁹⁷

But then we lose the happy indefinite air of the “something sweet;” — “murmurs” does not express the whispering sound of the original word; and “spring” is by no means the same thing as *springs*, in the plural, which suggest a variety of little waters leaping out of the ground together. Add, by the way, to this glimpse of Theocritus's scenery, the climate of Sicily, and perhaps the mountain in the distance, and what a picture for Claude or Gaspar Poussin!⁹⁸

I will take this opportunity of observing, that although the error with Creech was on the more promising side, he was as wrong in making Theocritus's shepherds talk so often like mere clowns, as more common-place translators have been in giving them the mere smoothness and conventional polish of Pope's Pastorals.⁹⁹ The truth lies in a certain medium of strength and simplicity, leaning however to ele-

gance: for there is not such a difference between the languages of the various classes of society in the South as there is in the North, and most likely never was; the cause being of a nature as much physical as moral, namely, the more general diffusion of an equal quantity of enthusiasm and sensibility. All the senses of the South are critical. A Tuscan of the poorer orders trolls the pearls of his native language consciously over his tongue,—and addresses you on the most ordinary occasion with speeches that would be high-flown and affected in the mouth of an Englishman of the same class. The Sicilian dialect, I believe, though much less renowned, piques itself to this day upon a similar refinement, and is accounted a very sweet and happy one. I have read somewhere that there are modern pastorals in it of great beauty.

I have gone a great way from Chaucer, but it is always easy to return to him. His exquisite series of portraits, at the beginning of the *Canterbury Tales*, may be accounted a string of happy exordiums. But see also the *Dream* referred to in Note 6,¹⁰⁰ the *Complaint of Mars and Venus*,¹⁰¹ the *Flower and the Leaf*,¹⁰² &c. never forgetting the exordium of the *Wife of Bath's Tale*, in which he jokes the friars so happily upon their succeeding to the ubiquitous privileges of the fairies.¹⁰³ Readers of taste, who have suffered themselves to be dismayed by the imaginary difficulties of Chaucer's language, are astonished when they come to find how melodious, as well as easy to read, is this "rude old poet" as some have called him.—The syllables, it is to be observed, that form the plural terminations, are to be pronounced,—*motès*, *burghès*, &c. as they are to this day in many instances among the uneducated classes of the metropolis; and it is a pity we ever left off pronouncing them, our consonants being at all times too ready to crowd together and thrust out their softer neighbours, like fellows in a pit at the theatre. The final *e* also in many words must be humoured, as it still is in French poetry, the common ancestor of our own.

In oldè dayès of the king Artoùr,
Of which that Bretons speke gret honour,
All was this lond ful filled of faërie;

The elf-quene with her joly compaignie
 Danced ful oft in many a grenè mede.
 This was the old opinion as I rede;
 I speke of many hundred yeres ago;
 But now can no man see non elvès mo;
 For now the gretè charitee and prayeres
 Of limitoures and other holy freres,—
 That serchen every land and every streme,
 As thikke as motès in the sunnè-beme ,
 Blessing hallès , chambres , kitchenès , and boures,
 Citees and burghès, castles high and toures,
 Thropès and bernès , shepènès and dairies,
 This maketh that there ben no faëries;
 For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the limitour himself,
 In undermelès* and in morwënings,
 And sayth his matinès and his holy thinges ,
 As he goth in his limitatioun:
 Women may now go safely up and down;
 In every bush and under every tree,
*There is non other incubus but he.*¹⁰⁴

(12) *The airiest wit that ever rais'd a joke.*—If ever the enamelled versification of Pope was proper for any poem throughout, it was for this lightest and most polished of satires, which in my opinion surpasses all other mock-heroics beyond all comparison. It has been said that Boileau¹⁰⁵ has the advantage of Pope in *propriety*; that is to say, his characters always act in a manner suitable to real life, while Pope's wage imaginary battles in drawing-rooms, make addresses to the gods, &c. I am not sure that the objection is not more than specious; but the play between truth and fiction is one of the merits of poems of this description; and as the characters in Pope are taken from a more airy and fanciful class of life than those in Boileau, perhaps we may apply to them what a friend of mine once said to me about actors,—a remark, which I have good reason to remember, because it overturned, in two or three words, a certain reputation for criticism in stage matters, which I had been raising ever since I was

* After dinner.

a youth. He observed, that it is not the business of actors to be natural, and nothing more: they should shew that they are masters of the literal truth, but add to it a certain spiritual colouring of their own, so as to unite ideal pleasure to the representation of reality, and make us admire their art without losing sight of nature. Now if we can suppose a certain dramatic consciousness in the personages of the Rape of the Lock, the prayers to the gods, the altar of "twelve vast French romances,"¹⁰⁶ &c. become matters of propriety as well as grace, the nature of comedy being duly considered; and unless we do suppose it, the battle in the last canto becomes a mere tragedy, and the metaphorical deaths by ladies' eyes, &c. real coroner's-inquest catastrophes, which the author certainly never intended.¹⁰⁷ Be this as it may, the Rape of the Lock can afford to be something short of perfection; and I will here observe, that the only real advantage which the Lutrin¹⁰⁸ appears to me to have over it, is in possessing a livelier exordium. The first paragraph of the Rape of the Lock is the only common-place passage in the poem. The author redeems it, to be sure, instantly; but still it is unworthy of what follows. The story of the Lutrin turns upon a dispute that happened between the Treasurer of a Chapter (whose station answers to our Dean)¹⁰⁹ and the Chanter.¹¹⁰ An enormous Pulpit or Reading-desk stood in the way of the Chanter, and obscured his dignity. He had it removed. The Dean insisted on its being restored. Boileau sets out in high spirit, and a true mock-heroic vein:—

Je chante les combats, et ce prélat terrible,
 Qui par ses longs travaux, et sa force invincible,
 Dans une illustre église exerçant son grand cœur,
 Fit placer, à la fin, un Lutrin dans le chœur.
 C'est en vain que le Chantre, abusant d'un faux titre,
 Deux fois l'en fit ôter par les mains du Chapitre.
 Ce prélat, sur le banc de son rival altier,
 Deux fois le rapportant, l'en couvrit tout entier.¹¹¹

Arms and the mighty-hearted dean I sing,
 Who in a church divinely triumphing,
 By his long toils and his resistless ire,

Got placed, at last, a Pulpit in the choir.
 In vain the Chanter, on a false pretence,
 Twice got the Church to take the Pulpit thence;
 The Dean, upon his lofty rival's place,
 Twice took it back, and fixed, for ever, in his face.

I ought to have mentioned this exordium in the text; but an Englishman when thinking of poetry is so apt to forget the French, that it never occurred to me. I allude of course to poetry in it's more poetical sense. In it's other sense, as a sayer of lively and pithy things in verse, the French have all the abundance that was to be expected of a nation of their good sense and good humour. But as Terence was called Half-Menander,¹¹² so Boileau is Half-Pope. He wants Ariel:¹¹³ he wants his invisible world: he wants that poetical part of poetry, which consists in bringing a remote and creative fancy to wait upon the more obvious wit and graces that lie about us. For as to the machines in the *Lutrin*, besides being too grave and heavy, they are not his own, nor rendered so by sufficient novelty of handling.

(13) *His face as rich and sensitive as a fawn's.*—This comparison must not be taken as a rhyme to fill up. It struck me forcibly when I was looking at a bust of Pope, that was exhibited in the British Institution. I think it is by Roubilliac.¹¹⁴ I never saw any thing that exhibited a nicer sensibility, a more delicate apprehensiveness. The nose seemed the very “tip of taste;” as if it were snuffing up the odour of his Banstead mutton,¹¹⁵ or the flowers he had gathered for Miss Blount.¹¹⁶ And when I recollected the fine dark eye in his painted portrait, the simile was complete. I have anticipated most of what I intended to say upon this stanza in the note preceding; but with respect to his style of composition, a word or two remains to be said, which has been suggested to me by a consideration of his person; especially as contrasted with that of Dryden. The physical conformation of a writer becomes a just ground of criticism and illustration, when there can be no suspicion of malignity. The portraits

of Dryden are those of a robust, or at least of a sufficiently able-bodied person, with a manly and breathing countenance. Pope's countenance is fine, and perhaps his eye has a more internal look with it; but it is unnecessary to inform the reader, that he had a person equally small and infirm, and that he could not even dress without assistance. I cannot help thinking that there is the same difference between Pope and Dryden in their verses, as in their persons. Pope goes to work cautiously, and with a certain minuteness of intention, like a miniature-painter preparing his ivory. Dryden takes up his brush with ease, and dashes at his oil-painting in a broader and more confident style. Pope, as if conscious of a complexional want of strength, takes all possible pains to do nothing amiss or incorrectly. Dryden trusts to the aspect of his strength for an effect, when he does not chuse to take the pains of proving it. As there is a vigour in his laxity, so there is a weakness in the very strength of the other. Pope seems to fear every stepping-stone in his way, and to resolve to get over the gutter handsomely, without detriment to his "little suit of black:"¹¹⁷—Dryden puts forth a "manly leg,"¹¹⁸ and steps across at once, certain that he shall go well over, whether with care or not. This kind of sympathy between mental and bodily conformation might afford some curious enquiries, and I think would be found to hold good throughout biography. Nothing however, which has been here said, can apply to the weak carelessness of many who might allege Dryden as an excuse, or to the smooth nothings of those who find their master in Pope. Both these great geniuses are always full of matter, and never write to fill up. Their poems are not plaster-walls, with an occasional look out. The whole edifice is enchanted work, instinct with life, and illuminated with fretting fires.

(14) *When the drum calls them, kiss their wives again.*

Ille ego qui quondam gracili modulatus avena
 Carmen, et egressus silvis, vicina coegi
 Ut quamvis avido parerent arva colono,
 Gratum opus agricolis; at nunc horrentia Martis
 Arma virumque cano, &c.¹¹⁹

I, who erewhile warbled in sylvan shades,
 And issued then to light, and forc'd the meads
 To glut the exacting swain, who loved my song;
 Yet now, a fierce note blowing, and a strong,
 Arms and the man I sing—

I confess I have not only most of the commentators against me, Heyne included, but what is worse, Dryden himself, and that in a very peremptory manner. I must own also, that what he so finely observes respecting the ordinary commencement,—that “the author seems to sound a charge, and begins like the clangor of a trumpet,” is very true; and that, as I have hinted in the text, such an exordium is more directly to the purpose.

“Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris.”

“Scarce a word,” says Dryden, “without an r, and the vowels, for the greater part, sonorous.”¹²⁰ But still I must venture to refer to what I have said respecting the poet’s natural inclinations. Dryden himself thinks the *Georgics* his most perfect work; and with regard to the verbal objections which he and the commentators make to the passage in question, they might perhaps have been quite as ingenious and peremptory in defending the words, had the humour been upon them, especially the word *horrentia*, of which (including of course it’s root and derivatives) Virgil, I will be bold to say, was even fond, and not the less so for it’s being suggested by certain rural images, such as the bristling of corn, of reeds, &c. The exordium has the same charm with it, to me, which is found in the allusions to themselves made by other great poets. It even looks like the triumph of Virgil’s nature over his art, or that famous “judgment” for which he is so cried up,—often, I cannot help thinking, both at the expense of his better reputation and the matter of fact. However, if I find Dryden against me, which ought to make me diffident, my confidence is restored by having Spenser and Milton on my side: at least I have a right to consider them so, when they have both imitated this very exordium,—Milton in the commencement of his *Paradise Regained*,¹²¹ and Spenser more particularly in that of his great poem, the *Faerie*

Queene. He was enabled to do so, by his having written pastorals himself. The stanza is a fine one, though the enthusiasm is subdued. I will delay no farther upon this subject, but finish with quoting it:

Lo! I, the man, whose Muse whylome did maske,
 As time her taught, in lowly shepherd's weeds,
 Am now enforst (a farre unfitter taske)
 For trumpets stern to chaunge mine oaten reeds,
 And sing of knights, and ladies' gentle deeds;
 Whose praises having slept in silence long,
 Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds
 To blazon broad amongst her learned throng:
 Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song.¹²²

(15) *Doats on her face in that devouring way.*—Spenser, as well as several other poets, has also given an imitation of this magnificent exordium of Lucretius,¹²³ one of the finest in the world, and worthy of his Greek inspiration: for Lucretius was evidently conversant with the more poetical part of Greek philosophy as well as Epicurus's,¹²⁴ and, like all men of imagination, had a religion in spite of himself. Certainly, Venus¹²⁵ would never have asked a nobler or more passionate address from the most orthodox of her worshippers.

“Æneadum genetrix, hominum Divûmque voluptas,
 Alma Venus, coeli subter labentia signa
 Quæ mare navigerum, quæ terras frugiferentes
 Concelebras; per te quoniam genus omne animantum
 Concipitur, visitque exortum lumina solis;
 Te, Dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila coeli,
 Adventumque tuum: tibi suaves dædala tellus
 Summittit flores; tibi rident æquora ponti,
 Placatumque nitet diffuso lumine coelum.
 Nam simul ac species patefacta est verna diei,
 Et reserata viget genitabilis aura Favonî,
 Aëriæ primùm volucres te, Diva, tuumque
 Significant initum, percussæ corda tuâ vi.
 Inde feræ pecudes persultant pabula læta,
 Et rapidos tranant amnes; ita capta lepore,
 Ille labrisque tuis, omnis natura animantum
 Te sequitur cupidè, quo quamque inducere pergis.

Denique per maria, ac montes, fluviosque rapaces,
 Frondiferasque domos avium, camposque virentes,
 Omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem,
 Efficis, ut cupidè generatim sæcla propagant."

Parent of Rome, delicious Queen of Love,
 Thou joy of men below and gods above;
 Who in one round of ever-blest increase
 Roll'st the green regions and the dancing seas;
 From whom all beings catch the race they run,
 And leap to life, and visit the dear sun;
 Thee, Goddess, thee, the winds, the winters fly,
 Thee, and the coming of thy suavity:—
 For thee the earth lays forth its flowers: for thee
 A lustre laughs along the golden sea,
 And lightsome heav'n looks round on all, for thou hast made it free. }
 For soon as Spring, thrown open, re-appears,
 And forth, with kisses, come the genial airs,
 The birds, first smitten to their hearts, announce
 Thee, Goddess, and thy balmy benisons:
 The herds, made wild again, in pastures bound,
 And track the rivers till their mates be found;
 And every living thing, drawn with delight,
 Follows with greedy will the charming of thy might,
 Through seas, o'er mountains, through the fields, the floods,
 And the green houses of the birds, the woods;
 All snatch into their hearts the generous wound,
 That still the ages may roll on, and nature's place be found.¹²⁶

I would fain translate further on, to come at the beautiful passage alluded to in the text; but the poet's fit of enthusiasm certainly makes a pause here. The long line, more than an Alexandrine, into which I have run out at the conclusion, is a modulation often practised by Dryden on passionate occasions, and I think amply deserves to be revived. It lets the spirit have its full vent, and carries it off in triumph, like the long blast of a trumpet. For Spenser's imitation or paraphrase, see the *Faerie Queene*, book 4. canto 10. He lengthens the original into a strain of voluptuous languor, like the incense fuming up from the altars at which it is sung; for the scene is laid in Venus's temple.

(16) *Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori*.—The first stanza of the Orlando Furioso.¹²⁷ Ariosto is said to have written the two first verses over and over again, and to have bestowed upon them an “incredible” attention. Thus it is that even the most enjoying spirits work for immortality.

(17) *His time in polishing another's treasure*.—Berni,¹²⁸ who remodelled the Orlando Innamorato of Boiardo.¹²⁹ The stanza that follows is the exordium of his *Rifacimento*.¹³⁰ Though I have been in two eminent cities of Italy, one of them famous for its literature, I have not yet been able to meet with Boiardo's work among the booksellers. I have great faith, however, in these old beginners; and much as I admire Berni, am inclined to suspect that the gallant old Lombard,¹³¹ (who is said to have come galloping home one day in a fit of enthusiasm, and have set all the bells a-ringing in his jurisdiction, because he had found out a fine name for his hero) must have stuff in him well worthy of being read for its own sake. Nor am I shaken in this opinion by the exordium of the original poem, quoted by Sismondi in his *Littérature du Midi de l'Europe*, tom. 2, p. 58,¹³² though undoubtedly Berni has given it an address and delicacy, which leave him in full possession of the praise in the text.¹³³

I will take this opportunity of observing, now that I am upon the Italian poets, that the opening stanza of Tasso's Jerusalem¹³⁴ is not what his readers might have expected from that great writer, especially as he had an ear finely tuned for the dignified and imposing. It was Voltaire (confound him!) that made me discover there were too many O's in it,¹³⁵—a fault, seemingly, frivolous enough to notice, but still less worthy of being committed. The charge is undoubtedly true.

Canto l'armi pietosa, e 'l capitano,
 Che 'l gran sepolcro liberò di Cristo.
 Molto egli oprò col senno e con la mano;
 Molto soffrì nel glorioso acquisto.
 E invan l'inferno a lui s'oppose; e in vano
 S'armò d'Asia e di Libia il popol misto;
 Che il ciel gli diè favore, e sotto ai santi
 Segni ridusse i suoi compagni erranti.¹³⁶

In revenge, I have the pleasure of knowing that Voltaire began his “epic” with a “vile antithesis,”¹³⁷ about the “right of victory and the right of birth:” —

Je chante le heros, qui regna sur la France,
Et par droit de conquête, et par droit de naissance.¹³⁸

A poem on the Droits of Admiralty¹³⁹ might open as well. Voltaire was a wag of wags, a writer of wonderful variety, a great puller down of abuses, though he did not always know what to spare by the way,—in short, a great man, whom little ones would in vain undervalue, by detecting some failures in the universality of his information, which would be passed over in his inferiors: but for epics,—

Look at his face, and you’ll forget them all.¹⁴⁰

(18) *But his own airs were sung in every bower.*—I learn this from an interesting article in the Quarterly Review upon Madame de Genlis’ *Petrarque et Laure*.¹⁴¹ There is another, still more so, in the same publication, No. 42, entitled *Narrative and Romantic Poems of the Italians*,¹⁴² and these two, together with one upon Dante in the Edinburgh Review,¹⁴³ contain the best and most comprehensive criticism on Italian Poetry, that we have in our language. The second article includes a notice of Mr. Stewart Rose’s happy abridgment of the *Animali Parlanti*,¹⁴⁴ and also of that other piece of wit inspired by Italian romance, entitled a *Prospectus of an intended National Poem*,¹⁴⁵ which only failed of popularity (if indeed it has failed) because it took up a remote subject, instead of one connected with existing manners. It is full of a manly and urbane pleasantry: and here indeed it committed another mistake; for it is in vain put into the mouths of those fraternal handicraft’s-men who are supposed to write it. The two saddlers have been used to better society than that of the village-squire, and are as gentlemanly as Archbishop Turpin¹⁴⁶ or the Cid Hamet Benengeli.¹⁴⁷

I must observe that these articles in the Quarterly Review are in it, not of it. They are even said to be translated from the contributions of a celebrated Italian now resident in England;¹⁴⁸ but be this as

it may, the number above-mentioned contains the usual accompaniment of party paltering and hypocrisy, especially in one of those articles on Mr. Shelley,¹⁴⁹ the disgusting falsehoods and malignity of which I have exposed in another place.¹⁵⁰

(19) *Emmi venuta certa fantasia*.—The exordium of Forteguerri's tragi-comic romance, *Ricciardetto*.¹⁵¹ He was a dignitary of the church in Rome, full of wit and spirit, who hearing his friends one evening wondering at the toil and trouble which it must have cost Ariosto and others to write such a heap of poetry, undertook to shew them it was no such difficult task, and produced the first canto of his romance by the following evening. It is reported, that he wrote all the other cantos with the same expedition. Nor is it incredible, considering the abundance of rhymes in the Italian language, and the natural poetry into which it runs; but with Forteguerri's leave, however delightful he is, and however he may equal Ariosto in parts, he never rises into his glorious beauty;—unless indeed the latter half of his work is different from the first, for I am now but in the middle of it. If so, I must make him the *amende honorable*.¹⁵²

In the meanwhile, I will make the said *amende* to a couple of other accomplished writers, of whom I spoke too hastily some years ago in another piece of rhyming criticism. If any body happens to have a little book in his possession containing "The Feast of the Poets"¹⁵³ (which certain critics are always alluding to and never mentioning) he will oblige me by altering the two couplets in which toasts are proposed, to the following:—

Then, says Bob,¹⁵⁴ "I've a toast," and got up like a gander:
Says Phoebus¹⁵⁵ "Don't spoil it with prosing; its Landor."¹⁵⁶
And Walter¹⁵⁷ look'd up too and begg'd to propose—
"I'll drink him with pleasure," said Phoebus,— "it's Rose."¹⁵⁸

What I said in the Feast of the Poets respecting the *talents* of the great Scottish Novelist, was before he had exhibited his genius in prose narrative, and I have unsaid it elsewhere.¹⁵⁹ The corrections are very likely of no importance after all; but they are made out of a sense of the duty which I owe to truth.

(20) *Not to be found on any other plains.*—An allusion, and I suspect an ironical one, to the poetical society of Arcadians in Rome, of which Forteguerra was a member. The associates had *pastoral names* given them by *diploma*,¹⁶⁰ and assembled in a spot set apart for them out of doors, where they “made as if” they were in Arcadia, and recited sonnets about sheep and pipes. They numbered some other good poets among them, Guidi, Filicaia,¹⁶¹ &c.; but like all other societies, in which genius is to be patronized by the great, degenerated into a mere set of courtiers and tattling pretenders, worthy of the contempt with which Goldsmith treats them in his essay on the then State of Literature.¹⁶² I believe any body can be a member now, who writes a sonnet and is orthodox.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Theocritus (4th-3rd century BC) was one of the greatest Greek poets of the Hellenistic age. His Idylls and Epigrams have survived in Arthemidorus of Ephesus's collection of bucolic poets, along with Moschus, Bion and others. Hunt's epigraph adapts a refrain from Idyll I (lines 64 ff.), which actually reads, in translation, "Begin, dear Muses, begin the shepherd's song". Hunt omits the word "*βωκολιᾶς*", i.e., bucolic, pastoral. Then, he gives a mock-translation of Theocritus's line: "Begin, dear Muses, *but* begin", where *but* means "only". What follows is indeed an "inspired" collection of renowned beginnings in Hunt's translation. Hunt claims the authorship of the translations in several of his own notes to the text (see for instance p. 119).

² Valerio's line from John Fletcher's 1647 *A Wife for a Month*, 3.1.

³ See Hunt's note (1) p. 116.

⁴ I.e., the right to name a candidate for a vacant position in the Church of England. In this context, Hunt claims the right to present both epic and pastoral beginnings.

⁵ See Hunt's note (2) p. 116.

⁶ A list of immensely influential poets: John Milton (1608-74), poet and polemicist, author of *Paradise Lost* (1667); Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400), English poet, author of *The Canterbury Tales* (1387-1400); Edmund Spenser (1553-99), English poet, author of the epic allegorical poem *The Fairie Queene* (1590-6).

⁷ A region in Greece that has been turned into the literary topos of a golden age land, inhabited by shepherds, home to the God Pan, dryads and nymphs. "Piping" refers to the musical abilities of the inhabitants.

⁸ The reference to the "ghastly breath" is unclear. In Greek mythology, Tartary was the underground chasm where Zeus confined the defeated Titans.

⁹ The Apennines are a mountain range in peninsular Italy.

¹⁰ Reference to *Metamorphoses*, celebrated and vastly influential narrative poem by the Roman poet Publius Ovidius Naso (Ovid, 43 BC-17/18 AD)

¹¹ Reference to Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), Italian poet, best known for the epic poem *Orlando furioso* (1516-32). In this poem, the heroes Ruggiero and Astolfo ride the Hippogriff – the legendary creature born of a mare and a griffin – to Ethiopia, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, and around the world.

¹² See Hunt's note (3) p. 116.

¹³ See Hunt's note (4) p. 117.

¹⁴ See Hunt's note (5) p. 117.

¹⁵ See Hunt's note (6) p. 117.

¹⁶ References to characters and elements from *One Thousand and One Nights* (15th-18th century), famous collection of folktales in Arabian, originally compiled in Egypt and diffused in Europe through French in the early 18th century. The first English translation from French in the anonymous *The Arabian Nights* (1708). Jafar and the genie are common characters; the jar is probably a reference to "The Fakir and His Jar of Butter"; Sindbad's "horrid grove" is either the back of a whale covered in trees where the hero lands at the beginning of his first voyage, or the island where he washes ashore after that episode. The Calender is one of the three in "History of Three Calenders, Sons of Kings, and of Five Ladies of Bagdad", in *Arabian Nights*.

¹⁷ See Hunt's note (7) p. 118.

¹⁸ See Hunt's note (8) p. 118.

¹⁹ I.e., touch like the pen of a lyrical or epic poet, tilted in order to write in a particular occasion.

²⁰ Ancient Greek poet (8th century BC).

²¹ Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65-8 BC).

²² *Cum grano salis*, i.e., not too literally. Hunt refers to Horace's calls to moderation and plainness in his *Ars Poetica* (19 BC).

²³ The opening words of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

²⁴ I.e., Ulysses.

²⁵ I.e., Wrathful, angry. The lines mean, therefore, "Whether the voice of the Delphic oracle announces good or bad verdicts".

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²⁶ Hesiod, ancient Greek poet, active in the same period as Homer (8th century BC). His *Theogony* is a poem about the genealogy of the gods. This stanza describes scenes from lines 1-34 of the *Theogony*.

²⁷ Mount Helicon is celebrated in Greek mythology as home to two springs sacred to the Muses. In *Theogony* the lyrical “I” – the shepherd Hesiod – is gifted bay leaf by the Muses on the Helicon.

²⁸ See Hunt’s note (9) p. 118.

²⁹ Stanza XIX is dedicated to Robert Burns (1759-96), eclectic Scottish poet and lyricist. “Fairyl-land” is where Burns’s version of the ballad “Tam Lin” (1796) takes place; “Tam o’ Shanter” (1790) is Burns’s longest narrative poem.

³⁰ See Hunt’s note (10) p. 119. Dante Alighieri (1265-1321).

³¹ John Milton (1608-74).

³² *Religio Laici, or A Layman’s Faith* (1682) is a poem in heroic couplets by John Dryden (1631-1700), English poet, playwright, and satirist.

³³ See Hunt’s note (11) p. 120.

³⁴ Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (1712), mock-heroic poem.

³⁵ See Hunt’s note (12) p. 125.

³⁶ See Hunt’s note (13) p. 127.

³⁷ *I.e.*, Bago (formerly spelled Pegu), in Myanmar.

³⁸ See Hunt’s note (14) p. 128.

³⁹ See Hunt’s note (14) p. 128.

⁴⁰ Titus Lucretius Carus (99-55 BC), Roman poet and philosopher, author of *De Rerum Natura*, a didactic poem based on Epicurean philosophy.

⁴¹ *I.e.*, the pleasant, complex and inescapable influence that Venus holds on all the earth.

⁴² See Hunt’s note (15) p. 130. Reference to Lucretius’s *De Rerum Natura* I, 31-40.

⁴³ See Hunt’s note (16) p. 132.

⁴⁴ Agramante, Trojano and Carlo are characters in Ludovico Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* (1516-32). Agramante is king of all the Moors in Africa; Trojano was his father, previously killed by Orlando; Carlo Magno was emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

⁴⁵ *I.e.*, Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), who spent most of his life in Ferrara, where he worked at court for Duke Alfonso d’Este and published *Orlando furioso*.

⁴⁶ See Hunt’s note (17) p. 132.

⁴⁷ In Greek mythology, Cronus, Zeus’s father, was prophesied that he would be deposed by a son of his, and therefore he would eat all his children. Young Zeus was hidden from by his mother Rhea on mount Ida, on Crete (therefore, Idaean boy). Once grown, he entered his father’s service disguised as a cupbearer and served him a concoction that had him vomit his swallowed children.

⁴⁸ Orlando is a Christian knight known in French as Roland. He is the subject of several epics, such as the 11th-century *chanson de geste* *Chanson de Roland*, Boiardo’s *Orlando innamorato*, and Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso*.

⁴⁹ Francesco Petrarca (1304-74), scholar, poet and humanist from Arezzo, Italy. His collection of poems *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* or *Canzoniere* was immensely influential during and much after the Renaissance.

⁵⁰ See Hunt’s note (18) p. 133.

⁵¹ Thomas Moore (1779-1852), Irish poet and musician, author of the hugely successful *Irish Melodies* (1808-34).

⁵² Niccolò Forteguerri (1674-1735), Italian poet and presbyter, author of the burlesque chivalric poem *Ricciardetto* (1738). The name sounds “militant” because it translates as “strong, valiant in war”.

⁵³ See Hunt’s note (19) p. 134.

⁵⁴ In Greek mythology, the Muses were daughters of Zeus. While the sun is more often associated with Apollo or Helios, Zeus is often described as “Zeus the sun” or “sun-eyed”.

⁵⁵ See Hunt’s note (20) p. 135.

⁵⁶ Short for the Latin *non compos mentis*, “not of sound mind”.

⁵⁷ In Greek mythology, Ariadne, daughter of King Minos of Crete, helped Theseus escape from the labyrinth of the Minotaur, but was then abandoned on the island of Naxos by the Athenian.

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- ⁵⁸ *I.e.*, in very soft tones.
- ⁵⁹ Adapted quotation from Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Dreame of Chaucer, or The Book of the Duchess*, 860 (in *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, edited by F.N. Robinson, pp. 266-79 [London: Oxford University Press, 1957]).
- ⁶⁰ Niccolò Forteguerri (1674-1735).
- ⁶¹ A maxim traditionally attributed to Publius Ovidius Naso (Ovid, 43 BC-17/18 AD).
- ⁶² E.g., in *Troilus and Criseyde*.
- ⁶³ “(but ours)” is a clearly ironic attempt at self-preservation.
- ⁶⁴ Valerio’s line from John Fletcher’s 1647 *A Wife for a Month*, 3.1.68.
- ⁶⁵ Francis Beaumont (1584-1616) and John Fletcher (1579-1625), English dramatists who wrote several plays together during the reign of James I. Their collaborations – not all recognised as actually theirs – are collected in the two *Beaumont and Fletcher Folios* (1647, 1679).
- ⁶⁶ The phrase indicates young men of some means who mingle in the pursuits or society of the town.
- ⁶⁷ Unidentified reference. François-Marie Arouet, known as Voltaire (1694-1778), French writer, playwright and philosopher of the Enlightenment.
- ⁶⁸ The tale is Hunt’s version of a famous story first narrated by the Iraqi Isma’ili missionary Ibn Hawshab (?-914 AD). Hunt’s poem “The Inevitable”, first published in *The New Monthly Magazine* LXXXVIII (January 1850): 1-2, is based on the same story.
- ⁶⁹ In Greek mythology, Ariadne, daughter of King Minos of Crete, helped Theseus escape from the labyrinth of the Minotaur, but was then abandoned on the island of Naxos by the Athenian.
- ⁷⁰ *Philoctetes* (409 BC) is one of the seven extant tragedies of the Greek tragedian Sophocles (c. 497-406 BC).
- ⁷¹ Sophocles’s *Cedipus in Colonus* (406 BC) follows the events in *Cedipus Tyrannus* (429 BC?). At the end of the latter, the king of Thebes Oedipus has blinded himself in desperation after his wife’s death and leaves his city as an exile with the daughter Antigone. *Cedipus at Colonus* begins with the two before the village of Colonus.
- ⁷² Thomas Francklin (1721-84), Church of England clergyman and writer. His translation of the tragedies of Sophocles, published in two volumes in 1758-9, was actually considered for a long time the best in the English language.
- ⁷³ John Jones, *A Grammar of the Greek Language, on a new and improved Plan, in English and Greek*, 3rd ed. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, and Brown, 1815).
- ⁷⁴ Later in 1823 John Jones would publish *A Greek and English lexicon; in which Are explained all the words used by the best Greek writers of prose and verse* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown).
- ⁷⁵ This other poem entitled *Chaucer’s Dream* is not attributed to Chaucer by modern scholars.
- ⁷⁶ All references are from the opening words and several passages in Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Dreame of Chaucer, or The Book of the Duchess*.
- ⁷⁷ In *Arabian Nights* or *One Thousand and One Nights*.
- ⁷⁸ The Philharmonic Society of London was founded in 1813 by professional musicians who wanted a platform for serious, predominantly instrumental and orchestral music (see Cyril Ehrlich, *First Philharmonic. A History of the Royal Philharmonic Society*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). At the time, it was the only permanent professional orchestra in London and an almost unprecedented project, hence Hunt’s euphoric praise.
- ⁷⁹ Today’s Grosvenor Chapel in South Audley Street.
- ⁸⁰ The phrase was coined by Robert Southey in the Preface to his 1821 *A Vision of Judgement* to refer in particular to Shelley and Byron, “Men of diseased hearts and depraved imaginations, who [...] labour to make others as miserable as themselves, by infecting them with a moral virus that eats into the soul! The school which they have set up may properly be called the Satanic School” (xix-xxi). Hunt’s remark shows how the authors of the “Satanic school” would come to take up and embrace the expression with irreverent pride.
- ⁸¹ *I.e.*, “Oh God”. “Bob” is a “euphemistic substitute for God in exclamatory formulae”, *OED* “bob (n.9)”. In 1823, the same year of the present issue of *The Liberal*, Jon Bee (pseudonym) records “So help me bob” as “an oath to deceive the hearer” (*Slang: a dictionary of the turf, the ring, the chase, the pit, of bon-ton, and the varieties of life*, London: T. Hughes, 1823). Hunt’s interjection also hints at Robert “Bob” Southey, who coined the phrase “Satanic school” (see n. 80 above).

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⁸² I.e., “great box of whistles”. Hunt’s exact quotation remains unidentified. However, the expression is representative of the staunchly sober attitude of the seventeenth-century Scottish Presbyterians towards any kind of ceremonial embellishment in Church. The *OED* traces the expression, or similar ones, back to the ejected minister Vincent Alsop: “Pope Vitalian [...] first [...] taught Mankind the Art of Worshipping God with a Box of Whistles” (*Melius Inquirendum*, 1678, i.ii.99). As for the Scottish variant, the *OED* records “The Kist [chest] fou [full] of Whistles, That make sic a Cleiro” (A. Ramsay, *New Misc. Scottish Songs* 141, 1772).

⁸³ The poet laureate Robert Southey (1774-1843). See n. 14 “Advertisement to the Second Volume”.

⁸⁴ I.e., “kai ta loipá”, “et cetera”. The quotation is from *Theogony*, 1-11.

⁸⁵ In Greek mythology, one spring on mount Helicon, source of poetic inspiration.

⁸⁶ In mythology, Jove or Jupiter is the Roman counterpart of the Greek Zeus, the chief deity and father of the Muses.

⁸⁷ Niccolò Forteguerri’s burlesque chivalric poem *Ricciardetto* (1738). Nine stanzas from the poem and Hunt’s translation are at pp. 107-13.

⁸⁸ I.e., Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), Italian poet, writer, and politician. Hunt’s “saturnine” is probably the heritage of Giovanni Boccaccio’s description of Dante Alighieri in his *Vita di Dante*: “sempre nella faccia malinconico e pensoso” (“always melancholy and pensive in his face”).

⁸⁹ Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, I, 1-7. The translation is by Henry Francis Cary (1772-1844), British author and translator, who translated Dante’s *Commedia* in the three-volume *The Vision; or, Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, of Dante Alighieri*.

⁹⁰ John Dryden, *Religio Laici, or A Layman’s Faith* (1682), 1-11.

⁹¹ A line consisting of twelve syllables.

⁹² John Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681) and *The Hind and the Panther* (1687); respectively a satirical and an allegorical poem.

⁹³ John Dryden, *The Hind and the Panther* (1687), 1-8.

⁹⁴ Edmund Waller (1606-87), English poet and Member of Parliament.

⁹⁵ The first three lines of Theocritus’s *Idyll* I.

⁹⁶ Thomas Creech (1659-1700), English translator of the classics.

⁹⁷ Theocritus, “*Idyllium* I”, in *The Idylliums of Theocritus* [...], trans. by Thomas Creech (1684).

⁹⁸ Claude Lorraine, “Claude” in English (1600-82) and Gaspard Dughet, or Gaspard Poussin, (1615-75), French painters.

⁹⁹ Alexander Pope’s major work, *Pastorals* (1709), published in *Poetical Miscellanies: The Sixth Part. Containing a Collection of Original Poems, with Several New Translations. By the Most Eminent Hands*, 721-51.

¹⁰⁰ See Hunt’s note (6) p. 117.

¹⁰¹ Two short poems by Geoffrey Chaucer.

¹⁰² The English poem *The Floure and the Leafe*, formerly attributed to Chaucer, is now held to be of the 15th century.

¹⁰³ The sixth tale in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*.

¹⁰⁴ The first 24 lines of “The Wife of Bath’s Tale”, in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*.

¹⁰⁵ Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux (1636-1711), French poet and critic.

¹⁰⁶ Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (1712), Canto II.

¹⁰⁷ Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (1712), Canto IV.

¹⁰⁸ Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux’s 1674 *Le Lutrin*, a mock heroic poem in four cantos.

¹⁰⁹ Chapter: “The body of canons of a collegiate or cathedral church, presided over by the dean”, *OED*, “chapter (n.)”.

¹¹⁰ “A person who leads or directs the singing of a church choir or congregation; a precentor”, *OED*, “chanter (n.2)”.

¹¹¹ The first stanza in Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux, *Le Lutrin* (1674).

¹¹² Publius Terentius Afer (Terence, c. 195-59 BC), Roman playwright author of comedies adapted from the late Attic comedy, many from Menander (c. 342-290 BC), Greek representative of Athenian New Comedy. Hence “Half-Menander”.

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¹¹³ The renowned spirit-character in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to whom Hunt attributes – not without cause – “remote and creative fancy”.

¹¹⁴ Louis-François Roubiliac, “Plaster portrait bust of Alexander Pope”, 1738, now at the British Museum, London.

¹¹⁵ Reference to Alexander Pope, “The Second Satire of the Second Book of Horace”: “To Hounslow Heath I point, and Bansted Down, / Thence comes your mutton, and these chicks my own”.

¹¹⁶ Martha Blount (1690-1763), Catholic gentlewoman, was a prominent figure in the Roman Catholic high society. Alexander Pope had a special relationship with Miss Blount – between friendship and non-formalised love – from 1707, when the two met, until his death in 1744.

¹¹⁷ Hunt might be referencing his sister-in-law Elizabeth Kent's *Flora Domestica* (London, 1823), to which he contributed several passages: “One of the most interesting descriptions of [Pope] represents him as being seen before dinner in a small suit of black, very neat and gentlemanly, with a basket in his hand containing flowers for the Miss Blounts” (xvi). The source of Kent's description remains unidentified.

¹¹⁸ Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (1712), III.57.

¹¹⁹ A few editors in the past have suggested that the first four lines of Hunt's excerpt from Virgil's *Aeneid* are indeed Virgil's beginning. The disputed lines, where the narrator evokes the two works that Virgil completed before the *Aeneid*, the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, are not found in the original text of any manuscript of Virgil. Moreover, the personal note in these lines is quite untypical of ancient epic, which usually begins with its central subject.

¹²⁰ John Dryden's 1697 translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* begins with the more traditional “Arms, and the Man I sing, who, forc'd by Fate / And haughty Juno's unrelenting Hate [...]”. In the dedication (306), Dryden describes the beginning in the terms quoted by Hunt here.

¹²¹ *Paradise Regained* (1671) is a poem by John Milton whose incipit explicitly connects it to Milton's previous effort, *Paradise Lost* (1667): “I, who ere while the happy garden sung / By one Man's disobedience lost, now sing / Recovered Paradise to all mankind, / By one Man's firm obedience fully tried / Through all temptation, and the Tempter foiled / In all his wiles, defeated and repulsed, / And Eden raised in the waste wilderness.”

¹²² The first stanza in Spenser's epic allegorical poem *The Fairie Queene* (1590-6).

¹²³ Titus Lucretius Carus (99-55 BC), Roman poet and philosopher.

¹²⁴ Epicurus (341-270 BC), Greek philosopher whose thought originated the influential philosophical school of Epicureanism.

¹²⁵ In Roman mythology, goddess of love, beauty, and desire.

¹²⁶ The first twenty-one lines – and Hunt's translation thereof – of Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, didactic poem in which he presents the Epicurean philosophy.

¹²⁷ Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando furioso* (1516-32).

¹²⁸ Francesco Berni (1497-35), Italian poet and playwright, author of an adaptation of Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato* (1483-95).

¹²⁹ Matteo Maria Boiardo (1440-94), Italian poet, author of *Orlando innamorato* (1483-95).

¹³⁰ I.e., adaptation of a literary work.

¹³¹ I.e., Matteo Maria Boiardo, who was Count of Scandiano, a feud of the Estensi.

¹³² Jean-Charles-Léonard Simonde de Sismondi, *De la littérature du Midi de l'Europe*, vol. 2 (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1813), 58-59.

¹³³ Jean-Charles-Léonard Simonde de Sismondi, *De la littérature du Midi de l'Europe*, vol. 2 (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1813), 58.

¹³⁴ *Gerusalemme liberata* (1575) heroic poem by the Italian poet Torquato Tasso (1544-95).

¹³⁵ Reference to Voltaire's 1729 *Essai sur la poésie épique* (*Oeuvres Complètes*, tome 8, Paris: Garnier, 362). Voltaire's original *Essay on Epic Poetry* (1727), substantially shorter than the French revision, does mention an excess in vowels in the Italian language, but not in *Gerusalemme liberata* specifically.

¹³⁶ The first stanza from Torquato Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata* (1575).

¹³⁷ Perhaps a reference to Alexander Pope, “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot”.

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- ¹³⁸ Incipit of Voltaire, *La Henriade* (1728), epic poem dedicated to the French King Henry IV.
- ¹³⁹ I.e., the rights claimed by the government over the property of an enemy.
- ¹⁴⁰ Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (1712), Canto II.
- ¹⁴¹ Madame la Comtesse de Genlis, “Pétrarque et Laure”, *The Quarterly Review* XXIV (no. 48, January 1821): 529-66.
- ¹⁴² “Narrative and Romantic Poems of the Italians” is the running title of Ugo Foscolo’s review of John Hookham Frere’s *Prospectus and Specimen of an Intended National Work*, and G. B. Casti’s “Court and parliament of beasts” in *The Quarterly Review* XXI (no. 42, April 1819): 486-556.
- ¹⁴³ Probably, G. Baglioli, “Dante: With a New Italian Commentary”, *The Edinburgh Quarterly* LVIII (February 1818): 453-74.
- ¹⁴⁴ William Stewart Rose, *The Court of Beasts, freely translated from the Animali Parlanti of Giambattista Casti, a Poem, in seven Cantos*, London: 1819.
- ¹⁴⁵ John Hookham Frere, *Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work, by William and Robert Whistlecraft, of Stowmarket, Suffolk, Harness and Collars Makers, intended to comprize the most interesting particulars relating to King Arthur and his Round Table*, London: 1818.
- ¹⁴⁶ One of the twelve Peers of France in *Chanson de Roland*.
- ¹⁴⁷ A fictional Arabian historian in Cervantes’s *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1605-15).
- ¹⁴⁸ Ugo Foscolo (1778-1827), Italian poet, playwright, translator and literary critic, spent his last years as an exile in England (1816-27), where he produced mainly historical, philological, and critical works, such as the one mentioned here.
- ¹⁴⁹ Reference to the “Article VII. 1. *Laon and Cythna, or the Revolution of the Golden City. A Vision of the Nineteenth Century, in the Stanza of Spenser*. By Percy B. Shelley. London. 1818. 2. *The Revolt of Islam. A Poem, in Twelve Cantos*. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London. 1818”, in *The Quarterly Review* XXI (no. 42, April 1819): 460-70. The article is very critical towards Shelley’s “industrious knot of authors” and “sect”, the aforementioned “Satanic school”, at the same time dismissing him as “by far the less pernicious of them”. His “friend and leader” Leigh Hunt, on the other hand, stands out in the article for having “all that is odious and contemptible”, “bustling vulgarity”, “ludicrous affectation”, “factious flippancy”, and “selfish heartlessness” (460, 469).
- ¹⁵⁰ Leigh Hunt, “Mr. Hazlitt’s letter to Mr. Gifford”, *The Examiner* 584, 7 March 1819: 156.
- ¹⁵¹ Niccolò Carteromaco [Forteguerrri], *Ricciardetto* (Venice, 1738), mock-heroic poem in thirty cantos.
- ¹⁵² I.e., a public apology.
- ¹⁵³ The poem was first published in 1811 as an article in *The Reflector* (Leigh Hunt, “The Feast of the Poets”, in *The Reflector, a Quarterly Magazine* 2 (1811, no. 4): 313-23); then in 1814 as a separate, expanded work (*The Feast of the Poets, with Notes and Other Pieces in Verse*, London: James Cawthorn, 1814).
- ¹⁵⁴ The poet laureate Robert “Bob” Southey (1774-1843). See n. 81 above.
- ¹⁵⁵ I.e., Apollo. Hunt’s poem is a “trifle” on the common literary theme of Apollo holding session as in a tribunal, but here the god is a critic of poetry.
- ¹⁵⁶ See Hunt’s note to his poem: “Mr. Walter Savage Landor, a very worthy person, I believe, and author of an epic piece of gossiping called *Gebir* [1798], upon the strength of which Mr. Southey has dedicated to him his *Curse of Kehama* [1810] [...]” (*The Reflector, a Quarterly Magazine* 2 (1811, no. 4): 322).
- ¹⁵⁷ Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), Scottish poet and novelist.
- ¹⁵⁸ See Hunt’s note to his poem: “Mr. William Stewart Rose [1775-1843], a son of the Right Honourable George Rose, and author of some common-place rhymings [...]” (*The Reflector, a Quarterly Magazine* 2 (1811, no. 4): 323).
- ¹⁵⁹ Unidentified reference.
- ¹⁶⁰ The Accademia dell’Arcadia was founded in Rome in 1690. Forteguerrri became a member under the “Arcadian” pseudonym of *Nidalmo Tiseo*.
- ¹⁶¹ Alessandro Guidi (1650-1712), or “Erilo Cleoneo”, poet and playwright from Pavia; Vincenzo da Filicaia (1642-1707), or “Polibo Emonio”, nobleman and poet from Florence.
- ¹⁶² *Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe* (London: Dodsley, 1759) by Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74), Anglo-Irish novelist, poet, and playwright.

A SUNDAY'S FÊTE AT ST. CLOUD.*¹

IF, as some moralists hold, human beings are, generally speaking, happy in proportion as they deserve to be so, the French are the most virtuous people in existence. Let those who dispute the proposition pay a visit to St. Cloud on a Fête-day² in summer. I can promise them they shall not repent of their journey, even though it should not solve a problem in morals. If happiness is not symptomatic of something else, it is at least contagious in itself, to a certain degree; and he who can witness the scene in question, and not partake in its joy, must be a philosopher at least, if not something worse.—But if one would join in this scene to any good effect, he must not be a mere spectator; for such a one cannot enter into, and therefore cannot feel, the true spirit of it. And he must not be a critic of forms and rules, lest he should be shocked by finding them forgotten or violated at every turn. Least of all must he affect the *genteel*;³ for the persons among whom he will find himself are all below the middle class, and moreover they do not understand even the word, to say nothing of the thing; it does not exist in their language—I mean in our sense of it. The French are the genteeldest people in the world, without knowing it. It is the only good quality they possess that they do not over-rate themselves upon; and their unconsciousness of this makes up for all their failings on the score of vanity and self-conceit.—But to our Fête—one glance at the reali-

* Author: Horace Smith / Transcribed and annotated by Giacomo Ferrari.

ties of which is better than all the mere reflections that can be made to arise out of it. That we may lose no part of the scene, and its characteristic appurtenances, let us join the partakers in it early in the day, as they are setting out, in couples or companies, from that grand starting point in the race of Parisian pleasure, the Place de Louis Quinze.⁴ The splendid coup-d'œil,⁵ formed by the unrivalled collection of inanimate objects that surround us, must not be allowed to withdraw our attention from the living picture that we are about to form a part of. Yonder lies the road to St. Cloud, along the elevated bank of the river, and beside the great mass of trees forming the Champs Elysées.⁶ From every other point of entrance to this magnificent square, Paris is pouring forth her gay streams of pleasure-lit faces and trim forms, till here, in the midst, they cross and mingle with each other, like bees in the neighbourhood of their hive on a sunshiny day. Here, however, at the head of this long string of cabriolets, the din is not so harmonious as that of the scene to which I have just likened the one before us. It is caused by the drivers disputing with each other for the possession of the fares that keep arriving every moment, and of the fares themselves disputing for the price they shall pay—for a Parisian bourgeois thinks a sous⁷ saved is worth a century of words, even when pleasure is the purchase; and a Parisian cabriolet⁸ driver is not the person to lose a sous, if talking will gain it. Many have agreed for their fare (of from twelve to twenty sous each, according to the skill and patience of the bargain-maker) and are taking their seats, by the aid of that aged crone who presents her chair with an air of anxious politeness, and is content with a half-penny for assisting a whole party. Meanwhile, here rattles along the “chaise and one” of a substantial tradesman of the Rue St. Honoré,⁹ containing himself, his spouse (his cabriolet is

the only place in which a Parisian tradesman may take precedence of his spouse) his three *petits*,¹⁰ and his *mouton*.¹¹ "Gare!"¹² issues at intervals from the noisy vehicle;—not to warn the pedestrians of their danger, but to apprise them of the approach of their betters, which, in the bustle of the scene, they might otherwise overlook. *There* lumbers along slowly and heavily, a clean tilted cart; we cannot penetrate its mysterious covering; but from the *éclats de rire*¹³ that burst from within at every jolt of the *pavé*,¹⁴ we may judge that it contains half a score of happy *soubrettes*,¹⁵ scarce more happy now while laughing at their play, than yesterday when singing at their work. If we could peep through that canvas curtain at the back, we might chance to see some of the prettiest faces that ever wore a mob-cap; for the waiting-maids are incomparably the prettiest women in Paris. We might amuse ourselves on this spot for half the day, but that a scene still more attractive awaits us. In passing to it by the side of the Seine, let us not forget to notice the defective taste of the Parisians in respect to water excursions. Their pleasant river winds gracefully through its rich banks to the very gates of the park of St. Cloud—the scene of the Fête; and yet scarcely fifty of the thousands that we shall meet there will have come by water. The truth is, the French are, by nature, the least courageous people in the world; and they are actually *afraid* of the water; at least it gives them an uneasy sensation of possible danger, which interferes with their pleasure, and alloys it. This being the case, they are wise to act as they do; but the fact, supposing it to be one, is curious. They are cowards advisedly, and on principle. When under the immediate influence of excitation, they are capable of the most rash and fool-hardy exploits; and under great circumstances they can "skew their courage to the sticking-place"¹⁶ till it impels them to the most heroic acts of

bravery and self-devotion. But left to themselves, and in the common concerns of life, they are cowards on the same principle as Falstaff was—namely, one of pure good sense.¹⁷ They are too happy in the possession of their life, and too fond of it, to tolerate the bare idea of risking it when they see no occasion. But when death comes, and there is no avoiding it, like Falstaff again they receive it graciously, and “babble of green fields” with their last breath.¹⁸ If their happy hearts do not prove them to be the most virtuous, they impel them to be the wisest people in the world, and perhaps the terms are nearly convertible. One thing I’m sure they are too wise as well as too happy to do—namely, to babble of wisdom and virtue in the midst of describing a Fête-day at St. Cloud—as I am doing now. But I’m an Englishman still, though writing under a foreign sky; and may easily be forgiven. Let me forget this, and at once transport myself and the reader to the bridge of St. Cloud.¹⁹ Here, after twelve o’clock, no carriage is allowed to pass. This regulation is established to prevent the confusion and danger likely to arise from the immense throng of vehicles, of different kinds, that would otherwise be collected in the village. The Fête being as yet scarcely commenced, let us make our way through these lines of booths on the outside of the park-gates, and leaving that to the left, take half an hour’s stroll through the splendid gardens of the Chateau.²⁰ An abrupt descent, through an opening at one corner of the court-yard, brings us to a low level opposite the grand garden front of the Chateau, which is divided from the grounds by a circular sheet of water confined in a wrought marble basin. From this level you look up a lofty ascent of platform above platform, crowned by a circular tower at the top, and clothed in smooth green turf, studded by clipped box-trees in regular rows, and lined on each side by a lofty artificial wood. The

whole of this view, on a sunshiny Sunday (and I think *all* the Sundays are sunshiny in France) enlivened and ornamented as it is by groups of gaily dressed people, seated in circles on the slopes of turf, or wandering in couples among the trees, exactly resembles one of Watteau's pictures;²¹ and it cannot well resemble any thing more gay and characteristic in its way. Ascending these slopes to the terrace where the tower is placed, and mounting, if we please, the tower itself, we may gaze upon one of the finest views in existence, of an artificial kind. In front, immediately beneath the perpendicular height of the terrace on which we stand, and sloping from the very edge of it down to the borders of the river below, lay a mass of richly foliated trees, over the flat tops of which we look to the plain beyond. In the midst of this plain, divided from the river by an interval of vineyards and corn-fields, lies Paris, its white walls stretching themselves into the distance on either side, and its innumerable spires, domes, and turrets, lifting themselves up as if to enjoy the air and the sunshine in which the whole seems basking. On one side, on the highest point of ground in the city, the grave Pantheon²² rises and overlooks its subject buildings, like a king on a watch-tower; and on the other side, the gorgeous dome of the Invalids flaunts and glitters in its gilded robes, like a queen at her coronation.²³ To the left of the city the river stretches away windingly into the blue distance; and on the right, the noble hill on which the Chateau of St. Cloud stands, encloses the scene to a great extent, every where sloping its richly wooded sides into the plain below. Nothing can be finer than the striking contrast afforded to this richly varied scene in front, by turning for a moment to that which completes the circle behind. With the exception of the view down the gardens to the palace front, it consists entirely of an interminable mass of immense forest trees,

intersected at regular intervals by six narrow vistas which have been cut through them, and which are so long that, by the laws of perspective, they close up, like the points of a star, before the eye can reach to the end of them. I repeat, turning from this grand effect of art, to the scene I have described as forming the opposite view from the tower, the effect of each upon the other is altogether unique; and perhaps upon the whole it is as fine as that of any purely natural scenery that can be contemplated; for unquestionably what it loses in some respects by comparison with a view of the latter kind, it gains in others.

Let us now descend from our height (and perhaps it may be not amiss if we leave our high words at the top) into the heart-stirring scene that awaits us below. We will not plod back along the beaten road, but will follow those errant groups that are making their way down yonder acclivity, through the thick of the wood. We shall thus come upon the gay scene suddenly and at once.

Emerging from the wood, here we stand on the bridge which surmounts the principal water-works. From the fixed appearance of the orderly crowd below, and the happy anxiety that lights up all their faces, young and old, we may be sure that the waters are on the point of commencing their strange freaks. And see!—the gentle bubblings, that move at the same moment round the mouths of the thousand jets, “give note of preparation.”²⁴ And now, in an instant, the waters rush forth from their secret prisons with a sound as of many winds; and, shooting their free sparkles into the sunshine, quiver and glitter for a moment above the tops of the highest trees, and then fall through the air in silver showers into the basin below. Meanwhile, after a momentary burst of delighted admiration, the till now motionless crowd move about in all directions, their gay attire shining

through the falling mist like notes in a sun-beam, and their happy voices blending with the music from the booths and the rushing of the waters.

Descending to the bottom of this sloping alley, containing the principal water-works, we shall find ourselves in the very heart of the scene that we have come chiefly to witness and partake in. Along this great line of smooth gravelled pathway, occupying the principal extent of the park, are erected on each side the booths of the players, the jugglers, the grimaciers,²⁵ the exhibitors of wonders in nature and art, the games, sports, and in fact the usual accompaniments of a fair in England. But this, be it understood, is the sole point in which a Fête at St. Cloud resembles an English fair: the discordant din of noises, the confusion, the mobbing, the debauchery, the indecency, and the crimes of the latter, are all wanting; and in their place we have music and dancing, that would not disgrace a fashionable assembly—gaiety of heart that need not be repressed, because it never oversteps the bounds of decorum—and feasting and revelry that may safely be indulged in, because they never lead to riot or end in shame.

But it is time that we partake in a little of this feasting ourselves; and for this purpose let us repair to one of yonder little trelliced alcoves looking on the principal avenue of the Park, and order our repast. But we must not be very fastidious. We are not at Beauvillier's now;²⁶ as we shall soon find in more than one particular. But what we lose in one way we shall gain in another; so we must not complain. And besides, we have been in the open air all day; and plain fare and homely wine will perhaps content us as well as the best, and be more in keeping with the scene about us. We laid aside our gentility when we determined on coming here; and for my part I feel in no hurry to put it on again. It is

very pretty wearing in towns and cities, and is not without important uses on many occasions; but among trees and flowers it is not the thing; and, in a scene like this, it is a mere impertinence. So let us seat ourselves cosily at this vacant table, between this group of pretty *paysannes* and their *bons amis* on one side,²⁷ and these trim Parisian *soubrettes* and *bonnes* on the other,²⁸ and forget that there are such places as St. James's and the Chaussée d'Antin in the world.²⁹ From this spot we can see all that is going on in the Park below; and a gay and busy scene it is. Observe, in that little turfed vale between the trees yonder, that group of "children of a larger growth,"³⁰ preparing to mount the hanging chairs and flying horses of that *round-about*, and engage in the game of Riding at the Ring.³¹ Father and mother, young men and lasses, girls and boys, *bonne* and all, enter into the sport with equal spirit and eagerness; for why should what pleases the one fail to please the other? and why should we refuse to seek pleasure where others can find it? So thinks the Parisian *bourgeois*, and so he acts; and let none but those whose wisdom makes them more happy than his folly (as they may if they please call it) makes him, presume to laugh at him. Another group, of a similar kind, are taking their turns to shoot at a mark with a school-boy's cross-bow. It well becomes us, no doubt, to sneer at their harmless amusement; though we shall do well not to doubt that it is amusement to them: but what will it become *them* to do in return, if they should chance to meet *us* in the fields to-morrow shooting at the happy birds there? Listen to yon band of Savoyard musicians.³² You'll not easily meet, between this and the gates of Calais, with a more *piquante*³³ figure than that singing girl. Her kerchiefed head, with the little insidious curl peeping out on each side—the trim *tourneure*³⁴ of her waist, bound in by its black silk

apron strapped over the shoulders—the confidently modest air—the shrill sweetness of her out-of-door voice—and her *naïve* expression of the wild Tyrolean³⁵ air she is singing—are, altogether, not to be resisted. And see—she's coming up to us, with her little wooden waiter, to solicit payment for her song. We must not pay such prettiness with ugly copper; but must ensure another air, and a smile and curtsy to boot, by a little ten sous piece. Somehow I never touch one of these little pieces without feeling as if I wanted to give it away. I think they were made for the purpose—and for pretty Savoyard singers in particular. But here's a character of a very different description; in some respects as distasteful and repulsive as the other was attractive. But as he represents a characteristic feature of a French fête, and as none ever take place without him, we must not let him pass by unnoticed. This is the celebrated *grîmacier* whom they call *Le Marquis*.³⁶ Observe how he skips about, like a parching pea.³⁷ He seems to have borrowed Kehama's power of ubiquity.³⁸ He is here, there, and everywhere, at the same moment. This man is one of the most striking and remarkable persons I ever saw. In scenes of this kind he haunts you like a spectre. He *appears* before you, without your knowing how he came there—smirks and smiles as if to welcome himself—dances his jig—plays his tune on the violin—insinuates his paper of songs into your hand—and is gone again before you know where you are. He moves about as if the ground burned his feet. He is more like the Goblin Page³⁹ grown old than any thing else. And yet you cannot fancy him to have ever been any younger than he is, or that he will ever grow older. There is a kind of rattlesnake fascination about this man's look that is unaccountable; it unites the opposite principles of attraction and repulsion. I never see him, or lose sight of him, but I

am tempted to pronounce two lines in an old love song—"Why did he come? Why did he go?"⁴⁰ And I'm obliged to repeat this twenty times in an hour; for he's like the Irishman's passion—he no sooner comes than he goes—but then he no sooner goes than he comes again. He's a perfect Jack-a-lantern—a Will-o'-the-wisp.⁴¹ What is very extraordinary, his face is handsome and his person good, and yet the one gives you the idea of perfect ugliness, and the other of extreme deformity. This seems to arise from the tricks he is perpetually playing with them, and the distortions he throws them into. And yet they have that hard, cut, angular appearance, that they seem as if they could never move out of their present position, whatever that may be. His dress has a no less non-descript⁴² air than his person, and yet that too is perfectly regular and *in costume*; being an old worn-out court suit, ruffled, painted, and embroidered—dirty white stockings—large paste buckles to his shoes and knees—and a white flaxen pig-tailed wig, which lies on the top of his head, and covers scarcely any of his grey hairs. He never wears a hat.

The Marquis seldom addresses any one personally; and when he does, it is always in a fixed formula, directed to the *ladies* of the party. However often he may come in contact with the same party, he invariably offers them a copy of his songs. If it is received, he smirks, bows, skips away, and says nothing. If it is refused, he lays it down on your seat, or table, making a profound obeisance, and saying, "*Jamais je ne manque au respect que je dois à la sexe.*"⁴³ I never heard him utter any words but these. He is never importunate for money. If, when he presents his little waiter,⁴⁴ you give him any thing, he bows and is gone in a moment; if you give him nothing, he bows equally low, and is gone as soon.

This singular person is to me a perfect study—a never-failing source of reflection; and accordingly, I never meet him in a scene like this without his marring, for a moment, the careless gaiety that would otherwise entirely possess me. There is something in his air, look, and manner, no less affecting than it is repulsive. His perpetual smiles seem put on to hide the indications of a sick heart; and his ceaseless change of place seems an unconscious endeavour to escape from himself. This man would have made a figure in the world, if fortune would have let him. But perhaps it was in kindness to himself as well as the world that she prevented this; for there is that in his face which says that he is fit for any thing—for much that is good, but for more that is evil. The gossips of Paris say that *Le Marquis* is a spy of the Government; and one would not hastily contradict such good authority! But, if he is a political tool at all, I should take him to be intended as a walking libel on the old regime, started by the Liberals! But let us hope that he will not turn out to be either of these; for he's quite low enough in the scale of humanity already, considering that he was evidently intended to be higher.

Having finished our somewhat homely repast, let us again mingle with the crowd below, that we may have a better opportunity of observing the constitution of it; for it is this that gives the character to the scene. The *professional* part of it we need take little farther notice of; for shewmen and their shews are pretty much alike all over the world. And first let us admire that sweet knot of peasant girls. What can be a prettier antithesis than those gaudy silk aprons—blue, green, pink, and lilac—and those snow-white quaker-like dresses, and plain mob caps? They look like inhabitants of a rainbow, newly alighted on the earth! And their fresh unworldly faces, and sparkling eyes, do not belie the

fancy. See how they thread their way through the crowd, linked arm in arm, as if they did not belong to it! And now they are lost among the trees. But we shall meet them again anon. There are several of these groups in the Park; and the costume is the prettiest I have seen for many a day: a rich silk apron of some one gaudy colour, spread over a perfectly plain snow-white robe, without a single flounce, furbelow, or frill, of any kind whatever; with a white mob-cap, equally devoid of ornament. There is no nation in the world in which the lower classes of the females have any pretensions to vie for a moment with the French, as to taste in dress. They display an infinite variety of costume, according to their different station, age, province, district, &c. but each is, generally speaking, curiously finished and perfect in itself, and appropriate to its wearer, without being in the slightest degree fantastical, affected, or recherché. The only one I remember, to which these latter qualities can be imputed, is the *cauchoise*, peculiar to a certain district in Normandy.⁴⁵ And this, if it is something too gorgeous, glittering, and outrée⁴⁶ (I speak of the *coiffure*)⁴⁷ is altogether so grand in itself, and so becoming to the noble race of creatures who wear it, that it must by no means be made an exception to the rule. What, again, can be more exquisitely neat, simple, snug, and appropriate, than the dress of those fine hale-looking⁴⁸ middle-aged dames, the wives of the small *propriétaires*⁴⁹ in the neighbourhood?—the snow-white robe; black silk apron; small crimson kerchief, folded over in front, and coming down to a point at the waist behind; and the close-eared fly cap, trimmed with three or four rows of rich Valenciennes lace,⁵⁰ and the whole stiffened and quilted into one invariable form, year after year, and from generation to generation. This is another admirable piece of taste in the classes of which I am speaking. They never ape

the class above them, as *all* classes, except the very highest, do in England; but keep fixedly to their own mode and style: which has thus the double advantages of being exclusively *their own*, and of preventing "odious" comparisons and idle emulation.⁵¹

By this time the dusk of the evening is beginning to draw on, and the dancing has commenced. This is another of the characteristics of these fêtes; and it is perhaps the pleasantest of all, and the most peculiar to them. A set of grooms and kitchen maids dancing quadrilles⁵² in the open air, in a style of ease, grace, and self-possession that would not discredit a fashionable ball-room, may be sought in vain elsewhere than in France; but there it almost universally takes the place of the drinking, quarrelling, and debauchery that are the natural and (as it would seem) the necessary finish to every festal meeting of the same class of persons in England and other countries. Under the lofty trees which line the grand avenue of the Park, orchestras are erected, filled with good musicians; lamps are suspended from the branches above; an open space is cleared on the sward or the smooth dry soil below; and numerous parties, consisting of the lowest classes of those who have been partaking in the fête during the day, finish the evening by dancing for two or three hours in the manner I have described. Those of the class above, who think their dignity would be compromised by joining in the dance with the mere *canaille*,⁵³ do not, however, refuse to gratify their passion for it in imagination, by forming gay circles round the dancers, and attentively looking on.

This, then, is offered as a slight sketch of a few of the characteristic features of a Sunday's Fête at St. Cloud; and if it has given the reader a tenth part of the pleasure the

writer of it experienced the first time he partook in the delightful scene which it endeavours to depict, it will not have been made in vain. But if it has failed to interest him, the reader is welcome to attribute the deficiency (as he safely may) to any thing rather than a want of attractiveness in the subject matter itself.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Saint Cloud is a town near Paris, famous for the park where the Château de Saint-Cloud – “Chateau” in the piece – used to be before 1870.

² *I.e.*, holiday.

³ The quality of exhibiting exaggerated or affected refinement or respectability.

⁴ Today’s Place de la Concorde, in Paris. In 1789, the revolutionaries pulled down the equestrian monument to Louis XV and erected the guillotine in its place. The Square was named “de la Concorde” in 1795, but at the time of writing, and since 1814, the name had been changed back to Place de Louis Quinze.

⁵ *I.e.*, glance.

⁶ The Avenue des Champs-Élysées in Paris.

⁷ The French coin, originally called “sol” (from the Latin *solidus*), then “sou”.

⁸ “A light two-wheeled chaise drawn by a single horse, having a large folding hood and usually an apron to cover the lap and legs of the occupants”, *OED*, “cabriolet (*n.*)”.

⁹ Probably a reference to Alexander Pope, “The First Epistle of the First Book of Horace Imitated”, (London: Dodsley, 1737), 154-58: since the word “chaise” already meant a carriage for pleasure drawn by one horse, the phrase “chaise and *n*” was more commonly used for vehicles drawn by two, four, or six horses. But Pope’s “poor”, who cannot afford more expensive vehicles, nonetheless hire and “run / (they don’t know whither) in a Chaise and one”. In Horace’s epistle, the poor Roman would do likewise on a hired boat, the humble equivalent of the rich’s trireme. Pope satirises the fickleness of the poorer classes, who spend ostensibly beyond their means to “ape the classes above them”, a vice of which Smith accuses “*all* [English] classes, except the very highest” (see pp. 148-9). Smith finds the small French proprietors innocent of said vice (pp. 148-9), but apparently not the “substantial tradesman of the Rue St. Honoré” who provokes the reference to Pope.

¹⁰ *I.e.*, children.

¹¹ The exact meaning of *mouton* in this sentence is obscure. Possibly, it stands for a mouton coat or sheepskin blanket, or for a docile companion or follower, *i.e.*, the coachman.

¹² *I.e.*, “A cry of warning: Look out!”, *OED*, “gare (*v. & int.*)”.

¹³ *I.e.*, bursts of laughter.

¹⁴ *I.e.*, paving stone.

¹⁵ *I.e.*, waiting-maids.

¹⁶ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I.vii.70.

¹⁷ Sir John Falstaff, the fat, jolly, braggart knight in William Shakespeare’s *1* and *2 King Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. See, for instance, *1 Henry IV*: “the better part of valor is discretion, in the which better part I have saved my life” (V.iv.122-3).

¹⁸ Much has been written about this elusive line of Shakespeare’s and its reading (‘a babbled, a Table, ‘a talked?). It suffices to say here that Smith is quoting Lewis Theobald’s version “a babbled of green fields”, meaning that Falstaff, before dying, mumbled incoherently about bliss in heaven.

¹⁹ A series of drawings and watercolours by J.M.W. Turner (about 1833) portraying the bridge of St. Cloud, the town, and the surroundings give an idea of the panorama described by Smith.

²⁰ The Château de Saint-Cloud, former residence of Napoleon, was destroyed during the siege of Paris in the Franco-Prussian War (1870).

²¹ Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), French Rococo painter, famous for his *fête galante* (“gallant entertainment”) paintings, such as the 1719 *Fêtes Vénitiennes*.

²² The Panthéon, built atop the Montagne Sainte-Geneviève, was built between 1758 and 1790.

²³ The Hôtel des Invalides is a monumental complex, originally intended as a hospital and home for veteran soldiers. Its dome was completed in 1706.

²⁴ Adapted quotation from William Shakespeare, *Henry V* (IV.Chorus.15).

²⁵ *I.e.*, one who makes grimaces, or distorts his face.

²⁶ The Beauvillier are a very ancient French family. The expression means, by antonomasia, in a residence of French nobility.

²⁷ *I.e.*, peasant women and their sweethearts.

²⁸ *I.e.*, waiting-maids and housemaids.

EDITORIAL NOTES

²⁹ St. James's is a district in London renowned, at the time, for its gentlemen's clubs. The Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin is a street in Paris which at the time of writing would be, in Balzac's words, the heart of the city.

³⁰ John Dryden, *All for Love* (1677), 4.43.

³¹ "A circlet of metal suspended from a post which each of a number of riders attempted to carry off on the point of a lance. Chiefly in 'to ride at the ring'", *OED*, "ring (*n.1*)". Of course, in the passage, the game will not be played on horseback but from the *round-about*, a sort of carousel.

³² "A native or inhabitant of Savoy, now a region of south-eastern France [...] Formerly sometimes with reference to the Savoyards' traditional association with the role of itinerant musician", *OED*, "Savoyard (*n. & adj.*)".

³³ *I.e.*, fascinating, charming.

³⁴ Actually "tournure", *i.e.*, the contour, the shape of a body-part.

³⁵ Typical of "former crown land of Austria-Hungary, embracing the present Austrian province of Tyrol and parts of northern Italy", *OED*, "Tyrolean (*adj. & n.*)".

³⁶ Several contemporary engravings portraying French *grimaciers* (see n. 25 above) match the ensuing description of *Le Marquis*, also called *marquis des rues*, a dancing and singing street-artist who also plays the violin.

³⁷ *I.e.*, like a pea that is being dried or roasted in a pan.

³⁸ In Robert Southey's *Curse of Kehama* (1810), the evil priest Kehama acquires increasing powers before becoming a god.

³⁹ "Distorted like some dwarfish ape" and capable of uncannily fast movement, the goblin or dwarf page appears in Sir Walter Scott's *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805), a narrative poem set in 16th-century Scotland (See Canto II, 355-70).

⁴⁰ The refrain in "Heigho!", a song sung by Mrs. Maria Dickons, "Claudine", in the second scene of T. Dibdin, *Two Faces under a Hood: a Comic Opera*, performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden in 1807.

⁴¹ "A phosphorescent light seen hovering or floating at night over marshy ground", *OED*, "will-o'-the-wisp (*n.*)". Sometimes imagined as a person or spirit.

⁴² *I.e.*, Lacking distinctive qualities.

⁴³ *I.e.*, "I never disrespect the fairer sex".

⁴⁴ *I.e.*, a salver, a small tray.

⁴⁵ Literally, typical of the Pays de Caux, in Normandy.

⁴⁶ *I.e.*, eccentric, extreme.

⁴⁷ "A style or fashion of attiring the head and dressing the hair", *OED*, "coiffure (*n.*)".

⁴⁸ *I.e.*, vigorous and healthy.

⁴⁹ *I.e.*, proprietors, someone who owns and works his land.

⁵⁰ A variety of lace originally manufactured at Valenciennes.

⁵¹ See n. 9 above.

⁵² "A square dance, typically performed by four couples, containing five sections or figures each of which is a complete dance in itself", *OED*, "quadrille (*n.1*)".

⁵³ *I.e.*, the common people, the masses.

APULEIUS.*¹

ST. AUGUSTINE, Bishop of Hippo,² one of the most illustrious fathers of the Church, in his celebrated book “of the Citie of God,” which was “Englished by J. H. in 1610,”³ has these words:—

“When I was in Italy, I heard such a report there, how certaine women of one place there, would but give one a little drug in cheese, and presently hee became an asse, and so they made him carry their necessaries whither they would, and having done, they reformed his figure againe: yet had he his humane reason still, as Apuleius had in his asse-ship, as himselfe writeth in his booke of the Golden Asse,⁴ be it a lie or a truth that hee writeth.”⁵

“Nam et nos cum essemus in Italia, audiebamus talia de quadam regione illarum partium ubi stabularias mulieres imbutas his malis artibus, in caseo dare solere, dicebant, quibus vellent seu possent viatoribus, unde in jumenta illico verterentur, et necessaria quæque portarent, postque perfuncta opera iterum ad se redirent: nec tamen in eis mentem fieri bestialem, sed rationalem humanamque servari, sicut Apuleius in libris quos Asini Aurei titulo inscripsit, sibi ipsi accidissee, ut accepto veneno, humano animo permanente, asinus fieret, aut indicavit aut finxit.”

Upon which passage a learned Spaniard, named Ludovicus Vives,⁶ who, through the munificence of Cardinal Wol-

* Author: Thomas Jefferson Hogg / Transcribed and annotated by Giacomo Ferrari.

sey,⁷ was Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Oxford, has written a comment in Latin, which has been rendered by the same J. H. thus:—

“Apuleius was a magician doubtlesse: but never turned into an asse. But Lucian⁸ before him wrote how hee, being in Thessaly⁹ to learne some magike, was turned into an asse instead of a bird: not that this was true: but that Lucian delighted neither in truths, nor truths’ likelihoods. This worke did Apuleius make whole in Latine, adding diverse things to garnish it with more delight, to such as love Milesian tales,¹⁰ and heere and there sprinckling it with his antiquaries’ phrases, and his new compositions, with great liberty, yet somewhat suppressing the absurdity of the theame. But wee love now to read him, because he hath said some things there in that new dexterity, which others seeking to imitate, have committed grosse errors: for I thinke that grace of his in that worke is inimitable. But Apuleius was no asse, only he delights men’s eares with such a story; as man’s affection is wholly transported with a strange story.”¹¹

Such uncommon praises extorted from one, who, as the admiring commentator on a Father of the Church, cannot be supposed to have entertained very friendly feelings towards the writings of a Pagan Philosopher, afford a valuable testimony in favour of Apuleius, and are alone sufficient to awaken some curiosity to be acquainted with a work, which we must love to read, and of which the grace is declared to be inimitable.

With respect to the passage cited from St. Augustine, the miscreancy of that reverend person is most striking; for, whatever allowances we may be disposed to make for the habits of credulity, or of bad faith, in which he may have

lived, it is extraordinary that the Bishop should have had the folly to believe, or the audacity to affect to believe, that Apuleius had really been changed into an ass.

As to the note, the appetite with which it is written is remarkable: the world has lost its appetite, and it is with difficulty that we can now be stimulated even to pick a bit of any wholesome work.

The masses of volumes that we are daily devouring are unhappily no proofs of a healthy desire for food. We cannot conscientiously call that man a glutton, who, a stranger to the baker and the milkman, and having long abjured animal food, has renounced also the bloodless diet that depends upon fruit, vegetables, and puddings, because he can shew on his inhospitable table piles of pill-boxes, heaps of gally-pots,¹² and stacks of empty phials. We can never allow a reputation for voracity to be authenticated by such documents as these. Let any honest man, who has ever read half a page of a good book, or eaten half a plate of good roast beef, decide, whether the literature, with which we are now drugged, most resembles nauseous Galenicals,¹³ or savoury kitchen physic.

We may perhaps be permitted, in the short vacation between the last exorbitant attack upon our patience and our pockets, and the next accruing imposition, to enquire a little into the history of Apuleius, and the nature of the *Metamorphosis*.¹⁴

Lucius Apuleius lived in the second century of the Christian æra, under the Antonines:¹⁵ he was born of a good family at Madaura,¹⁶ a Roman colony in Africa; his father being one of the principal Magistrates of that city, and his mother, Salvia, a descendant of Plutarch of Charonea.¹⁷

Having been educated from his earliest youth at Athens, the Greek was his native language; and coming afterwards to

reside in Rome, he there learnt the Latin (which was little known at Madaura) with painful labour, and without the assistance of a master; "*arumnabili labore, nullo magistro pra eunte*:" the *Metamorphoses* therefore commence with an apology, in case the rude use of any exotic or forensic expression should give offence.

He followed for some time at Rome the profession of an advocate; and for a person, who, amongst his numerous attainments, appears to have been a considerable Dandy,¹⁸ was remarkably successful.

An unusual advancement in the science of jurisprudence, and such a thorough knowledge of the nature of ample redress, and of substantial justice, even when backed by powerful private interest, and of the spirit of the law in general, as could only have been acquired by deep study and respectable practice, are clearly evinced in the narrative of a little adventure, which terminates the first book of the *Metamorphoses*.

We shall be pleased with it as a specimen of the style of a Dandy Advocate. We shall value it also as being a complete refutation of the absurd opinion, that it is impossible for a sound lawyer to find time for any more elegant or liberal studies: and those who are condemned to devote the principal part of their days to legal pursuits, will have no small consolation in reflecting, that one, who was all-accomplished, had as clear an insight into the fundamental principles of right, as any Jurisconsult ever attained to, who had bestowed on these subjects an exclusive and undivided attention.

The adventure is as follows:—

"Having settled these matters and put away my things in my bed-room, I set out for the bath, and, that I might first provide something to eat, I found out the fish-market, and

saw there a fine piece of fish exposed for sale. I asked the price, and being told that five-and-twenty pieces had been refused, I bought it up for twenty. As I was going gently from the market, Pytheas joined me, my fellow-collegian at Athens: after a short time he recognized me, and came to me; having embraced and saluted me kindly, he said, "It is a long time, my Lucius, since I have seen you; not surely since we left our master. But what is the occasion of this journey?" "You shall know to-morrow," I said, "but what is this? I wish you joy; for I see attendants with wands, and your dress is altogether that of a person in office."

"I preside over the market," he said, "and fill the office of *Ædile*;¹⁹ if you wish to buy any thing, I will assist you as far as I can." This I declined, as I had already provided a piece of fish quite sufficient for supper. But notwithstanding, Pytheas caught sight of the basket, and shaking up the fish, that he might see better, said, "What did you give for this trash?" "With some difficulty I got the fishmonger to take twenty pieces." Upon hearing which, he instantly seized my hand, and hurrying me back into the fish-market, cried, "And from whom did you purchase this trumpery, here?" I pointed out a little old man sitting in a corner, when Pytheas immediately chiding him in a very severe voice, and with all the dignity of an *Ædile*, said, "So then you have no mercy at all even upon my friends, or upon foreigners? What do you mean by selling so dear such wretched little fishes, and by thus making the flower of the land of Thessaly seem like a solitary rock in respect of dear-ness of provisions? But you shall not escape; I will let you know how, under my magistracy, rogues ought to be punished." Then overturning the basket in the midst, he ordered his officer to get upon the fish, and to tread them to pieces with his feet. My friend Pytheas being satisfied

with this noble severity of manners, informed me, that I was at liberty to withdraw. "It is enough for me, my Lucius, to have thus disgraced that old fellow." Astonished and struck dumb at these exploits, I betook myself to the bath, having been deprived both of my money and of my supper by the resolute wisdom of my sensible fellow-collegian."²⁰

"His actis et rebus meis in illo cubiculo conditis, pergens ipse ad balneas, ut prius aliquid nobis cibaturi prospicerem, forum cupedinis peto: inque eo piscatum opiparum expositum video. Et percontato pretio, quod centum numis indicaret aspernatus, viginti denariis præstavi. Inde me commodum egredientem continuatur Pytheas, condiscipulus apud Athenas Atticus meus, qui me post aliquam multam temporis amanter agnitum invadit, amplexusque ac comiter deosculatus: "Mi Luci," ait, "sat Pol diu est, quod intervisimus. At, Hercules, exinde cum a magistro digressi sumus. Quæ autem tibi causa peregrinationis hujus?" "Crastino die scies," inquam. "Sed quid istud? Voti gaudeo. Nam et lixas et virgas, et habitum prorsus magistratui congruentem in te video." "Annonam curamus," ait, "et Ædilatum geremus; et, si quid obsonare cupis, utique commodabimus." Abnuebam; quippe qui jam coenæ affatim piscatus prospereramus. Sed enim Pytheas, visa sportula, succussisque in aspectum planiorem piscibus, "At has quisquillas quanti parasti?" "Vix," inquam, "piscatori extorsimus accipere viginti denarios." Quo audito, statim arreptâ dextrâ postliminio me in forum cupedinis reducens, "Et a quo," inquit, "istorum nugamenta hæc comparasti?" Demonstrò seniculum in angulo sedentem. Quem confestim pro Ædilitatis imperio voce asperrima increpans, inquit, "Tam jam nec amicis quidem nostris, vel omnino ullis hospitibus parcitis? Quid tam magnis pretiis pisces frivolos vindicatis, et florem Thessaliæ regionis instar solitudinis scopuli edulium cari-

tate ducitis? Sed non impune. Jam enim fano scias, quemadmodum sub nostro magisterio mali debeant coerceri." Et profusa in medium sportula, jubet officialem suum insuper pisces inscendere, ac pedibus suis totos obterere. Qua contentus morum severitudine meus Pytheas, ac mihi, ut abirem, suadens, "Sufficit mihi, O Luci," inquit, "seniculi tanta hæc contumelia." His actis consternatus, ac prorsus obstupidus, ad balneas me refero, prudentis condiscipuli valido consilio et numis simul privatus et coena."

Apuleius enjoyed during his life a very high reputation for deep and various learning, which has been transmitted to the present time by the testimony of numerous and respectable writers in all ages. A slight acquaintance with his works will convince us, that this was obtained in the obsolete method of close application, by extraordinary diligence, patient accurate investigation, and a strict intimacy with learned men and their works; not in the more easy and more fashionable course of gaining a title to renown merely by occupancy. This title is thus described by the lawyers, and in speaking of an advocate, legal terms are the most proper: "Occupancy is the taking possession of those things, which before belonged to nobody.—When it was once agreed that every thing capable of ownership should have an owner, natural reason suggested, that he who could first declare his intention of appropriating any thing to his own use, and in consequence of such intention, actually took it into possession, should thereby gain the absolute property of it—*quod nullius est, id ratione naturali occupanti conceditur*."²¹

Upon these principles in this well-taxed land, and especially at the two Universities,²² where natural reason governs with uncontrolled and absolute dominion, if any person declare his intention of appropriating the sole knowledge of any subject whatever, unless it interfere with the prior claim of

some one else, which is rarely the case, the claim is immediately allowed, under a tacit agreement, which might be thus expressed:—CLAIMANT. “I understand this subject better than any other man.” UNIVERSITY. “Take your reputation, and welcome, only do not talk to us about it: for God’s sake! do not compel any of us to know any thing.”

If some confirmed sceptic ventures to doubt the reality of such practices, he may satisfy himself by an easy experiment, and readily bring the question to a fair trial: let him only arrogate to himself the exclusive or superior knowledge of any science, language, or author whatever, and, if the world refuses to concede it, his doubt is well founded.

It may be truly said that Apuleius was an universal genius: there are but few subjects which he has not handled. He translated the *Phædo* of Plato,²³ and the *Arithmetic* of Nicomachus;²⁴ he wrote a treatise *de Republica*; another *de Numeris* and one *de Musica*. His *Convivales Quæstiones*, his Proverbs, his *Hermagoras* and his *Ludicra*, are quoted.²⁵ We have still his *Metamorphoses*, or the *Golden Ass*; his *Apolo-*
logy;²⁶ some treatises of Natural Philosophy; of Moral Philosophy; *de Interpretatione*; *de Deo Socratis*; *de Mundo*; and his *Florida*.²⁷

He was not more distinguished by his learning, than by an insatiable curiosity to know every thing, which induced him to enter himself in several religious fraternities, and to spend his whole fortune in travelling; insomuch, that having a desire to dedicate himself to the service of Osiris,²⁸ he was in want of money to defray the expense of the ceremonies incident to his reception, and was compelled to pawn even his clothes to make up the necessary sum.

As a listless indifference is the invariable characteristic of dull sluggish minds, and of ages of darkness and of barbarism, so an active, enterprising, and even rash curiosity, is

the constant indication of genius in the individual, and is a most conspicuous quality in periods of liberality and refinement. This curious disposition was doubtless one of the principal causes of his prodigious acquirements; but in order duly to appreciate his motives for desiring to be initiated in the religious mysteries, it is necessary briefly to consider the nature of those institutions.

To countenance any species of superstition is, it must be admitted, beneath the dignity of a philosopher; yet we must remember, that the mysteries were not only of great antiquity, and had been effectually shrouded in impenetrable secrecy (so effectually indeed, that we are now perfectly ignorant of their purport) but, that they were not like the greater part of prevailing superstitions, a farrago of absurd and contradictory dogmas, which inculcate such doctrines as tend to enslave and degrade the soul, which are celebrated by sordid and puerile rites; which can captivate the minds of the lowest vulgar only, and mislead none but the grossest of the ignorant.

The ancient cultivation of the Divine Being was enriched with all that is dazzling in the higher departments of philosophy, and comprehended many unpublished stores of traditionary lore; it was taught in a language unparalleled, and had every decoration of music, perhaps superior to any thing that we can conceive, of painting, most probably, far surpassing the masterpieces of modern artists, and of sculpture and architecture manifestly transcendant and inimitable. The whole was exalted by a chastening taste, the value of which we are now most unfortunately little capable of estimating; and secured by a liberty of thought and speech, of which, could we once more thoroughly feel the worth, we should have again in our power the key to unlock the treasury of all good things.

It is obvious then that there was enough in the mysteries to attract the attention of an ardent mind; the very secrecy alone must have inflamed even ordinary curiosity.

The Golden Asse has been supposed by credulous alchemists to contain the secret of the philosopher's stone; and to its author, as well as to all other persons, who have had the smallest pretensions to distinction, the power of working miracles was attributed by the multitude.

Apuleius was admired for the qualities of his body as well as for those of his mind: his person was well proportioned; he was active and graceful. His face, which has been preserved to us on gems, is exquisitely beautiful;²⁹ the hair and beard, as in the portraits of Pythagoras and Numa, are smooth and flowing; the attire of the head the same, a plain fillet tied behind, the ends hanging down. The whole countenance overflows with the fine old Platonic hilarity, which we view with astonishment, when found petrified in an onyx or a jasper; the organic remains of some earlier period, when the intellect and morals grew with antediluvian vigour to a gigantic stature.

A certain little modest widow, not unaptly named Pudentilla,³⁰ had lived thirteen years in a solitary state, sorely against her will and to the great injury of her health, when the advocate came to lodge in her house; her disorder, which during that long-protracted Lent had been continually increasing, accidentally attained its crisis some little time after this arrival; she then found that she must either die or marry somebody, and she had no insuperable objections to her guest.

Her son Pontianus, to whom she had imparted without scruple her delicate situation, and whose filial piety could not bear to witness the anguish of a mother, then above forty years of age, pining for the want of those little conjugal

endearments, which were the more precious, as they were not likely to be lasting, besought his particular friend and fellow collegian, by all that is holy in friendship and sacred amongst men, to soothe his afflicted parent; the lady was neither young, nor beautiful, nor rich, but, for a more disinterested motive, Apuleius generously consented to marry her.

We are told that Pudentilla was a literary character, and was qualified to assist her husband, which some maintain to be a probable reason for his marrying her, as it is said that she used to hold lights to him while engaged in his studies; which expression a dull critic takes literally, and wonders how she could stand by him all night with a candlestick in each hand. Be this as it may, they were united; and considering that children are good things, and that it is good to have children, and being free from all prior and less philosophical intentions, to effect this quiet purpose more quietly, they retired together into the country.

The intercourse of refined minds and of congenial tastes, whether in town or country, is truly delightful. Miss Anna Seward and Dr. Darwin³¹ amused themselves in the Doctor's study, as scandal says, but perhaps falsely, by a course of experiments on equivocal generation; by their joint efforts they nearly made a baby.

They had mingled veal broth and mashed potatoes in a glass vessel according to art, and in due time the lady had her reasons for expecting shortly to taste the delicious transports of a mother; but in her eager haste she shook the gravid bottle, and the germ was dissolved into its parent broth. They repeated the process again and again, with every variation that the fertile invention of a poetess could devise; but without success; and, sad to say, the baby-linen still lies by in lavender without a claimant.

However unequivocal the rural occupations of Pudentilla may have been, her happiness was soon broken in upon by a most extraordinary accusation, which roused the amiable pair from the warm bride's favourite covert, the long grass under some shady elm.

The accusation seems to have been almost as bad as a Chancery suit,³² in demanding the same cruel exposure of family secrets, and the same unfeeling violation of domestic privacy, in drawing matters into court, which are not fit subjects for the jurisdiction of any tribunal; it was less dilatory, but nearly as ruinous and expensive.

Sicinius Emilianus, the brother of Pudentilla's first husband, accused Apuleius of Magic, and of having gained the affections of his wife by charms and enchantments. On which occasion he pronounced before Claudius Maximus, Proconsul of Africa,³³ his celebrated Apology; a most eloquent oration, which is still extant, and is only less engaging than the Golden Ass. The orator gives many amusing particulars of his own life; exposes admirably, and at great length, the absurdity of the accusation and the malice of his accusers. He must be allowed to have many of the faults, and much of the false eloquence of the age; but it is certain that the speaker possessed in a remarkable degree the criterion of true eloquence, in carrying along with him the feelings and passions of his hearers, and in exciting an intense interest in his favour. He was in consequence triumphantly acquitted. Some writers pretend, that he was tried before Christian judges; but in fact, as the event of the trial alone would lead us to believe, the Proconsul was by religion a Pagan.

It is difficult to imagine what could have occasioned this opinion, unless it be that he was accused, amongst other enormities, of cleaning his teeth. "I saw some time since,"

says the Apology, "that many could scarcely refrain from laughter, when that orator charged me so vehemently with washing my mouth, and spoke of tooth-powder with more indignation than any other man ever spoke of poison."

"Vidi ego dudum vix risum quosdam tenentes, cum mundicias oris videlicet orator ille asperè accusaret, et dentifricium tanta indignatione pronunciaret, quanta nemo quisquam venenum."³⁴

There appear likewise to have been counts in the information for combing his hair. This was not the first time that neatness gave offence, for even Socrates,³⁵ as Ælian³⁶ relates, was charged with being curious and nice about his house, and his couch, and his fine slippers.³⁷

We cannot help feeling a wish, on reading the defence, that the prosecutor's speech had been preserved; for it seems hardly possible to believe that the principal circumstances from which he sought to infer the undue influence of magic, were, that Pudentilla had consented to marry after thirteen years of widowhood, and that an old woman had not refused a young man; to which it is answered, that the real wonder is that she remained a widow so long; and that there was no need of magic to induce a female to marry a man, a widow a bachelor, an old woman a young man.

"Igitur hoc ipsum argumentum est, nihil opus magiæ fuisse, ut nubere vellet mulier viro, vidua coelibì, major juniore."³⁸

Let the reflection that, even in these days, we have accusations quite as monstrous, supported by no better evidence, but with results much less satisfactory, serve to mitigate our curiosity.

One of the proofs, if generally admitted, would convict all the world of magic; it is this: "Apuleius has something at home, which he worships in secret." "Habet quiddam

Apuleius domi, quod secreto colit.”³⁹ Who then would be safe? who does not stand confessed a wizard? who has not something at home which he worships in secret?

Amongst the ethical writings of Plutarch, in the Nuptial Precepts sent with his good wishes to Pollianus and Eurydice,⁴⁰ we read, that the natural Magic of Love had been before confounded with the Black Art; but that the good sense of the royal rival herself could distinguish between the effects of the power of light and of the powers of darkness. “King Philip,”⁴¹ says the tale, “loved a Thessalian woman, and she was accused of having given him a love-potion. His wife, Olympias,⁴² therefore endeavoured to get the person in her power. But, when she came into her presence, and appeared comely in aspect, and conversed with gentility and prudence, “Farewell accusations,” said Olympias, “for you have the love-potions in yourself.” “Wherefore (infers Plutarch with his exquisite *bonhommie*)⁴³ a lawful married wife becomes something quite irresistible, if, placing all things in herself, dowry, and gentility, and love-potions, and the very cestus of Venus, she works out affection by good manners and virtue.”

If the sculptured face of Apuleius be a faithful copy of his countenance, and, more especially, if his conversation were as engaging as his writings, a female more attractive than his bride might well exclaim with Olympias, “You have the love-potions in yourself!” The highest authority in the world, that of the divine Plato, in his masterpiece the Symposium,⁴⁴ might be cited, if it were necessary to adduce authorities to shew the sovereign influence of conversation in affairs of the heart: the passage is worthy of attention as a marvellous specimen of the antique simplicity, although we do not need proof where it is impossible to doubt:—

“In Elis,”⁴⁵ says the Divine, “and amongst the Bœotians,⁴⁶ and in every other Grecian state where the arts of speaking

flourish not, the law in such places absolutely makes it honourable to gratify the lover; nor can any person there, whether young or old, stain such a piece of conduct with dishonour: the reason of which law, I presume, is to prevent the great trouble they would otherwise have in courting the fair, and trying to win them by the arts of oratory, arts in which they have no abilities.”⁴⁷

The advantages of a good face are perhaps a little underrated in a popular anecdote of the facetious John Wilkes,⁴⁸ whose excessive squint and whimsical ugliness have been passed on by Hogarth to the laughs of the nineteenth century;⁴⁹ and whose estimate of beauty tradition has preserved, to teach humility to the handsome, and confidence to the unhappy plain.

“You say such a one is a good-looking fellow,” observed the gallant patriot, “and such a one is an ill-looking fellow: I think nothing of looks. Between the finest face I ever knew and my own, I never found more than half-an-hour’s difference with any woman.”⁵⁰ The patriot did not know the value of half-an-hour in a case of life and death: Sappho, although ugly, was, perhaps, not more ugly than Wilkes, and perhaps Phaon relented half-an-hour too late; had the Lesbian girl been gifted with a better face, she might have found some remedy less alarming than the lover’s leap.⁵¹

There are many editions of the *Metamorphoses*; old and new, but principally old; large and small, but chiefly large; with and without notes, but commonly choaked up with piles of animadversions. We sometimes see one, or two lines of text at the top of a full quarto page, like the chimnies and roofs and battlements of a town rising above a flood; sometimes only a dreary waste of waters, when the Ruhnken and the Wower, the Oudendorp and the Elmenhorst have broken their banks, and laid the smiling face of the

text under commentary: then the blank of paper above and the blank of annotation below meet in one uniform line; and the weary eye seeks in vain along the dull Dutch horizon an object to repose upon.⁵² In a barn some proportion is observed between the quantity of the grain and the bulk of the chaff and straw; there is some proportion too in their relative value; but in the classics there is none between the edited and the editor, between the expounded and the expositor.

An old edition is prized by collectors for its wood-cuts, which have more merit than is usual with these antique productions; they are ugly and barbarous, but not altogether without spirit.⁵³

The *Metamorphoses* have been translated into all the languages of Europe; the translations are principally old ones. Boiardo, who published an abridged version in Italian, in 1544, concludes his work with a pleasant sort of index; he reckons up all the pretty little *novelle*, which he makes to be twenty-four, in a table at the end of the volume.⁵⁴

At the revival of letters the antient authors were read for some time with enthusiasm, but they soon became suspected, and it seemed better to those who govern our bodies and our minds, to discourage these studies. In order to provide substitutes for such restless spirits, as even the drunkenness of a college life cannot stupify, they restored, in some instances, the old logic of Aristotle,⁵⁵ with a dash of divinity; in others, they waste the ingenuity of the youthful mind upon the most subtle analytics. The one side say: "Did they not live very well in the middle ages without knowledge? Can we not do so now? We eat, we drink, and we sleep; we abstain from treading upon the grass: what more did they in the twelfth century?" The others, to justify themselves, enquire: "Do you wish for modern discoveries; for the

latest improvements? Here they are; here is the last, the most modish French *Calculus*. We teach what is new, the newest of the new; we expound last night's dreams." It is no wonder, therefore, that the Golden Ass is but little known: it is a vain attempt, with a few hands, to tow a heavy vessel against a strong wind and a strong tide; but it is as well to take hold of the rope; winds and tides have changed; and we owe all that is precious to vain attempts.

If the curiosity of one person only shall be excited to read the work by these remarks, the pleasure which he will derive from it will repay whatever labour the composition of them has demanded.

Some one, whose conversation is of the narrative order, was relating, at an agreeable dinner party, with unwelcome proximity, the story of his having attended, in the fields, a congregation of Ranters⁵⁶ on the preceding Sunday, and that the sermon of the preacher contained a full description of the infernal regions, when the narrator was suddenly cut short by this question: "Well, Sir, did he describe the other place? what did he say of that?" A question actually full of exquisite wit, but, in this instance, most unintentionally so, as the intimate friends of the person who asked it all confidently asserted, and vehemently repelled such an imputation.⁵⁷

For who can describe happiness? With pain we are but too familiar. There is the same difficulty in conveying an idea of an interesting book; we can easily offer specific reasons to deter from the perusal of a worthless composition, but, when we would illustrate literary worthiness, we become vague and general. We ought not to expect that a man, who had just arrived from fairy-land, should be able to give a systematic account of all he had seen there: the poor fellow could only say that every thing was enchanted and

enchanting; he might, perhaps, name one or two of the most striking things that the fairies and their queen had shown him.

The story, as Vives says, is taken from Lucian, and is comprised by him in about sixty pages; it has been filled up and embellished by Apuleius, who has extended it to eleven books: the author, under the name of Lucius, is in both works the hero of the tale. Lucius is a handsome and accomplished young man, full of eager curiosity, who comes to Hypata, in Thessaly, the metropolis of Thessalian Magic. He there lodges with Milo, a rich miser, a pawnbroker and usurer, whose only servant Photis (Lucian⁵⁸ calls her Palæstra, and says of her, that “the girl was a bold, saucy little thing, and full of grace;” σφόδρα γὰρ ἡνίκαμον, καὶ χαριτῶν μέσον το κορασιον)⁵⁹ soon captivates the foolish young man, who suspected no harm, and continues to captivate the more foolish reader, even after he has a full knowledge of the fatal consequences of such an indiscretion.

After some amusing adventures, Lucius familiarises himself with Photis; the familiarities are described too minutely, especially by Lucian of Samosata, but they may easily be passed over by the not impertinently curious. He learns from her, upon a promise “to remunerate the simplicity of her relation by the tenacity of his taciturnity,” that her mistress is a sorceress, and he prevails upon the fragile fair to procure him a sight of her incantations. One night Photis gives him notice that Pamphile⁶⁰ is about to change herself into a bird, in order to visit a supremely beautiful youth, whom she loved desperately, and beyond all measure. He accompanies her to the door of her mistress’s bed-room; and peeping through a chink, sees Pamphile strip off all her clothes (the loved youth could not have seen more) and rub her body over entirely with an ointment, change gradually

into an owl, and fly hooting away. Man is an imitative animal; Lucius must copy the usurer's wife: he prevails upon the saucy girl to permit him to try the experiment; she gives him a box, he strips himself, and hastily rubs his body with the contents:

"And presently poisoning my arms with alternate efforts," says he, "I was delighted at the thoughts of turning into a similar bird. But there are no little feathers, no little wings at all; my hairs are evidently thickened into bristles, and my tender skin is hardened into a hide; at the tips of both my hands and of both my feet, all my fingers and toes, their number being lost, are forced into one hoof; and from the extremity of my back bone a great tail comes forth. My face soon becomes disproportionate, my mouth wide, my nostrils gaping, and my lips pendulous. So also my ears stick up with immoderate increase. And whilst in despair I contemplate my whole body, I see that I am not a bird, but an ass."

"Jamque alternis conatibus, libratis brachiis, in avem similem gestiebam. Nec ullæ plumulæ, nec usquam pin-nulæ; sed planè pili mei crassantur in setas, et cutis tenella duratur in corium; et in extimis palmulis, perduto numero, toti digiti coguntur in singulas ungulas; et de spinæ meæ termino grandis cauda procedit. Jam facies enormis, et os prolixum, et nares hiantes, et labiæ pendulæ. Sic et aures immodicis horripilant auctibus. Ac dum salutis inopia cuncta corporis mei considerans, non avem me sed asinum video."

Nothing can equal the despair of Lucius, except the protestations of Photis, who assures him that he may be instantly restored to his human figure upon eating some roses: she regrets that it is too late to procure any that night, but promises to gather some early in the morning; he is per-

suaded meanwhile to be led off quietly to the stable; where he is most unceremoniously kicked out of the stall by his own white horse, and presently afterwards carefully beaten by his own slave with a huge green cudgel.

It is impossible not to pause here and reflect a moment.—The calamity was great; but let us hear his reason for wishing to be able to take the form of an owl at pleasure: he does not dissemble that it was to enable him, without suspicion, to pay nightly visits to certain married ladies in the neighbourhood, and to caress them without injury to their characters, and in spite of all the precautions of jealousy; a natural wish enough perhaps! but some heavy punishment as naturally follows presumption, even in thought. To the frequent practice of lovers calling upon their mistresses in this disguise, he attributes the custom of nailing to the wall of a house the bodies of such owls as have been killed in the vicinity, in order to scare away amorous visitants. The gibbetting is in full force in this virtually-represented nation, as the bodies of feathered malefactors every where testify; but the reason for these executions is not generally known, because the secret of these little misfortunes is better kept than love-secrets commonly are, or because lovers (which it is hard to believe) are no longer willing to be impaled.

Whilst the long-eared platonist is brooding over the injuries which his leathern coat has just sustained, and is expecting that the dawn will bring Photis and roses, a band of robbers plunder the miser's house, enter the stable, load the philosopher with the spoil, and drive him off, in company with his own horse, to their cave. To just such a cave as we were all confined in, when school-boys, with *Gil Blas de Santillane*.⁶¹ Then follow adventures innumerable, in a series and long order, each that succeeds more engaging than

the last; in short, the book cannot be laid down until finished. It must be drunk at one draught. It must be taken up at sunrise on the feast of St. Barnabas,⁶² the longest and the brightest day, that the sun may not go down upon the metamorphosed Lucius, but that just before sunset he may eat his roses and become a man.

When young, we all read the *Adventures of a Guinea*, of an *Atom*, of a *Sopha*, of a *Silver Penny*,⁶³ and of a thousand other things; we have not now a very distinct remembrance of what any one of these books is about, we have only a general recollection that we experienced pleasure in the perusal: it is an agreeable mode of stringing together adventures, and the *Golden Ass* is beyond comparison the best work of the kind.

There is moreover in this book something quite peculiar, of which we see no vestige elsewhere: it excites an expectation even from the commencement, a breathless curiosity, an anticipation of the marvellous so intense, that we feel prepared for whatever happens; it seems to be no more than we expected, however strange, new, or incredible. These feelings are in some degree described in what Lucius experienced the morning after his arrival at Hypata, the city of Magic.

“I saw nothing in that city which I could believe to be what it really was, but I felt that every thing had been changed into another form by some fatal whisper, so that even the stones which I trod upon had been hardened out of men, and the birds which I heard had been feathered in the same manner, and the trees which surrounded the walls had thus been covered leaves, and that the fountain streams were but flowing human bodies. I expected that the statues and images would presently begin to walk and the walls to speak, that the oxen and cattle would utter some divination, and that from the heavens and the circle of the sun an oracle

would suddenly descend. Being thus confounded, nay, rather benumbed by an excruciating desire, and unable to find any commencement, or even the least trace of what I sought, I wandered about every where."

"Nec fuit in illa civitate, quod aspiciens, id esse crederem quod esset, sed omnia prorsus ferali murmure in aliam effigiem translata, ut et lapides quos offenderem, de homine duratos; et aves, quas audirem, indidem plumatas; et arbores quæ pomerium ambirent, foliatas similiter, et fontanos latices de corporibus humanis fluxos crederem. Jam statuas et imagines incessuras, parietes locuturos, boves et id genus pecua dictura præsagium; de ipso vero cœlo, et jubaris orbe subito venturum oraculum. Sic attonitus, immo verò cruciabili desiderio stupidus, nullo quidem initio vel omnino vestigio cupidinis meæ reperto, cuncta circuibam."

In some parts of England, as the Western district of Yorkshire, they prepare a sauce for boiled meat, generally for veal, in great measure, if not altogether, of sorrel. The leaves are placed in a wooden bowl, and upon them a large stone ball, like a cannon-ball; the lady-cook, seating herself upon a low stool, takes the bowl between her knees, and by well-timed motions, persuades the stone to roll about, until the sorrel is reduced to a smooth pulp. However incredible it may appear to some, that any effect produced in this manner can be agreeable, the sauce is certainly most delicious; it tastes of the veriest freshness of the spring. Those who have witnessed this singular culinary operation will be forcibly reminded of it by a passage, where Lucius finds Photis preparing, not sorrel-sauce, but some kind of minced-meat, in an attitude nearly similar.

"She was dressed neatly in a linen tunic, with a bright red sash tied rather high under her bosom, and was turning the bowl round and round with her rosy little hands, often

shaking it up gently whilst it revolved, and moving her limbs softly, with her loins just quivering, and her flexible back quietly stirring, she waved it gracefully.”

“*Ipsa linea tunica mundulè amicta, et russea fasciola prænitente altiusculè sub ipsas papillas succinctula, illud cibarium vasculum floridis palmulis rotabat in circulum; et in orbis flexibus crebra succutiens, et simul membra sua leniter illubricans, lumbis sensim vibrantibus, spinam mobilem quatiens placidè, decenter undabat.*”

Apuleius seems to have been an enthusiast in hair, and ardently to have admired an elegant head dress; this is not inconsistent with the beauty of his own tresses: he is eloquent and impassioned when he speaks of those of Photis, yet what he says is of too heating a nature to be admitted into a composition of cool criticism, and must therefore be passed over.

But is not the whole work of a somewhat licentious cast? It is a common complaint that novelists always write about love: this is true—but what else have they to write about?—that they write too warmly; this is also true—they do write too warmly; but such as they are we must read them, until some one descends from heaven, at once calm and readable.

The most objectionable part of the *Golden Ass* is an allegorical satire on the female sex, which it is impossible to justify; but at the same time it is so clever, that it is equally impossible for either man or woman to be outrageously angry. On the other hand, the story of Cupid and Psyche⁶⁴ is not only one uniform piece of loveliness, but is so delicate (even in the modern and least estimable sense of the word) that it might be read at school by a class of young ladies. This episode is entirely the invention of Apuleius; it fills

more than two whole books, and is replete with erudition and pleasure.

The Emperor Severus⁶⁵ professed to despise what he called the Punic tales of Apuleius;⁶⁶—the censure of an Emperor may recommend them to some readers.

Macrobius,⁶⁷ in his Exposition of the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero,⁶⁸ says:—

“Fables that delight the ear, like the comedies which Menander⁶⁹ and his imitators wrote for representation, or stories full of the feigned adventures of lovers, in which Petronius⁷⁰ practised much, and Apuleius sometimes amused himself to our great surprise” (and to the sorrow of consular men like myself, who cannot afford to be jocose) “all fables of this kind, which profess only to delight the ears, wisdom banishes from her sanctuary to the cradles of nurses.”⁷¹

“Auditum mulcent, velut comediae, quales Menander, ejusve imitatores agendas dederunt: vel argumenta fictis casibus amatorum referta: quibus vel multum se Arbiter exercuit: vel Apuleium nonnunquam luisse miramur. Hoc totum fabularum genus, quod solas aurium delicias profitetur, e sacrario suo in nutricum cunas sapientiae tractatus eliminat.”⁷²

If the use of such books only as they can read without delight be permitted to the wise, we the foolish shall almost doubt, whether it is not better to lie in the cradle with the nurse, than to sit in the sacristy with the philosopher.

A person who would take the pains and had the requisite qualifications, and he must have a great many, might draw up a very curious and instructive commentary on this romance, which contains many uncommon words, worthy of explanation, as being intimately connected with the history and manners of the second century. The last book

is singularly interesting, and indeed *unique*; it is elegant and erudite, and comprehends many of the more secret doctrines of philosophy and of the antient religion of Egypt; a learned and copious description of certain sacerdotal ceremonies, and of the initiation into the mysteries of Isis and Osiris.⁷³

By patient research and diligent investigation, many facts respecting the mysteries, now buried in unopened volumes, might be brought to light: the enquiry, as well as the results, would afford no common pleasure; whether leisure and opportunity for these pursuits will always be wanting, for the present, at least, it is impossible to determine.

There are barbarisms, there is bad taste, there is false eloquence in the *Golden Ass*; there are all these faults and many more: but nevertheless let him who has read it read it again; let him who has never read it, all other business being omitted, suddenly read it; and, if he cannot procure a copy on easier terms, let him, Apuleius-like, sell his coat and buy one.

All that now remains, is to call the attention of the learned world to the conclusion of the *Apology*,⁷⁴ in which the author warns all men against marrying a widow, for this plain reason, because she can have nothing *imposcibile*⁷⁵ about her:" the passage is as follows:—

"*Virgo formosa, etsi sit oppidò pauper, tamen abundè dotata est. Adfert quippe ad maritum novum animi indolem, pulchritudinis gratiam, floris rudimentum. Ipsa virginitatis commendatio jure meritòque omnibus maritis acceptissima est. Nam quodcumque aliud in dotem acceperis, potes cum libuit, ne sis beneficio obstrictus, omne ut acceperis retribuere; pecuniam renumerare, mancipia restituere, domo demigrare, prædiis cedere. Sola virginitas, cum semel accepta est, reddi nequitur; sola apud maritum*

ex rebus dotalibus remanet. Vidua autem qualis nuptiis venit, talis divortio digreditur; nihil adfert inposcibile.”⁷⁶

The authority is weighty, and the Philosopher did not speak without experience: but if any one, notwithstanding, shall have the hardihood to despise this caution, let him accept, as a nuptial benediction, the phrase in which Photis used to say “Good night!”

QUOD BONUM FELIX ET FAUSTUM.⁷⁷

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ¹ Lucius Apuleius Madaurensis (c.124-170 AD), was a prose writer, Platonist philosopher and rhetorician. Like Hogg, Apuleius was by profession a lawyer.
- ² Aurelius Augustinus Hipponensis (St. Augustine, 354-430 AD), theologian and philosopher.
- ³ *De civitate Dei contra paganos*, known as *The City of God*. The edition mentioned by Hogg was translated by John Healey (St. Augustine, *Of the Citie of God*, London: George Eld., 1610).
- ⁴ Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* or *Metamorphoses* is a novel in Latin.
- ⁵ St. Augustine, *Of the Citie of God*, 694.
- ⁶ Juan Luis Vives y March (1493-1540), Valencian scholar and humanist. After publishing the comment to *Civitate Dei* with a dedication to King Henry VIII, he was invited to England, where he taught at Oxford, Corpus Christi College.
- ⁷ Thomas Wolsey (1473-1530), English Catholic Cardinal.
- ⁸ Lucian of Samosata (c.125-180 AD), Greek satirist and rhetorician. The tale mentioned by Vives, the *Ass*, which contains the elements of Apuleius's *Golden Ass*, is now considered a "pseudo-Lucian" work.
- ⁹ A region in central Greece.
- ¹⁰ A short story, fable, or folktale featuring love and adventure, usually of an erotic or titillating nature.
- ¹¹ St. Augustine, *Of the Citie of God*, 695.
- ¹² Small glazed earthenware jar used by apothecaries for holding ointment and medicine.
- ¹³ A medicinal preparation consisting mainly of plant or animal tissue.
- ¹⁴ Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* or *Metamorphoses*.
- ¹⁵ The Nerva-Antonine dynasty of emperors who ruled from 96 to 192 AD.
- ¹⁶ Madauros, present-day M'Daourouch, in Algeria.
- ¹⁷ Plutarch (46-c.120 AD), Greek Platonist philosopher, historian and biographer.
- ¹⁸ A man who affects extreme elegance in clothes and manners.
- ¹⁹ A Roman magistrate whose duties included the oversight of roads and buildings, markets and prices, religious ceremonies, public games.
- ²⁰ The translation is probably Hogg's own, a revision of Thomas Taylor's, which was published in 1822 as Apuleius, *The Metamorphosis, or Golden Ass, and Philosophical Works, of Apuleius. Translated from the Original Latin by Thomas Taylor* (London: Triphook, 1822).
- ²¹ "For whatever belongs to no one, by natural reason becomes property of the first taker." A famous legal maxim, originating in Justinian's *Digest* (41.1.3).
- ²² I.e., Great Britain, and the universities of Cambridge and Oxford.
- ²³ One of the dialogues by the Greek philosopher Plato (c. 428-348 BC).
- ²⁴ *Introduction to Arithmetic* by the Greek philosopher Nicomachus of Gerasa (c. 60-c. 120 AD).
- ²⁵ Of all these works, which are now lost, we have a septenary of *Ludicra* in a work by the Roman grammarian Nonio.
- ²⁶ The apologetic speech written in self-defence from the accusation of abusing magic. Hogg discusses the episode below.
- ²⁷ Of these four, only *Florida* and *De deo Socratis* are reliably attributed to Apuleius.
- ²⁸ In Rome, Apuleius was initiated to the cults of Isis and Osiris, gods of the ancient Egyptian religion.
- ²⁹ Unidentified reference.
- ³⁰ Emilia Pudentilla, i.e., "timid".
- ³¹ Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), physician, natural philosopher and poet, and Anna Seward, friend, poet and correspondent (1742-1809).
- ³² A litigation in the court of the Lord Chancellor of England, the highest court next to the House of Lords.
- ³³ Gaius Claudius Maximus (2nd century AD), proconsul of Africa in 158-59.
- ³⁴ Apuleius, *Apologia, sive De magia liber* (c. 158 AD).
- ³⁵ The Greek philosopher Socrates (c. 470-399 BC) was accused of impiety, of bringing new gods to the city, and corrupting the young. He was found guilty and sentenced to death.
- ³⁶ Claudius Aelianus (Aelian, 175- c.235 AD), Roman writer, author of *Varia historia*, a miscellany of anecdotes.

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³⁷ “*Diogenes* said that *Socrates* himself was luxurious: for he was too curious in his little House, and in his little Bed, and in the Sandals which he used to wear” (Aelian, *Varia historia*, IV.xi).

³⁸ Apuleius, *Apologia, sive De magia liber* (c. 158 AD).

³⁹ Apuleius, *Apologia, sive De magia liber* (c. 158 AD).

⁴⁰ Plutarch, *Coniugalia Praecepta* (1st-2nd century AD).

⁴¹ Philip II of Macedon (382-336 BC), father of Alexander the Great.

⁴² Olympias (c. 375-316 BC), princess of the Molossians, then mother of Alexander the Great.

⁴³ Cheerful affability.

⁴⁴ One of the dialogues by the Greek philosopher Plato (c. 428-348 BC). The main topic of the *Symposium* is love in all its aspects.

⁴⁵ A historical region in west Peloponnese.

⁴⁶ Inhabitants of Beotia, a region in central Greece.

⁴⁷ See Plato, *The Banquet; a Dialogue Concerning Love*, trans. by Floyer Sidenham (London: Sandby, 1767), 62-63.

⁴⁸ John Wilkes (1725-97), reformist politician, essayist, and journalist.

⁴⁹ The 1763 “savage caricature” *John Wilkes Esquire*, by the cartoonist William Hogarth (1697-1764). “This portrayal of an impudent demagogue with a hideous squint was to be the visual image of Wilkes conveyed both to contemporaries and to posterity. More conventional portraits show that he was not quite that ugly, but he himself was famously wont to say that it took him half an hour to talk his face away” (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*).

⁵⁰ The source of this anecdote remains unidentified, but see n. 49 above.

⁵¹ The episode is in Ovid’s *Heroides*, epistle XV, “Sappho to Phaon”. See the argument in the 1806 edition containing Alexander Pope’s translation: “Sappho, a lady of Lesbos, was ardently enamoured of Phaon, a youth of uncommon beauty, and universally admired, who returned her passion. On the departure, however, of Phaon from Lesbos to Sicily, she, fearing that his love was on the decline, addresses him in this epistle; in which she endeavours to recal him by urging every circumstance that can excite his compassion; declaring it to be her resolution, should he continue obdurate, to throw herself into the sea from the promontory of Leucadia in Epirus” (Ovid, “Sappho to Phaon”, in *Ten Epistles of Ovid*, London: Baldwin, 1807, 246).

⁵² In Hogg’s metaphor, Dutch and German philologists and classicists – all commentators or editors of Apuleius’s *Metamorphoses* – are overflowing rivers of ink and commentaries: David Ruhnken (1723-1798); Johann von Wowerm (1574-1612); Franz Oudendorp (1696-1761); Geverhart Elmenhorst (1583-1621). Of course, the flooded Dutch lowland was an easy commonplace at the time.

⁵³ Unidentified edition, possibly *Apuleius cum commento Beroaldi: figuris noviter additis*, Venice, 1510.

⁵⁴ Apuleius, *L’Apulegio tradotto in volgare dal Conte Matteo Maria Boiardo* (Venice: 1544).

⁵⁵ The works in logic, later collected under the name *Organon*, by the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384/3-322 BC).

⁵⁶ “A member of any of several Nonconformist groups, especially the Primitive Methodist”, *OED*, “*ranter* (n.)”.

⁵⁷ Unidentified reference.

⁵⁸ Lucian of Samosata (c.125-180 AD).

⁵⁹ Pseudo-Lucian of Samosata, *Λούκιος ἡ ὄνος* (*Lucius or the Ass*).

⁶⁰ Milo’s wife.

⁶¹ The extremely popular picaresque novel *L’Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* (1715-35) by Alain-René Lesage. Several early chapters take place in the cave of a band of robbers that Gil is forced to join.

⁶² Celebrated on the 11th of June.

⁶³ Charles Johnstone’s satirical *Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea* (1760-65); Tobias Smollett’s object narrative *The History and Adventures of an Atom* (1769); Claude Prosper Jolyot de Cr  billon’s libertine novel *The Sofa: A Moral Tale* (1740); Richard Johnson’s object narrative *The Adventures of a Silver Penny* (1786).

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ⁶⁴ The Tale of Cupid and Psyche occupies the books V and VI of Apuleius's *Golden Ass*.
- ⁶⁵ The Roman emperor Lucius Septimius Severus (reigned 193-211).
- ⁶⁶ "Milesias Punicas Apuleii" (see Johan Albert Fabricius, *Bibliotheca latina*, vol. 3, Leipzig, 1774, 29). A Milesian tale ("Milesia") is a short story, fable, or folktale featuring love and adventure, usually of an erotic or titillating nature.
- ⁶⁷ Macrobius Ambrosius Theodosius (5th century AD), Roman writer, best known for his *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*.
- ⁶⁸ "Somnium Scipionis", in the sixth book of *De re publica* by Marcus Tullius Cicero (146-43 BC).
- ⁶⁹ Menander (c. 342-290 BC), Greek representative of Athenian New Comedy.
- ⁷⁰ Gaius Petronius Arbiter (c. 27-66 AD), author of the satirical novel *Satyricon*.
- ⁷¹ Probably Hogg's translation.
- ⁷² See Macrobius, "Aurelii Macrobiani Ambrosii Theodosii V. C. & Illustris Commentarius ex Cicerone In Somnium Scipionis liber primus", in *Aur. Theodosii Macrobiani v. cl. & illustris Opera*, London: 1694, 5.
- ⁷³ In Rome, Apuleius was initiated to the cults of Isis and Osiris, gods of the ancient Egyptian religion.
- ⁷⁴ The apologetic speech written in self-defence from the accusation of abusing magic.
- ⁷⁵ Nothing that cannot be paid back by the husband in case of separation, *i.e.*, her virginity. The sense of the ensuing passage being that while a maiden can be married and her virginity will always "remain with" the husband, a widow gets out of the marriage same as she entered it.
- ⁷⁶ Apuleius, *Apologia, sive De magia liber*.
- ⁷⁷ With this traditional auspicious phrase, Lucius wishes himself luck before making advances to the servant Photis, "licet salutare non erit", *i.e.*, although it might be risky. Apuleius puns on the contrast between the triplet *bonum, felix, faustum*, and "[not] *salutare*".

MINOR PIECES.*

TO A SPIDER RUNNING ACROSS A ROOM.¹

THOU poisonous rascal, running at this rate
O'er the perplexing desart of a mat,
Scrambling and scuttling on thy scratchy legs,
Like a scared miser with his money-bags;
Thou thief—thou scamp—thou hideous much in little,
Bearing away the plunder of a spital,—
Caitiff of corners,—doer of dark deeds,
Mere lump of poison lifted on starv'd threads,
That while they run, go shuddering here and there,
As if abhorring what they're forc'd to bear,
Like an old bloated tyrant, whom his slaves
Bear from the gaping of a thousand graves,
And take to some vile corner of a court,
Where felons of his filthy race resort,—
I have thee now;—I have thee here, full blown,
Thou lost old wretch, benighted by the noon!
What dost thou say? What dost thou think? Dost see
Providence hanging o'er thee, to wit, me?
Dost fear? Dost shrink with all thine eyes to view
The shadowing threat of mine avenging shoe?
Now, now it comes;—one pang,—and thou wilt lie
Flat as the sole that treads thy gorg'd impurity.

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N

* Author: Various authors / Transcribed and annotated by Giacomo Ferrari.

Yet hold:—why should I do it? Why should I,
 Who in my infidel fidelity,
 Believer in the love, though not the wrath,
 Have spared so many crawlers o'er my path,—
 Why should I trample here, and like a beast,
 Settle this humblest of them all and least?
 The vagrant never injured me or mine,
 Wrote no critiques, stabbd at no heart divine,
 And as to flies, Collyer himself must dine.² }
 Flies may be kill'd as speedily as mutton,
 And your black spider's not your blackest glutton.
 The vermin's a frank vermin, after all;
 Makes no pretence to a benignant call;
 Does not hold up a hideous white hand,
 To tickle grandams to his promised land;
 Nor pulls white handkerchiefs from out his blackness,
 To wipe the tears,—that give a surfeit slackness.
 He's not the Laureat, not my turn'd old Bob;³
 Not Bull the brute,⁴ nor Gazetteer the grub:⁵
 He does not “profess Poetry,” like Mill;⁶
 Music, like Buzby;⁷ nor, what's higher still,
 “Moral Philosophy,” like wicked Will.⁸
 He swells, I grant, and 'tis with poison too;
 But not, toad-eating Muddyford,⁹ like you:
 He plunders, and runs off; but not like Theod.,
 To make amends by slandering for King Ehud:¹⁰
 He skulks; but 'tis not as “dear Ally” does,
 To pry and pounce on females, and keep close }
 At fingers only that can pull a nose.¹¹
 Honest the rogue is, in his way,—hey, Groly?¹²—
 And does not call his snares and slaughters “Holy;”
 Nor like the Russian that insulted Spain,
 Cry “Manners,” and affect the gentleman.

He holds to what he is, like her that bore him,
 A spider, as his father was before him.
 'Twas Cowl,¹³ not he, that by old Gizzard's fire,¹⁴
 Born of a man, turn'd reptile and mere liar,
 And chang'd his shape with his own fright, as mothers,
 Their tender burthen incomplete, change others.
 And have I spared the very worst of these¹⁵
 A thousand times, and all for their own ease,—
 Let them crawl on, and wink'd at Gizzard's self,
 To tread out thee, poor emblematic elf?
 Thee, whose worst vice is, that thy hang-dog looks¹⁶
 Remind us of his face, not of his books,
 For all the poison, clubb'd from all thy race,
 Could not do that: you're safe from that disgrace.
 Have I, these five years, spared the dog a stick,¹⁷
 Cut for his special use, and reasonably thick,
 Now, because prose had fell'd him just before;¹⁸
 Then, to oblige the very heart he tore;
 Then, from conniving to suppose him human,
 Two-legg'd, and one that had a serving-woman;¹⁹
 Then, because some one saw him in a shiver,
 Which shewed, if not a heart, he had a liver;
 And then, because they said the dog was dying,
 His very symptoms being given to lying?
 Have I done this? Have I endur'd e'en Murrain,²⁰
 Whom even his own face finds past enduring,
 Trying to slip aside from him, and cut him,
 When honest men ask questions that don't suit him?
 Have I let strut, behind their dunghill screens,
 All the brisk crows in Scotch magazines,²¹
 Who take for day their crackling Northern Lights,²²
 And scream, and scratch, and keep it up o' nights,
 Braggarts with beaten plumes, and sensual hypocrites?
 Him too who feeds them,²³ and in whom there run

All Curl's²⁴ and Osborne's²⁵ melted brass in one,
 (Blackguard,²⁶ thought wrong by the young trade, but wronger
 By those whose consciences have eaten longer)
 Have I spared him, when, with a true rogue's awe
 Not of the truth or justice, but the law,
 He lay before my feet, and proffer'd me
 His rascal money for indemnity?²⁷
 In scorn I let him go, just taught, it seems,
 How to call people more ingenious names;
 For which, I own, I merit the reproofs
 Of all the world, but those who read his huffs.²⁸

Go, you poor wretch,—I mean the spider; go,
 And take care how you bite Sir Hudson Lowe.²⁹

SOUTHEOGONY,

OR THE BIRTH OF THE POET LAUREAT.³⁰

Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem.—VIRG.³¹

Laugh, if you can; but one way or another,
 Do pray, old boy, begin to know your mother.

WE'VE all of us read, in some poet or other,
 That Pallas³² was born without ever a mother;
 And 'tis equally certain, or more certain rather,
 That Mars was produc'd without ever a father:³³
 For as to old Jupiter's pain in his brows,³⁴
 The reason for that might still lie with his spouse;
 And as to his getting the thing in his head,
 It's what many men do, who are not brought to bed:
 Whereas that a son should be born of a lady,
 And none know the father, not even the Cadi,³⁵
 Or rather, that there's been no father at all,
 (For it couldn't be Peter, and couldn't be Paul,

And then, as the village says, “Who *could* it be?”)
Is a point on which doctors of all sorts agree.

Be this as it may, the immortals above us
Were talking of these things, and saying “Lord love us!”
When Jupiter, coming from council upon ’em,
(You’d have thought that the sound of his step had undone ’em,
But luckily he had escap’d their descriptions)
Said, “What do you say there about my conceptions?”
Conceive, if you can, a strange creature I’ve thought on,
For bard to the era about to be brought on,—
A jumble, a Janus,³⁶ a Jack-of-all-trades,
A prostitute pen, yet the prince of old maids;
The ghost of a rhyming Inquisitor’s rack;
A crack on the crown, and a crown on the crack;³⁷
A “Honi soit” zealot for Liberty’s charms,
Subsiding in softness beneath the King’s Arms;³⁸
The vice contradiction; the virtue in if;
A weathercock image, so solemn and stiff,
Who first holds up one hand, and then holds up t’other,
As pompously fierce for one wind as another;
A mind, like his visage, by nature intended
For something, but left till too late to be mended,
That promises strength, but retreats in weak dudgeon,
The nose of a hawk, and the mouth of a gudgeon;³⁹
In short, a grotesque, any thing but a true thing,
Part human, part brutal, part flowery, all nothing;
That begins like a man, but possessing no substance,
Runs flourishing off, like the figures on hob-stands,
And foams at a creature that guards t’other side,
To wit, it’s own self, and identical pride.
“I want such a being,” said Jove in conclusion,
“To put, with his praises, his friends in confusion,

And furnish crown'd heads with a shabby phenomenon,
Fit for some certain disasters then coming on."

"I cannot conceive such a being," said Juno:⁴⁰
"Don't mention," said Venus, "such *juncta in uno*:"⁴¹
"It's much beyond us," cried the whole of the goddesses,
Bridling, and settling their several boddices.⁴²

"Well," cried a damsel, who kept Juno's peacock,
"It seems now as easy to me as *hic hæc hoc*:"⁴³
Good lord! sure my mistress is joking. Why I
Could conceive twenty such, or I'd like to know why.

Now the damsel who thus indiscreetly took on her,
By poets on earth is yclept Mrs. Honour:
But in heav'n, for her airs and her "pompous inanity,"⁴⁴
Gods name her rightly, and call the jade Vanity.

"Do," said Jove laughing. He took from a shelf
The work of a bard who was big with himself,
And throwing it at her, the girl, as they say,
Seem'd struck of a heap, and look'd down, and said "Hey!"

A ludicrous gravity roll'd in her eyes,
She looks pregnantly vacant, and foolishly wise, }
And picking her skirts up, sail'd off through the skies. }
You'd have thought all the Gods would have split 'em for
laughter,
To see her waist first, and herself coming after.

That very day nine weeks, if gossips be right,
My Southey, with green and grey head,⁴⁵ came to light;
And 'tis said, that before he had found out his legs,
The rogue taught his grandmother how to suck eggs.⁴⁶

LINES OF MADAME D'HOUTETOT.⁴⁷

Jeune, j'aimai. Le temps de mon bel age,
 Ce temps si court, l'amour seul le remplit:
 Quand j'atteignis la saison d'être sage,
 Toujours j'aimai: la raison me le dit.
 Mais l'âge vient, et le plaisir s'envole;
 Mais mon bonheur ne s'envole aujourd'hui,
 Car j'aime encore, et l'amour me console;
 Rien n'aurait pu me consoler de lui.

When young, I lov'd. At that delicious age,
 So sweet, so short, love was my sole delight;
 And when I reach'd the season to be sage,
 Still I lov'd on, for reason gave me right.
 Age comes at length, and livelier joys depart,
 Yet gentle ones still kiss these eyelids dim;
 For still I love, and love consoles my heart;
 What could console me for the loss of him?

TALARI INNAMORATI.⁴⁸

DEAR Molly, who art the best comingest lass,
 With a foot not so big as the slipper of brass,⁴⁹
 Or as her's, whom a wag,⁵⁰ strangely gifting with wrong cloës,
 Calls, most unbecomingly, Ninon de Long-cloës,⁵¹
 (Of whom 'tis recorded, that in a ragoût
 Some young men of fashion once toss'd up her shoe),⁵²
 Take a story that came in my head t'other day,
 As writing a libel, all careless I lay,
 So good-natur'd am I, and soon carried away.

}

You must know, that 'twas after a day of much flight,
 The feather'd god Mercury⁵³ got home one night:
 He took off his winged hat, flagging with dews,
 And shook off as quickly his two winged shoes:
 And ringing for Hebe,⁵⁴ said, "Starlights and nectar;
 And go and tell Venus,⁵⁵ you rogue, I expect her."
 So saying, he threw his light legs up together,
 And stretched, half-reclin'd, on his couch of dove's feather,
 And taking his lute up, and thumbing, and humming,
 Was about to sing something to hasten her coming,
 When lo! the two shoes that I spoke of, instead
 Of departing, as usual, like pigeons, to bed,
 Began flutt'ring and making genteel indications
 Of delicate feelings and nice hesitations,
 And then walking forward, stood still, rather wide,
 When the one drew his heel to the other's inside,
 And suggesting a bow (for it well may be said,
 You can't make a bow without having a head)
 Told the god with a sigh, which they meant to go through him,
 That they had, if he pleas'd, a small prayer to make to him.

"How now!" said the God; "what, my shoes grown pa-
 thetic!
 This indeed's a new turn of the peripatetic.⁵⁶
 What's the matter, my friends? Why this bowing and
 blushing?
 Has Ganymede⁵⁷ giv'n you too careless a brushing?
 Do you ache yet from Jupiter's tread on your toes,
 When I spoke, before Juno, of Chloris's nose?⁵⁸
 Or does she keep charge of his pen and ink still,
 And force him to borrow another new quill?"

"No: nothing of all this, dear master," said they;
 'But the fact is,—the fact is—"Well, what is it, pray?"

“Why, you know, Sir, our natures partake of the dove,
And in fact, Sir,—in short, Sir,—we’ve fallen in love.”

“In love! and with what, pray? With Rhodope’s shoes?
Or with Rhodope’s self?” cried the god at this news.*
“I have heard of shoes ‘doated on,’ during a fashion,
But never of any returning the passion.”

“We beg, Sir,” said they, “that you wouldn’t chagrin⁵⁹ us:
Who, or what could it be, but the feet of your Venus?
To see them, to touch them, and yet be heart-whole,
How could we, yet have understanding and soul?
When we heard, tother day, that dog Momus object,⁶⁰
For want of a fault in ’em, that her shoes creak’d,
We could fairly have jump’d at the rascal, and kick’d:
And so, Sir, we have to request, that whenever
We’re not upon duty, you’ll do us the favour
Of letting us wait on those charmers so little,
To which Thetis’s silver are surely queen’s-metal.⁶¹
The soft-going sandals of Rhetoric’s god⁶²
Will make her move always as loveliness should;⁶³
Will put a perfection, Sir, into her shoe-tye,
And give the last lift to her exquisite beauty.”

}

* Rhodope, or Rhodopis (Rosy-face) the most romantic of the courtezans of antiquity. She began with falling in love with her fellow-servant Æsop; and ended with consecrating a number of costly spits in the temple of Apollo at Delphos, some say with erecting one of the pyramids of Egypt. She inspired a violent passion in Charaxes, the brother of Sappho, who takes upon herself, in Ovid, to complain of it. There is a pretty legend of her, in which those who are fond of tracing every thing to the ancient world, may find the origin of the Little Glass Slipper.⁶⁴ Elian⁶⁵ says, that as she was bathing, an eagle carried away one of her sandals, and flying with it over Memphis, where Psammetichus, king of Egypt, was sitting in judgment, dropped it in the monarch’s lap. Struck with its extraordinary beauty, he had the owner found out, and married her.

“Be it so,” replied Hermes; “but take care, you rogues;
Don’t you keep her from me, or I’ll turn you to clogs.”⁶⁶

“We cannot, we cannot,” cried they, “dearest master;
And to prove it at once, she shall come to you faster.”

So saying, they rose, and skimm’d out of the door,
Like a pair of white doves, when beginning to soar:
They met her half-way, and they flew to her feet,
Which they clasp’d in a flutter, the touch was so sweet;
And they bore her in silence, and kiss’d all the while
The feet of the queen of the beautiful smile;
And lo! in an instant, redoubled in charms,
The soft coming creature was pitch’d in his arms.

RHYMES TO THE EYE,

BY A DEAF GENTLEMAN.⁶⁷

I LONG’D for Dublin, thinking there to *laugh*
With jolly tipplers o’er their *usquebaugh*,⁶⁸
For I’ve a merry heart, and love that *juice*,
Which London hath not good at any *price*.
Thither I went; but once (’twas at the *Plough*)
Some time uncounted after I’d *enough*,
I sallied forth, and in the street, *alas!*
I plunged into a horrible *fracas*,—
So horrible, that all my bones did *ach*,
And I was forced to ride home in a *couch*,
Entreating Dora to achieve a *pot*
Of salve from the Chirurgical *Depot*.*

* I am aware this rhyme may be carped at. However, Pope rhymed “way” and “away” together, and that is good authority. For my part, I think “pot” and “pot” rhyme very well together.—*Note by the Deaf Gentleman.*

Truly I cannot boast of such *eclat*⁶⁹
 As could my friend, whose sword, this way and that,
 Brandish'd through Islington and Highgate *thorps*,—
 For he belongs unto the Light Horse *Corps*!
 Next morn I had a great mind to indict
 The bludgeoneers, but could not well convict;
 And fain was I to take their promises
 Of good behaviour touching many bruises.
 But if again they catch me in that *region*,
 (Well-named *Ire-land*) since I am not a *lion*,
 The world may call me fool, and I'll say—"yes,"
 For I don't like bones batter'd and black eyes.
 No! rather would I to *Constantinople*,
 Although the Turk's-men are a strange *people*,
 And I've no predilection for the *plague*,
 Than drink in a continued fearful *ague*.

LINES TO A CRITIC.*⁷⁰

HONEY from silkworms who can gather,
 Or silk from the yellow bee?
 The grass may grow in winter weather,
 As soon as hate in me.

* We have given the stupid malignity of the Investigator⁷¹ a better answer than it is worth already. The writers must lay it to the account of our infirmity, and to a lurking something of orthodoxy in us. But in these "Lines to a Critic," the Reverend Calumniator, or Calumniators,⁷² will see what sort of an answer *Mr. Shelley* would have given them; for the beautiful effusion is his. Let the reader, when he has finished them, say which is the better Christian,—the "religious" reviver of bitter and repeated calumnies upon one who differs with him in opinion, or the "profane" philanthropist who can answer in such a spirit?

Hate men who cant, and men who pray,
 And men who rail like thee;
 An equal passion to repay,—
 They are not coy like me.

Or seek some slave of power and gold,
 To be thy dear heart's-mate,
 Thy love will move that bigot cold,
 Sooner than me, thy hate.

A passion like the one I prove
 Cannot divided be;
 I hate thy want of truth and love,
 How should I then hate thee?

THE MONARCHS,

AN ODE FOR CONGRESS.⁷³

WHEN Congress (heav'nly maid!) was young,
 While scarcely yet Rossini sung,⁷⁴
 The Monarchs oft, to flesh the sword,
 Throng'd⁷⁵ around the festive board;
 Exulting, carving, hobbing, nobbing,
 Possess'd of what they'd all been robbing.
 By turns they felt each other's crown,
 Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, pull'd down;
 Till once, 'tis said, when all were maudlin,⁷⁶
 Fill'd with Rhenish,⁷⁷ flouncing, twaddling,
 From the supporting statesmen round
 They snatch'd the first pens that they found,
 And as they once had learnt apart
 Sweet lessons of the pot-hook art,⁷⁸

Each (for madness rul'd the hour)
Would prove his own didactic power.

First Fred.⁷⁹ his hand, it's skill to try,
Upon the foolscap⁸⁰ wilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
At the remarks himself had made,

Next Alec.⁸¹ rush'd; his eyes, on fire,
In wanderings own'd their secret stings;
In one plain word, he play'd the liar,
And wrote the hurried hand of kings.

With woeful scrawl came poor old Frank;⁸²
Low stupid things his grief beguil'd;
A solemn, strange, and mingled crank;⁸³
'Twas sad in *Ps*, in *Qs* 'twas wild.⁸⁴

But thou, old boy, with pies so rare,
What was thy delight, Des-Huîtres!⁸⁵
Still it whisper'd—"Spain—they'll beat her!"
And bade the bully boys at distance hail:
Still would his munch the fish prolong,
And still from creams, and cakes, and ale,
He cull'd a finish still, although 'twas wrong:
And where his tiddest bit⁸⁶ he chose,
Soft Montmorency's⁸⁷ voice came blessing through the nose,
And old Des-Huîtres smil'd, and waiv'd the chaplain's prayer.

And longer had he din'd; but with a groan
The Duke⁸⁸ came saying "Oh!"
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in wonder down,
And with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,

And shook a shake so drear of head,
 Was ne'er pacific skull so full of *No!*
 And ever and anon he beat
 The devil's tattoo⁸⁹ with curious heat;
 And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
 Dejected Dangy at his side,⁹⁰
 Her man-subduing voice applied,
 Yet still he kept his sad and alter'd mien,
 While each gulp'd oath and curse seem'd bursting to be said.

Thy numbers, Armament, to nought were fix'd,
 Sad proof of thy distressful state;
 Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd,
 And now it call'd "To Arms!" now raving said,
 "No,—wait."

With eyes up-turn'd, as one amaz'd,
 James Monro⁹¹ sat aloof, and gaz'd;
 And from his calm sequester'd seat,
 (A place by distance made more sweet)
 Sent through the newsman's horn his free-born soul:
 And dashing oft from kindred ground
 Doubling journals join'd the sound:
 Through courts and camps the better measures stole,
 Or in some patriot's themes, with fond delay,
 Round an awful calm diffusing,
 Love of peace, and letter'd musing,
 Their useful murmurs plied away.

But oh! how finished was the happy tone,
 When brave San Miguel,⁹² Spaniard good and true,
 (His *No!* to all the monarchs flung,
 His face on fire, yet laughing too)
 Read that inspiring Note, with which the Cortes rung!⁹³

The freeman's truth, to freemen only known!
Portugal sped it's chaste-eyed Queen;⁹⁴
Writers and Liberty-Boys⁹⁵ were seen
Peeping their prison-bars between;
Brown Italy⁹⁶ rejoic'd to hear,
And courts leap'd up, and seiz'd their hats for fear.

Last came Greece's crowning trial:
She, by painful steps advancing,
Had first to foreign lands her pray'rs address'd;
But soon she stood upon her own denial,
The noble voice fair Freedom lov'd the best.
They would have thought who heard the sound,
They saw in Marathon her ancient men
Crushing the turban'd slaves again,⁹⁷
For all their mighty pomp and prancing;
While as the flying Turks kiss'd their steeds' manes,⁹⁸
Russ left with Pruss their strange, fantastic ground:⁹⁹
Free were our presses seen, our trade unbound,
And Frank, amid their frolic play,
As if he knew no longer what to say,
Shook heaps of powder from his head and brains.

O Freedom, self-defended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid,
Why, goddess, why, so long denied,
Bid not these idler's stand aside?
In the Old World, in the New,
You've shewn us what your will can do,
And why then longer waste a thought
On full-grown boys, that *won't* be taught?
Where is thy native, simple heart,
Devote to virtue, fancy, art?

Arise, as in that elder time,
Self-sufficing, pure, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording children's page:
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest friends could more prevail,
And talk'd in Greek of finer things,
Than all which charms the ear of kings,
Aye, all together, meek and slaughterly,
Bob, Chateaubriand, and the Quarterly.¹⁰⁰

O bid their vain endeavours cease;
Complete the just designs of Greece;
Return in all thy simple state,
And clip the tails that kings think great.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY C. H. REYNELL, BROAD STREET, GOLDEN SQUARE.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Leigh Hunt acknowledged authorship of this piece in the Preface to his *Ultra-Crepidarius* (1823). In this satire, Hunt compares contemporary critics and writers to the spider (See William H. Marshall, *Byron, Shelley, Hunt, and The Liberal*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960, 171).

² Possible reference to John Payne Collyer (1789-1883), journalist, critic, and Shakespearean forger.

³ The poet laureate Robert "Bob" Southey (1774-1843). See n. 486 "The Book of Beginnings".

⁴ I.e., *John Bull*, a Sunday newspaper published from 1820 to 1892, a champion of traditionalist conservatism. The name of the journal embraces John Bull, the satirical national personification of England created by John Arbuthnot in 1712.

⁵ Probably *The London Literary Gazette*, the journal established in 1817 by Henry Colburn, which reviewed bitterly the first issue of *The Liberal* (See William H. Marshall, *Byron, Shelley, Hunt, and The Liberal*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960, 102).

⁶ Reference either to the philosopher James Mill (1773-1836), or to Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868), historian, poet, and dean of St Paul's. The second seems more likely, since Milman took orders in 1816 and in 1821 he was elected professor of poetry at Oxford. Hence Hunt's "profess Poetry".

⁷ Thomas Busby (1754-1838), composer, journalist, and author.

⁸ Reference to John Wilson (1785-1854), a close collaborator in the development of the *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (see n. 21 below), appointed professor of Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh in 1820.

⁹ William Mudford (1782-1848), who at the time of publication owned the tory journal *The Courier* (1792-1842). As for the "poison", Hunt probably refers to the grim obituary published on *The Courier* upon Percy Shelley's death, where the poet had been called "a writer of infidel poetry" (August 5, 1822, 3). "Toad-eating" meant "sycophant".

¹⁰ At the time the piece was written, Theodore Edward Hook (1788-1841), writer and hoaxer, had been accused of a shortfall at Mauritius, where he had been accountant-general and treasurer from 1813 to 1817. His property was confiscated and he was later imprisoned, but made a living with his writing. In 1820 he created the *John Bull* as a means to gain King George IV's support against Queen Caroline by any possible means. "King Ehud" is a reference to King George IV: Ehud was an Old Testament patriarch who used assassination as political weapon. Therefore, Hook's "slandering" refers to the character assassination that he regularly performed for the King in his *John Bull*.

¹¹ Possible reference to William Gifford. Hunt might also be hinting at an episode involving Mary Robinson (1758-1800). Actress and former mistress of George IV (then Prince of Wales), then repudiated, she suffered in her late days an illness that left her partially paralysed. In Hunt's words, "she fell under the lash of this masculine and gallant gentleman, Mr. Gifford, who, in his *Baviad and Maeviad* [1797] amused himself with tripping up her 'crutches', particularly as he thought her on her way to her last home. This he considered the climax of the fun" (Leigh Hunt, *The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt*, vol.1, 1850, 212).

¹² Tory satirist and poet George Croly (1780-1860), contributor to *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (see n. 21 below).

¹³ Unidentified reference.

¹⁴ Gizzard is William Gifford (1756-1826), satirist and editor. From 1809 to 1824 he was editor of the *Quarterly Review*, which he founded with John Murray. See n. 16 "Advertisement to the Second Volume". The gizzard is a part of a bird's stomach but, informal and more generally, the innards or viscera.

¹⁵ William Gifford (1756-1826).

¹⁶ A degraded or base appearance.

¹⁷ In the Preface to *Ultra-Crepidarius* (1823), Hunt acknowledges authorship of the present poem, and writes that the *Ultra-Crepidarius* is "the 'stick' which is mentioned in the third issue of the *Liberal*, as having been cut for Mr. Gifford's special use" (Leigh Hunt, *The Poetical Works of Leigh Hunt*, ed. by H.S. Milford, New York: AMS Press, 1978, 711).

¹⁸ Reference to Hazlitt's 1819 "A Letter to William Gifford; ESQ."

¹⁹ Reference to Gifford's relationship with his housekeeper Ann Davies.

²⁰ Most likely a nickname for the publisher John Murray (1778-1843). Wordplay on "murrain", archaic word for an infectious disease, plague, pestilence.

EDITORIAL NOTES

²¹ The three main stakeholders in the *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, J.C. Lockhart, William Maginn, and John Wilson. The magazine was famously critical of Leigh Hunt: six articles published in the period 1817-19 refer to him as "King of the Cockneys", leader of the "Cockney School of Poetry", derogatory label signifying a mix of social climbing, vulgarity, ignorance and arrogance (see William H. Marshall, *Byron, Shelley, Hunt, and The Liberal*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960, 43).

²² The aurora borealis.

²³ William Blackwood (1776-1834) (see n. 103 "My first Acquaintance with Poets").

²⁴ Edmund Curll (1681-1747), bookseller. He is associated with unscrupulous publication for publishing pirate copies of Alexander Pope's poems and his *Dunciad*.

²⁵ Thomas Osborne (1704-67), bookseller. Like Curll, he was accused by Alexander Pope of publishing pirate copies of his works, particularly his translation of the *Iliad*.

²⁶ Possible reference to William Blackwood (1776-1834) (see n. 103 "My first Acquaintance with Poets"). "Blackguard" here means someone "who behaves in a dishonourable or contemptible way, someone worthless or despicable", *OED*, "blackguard (*n.* & *adj.*)".

²⁷ Reference to the lawsuits against the *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* following the publication of the "Cockney School of Poetry" articles. See n.21 above.

²⁸ I.e., his works; here "huff" means a gust or sudden swell of anger or arrogance.

²⁹ Sir Hudson Lowe (1769-1844), army officer and colonial governor. He guarded Napoleon at St Helena from 1815 until Napoleon's death in 1821. In 1823 he was involved in a controversy for his supposed abuses against Napoleon's doctor at St Helena, and his defence was published in the *Quarterly Review*.

³⁰ Internal evidence and style support Leigh Hunt's authorship of this piece (see William H. Marshall, *Byron, Shelley, Hunt, and The Liberal*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960, 172). "The Laureat" is the poet laureate Robert Southey (1774-1843), and this verse satire tells of how he, inconceivable to any of the gods, was conceived by Vanity.

³¹ Virgil, "Ecloga IV", 60.

³² In Greek mythology, Pallas is an epithet of the goddess Athena, born from the forehead of Zeus.

³³ In Ovid's version of the birth of the god Mars, he was born of Juno alone.

³⁴ In Greek mythology, the goddess Athena was born from the forehead of Zeus.

³⁵ Although the specific reference could not be traced, the "Cadi" is a type of judge in Islamic countries; Cadis are responsible for numerous sentences in *One Thousand and One Nights*, which is probably Hunt's inspiration here.

³⁶ In Roman mythology, Janus, the god of beginnings, time, and endings, is usually depicted as having two faces.

³⁷ The exact meaning is unclear. However, "crack" was slang for "whore", and "The crack" would mean "the fashionable theme, the go". Therefore, the line probably alludes to Southey's "whorish" subservience to the crown and to his love for the spotlight.

³⁸ In the royal coat of arms of the United Kingdom, the motto "Honi soit qui mal y pense" is written on the Garter surrounding the shield and is partly covered by the lion's and the unicorn's forelegs. The motto means "shame on anyone who thinks evil of it [the garter]". Therefore, Hunt's lines probably refer ironically to Southey's renunciation of his former liberal views in favour of conservatism and royalism: the once zealot of Liberty now submits weakly to royal power, just as the famous motto is covered by the beasts' forelegs ("the King's Arms").

³⁹ A small freshwater fish.

⁴⁰ In Roman mythology, the wife of Jupiter and goddess of love and marriage.

⁴¹ I.e., "Joined in one"; possibly a reference to the motto of the Order of the Bath (*Tria juncta in uno*, "three joined in one").

⁴² Pieces of clothing traditionally for women and girls, covering the torso from the neck to the waist.

⁴³ In Latin, quite an easy lesson: the masculine, feminine, and neuter nominatives of the demonstrative pronoun "this".

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⁴⁴ Perhaps a reference to Samuel Johnson's sentence about James Boswell's *Account of Corsica* (1768): "a farrago of disgusting egotism and pompous inanity" (in Peter Pindar, *A poetical and congratulatory epistle to James Boswell, Esq.*, London: Kearsley, 1786, 21).

⁴⁵ In the present context where Southey is described as duplicitous and inconceivable, Hunt describes him as both immature and old ("green and grey head") since birth.

⁴⁶ "said to those who presume to offer advice to others who are more experienced", *OED*, "egg (n.)."

⁴⁷ Leigh Hunt is the author of this translation of Madame d'Houtetot's poem "Aimer" (see Hippolyte Buffenoir, *La comtesse d'Houtetot, sa famille, ses amis*, Paris: Henri Leclerc, 1905, 84).

⁴⁸ The author of this piece is Leigh Hunt, as proved by epistolary evidence (see William H. Marshall, *Byron, Shelley, Hunt, and The Liberal*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960, 172).

⁴⁹ In a traditional tale, a slipper of brass that turns into a boat: "placing it on the water, whirled it thrice round, and the infernal slipper dilated at every turn, till it became a bonnie barge with its sails bent" (Allan Cunningham, "The Haunted Ships", in *Traditional tales of the English and Scottish peasantry*, vol. 2, London: Taylor and Hessey, 1822, 281).

⁵⁰ "Any one ludicrously mischievous", *OED*, "wag (n.2)".

⁵¹ A distortion of the name Ninon de l'Enclos (1620-1705), French author, courtesan, and patron.

⁵² "The cook set himself seriously to work upon it: He pulled the upper part (which was of damask) into the shreds, and tossed it up in a ragout; minced the sole; cut the wooden heel into very thin slices, fried them in butter, and placed them round the dish for garnish" (*The Connoisseur* 19 (1754), 112, a letter signed T. Savoury).

⁵³ In Roman mythology, the god of rhetoric, commerce, communication and trickery. In traditional iconography he wears winged shoes or sandals.

⁵⁴ In Greek mythology, the goddess of youth. She is also the cupbearer of Mount Olympus, serving nectar to the gods.

⁵⁵ In Roman mythology, goddess of love, beauty, and desire.

⁵⁶ A peripatetic is someone who walks about, a traveller, an itinerant trader; also, historically, a student or follower of Aristotle, named after the *walkways* (*peripatoi* in Greek) where they would meet. In Mercury's dialogue with his own shoes, Hunt puns on "pathetic" and "peripatetic".

⁵⁷ In Greek mythology, Trojan prince abducted to serve as Zeus's cupbearer.

⁵⁸ In Greek mythology, a nymph associated with spring.

⁵⁹ *I.e.*, mortify.

⁶⁰ In Greek mythology, the personification of satire and mockery.

⁶¹ In Greek mythology, Thetis is a sea nymph or goddess of water. One of her epithets is "silver-footed". Hunt's turns it into "queen's metal", *i.e.*, "any of several alloys of tin and antimony with other metals, resembling Britannia metal and formerly used for tableware, teapots, etc.", *OED*, "queen's metal (n.)."

⁶² Mercury.

⁶³ Possibly the bottom line of the piece: loveliness should always move in silence, as the lines "The soft-going [*i.e.*, quiet] sandals of Rhetoric's god" and the ensuing "they bore her in silence" suggest.

⁶⁴ The tale of "Cinderella", by Charles Perrault (1628-1703).

⁶⁵ *Varia historia* (XIII.xxxiii) by Claudius Aelianus (Aelian, 175- c.235 AD).

⁶⁶ "A wooden-soled overshoe or sandal worn to protect the shoes from wet and dirt", *OED*, "clog (n.)."

⁶⁷ Since the "deaf gentleman" is "obviously" deaf to rhyme, his couplets rhyme only in writing, "to the eye".

⁶⁸ Whisky.

⁶⁹ Public scandal, "scene".

⁷⁰ This short 1817 poem is the only contribution by Percy Bysshe Shelley in this issue of *The Liberal*.

⁷¹ Probably the Tory journal *The Courier* (1792-1842). See n. 9 above. Hunt is referring to his answer to criticism in the Preface to the first issue of *The Liberal*, second edition.

⁷² Possible reference to William Mudford (1782-1848). See n. 9 above.

⁷³ The author of this satirical verse about the Congress of Verona (1822) and its aftermath is Leigh Hunt.

⁷⁴ Gioachino Antonio Rossini (1792-1868), Italian composer.

⁷⁵ To crowd or pack with people.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ⁷⁶ “Having reached the stage of drunkenness characterized by tearful sentimentality and effusive displays of affection”, *OED*, “maudlin (*adj.*)”.
- ⁷⁷ Wine produced in the Rhine region.
- ⁷⁸ “A curved or hooked stroke made with the pen, esp. as a component of an unfamiliar or unintelligible script or when learning to write”, *OED*, “pot-hook (*n.*)”.
- ⁷⁹ Frederick William III (reigned 1797-1840), king of Prussia, represented at the Congress of Verona by Karl August von Hardenberg (1750-1822).
- ⁸⁰ “A size of paper, formerly typically used for writing documents, records of meetings, etc. [...] Foolscap paper was originally watermarked with a foolscap watermark”, *OED*, “foolscap (*n.2*)”.
- ⁸¹ Alexander I (reigned 1801-25), emperor of Russia.
- ⁸² Francis I (reigned 1804-35), emperor of Austria, represented at the Congress of Verona by Klemens von Metternich (1773-1859).
- ⁸³ A crook, bend, winding.
- ⁸⁴ The line derives from the idiomatic “mind your Ps and Qs”, *i.e.*, “mind your manners”, “be on your best behaviour”, possibly meaning that Francis I’s behaviour was “sad” and “wild” (see n. 82 above).
- ⁸⁵ Louis XVIII (reigned 1814-24). Quite plump, he was nicknamed *Louis des Huitres*.
- ⁸⁶ Choicest or daintiest bit.
- ⁸⁷ Anne-Adrien-Pierre de Montmorency (1768-1837), peer of France and Spain, representative of France at the Congress of Verona.
- ⁸⁸ Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington (1769-1852), who represented the United Kingdom at the Congress of Verona after Lord Castlereagh’s suicide.
- ⁸⁹ The devil’s tattoo is the action of drumming with the fingers upon a table as a sign of vexation or impatience.
- ⁹⁰ Unidentified reference.
- ⁹¹ James Monroe (1758-1831), fifth president of the United States of America.
- ⁹² Evaristo José Fernández San Miguel y Valledor, Duke of San Miguel (1785-1862), Spanish soldier, politician, and writer who opposed the Restoration of Fernando VII. During the Spanish Trienio Liberal, he was Secretary of State of the liberal government established on the 5th of August 1822. On the 9th of January 1823, in front of the *cortes* (see n. 93 below), he opposed the ultimatum issued at the Congress of Verona.
- ⁹³ “The two chambers or houses, constituting the legislative assembly of Spain and of Portugal”, *OED*, “*cortes* (*n.*)”.
- ⁹⁴ Doña Carlota Joaquina Teresa Cayetana (1775-1830), queen consort of Portugal.
- ⁹⁵ Supporter of the American cause prior to and during the American War of Independence.
- ⁹⁶ “Brown” in this instance might mean “gloomy, morose” because oppressed.
- ⁹⁷ Reference to the battle of Marathon (490 BC), during the first Persian invasion of Greece. The Greek army inflicted a crushing defeat on the more numerous Persians, “the turban’d slaves”.
- ⁹⁸ Kissing the manes (the long hair on the back of horses) means riding fast, bent on the horse’s neck.
- ⁹⁹ Russia and Prussia.
- ¹⁰⁰ The poet laureate Robert “Bob” Southey (1774-1843); François-August-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), French writer, politician, and historian. A fervent royalist, he lived as an exile in London (1793-1800) and during the Restoration he was representative of France at the Congress of Verona (1822); the periodical *The Quarterly Review* (1809-1967).

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THE
LIBERAL.

No. IV.

MORGANTE MAGGIORE
DI
MESSER LUIGI PULCI.*¹

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Morgante Maggiore, of the first canto of which this translation is offered, divides with the Orlando Innamorato² the honour of having formed and suggested the style and story of Ariosto.³ The great defects of Boiardo⁴ were his treating too seriously the narratives of chivalry, and his harsh style. Ariosto, in his continuation, by a judicious mixture of the gaiety of Pulci, has avoided the one, and Berni,⁵ in his reformation of Boiardo's poem, has corrected the other. Pulci may be considered as the precursor and model of Berni altogether, as he has partly been to Ariosto, however inferior to both his copyists. He is no less the founder of a new style of poetry very lately sprung up in England. I allude to that

* Author: Lord Byron / Transcribed by Carmen Gallo; Annotated by Alessandra Crotti.

of the ingenious Whistlecraft.⁶ The serious poems on Roncesvalles in the same language, and more particularly the excellent one of Mr. Merivale,⁷ are to be traced to the same source. It has never yet been decided entirely, whether Pulci's intention was or was not to deride the religion, which is one of his favourite topics. It appears to me, that such an intention would have been no less hazardous to the poet than to the priest, particularly in that age and country; and the permission to publish the poem, and its reception among the classics of Italy, prove that it neither was nor is so interpreted. That he intended to ridicule the monastic life, and suffered his imagination to play with the simple dulness⁸ of his converted giant, seems evident enough; but surely it were as unjust to accuse him of irreligion on this account, as to denounce Fielding⁹ for his Parson Adams, Barnabas,¹⁰ Thwackum, Supple,¹¹ and the Ordinary in Jonathan Wild,¹²—or Scott,¹³ for the exquisite use of his Covenanters in the "Tales of my Landlord."¹⁴

In the following translation I have used the liberty of the original with the proper names; as Pulci uses Gan, Ganelon, or Ganellone;¹⁵ Carlo, Carlomagno, or Carlomano;¹⁶ Rondel, or Rondello,¹⁷ &c. as it suits his convenience, so has the translator. In other respects the version is faithful to the best of the translator's ability in combining his interpretation of the one language with the not very easy task of reducing it to the same versification in the other. The reader, on comparing it with the annexed original, is requested to remember that the antiquated language of Pulci, however pure, is not easy to the generality of Italians themselves, from its great mixture of Tuscan proverbs; and he may therefore be more indulgent to the present attempt. How far the translator has succeeded, and whether or no he shall

continue the work, are questions which the public will decide. He was induced to make the experiment partly by his love for, and partial intercourse with, the Italian language, of which it is so easy to acquire a slight knowledge, and with which it is so nearly impossible for a foreigner to become accurately conversant. The Italian language is like a capricious beauty, who accords her smiles to all, her favours to few, and sometimes least to those who have courted her longest. The translator wished also to present in an English dress a part at least of a poem never yet rendered into a northern language; at the same time that it has been the original of some of the most celebrated productions on this side of the Alps, as well as of those recent experiments in poetry in England, which have been already mentioned.

TRANSLATION.

MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

CANTO I.

I.

IN the beginning was the Word next God;
 God was the Word, the Word no less was he:¹⁸
 This was in the beginning, to my mode
 Of thinking, and without him nought could be:
 Therefore, just Lord! from out thy high abode,
 Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,
 One only, to be my companion, who
 Shall help my famous, worthy, old song through.

II.

And thou, oh Virgin! daughter, mother, bride,
Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key
Of heaven, and hell, and every thing beside,
The day thy Gabriel said, "All hail!" to thee,
Since to thy servants pity's ne'er denied,
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and free,
Be to my verses then benignly kind,
And to the end illuminate my mind.

III.

'Twas in the season when sad Philomel¹⁹
Weeps with her sister, who remembers and
Deplores the ancient woes which both befell,
And makes the nymphs enamour'd, to the hand
Of Phæton²⁰ by Phœbus²¹ loved so well
His car (but temper'd by his sire's command)
Was given, and on the horizon's verge just now
Appear'd, so that Tithonus²² scratched his brow:

IV.

When I prepared my bark first to obey,²³
As it should still obey, the helm, my mind,
And carry prose or rhyme, and this my lay
Of Charles the Emperor,²⁴ whom you will find
By several pens already praised; but they
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined,
For all that I can see in prose or verse,²⁵
Have understood Charles badly—and wrote worse.

V.

Leonardo Aretino²⁶ said already,
That if, like Pepin,²⁷ Charles had had a writer
Of genius quick, and diligent steady,
No hero would in history look brighter;
He in the cabinet being always ready,
And in the field a most victorious fighter,
Who for the church and Christian faith had wrought,²⁸
Certes far more than yet is said or thought.

VI.

You still may see at Saint Liberatore,²⁹
The abbey no great way from Manopell,
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,
Because of the great battle in which fell
A Pagan King, according to the story,
And felon people whom Charles sent to hell:
And there are bones so many, and so many,
Near them Giusaffa's³⁰ would seem few, if any.

VII.

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't prize
His virtues as I wish to see them: thou,
Florence, by his great bounty don't arise,³¹
And hast, and may have, if thou wilt allow,
All proper customs and true courtesies:
Whate'er thou hast acquired from then till now,
With knightly courage, treasure, or the lance,
Is sprung from out the noble blood of France.

VIII.

Twelve Paladins³² had Charles in court, of whom
 The wisest and most famous was Orlando;³³
 Him traitor Gan³⁴ conducted to the tomb
 In Roncesvalles, as the villain plann'd too,
 While the horn rang so loud, and knell'd the doom
 Of their sad rout, though he did all knight can do,
 And Dante³⁵ in his comedy has given
 To him a happy seat with Charles in heaven.³⁶

IX.

'Twas Christmas-day; in Paris all his court
 Charles held; the chief, I say, Orlando was,
 The Dane;³⁷ Astolfo³⁸ there too did resort,
 Also Ansuigi,³⁹ the gay time to pass
 In festival and in triumphal sport,
 The much renown'd St. Dennis⁴⁰ being the cause;
 Angiolin of Bayonne,⁴¹ and Oliver,⁴²
 And gentle Belinhieri⁴³ too came there:

X.

Avolio, and Arino,⁴⁴ and Othone
 Of Normandy,⁴⁵ and Richard Paladin,
 Wise Hamo,⁴⁶ and the ancient Salemon,⁴⁷
 Walter of Lion's Mount⁴⁸ and Baldwin,⁴⁹
 Who was the son of the sad Ganellone,
 Were there, exciting too much gladness in
 The son of Pepin:⁵⁰—when his knights came hither,
 He groaned with joy to see them altogether.

XI.

But watchful Fortune lurking, takes good heed
Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to bring.
While Charles reposed him thus, in word and deed,
Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every thing;
Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such need
To vent his spite, that thus with Charles the king,
One day he openly began to say,
"Orlando must we always then obey?

XII.

"A thousand times I've been about to say,
"Orlando too presumptuously goes on;
"Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own thy sway,
"Hamo,⁵¹ and Otho,⁵² Ogier,⁵³ Solomon,⁵⁴
"Each have to honour thee and to obey;
"But he has too much credit near the throne,
"Which we won't suffer, but are quite decided
"By such a boy to be no longer guided.

XIII.

"And even at Aspramont⁵⁵ thou didst begin
"To let him know he was a gallant knight,
"And by the fount did much the day to win;
"But I know *who* that day had won the fight
"If it had not for good Gherardo⁵⁶ been:
"The victory was Almonte's⁵⁷ else; his sight
"He kept upon the standard, and the laurels
"In fact and fairness are his earning, Charles.

XIV.

“If thou rememberest being in Gascony,
“When there advanced the nations out of Spain,
“The Christian cause had suffer’d shamefully,
“Had not his valour driven them back again.
“Best speak the truth when there’s a reason why:
“Know then, oh Emperor! that all complain:
“As for myself, I shall repass the mounts
“O’er which I cross’d with two and sixty Counts.

XV.

“’Tis fit thy grandeur should dispense relief,
“So that each here may have his proper part,
“For the whole court is more or less in grief:
“Perhaps thou deem’st this lad a Mars⁵⁸ in heart?”
Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,
As by himself it chanced he sate apart:
Displeased he was with Gan because he said it,
But much more still that Charles should give him credit.

XVI.

And with the sword he would have murder’d Gan,
But Oliver thrust in between the pair,
And from his hand extracted Durlindan,⁵⁹
And thus at length they separated were.
Orlando, angry too with Carloman,
Wanted but little to have slain him there;
Then forth alone from Paris went the chief,
And burst and madden’d with disdain and grief.

XVII.

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,
He took Cortana,⁶⁰ and then took Rondell,
And on towards Brara⁶¹ prick'd him o'er the plain;
And when she saw him coming, Aldabelle⁶²
Stretch'd forth her arms to clasp her lord again:
Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,
As "Welcome my Orlando home," she said,
Rais'd up his sword to smite her on the head.

XVIII.

Like him a fury counsels; his revenge
On Gan in that rash act he seem'd to take,
Which Aldabella thought extremely strange,
But soon Orlando found himself awake;
And his spouse took his bridle on this change,
And he dismounted from his horse, and spake⁶³
Of every thing which pass'd without demur,
And then reposed himself some days with her.

XIX.

Then full of wrath departed from the place,
And far as Pagan countries roam's astray,
And while he rode, yet still at every pace
The traitor Gan remember'd by the way;
And wandering on in error a long space
An abbey which in a lone desert lay,
'Midst glens obscure, and distant lands, he found,
Which form'd the Christian's and the Pagan's bound.

XX.

The abbot was call'd Clermont, and by blood
Descended from Angrante;⁶⁴ under cover
Of a great mountain's brow the abbey stood,
But certain savage giants look'd him over;
One Passamont was foremost of the brood,
And Alabaster and Morgante hover
Second and third, with certain slings, and throw
In daily jeopardy the place below.

XXI.

The monks could pass the convent gate no more,
Nor leave their cells for water or for wood;
Orlando knock'd, but none would ope,⁶⁵ before
Unto the prior it at length seem'd good;
Enter'd, he said that he was taught to adore
Him who was born of Mary's holiest blood,⁶⁶
And was baptized a Christian; and then show'd
How to the abbey he had found his road.

XXII.

Said the abbot, "You are welcome; what is mine
"We give you freely, since that you believe
"With us in Mary Mother's Son divine;
"And that you may not, cavalier, conceive
"The cause of our delay to let you in
"To be rusticity, you shall receive
"The reason why our gate was barr'd to you:
"Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

XXIII.

“When hither to inhabit first we came
“These mountains, albeit that they are obscure,
“As you perceive, yet without fear or blame
“They seem’d to promise an asylum sure:
“From savage brutes alone, too fierce to tame,
“’Twas fit our quiet dwelling to secure;
“But now, if here we’d stay, we needs must guard
“Against domestic beasts with watch and ward.

XXIV.

“These make us stand, in fact, upon the watch,
“For late there have appear’d three giants rough;
“What nation or what kingdom bore the batch
“I know not, but they are all of savage stuff;
“When force and malice with some genius match,
“You know, they can do all—we are not enough:
“And these so much our orisons derange,
“I know not what to do, till matters change.

XXV.

“Our ancient fathers living the desert in,
“For just and holy works were duly fed;
“Think not they lived on locusts sole, ’tis certain
“That manna was rain’d down from heaven instead;
“But here ’tis fit we keep on the alert in
“Our bounds, or taste the stones shower’d down for bread,
“From off yon mountain daily raining faster,
“And flung by Passamont and Alabaster.

XXVI.

“The third, Morgante, ’s savagest by far; he
“Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees, and oaks,
“And flings them, our community to bury,
“And all that I can do but more provokes.”
While thus they parley in the cemetery,
A stone from one of their gigantic strokes,
Which nearly crush’d Rondell, came tumbling over,
So that he took a long leap under cover.

XXVII.

“For God sake, cavalier, come in with speed,
“The manna’s⁶⁷ falling now,” the abbot cried:
“This fellow does not wish my horse should feed,
“Dear abbot,” Roland unto him replied,
“Of restiveness he’d cure him had he need;
“That stone seems with good-will and aim applied.”
The holy father said, “I don’t deceive;
“They’ll one day fling the mountain, I believe.”

XXVIII.

Orlando bade them take care of Rondello,
And also made a breakfast of his own:
“Abbot,” he said, “I want to find that fellow
“Who flung at my good horse yon corner-stone.”
Said the abbot, “Let not my advice seem shallow,
“As to a brother dear I speak alone;
“I would dissuade you, baron, from this strife,
“As knowing sure that you will lose your life.

XXIX.

“That Passamont has in his hand three darts—
“Such slings, clubs, ballast-stones, that yield you must;
“You know that giants have much stouter hearts
“Than us, with reason, in proportion just;
“If go you will, guard well against their arts,
“For these are very barbarous and robust.”
Orlando answer’d, “This I’ll see, be sure,
“And walk the wild on foot to be secure.”

XXX.

The abbot sign’d the great cross on his front,
“Then go you with God’s benison and mine:”
Orlando, after he had scaled the mount,
As the abbot had directed, kept the line
Right to the usual haunt of Passamont;
Who, seeing him alone in this design,
Survey’d him fore and aft with eyes observant,
Then asked him, “If he wish’d to stay as servant?”

XXXI.

And promised him an office of great ease.
But, said Orlando, “Saracen insane!
“I come to kill you, if it shall so please
“God, not to serve as footboy in your train;
“You with his monks so oft have broke the peace—
“Vile dog! ’tis past his patience to sustain.”
The giant ran to fetch his arms, quite furious,
When he received an answer so injurious.

XXXII.

And being return'd to where Orlando stood,
Who had not moved him from the spot, and swinging
The cord, he hurl'd a stone with strength so rude,
As show'd a sample of his skill in slinging;
It roll'd on Count Orlando's helmet good
And head, and set both head and helmet ringing.
So that he swoon'd with pain as if he died,
But more than dead, he seem'd so stupefied.

XXXIII.

Then Passamont, who thought him slain outright,
Said, "I will go, and while he lies along,
"Disarm me: why such craven did I fight?"
But Christ his servants ne'er abandons long,
Especially Orlando, such a knight,
As to desert would almost be a wrong.
While the giant goes to put off his defences,
Orlando has recall'd his force and senses:

XXXIV.

And loud he shouted, "Giant, where dost go?
"Thou thought'st me doubtless for the bier outlaid;
"To the right about—without wings thou'rt too slow
"To fly my vengeance — currish renegade!
"Twas but by treachery thou laid'st me low."
The giant his astonishment betray'd,
And turn'd about, and stopp'd his journey on,
And then he stoop'd to pick up a great stone.

XXXV.

Orlando had Cortana bare in hand,
 To split the head in twain was what he schem'd:—
 Cortana clave the skull like a true brand,
 And Pagan Passamont died unreseem'd.
 Yet harsh and haughty, as he lay he bann'd,
 And most devoutly Macon⁶⁸ still blasphemed;
 But while his crude, rude blasphemies he heard,
 Orlando thank'd the Father and the Word,—

XXXVI.

Saying, "What grace to me thou'st given!
 "And I to thee, Oh Lord! am ever bound.
 "I know my life was saved by thee from heaven,
 "Since by the giant I was fairly down'd.
 "All things by thee are measured just and even;
 "Our power without thine aid would nought be found:
 "I pray thee take heed of me, till I can
 "At least return once more to Carloman."

XXXVII.

And having said thus much, he went his way;
 And Alabaster he found out below,
 Doing the very best that in him lay
 To root from out a bank a rock or two.
 Orlando, when he reach'd him, loud 'gan say,
 "How think'st thou, glutton, such a stone to throw?"
 When Alabaster heard his deep voice ring,
 He suddenly betook him to his sling,

XXXVIII.

And hurl'd a fragment of a size so large,
That if it had in fact fulfill'd its mission,
And Roland not avail'd him of his targe,
There would have been no need of a physician.
Orlando set himself in turn to charge,
And in his bulky bosom made incision
With all his sword. The lout fell; but, o'erthrown, he
However by no means forgot Maccone.

XXXIX.

Morgante had a palace in his mode,
Composed of branches, logs of wood, and earth,
And stretch'd himself at ease in this abode,
And shut himself at night within his birth.
Orlando knock'd, and knock'd, again to goad
The giant from his sleep; and he came forth,
The door to open, like a crazy thing,
For a rough dream had shook him slumbering.

XL.

He thought that a fierce serpent had attack'd him,
And Mahomet he call'd, but Mahomet
Is nothing worth, and not an instant back'd him;
But praying blessed Jesu, he was set
At liberty from all the fears which rack'd him;
And to the gate he came with great regret—
“Who knocks here?” grumbling all the while, said he:
“That,” said Orlando, “you will quickly see.

XLI.

"I come to preach to you, as to your brothers,
"Sent by the miserable monks—repentance;
"For Providence divine, in you and others,
"Condemns the evil done my new acquaintance.
"Tis writ on high—your wrong must pay another's;
"From heaven itself is issued out this sentence;
"Know then, that colder now than a pilaster
"I left your Passamont and Alabaster."

XLII.

Morgante said, "O gentle cavalier!
"Now by thy God say me no villany;⁶⁹
"The favour of your name I fain would hear,
"And if a Christian, speak for courtesy."
Replied Orlando, "So much to your ear
"I by my faith disclose contentedly;
"Christ I adore, who is the genuine Lord,
"And, if you please, by you may be adored."

XLIII.

The Saracen rejoin'd in humble tone,
"I have had an extraordinary vision;
"A savage serpent fell on me alone,
"And Macon would not pity my condition;
"Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone
"Upon the cross, preferr'd I my petition;
"His timely succour set me safe and free,
"And I a Christian am disposed to be."

XLIV.

Orlando answer'd, "Baron just and pious,
"If this good wish your heart can really move
"To the true God, who will not then deny us
"Eternal honour, you will go above,
"And, if you please, as friends we will ally us,
"And I will love you with a perfect love.
"Your idols are vain liars full of fraud,
"The only true God is the Christian's God.

XLV.

"The Lord descended to the virgin breast
"Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine;
"If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest,
"Without whom neither sun nor star can shine,
"Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,
"Your renegado God, and worship mine,—
"Baptize yourself with zeal, since you repent."
To which Morgante answer'd, "I'm content."

XLVI.

And then Orlando to embrace him flew,
And made much of his convert, as he cried,
"To the abbey I will gladly marshal you:"
To whom Morgante, "Let us go," replied,
"I to the friars have for peace to sue."
Which thing Orlando heard with inward pride,
Saying, "My brother, so devout and good,
"Ask the abbot pardon, as I wish you would:

XLVII.

“Since God has granted your illumination,
“Accepting you in mercy for his own,
“Humility should be your first oblation.”
Morgante said, “For goodness’ sake make known—
“Since that your God is to be mine—your station,
“And let your name in verity be shown,
“Then will I every thing at your command do.”
On which the other said, he was Orlando.

XLVIII.

“Then,” quoth the giant, “blessed be Jesu,
“A thousand times with gratitude and praise!
“Oft, perfect Baron! have I heard of you
“Through all the different periods of my days:
“And, as I said, to be your vassal too
“I wish, for your great gallantry always.”
Thus reasoning, they continued much to say,
And onwards to the abbey went their way.

XLIX.

And by the way, about the giants dead
Orlando with Morgante reasoned; “Be,
“For their decease, I pray you, comforted,
“And, since it is God’s pleasure, pardon me.
“A thousand wrongs unto the monks they bred,
“And our true Scripture⁷⁰ soundeth openly—
“Good is rewarded, and chastised the ill,
“Which the Lord never faileth to fulfil:

L.

“Because his love of justice unto all
“Is such, he wills his judgment should devour
“All who have sin, however great or small;
“But good he well remembers to restore:
“Nor without justice holy could we call
“Him, whom I now require you to adore:
“All men must make his will their wishes sway,
“And quickly and spontaneously obey.

LI.

“And here our doctors are of one accord,
“Coming on this point to the same conclusion,—
“That in their thoughts who praise in heaven the Lord,
“If pity e’er was guilty of intrusion
“For their unfortunate relations stored
“In hell below, and damnd in great confusion,—
“Their happiness would be reduced to nought,
“And thus unjust the Almighty’s self be thought.

LII.

“But they in Christ have firmest hope, and all
“Which seems to him, to them too must appear
“Well done; nor could it otherwise befall;
“He never can in any purpose err:
“If sire or mother suffer endless thrall,
“They don’t disturb themselves for him or her;
“What pleases God to them must joy inspire;—
“Such is the observance of the eternal choir.”

LIII.

“A word unto the wise,” Morgante said,
“Is wont to be enough, and you shall see
“How much I grieve about my brethren dead;
“And if the will of God seem good to me,
“Just, as you tell me, ’tis in heav’n obey’d—
“Ashes to ashes,⁷¹—merry let us be!
“I will cut off the hands from both their trunks,
“And carry them unto the holy monks.

LIV.

“So that all persons may be sure and certain
“That they are dead, and have no farther fear
“To wander solitary this desert in,
“And that they may perceive my spirit clear
“By the Lord’s grace, who hath withdrawn the curtain
“Of darkness, making his bright realm appear.”
He cut his brethren’s hands off at these words,
And left them to the savage beasts and birds.

LV.

Then to the abbey they went on together,
Where waited them the abbot in great doubt.
The monks, who knew not yet the fact, ran thither
To their superior, all in breathless rout,
Saying, with tremor, “Please to tell us whether
“You wish to have this person in or out?”
The abbot, looking through upon the giant,
Too greatly fear’d, at first, to be compliant.

LVI.

Orlando, seeing him thus agitated,
Said quickly, "Abbot, be thou of good cheer;
"He Christ believes, as Christian must be rated,
"And hath renounced his Macon false;" which here
Morgante with the hands corroborated,
A proof of both the giants' fate quite clear:
Thence, with due thanks, the abbot God adored,
Saying, "Thou hast contended me, oh Lord!"

LVII.

He gazed; Morgante's height he calculated,
And more than once contemplated his size;
And then he said, "Oh giant celebrated,
"Know, that no more my wonder will arise,
"How you could tear and fling the trees you late did,
"When I behold your form with my own eyes.
"You now a true and perfect friend will show
"Yourself to Christ, as once you were a foe.

LVIII.

"And one of our apostles, Saul⁷² once named,
"Long persecuted sore the faith of Christ,
"Till one day by the Spirit being inflamed,
"Why dost thou persecute me thus?' said Christ;
"And then from his offence he was reclaimed,
"And went for ever after preaching Christ;
"And of the faith became a trump, whose sounding
"O'er the whole earth is echoing and rebounding.

LIX.

“So, my Morgante, you may do likewise;
“He who repents, thus writes the Evangelist,—
“Occasions more rejoicing in the skies
“Than ninety-nine of the celestial list.
“You may be sure, should each desire arise
“With just zeal for the Lord, that you’ll exist
“Among the happy saints for evermore;
“But you were lost and damn’d to hell before!”

LX.

And thus great honour to Morgante paid
The abbot: many days they did repose.
One day, as with Orlando they both stray’d,
And saunter’d here and there, where’er they chose,
The abbot show’d a chamber, where array’d,
Much armour was, and hung up certain bows;
And one of these Morgante for a whim
Girt on, though useless, he believ’d, to him.

LXI.

There being a want of water in the place,
Orlando, like a worthy brother, said,
“Morgante, I could wish you in this case
“To go for water.” “You shall be obey’d
“In all commands,” was the reply, “straightways.”
Upon his shoulder a great tub he laid,
And went out on his way unto a fountain,
Where he was wont to drink below the mountain.

LXII.

Arrived there, a prodigious noise he hears,
 Which suddenly along the forest spread;
 Whereat from out his quiver he prepares
 An arrow for his bow, and lifts his head;
 And lo! a monstrous herd of swine appears,
 And onward rushes with tempestuous tread,
 And to the fountain's brink precisely pours,
 So that the giant's join'd by all the boars.

LXIII.

Morgante at a venture shot an arrow,
 Which pierced a pig precisely in the ear,
 And pass'd unto the other side quite thorough,
 So that the boar, defunct, lay tripp'd up near.
 Another, to revenge his fellow farrow,
 Against the giant rush'd in fierce career,
 And reach'd the passage with so swift a foot,
 Morgante was not now in time to shoot.

LXIV.

Perceiving that the pig was on him close,
 He gave him such a punch upon the head*

“*Gli dette in sulla testa un gran punzone.” It is strange that Pulci should have literally anticipated the technical terms of my old friend and master Jackson,⁷³ and the art which he has carried to its highest pitch. “A *punch on the head*,” or a *punch in the head*,” “un punzone in sulla testa,” is the exact and frequent phrase of our best pugilists, who little dream that they are talking the purest Tuscan.

As floor'd him, so that he no more arose—
Smashing the very bone; and he fell dead
Next to the other. Having seen such blows,
The other pigs along the valley fled;
Morgante on his neck the bucket took,
Full from the spring, which neither swerved nor shook.

LXV.

The ton was on one shoulder, and there were
The hogs on t'other, and he brush'd apace
On to the abbey, though by no means near,
Nor spilt one drop of water in his race.
Orlando, seeing him so soon appear
With the dead boars, and with that brimful vase,
Marvell'd to see his strength so very great;—
So did the abbot, and set wide the gate.

LXVI.

The monks, who saw the water fresh and good,
Rejoiced, but much more to perceive the pork;—
All animals are glad at sight of food:
They lay their breviaries to sleep, and work
With greedy pleasure, and in such a mood,
That the flesh needs no salt beneath their fork.
Of rankness and of rot there is no fear,
For all the fasts are now left in arrear.

LXVII.

As though they wish'd to burst at once, they ate;
And gorged so that, as if the bones had been
In water, sorely grieved the dog and cat,
Perceiving that they all were pick'd too clean.
The abbot, who to all did honour great,
A few days after this convivial scene,
Gave to Morgante a fine horse well train'd
Which he long time had for himself maintain'd.

LXVIII.

The horse Morgante to a meadow led,
To gallop, and to put him to the proof,
Thinking that he a back of iron had,
Or to skim eggs unbroke was light enough;
But the horse, sinking with the pain, fell dead,
And burst, while cold on earth lay head and hoof.
Morgante said, "Get up, thou sulky cur!"
And still continued pricking with the spur.

LXIX.

But finally he thought fit to dismount,
And said, "I am as light as any feather,
"And he has burst—to this what say you, Count?"
Orlando answered, "Like a ship's mast rather
"You seem to me, and with the truck for front:—
"Let him go; Fortune wills that we together
"Should march, but you on foot, Morgante still."
To which the giant answered, "So I will.

LXX.

“When there shall be occasion, you will see
“How I approve my courage in the fight.”
Orlando said, “I really think you’ll be,
“If it should prove God’s will, a goodly knight,
“Nor will you napping there discover me:
“But never mind your horse, though out of sight
“Twere best to carry him into some wood,
“If but the means or way I understood.”

LXXI.

The giant said, “Then carry him I will,
“Since that to carry me he was so slack—
“To render, as the gods do, good for ill;
“But lend a hand to place him on my back.”
Orlando answer’d, “If my counsel still
“May weigh, Morgante, do not undertake
“To lift or carry this dead courser, who,
“As you have done to him, will do to you.

LXXII.

“Take care he don’t revenge himself, though dead,
“As Nessus⁷⁴ did of old beyond all cure;
I don’t know if the fact you’ve heard or read,
“But he will make you burst, you may be sure.”
“But help him on my back,” Morgante said,
“And you shall see what weight I can endure:
“In place, my gentle Roland, of this palfrey,
“With all the bells, I’d carry yonder belfry.”

LXXIII.

The abbot said, "The steeple may do well,
"But, for the bells, you've broken them, I wot."
Morgante answered, "Let them pay in hell
"The penalty, who lie dead in yon grot;"
And hoisting up the horse from where he fell,
He said, "Now look if I the gout have got,
"Orlando, in the legs—or if I have force;"—
And then he made two gambols with the horse.

LXXIV.

Morgante was like any mountain framed;
So if he did this, 'tis no prodigy;
But secretly himself Orlando blamed,
Because he was one of his family;
And fearing that he might be hurt or maim'd,
Once more he bade him lay his burthen by:
"Put down, nor bear him further the desert in."
Morgante said, "I'll carry him for certain."

LXXV.

He did; and stow'd him in some nook away,
And to the abbey then return'd with speed.
Orlando said, "Why longer do we stay?"
"Morgante, here is nought to do indeed."
The abbot by the hand he took one day,
And said with great respect, he had agreed
To leave his reverence; but for this decision
He wish'd to have his pardon and permission.

LXXVI.

The honours they continued to receive
Perhaps exceeded what his merits claim'd:
He said, "I mean, and quickly, to retrieve"⁷⁵
"The lost days of time past, which may be blam'd;
"Some days ago I should have ask'd your leave,
"Kind father, but I really was ashamed,
"And know not how to show my sentiment,
"so much I see you with our stay content.

LXXVII.

"But in my heart I bear through every clime,
"The abbot, abbey, and this solitude—
"So much I love you in so short a time;
"For me, from heaven reward you with all good,
"The God so true, the eternal Lord sublime!
"Whose kingdom at the last hath open stood:
"Meanwhile we stand expectant of your blessing,
"And recommend us to your prayers with pressing."

LXXVIII.

Now when the abbot Count Orlando heard,
His heart grew soft with inner tenderness,
Such fervour in his bosom bred each word;
And, "Cavalier," he said, "if I have less
"Courteous and kind to your great worth appear'd,
"Than fits me for such gentle blood to express,
"I know I've done too little in this case;
"But blame out ignorance, and this poor place.

LXXIX.

“We can indeed but honour you with masses,
“And sermons, thanksgivings, and pater-nosters
“Hot suppers, dinners (fitting other places
“In verity much rather than the cloisters;)
“But such a love for you my heart embraces,
“For thousand virtues which your bosom fosters,
“That wheresoe’er you go, I too shall be,
“And, on the other part, you rest with me.

LXXX.

“This may involve a seeming contradiction,
“But you I know are sage, and feel, and taste,
“And understand my speech with full conviction.
“For your just pious deeds may you be graced
“With the Lord’s great reward and benediction,
“By whom you were directed to this waste:
“To his high mercy is our freedom due,
“For which we render thanks to him and you.

LXXXI.

“You saved at once our life and soul: such fear
“The giants caused us, that the way was lost
“By which we could pursue a fit career
“In search of Jesus and the saintly host;
“And your departure breeds such sorrow here,
“That comfortless we all are to our cost;
“But months and years you could not stay in sloth,
“Nor are you form’d to wear our sober cloth;

LXXXII.

“But to bear arms and wield the lance; indeed,
 “With these as much is done as with this cowl,
 “In proof of which the Scripture you may read.
 “This giant up to heaven may bear his soul
 “By your compassion: now in peace proceed.
 “Your state and name I seek not to unroll,
 “But, if I’m ask’d, this answer shall be given,
 “That here an angel was sent down from heaven.

LXXXIII.

“If you want armour or aught else, go in,
 “Look o’er the wardrobe, and take what you choose,
 “And cover with it o’er this giant’s skin.”
 Orlando answered, “If there should lie loose
 “Some armour, ere our journey we begin,
 “Which might be turn’d to my companion’s use,
 “The gift would be acceptable to me.”
 The abbot said to him, “Come in and see.”

LXXXIV.

And in a certain closet, where the wall
 Was cover’d with old armour like a crust,
 The abbot said to them, “I give you all.”
 Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the dust
 The whole, which, save one cuirass, was too small,
 And that too had the mail inlaid with rust.
 They wonder’d how it fitted him exactly,
 Which ne’er has suited others so compactly.
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LXXXV.

'Twas an immeasurable giant's, who
By the great Milo of Agrante⁷⁶ fell
Before the abbey many years ago.
The story on the wall was figured well;
In the last moment of the abbey's foe,
Who long had waged a war implacable:
Precisely as the war occur'd they drew him,
And there was Milo as he overthrew him.

LXXXVI.

Seeing this history, Count Orlando said
In his own heart, "Oh God! who in the sky
"Know'st all things, how was Milo hither led?
"Who caused the giant in this place to die?"
And certain letters, weeping, then he read,
So that he could not keep his visage dry,—
As I will tell in the ensuing story.
From evil keep you the high King of Glory!

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Luigi Pulci (1432-84), Italian poet. His main artistic endeavour was the epic poem *Morgante*, which follows the deeds of Emperor Charlemagne's twelve Paladins. The title character is the converted giant Morgante, who becomes Orlando's loyal friend in the Canto selected by Lord Byron for translation. The first version of Cantos I-XXV appeared in 1478 and was printed by Luca Venetiano in 1481. The second version, known as *Morgante Maggiore*, appeared in 1483 and consists of twenty-eight cantos. In terms of style, Pulci employed the *ottava rima*, or eight-line stanza, favoured by Italian satirical writers of mock-heroic romances such as Matteo Maria Boiardo and Ludovico Ariosto; the *ottava rima* was later employed by Lord Byron in his satirical works *Beppo: A Venetian Story* (1818) and, most notably, *Don Juan* (1819-24).

² *Orlando innamorato* (1495), epic poem by Matteo Maria Boiardo (1441-94). Largely based on materials from the Carolingian and Arthurian cycles, it narrates the adventures of the knight Orlando in his pursuit of beautiful Angelica, daughter of the king of Cathay.

³ Reference to *Orlando furioso* (1516) by Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533). This epic poem was originally conceived as a continuation (*giunta*) of Boiardo's unfinished *Orlando innamorato*. However, Ariosto's thematic innovations and ironic tone set *Orlando furioso* apart from Boiardo's poem, which, as Byron points out in his "Advertisement" to the translation of *Morgante Maggiore*, treated "too seriously the narratives of chivalry".

⁴ Boiardo, Italian Renaissance poet.

⁵ Francesco Berni (1497-1535), Italian poet. Berni owed his fame mainly to his recasting (*rifacimento*) of Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato* (1531), in which, as Byron observes in his "Advertisement", he perfected Boiardo's "harsh language", replacing the rugged style and vernacular traces of the original text with elegant and polished Italian. In 1830, Boiardo's original text was newly discovered at the British Museum Library by librarian Antonio Panizzi (1797-1879) and reprinted in London in 1831.

⁶ Narratorial persona of John Hookham Frere (1769-1846), English author and diplomat. He wrote the mock-heroic Arthurian poem *Prospectus and Specimen of an Intended National Work, by William and Robert Whistlecraft* (1817), which had a transformative role in the definition of Byron's style.

⁷ John Herman Merivale (1779-1844), English man of letters. Merivale was part of Byron's social circle; the latter warmly praised him for both his translations and his poem *Orlando in Roncesvalles* (1814), founded upon Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore* and written in *ottava rima*.

⁸ Archaic spelling of *dullness*.

⁹ Henry Fielding (1707-54), English novelist and playwright. Known mainly for his use of humour and satire, he is considered one of the founding fathers of the English novel. His main works include the novels *Joseph Andrews* (1742) and *Tom Jones* (1749).

¹⁰ Parson Abraham Adams and clergyman Mr. Barnabas are characters in Fielding's picaresque novel *Joseph Andrews*.

¹¹ Thwackum – who claims to value Religion above all else – and Parson Supple are characters in Fielding's comic novel *Tom Jones*.

¹² The fictional church officer of *The Life and Death of the Late Jonathan Wild, the Great* (1743), a satiric novel by Fielding.

¹³ Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) is regarded as the founder of the historical novel. Among his major works are the novels *Waverley* (1814) and *Ivanhoe* (1819).

¹⁴ *Tales of my Landlord* is a series of novels by Scott published between 1816 and 1832. The second volume of the first series, entitled *The Tale of Old Morality* (1816), describes the military campaign against a Covenanting army that had risen against Charles II, thus reflecting Scott's long-standing interest in seventeenth-century civil and ecclesiastical conflicts.

¹⁵ Ganelon (Gano, Ganelon, Ganellone) is a fictional character of *La Chanson de Roland* (c. 1100), an eleventh-century *chanson de geste* about the adventures of the Frankish paladin Roland (or Orlando) during the reign of Charlemagne. The name Ganelon comes from the Italian *inganno*, meaning *deception*, and foreshadows his betrayal of Charlemagne's army to the Saracens.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹⁶ Charlemagne (c. 747-814), king of the Franks and emperor of the Carolingian Empire. His story provides much of the material for the Matter of France or Carolingian cycle, a body of medieval literature associated with the early history of France.

¹⁷ Orlando's horse in Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*.

¹⁸ Biblical reference: see *John* 1.1-5.

¹⁹ Philomela is an Athenian princess of Greek mythology raped and mutilated by Tereus, her sister's husband. After being avenged by the killing of Tereus' son, Philomela is changed into a nightingale, whose song, heard especially in springtime, is depicted as exceedingly beautiful and sorrowful. She often features as a symbol in literary, musical and artistic works.

²⁰ Phaeton is the mortal son of the sun god Helios in Greek mythology. In order to prove his divine lineage, Phaethon travels far east to Helios' palace. Despite his father's advice against it, he drives the chariot of the sun through the sky and, unable to control its horses, flies too close to the Earth, scorching it. In order to prevent further damage, Zeus strikes Phaethon with a thunderbolt.

²¹ Phoebus Apollo, the Greek god of light, poetry, music, healing, and prophecy. In his *Metamorphoses*, the Roman poet Ovid identifies Apollo with the sun god, his epithet Phoebus meaning *bright* or *pure*.

²² Tithonus was a minor character in Greek mythology, lover of Eos, the Goddess of Dawn. He was a *rhapsode*, that is, a professional performer of epic poetry in classical Greece.

²³ Reference to the patron Lorenzo de' Medici (1449-92) and his mother, the poetess Lucrezia Tornabuoni (1425-82), who commissioned *Morgante* to Luigi Pulci.

²⁴ Charlemagne, early medieval king of the Franks.

²⁵ The story of Charlemagne was recorded by the scholars and historiographers Alcuin (735-804) and Einhard (c. 770-840), as well as Turpin, the alleged author of *Historia Caroli Magni*, which provided the materials for later elaborations of Charlemagne's life.

²⁶ Leonardo Bruni (1370-1444), Italian writer and politician also known as Leonardo Aretino. Bruni is often considered the first modern historian and foremost humanist of the early Renaissance. In his *Istoria Fiorentina* (1610), Bruni commemorates the figure of Charlemagne and recalls his charitable deeds in favour of the church.

²⁷ Pepin the Short (714-68), king of the Franks from 751 to 768. He was the first king of the Carolingian dynasty and father of Charlemagne.

²⁸ In 773-74, Charlemagne fought a war against the king of the Lombards, freeing Italy from their domination. Possible reference to Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy: Paradiso* VI.94-96.

²⁹ The Benedictine Monastery of San Liberatore alla Maiella is one of the oldest abbeys of Italy's Abruzzo region, located south of Manoppello. A body of legends links its foundation to Charlemagne.

³⁰ The Valley of Josaphat is a Biblical place mentioned in *Joel* (3.2 and 3.12). In the fourth century CE, the Biblical valley was traced back to the area of Cedron and became a burial ground.

³¹ Misprint. Byron probably wrote *dost arise*, recalling the supposed restoration of Florence by Charlemagne.

³² In the Matter of France, the paladins are Charlemagne's twelve closest companions akin to the Knights of the Round Table in the Arthurian cycle or Christ's twelve Apostles. They appear alongside Charlemagne and his army against the Saracens at the Battle of Roncevaux Pass, caused by Ganelon's treachery, where they die heroically.

³³ Roland, spelled Orlando in later Italian sources. In *La Chanson de Roland*, Ganelon conspires with Marsile, the Islamic ruler of Saragossa, to ambush the rearguard of the Frankish led by Roland at the Roncevaux Pass. When the Saracens appear, the soldiers of the rearguard ask Roland to signal for help from Charlemagne's army using Oliphant, his great war-horn. Roland refuses, believing that the rearguard could defeat the Muslim hordes on its own. However, the Saracens outnumber Roland's troops, most of whom are killed. As Roland decides to use his war-horn, he blows so hard that his temples burst, leaving him fatally wounded.

³⁴ Character who betrays Charlemagne's army to the Saracens in *La Chanson de Roland*.

³⁵ Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), Italian poet, author of *Divine Comedy* (c. 1308-21).

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ³⁶ Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Paradiso* XXVIII.43-45. Cacciaguida points at the spirits who, in life, had fought for the Christian faith; among them are Charlemagne and his paladin Orlando.
- ³⁷ Allusion to Ogier the Dane, one of Charlemagne's paladins in many Old French *chansons de geste*.
- ³⁸ Astolfo is Orlando's cousin and one of Charlemagne's paladins in the Matter of France.
- ³⁹ Ansuigi is a fictional character in Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*.
- ⁴⁰ Denis of Paris, patron saint of France.
- ⁴¹ One of Charlemagne's paladins in Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*. He dies in Roncevaux, pierced by King Marsile's sword.
- ⁴² Oliver is a legendary knight in the Matter of France and Orlando's closest friend and confidant. They die together at the Battle of Roncevaux Pass.
- ⁴³ Misprint for *Berlinghieri*. In the Matter of France, he often appears together with his brothers Avino, Avolio and Othone.
- ⁴⁴ Misprint for *Avino*.
- ⁴⁵ Berlinghieri's brothers in the Matter of France.
- ⁴⁶ Naimon, Duke of Bavaria. He is a fictional character in several *chansons de geste*, where he is traditionally depicted as Charlemagne's wisest and most trusted advisor.
- ⁴⁷ In the Bible Solomon is a king and prophet often depicted as wise and powerful.
- ⁴⁸ Untraced reference.
- ⁴⁹ Ganelon's son in the Matter of France.
- ⁵⁰ Reference to Charlemagne, son of Pepin the Short.
- ⁵¹ Naimon, Duke of Bavaria, a fictional character in several *chansons de geste*.
- ⁵² Othone, Berlinghieri's brother.
- ⁵³ Ogier the Dane, one of Charlemagne's paladins.
- ⁵⁴ Solomon, Biblical figure.
- ⁵⁵ Reference to the *Chanson d'Aspremont*, a twelfth-century *chanson de geste* and prologue to *La Chanson de Roland*. The Saracen king Agolant and his son Aumon invade the south of Italy. In Aspremont, young Orlando saves Charlemagne's life by defying dangerous Aumon with a rod. Charlemagne knights Orlando, girding him with Aumon's horse and sword, Durlindan.
- ⁵⁶ Girart de Fraite, a legendary figure in the Carolingian cycle. In the *Chanson d'Aspremont*, he appears as Charlemagne's powerful ally.
- ⁵⁷ Aumon, son of the Saracen king Agolant. In the *Chanson d'Aspremont*, he tries to take Charlemagne's life.
- ⁵⁸ Mars, the god of war in ancient Roman religion and mythology.
- ⁵⁹ In the Carolingian cycle, Durlindan or Durendal is Orlando's sword.
- ⁶⁰ Curtana is Ogier the Dane's sword in the Carolingian cycle.
- ⁶¹ Misprint. Byron must have written *Brava*, Italian for Blaye, a small French town which hosts a tomb popularly attributed to Orlando, known in *La Chanson de Roland* as Roland de Blaye.
- ⁶² Aldabella, Oliver's sister and Orlando's wife in the *Chanson de Roland*.
- ⁶³ Old form of the past simple of the verb *to speak*.
- ⁶⁴ Milone d'Angrante, Orlando's father and uncle of the abbot Clermont.
- ⁶⁵ Archaic form of the verb *open*.
- ⁶⁶ Reference to Jesus Christ, son of the Virgin Mary.
- ⁶⁷ In the Bible, manna is described as the miraculous food provided for the Israelites by God. In *Exodus* 16, it is described as appearing on the ground like dew in the morning, having come down from the heavens overnight.
- ⁶⁸ Macon, antagonistic deity worshipped by Pagans in Italian chivalric poems. The name Macon is sometimes used as another epithet for the Islamic prophet Mohammed.
- ⁶⁹ Old form of the noun *villainy*.
- ⁷⁰ Sacred or religious writings considered authoritative by a particular faith tradition.
- ⁷¹ Reference to a passage from the burial service in the Book of Common Prayer (1549).

EDITORIAL NOTES

⁷² Paul the Apostle, also known as Saul of Tarsus (c. 4 BCE-c. 62/4 CE). According to the Bible (*Acts*), Paul was an active persecutor of the first disciples of Jesus. On his way to Damascus, he was suddenly dazzled by a blinding light and a vision of the risen Christ. After his sight was restored, Paul converted to Christianity.

⁷³ John Jackson (1769-1845), English pugilist. Lord Byron, a passionate follower of boxing, was Jackson's student and referred to him as the Emperor of Pugilism.

⁷⁴ Nessus, a Thessalian centaur of Greek mythology. Nessus is fatally wounded by a poisoned arrow shot by Heracles, as he tries to violate Heracles' wife Deianira while ferrying her across a river. In order to have his revenge, Nessus tells Deianira that his blood, now infected by poison, would ensure Heracles' eternal faithfulness to her. Years later, Deianira spreads Nessus' blood on Heracles' robe, causing him to die in agony.

⁷⁵ Misprint for *retrieve*.

⁷⁶ Milone d'Angrante, Orlando's father.

IL MORGANTE MAGGIORE.*

CANTO PRIMO.

I.

IN principio era in Verbo appresso a Dio,
Ed era Iddio il Verbo, e'l Verbo lui:
Questo era nel principio al parer mio;
E nulla si può far senza costui:
Però, giusto Signor benigno e pio,
Mandami solo un de gli angeli tui,
Che m'accompagni, e rechimi a memoria
Una famosa antica e degna storia.

II.

E tu Vergine figlia e madre e sposa
Di quel Signor che ti dette la chiave
Del cielo e de l'abisso e d'ogni cosa
Quel dì che Gabriel tuo ti disse ave:
Perchè¹ tu se' de' tuo' servi pietosa,
Con dolce rime e stil grato e soave
Ajuta i versi miei benignamente,
E'nfino al fine illumina la mente.

III.

Era nel tempo quando Filomena
Con la sorella si lamenta e plora,
Che si ricorda di sua antica pena,
E pé² boschetti le nimfe³ innamora,

* Author: Luigi Pulci / Transcribed and annotated by Alessandra Crotti.

E Febo il carro temperato mena,
Che 'l suo Fetonte l'ammaestra ancora;
Ed appariva appunto a l'orizzonte,
Tal che Titon si graffiava la fronte.

IV.

Quand'io varai la mia barchetta,⁴ prima
Per ubbidir chi sempre ubbidir debbe
La mente, e faticarsi in prosa e in rima,
E del mio Carlo imperador m'increbbe;
Che so quanti la penna ha posto in cima,
Che tutti la sua gloria prevarrebbe:
E⁵ stata quella istoria, a quel ch' i' veggio,
Di Carlo male intesa e scritta peggio.

V.

Diceva già Lionardo Aretino,
Che s'egli avesse avuto scrittor degno,
Com'egli ebbe un Ormanno il suo Pipino
Ch'avesse diligenza avuto e ingegno;
Sarebbe Carlo Magno un uom divino;
Però ch'egli ebbe gran vittoria e regno,
E fece per la chiesa e per la fede
Certo assai più che non si dice o crede.

VI.

Guardasi⁶ ancora a san Liberatore
Quella badia là presso a Manoppello,
Giù ne gli Abbruzzi fatta per suo onore,
Dove fu la battaglia e'l gran flaggello⁷
D'un re pagan, che Carlo imperadore
Uccise, e tanto del suo popol fello:
E vedesi tante ossa, e tanto il sanno,
Che tutte in Giusaffà poi si vedranno.

VII.

Ma il mondo cieco e ignorante non prezza
Le sue virtù, com'io vorrei vedere:
E tu, Fiorenza, de la sua grandezza
Possiedi, e sempre potrai possedere
Ogni costume ed ogni gentilezza
Che si potesse aquistare⁸ o avere
Col senno col tesoro o con la lancia
Dal nobil sangue e venuto di Francia.

VIII.

Dodici paladini aveva in corte
Carlo; e'l più savio e famoso era Orlando:
Gran traditor lo condusse a la morte
In Roncisvalle un trattato ordinando;
Là dove il corno sonò tanto forte
Dopo la dolorosa rotta, quando
Ne la sua commedia Dante qui dice,
E mettelo con Carlo in ciel felice.

IX.

Era per pasqua quella di natale:
Carlo la corte avea tutta in Parigi:
Orlando, com'io dico, il principale
Evvi, il Danese, Astolfo, e Ansuigi
Fannosi feste e cose trionfale,
E molto celebravan San Dionigi;
Angiolin di Bajona, ed Ulivieri
V'era venuto, e'l gentil Berlinghieri.

X.

Eravi Avolio ed Avino ed Ottone,
Di Normandía, Riccardo paladino,
E'l savio Namò, e'l vecchio Salamone,
Gualtier da Monlione, e Baldovino

Ch'era figliuol del tristo Ganellone.
Troppo lieto era il figliuol di Pipino;
Tanto ch'è⁹ spesso d'allegrezza geme
Veggendo tutti i paladini insieme.

XI.

Ma la fortuna attenta sta nascosa,
Per guastar sempre ciascun nostro effetto;
Mentre che Carlo così si riposa,
Orlando governava in fatto e in detto
La corte e Carlo Magno ed ogni cosa:
Gan per invidia scoppia il maladetto,
E cominciava un dì con Carlo a dire:
Abbiam sempre noi Orlando ad ubbidire?

XII.

Io ho creduto mille volte dirti:
Orlando ha in se troppa presunzione:
Noi siam qui conti, re, duchi a servirti,
E Namò, Ottone, Uggieri e Salamone,
Per onorarti ognun, per ubbidirti:
Che costui abbi ogni reputazione
Nol soffrirem; ma siam deliberati
Da un fanciullo non esser governati.

XIII.

Tu cominciasti insino in Aspramonte
A dargli a intender che fusse¹⁰ gagliardo,
E facesse gran cose a quella fonte;
Ma se non fusse¹¹ stato il buon Gherardo,
Io so che la vittoria era d'Almonte:
Ma egli ebbe sempre l'occhio a lo stendardo:
Che si voleva quel dì coronarlo:
Questo è colui ch'ha meritato, Carlo.

XIV.

Se ti ricorda già sendo in Guascogna,
Quando e' vi venne la gente di Spagna,
Il popol de' cristiani avea vergogna,
Se non mostrava la sua forza magna.
Il ver convien pur dir, quando e' bisogna:
Sappi ch'ognuno imperador si lagna:
Quant'io per me, ripasserò que' monti
Ch'io passai'n qua con sessantaduo conti.

XV.

La tua grandezza dispensar si vuole,
E far che ciascun abbi la sua parte:
La corte tutta quanta se ne duole:
Tu credi che costui sia forse Marte?
Orlando un giorno udì queste parole,
Che si sedeva soletto in disparte:
Dispiacquegli di Gan quel che diceva;
E molto più che Carlo gli credeva.

XVI.

E volle con la spada uccider Gano;
Ma Ulivieri in quel mezzo si mise,
E Durlindana gli trasse di mano,
E così il me' che seppe gli divide.
Orlando si sdegnò con Carlo Mano,
E poco men che quivi non l'uccise;
E dipartissi di Parigi solo,
E scoppia e'mpazza di sdegno e di duolo.

XVII.

Ad Ermellina moglie del Danese
Tolse Cortana, e poi tolse Rondello;
E'n verso Brava il suo cammin poi prese.
Alda la bella come vide quello,

Per abbracciarlo le braccia distese.
Orlando, che ismarrito avea il cervello,
Com'ella disse: ben venga il mio Orlando:
Gli volle in su la testa dar col brando.

XVIII.

Come colui che la furia consiglia,
Egli pareva a Gan dar veramente:
Alda la bella si fè maraviglia:
Orlando si ravvide prestamente:
E la sua sposa pigliava la briglia,
E scese dal caval subitamente:
Ed ogni cosa narrava a costei,
E ripososi alcun giorno con lei.

XIX.

Poi si partì portato dal furore,
E terminò passare in Paganía;
E mentre che cavalca, il traditore
Di Gan sempre ricorda per la via:
E cavalcando d'uno in altro errore,
In un deserto truova una badía
In luoghi oscuri e paesi lontani,
Ch'era a' confin' tra cristiani e pagani.

XX.

L'abate si chiamava Chiaramonte,
Era del sangue disceso d'Anglante:
Di sopra a la badía v'era un gran monte,
Dove abitava alcun fiero gigante,
De'quali uno avea nome Passamonte,
L'altro Alabastro, e'l terzo era Morgante:
Con certe frombe gittavan da alto,
Ed ogni dì facevan qualche assalto.

XXI.

I monachetti non potieno uscire
Dal monistero o per legne o per acque:
Orlando picchia, e non volieno aprire,
Fin che a l'abate a la fine pur piacque;
Entrato drento cominciava a dire,
Come colui, che di Maria già nacque
Adora, ed era cristian battezzato,
E com'egli era a la badía arrivato.

XXII.

Disse l'abate: il ben venuto sia:
Di quel ch'io ho volentier ti daremo,
Poi che tu credi al figliuol di Maria;
E la cagion, cavalier, ti diremo,
Acciò che non l'imputi a villania,
Perchè¹² a l'entrar resistenza facemo,
E non ti volle aprir quel monachetto:
Così intervien chi vive con sospetto.

XXIII.

Quando ci venni al principio abitare
Queste montagne, benché sieno oscure
Come tu vedi; pur si potea stare
Sanza sospetto, ch' ell' eran sicure:
Sol de le fiere t'avevi a guardare;
Fernoci spesso di brutte paure;
Or ci bisogna, se vogliamo starci,
Da le bestie domestiche guardarci.

XXIV.

Queste ci fan piuttosto stare a segno
Sonci appariti tre fieri giganti,
Non so di qual paese o di qual regno,
Ma molto son feroci tutti quanti:

La forza e'l malvoler giunt'a lo'ngegno¹³
Sai che può'l tutto; e noi non siam bastanti;
Questi perturban sì l'orazion nostra,
Che non so più che far, s'altri nol mostra.

XXV.

Gli antichi padri nostri nel deserto,
Se le lor opre sante erano e giuste,
Del ben servir da Dio n'avean buon merto;
Nè creder sol vivessin di locuste:
Piovea dal ciel la manna, questo è certo;
Ma qui convien che spesso assaggi e gusti
Sassi che piovon di sopra quel monte,
Che gettano Alabastro e Passamonte.

XXVI.

E'l terzo ch'è Morgante, assai più fiero,
Isvegli e pini e faggi e certi e gli oppi,
E gettagli infin qui: questo è pur vero:
Non posso far che d'ira non iscoppi.
Mentre che parlan così in cimitero,
Un sasso par che Rondel quasi sgropi;
Che da' giganti giù venne da alto
Tanto, ch'è prese sotto il tetto un salto.

XXVII.

Tirati drento, cavalier, per Dio,
Disse l'abate, che la manna casca.
Risponde Orlando: caro abate mio,
Costui non vuol che'l mio caval più pasca:
Veggio che lo guarrebbe del restio:
Quel sasso par che di buon braccio nasca.
Rispose il santo padre: io non t'inganno,
Credo che'l monte un giorno gitteranno.

XXVIII.

Orlando governar fece Rondello,
E ordinar per se la colazione:
Poi disse: abate, io voglio andare a quello
Che dette al mio caval con quel cantone.
Disse l'abate: come car' fratello
Consiglierotti senza passione?
Io ti sconforto, baron, di tal gita;
Ch'io so che tu vi lascerai la vita.

XXIX.

Quel Passamonte porta in man tre dardi:
Chi frombe, chi baston, chi mazzafrusti;
Sai che giganti più di noi gagliardi
Son per ragion, che son anco più giusti;
E pur se vuoi andar fa che ti guardi,
Che questi son villan' molto e robusti.
Rispose Orlando: io lo vedrò per certo;
Ed avviossi a piè su pel deserto.

XXX.

Disse l'abate col segnarlo in fronte:
Va, che da Dio e me sia benedetto.
Orlando, poi che salito ebbe il monte.
Si dirizzò, come l'abate detto
Gli aveva, dove sta quel Passamonte;
Il quale Orlando veggendo soletto,
Molto lo squadra di dietro e devante;
Poi domandò, se star volea per fante.

XXXI.

E' prometteva di farlo godere.
Orlando disse: pazzo saracino,
Io vengo a te, com'è di Dio volere,
Per darti morte e non per ragazzino;

A'monaci suoi fatto hai dispiacere;
Non può più comportarti can mastino.
Questo gigante armar si corse a furia
Quando sentì ch'egli diceva ingiuria,

XXXII.

E ritornato ove aspettava Orlando
Il qual non s'era partito da bomba;
Subito venne la cordia girando,
E lascia un sasso andar fuor de la fromba,
Che in su la testa giugnea rotolando
Al conte Orlando, e l'elmetto rimbomba;
E'cadde per la pena tramortito;
Ma più che morto par, tanto è stordito.

XXXIII.

Passamonte pensò che fusse¹⁴ morto,
E disse: io voglio andarmi a disarmare:
Questo poltron per chi m'aveva scorto?
Ma Cristo i suoi non suole abbandonare,
Massime Orlando, ch'egli arebbe il torto.
Mentre il gigante l'arme va a spogliare,
Orlando in questo tempo si risente,
E rivocava e la forza e la mente.

XXXIV.

E gridò forte: gigante, ove vai?
Ben ti pensasti d'avermi ammazzato!
Volgiti a drieto, che, s'ale non hai,
Non puoi da me fuggir, can rinnegato:
A tradimento ingiuriato m'hai.
Donde il gigante allor maravigliato
Si volse a dietro, e riteneva il passo;
Poi si chinò per tor di terra un sasso.

XXXV.

Orlando avea Cortana ignuda in mano;
Trasse a la testa: e Cortana tagliava:
Per mezzo il teschio partì del pagano,
E Passamonte morto rovinava:
E nel cadere il superbo e villano
Divotamente Macon bestemmiava;
Ma mentre che bestemmia il crudo e acerbo,
Orlando ringraziava il Padre e'l Verbo.

XXXVI.

Dicendo: quanta grazia oggi m'ha data!
Sempre ti sono, o signor mio, tenuto;
Per te conosco la vita salvata;
Però che dal gigante era abbattuto:
Ogni cosa a ragion fai misurata;
Non val nostro poter senza il tuo ajuto.
Priegoti, sopra me tenga la mano,
Tanto che ancor ritorni a Carlo Mano.

XXXVII.

Poi ch'ebbe questo detto s'andò,¹⁵
Tanto che trova Alabastro più basso
Che si sforzava, quando e'lo trovò,¹⁶
Di svegliar d'una ripa fuori un masso.
Orlando, com'è giunse a quel, gridò:¹⁷
Che pensi tu, ghiotton, gittar quel sasso?
Quando Alabastro questo grido intende,
Subitamente la sua fromba prende.

XXXVIII.

E'trasse d'una pietra molto grossa,
Tanto ch'Orlando bisognò schermisse;
Che se l'avesse giunto la percossa,
Non bisognava il medico venisse.

Orlando adoperò poi la sua possa;
Nel pettignon tutta la spada misse:
E morto cadde questo badalone,
E non dimenticò però Macone.

XXXIX.

Morgante aveva al suo modo un palagio
Fatto di frasche e di schegge e di terra:
Quivi, secondo lui, si posa ad agio;
Quivi la notte si rinchiude e serra.
Orlando picchia, e daragli disagio,
Perchè¹⁸ il gigante dal sonno si sferra;
Vennegli aprir come una cosa matta;
Ch'un' aspra visione aveva fatta.

XL.

E'gli pareva ch'un feroce serpente
L'avea assalito, e chiamar Macometto;
Ma Macometto non valea niente:
Ond'èchiamava Gesù benedetto;
E liberato l'avea finalmente.
Venne a la porta, ed ebbe così detto;
Chi bizza qua? pur sempre borbottando.
Tu il saprai tosto gli rispose Orlando.

XLI.

Vengo per fatti, come a'tuo' fratelli,
Far de' peccati tuoi la penitènzia,
Da' monaci mandato, cattivelli,
Come stato è divina provvidenzia;
Pel mal ch'avete fatto a torto a quelli,
E dato in ciel così questa sentenza;
Sappi, che freddo già più ch'un pilastro
Lasciato ho Passamonte e'l tuo Alabastro,

XLII.

Disse Morgante: o gentil cavaliere,
Per lo tuo Dio non mi dir villania:
Di grazia il nome tuo vorrei sapere;
Se se' cristian, deh dillo in cortesia.
Rispose Orlando: di cotal mastiere¹⁹
Contenterotti per la fede mia:
Adoro Cristo, chè Signor verace;
E puoi tu adorarlo, se ti piace.

XLIII.

Rispose il saracin con umil voce:
Io ho fatto una strana visione,
Che m'assaliva un serpente feroce:
Non mi valeva per chiamar Macone;
Onde al tuo Dio che fu confitto in croce
Rivolsi presto la mia intenzione:
E' mi soccorse, e fui libero e sano,
E son disposto al tutto esser cristiano.

XLIV.

Rispose Orlando: baron giusto e pio,
Se questo buon voler terrai nel core,
L'anima tua arà quel vero Dio
Che ci può sol gradir d'eterno onore:
E s'tu vorrai, sarai compagno mio,
E amerotti con perfetto amore:
Gl'idoli vostri son bugiardi e vani:
Il vero Dio è lo Dio de' cristiani

XLV.

Venne questo Signor senza peccato
Ne la sua madre vergine pulzella:
Se conoscessi quel Signor beato,
Sanza'l qual non risplende sole o stella,

Aresti già Macon tuo rinnegato,
E la sua fede iniqua ingiusta e fella:
Battezzati al mio Dio di buon talento.
Morgante gli rispose: io son contento.

XLVI.

E corse Orlando subito abbracciare:
Orlando gran carezze gli facea,
E disse: a la badía ti vo' menare.
Morgante, andianci²⁰ presto, rispondea:
Co'monaci la pace si vuol fare.
De la qual cosa Orlando in se godea,
Dicendo; fratel mio divoto e buono,
Io vò che chiegga a l'abate perdono.

XLVII.

Da poi che Dio ralluminato t'ha,
Ed accettato²¹ per la sua umiltade;
Vuolsi che tu ancor usi umiltà.
Disse Morgante: per la tua bontade,
Poi che il tuo Dio mio sempre omai sarà,
Dimmi del nome tuo la veritade,
Poi di me dispor puoi al tuo comando;
Ond'è' gli disse, com'egli era Orlando.

XLVIII.

Disse il gigante: Gesù benedetto
Per mille volte ringraziato sia;
Sentito t'ho nomar, baron perfetto,
Per tutti i tempi de la vita mia:
E, com'io dissi, sempremai soggetto
Esser ti vo' per la tua gagliardia.
Insieme molte cose ragionarò,
E'n verso la badía poi s'inviamo.

XLIX.

E per la via de que'giganti morti:
 Orlando con Morgante sì ragiona:
 De la lor morte vòche ti conforti;
 E poi che piace a Dio, a me perdona;
 A' monaci avean fatto mille torti;
 E la nostra scrittura aperto suona
 Il ben remunerato, e'l mal punito;
 E mai non ha questo Signor fallito,

L.

Però ch'egli ama la giustizia tanto,
 Che vuol, che sempre il suo giudicio morda²²
 Ognun ch'abbi peccato tanto o quanto;
 E così il ben ristorar si ricorda:
 E non saria senza giustizia santo:
 Adunque al suo voler presto t'accorda:
 Che debbe ognun voler quel che vuol questo,
 Ed accordarsi volentieri e presto.

LI.

E sonsi i nosti dottori accordati,
 Pigliando tutti una conclusione,
 Che que' che son nel ciel glorificati,
 S'avessin nel pensier compassione²³
 De' miseri parenti, che dannati
 Son ne lo inferno in gran confusione,
 La lor felicità nulla sarebbe;
 E vedi che qui ingiusto Iddio parrebbe.

LII.

Ma egli anno posto in Gesù ferma spene;
 E tanto pare a lor, quanto a lui pare;²⁴
 Afferman ciò ch'è fa, che facci bene,
 E che non possi in nessun modo errare:

Se padre o madre è ne l'eterne pene,
Di questo non si posson conturbare:
Che quel che piace a Dio, sol piace a loro:
Questo s'osserva ne l'eterno coro.

LIII.

Al savio suol bastar poche parole,
Disse Morgante; tu il potrai vedere,
De' miei fratelli, Orlando, se mi duole,
E s' io m'accorderò di Dio al volere,
Come tu di' che in ciel servir si suole:
Morti co' morti; or pensiam di godere;
Io vo tagliar le mani a tutti quanti,
E porterolle a que' monaci santi,

LIV.

Acciò ch'ognun sia più sicuro e certo,
Com' e' son morti, e non abbin paura
Andar soletti per questo deserto;
E perchè²⁵ veggan la mia mente pura
A quel Signor che m'ha il suo regno aperto,
E tratto fuor di tenebre sì oscura.
E poi tagliò le mani a' due fratelli,
E lasciagli a le fiere ed agli uccelli.

LV.

A la badia insieme se ne vanno,
Ove l'abate assai dubbioso aspetta:
I monaci che'l fatto ancor non sanno,
Correvano a l'abate tutti in fretta,
Dicendo paurosi e pien' d'affanno:
Volete voi costui drento si metta?
Quando l'abate vedeva il gigante,
Si turbò tutto nel primo sembiante.

LVI.

Orlando che turbato così il vede,
Gli disse presto: abate, datti pace,
Questo è cristiano, e in Cristo nostro crede,
E rinnegato ha il suo Macon fallace.
Morgante i moncherin' mostrò per fede,
Come i giganti ciascun morto giace;
Donde l'abate ringraziava²⁶ Iddio,
Dicendo: or m'hai contento, Signor mio.

LVII.

E risguardava, e squadrava Morgante,
La sua grandezza e una volta e due,
E poi gli disse: O famoso gigante,
Sappi ch'io non mi maraviglio più,
Che tu svegliessi e gittassi le piante,
Quand'io riguardo or le fattezze²⁷ tue:
Tu sarai or perfetto e vero amico
A Cristo, quanto tu egli eri nimico.

LVIII.

Un nostro apostol, Saul già chiamato,
Perseguì molto la fede di Cristo:
Un giorno poi da lo spirto infiammato,
Perchè²⁸ pur mi persegui? disse Cristo:
E'si ravvide allor del suo peccato:
Andò poi predicando sempre Cristo;
E fatto è or de la fede una tromba,
La qual per tutto risuona e rimbomba.

LIX.

Così²⁹ farai tu ancor, Morgante mio:
E chi s'emenda, è scritto nel vangelo,
Che maggior festa fa d'un solo Iddio,
Che di novantanove altri su in cielo:

Io ti conforto ch'ogni tuo disio
Rivolga a quel Signor con giusto zelo:
Che tu sarai felice in sempiterno,
Ch'eri perduto, e dannato a l'inferno.

LX.

E grande onore a Morgante faceva
L'abate, e molti dì si son posati:
Un giorno, come ad Orlando piaceva,
A spasso in qua e in là si sono andati:
L'abate in una camera sua aveva
Molte armadure e certi archi appiccati:
Morgante gliene piacque un che ne vede;
Onde e' sel cinse bench'oprar nol crede.

LXI.

Avea quel luogo d'acqua carestia:
Orlando disse come buon fratello:
Morgante, vo' che di piacer ti sia
Andar per l'acqua; ond'è rispose a quello:
Comanda ciò che vuoi che fatto sia;
E posesi in ispalla un gran tinello,
Ed avviossi là verso una fonte
Dove solea ber sempre appiè del monte.

LXII.

Giunto a la fonte, sente un gran fracasso
Di subito venir per la foresta:
Una saetta cavò del turcasso,
Posela a l'arco, ed alzava la testa:
Ecco appariri³⁰ un gran gregge al passo
Di porci, e vanno con molta tempesta;
E arrivorno a la fontana appunto
Dove il gigante è da lor sopraggiunto.

LXIII.

Morgante a la ventura a un saetta;
Appunto ne l'orecchio lo 'ncarnava:
Da l'altro lato passò la verretta;
Onde il cinghial giù morto gambettava;
Un altro, quasi per farne vendetta,
Addosso al gran gigante irato andava;
E perché e' giunse troppo tosto al varco,
Non fu Morgante a tempo a trar con l'arco.

LXIV.

Vedendosi venuto il porco adosso,
Gli dette in su la testa un gran punzone
Per modo che gl'infranse insino a l'osso,
E morto allato a quell'altro lo pone:
Gli altri porci veggendo quel percosso,
Si misson tutti in fuga pel vallone;
Morgante si levò il tinello in collo,
Ch'era pien d'acqua, e non si move un crollo.

LXV.

Da l'una spalla il tinello avea posto,
Da l'altra i porci, e specciava³¹ il terreno;
E torna a la badía, ch'è pur discosto,
Ch'una gocciola d'acqua non va in seno.
Orlando che'l vedea tornar sì tosto
Co' porci morti, e con quel vaso pieno;
Maravigliossi che sia tanto forte;
Così l'abate; e spalancan le porte.

LXVI.

I monaci veggendo l'acqua fresca
Si rallegrorno, ma più de' cingiali;³²
Ch'ogni animal si rallegra de l'esca;
E posano a dormire i breviali:

Ognun s'affanna, e non par che gl'incresca,
Acciò che questa carne non s'insali,
E che poi secca sapesse di victo:³³
E la digiune si restorno a drieto.

LXVII.

E ferno a scoppia corpo per un tratto,
E scuffian, che parien de l'acqua usciti;
Tanto che'l cane sen doleva e'l gatto,
Che gli ossi rimanean troppo puliti.
L'abate, poi che molto onore ha fatto
A tutti, un dì dopo questi conviti
Dette a Morgante un destrier molto bello,
Che lungo tempo tenuto avea quello.

LXVIII.

Morgante in su'n un prato il caval mena,
E vuol che corra, e che facci ogni pruova,
E pensa che di ferro abbi la schiena,
O forse non credeva schiacciar l'uova:
Questo caval s'accoscia per la pena,
E scoppia, e'n su la terra si ritruova.
Dicea Morgante: lieva su, tozzone;
E va pur punzecchiando co lo sprone.

LXIX.

Ma finalmente convien ch' egli smonte,
E disse: io son pur leggier come penna,
Ed è scoppiato; che ne di' tu, conte?
Rispose Orlando: un arbore d'antenna
Mi par piuttosto, e la gaggia la fronte:
Lascialo andar, che la fortuna accenna
Che meco appiede³⁴ ne venga, Morgante.
Ed io così verrò, disse il gigante.

LXX.

Quando serà³⁵ mestier, tu mi vedrai
Com'io mi proverò ne la battaglia.
Orlando disse: io credo tu farai
Come buon cavalier, se Dio mi vaglia;
Ed anco me dormir non miterai.³⁶
Di questo tuo caval non te ne caglia:
Vorrebbe si portarlo in qualche bosco;
Ma il modo nè la via non ci conosco.

LXXI.

Disse il gigante: io il porterò ben'io,
Da poi che portar me non ha voluto,
Per render ben per mal, come fa Dio;
Ma vo' che a porlo addosso mi dia ajuto.
Orlando gli dicea: Morgante mio,
S'al mio consiglio ti sarai attenuto,
Questo caval tu non ve'l porteresti,
Che ti farà come tu a lui facesti,

LXXII.

Guarda che non facesse la vendetta,
Come fece già Nesso così morto:
Non so se la sua istoria hai inteso o letta:
E' ti farà scoppiar; datti conforto.
Disse Morgante: ajuta ch'io me'l metta
Addosso, e poi vedrai s'io ve lo porto:
Io porterei, Orlando mio gentile,
Con le campane là quel campanile.

LXXIII.

Disse l'abate: il campanil v'è bene;
Ma le campane voi l'avete rotte.
Dicea Morgante, e'ne porton le pene
Color che morti son là in quelle grotte;

E levossi il cavallo in su le schiene,
E disse: guarda s'io sento di gotte,
Orlando, nelle gambe, e s' io lo posso;
E fe' duo salti col cavallo addosso.

LXXIV.

Era Morgante come una montagna:
Se facea questo, non è maraviglia
Ma pure Orlando con seco si lagna;
Perchè³⁷ pur era omai di sua famiglia,
Temenza avea non pigliasse magagna.
Un'altra volta costui riconsiglia:
Posalo ancor, nol portare al deserto.
Disse Morgante: il porterò per certo.

LXXV.

E portollo, e gittollo in luogo strano,
E tornò a la badia subitamente.
Diceva Orlando: or che più dimoriano?
Morgante, qui non faciam noi niente;
E prese un giorno l'abate per mano,
E disse a quel molto discretamente,
Che vuol partir de la sua reverenzia,
E domandava e perdono e licenzia.

LXXVI.

E de gli onor' ricevuti da questi,
Qualche volta potendo, arà buon merito;
E dice: io intendo ristorare e presto
I persi giorni del tempo preterito:
E'son più di che licenzia arei chiesto,
Benigno padre, se non ch' io mi perito;
Non so mostrarvi quel che drento sento;
Tanto vi veggo del mio star contento.

LXXVII.

Io me ne potto³⁸ per sempre nel core
L'abate, la badia, questo deserto;
Tanto v'ho posto in picciol tempo amore:
Rendavi su nel ciel per me buon merto
Quel vero Dio, quello eterno Signore
Che vi serba il suo regno al fine aperto:
Noi aspettiam vostra benedizione,
Raccomandiamci³⁹ a le vostre orazione.

LXXVIII.

Quando l'abate il conte Orlando intese,
Rinteneri nel cor per la dolcezza,
Tanto fervor nel petto se gli accese;
E disse: cavalier, se a tua prodezza
Non sono stato benigno e cortese,
Come conviensi a la gran gentilezza;
Che so che ciò ch'i'ho fatto è stato poco,
Incolpa la ignoranza nostra e il loco.

LXXIX.

Noi ti potremo di messe onorare,
Dì prediche di laude e paternostri,
Piuttosto che da cena o desinare,
O d'altri convenevol' che da chiostrì:
Tu m'hai di te sì fatto innamorare
Per mille alte eccellenzie che tu mostri;
Ch'io me ne vengo ove tu andrai con teco,
E d'altra parte tu resti qui meco.

LXXX.

Tanto ch'a questo par contraddizione;
Ma so che tu se' savio, e 'ntendi e gusti,
E intendi il mio parlar per descrizione;
De' beneficj tuoi pietosi e giusti

Renda il Signore a te munerazione,
Da cui mandato in queste selve fusti;
Per le virtù del qual liberi siamo,
E grazie a lui e a te noi ne rendiamo.

LXXX.⁴⁰

Tu ci hai salvato l'anima e la vita:
Tanta perturbazion già que' giganti
Ci detton, che la strada era smarrita
Da ritrovar Gesù con gli altri santi:
Però troppo ci duol la tua partita,
E sconsolati restiam tutti quanti;
Né ritener possiamti⁴¹ i mesi e gli anni:
Che tu non se' da vestir questi panni,

LXXXI.

Ma da portar la lancia e l'armadura:
E puossi meritar con essa, come
Con questa cappa; e leggi la scrittura:
Questo gigante al ciel drizzò le some
Per tua virtù; va in pace a tua ventura
Chi tu ti sia; ch'io non ricerco il nome:
Ma dirò sempre, s'io son demandato,
Ch' un angiol qui da Dio fussi mandato.

LXXXII.

Se c'è armadura o cosa che tu voglia,
Vattene in zambra e pigliane tu stessi,
E cuopri a questo gigante la scoglia.
Rispose Orlando: se armadura avessi
Prima che noi uscissim de la soglia,
Che questo mio compagno difendessi:
Questo accetto io, e sarammi piacere.
Disse l'abate: venite a vedere.

LXXXIII.

E in certa cameretta entrati sono,
Che d'armadure vecchie era copiosa;
Dice l'abate: tutte ve le dono.
Morgante va rovistando ogni cosa;
Ma solo un certo sbergo gli fu buono,
Ch'avea tutta la maglia rugginosa:
Maravigliossi che lo cuopra appunto:
Che mai più gnun forse glien' era aggiunto.

LXXXIV.

Questo fu d'un gigante smisurato,
Ch'a la badía fu morto per antico
Dal gran Milon d'Anglante, ch' arrivato?
V' era, s'appunto questa istoria dico;
Ed era ne le mura istoriato,
Come e'fu morto questo gran nimico
Che fece a la badía già lunga guerra:
E Milon v'è comè'l'abbatte in terra.

LXXXV.

Veggendo questa istoria il conte Orlando,
Fra suo cor disse: o Dio, che sai sol tutto,
Come venne Milon qui capitando,
Che ha questo gigante qui distrutto
E lesse certe lettere lacrimando,
Che non potè tenir più il viso asciutto,
Com'io dirò ne la seguente istoria.
Di mal vi guardi il Re de l'alta gloria.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

- 1 Misprint for *perché*.
- 2 Misprint for *pe'*.
- 3 Misspelling for *ninfe*.
- 4 See Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Paradiso* II.1-4.
- 5 Misprint for *È*.
- 6 Misspelling for *Guardisi*.
- 7 Misspelling for *flagello*.
- 8 Misprint for *acquistare*.
- 9 Misprint for *che*.
- 10 Misspelling for *fussi*.
- 11 Misspelling for *fussi*.
- 12 Misprint for *perché*.
- 13 See Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Inferno* XXXI.55-57.
- 14 Misspelling for *fussi*.
- 15 Misprint for *andòe*.
- 16 Misprint for *trovòe*.
- 17 Misprint for *gridòe*.
- 18 Misprint for *perché*.
- 19 Misspelling for *mestiere*.
- 20 Misspelling for *andianvi*.
- 21 Misspelling for *accettato*.
- 22 See Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Paradiso* VII.40-42.
- 23 See Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Inferno* XX.28-30.
- 24 See Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Inferno* XX.138.
- 25 Misprint for *perché*.
- 26 Misprint for *ringraziava*.
- 27 Misspelling for *fattezze*.
- 28 Misprint for *perché*.
- 29 Misprint for *così*.
- 30 Misspelling for *apparire*.
- 31 Misspelling for *spacciava*.
- 32 Misspelling for *cinghiali*.
- 33 Misprint for *vieto*.
- 34 Misspelling for *a piede*.
- 35 Misspelling for *sarà*.
- 36 Misspelling for *mirerai*.
- 37 Misprint for *perché*.
- 38 Misspelling for *porto*.
- 39 Misspelling for *raccomandianci*.
- 40 Misprint. Incorrect numbers from stanza LXXXI to stanza LXXXVI.
- 41 Misspelling for *possianti*.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.*

LETTER IV.

DEAR C——,¹

I HOPE you have not forgotten the thoughts you entertained of visiting Italy. I set your father longing to accompany you, when I saw him. N's² holidays are approaching; and I should be glad to know what all three of you could do better than to come arm-in-arm, joking and to joke, and see one who hungers and thirsts after his old friends. I have much to offer you, "though I say it who should not." Imprimis, all that line of French territory which extends from Calais to the Alps, and which, with the help of Mr. Roscoe's famous song,³ and Mrs. Radcliffe's romances,⁴ you will find as gay as the inhabitants:—2ndly, Rousseau and Les Charmettes⁵ by the way:—3rdly, the passage of Mont Cenis, which is among the performances of one Bonaparte:⁶ 4thly, Turin,⁷ where you will have the happiness of seeing your legitimate monarch, the King of Sardinia,⁸ unless he is still eating sweatmeats at Genoa, where we have the good fortune to possess him at present:—5thly, the Appenines,⁹ though, at the sea-side here, they are but the footstools of the rest:—6thly, Genoa, with its grand palaces, and half the mules in Italy:—7thly, and lastly, a little hill, called Albaro,¹⁰ containing vineyards and olive trees, stone allies, and certain

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Alessandra Crotti.

“Signori Inglesi,”¹¹ large and small, who will shout for joy at the sight of you. Venite, venite.¹² You know how cheaply I can lodge and feed you; and though our house lets at but £20. a year, you can have your choice out of forty rooms to sleep in. There is nothing between this sort of house and the cottages of the peasantry, unless one goes to lodge in town, which would cost a great deal more. For £24. a year, you can hire a palace. Again and again, therefore, I say, come. During the evening and early morning, I will shew you about. The rest of the time we will eat, sleep, lounge, read and converse. It will be hard if we do not have some music. There are pictures by Raphael¹³ and Guido¹⁴ in the palaces. The fruits are fine: the colours of things exquisite; every object about you new. You cannot help being pleased: and I myself shall catch a new inspiration from your coming, and will at least warrant my being merry for as long a time as you stay.

You know all that I am at present acquainted with, respecting the city of Genoa; but as a scholar and a lover of the country, especially one who has never been in the South, there are some other points which will not be without their importance in your eyes. The first sight of the olive trees and cypresses will remind you of a hundred things, Greek, Latin, and Italian. Fancy yourself in Virgil’s¹⁵ country, seeing the lizards run up the walls, and hearing the *cicada*! Both of them retain almost their identical names, *lucerta*, and *cicala*. Then there are the fire-flies, divine little creatures, which rule the night here, as bees and butterflies rule the day.—But I must lay before you my temptations more slowly. Travellers, hearing so much of olive trees, and accustomed to their piquant fruit, are generally disappointed at sight of them. Whether my enthusiasm bore me out or not, I know not, but I liked it; or rather them, for one by

itself is equivocal. You must see them in a body, or, still better, contrasted with chesnut¹⁶ and cypresses. They have an aspect singularly light and hazy. The leaves are stiff, hard, pointed, willow-like, dark above, and of a light leathern colour underneath; the trunk slight, dry-looking, crooked, and almost always branches off into a double stem at a little distance from the ground.* A wood of them looks like a huge hazy bush, more light than dark, and glimmering with innumerable specks; which are the darker sides of the leaves. When the fruit is on them, they seem powdered with myriads of little black balls. My wife says, that olive trees look as if they only grew by moonlight; which gives a better idea of their light, faded aspect, than a more prosaical description. The cypress is a poplar, grown more sombre, stately, and heavy: not to be moved by every flippant air; it is of a beautiful dark colour, and contrasts admirably with trees of a rounder figure.† Two or three cypress trees by the side of a white or yellow cottage, roofed and windowed like our new cottage-houses near London, the windows often without glass, form alone an Italian picture; and constantly remind you that you are at a distance from home. The consumption of olive oil is immense. It is doubtless no mean exasperator of Italian bile. The author of an *Art of Health*¹⁷ highly approves a moderate use of it, both in diet and medicine; but says, that as soon as it becomes cooked, fried, or otherwise abused, it inflames the blood, disturbs the humours, irritates the fibres, and produces other effects very superflu-

* “*Olea Europæa. Foglie lanciolate, sopra verdi sotto bianche coriacee.*”
*Targioni—Istituzioni Botaniche—Vol. 2.*¹⁸

† “*Cupressus Pyramidalis. Rami eretti, avvicinati. Foglie giovani acute, scorrenti, adulte ottuse, embriciate per quattro parti. Strobili ovati, più larghi alla base.*”—*Id. Vol. .3.*¹⁹

ous in a stimulating climate. The notoriousness of the abuse makes him cry out, and ask how much better it would be to employ this pernicious quantity of oil in lighting the streets and roads. He thinks it necessary however to apologize to his countrymen for this apparent inattention to their pecuniary profits, adding, that he makes amends by diverting them into another channel. I fear the two ledgers would make a very different show of profit and loss: not to mention, that unless the oil were consecrated, or the lamps hung very high, it would assuredly be devoured. We have a difficulty in keeping the servants from disputing its food with our lamp-light. Their lucubrations are of a more internal nature.

The rather thou,
Celestial light, shine inwards.²⁰

I am told that the olive trees grow finer and finer as you go southwards. The chesnut trees are very beautiful; the spiky-looking branches of leaves, long, and of a noble green, show gloriously, as you look up against the intense blue of the sky. Am I reminding you of a common place, in saying that the *castanets* used in the dancing, evidently originated in the nuts of this tree, *castagnette*? They are made in general, I believe, of cockle-shells, or an imitation of them; but the name renders their vegetable descent unequivocal. It is pleasant to observe the simple origin of pleasant things. Some loving peasants, time immemorial, fall dancing under the trees: they pick up the nuts, rattle them in their hands; and behold (as the Frenchman says) the birth of the fandango.

As you walk through the lanes in warm weather, you startle the lizards at every step. They run up the walls swiftly, but in a climbing manner, moving their sides alternately. But what is that very loud cricket? The noise ceases; and with a whirr almost as strong as that of a little bird, the

creature comes spinning across the lane. It is a great winged grasshopper,—the cicada,—the ^{τεττιξ},²¹—the grasshopper of Virgil,²² of Theocritus,²³ of *Anacreon*.²⁴ When I first saw it, I almost felt as if Anacreon were alive, and all the South was his country. It is undoubtedly of the same species as our grasshopper, though our name does not suit it, for it lives in the trees, ^{δενδρεων επ' ακρων.}²⁵ I have not yet heard them in chorus, the hot weather not having set in. They will begin singing, if scratched gently on the breast; and boys catch them to startle people with. A gentleman tells me, that when he was at school, he and a set of his fellows caught a great number, and suddenly opened their music at the schoolmaster, who could not be heard.

All the insect tribes, good and bad, acquire vigour and size as they get southwards. I have seen however but one scorpion yet, and the rascal was young; we were looking upon him with much interest, and speculating upon his turn of mind, when a female servant quietly took out her scissars²⁶ and cut him in two. Her bile, with eating oil and minestra, was as much exalted as his. Is it true that all poison is nothing but an essential acid, exalted in proportion to its venom? The discovery of Prussic Acid, which kills instantly, looks like it.—Our antipathies are set up every now and then, by the sight of some new and hideous-looking insect; but we have not seen a twentieth part of what we expected. The flies bite so, that the *zanzaliere* (the bed-net against the gnats) seems quite as necessary against them as the enemy from whom it is named. The gnats have hardly come; yet we have been obliged to take to it. We have not yet seen the *mantis*, which I am told will turn its head round at music, and seem to listen. Of the silk-worms, notice has just been given us in the neighbourhood by a general stripping of the leaves off the mulberry-trees. The beauty of the bees

and butterflies you may imagine. But there is one insect, of so fairy-like a nature and lustre, that it would be almost worth coming in the south to look at, if there were no other attraction. I have already alluded to it,—the *fire-fly*. Imagine thousands of flashing diamonds every night powdering the ground, the trees, and the air; especially in the darkest places, and the corn-fields. They give at once a delicacy and brilliance to Italian darkness, inconceivable. It is the glow-worm, winged, and flying in crowds. In England, you know, the female alone gives light: at least, that of the male, who is the exclusive possessor of the wings, is hardly perceptible. Worm is a wrong word, the creature being a real insect.—The Italian name is *Lucciola*, Little-light,—in Genoa, Cæe-belle (Chiare-belle)—Clear and fine. Its aspect, when held in the hand, is that of a dark-coloured beetle, but without the hardness or sluggish look. The light is contained in the under part of the extremity of the abdomen, exhibiting a dull golden-coloured partition by day, and flashing occasionally by day-light, especially when the hand is shaken. At night, the flashing is that of the purest and most lucid fire, spangling the vineyards and olive-trees, and their dark avenues, with innumerable stars. Its use is not known. In England, and I believe here, the supposition is, that it is a signal of love. It affords no perceptible heat, but is supposed to be phosphoric. In a dark room, a single one is sufficient to flash a light against the wall. I have read of a lady in the West Indies, who could see to read by the help of three under a glass, as long as they chose to accommodate her. A few of them are generally in our rooms all night, going about like little sparkling elves. It is impossible not to think of something spiritual, in seeing the progress of one of them through a dark room. You only know it by the flashing of its lamp, which takes place every

three or four inches apart, sometimes oftener, thus marking its track in and out the apartment, or about it. It is like a little fairy taking its rounds. These insects remind us of the lines in Herrick,²⁷ inviting his mistress to come to him at night-time; and they suit them still better than his English ones:—

Their lights the glow-worms lend thee;
The shooting stars attend thee;
And the elves also,
Whose little eyes glow
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.²⁸

To me, who pass more of my time even than usual, in the ideal world, these spiritual-looking little creatures are more than commonly interesting. S.²⁹ used to watch them for hours. I look at them, and wonder whether any of the particles he left upon earth help to animate their loving and lovely light. The last fragment he wrote, which was a welcome to me on my arrival, began with a simile taken from their dusk look and the fire underneath it, in which he found a likeness to his friend. They had then just made their appearance. Do you recollect coming down to Buckinghamshire one summer? Come to Italy now, and help me to bear a thousand recollections full of him and all beautiful things.—There is one circumstance respecting these fire-flies, quite as extraordinary as any. There appears to be no mention of them in the ancient poets. Now of all insects, even southern, they are perhaps the most obvious to poetical notice: it is difficult to see how any poet, much less a pastoral or an amatory one, could *help* speaking of them; and yet they make their appearance neither in the Greek nor Latin poets, neither in Homer³⁰ (at least I believe not) nor Virgil,³¹ nor Ovid,³² nor Anacreon,³³ nor Theocritus.³⁴ Per-

haps you can set me right. The earliest mention of them, with which I am acquainted, is in Dante, (*Inferno*, Canto 26) where he compares the spirits in the eighth circle of hell, who go about swathed in fire, to the "*lucciole*" in a rural valley of an evening.³⁵ A truly saturnine perversion of a beautiful object! I see, by the dictionary, that Pliny mentions a glow-worm of some sort under the name of *cicindela*;³⁶ but I have no Pliny to consult. The Greek word is *Lampyrus*, which is retained in Entomology. Does nature put forth a new production now and then, like an author? Has the glow-worm been exalted into the fire-fly by the greater heat of the modern Italian soil, which appears indisputable?

I conclude with a specimen or two of the Genoese dialect, which is much disdained by the Tuscans, but which the Genoese say is the next best dialect in Italy to the Venetian. I know not what the Neapolitans and Sicilians would say to this; but it is certainly better than the Mantuan and Bergamasque, specimens of which (together with Venetian, Neapolitan, and Paduan), you will find in Coxe's *Picture of Italy*.³⁷ Dante says, in his treatise *De Vulgari Eloquentia*,³⁸ that if the Genoese were deprived of the letter Z, they would be dumb. But Dante's dislikes did not stand upon ceremony. When written, the dialect has a look of Provençal in it; and doubtless it contains a good deal of old French, and has drawn upon all its neighbours. Z abounds in the shape of S and X, as well as its own; but not any thing to the extent that Dante speaks of. The³⁹ have the French *u*, which they write *æu*; and their diphthong⁴⁰ without the *u* has also a petty effect. The soft *gl* of the Tuscans they convert into a *dg* or *double g*, which often recurs and is very unpleasant. Thus *figlio*, a son, is *figgiæu*: and their words for *pigliare pane*, to get bread, sound as if they said *pigger pang*, the *r* at the

same time being heard very little, if at all, like the final one of Londoners. Indeed, I observe in their books, that they write their infinitive moods without the *r*, putting a circumflex instead, as *piggiâ*, *passâ*, *sparegâ*, *da fâ*. I should suppose they drop this *r*, which adds so much strength to the softness of the Tuscan, in order to diminish the roughness of their language, if they did not seem to take pains to add to it in other instances. The people, as in all commercial countries, have a tendency to cut their words short for dispatch of business; and their pronunciation is harsh and mean. There is a joke of a Neapolitan's telling a man, in a fine breathing strain, that he had seen an eagle fly; upon which the Genoese asks, whether an eagle has wings. But whether this is to ridicule the boasting of the Neapolitan, or the ignorance of the Genoese, I know not.—Neapolitan. "*Haggio veduta un aquila volare.*"—Genoese. "*A i äeia i -ae?*" This brevity sounds still shorter than it looks:—(*A-yea-a-ee-ai.*) The Genoese language seems copious and expressive⁴¹ and I am told they have good translations of Tasso,⁴² and of some of Molieré's comedies.⁴³ Serassi,⁴⁴ Tasso's biographer, speaks highly, I see, of the former. Their principal native poet, Cavalli,⁴⁵ lived in the time of Chiabrera,⁴⁶ who eulogizes him as a man of original genius. His works, which are now before me, I shall try to spell *pro bono publico*, a good poet being too good a thing to be confined to his native town. The following is a stanza of a poem written in the Genoese dialect upon the passion for religious processions. A gentleman has translated it into Tuscan for me. The author fancies a lover of processions to have risen from the dead, on purpose to indulge himself in his favourite pastime. The whole poem is reckoned very pleasant, and appears so by what I can discern of it. The present stanza is the climax of the sight, the appearance of the *gran cascina* or final

group of figures carried on men's shoulders in honour of the saint concerned, who is St. James. Maragiano⁴⁷ was a maker of these wooden figures, whose memory is celebrated in Genoa.

Særa o crocco a gran Cascia. Oh che esprescion!
 Maragiano l'à fæto parlâ o legno:
 Ogni figûa fà vedde unna pascion;
 Ogni testa, ogni gamba a l'è à so segno;
 So i Moi, e i Saraceni in confuxion:
 Tutto de l'arte, e de l'Autô l'è degno,
 Ma s'oi vedde unna cosa de ciù ardîe,
 Miæ o cavallo, e scappæ, co no ve tie.⁴⁸

Ecco al fin la gran cassa! Oh che espressione!
 Ah, Maragiano fe parlare il legno!
 Ogni statua veder fa una passione:
 Ogni testa, ogni gamba, è al proprio segno:
 Son Mori e Saraceni in confusione:
 Tutto dell'arte e dell'autore e degno.
 Ma se veder vuoi cosa ancor più ardita,
 Mira il cavallo, e scappa, O egli ti trita.

See—there's the group at last! Oh, what expression!
 How Maragiano brings the blockheads out!
 There's not a figure but it's in a passion;
 The heads and legs know all what they're about:
 The Moors and Saracens — Christ! what a crashing!
 All's worthy of the workman, there's no doubt.
 But if you want some thing still more to strike you,
 Look at that horse there! Scamper, or he'll kick you.

For the prose, I will take an old jest or two out of an Italian grammar,⁴⁹ putting the original Italian first, and adding an English translation “for the benefit of the country gentlemen.” The ladies require these helps less and less every day.

Un contadino passando sul Ponte Nuovo di Parigi, ed osservando fra molte botteghe piene di mercanzî⁵⁰ quella d'un cambista, nella quale eravi soltanto un uomo, e un tavolino con carta e calamaio, volle entrar dentro per curiosità, e domandare che cosa vendevasi: "Delle teste d'asino," rispose il cambista: "Bisogna," soggiunse il contadino, "che abbiano un grande spaccio, perché non vi è rimasta che la vostra"⁵¹

Un païsun passando sciù o Ponte Neuvo Parigi, e osservando fra e varie butteghe pinne de mercansiaë quella d'un bancäotto ne-a quale non ghëra che un ômmo con un tavolin, do' papæ, e un caamâ, ghe venne a curiositæ d'intraghæ e de domandâ un po' cose se ghe vendëiva: "Dæ testæ d'âse," ghe rispose, bancäotto: "Bæusæugna," di repigio' o' païsan, "che queste aggian un gran smercio, perche non gh' e resto che a vostra."

A countryman passing over the Pont Neuf at Paris, and seeing, among a heap of shops full of merchandize, that of a banker in which there was nothing but a man sitting at a table with pen and ink, had the curiosity to go in and enquire what it was he sold: "Asses' heads," replied the banker: "They must be in great request," said the countryman, "since you have only your own left."

Un signore cenando a un osteria⁵² in una piccola città, quando fu sparecchiato, l'oste gli domandò, come gli era piaciuta la cena. "Moltissimo." rispose quel signore; "posso dire d'aver cenato bene al par di qualunque gran personaggio nel regno." "Eccettuato il Signor Governatore," disse l'oste.— "Io non eccettuo nessuno," rispose egli, "Ma voi dovete sempre eccettuare il Signor Governatore," replicò⁵³ l'oste. "Ma io non voglio," soggiunse il gentiluomo. In breve, la loro disputa si accese talmente, che l'oste, il quale era un magistrato subalterno, ma non però simile a Solone o a Li-

curgo, fece chiamare il gentiluomo davanti al Governatore. Questo magistrato, la cui capacità era in perfetto equilibrio con quella dell'oste disse con aria grave al gentiluomo, che l'eccettuare il Signor Governatore in ogni cosa era in quella città un inveteratissimo costume; e che a tal costume era obbligato ciascuno d'uniformarsi; e perciò lo condannava all'amenda d'uno scellino per aver vicusato di farlo. "Benissimo," rispose il gentiluomo: "ecco uno scellino; ma possa io morire se v'è nel modo un più gran pazzo dell'oste, Eccettuato il Signor Governatore."

Cenando un scioú otaïa t'unna piccola çittæ, appena a to-a fu desbarraççâ, l'oste ghe domandò come gh'era piaxua a çennha. "Moltissimo," ghe rispose quello scioú; "posso asseguave d'avei çenöu ben a-o paro de qualunque gran personaggio do' regno. "Eççettuöu ò Scioú Governo'u," ghe disse l'oste. "Mi non eççettúo nisciun," ghe rispose o' scioú. "Ma vui dovei sempre eççettua ò Scioú Governöu," replicò l'oste. "E mi non veuggio eççettuâ un corno," soggiunse o' gentilommo. In poco tempo a disputa a se aseâdo a tâ segno, che l'oste, u quale u l'era un magistrato sebalterno, non però simile a Solon o a Licurgo, o feççe ciammâ o' gentilommo davanti o Governöu. Questo magistrato, che in punto de capacità o l'era in perfetto equilibrio con l'oste, o disse con aïa grave a-o gentilommo, che in l'eççettuâ o' Governöu in tutte æ cose l'era un uso antighissimo in quella çittæ; che ciascun era obligöu d'uniformâse a quest' uso, e che per avei recusöu da fâlo, o lo condannava all'emenda d'un scellin. "Va benissimo," rispose gentilommo, "piggiæ chi un scellin; ma vorrieiva ese ammasöu, se se treuva a-o mondo un ommo cui matto de l'oste, Eççettuöu ò Seioù Governöu."

A gentleman supping at an inn in a petty city, the landlord, when the things were cleared away, asked him whether

his supper had pleased him. "Very much," said the gentleman: "I may affirm that I have supped as well as the greatest man in the kingdom." "Except the Signor Governor," said the landlord. "I except nobody," returned the other. "But you ought always to except the Signor Governor," replied the host. "But I will not," said the gentleman. In short, the dispute grew so warm, that the host, who was a bit of a magistrate himself, not very like Solon or Lycurgus, summoned his guest before the Governor. This officer, whose capacity was on a perfect level with that of his informer, said with a grave air to the gentleman, that to except the Governor upon every occasion was a custom of the most ancient standing, to which all persons were obliged to conform, and therefore he condemned him to the penalty of a shilling for having refused to do so. "Mighty well," replied the gentleman; "there's your shilling, but hang me if there is a greater fool upon earth than the landlord,—Except the Signor Governor."

This story reminds me of one in a new set of Arabian Tales (genuine) which, whether you have read it or not, you will not be sorry to hear repeated. A schoolmaster (worthy brother of the Scholar in Hierocles⁵⁴) taught his boys, whenever they heard him sneeze, to rise up with solemnity, cross their hands on their bosoms, and ejaculate, "God preserve our venerable tutor!" One day he took them out for a walk; and the weather being hot, it was proposed they should drink at a well. The well was deep, so the master made them join their turbans together for a rope, and descending to the bottom, handed them up their drink one after the other. The refreshment over, he bade them draw him up again, and had nearly reached the top, when the coldness of the well making him sneeze, the whole posse instantly lay go the rope, threw themselves into their accus-

tomed attitude, and exclaimed with fervour, "God preserve our venerable tutor!"—who broke his leg.

But the Governor has reminded me of another story, which is new, and which concerns the Governor of our city here; a different sort of man, and popular, notwithstanding his Sardinian office. He is a Savoyard Marquis of the name of D'Yennes,⁵⁵ and relates the story himself with much glee. As he was coming to take possession of his appointment, he stopped at a town not far from Genoa, the inhabitants of which were ambitious of doing him honour. They accordingly gave him an entertainment, at which was an allegorical picture containing *a hyæna surrounded wth*⁵⁶ *Cupids*. The hyæna was supposed to be a translation of his name. Upon requesting an explanation of the compliment, he received the following smiling reply:—"Les Amours, Monsieur, son nous; et vous etes⁵⁷ la bête." ("The Loves, Sir, are ourselves,—the beast is you.")

If you do not thump your knee at this story, I shall conclude you have left off discussing the debates in Parliament, and are no longer in need of your usual refreshment.

Your's ever sincerely.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ¹ Unknown addressee.
- ² Possible reference to Leigh Hunt's friend Novello, to whom is addressed his "Letter from Abroad" included in the third instalment of *The Liberal*.
- ³ Reference to the popular song "O'er the vine cover'd hills and gay regions of France" (1791) by William Roscoe (1753-1831).
- ⁴ Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823), English novelist and poet. Hunt is probably alluding to Radcliffe's Gothic romance *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), set in Southern France and Northern Italy.
- ⁵ Les Charmettes is a country house located in a wooded valley near the town of Chambéry, France. The French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) lived there between 1736 and 1742 with Madame de Warens (1699-1762), his mentor and mistress.
- ⁶ Col du Mont-Cenis is a mountain pass located between Italy and France. Between 1803 and 1810, Napoleon Bonaparte commissioned the construction of a road connecting the Italian town of Susa and the French town of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne to improve military connections.
- ⁷ Turin, city in Northern Italy. At the time, Turin was the capital city of the Kingdom of Sardinia ruled by the Savoy dynasty, who held the island of Sardinia, as well as other inland possessions.
- ⁸ Carlo Felice di Savoia (1765-1831), king of Sardinia from 1821 to his death. Carlo Felice resided in Turin solely during the theatre season and spent the rest of his time between Savoy, Nice and Genoa, one of his favourite residences.
- ⁹ Mountain range that originates in the Ligurian Alps and extends southwards over the whole length of the Italian peninsula.
- ¹⁰ Small Italian town, known in the nineteenth century for its small taverns.
- ¹¹ Italian for *English gentlemen*.
- ¹² Italian for *come, come*.
- ¹³ Raffaello Sanzio (1483-1520), Italian painter and architect. Raffaello is regarded as one of the three great masters of the Renaissance along with Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) and Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564).
- ¹⁴ Guido Reni (1575-1642), Italian painter and engraver. Genoa hosts Reni's altarpiece *Assunzione della Vergine* (1616-17) commissioned by the nobleman Stefano Durazzo (1594-1667) for the Jesuit church of Sant'Ambrogio.
- ¹⁵ Publius Vergilius Maro, known in English as Virgil (70-19 BCE), Roman poet of the Augustan period. In his *Eclogues* (c. 39BC), also known as *Bucolics*, he conjures up an idyllic pastoral world.
- ¹⁶ Old form of the word *chestnut*, common until c. 1820.
- ¹⁷ Untraced reference.
- ¹⁸ Ottaviano Targioni Tozzetti (1755-1826), Italian essayist and scholar, author of *Istituzioni botaniche* (1794).
- ¹⁹ Misprint.
- ²⁰ John Milton, *Paradise Lost* III.51-52.
- ²¹ Ancient Greek for *cicada*.
- ²² Virgil, *Eclogues* II.9-10 and V.75-76.
- ²³ Theocritus (c. 300-260 BCE), Greek poet and father of Ancient Greek pastoral poetry. Reference to *Idylls* 4.16.
- ²⁴ The collection of Greek poems *Anacreontea* was attributed to the lyric poet Anacreon. Poem 34 is dedicated to the cicada, which is unaffected by time and the undisputed ruler of the countryside.
- ²⁵ See *Anacreontea* 34.
- ²⁶ Archaic form of the word *scissors*.
- ²⁷ Robert Herrick (1591-1674), English lyric poet best known for his collection *Hesperides*; or, *The Works Both Humane and Divine* (1648).
- ²⁸ Robert Herrick, "The Night Piece, to Julia" (1648), collected in *Hesperides*.
- ²⁹ Probable allusion to Percy Bysshe Shelley.
- ³⁰ Homer (c. eighth century BCE), Greek poet and presumed author of the epic poems *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ³¹ Virgil, Roman poet.
- ³² Publius Ovidius Naso, known in English as Ovid, (43 BCE-17 CE), Roman poet best known for *Metamorphoses* (c. 8 CE), a collection of Greek myths and legends from creation to the death and deification of Julius Caesar.
- ³³ Anacreon (c. 582-c. 485 BCE), Greek lyric poet known for his songs and poems celebrating love, wine, and pleasure.
- ³⁴ Theocritus, Greek poet.
- ³⁵ See Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Inferno* XXVI.25-33.
- ³⁶ Gaius Plinius Secundus, known as Pliny the Elder (23-79 CE), Roman naturalist and author of *Naturalis Historia* (*Natural History*), where the term *cicindela* appears for the first time to indicate the firefly.
- ³⁷ Reference to Henry Coxe, pseudonym of John Millard, author of *Picture of Italy* (1818), one of the most noted early nineteenth-century cultural guides to Italy.
- ³⁸ *De vulgari eloquentia* (c. 1303-05) is a Latin treatise by Dante Alighieri about the origins and cultural value of vernacular languages in Italy. In section XIII, Dante discusses the vernacular language spoken in Genoa.
- ³⁹ Misprint for *they*.
- ⁴⁰ Archaic form of the noun *diphthong*.
- ⁴¹ Misprint.
- ⁴² Torquato Tasso (1544-95), Italian poet best known for his epic poem *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581). In 1755, a team of scholars from Genoa led by the poet Stefano De Franchi (1714-85) translated Tasso's work into Genoese vernacular language and published it with the title *Ra Gerusalemme deliverà dro Signor Torquato Tasso traduta in lengua zeneise*.
- ⁴³ Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (1622-73), known as Molière, was a French dramatist. De Franchi translated several of Molière's comedies into Genoese vernacular language: *Le médecin malgré lui* (1666, translated as *Ro mègo per força*), *Le Mariage forcé* (1664, translated as *Ro Mariezzo per força*), and *Les Fourberies de Scapin* (1671, translated as *Furbarie de Monodda*). Other comedies were not only translated, but also recasted and rewritten: *L'avare* (1668, translated as *Lavarò*), *Les Précieuses ridicules* (1659, translated as *Le preziose ridicole*), and *Les Fâcheux* (1661, translated as *Ri Fastidiosi*).
- ⁴⁴ Pierantonio Serassi (1721-91), author of *La vita di Torquato Tasso* (1785).
- ⁴⁵ Gian Giacomo Cavalli (1590-1657), Italian poet known for his contribution to the poetry in Genoese. His best-known work is the collection *Ra Çittara Zeneize* (1630).
- ⁴⁶ Gabriello Chiabrera (1552-1638), Italian poet and dramatist. His commendation to the poet Cavalli, originally written in a letter dated 10 December 1630, was included in the 1745 edition of *Ra Çittara Zeneize* under the title "Elogio del signor Gabriello Chiabrera sovra il Cavalli".
- ⁴⁷ Misprint for *Maragliano*. Anton Maria Maragliano (1664-1741), Italian sculptor. Hunt might be alluding to the sculpture *San Giacomo della Marca* (c. 1730-40), attributed to Maragliano.
- ⁴⁸ This passage is not part of one of Cavalli's poems, but of "O sciò Palosso resuscitou pé vedde ai 2 de Zugno a casazza de Foxinne" (1822) by the poet Tocca Ejus.
- ⁴⁹ Reference to Angelo Vergani's *Italian Grammar* (c. 1813).
- ⁵⁰ Misprint for *mercanzie*.
- ⁵¹ Misprint.
- ⁵² Misprint for *un'osteria*.
- ⁵³ Misprint for *replicò*.
- ⁵⁴ Hierocles of Alexandria (active c. 430 CE), Greek Neoplatonist and teacher of philosophy in the city of Alexandria.
- ⁵⁵ Ettore Veuillet d'Yenne (1758-1830), Italian politician. In 1822, he became governor of the Dutchy of Genoa.
- ⁵⁶ Misprint for *with*.
- ⁵⁷ Misprint for *êtes*.

THE CHOICE.**

—Nec vos, dulcissima mundi
Nomina, vos, Musæ, libertas, otia, libri,
Hortique, silvæque, animâ remanente, relinquam

Nor by me e'er shall you,
You, of all names the sweetest and the best,
You, Muses, books, and liberty, and rest,
You, gardens, fields, and woods, forsaken be,
As long as life itself forsakes not me.

COWLEY.¹

I HAVE been reading Pomfret's *Choice*² this spring,
A pretty kind of sort of kind of thing,
Not much a verse, and poem none at all,
Yet, as they say, extremely natural.
And yet I know not. There's a skill in pies,
In raising crusts as well as galleries;
And he's the poet, more or less, who knows
The charm that hallows the least thing from prose,
And dresses it in its mild singing clothes.
Poetry's that which sets a thought apart,
To worship Nature with a choral heart:
And may be seen where rarely she intrudes,
As birds in cages make us think of woods.

* It is hardly necessary to say, that the mode of life which the author desires for himself in this dreaming speculation, is only such as he could contemplate for his own actual life, and in the present condition of things. If he were speculating for the rest of the world, and upon the possible condition of things, it would be much further modified; and certain personages who make their appearance in it would not be heard of.

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Andrea Peghinelli.

Beaux have it in them, when they love the faces
 Of country damsels, and their worsted graces.
 E'en satire, if of laurelled race, retains
 A taste of sweetness in its finer veins;
 Or like its friend, the common stocks, may be
 Touched with a shadow of the living tree.
 The greatest poets please the greatest wits,
 But every reader loves the least by fits:
 The former lord it in their vast editions;
 But 'tothers' cards still gain them recognitions:
 The ladies rise in heaps and give them sweet admissions.

But to the *Choice*. It pleased me as I read,
 Walked with me forth, and went with me to bed.
 And as, when somebody at dinner glows
 In praise of what he likes, soups, harricoes,
 Grouse or a carp, the rest as surely join
 In praise of that on which they like to dine,—
 So Pomfret's likings make me think of mine.
I'll write a *Choice*, said I: and it shall be
 Something 'twixt labour and *extempore*;
 Not long, yet not too quick on the conclusion,
 And for its ease I'll call it an effusion.
 All that I vouch for is to shun the crime,
 (Death, by all laws) of writing for the rhyme.
 I shall not please all tastes, as Pomfret did,
 Even though he said he'd "live a man forbid."*³

*Videlicet, that he would "have no wife:" which not only threatened to lose him his living, but actually cost him his life: for the obstructions raised by his enemies in the mind of Dr. Compton⁴ the bishop, constrained his presence in London, where he caught the small pox and died in 1703, in the thirty-sixth year of his age."⁵—See his life by Johnson.⁶—It is curious, that what would have been hailed as a saintly recommendation in a clergyman at one period of the Church, should become so profane a drawback in another.

Men, in these times, have notions of their own,
And something called a zeal, which makes them known;
Else I would print my fancy by itself,
And be “a love” on every lady’s shelf:
Perhaps I shall be so, some day or other;
But I’d at once please every prudent mother;
Not locked in cupboards, like “a losel vilde,”⁷
With sups and sweetmeats that would “hurt the child;”⁸
But bound in lilac, register’d with rose,
I’d smile on tables in the parson’s nose;
My lady’s woman should approve my lays,
And all the Tomkinses⁹ and Critics’ praise.

Come then, ye scenes of quiet and content,
Ye goals of life, on which our hearts are spent,—
Meet my worn eyes. I love you, e’en in vales
Of cups and saucers, and such Delfic¹⁰ dales,
Much more in pen and ink, as bard beseems;
Come—take me to your arms in bowery dreams.

First, on a green I’d have a low, broad house,
Just seen by travellers through the garden boughs;
And that my luck might not seem ill bestowed,
A bench and spring should greet them on the road.
My grounds should not be large; I like to go
To Nature for a range, and prospect too,
And cannot fancy she’ll comprise for me,
Even in a park, her all-sufficiency.
Besides, my thoughts fly far; and when at rest,
Love, not a watch-tower, but a lulling nest.
But all the ground I had should keep a look
Of Nature still, have birds’-nests and a brook;
One spot for flowers, the rest all turf and trees;

For I'd not grow my own bad lettuces.
And above all, no house should be so near,
That strangers should discern me here and there;
Much less when some fair friend was at my side,
And swear I thought her charming,—which I did.
I am not sure I'd have a rookery;
But sure I am I'd not live near the sea,
To view its great flat face, and have my sleeps
Filled full of shrieking dreams and foundering ships;
Or hear the drunkard, when his slaughter's o'er,
Like Sinbad's¹¹ monster scratching on the shore.
I'd live far inland, in a world of glades,
Yet not so desert¹² as to fright the maids:
A batch of cottages should smoke beside;
And there should be a town within a morning's ride.

My house of brick should not be great or mean,
Much less built formally, outside or in.
I hate the trouble of a mighty house,
That worst of mountains labouring with a mouse;
And should dislike as much to fill a niche in
A Grecian temple opening to a kitchen.
The frogs in Homer¹³ should have had such boxes,
Or Æsop's frog¹⁴, whose heart was like the ox's.
Such puff about high-roads, so grand, so small,
With wings and what not, portico and all,
And poor drenched pillars, which it seems a sin
Not to mat up at night-time, or take in.
I'd live in none of these. Nor would I have
Veranda'd windows to forestall my grave;
Veranda'd truly, from the northern heat!
And cut down to the floor to comfort one's cold feet!
I like a thing to please the traveller's eye,

But more a house to live in, not to die.
 Older than new I'd have it; dressed with blooms
 Of honied green, and quaint with straggling rooms,
 A few of which, white-bedded and well swept,
 Should bear the name of friends for whom they're kept.
 And yet to show I had a taste withal,
 I'd have some casts of statues in the hall,
 Or rather entrance, whose sweet steady eyes
 Should touch the comers with a mild surprise,
 And so conduct them, hushing to my door,
 Where, if a friend, the house should hear a roar.
 The grateful beggar should peep in at these,
 And wonder what I did with Popish images.

My study should not be, as Pomfret's was,
 Down in the garden; 'tis an awkward place
 In winter; and in summer I prefer
 To write my verses in the open air,
 Stretched on the grass, under the yellow trees,
 With a few books about me, and the bees.
 My study should conclude the upper floor,
 The stillest corner, with a double door:
 The window (one) should just peep down between
 The break of tree-tops on a sylvan scene;
 And on the table, bending a bland eye,
 I'd have, I think, a bust of Mercury.¹⁵
 The walls should be all books. No—here and there
 I'd set a favourite head within a square,—
 A square within the books, and so enclosed
 With such as it loved dearest, or composed.
 My dearest friend should show me his kind face,
 Among the best, over the fire-place;
 So that when winter came, and I could please

My sight no longer with the nestling trees,
 I should turn wholly round, and warm my heart
 And feet alike with facing that best part;
 Still feeling round about me all my books,
 Those for love's arms, the fire-side for its looks.
 You'll say, perhaps, there'd be a want of grace
 In putting pictures in this kind of case:
 There might in many rooms, but not in this;
 For grace is greatest where affection is,
 And merges, like a wife, her name in sympathy's.

Here would I write and read, till it was time
 To ride or walk, or on the grass go rhyme;
 For every day I'd be my friend enough
 To spin my blood and whirl its humours off,
 And take my draught of generous exercise,
 The youth of age, and medicine of the wise.
 And this reminds me, that behind some screen
 About my grounds, I'd have a bowling-green;
 Such as in wits' and merry women's days
 Suckling preferred before his walk of bays.
 You may still see them, dead as haunts of fairies,
 By the old seats of Killigrew and Carews,¹⁶
 Where all, alas, is vanished from the ring,
 Wits and black eyes, the skittles and the king!*

*Bowls are now thought vulgar: that is to say, a certain number of fine vulgar people agree to call them so. The fashion was once otherwise. Suckling¹⁷ prefers

A pair of black eyes, or a lucky hit
 At bowls, above all the trophies of wit.¹⁸

Piccadilly, in Clarendon's¹⁹ time, "was a fair house of entertainment and gaming, with handsome gravel walks for shade, and where were an upper and a lower bowling green, whither very many of the nobility and gentry of

I'd never hunt, except the fox, and then
 Not much, for fear I should fall hunting men,
 And take each rogue I met for a stray soul,
 That hadn't rights, and might not eat his fowl;
 A thing, that by degrees might bring me round
 To trespass on the squire's and lawyer's ground.
 Fishing I hate, because I think about it,
 Which makes it right that I should do without it.
 A dinner, or a death might not be much;
 But cruelty's a rod I dare not touch.
 I own I cannot see my right to feel
 For my own jaws, and tear a carp's with steel;
 To troll him here and there, and spike, and strain,
 And let him loose to jerk him back again.
 Suppose a parson at this sort of work,
 Not with his carp or salmon, but his clerk:
 The clerk he snatches at a tempting bit,
 And hah! an ear-ache with a knife in it!
 That there is pain and evil is no rule
 Why I should make it greater, like a fool;
 Or rid me of my rest so vile a way,
 As long as there's a single manly play.
 The next conclusion to be drawn, might be,
 That higher beings made a carp of me;
 Which I would rather should not be the case;

the best quality resorted, both for exercise and conversation."—*Hist. of the Rebellion, Vol. 2.*²⁰—It seems to have been to the members of Parliament what Brooks's²¹ is now, and was a much better place for them to refresh their faculties in. The robust intellects of the Commonwealth²² grew there, and the airy wits that succeeded them. The modern gambling-houses are fit to produce nothing better than their name bespeaks. There grow our sottish financiers and timid intriguers. It is the same with the difference of the hours they keep.

VOL. II.

T

Though "Izaak"²³ were the saint to tear my face,
 And stooping from his heaven with rod and line,
 Made the damn'd sport, with his old dreams divine,
 As pleasant to his taste as rough to mine.
 Such sophistry, no doubt, saves half the hell,
 And fish would have preferred his reasoning well;
 And if my gills concerned him, so should I.
 The dog, I grant, is in that "equal sky:"
 But, Heaven be praised, he's not my deity!

All manly games I'd play at: golf, and quoits,
 And cricket, to set all my limbs to rights,
 And make me conscious, with a due respect,
 Of muscles one forgets by long neglect.
 But as for prize-fights, with their butchering shows,
 And crowds of blacklegs, I'd have none of those;—
 I am not bold in other people's blows.
 Besides, I should reside so far from town,
 Those human waves could never bear me down—
 Which would endear my solitude, I own.
 But if a neighbour, fond of his antiques,
 Tried to renew a bout or two at sticks,
 I'd do my best to force a handsome laugh
 Under a ruddy crack from quarter staff
 Nor think I had a right to walk my wooos,²⁴
 Coy of a science that was Robin Hood's.²⁵
 'Tis healthy, and a man's; and would assist
 To make me wield a falchion in my fist,
 Should foes arise who'd rather not be taught,
 And war against the course of truth-exploring thought.

Thus would I study when alone, and thus
 With friends and villagers a game discuss;

And gather all the health and peace I could,
Man's honey from the wilds and flowery wood.
For in this picture, with its happy frame,
I would not be the shaken thing I am.
I'd write, because I could not help it; read
Much more, but nothing to oppress my head;
For heads are very different things at ease,
And forced to bear huge loads for families.
Still I would think of others; use my pen,
As fits a man and lettered citizen,
And so discharge my duty to the state;
But as to fame and glory, fame might wait
Nevertheless, I'd write a work in verse,
Full of fine dreams and natural characters;
Eastern perhaps, and gathered from a shore
Whence never poet took his world before.
To this sweet sphere I would retire at will,
To sow it with delight, and shape with skill;
And should it please me, and be roundly done,
I'd launch it into light, to sparkle round the sun.

I'd have two friends live near me, perhaps three:
Time was, when in one happy house——But he
Has gone to his great home, over the dreadful sea.
Oh Nature, we both loved thee! Pardon one
To whom thine ocean, even in the sun,
Has grown a monstrous and a morbid sight:—
See how I try to love thee still, and dream of thy delight.

Come—let me go on with my builded bower:
I should be nearer him, by many a weary hour.

In pleasure and in pain, alike I find
My face turn tenderly to womankind:

But then they must be truly women,—not
Shes by the courtesy of a petticoat,
And left without enquiry to their claims,
Like haunted houses with their devil's dams.
I'd mend the worst of women, if I could,
But for a constancy, give me the good;—
I do not mean the formal or severe,
Much less the sly, who's all for character;
But such as, in all nations and all times,
Would be good creatures, fit for loving rhymes;
Kind, candid, simple, yet of sterling sense,
And of a golden age for innocence.
Of these my neighbours should have choice relations;
And I (though under certain alterations)
I too would bring—(though I dislike the name;
The Reverend Mr. Pomfret did the same;
Let its wild flavour pass a line so tame;)—
A wife,—or whatsoever better word
The times, grown wiser, might by law afford
To the chief friend and partner of my board.
The dear, good she, by every habit then,—
Ties e'en when pleasant, very strong with men;
Though your wise heads first make one's systems wrong,
And then insist that only their's last long,—
Would finish, and make round in every part,
The natural harmony of her own wise heart;
And by the loss of something of her right
Of being jealous, consummate delight.
Gods! how I'd love her morning, noon, and night!
I'd only know the women she approved,
But then she'd love all those who should be loved:
So that our fair friends, better still than good,
Should crown, like doves, our gentle neighbourhood;

And bring us back the peace the world has lost,
All fav'rites and beloved, though one the most.
Should doubts arise, and want of explanations,
We'd settle all by little gifts and patience;
But there could not be much 'twixt real friends,
Taught to consult each other's common ends:
And as for passions of a graver sort,
Kisses and shakes of hand should cut them short.
Should any one incur the common grief,
By moods that asked and yet repelled relief,
Long tears and the remorseless handkerchief,
One pain well borne for friendship's and love's sake
Should gather to our arms the wanderer back:—
It should be our fixed law, no loving heart should ache.

I'd have my mornings to myself. Ev'n ladies
Should not prevent me this, except on May-days:
Unless we fairly struck our tents awhile,
To stroll, like gypsies, round about the isle;
A plan I might be bent on, I confess,
Provided colds would give us leave, and dress,
And twenty other inconveniences.
I'd give up even my house to live like them,
And have a health in every look and limb,
To which our best perceptions must be dim.
A gypsy's body, and a poet's mind,
Clear blood, quick foot, free spirit, and thought refined,
Perpetual airs to breathe, and loves to bind,—
Such were the last perfection of mankind.

I'd have my mornings to myself then; calm,
Clear, useful, busy, like distilling balm.
The spirit of the genial text I own;

But yet 'tis sometimes "for man to be alone."²⁶
 It makes him feel his own free powers; put forth
 All the glad fruitage that his heart is worth;
 And should his fellows fall to their green tombs,
 Enables him to take the storm that comes,
 And sternly rouse his locks, and stand the driving glooms.
 Alas! too late have I learnt this.—Be strong,
 Be strong, my boughs, and still allure a tranquillizing song!

These mornings, with their work, should earn for me
 My afternoon's content and liberty.
 I'd have an early dinner, and a plain,
 Not tempting much to "cut and come again;"²⁷
 A little wine, or not, as health allowed,
 But for my friends, a stock to make me proud;
 Bottles of something delicate and rare,
 Which I should draw, and hold up with an air,
 And set them on the table, and say, "There!"
 My friend the doctor (not the apothecary,
 For they and doctors eminently vary;
 Doctors, I mean, such as the Muses²⁸ love,
 And with the liberal more than hand and glove,*)
 Should draw on these for med'cines for the poor,
 And our delicious fee should be the cure.
 Perhaps I'd make him give me a degree
 Myself, and practise out of jealousy.
 Oh Garth!²⁹ Oh Goldsmith!³⁰ Oh ye sons of theirs,
 In wit, or in wise heart, your real heirs,
 And you the most, ever yourself, and true

*I am told by a surgeon's kinswoman, that I ought to include surgeons; which I do with a great deal of pleasure. I mean, in short, all medical men, who are not ignorant and rapacious; not excepting the mere apothecary, if he happens to be one of them.

To your old patients and new duties too,
Whom my soul thanks, and, if it might, would bless,
To all the world with trembling tenderness,—
How meanly do I rate your brethren's arts,
How highly your's, and how like gems your hearts!
Gems deeply cut with Phœbus and the Nine:³¹
May never sorrow shatter them like mine!

See—I'm at least a promising beginner,
And, out of pure good will, have left my dinner.

My dining-room should have some shelves of books,
If only for their grace and social looks—
Horace³² and Plutarch,³³ Plato,³⁴ and some more,
Who knew how to refine the tables' roar,
And sprinkled sweet philosophy between,
As meats are reconciled with slips of green.
I read infallibly, if left alone;
But after meat, an author may step down
To settle a dispute, or talk himself:—
I seem to twitch him now with finger from his shelf.

I would not sit in the same room to dine
And pass the evening; much less booze till nine,
And then, with a white waistcoat and red face,
Rise, with some stupid, mumbling, common place,
And "join the ladies," bowing, for some tea,
With nauseous looks, half lust, half irony.
I'd have two rooms, in one of which, as weather
Of fancy chose, we all might come together,
With liberty for each one nevertheless
To wander in and out, and taste the lawns and trees.
One of the rooms should face a spot of spots,

Such as would please a squirrel with his nuts;
I mean a slope, looking upon a slope,
Wood-crowned, and delled with turf, a sylvan cup.
Here, when our moods were quietest, we'd praise
The scenic shades, and watch the doves and jays,
And so receive the twilight with low talk,
And moon, slow issuing to her maiden walk.
The other sitting-room, a story higher,
Should look out towards the road and village spire;
And here we'd have our music and our mirth,
And seem as if we laughed with the whole rolling earth.

Next there, and looking out on either side,
I'd have "a little chapel edified,"³⁵
Informed with heads of those who, heavenly wise,
Through patient thought or many sympathies,
Lived betwixt heaven and earth, and bore for us
Dire thirsty deaths, or drank the deadly juice.
Greek beauty should be there, and Gothic shade;
And brave as anger, gentle as a maid,
The name on whose dear heart my hope's worn cheek was laid.
Here, with a more immediate consciousness,
Would we feel all that blesses us, and bless;
And lean on one another's heart, and make
Sweet resolutions, ever, for love's sake;
And recognise the eternal Good and Fair,
Atoms of whose vast active spirit we are;
And try by what great yearnings we could force
The globe on which we live to take a more harmonious course.

And when I died, 'twould please me to be laid
In my own ground's most solitary shade;
Not for the gloom, much less to be alone,

But solely as a room that still might seem my own.
There should my friends come still, as to a place
That held me yet, and bring me a kind face:
There should they bring me still their griefs and joys,
And hear in the swell'd breeze a little answering noise.
Had I renown enough, I'd choose to lie,
As Hafiz³⁶ did, bright in the public eye,
With marble grace enclosed, and a green shade,
And young and old should read me, and be glad.
This for mankind, and one who loves them all:
But should my own pure pleasure guide the pall,
Then to the bed of my affections, where
My best friends lay, should its calm steps repair;
And two such vistas to my travail's end
Before me now with gathering looks attend:
One, in a gentle village, my old home;
The other, by the softened walls of Rome.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Abraham Cowley (1618-67), English poet and essayist. The passage selected by Hunt is part of Cowley's essay "Of Myself" first published in his collection *Essays* in 1668.

² John Pomfret (1667-1702), English clergyman and poet. In "The Choice", here revisited by Hunt, Pomfret sings the praises of country life, celebrating simplicity, moderation, and personal fulfilment.

³ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* I.iii.22.

⁴ Henry Compton (1632-1713), Anglican clergyman and Bishop of London (1675-1713). At that time, Pomfret travelled to London to gain Compton's favour.

⁵ Misprint. The quotation starts from the words *in London*.

⁶ Samuel Johnson (1709-84), English man of letters, among whose most important accomplishments are *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) and *Lives of the Poets* (1779-81), a collection of short biographies and critical profiles of fifty-two poets. John Pomfret appears among the writers included by Johnson in his *Lives of the Poets*.

⁷ Untraced quotation.

⁸ Untraced quotation.

⁹ Surnames like Tomkins are typically used by Hunt to indicate stereotypical Cockneys, the inhabitants from East London.

¹⁰ Pertaining to the Greek oracle at Delphi.

¹¹ Sinbad the Sailor, fictional mariner in the *One Thousand and One Nights*. Hunt is probably alluding to Sinbad's third voyage, in which the mariner and his crew are cast on an island inhabited by a ravenous monster.

¹² Archaic form of the noun *desert*.

¹³ Reference to the *Batrachomyomachia*, also known as *Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, a comic epic parodying the *Iliad* attributed to Homer by the Romans.

¹⁴ Aesop, Greek fabulist and storyteller, whose works are known collectively as *Aesop's Fables*. Hunt is probably alluding to the fable *The Frog and the Ox*, the tale of a frog that inflates to the size of an ox until it bursts.

¹⁵ Mercury is the Roman god of merchants and travellers.

¹⁶ Sir Henry Killigrew (d. 1603), English diplomat. Killigrew served during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) and, in 1554, helped the English adventurer Sir Peter Carew (1514-75) to flee to the Continent.

¹⁷ Sir John Suckling (1609-42), English poet and dramatist, best known for his lyrics such as the skit "A Session of the Poets" (1637, published 1646).

¹⁸ See Sir John Suckling, "A Session of the Poets" ll.79-80. Apollo oversees a meeting of English poets and, after assessing their qualifications for the laureateship, ironically grants the title to the least deserving candidate.

¹⁹ Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon (1609-74), English diplomat and historian.

²⁰ Lord Clarendon was one of the first to make direct mention of Piccadilly in his *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* (1702-04), an account of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms.

²¹ A gentlemen's club founded in 1764 by twenty-seven Whig nobles.

²² The Commonwealth of England was the political system in place between 1649 and 1660, whereby England, Wales and, later, Ireland, and Scotland, were ruled as a republic following the end of the Second English Civil War.

²³ One of the three patriarchs of Judaism.

²⁴ Misprint for *woods*.

²⁵ Robin Hood, legendary outlaw of English folklore, who became a symbol of justice and defiance against tyranny.

²⁶ Biblical reference: see *Genesis* 2.18.

²⁷ That can be cut or harvested repeatedly.

²⁸ Goddesses of Greek mythology who inspired literature, science and the arts.

²⁹ Sir Samuel Garth (1661-1719), English physician and poet.

³⁰ Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74), Anglo-Irish writer. Goldsmith studied medicine but failed in his attempts as a physician.

EDITORIAL NOTES

³¹ According to the myth, Apollo was the lover of all nine Muses. As he could not decide among them, he remained unwed.

³² Quintus Horatius Flaccus, known in English as Horace (65-8 BCE), Roman poet best known for his lyric poetry, satires, and epistles.

³³ Plutarch (c. 46-120), Greek philosopher and historian, author of *Parallel Lives*.

³⁴ Plato (c. 428-348BCE), Greek philosopher, whose influential works are written primarily in the form of dialogues.

³⁵ See Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* I.i.xxxiv.

³⁶ Khājah Shams-od-Dīn Mohammad Ḥāfeẓ-e Shīrāzī (1325-90), known by the pen name Hafez or Hafiz, was a Persian lyric poet.

GIOVANNI VILLANI.*¹

AMONG the many accusations that have been made against modern writers by the exclusive lovers of ancient literature, none has been more frequently repeated than the want of art manifested in the conception of their works, and of unity in the execution. They compare the Greek temples to Gothic churches, and bidding us remark the sublime simplicity of the one, and the overcharged ornament of the other, they tell us, that such is the perfection of antiquity compared with the monstrous distortions of modern times. These arguments and views, followed up in all their details, have given rise to volumes concerning the Classic and the Romantic, a difference much dwelt on by German writers, and treated at length by Madame de Staël in her “L’Allemagne.”² All readers, who happen at the same time to be thinkers, must have formed their own opinion of this question; but assuredly the most reasonable is that which would lead us to admire the beauties of all, referring those beauties to the standard of excellence that must decide on all merit in the highest resort, without reference to narrow systems and arbitrary rules. Methinks it is both presumptuous and sacrilegious to pretend to give the law to genius. We are too far removed from the point of perfection to judge with accuracy of what ought to be, and it is sufficient if we understand and feel what is. The fixed stars appear to abberate;³ but it is we that move, not they. The regular planets make various

* Author: Mary Shelley / Transcribed by Riccardo Capoferro; Annotated by Alessandra Crotti.

excursions into the heavens, and we are told that some among them never return to the point whence they departed, and by no chance ever retrace the same path in the pathless sky. Let us, applying the rules which appertain to the sublimest objects in nature, to the sublimest work of God, a Man of Genius,—let us, I say, conclude, that though one of this species appear to err, the failure is in our understandings, not in his course; and though lines and rules, “centric and eccentric scribbled o’er,”⁴ have been marked out for the wise to pursue, that these in fact have generally been the leading-strings and go-carts of mediocrity, and have never been constituted the guides of those superior minds which are themselves the law, and whose innate impulses are the fiats, of intellectual creation.

But zeal for the cause of genius has carried me further than I intended. Let us again recur to the charges brought against modern writers, and instead of cavilling at their demerits, let me be pardoned if I endeavour to discover that which is beautiful even in their defects, and to point out the benefits we may reap in the study of the human mind from this capital one—the want of unity and system.

It is a frequent fault among modern authors, and peculiarly among those of the present day, to introduce themselves, their failings and opinions, into the midst of works dedicated to objects sufficiently removed, as one might think, from any danger of such an incursion. This has sometimes the effect of a play-house anecdote I once heard, of a man missing his way behind the scenes, in passing from one part of the house to the other, and suddenly appearing in his hat and unpicturesque costume, stalking amidst the waves of a frightful storm, much to the annoyance of the highly-wrought feelings of the spectators of the impending catastrophe of a disastrous melodrame. Thus the Poet, in *propria personâ*,

will elbow his way between the despairing fair one and her agitated lover; he will cause a murderer's arm to be uplifted till it ought to ache, and his own hobby will sometimes displace the more majestic quadruped that just before occupied the scene.

These are the glaring defects of the intrusion of self in a work of art. But well-managed, there are few subjects, especially in poetry, that excite stronger interest or elicit more beautiful lines. To sit down for the purpose of talking of oneself, will sometimes freeze the warmth of inspiration; but, when elevated and carried away by the subject in hand, some similitude or contrast may awaken a chord which else had slept, and the whole mind will pour itself into the sound; and he must be a critic such as Sterne⁵ describes, his stop-watch in his hand, who would arrest the lengthened echo of the deepest music of the soul.⁶ Let each man lay his hand on his heart and say, if Milton's⁷ reference to his own blindness and personal circumstances does not throw an interest over *Paradise Lost*,⁸ which they would not lose to render the work as much no man's or any man's production as the *Æneid*—supposing *Ille ego*⁹ to be an interpolation, which I fondly trust it is not.

This habit of self-analysis and display has also caused many men of genius to undertake works where the individual feeling of the author embues¹⁰ the whole subject with a peculiar hue. I have frequently remarked, that these books are often the peculiar favourites among men of imagination and sensibility. Such persons turn to the human heart as the undiscovered country. They visit and revisit their own; endeavour to understand its workings, to fathom its depths, and to leave no lurking thought or disguised feeling in the hiding places where so many thoughts and feelings, for fear

of shocking the tender consciences of those inexpert in the task of self-examination, delight to seclude themselves. As a help to the science of self-knowledge, and also as a continuance of it, they wish to study the minds of others, and particularly of those of the greatest merit. The sight of land was not more welcome to Columbus,¹¹ than are these traces of individual feeling, chequering their more formal works of art, to the voyagers in the noblest of terræ incognitæ, the soul of man. Sometimes, despairing to attain to a knowledge of the secrets of the best and wisest, they are pleased to trace human feeling wherever it is artlessly and truly portrayed. No book perhaps has been oftener the vade-mecum of men of wit and sensibility than Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*;¹² the zest with which it is read being heightened by the proof the author gave in his death of his entire initiation into the arcana of his science. The essential attributes of such a book must be truth; for else the fiction is more tame than any other; and thus Sterne may become this friend to the reading man, but his imitators never can; for affectation is easily detected and deservedly despised. Montaigne¹³ is another great favourite; his pages are referred to as his conversation would be, if indeed his conversation was half so instructive, half so amusing, or contained half so vivid a picture of his internal spirit as his essay. Rousseau's *Confessions*,¹⁴ written in a more liberal and even prodigal spirit of intellectual candour, is to be ranked as an inestimable acquisition to this class of production. Boswell's *Life of Johnson*¹⁵ has the merit of carrying light into the recesses not of his own, but another's peculiar mind. Spence's *Anecdotes*¹⁶ is a book of the same nature, but less perfect in its kind. Half the beauty of Lady Mary Montague's *Letters*¹⁷ consists in the *I* that adorns them; and this *I*, this sensitive, imagi-

native, suffering, enthusiastic pronoun, spreads an inexpressible charm over Mary Wollstonecraft's Letters from Norway.*¹⁸

An historian is perhaps to be held least excusable, if he intrude personally on his readers. Yet they might well follow the example of Gibbon, who, while he left the pages of his *Decline and Fall*¹⁹ unstained by any thing that is not applicable to the times of which he treated, has yet, through the medium of his *Life and Letters*,²⁰ given a double interest to his history and opinions. Yet an author of *Memoirs*, or a *History* of his own Times, must necessarily appear sometimes upon the scene. Mr. Hyde gives greater interest to Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*,²¹ though I have often regretted that a quiet *I* had not been inserted in its room.

And now drawing the lines of this reasoning together, it may be conjectured why I like, and how I would excuse, the dear, rambling, old fashioned pages of Giovanni Villani, the author of the *Croniche Fiorentine*; the writer who makes the persons of Dante's *Spirits*²² familiar to us; who guides us through the unfinished streets and growing edifices of Firenze la bella, and who in short transports us back to the superstitions, party spirit, companionship, and wars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Dante's commentators had made me familiar with the name of Villani, and I became desirous of obtaining what appeared to be the key of the mysterious allusions of the *Divina Comedia*. There is something venerable and endearing in the very appearance of this folio of the sixteenth century.²³ The Italian is old and delightfully ill-spelt: I say delightfully, for it is spelt for

*I cannot help here alluding to the papers of "Elia," which have lately appeared in a periodical publication.²⁴ When collected together, they must rank among the most beautiful and highly valued specimens of the kind of writing spoken of in the text.

Italian ears, and the mistakes let one into the secret of the pronounciation of Dante and Petrarch²⁵ better than the regular orthography of the present day. The abbreviations are many, and the stops in every instance misplaced; the ink is black, the words thickly set, so that the most seems to have been made of every page. It requires a little habit to read it with the same fluency as another book, but when this difficulty is vanquished, it acquires additional charms from the very labour that has been bestowed.

I know that in describing the outward appearance of my friend, I perform a thankless office, since few will sympathise in an affection which arises from a number of associations in which they cannot participate. But in developing the spirit that animates him, I undertake a more grateful task, although, by stripping him of his original garb and dressing him in a foreign habiliment, I divest him of one of his greatest beauties. Though in some respects rather old fashioned, his Italian is still received as a model of style; and those Italians who wish to purify their language from Gallicisms,²⁶ and restore to it some of its pristine strength and simplicity, recur with delight to his pages. All this is lost in the English; but even thus I trust that his facts will interest, his simplicity charm, and his real talent be appreciated.

In the course of his work, Villani thus recounts the motives that induced him to commence his history:—

“In the year 1300, according to the nativity of Christ, on account of its having been said by many, that in former times, every hundred years after the nativity of Christ, he that was pope at that period gave great indulgencies, Pope Boniface VIII,²⁷ who then held the Apostolic office, through reverence for the same, gave a great and high indulgence in this manner: that whatsoever believer visited during all that

year continuously for thirty days (and fifteen days for strangers who were not Romans) the churches of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, to all these he gave full and entire pardon, both of sin and punishment, for all their sins confessed or to be confessed; and for the consolation of Christian pilgrims, every Friday and holiday, the Veronica del Sudario²⁹ of Christ was exhibited at St. Peter's.³⁰ On this account a great part of the then existing Christians performed this said journey, both men and women, from distant and diverse countries, both far and near. And it was the most wonderful thing that ever was, that, during a whole year there were in Rome, besides the people of the city, two hundred thousand pilgrims, without including those on the road going and coming; and all were well furnished and satisfied with all manner of food, as well the houses as the persons; and this I can witness, who was there present, and saw much accrued to the Church from the offerings of the pilgrims, and all the Roman people became rich through the commerce occasioned by them. I, being at the Holy City of Rome, on account of this blessed pilgrimage, observing the magnificent and ancient things there, and knowing the great achievements and history of the Romans, written by Sallust,³¹ Lucan,³² Titus Livius,³³ Valerius,³⁴ Paul Orosius,³⁵ and other masters of history, who narrated small occurrences as well as great, and even those that happened at the extremities of the universal world, to give note and example to those to come after them; and although, with regard to their style and order, I was not a disciple worthy the doing so great a work, yet, considering our city of Florence, the daughter and creature of Rome, which had achieved high things in her ascent, and was now, like Rome, on her decline, it appeared to me to be right to collect in this volume a new Chronicle of all the deeds and ordinances of

that city; and as much as was in me to seek, find, and narrate past, present, and future times, while it shall please God. So that I shall recount at large the deeds of the Florentines, and all other famous events of the universal world, as far as I can learn, God giving me grace, in hope of which I began this enterprize,³⁶ considering the poverty of my talent, on which I should not have dared rely. And thus, through the grace of Christ, having returned from Rome in his year 1300, I began to compile this book, in reverence to God and the blessed Messer Santo John,³⁷ in commendation of the city of Florence.”—(Book VIII. Cap. 36.)

Villani begins his history with the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues; and then relates how king Atalante, the fifth in descent from Japhet, the son of Noah,³⁸ colonized in Italy and built the town of Fiesole.³⁹ He commemorates the siege of Troy,⁴⁰ and how Antenor and the younger Priam came over to Italy, and severally built the towns of Padua and Venice;⁴¹ and that the descendants of the latter became kings of Germany and France. The history of Rome is slightly skimmed over, and he mentions that, after the discovery of Catiline's plot,⁴² several of the conspirators entrenched themselves in Fiesole, which was accordingly besieged by the following leaders: “Count Rainaldo, Cicero, Tiberinus, Machrimus, Albinus, Cn. Pompeius, Cæsar Camertinus, Count Seggio, Tudertino, that is of the Soli,⁴³ who was with Julius Cæsar and his army.”⁴⁴ Under such an assemblage of generals Fiesole fell, and Florence arose from its ruins.

But these strange anachronisms and unfounded fables, though made amusing by the gravity and minuteness of Villani, are not the qualities which constitute his principal merit. He grows more interesting and more authentic as he advances from the creation of the world to his own times;

and nine-tenths of his book are occupied by the narration of events which occurred during the course of his own life. He describes characters in the style of one well read in human nature, and who, by living at a period when civil discord awakened the most violent passions and disclosed the workings of the heart carefully veiled for our politer eyes, and by mingling in the game where each the smallest individual risked fortune, family and life,—had penetrated into every diversity of character. His anecdotes make us familiarly acquainted with the private habits and ways of thinking of those times; his accounts of civil commotions and wars are worthy of that which he was—an eye-witness. It is true, that in the midst of grave matter of fact, the strangest stories will force their way. I own that these digressions are to me by no means the least pleasant part of his work, and as they are disjoined from the rest of his history, they by no means injure his character of an exact historian, which stands high on all matters appertaining to Italy and his immediate times. I confess that while reading a spirited narration of the Battle of the Arbia,⁴⁵ or the murder of Buondelmonti and the rise of parties in Florence,⁴⁶ or any other historic fact of the kind, I come with pleasure to a chapter entitled—“How the Tartars first left the mountains where Alexander the Great had confined them,” and read under that head the following wild and poetic story:—

“In the year of Christ 1202, the people called Tartars came out from the mountains of Gog and Magog, called in Latin the mountains of Belgen. This people are said to have descended from that tribe of Israel which the great Alexander, king of Greece, who conquered all the world, shut up in these mountains, on account of their wicked life (*per loro brutta vita*) that they might not mix with the other gene-

rations. And through their cowardice and vain credulity, they remained shut up from the time of Alexander until this period, believing that the army of this king still surrounded them. For he, with wonderful mechanism, commanded immense trumpets to be made, and placed on the mountains, which every wind caused to sound and trumpet forth with a great noise. Afterwards, it is said, that owls built their nests in the mouths of those trumpets, which put an end to the artifice by stopping the sound: and on this account the Tartars have owls in great reverence, and their principal lords wear the feathers of owls, by way of ornament, in their caps, in memory that they caused to cease the sound of these trumpets. For this circumstance reassured the people, who lived in the manner of animals, and were of innumerable numbers; so certain among them passed the mountains and finding no enemy on their summits, but only this vain sound of these tower-exalted trumpets, they descended to the plains of India, which were fertile, fruitful, and of a mild climate; and returning and reporting this news to their families and the rest of the people, they assembled together, and made, through divine intervention, a poor blacksmith called Cangius their general and lord. And when he was made lord, he received the name of "Cane," that is the emperor in their language. He was a valourous and wise man; and through his wisdom and valour he divided the people into tens, hundreds, and thousands, under captains fitted to the command. And first, he ordered all his principal subjects to kill their first-born sons, and when he found himself obeyed in this, he issued his command to his people, entered India, vanquished Prester John, and conquered all his country." (Book V. Cap. 27.)⁴⁷

Villani was a Guelph, that is, an adherent to the papal and republican party. He repeats all the calumnies that

had been invented to prejudice the Italians against the house of Swabia,⁴⁸ and he appears to believe the miracles and dreams of various pontiffs with catholic credulity: One of his principal heroes is Charles d'Anjou,⁴⁹ a cruel, faithless, but heroic tyrant; and it is thus that he paints his character with the partiality of a partizan, and the lively touches of one personally acquainted with the character whom he hands down to posterity:—

“Charles was wise and prudent, brave in arms, severe, and much feared and redoubted by all the kings in the world; magnanimous, and of high spirit to carry on any great enterprize, firm in adversity, secure and veracious in keeping his promises, speaking little and doing much. He seldom laughed, if ever; chaste as a monk, and catholicly religious. As a judge he was merciless, and of ferocious aspect. He was tall and strongly made, of an olive complexion, with a large nose; and he appeared far more majestic than any other lord. He watched much, and slept little; using to say, that sleeping was so much time lost. He was generous as a knight of arms, but desirous of acquiring lands, dominion, and wealth, whence he might provide for his enterprizes and wars. He never took delight in *uomini di corte*, courtiers and games.” (Book VII. Cap 1.)

History does not present in any of her pages so strong a contrast as that between the characters of the rivals for the crown of Naples. Manfred⁵⁰ was the natural son of Frederic, the last Emperor of the house of Swabia. Refusing to bow the neck to the yoke of papal tyranny, three successive Pontiffs pursued him with unbending malignity and hatred; they at length bestowed his kingdom upon Charles d'Anjou, and invited him over to conquer it. It is hardly fair to give the character of the intrepid, noble, and unfortunate Manfred in the words of his enemy, for such Villani was. But the

actions of these two princes are a comment upon the words of the historian, and enable us to form an impartial opinion. "This same king Manfred," says Villani, "was the son of a beautiful woman belonging to the Marquess Lancia of Lombardy, to whom the Emperor was attached. He was a handsome man like his father, but dissolute and luxurious in the extreme; he was a musician, a singer, and was pleased to see buffoons and *uomini di corte*; he kept mistresses, and always dressed in green. He was generous and courteous, and of noble demeanour, so that he was much beloved and followed; but his life was epicurean; scarcely believing in God (*for God read the Pope*)⁵¹ or his saints; he was an enemy of holy church and of priests; was a greater confiscator of church riches than his father: he was rich, through the treasure left by the Emperor and by king Conrad,⁵² and because his kingdom was fruitful and abundant. And while he lived at war with the church, he rendered his kingdom prosperous, and so rose to great dominion and riches by sea and land. He had for wife the daughter of the despot of Romania (the Emperor of Constantinople)⁵³ by whom he had several children."—(Book VIth, Cap. 47.)

The great crime of Manfred consisted in his forming a small army of Saracens, whom he used to defend himself against his papal enemies, who were devotedly attached to him, and by whose means he had risen to dominion again, after he had been reduced to flight and impotence. Even in the above garbled account of the noblest king and the most accomplished cavalier that ever existed, we may trace his excellencies. His kingdom prosperous, himself adored by his subjects, we may excuse his love for courtly amusements; and beloved by his wife, we may doubt the excess of less pardonable faults. The actions of Charles are a long list of crimes. He involved Naples in a bloody war, and shewed no mercy to the van-

quished. After the death of Manfred, who happily for himself died on the field of battle, his wife Sibilla, whose high birth Villani has commemorated, and her children, were imprisoned in Calabria, and there, as this partial historian shortly narrates (*da Carlo fatto morire*) put to death by Charles. Every noble partisan of Manfred lost his life on the scaffold, and the line of unfortunate victims was closed by the young and gallant Coradino.⁵⁴ His newly conquered kingdom was driven to desperation by his extortions and cruelties, and the Sicilian vespers at length delivered that miserable island from his merciless gripe. Such was the catholicly religious Charles.

But to return to Villani: although a violent party-man, he dwells with fond regret on the time when there was neither Guelph nor Ghibeline in Florence. "It is from these names," he says "that great evil and ruin fell upon our city, as mention will hereafter be made: and we may well believe, that it will never have an end, if God does not terminate it." This (as it were) figure of speech, of recurring to the good old times, is common to all recorders of the past, from Homer⁵⁵ downwards. But it is more natural in Villani, since he himself beheld the festive meetings of his countrymen changed into murderous brawls, and after having seen all that claimed the common name of Florentines live in brotherly amity, he witnessed the irremediable rent which divided them into Guelph and Ghibeline, the palaces of Florence razed through the violence of party, and the estates of the vanquished confiscated. Examples of the rich and happy becoming poor and wretched were familiar to him, and the further sting was added, that these calamities were not occasioned by what may be called the natural evils of life—neither by pestilence, war, nor famine—but by civil discord, originating in words only, and where the wisest and best, branded by a

name, became the victims of the new-born hatred of former friends.

After the manner of Livy,⁵⁶ Villani delights to tell of monsters, of comets, of meteors, and portents. In one place he tells us how "Philip le Bel,⁵⁷ king of France, caused to be made prisoners all the Italians in that kingdom, under pretence of taking usurers; but at the same time he caused to be taken, and liberated only upon ransom, many honest merchants as usurers; for this he was much blamed and hated, and henceforward the kingdom of France went declining, falling, and coming from bad to worse."

Perhaps the best idea that I can present of the general nature of this book, will be in giving some of the heads of the chapters in the order they occur. As for instance:— (Book VIII. Cap. 12.) "How the nobles of the city of Florence took arms to destroy and oppress the popular government." (Cap. 13.) "How Pope Boniface made peace between king Charles, and the Florentines, and Don Giamo of Arragon, king of Sicily." (Cap. 14.) "How the Guelph party was driven out of Genoa." (Cap. 15.) "Of certain novelties and changes that arrived among the lords of Tartary." (Book IX. Cap. 291.) "How a new small money was coined at Florence." (Cap. 292.) "Of a miraculous fall of snow in Tuscany." (Cap. 293.) "How Castruccio endeavoured to betray Florence." (Cap. 294.) "How there was accord between some of the elected lords in Germany." (Cap. 295.) "How Castruccio, lord of Lucca, possessed himself of the city of Pistria, by means of treason." (Cap. 296.) "How Messer Raimondo of Cardona came to Florence, as Captain of War." (Cap. 297.) "How the Duke of Calabria, with a great army, made a descent upon the Island of Sicily." (Cap. 298.) "Of signs that appeared in the air, which," as Villani says, "made all who saw them, dread future danger and troubles in the city."

I will conclude my extracts and remarks by his chapter upon the death, character, and writings of Dante.

Book IX. Of the Poet Dante, and how he died. (Cap. 135.)

"In this same year (1321) in the month of July,⁵⁸ Dante died at the city of Ravenna, in Romagna, having returned from an embassy to Venice in the service of the lords of Polenta,⁵⁹ with whom he lived. He was buried with great honour, in the guise of poet and great philosopher, at Ravenna, before the gate of the principal church.⁶⁰ He died, an exile from the commune of Florence, at the age of about fifty-six years. This Dante was an antient and honourable citizen of Florence, of the divison⁶¹ of the gate of San Piero.⁶² His exile from Florence was thus occasioned. When Messer Carlo di Valois,⁶³ of the house of France, came to Florence in the year 1301, and exiled the *Bianchi* (*a party so called*) as we have before related, this same Dante was the highest governor of our city, and of that party, though a Guelph.* And thus, free from guilt, he was driven out with the *Bianchi*, and exiled from Florence, whence he retired to study at Bologna, and afterwards to Paris, and other parts of the world. He was very learned in almost every science, though a layman; he was a great poet, a philosopher, and a perfect rhetorician, as well in writing, either prose or verse, as in speaking. He was

*Villani, who was townsman and contemporary of Dante, appears to have also been his friend, and to wish to reinstate him in the good graces of the Florentines, by saying that he was a Guelph. Dante, as a reasonable man, endeavoured to reconcile the absurd differences of all parties, but he was not a Guelph. His discrepancy of opinion from Villani may be gathered from the opposite judgments that they pass on the same persons. The poet prepares a choice place of torture for Boniface VIII in his dreary hell,⁶⁴ while Villani exalts him as a saint. Dante rails at all the Popes; Villani respects them all. Dante sweetly and pathetically dwells on the wrongs and virtues of Manfred, and places him on the high road to heaven.⁶⁵ Villani vituperates him, and consigns him as a *scomunicato*⁶⁶ to the devil.

the noblest maker of verses, with the finest style, that had ever been in our language until his own time and later. He wrote in his youth the beautiful book of the "New Life of Love,"⁶⁷ and afterwards, when in exile, he wrote twenty excellent moral and amatory *canzoni*.⁶⁸ Among other things he wrote three noble epistles;⁶⁹ one of which he sent to the government of Florence, mourning his banishment as an innocent man; the other he sent to the Emperor Henry (of Luxembourg)⁷⁰ when he was at the siege of Brescia, reprehending his abiding there, with almost the foreknowledge of a prophet: the third was to the Italian Cardinals during the vacancy after Pope Clement,⁷¹ advising them to accord in the election of an Italian Pope, all in Latin, in magnificent language, with excellent sentences and authorities, the which were much praised by the holy men who understood them. He wrote also the *Comedia*, where, in elegant verse, with great and subtle questions of morality, natural philosophy, astrology, philosophy and theology, and with beautiful and new metaphors and similes, he composed an hundred chapters or cantos, of having been in Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, in as noble a manner as it is possible to have done. But in this discourse, whoever is of a penetrating understanding may well see and comprehend that he greatly loves in that drama to dispute and vituperate, after the manner of poets, perhaps in some places more than is decent. Probably his exile also made him write his Treatise on Monarchy,^{*72} where in excellent Latin he treats of the offices of Pope and Emperor. He

*I must again remark, that Dante and Villani must have been personal friends, or that reverence for the poet's talent made the latter seek for every circumstance that might excuse the opinions of Dante to the Florentines, who were then all Guelphs, and to whom the Treatise on Monarchy was peculiarly obnoxious.

began a comment upon fourteen of his before-mentioned moral *canzoni*, which, on account of his death, he did not finish; and only three were found, the which, from what we see, would have been a great, beautiful, subtle, and eminent work. He also wrote a book entitled, “of Vulgar Eloquence”⁷⁴—which, he says, was to consist of four books, but only two are found, probably on account of his unexpected death, where, in strong and elegant Latin, he reprobates all vernacular Italian. This Dante, on account of his knowledge, was somewhat presumptuous, satirical, and contemptuous. He was uncourteous, as it were, after the manner of philosophers; nor did he well know how to converse with laymen. But on account of his other virtues, his science, and his merit as a citizen, it appeared just to give him perpetual memo-⁷⁵ in this our Chronicle, although his great works left in writing bestow on him a true testimony, and an honourable fame on our city.”

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¹ Giovanni Villani (c. 1275-1348), Italian diplomat and chronicler. His *Nuova Cronica* is one of the most important sources for Italian medieval history. His *Croniche Fiorentine* (1347) was read by Mary Shelley in preparation for her novel *Valperga* (1823).

² Madame de Staël (1766-1817), French-Swiss writer and intellectual. In her *De l'Allemagne* (1810), she describes German Romanticism as a response to the perceived limitations of Enlightenment thinking, particularly in connection with the complexity and emotional depth of the human experience.

³ Misprint for *aberrate*.

⁴ See John Milton, *Paradise Lost* VIII.83. Adam asks Raphael about the motions of the stars, sun, and planets, assuming that other planets orbit the earth. Raphael, however, explains that it is possible, although not certain, that the earth's circular motion on its axis might be responsible for such impression.

⁵ Laurence Sterne (1713-68), British novelist, author of *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759-67) and *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy* (1768), in which he blends humour, satire, and experimental narrative techniques.

⁶ See chapter 12 in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* III. Sterne contends that critics are so focused on rules and norms (here represented by a stop-watch that the critic insists on checking) that they fail to recognize or are unwilling to acknowledge works of genius.

⁷ John Milton (1608-74), English poet, political pamphleteer, and civil servant under the English statesman Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658). Milton's epic *Paradise Lost* (1667) follows the story of Satan's rebellion against God, his fall from Heaven, and the subsequent temptation of Adam and Eve.

⁸ See John Milton, *Paradise Lost* III.1-55 and VII.24-31.

⁹ Latin for *I am he*.

¹⁰ Variant of the verb *to imbue*.

¹¹ Christopher Columbus (1451-1506), Italian explorer. Shelley's allusion is to his first voyage across the Atlantic, which led to the European discovery of the American continent (1492).

¹² Robert Burton (1577-1640), English scholar and author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). He died around the time he had predicted years earlier based on the calculation of his nativity.

¹³ Michel de Montaigne (1533-92), French philosopher and essayist best known for his *Essais* (1580-88), which Mary Shelley read between 1818 and 1822.

¹⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), French philosopher and writer, whose *Confessions* (1782-89) are regarded as one of the first modern autobiographies.

¹⁵ James Boswell (1740-95), Scottish lawyer, diarist and biographer. He is known for his celebrated biography of the writer and lexicographer Samuel Johnson, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), read by Mary Shelley in 1820.

¹⁶ Joseph Spence (1699-1768), English scholar and contributor to the early development of the literary biography along with Rousseau and Boswell. He is remembered for his *Anecdotes, Observations, and Characters, of Books and Men*, published posthumously in 1820.

¹⁷ Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762), English writer. Her letters, written during her time in the Ottoman Empire, were collected in the volume *Embassy Letters* (1763).

¹⁸ Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97), English writer, philosopher, and early advocate for women's rights. Her *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796) blend personal reflections, observations of nature, and a critique of social and political conditions. They were read by her daughter, Mary Shelley, between 1814 and 1822.

¹⁹ Edward Gibbon (1737-94), English historian. Mary Shelley read his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88) between 1815 and 1818.

²⁰ *Memoirs of My Life and Writings* (1796) is an account of Edward Gibbon's life compiled by his friend John Baker Holroyd, 1st Earl of Sheffield (1735-1821). It offers insights into his personal life, intellectual development, and writing. Mary Shelley read it in 1815.

²¹ *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England, begun in the Year 1641* (1702-04), read by Mary Shelley between 1816 and 1819, is an account of the English Civil War (1642-51) by the Earl of Clarendon. In it, the author refers to himself in the third person as Mr. Hyde.

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²² Shelley's allusion is to Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, which portrays the spirits of several figures contemporary to himself and Villani.

²³ Reference to *Croniche di Messer Giovanni Villani, Cittadino Fiorentino* (1537) edited by Giacomo Fasolo.

²⁴ Charles Lamb (1775-1834), English essayist, poet and critic. His essays, celebrated for their wit and conversational tone, were published in *The London Magazine* between 1820 and 1823 under the pseudonym of 'Elia' and collected in book form as *Essays of Elia* (1823-33).

²⁵ Francesco Petrarca (1304-74), Italian poet and humanist, known for his *Canzoniere*, a collection of poems written, like Dante's *Divine Comedy*, in *lingua volgare*, or Tuscan vernacular.

²⁶ Allusion to the efforts of the Accademia della Crusca, a society of scholars of linguistics and philology founded in Florence in 1583 with the aim of maintaining the purity of the Italian language.

²⁷ Pope Boniface VIII (c. 1235-1303), head of the Catholic Church from 1294 to 1303. Boniface VIII was a controversial pontiff who sought to assert papal supremacy over secular rulers, famously clashing with King Philip IV of France (1268-1314) and issuing the papal bull *Unam Sanctam* (1302), claiming the pope's ultimate authority.

²⁸ Misprint. Incorrect page numbers from 287 to 302.

²⁹ According to the Christian tradition, the veil of Veronica is the handkerchief or veil impressed with Christ's features that appeared when Saint Veronica, a widow from Jerusalem, wiped Jesus' forehead as he was carrying the cross on Calvary Hill.

³⁰ St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, one of the holiest sites of Christianity.

³¹ Gaius Sallustius Cripus, anglicised as Sallust (c. 86-35 BCE), Roman historian and politician, and the earliest known Roman historian writing in Latin whose works have survived.

³² Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, known in English as Lucan (39-65 CE), Roman poet, author of the epic poem *Pharsalia* or *De Bello Civili*.

³³ Titus Livius, known in English as Livy, (59 BCE-17 CE), Roman historian. He authored *Ab Urbe Condita* (*From the Founding of the City*), a history of Rome and its people.

³⁴ Valerius Maximus, first-century writer and author of *Factorum et dictorum memorabilium libri IX* (*Nine books of memorable deeds and sayings*), a collection of historical anecdotes, most of which related to Roman history.

³⁵ Paulus Orosius (flourished 414-417 CE), Roman priest and historian. His *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans* is regarded as one of the most influential texts in historiography between antiquity and the Middle Ages.

³⁶ Archaic form of the noun *enterprise*.

³⁷ John the Baptist (b. 1st decade BCE-d. 28/36 CE), Jewish preacher and patron of Florence.

³⁸ Biblical reference: *Genesis* 11.1-9.

³⁹ Fiesole is an Italian town located four miles north-east of Florence.

⁴⁰ In Greek mythology, the siege of Troy marked the final stage of the war fought by the Greeks under king Agamemnon's leadership to reclaim Helen, the wife of his brother Menelaus.

⁴¹ Following the siege of Troy, the Trojan prince Antenor fled with Priam's infant son, Priam the younger, guiding the Eneidi to the northern Adriatic, where they settled in Venetia and founded Padua.

⁴² Lucius Sergius Catilina, known in English as Catiline (c. 108-62 BCE), Roman senator and politician. He is known for his failed conspiracy to overthrow the Roman Republic in 63 BCE. His attempts to seize power and overthrow the Roman consuls ultimately led to his downfall.

⁴³ Misprint for *Todi*.

⁴⁴ Although five of the leaders were captured, Catiline fled to Fiesole where he gathered his troops to fight against the state, but was ultimately defeated and killed in battle (see Giovanni Villani, *Croniche Florentine* I 36). Following Catiline's ill-fated campaign, the Etrusco-Roman city gained increasing importance thanks to its strategic position between the river and the hill. In the same year, Caesar ordered the construction of a military camp to secure Fiesole owing to the presence of large numbers of Catilinarian supporters.

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⁴⁵ Fought on 4 September 1260, the Battle of Montaperti was part of the conflict between Guelphs and Ghibellines, two factions supporting the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor respectively. Part of the battle is believed to have been fought near the river Arbia, in Siena. During the battle the people of Florence, who were Guelphs, were defeated by an army of refugee Ghibellines.

⁴⁶ Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti (d. 1216), noble Florentine of the Buondelmonti family. According to Villani, Buondelmonte was engaged to a maiden from the Amidei family. However, Buondelmonte fell in love with a woman from the Donati family and ended the engagement. The broken betrothal was viewed as a grave insult by the Amidei, who vowed to seek revenge. Thereafter, the Florentine nobility split into two factions, the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, and became embroiled in a bloody struggle for power.

⁴⁷ In the original, chapter 28.

⁴⁸ One of the stem-duchies of medieval Germany, governed by members of the Hohenstaufen family.

⁴⁹ Charles I, also known as Charles d'Anjou (1226-85), king of Naples and Sicily, and youngest brother of King Louis IX of France (1214-70). In 1266, he became King of Sicily after defeating the last Hohenstaufen ruler, Manfred, in battle.

⁵⁰ Manfred (1232-66), illegitimate son of Emperor Frederick II (1194-1250) and last King of Sicily of the Hohenstaufen family. His reign was marked by conflict with the Papacy and rival dynasties. In 1266, he was defeated and killed by Charles d'Anjou at the Battle of Benevento, ending the Hohenstaufen rule in Sicily. See also Mary Shelley's "A Tale of Passions" published in the second instalment of *The Liberal*.

⁵¹ Editorial interpolation.

⁵² Conrad IV (1228-54), king of Italy and, after the Emperor's death in 1250, king of Sicily as Conrad I. Manfred was appointed vicar of Italy and Sicily for his half-brother Conrad IV, but quickly began pursuing the Sicilian throne for himself.

⁵³ Editorial interpolation.

⁵⁴ Conrad III (1252-68), known by the diminutive Conradin, was Conrad IV's son and the last direct heir of the Hohenstaufen family. After his failed attempt to restore the Kingdom of Sicily to the Hohenstaufen dynasty, he was captured and executed by beheading.

⁵⁵ Homer, Greek poet.

⁵⁶ Livy, Roman historian.

⁵⁷ Philip IV, also known as Philippe le Bel (1268-1314), king of France from 1285 to 1314.

⁵⁸ Dante died between 13 and 14 September, as testified by the epitaph by Giovanni del Virgilio, *Theologus Dantes*.

⁵⁹ The da Polenta were a noble Italian family. In 1318-19, Guido Novello da Polenta (d. 1330) gave hospitality to Dante in Ravenna, after he had been exiled for his political involvement and the factional struggles between the Guelphs and Ghibellines.

⁶⁰ Basilica of San Francesco, a major church in Ravenna which hosted Dante's funeral in 1321.

⁶¹ Misprint for *division*.

⁶² Dante belonged to the small urban Guelph nobility and was born in the district of San Martino del Vescovo, in the quarter of Porta San Pietro, Florence.

⁶³ Charles of Valois (1270-1325), French prince. Charles led several campaigns in Italy, but his attempts to gain power, especially in Florence, were largely unsuccessful.

⁶⁴ See Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Inferno* XIX.54-81. Led by Virgil, Dante descends to the third gulf of hell, home of the guilty of simony who hang upside down with their feet ablaze. There, the spirit of Pope Nicholas III foretells that Pope Boniface VIII will soon occupy the very spot where he himself is suspended.

⁶⁵ See Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy: Purgatorio* III.110-41.

⁶⁶ Italian for *excommunicate*.

⁶⁷ *Vita Nova* (c. 1293) is an early collection of verse by Dante Alighieri. *Vita Nova* marked the beginning of his literary career and laid the thematic and formal foundations for his later work, *The Divine Comedy*.

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⁶⁸ Reference to the moral and allegorical *canzoni* of the first years of exile. Among them is Dante's "Tre donne intorno al cor mi son venute" (*Rime* 47 CIV). The three women allegorically represent Universal Justice, Human Justice, and Natural Law, and point at the general decline in justice that led to Dante's own unjust condemnation and exile.

⁶⁹ Only the second and third letters have survived.

⁷⁰ Editorial interpolation.

⁷¹ Clement V (c. 1260-1314), head of the Catholic Church from 1305. The letter to the Italian cardinals urging them to elect an Italian pope was aimed at restoring the papal seat in Rome. It was Clement V, formerly the Archbishop of Bordeaux, who had moved the papacy to Avignon.

⁷² Dante Alighieri's *De monarchia* (1313) is a political essay exploring the relationship between secular and spiritual power.

⁷³ Misprint. The correct header would be *GIOVANNI VILLANI*.

⁷⁴ *De vulgari eloquentia* is a Latin treatise by Dante Alighieri. In this work, Dante argues for the legitimacy and artistic potential of the vernacular, or common language, in contrast to Latin, then the language of scholarship and the Church.

⁷⁵ Misprint for *memorial*.

PULPIT ORATORY.*

DR. CHALMERS¹ AND MR. IRVING.²

THE Scotch at present seem to bear the bell, and to have “got the start of the majestic world.”³ They boast of the greatest novelists, the greatest preachers, the greatest philanthropists, and the greatest blackguards in the world. Sir Walter Scott⁴ stands at the head of these for Scotch humour, Dr. Chalmers for Scotch logic, Mr. Owen⁵ for Scotch Utopianism, and Mr. Blackwood⁶ for Scotch impudence. Unrivalled four! Nay, here is Mr. Irving, who threatens to make a fifth, and *stultify* all our London orators, from “kingly Kensington”⁷ to Blackwall! Who has not heard of him? Who does not go to hear him? You can scarcely move along for the coronet-coaches that besiege the entrance to the Caledonian chapel in Hatton-garden; and when, after a prodigious squeeze, you get in so as to have standing-room, you see in the same undistinguished crowd Brougham and Mackintosh,⁸ Mr. Peel and Lord Liverpool,⁹ Lord Landsdown and Mr. Coleridge.¹⁰ Mr. Canning and Mr. Hone¹¹ are pew fellows, Mr. Waithman¹² frowns stern applause, and Mr. Alderman Wood¹³ does the honours of the Meeting! The lamb lies down with the lion, and the Millennium seems to be anticipated in the Caledonian chapel, under the new Scotch preacher. Lords, ladies, sceptics, fanatics, join in approbation,—some admire the doctrine, others the sound, some the picturesque appearance of the

* Author: William Hazlitt / Transcribed and annotated by Alessandra Crotti.

orator, others the grace of action, some the ingenuity of the argument, others the beauty of the style or the bursts of passion, some even go so far as to patronize a certain *brackish* infusion of the Scottish dialect, and a slight defect of vision. Lady Bluemount¹⁴ declares it to be only inferior to the EXCURSION¹⁵ in imagination, and Mr. Botherby¹⁶ cries—“Good, good!” The “Talking Potato”^{*} and Mr. Theodore Flash¹⁷ have not yet been.

Mr. Irving appears to us the most accomplished barbarian, and the least offensive and most dashing clerical holder-forth we remember to have seen. He puts us in

^{*}Some years ago, a periodical paper was published in London, under the title of the PIC-NIC.¹⁸ It was got up under the auspices of a Mr. Fulke Greville,¹⁹ and several writers of that day contributed to it, among whom were Mr. Horace Smith,²⁰ Mr. Dubois,²¹ Mr. Prince Hoare,²² Mr. Cumberland,²³ and others. On some dispute arising between the proprietor and the gentlemen-contributors on the subject of an advance in the remuneration for articles, Mr. Fulke Greville grew heroic, and said, “I have got a young fellow just come from Ireland, who will undertake to do the whole, verse and prose, politics and scandal, for two guineas a week, and if you will come and sup with me to-morrow night, you shall see him, and judge whether I am not right in closing with him.” Accordingly, they met the next evening, and the WRITER OF ALL WORK was introduced. He began to make a display of his native ignorance and impudence on all subjects immediately, and no one else had occasion to say any thing. When he was gone, Mr. Cumberland exclaimed, “A talking potato, by God!” The talking potato was Mr. Croker,²⁴ of the Admiralty. Our adventurer shortly, however, returned to his own country, and passing accidentally through a town where they were in want of a ministerial candidate at an Election, the gentleman of modest assurance offered himself, and succeeded. “They wanted a Jack-pudding,” said the father of the hopeful youth, “and so they chose my son.” The case of the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke²⁵ soon after came on, and Mr. Croker, who is a dabbler in dirt, and an adept in love-letters, rose from the affair Secretary to the Admiralty, and the very “rose and expectancy of the fair State.”²⁶

mind of the first man, Adam, if Adam had but been a Scotchman, and had had coal black hair. He seems to stand up in the integrity of his composition, to begin a new race of practicing believers, to give new impulse to the Christian religion, to regenerate the fallen and degenerate race of man. You would say he had been turned out of the hands of Nature and the Schools a perfect piece of workmanship. See him in the street, he has the air, the free-swing, the *bolt upright* figure of an Indian savage, or a northern borderer dressed in canonicals: set him in the pulpit, and he is armed with all the topics, a master of fence, the pupil of Dr. Chalmers! In action he has been compared to Kean;²⁷ in the union of external and intellectual advantages, we might start a parallel for him in the admirable Chrichton.²⁸ He stands before Haydon's picture of Lazarus,²⁹ and says, "Look at me!" He crosses Piccadilly, and clears Bond-street of its beaux! Rob Roy, Macbriar is come again.³⁰ We saw him stretched on a bench at the Black Bull³¹ in Edinburgh,—we met him again at a thirteen-penny ordinary in London, in the same attitude, and said, without knowing his calling, or his ghostly parts, "That is the man for a fair saint." We swear it by

"His foot mercurial; his martial thigh;
The brawns of Hercules, but his jovial face!"³²

Aye, there we stop like Imogen³³—there is a want of expression in it. "The iron has not entered his soul."³⁴ He has not dared to feel but in trammels and in dread. He has read Werter³⁵ but to criticise him; Rousseau,³⁶ but to steel himself against him; Shakespear,³⁷ but to quote him; Milton,³⁸ but to round his periods. Pleasure, fancy, humanity, are syrens that he repels and keeps at arms-length; and hence his features are hardened, and have a barbaric crust upon them. They are

not steeped in the expression of Titian or Raphael;³⁹ but they would do for Spagnoletti⁴⁰ to paint, and his dark profile and matted locks have something of the grave commanding appearance of Leonardo da Vinci's massive portraits.⁴¹

Dr. Chalmers is not so good-looking a man as Mr. Irving; he wants the same vigour and spirit. His face is dead and clammy, cold, pale, bloodless, passionless, and there is a glazed look of insincerity about the eyes, uninformed, uninspired from within. His voice is broken, harsh, and creaking, while Mr. Irving's is flowing and silvery: his Scotch accent and pronunciation are a terrible infliction on the *uncultivated* ear. His "Whech observation I oorge upon you my frinds and breethren" desolates and lays waste all the humanities. He grinds out his sentences between his teeth, and catches at truth with his fists, as a monkey catches an apple or a stick thrown at him with his paws. He seems by his action and his utterance to say to difficulties, "Come, let me clutch thee,"⁴² and having got them in his grasp, tears and rends them in pieces as a dog tears an old rag to tatters or mumbles a stone that is flung in his way. Dr. Chalmers engages attention and secures sympathy solely by the intensity of his own purpose: there is neither eloquence nor wisdom, neither imagination nor feeling, neither the pomp of sound nor grace nor solemnity of manner about him, but he is in earnest, and eager in pursuit of his argument, and arrests the eye and ear of his congregation by this alone. He dashes headforemost into the briars and thorns of controversy, and drags you along with him whether you will or no, and your only chance is to push on and get out of them as well as you can, though dreadfully scratched and almost blinded. He involves you in a labyrinth, and you are anxious to escape from it: you have to pass through many a dark, subterranean cavern with him in his theological ferry-boat, and

are glad enough to get out on the other side, with the help of Scotch logic for oars, and Scotch rhetoric for sails! You hear no *home* truths, nothing that touches the heart, or swells or expands the soul; there is no tide of eloquence lifting you to Heaven, or wafting you from Indus to the Pole.—No, you are detained in a canal, with a great number of *locks* in it.—You make way by virtue of standing still, your will is irritated, and impelled forward by stoppages—you are puzzled into sympathy, pulled into admiration, tired into patience! The preacher starts a difficulty, of which you had no notion before, and you stare to see how he will answer it. He first makes you uneasy, sceptical, sensible of your helplessness and dependence upon his superior sagacity and recondite learning, and proportionably thankful for the relief he affords you in the unpleasant dilemma to which you have been reduced. It is like proposing a riddle, and then, after playing with the curiosity and impatience of the company for some time, giving the solution, which nobody else has the wit to find out. We never saw fuller attentances or more profound attention than at the Tron Church⁴³ in Glasgow—it was like a sea of eyes, a swarm of heads, gaping for mysteries, and staring for elucidations—it was not the sublime or beautiful; the secret was that which has been here explained, a desire to get rid of the difficult, the disagreeable, the dry, and the discordant matter that had been conjured up in the imagination. Dr. Chalmers, then, succeeds by the force of sophistry and casuistry, in our humble judgment. Riddles (of which we spoke just now) are generally traditional: those that Dr. Chalmers unfolds from the pulpit, are of his own invention, or at least promulgation. He started an objection to the Christian religion (founded on its supposed inconsistency with the Newtonian philosophy) which objection had never been noticed in books, on pur-

pose that he might answer it. "Well," said a Scotchman, "and if the answer was a good one, was he not right?" "No, assuredly," we should answer, "for there is no faith so firm as that which has never been called in question." The answer could only satisfy those who had been unsettled by the question; and there would be many who would not be convinced by the Doctor's reasoning, however he might plume himself on his success. We suspect that this is looking after a reputation for literary ingenuity and philosophical depth, rather than the peace of consciences or the salvation of souls; which, in a Christian minister, is unbecoming, and savours of the Mammon of unrighteousness. We ourselves were staggered by the blow (either then or long before) and still gasp for a reply, notwithstanding Dr. Chalmers's nostrum. Let the reader briefly judge:—The Doctor tells us, it may be said, that the Christian Dispensation supposes that the counsels of God turn upon this world as its center; that there is a heaven above and an earth beneath; and that man is the lord of the universe, the only creature made in the divine likeness, and over whom Providence watches, and to whom revelations are given, and an inheritance everlasting. This agrees with the cosmogony of Moses,⁴⁴ which makes the earth the center of all things, and the sun, moon, and stars, little shining spots like silver sixpences, moving round it. But it does not so well agree with Newton's *Principia*⁴⁵ (we state Dr. Chalmers's objection) which supposes the globe we inhabit to be but a point in the immensity of the universe; that ours is but one, and that the most insignificant (perhaps) among innumerable worlds, filled, probably, with created intelligences, rational and fallen souls, that share the eye of God with us, and who require to know that their Redeemer liveth. We alone (it would appear) cannot pretend to monopolize heaven or hell: there are other contin-

gent candidates besides us. Jacob's dream was poetical and natural, while the earth was supposed to be a flat surface and the blue sky hung over it, to which angels might ascend by a ladder, and the face of God be seen at the top, as his lofty and unchangeable abode; but this beautiful episode hardly accords with the Antipodes. Sir Isaac turned the world upon its back, and divided heaven from itself, and removed it far from every one of us. As we thought the universe turned round the earth as its pivot, so religion turned round man as its center, as the sole, important, moral and accountable agent in existence. But there are other worlds revolving in infinite space, to which this is a speck. Are they all desert, worthless? Were they made for us? Have they no especial dispensations of life and light? Have we alone a God, a Saviour, revealed to us? Is religion triumphant only here, or is it itinerant through each? It can hardly seem that we alone have occupied the thoughts or been the sole objects of the plans of infinite wisdom from eternity—that our life, resurrection, and judgment to come, are the whole history of a wide-seeing Providence, or the loftiest events in the grand drama of the universe, which was got up as a theatre only for us to perform our petty parts in, and then to be cast, most of us, into hell fire? Dr. Chalmers's *Astronomical Discourses* indeed may be said to dwarf his mighty subject, and make mankind a very Lilliputian race of beings, which this Gulliver⁴⁶ in vain dandles in the hard, broad, brawny hand of school divinity, and tries to lift into their bigotted self-sufficiency and exclusive importance again. How does he answer his own objection, and turn the tables on himself—how reverse this pitiful, diminished perspective, and aggrandise us in our own estimation once more as undoubted heirs of heaven or of hell—the sole favoured or reprobated sons of God? Why, his answer is this—that the

microscope has done as much to lift man in the scale of being, and to enlarge the bounds of this atom the earth, as the telescope has done to circumscribe and lessen it; that there are infinite gradations BELOW man, worlds within worlds, as there are degrees of being above, and stars and suns blazing round each other; that, for what we know, a speck, a lucid drop circulating in a flea's back, may be another habitable globe like this!—And has that, too, a revelation of its own, an avenging God, and a Christ crucified? Does every particle in a flea's back contain a Mosaic dispensation, a Popish and a Protestant religion? Has it its Tron church and its Caledonian chapel, and Dr. Chalmers's Discourses and Mr. Irving's orations in little? This does not seem to obviate the difficulty, but to increase it a million-fold. It is his objection and his answer to it, not ours: if blasphemy, it is his; and, if orthodoxy, he is entitled to all the credit of it. But his whole scheme shows how impossible it is to reconcile the faith delivered to the saints with the subtleties and intricacies of metaphysics. It displays more pride of intellect than simplicity of heart, is an insult equally on the understandings or prejudices of men, and could only have been hit upon by that personification and abstraction of cross-purposes, a Scotch metaphysical divine. In his general preaching, Dr. Chalmers is a great casuist, and a very indifferent moralist. He states the *pros* and *cons* of every question with extreme pertinacity, and often "spins the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument."⁴⁷ He assigns possible reasons, not practical motives, for conduct; and vindicates the ways of God, and his own interpretation of the Scriptures, to the head, not to the heart. The old school-divines set this practice afoot; for being accustomed to hear the secrets of confession, and to salve the tender consciences of the great and powerful, they had to bandy all sorts of questions about;

and if they could find out “a loop or peg to hang a doubt on,”⁴⁸ were well rewarded for their trouble; they were constantly reduced to their shifts, and forced to go on the forlorn hope of morality by the ticklish cases referred to them for arbitration: and when they had exhausted the resources of humanity and natural sentiment, endeavoured to find new topics within the range of abstract reason and possibility. Dr. Chalmers’s reasoning is as unlike as possible to a chapter in the Gospels: but he may do very well to comment on the Apocalypse or an Epistle of St. Paul’s. We do not approve of this method of carving out excuses or defences of doctrinal points from the dry parchment of the understanding or the cobwebs of the brain. Whatever sets or leaves the dogmas of religion at variance with the dictates of the heart, hardens the last, and lends no advantage to the first.

Mr. Irving is a more amiable moralist, and a more practical reasoner. He throws a glancing, pleasing light over the gloomy ground of Calvinism.⁴⁹ There is something humane in his appeals, striking in his apostrophes, graceful in his action, soothing in the tones of his voice. He is not affected and theatrical; neither is he deeply impassioned or overpowering from the simple majesty of his subject. He is above common-place both in fancy and argument; yet he can hardly rank as a poet or philosopher. He is a modernised covenanter, a sceptical fanatic. We do not feel exactly on sure ground with him—we scarcely know whether he preaches Christ crucified, or himself. His pulpit style has a resemblance to the *florid gothic*. We are a little *mystified* when a man with one hand brings us all the nice distinctions and air-drawn speculations of modern unbelievers, and arms the other with “fire hot from Hell,”⁵⁰—when St. Paul and Jeremy Bentham,⁵¹ the Evangelists and the Sorrows of Werter,⁵² Seneca,⁵³ Shakespear, the author of

Caleb Williams and the Political Justice,⁵⁴ are mingled together in the same passage, and quoted in the same breath, however eloquent that breath may be. We see Mr. Irving smile with decent scorn at this remark, and launch one more thunderbolt at the critics. He is quite welcome, and we should be proud of his notice. In the discourses he has lately delivered, and which have drawn crowds to admire them, he has laboured to describe the Sensual Man, the Intellectual Man, the Moral Man, and the Spiritual Man; and has sacrificed the three first at the shrine of the last. He gave certainly a terrific picture of the death-bed of the Sensual Man—a scene where few shine—but it is a good subject for oratory, and he made the most of it. He described the Poet well, walking by the mountain side, in the eye of nature—yet oppressed, panting rather than satisfied, with beauty and sublimity. Neither Fame nor Genius, it is most true, are all-sufficient to the mind of man! He made a fair hit at the Philosophers; first, at the Political Economist, who draws a circle round man, gives him so many feet of earth to stand upon, and there leaves him to starve in all his nobler parts and faculties: next, at the Great Jurisconsult, who carves out a mosaic work of motives for him, cold, hard, and dry, and expects him to move mechanically in right lines, squares, and parallelograms, drills him into perfection, and screws him into utility. He then fell foul of the Moralist and Sentimentalist, weighed him in the balance and found him wanting—deficient in clearness of sight to discern good, in strength of hand and purpose to seize upon it when discerned. But Religion comes at last to the aid of the Spiritual Man, couches the blind sight, and braces the paralytic limb; the Lord of Hosts is in the field, and the battle is won, his countenance pours light into our souls,

and his hand stretched out imparts strength to us, by which we tower to our native skies! In treating of this subject, Mr. Irving introduced several powerful images and reflections, to show how feeble moral and intellectual motives are to contend with the allurements of sense and the example of the world. Reason alone, he said, was no more able to stem the tide of prejudice and fashion, than the swimmer with his single arm (here he used an appropriate and spirited gesture, which reminded us of the description of the heroic action of the swimmer in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*)⁵⁵ is able to oppose the raging torrent, as the voice of conscience was only heard in the tumultuous scenes of life like the faint cry of the sea-bird in the wide world of waters. He drew an animated but mortifying sketch of the progress of the Patriot and Politician, weaned by degrees from his attachment to young Liberty to hug old Corruption; and showed (strikingly enough) that this change from youthful ardour to a hoary, heartless old age of selfishness and ridicule (there were several Members of the Honourable House present) was not owing to increased wisdom or strength of sight, but to faltering resolution and weakness of hand, that could no longer hold out against the bribes, the snares, and gilded chains prepared for it. The romantic Tyro was right and free, the callous Courtier was a slave and self-conceited. All this was true; it was honest, downright, and well put. There was no cant in it, as far as regards the unequal odds and the hard battle that reason has to fight with pleasure, or ambition, or interest, or other antagonist motives. But does the objection apply to morality solely, or has not religion its share in it? Man is not what he ought to be—Granted; but is he not different from this ideal standard, in spite of religion as well as of morality? Is not the religious man often a slave to power,

the victim of pleasure, the thrall of avarice, hard of heart, a sensual hypocrite, cunning, mercenary, miserable? If it be said that the really religious man is none of these, neither is the truly moral man. Real morality, as well as vital christianity, implies right conduct and consistent principle. But the question simply at issue is, whether the profession or the belief of sound moral opinions implies these; and it certainly does it no more than the profession or belief of orthodox religious opinions does. The conviction of the good or ill consequences of our actions in this life does not absolutely conform the will or the desires to good; neither does the apprehension of future rewards or punishments produce this effect completely or necessarily. The candidate for Heaven is a back-slider; the dread of eternal torments makes but a temporary impression on the mind. This is not a reason, in our judgement, for neglecting or giving up in despair the motives of religion or morality, but for strengthening and cultivating both. With Mr. Irving, it is a triumphant and unanswerable ground for discarding and denouncing morality, and for exalting religion, as the sovereign cure for all wounds, as the *thaumaturgos*, or wonder-worker, in the reform of mankind! We are at a loss to understand how this exclusive and somewhat intolerant view of the subject is reconcileable with sound reason or with history. Religion is no new experiment now first making on mankind; we live in the nineteenth century of the Christian æra; it is not as if we lived in the age of apostles, when we might (from novelty and inexperience of the intended dispensations of Providence) expect the earth to wear a new face, and darkness suddenly to flee away before the light of the gospel: nor do we apprehend that Mr. Irving is one of those who believe with Mr. Croly,⁵⁶ that the millennium actually commenced with the battle of

Waterloo; that event seems as far off, to all outward appearance, as it was two thousand years ago. What does this make against the doctrines of christianity? Nothing; if, as far as they are implanted and take root, they bear fruit accordingly, notwithstanding the repugnance and thanklessness of the soil. Why then is Mr. Irving so hard upon the labours of philosophers, moralists, and men of letters, because they do not do all their work at once? Bishop Butler⁵⁷ indeed wrote a most able and learned quarto volume, to prove that the slow growth and imperfect influence of christianity was a proof of its divine origin, and that in this respect we had a right to look for a direct *analogy* between the operations of the worlds of grace and nature, both proceeding as they did from the same Almighty hands! Our deservedly popular preacher has, however, an answer to what we have here stated: he says, “the time **MUST** and **WILL** shortly come!” We never contradict prophecies; we only speak to facts. In addressing himself to this point, Mr. Irving made a spirited digression to the Missionary Societies, and the impending propagation of the Gospel at home and abroad—all obstacles to it would speedily be surmounted:—“The Negro slave was not so enchained but that the Gospel would set him free; the Hottentot was not so benighted but that its light would penetrate to him; the South Sea Islander was not so indolent and voluptuous but that he would rouse himself as its call; neither the cunning of the Italian, nor the superstition of the Spaniard, not the tameness of the German, nor the levity of the French, nor the buoyancy of the Irish, nor the indomitable pride of the English, nor the *fiery manhood* of the Scotch, would be long able to withstand its all-pervading influence!” We confess, when our Caledonian pastor launched his canoe from the South Sea Isles and landed on European *terra firma*,

taking measure of the vices of each nation that were opposed to the spirit of christianity, we did *prick up* our ears to know what fault he would, in due course of argument, find with his native country—it would go against the grain, no doubt, but still he had undertaken it, and he must speak out—When lo! for some sneaking vice or sordid pettifogging disposition, we have our own “best virtue”⁵⁸ palmed upon us as the only failing of the most magnanimous natives of the North—*fiery manhood*, quotha! The cold sweat of rankling malice, hypocrisy, and servility, would be nearer the mark—Eh! Sir Walter?⁵⁹ Nay, good Mr. Blackwood,⁶⁰ we meant no offence to you! “Fiery manhood” is the Anti-Christian vice or virtue of the Scotch that meets true religion on the borders, and beats her back with suffocating breath! Is Christianity still then to be planted like oak timber in Scotland? What will Dr. Chalmers and the other labourers in the vineyard say to this?—“We pause for a reply!”⁶¹ The best and most impressive part of Mr. Irving’s discourse (Sunday, the 22nd June) was that, in which he gave a very beautiful account of what Christianity had done, or rather might do, in aid of morality and the regeneration of the spirit of man. It had made “corruption blossom,” “annihilated time in the prospect of eternity,” and “changed all nature, from a veil hiding the face of God, into a mirror reflecting his power and beneficence.” We do not, however, see why in the fervour of his enthusiasm he should affirm “that Jesus Christ had destroyed melody,” nor why, by any allowed licence of speech, he should talk of “the mouth of God being muzzled by man.” We might not perhaps have noticed this last expression, considering it as a slip of the tongue; but Mr. Irving preaches from written notes, and his style is, on the whole, polished and ambitious. We can conceive of a deeper strain of argument, of a more

powerful and overwhelming flood of eloquence; but altogether we deem him an able and attractive expounder of Holy Writ; and farther, we believe him to be an honest man. We suspect there is a radical "taint in him," and that Mr. Canning⁶² will be advised to withdraw himself from the congregation. His strokes aimed at iniquity in high places are bold, unsparing, and repeated. We would however suggest to him the propriety of containing his indignation at the advancement of the secular priesthood by "the powers that be;" it is a thing of course, and his impatience of their elevation may be invidiously construed into a jealousy of the spoil. When we compare Mr. Irving with some other preachers that we have heard, and particularly with that crawling sycophant Daniel Wilson⁶³ (who tendered his gratuitous submission to Nero the other day in the excess of his loyalty to George IV⁶⁴.) we are sorry that we have not been able to make our tribute of approbation unqualified as it is cordial, and to stifle *their* venal breath with the applauses bestowed upon *him*. "Oh! for an *eulogy* to kill"⁶⁵ all such with!

[The following has also lost its way to us. We take it in as a foundling, but without adopting all its sentiments.]

MR. IRVING, THE QUACK-PREACHER.

WE have always set our faces against cant, quackery, and imposture, in every shape; but we think, of all places, the pulpit should be sacred from these. It ought to be the chosen retreat of simplicity, gravity, and decorum. What then must be the feelings of every well-wisher to religion and good order, who witnesses the disgraceful scenes that

are weekly acting at the Caledonian Chapel—the place itself resembling a booth at a fair, and the pulpit made into a stage for a tall, raw-boned, hard-featured, impudent Scotch quack to play off his ambiguous person and obscene antics upon? It is difficult to analyze Mr. Irving's figure. His hair is black and matted like a mane, his beard blue and *singed*; and he verges in his general appearance to the *simious* tribe, but of the largest species. To hear this person, so qualified, bandy Scotch dialectics, and “sweet religion make a rhapsody of words,”⁶⁶ the great, the learned, and the fair, leering dowagers, and faded (or fading) blue stockings, throng twice every Lord's Day—for what?—to admire indecency, blasphemy, and sedition, twanged through the nose, and to be told that he (Mr. Irving) has come up from the banks of the Esk⁶⁷ with huge, hasty strides to *introduce God Almighty in London*, and to prop the falling throne of Heaven with his raised right arm! This is too much, though Mr. Irving is six feet three inches high, and a Scotchman. One would think that the Christian and Protestant religion was of too old a standing to be put into leading-strings now, and that the fashionable and the fair will hardly consent to be baptised by this new St. John⁶⁸ in the kennels of Saffron-hill⁶⁹ and the mud of Fleet-ditch.⁷⁰ Yet, when one looks at the half-saint, half-savage, it *does* seem as if society was to begin again; and all our pre-established notions were confounded by the cross-fire of his double vision. A portentous cast in the right eye is one of the engines with which the orator supports his quackery—it is not a mote, but a beam—which he levels like a battering-ram at my Lord Liverpool⁷¹ (*proh pudor!*) accompanied with a taunt on his Majesty's Minister and Government—which glances off from the gentle skull of Hone the parodist to Canning's polished forehead,⁷² and falls plump on the

shaven crown of Mr. B—— M——, who sits on the steps of the pulpit, with a forlorn attitude and expression, like one of Cibber's⁷³ celebrated figures. What did Mr. Irving mean, last Sunday, by issuing a Proclamation in the name of the King of Heaven, appointing himself Crier of the Court, beginning with a TO WIT, TO WIT, and ending with damnation to all those who do not go to hear him? He ought to have been hissed like a bad player who leaves his part to foist in fustian of his own. It would not have been borne but in the Scotch accent; and the outrage was carried off by the oddity of the thing. What did he mean by saying, the Sunday before last, that the God of natural religion was like the Great Desert—dry, disagreeable, comfortless, deadly—where no one wished to dwell? No one, we will be bold to say, would venture upon this gross insult to the God of Nature (whom we apprehend to be also the God of Christians) without that strong obliquity of mental vision that can keep natural religion in one eye and revealed religion in the other, look grave on the parent and fulsome on the daughter. Why does Mr. Irving cut and carve and make minced-meat of the attributes of the Almighty, to shock the pious and make the ignorant stare? Why did he, on last Lord's day assert, by an impudent figure, that the God of Mercy was like Alsatia,⁷⁴ where the scum of mankind took refuge? Does not this brawny bravo of the Caledonian Kirk⁷⁵ want an asylum for himself? Would it not be thought indecent and profane in us to retort such a metaphor, and ask this insane reviler whether, on his theory, the God of Justice is not the God of Newgate,⁷⁶ and he himself a volunteer Jack Ketch?⁷⁷ We say the indecency, the profaneness would not be in us, but in the original allusion. Mr. Irving will find before long that he cannot play with religion as with cups and balls; that he cannot insult the feelings, the prejudices,

and common sense of mankind with impunity; and that, instead of taking implicit faith and established opinions in pieces, he had better let them remain in their original integrity. With respect to that last figure of his about Alsatia, we beg to say, that the founder of the Christian religion has left a parable behind him about the Prodigal Son,⁷⁸ but perhaps this authority may not weigh with the *modern* Saviour of the polite world! In a word, this favourite of the frail votaries of religious theatricals should beware, with his tricks, his finery, and his goodly proportions, of the fate of Apuleius's Golden Ass.⁷⁹ Still he might do in America.

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), Scottish Presbyterian minister, theologian, and social reformer. He became a prominent leader in the Church of Scotland, advocating for evangelical reforms and social welfare.

² Edward Irving (1792-1834), Scottish clergyman and theologian, known for his charismatic leadership and influence on the early Pentecostal movement and for founding the Catholic Apostolic Church. Hazlitt attended one of his sermons at the Caledonian Chapel in Hatton Garden in 1823 and wrote and account in which he listed the names of the notable figures present on the occasion.

³ See William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* I.ii.137.

⁴ Sir Walter Scott, Scottish novelist and poet.

⁵ Robert Owen (1771-1858), textile manufacturer, social reformer, and founder of utopian socialism.

⁶ William Blackwood (1776-1834), Scottish publisher and founder of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in 1817. The magazine gathered a host of writers and gained notoriety for launching personal attacks on public figures, leading to several lawsuits against it.

⁷ Reference to Jonathan Swift's ballad "Duke Upon Duke", line 56.

⁸ Sir James Mackintosh (1765-1832) and Henry Peter Brougham (1778-1868), Whig politicians and rectors of the University of Glasgow.

⁹ Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) and Robert Banks Jenkinson, 2nd Earl of Liverpool (1770-1828), British Tory statesmen. Between 1822 and 1827, Peel was Home Secretary in Liverpool's government.

¹⁰ Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), English poet and literary critic. In his letters, he claims to have attended one of the gatherings and defines Irving "the super-Ciceronian, ultra-Demosthenic pulpiteer of the Scotch Chapel in Cross Street, Hatton Garden" (7 July 1823) and "the greatest *orator* I even heard" (23 July 1823).

¹¹ William Hone (1780-1842), English writer and publisher, famous for his satirical works and defiance of government censorship. Hone is known for his trial in 1817, where he successfully defended himself against charges of blasphemy. During one of his trials, Hone relied on the legal principle of precedent, showing the jury that parodies of the Scriptures – when supportive of the government – were not prosecuted. He extensively quoted from other people's Scripture parodies, which had not faced legal action. He cited, among others, the British Tory statesman George Canning (1770-1827), who had written such parodies without facing prosecution, and concluded that his own parodies should not be treated as exceptions to the general rule.

¹² Robert Waithman (1764-1833), British politician and radical reformer, known for his advocacy of parliamentary reform and workers' rights.

¹³ Sir Matthew Wood (1768-1843), British Whig politician who served as Lord Mayor of London and Member of Parliament. Wood supported the expansion of suffrage and was involved in promoting the rights of the working class.

¹⁴ Misprint for *Beaumont*. Margaret Beaumont (c. 1766-1829), British socialite, philanthropist, and supporter of the arts.

¹⁵ Possible reference to the poem *The Excursion* (1814) by William Wordsworth, who was Margaret Beaumont's close friend.

¹⁶ Nickname possibly referred to the English poet, playwright, and translator William Sotheby (1757-1833). He gained recognition for his attempts at writing dramatic works and his translations of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The nickname may be explained by Sotheby's persistent attempts as a dramatic author.

¹⁷ Possible reference to Theodore Hook (1788-1841), English writer, playwright, and practical joker, known for his sharp wit and satirical works. In his Sunday newspaper *John Bull*, Hook denounced Irving as a humbug (20 July 1823) as testified by Coleridge; in one of his letters, Coleridge wrote Irving had been "so blackguarded in the 'John Bull' of last Sunday" (23 July 1823).

¹⁸ The *Pic-Nic* (1803) was a short-lived literary periodical established by Lt. Col. Henry Francis Greville, and edited by the British author William Combe (1742-1823).

¹⁹ Henry Francis Greville (1760-1816), British impresario. He is also known for his role in the early stages of *The Cabinet* and for his involvement in the cultural and political circles of his time.

EDITORIAL NOTES

²⁰ Horace Smith (1779-1849), English poet and novelist. Together with his brother, he wrote parodies of poets of their time including William Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge, and Lord Byron, and collected them in *Rejected Addresses* (1812).

²¹ Edward Dubois (1774-1850), English man of letters. He contributed regularly to the *Morning Chronicle* and was an art critic for *The Observer*. With Theodore Hook, he became editor of the *Monthly Mirror*.

²² Prince Hoare (1755-1834), English painter and playwright. Among his works was the popular farce *No Song, No Supper* (1790).

²³ Richard Cumberland (1732-1811), English dramatist and editor of the short-lived periodical *The London Review* (1809).

²⁴ John Wilson Croker (1780-1857), Anglo-Irish statesman and writer for the *Quarterly Review*. Croker served as Tory MP and became an influential political figure in early nineteenth-century Britain; he is remembered for his critical role in the development of the Admiralty as well as his contentious literary criticism.

²⁵ In 1803, Mary Anne Clarke (1776-1852) and Prince Frederick, Duke of York (1763-1827) became entangled in an illicit affair which turned into a political scandal when the press spread the news that she had employed her influence over the duke to obtain army commissions in exchange for financial gain.

²⁶ See William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* III.i.166.

²⁷ Edmund Kean (1787-1833), actor celebrated for his intense and passionate performances of Shakespearean roles. Breaking away from the more formal traditions of the time, he revolutionized acting thanks to his emotional depth and dramatic style.

²⁸ Misspelling for *Crichton*. James Crichton (1560-c. 1585), known as The Admirable Crichton, was a Scottish rhetorician. His remarkable talents and mastery of several fields of knowledge – including languages, philosophy, and swordsmanship – earned him widespread admiration across Europe during the Renaissance, especially in Italy.

²⁹ Reference to the painting *The Raising of Lazarus* (1821-23) by historical painter Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846)

³⁰ Reference to Walter Scott's Waverly novels *Old Mortality* (1816) and *Rob Roy* (1817). Robert Roy Macgregor (1671-1734) was a Scottish outlaw who became a Jacobite folk hero. In Scott's novel, Ephraim Macbriar is a covenanting preacher supposedly based on Hugh Mackail (c. 1640-66), Scottish martyr of the covenant.

³¹ Public house and hotel.

³² See William Shakespeare, *Cymbeline* IV.ii.383-84.

³³ Imogen, daughter of King Cymbeline in Shakespeare's play *Cymbeline*. In his *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (1817), Hazlitt writes that "of all Shakespear's women she is perhaps the most tender and the most artless".

³⁴ Biblical reference: see *Psalms* 105.18.

³⁵ Reference to epistolary novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) by German author Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), a seminal work of the *Sturm und Drang* movement exploring the intense emotional turmoil of the eponymous young artist.

³⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, French philosopher and writer.

³⁷ William Shakespeare (1564-1616), English playwright, poet, and actor.

³⁸ John Milton, English poet.

³⁹ Tiziano Vecellio, known in English as Titian (1488/90-1576) and Raffaello Sanzio, known in English as Raphael (1483-1520) were Italian Renaissance painters. Titian's art is characterized by its emotional depth and vibrant colour, while Raphael's is distinguished by its classical balance and serene beauty.

⁴⁰ Jusepe de Ribera, known as Spagnoletto (1591-1652), Spanish painter. Ribera is renowned for his masterful use of tenebrism, a technique emphasizing stark contrasts between light and dark to heighten emotional impact.

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⁴¹ Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Italian scientist, inventor and artist of the Renaissance. His portraits – such as *Lady with an Ermine* (1489), *La Belle Ferronnière* (1490-99), and *Mona Lisa* (1503) – exemplify his mastery of light and shadow, particularly using the *sfumato* technique, which brought unprecedented life-like quality and emotional depth to his subjects.

⁴² See William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* II.i.45.

⁴³ The Tron Church is an evangelical Presbyterian church in Glasgow known for its rich tradition of expositional preaching.

⁴⁴ Moses is a central figure in the Abrahamic religions, known as the leader who liberated the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Mosaic cosmogony, as presented in the Book of Genesis, emphasizes the orderliness and intentionality of God's creation.

⁴⁵ Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), English mathematician, physicist, and astronomer, widely regarded as one of the most influential scientists in history. His *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687) laid the foundations of modern physics and astronomy.

⁴⁶ Reference to Jonathan Swift's satirical novel *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), in which Lemuel Gulliver travels to lands such as Lilliput, where the inhabitants are tiny, and Brobdingnag, in which they are giants.

⁴⁷ See William Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost* V.i.17-18.

⁴⁸ See William Shakespeare, *Othello* III.iii.418-19.

⁴⁹ Calvinism is a branch of Protestant theology based on the teachings of John Calvin (1509-64), emphasizing the sovereignty of God, the authority of Scripture, and the doctrine of predestination.

⁵⁰ See William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* III.i.297.

⁵¹ Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), English philosopher and social reformer, best known as the founder of utilitarianism. He advocated for legal and social reforms, including the abolition of slavery and animal rights.

⁵² Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774).

⁵³ Lucius Annaeus Seneca the Younger, known as Seneca (4 BCE-65 CE), Roman Stoic philosopher, statesman, and playwright, also known for his writings on ethics.

⁵⁴ Reference to the English writer and philosopher William Godwin (1756-1836). His treatise titled *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) is an influential critique of political institutions and the first work to outline the principles of anarchism; his popular Gothic novel *Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794) explores the consequences of unchecked authority.

⁵⁵ Reference to the prose pastoral romance *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1580) by the poet and courtier Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86).

⁵⁶ George Croly (1780-1860), Irish writer and Anglican priest. He was a regular contributor to the *Literary Gazette* and *Blackwood's Magazine*.

⁵⁷ Joseph Butler (1692-1752), English Anglican bishop and philosopher. Hazlitt's allusion is to Butler's treatise *The Analogy of Religion* (1736), which defends the reasonableness of Christianity by comparing religious doctrines to the natural world.

⁵⁸ See William Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well* IV.iii.272.

⁵⁹ Sir Walter Scott, Scottish novelist and poet.

⁶⁰ William Blackwood, Scottish publisher.

⁶¹ See William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* III.ii.36.

⁶² George Canning, British Tory statesman.

⁶³ Daniel Wilson (1778-1858), English Bishop of Calcutta. At that time, Wilson was minister at St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row, Bloomsbury.

⁶⁴ George IV (1762-1830), who reigned from 1820 to 1830.

⁶⁵ See "Oh, for a curse to kill with" in Thomas Otway, *Venice Preserv'd* II.ii.

⁶⁶ See William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* III.iv.56-57.

⁶⁷ The River Esk flows through Midlothian and East Lothian in Scotland.

⁶⁸ John the Baptist.

⁶⁹ Saffron Hill is a street and former ward located in Holborn, London, and the location of some of London's most infamous slums.

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⁷⁰ The River Fleet is the largest underground river in London. As London expanded, the river was gradually reduced to an open-air sewer and the area around it became known for its poor housing and prisons. See Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad* II.271-274.

⁷¹ Robert Banks Jenkinson, British Tory statesman.

⁷² George Canning, British Tory statesman.

⁷³ Colley Cibber (1671-1757), English actor-manager and playwright. He served as the poet laureate of England and was a prominent figure in Drury Lane Theatre. He also became involved in literary controversies and is generally remembered as the main target in Alexander Pope's satirical poem *The Dunciad* (1728-43).

⁷⁴ Historical region located in northeastern France, bordered by Germany and Switzerland.

⁷⁵ Scottish for *church*.

⁷⁶ Newgate was a notorious prison in London, originally built in the twelfth century and active until its closure in 1902. It housed many infamous criminals and became synonymous with crime and punishment in London.

⁷⁷ John Ketch, known as Jack Ketch (d. 1686), English executioner under King Charles II. In time, the expression *Jack Ketch* became a proverbial term for death, Satan, and executioners generally owing to Ketch's botched executions.

⁷⁸ Biblical reference: see *Luke* 15.11-32.

⁷⁹ Reference to *Metamorphoses* by Roman writer Apuleius (c. 125-c. 180), also referred to as *The Golden Ass*. It tells the story of Lucius who is transformed into a donkey as a result of his insatiable *curiositas* and desire to practice magic.

THE FIRST CANTO OF THE SQUIRE'S TALE OF CHAUCER,¹ MODERNIZED.*

Of Cambus,² the great Tartar King,
And his fair flower blossoming;
And what came riding in the hall,
When he held his festival.

At Sarra, in the land of Tartary,
There dwelt a king, the best beneath the sky:
In prime of life he was a valiant man,
And Cambus was he called, the noble Khan.
No where, in all that region, had a crown
Been ever worn with such entire renown.
Hardy he was and wise, true to his word,
He kept his oath as stoutly as his sword.
His presence marked so well the soul within,
Men trembled when they heard his pomp begin;
And yet his ways were gentle and benign;
But there seemed something in his star, divine;
For not more fresh was he for arms anew,
Than sure to beat where'er his trumpets blew;
And therewithal he ever kept a state
So fit to uphold a throne so fortunate,
That there was no where such another man.

* Author: Leigh Hunt / Transcribed and annotated by Alessandra Crotti.

This noble king, this Tartar, Cambus Khan,*
Had by the late Queen Elfeta, his wife,
Two sons, named Cambalu and Algarsife,
And a dear daughter, Canace by name,
Whose perfect beauty puts my pen to shame.
If you could see my heart, it were a glass
To show perhaps how fair a thing she was;
But when I speak of her, my tongue appears
To fail me, looking in that face of hers.
'Tis well for me that I regard not those,
Who love what I do, as my natural foes;
Or when I think how dear she is to be
To one that will adorn this history,
And how her heart will love him in return,
My paper, sooner than be touched, should burn:
But she knows nothing of all this at present,
She's only young, and innocent, and pleasant;
And sometimes by her father sits and sighs,
On which he stoops to kiss her gentle-lidded eyes.

And so befel, that when this Khan supreme
Had twenty winters borne his diadem,
He had the feast of his nativity
Cried throughout Sarra, as it was wont to be.
It was in March; and the young lusty year
Came in with such a flood of golden cheer,
That the quick birds, against the sunny sheen,
What for the season and the thickening green,

*This commencement of a fresh paragraph with the second line of a couplet (together with the couplet itself) is retained from the original. It has a fine air of resumption with it, at least to my ear; and is the only good thing which the French have had taste enough to retain from their old poetry.

Sung their affections loudly o'er the fields:
They seemed to feel that they had got them shields
Against the sword of winter, keen and cold.

High is the feast in Sarra, that they hold;
And Cambus, with his royal vestments on,
Sits at a separate table on a throne;
His sons a little lower on the right;
His daughter on the left, a gentle sight;
And then his peers apart from either wall,
Ranged in majestic drapery down the hall.
The galleries on two sides have crowded slants
Of ladies leaning over and gallants;
And o'er the doorway, opposite the king,
The proud musicians blow their shawms and sing.
But to relate the whole of their array
Would keep me from my tale a summer's day;
Ans so I pass the service and the cost,
The often-silenced noise, the lofty toast,
And the glad symphonies, that leaped to thank
The lustre-giving Lord, whene'er he drank.
Suffice to say that, after the third course,
His vassals, while the sprightly wine's in force,
And the warm music mingles over all,
Bring forth their gifts and set them in the hall;
And so befel, that when the last was set,
And while the king sat thus in his estate,
Hearing his minstrels playing from on high
Before him at his board deliciously,
All on a sudden, ere he was aware,
Through the hall door and the mute wonder there,
There came a stranger on a steed of brass,
And in his hand he held a looking-glass;

Some sparkling ring he wore; and by his side
Without a sheath a cutting sword was tied.
And up he rides unto the royal board:
In all the hall there was not spoke a word:
All wait with busy looks, both young and old,
To hear what wonderous thing they shall be told.

The stranger, who appeared a noble page,
High-bred, and of some twenty years of age,
Dismounted from his horse; and kneeling down,
Bowed low before the face that wore the crown;
Then rose, and revered lady, lords, and all,
In order as they sat within the hall,
With such observance, both in speech and air,
That certainly had Roustan's³ self been there,
Or Hatem Tai⁴ with his old courtesy,
Returned to earth to shew what men should be,
He could not have improved a single thing:
Then turning lastly to address the king
Once more, but lightlier than at first, he bowed,
And in a manly voice thus spoke aloud:—

“May the great Cambus to his slave be kind!
My lord, the king of Araby and Ind,
In honour of your feast, this solemn day,
Salutes you in the manner he best may,
And sends you, by a page whom he holds dear,
(His happy but his humble messenger)
This steed of brass; which, in a day and night,
Through the dark half as safely as the light,
O'er sea and land, and with your perfect ease,
Can bear your body wheresoe'er you please.
It matters not if it be foul or fair:
The thing is like a thought, and cuts the air

So smoothly, and so well observes the track,
The man that will may sleep upon his back.
All that the rider needs when he would turn,
Or rise, or take him downwards, you may learn,
If it so please you, when we speak within,
And does but take the writhing of a pin.

“This glass too, which I hold, such is its power,
That if by any chance, an evil hour
Befel⁵ your empire or yourself, ’twould show
What men you ought to know of, friend and foe;
And more than this, if any lady’s heart
Be set on one that plays her an ill part,
Or is in aught beneath her love and her,
Here she may see his real character,
All his new loves, and all his old pursuits:
His heart shall all be shown her, to the roots.
Therefore, my lord, with your good leave, this glass,
And this green ring, the greenest ever was,
My master, with his greeting, hopes may be
Your excellent daughter’s here, my lady Canace.
The virtues of the ring, my lord, are these—
That if a lady loves the flowers and trees,
And birds, and all fair Nature’s ministers;
And if she bear this gem within her purse,
Or on her hand, like any other ring,
There’s not a fowl that goes upon the wing,
But she shall understand his speech or strain,
And in his own tongue answer him again.
All plants that gardens or that fields produce,
She shall be also skilled in, and their use,
Whether for sweetness or for stanching wounds:
No secret shall she miss, that smiles in balmy grounds.

“Lastly, my lord, this sword has such a might,
That let it meet the veriest fiend in fight,
'Twill carve throughout his armour the first stroke,
Were it as thick as any branched oak:
Nor could the wound be better for the care
Of all the hands and skills that ever were;
And yet, should it so please you, of your grace,
To pass the flat side on the wounded place,
Though it were ready to let out his soul,
The flesh should close again, the man be whole.
Oh heart of hearts! that nobody shall break!
Pardon me, Sir, that thus my leave I take
Even of a sword, and like a lover grieve,
But its own self, unbidden, will not leave
The hand that wields it, though it smote a block
The dullest in the land, or dashed a rock:
And this my master hopes may also be
Acceptable to Tartary's majesty,
With favour for himself, and pardon, Sir, for me.”

The Khan, who listened with a gracious eye,
Smiled as he stopp'd, and made a due reply,
Thanking the king, his brother, for the great,
Not gifts, but glories, added to his state,
And saying how it pleased him to have known
So young an honour to his neighbour's throne.
The youth then gave the proper officers
The gifts; who, 'midst the music's bursting airs,
Laid them before the king and Canace,
There as they sate, each in their high degree:
But nothing that they did could move the horse;
Boys might as well have tried their little force
Upon a giant with his armour on:

The brazen thing stood still as any stone.
The stranger hastened to relieve their doubt,
And touched his neck, and led him softly out;
And 'twas a wonder and a joy to see
How well he went, he stept so tenderly.

Great was the press that from all quarters came
To gaze upon this horse of sudden fame;
And many were the struggles to get close,
And touch the mane to try if it hung loose,
Or pat it on the shining flanks, or feel
The muscles in the neck that sternly swell;
But the Khan's officers forbade, and fear
E'en of the horse conspired to keep the circle clear.
High was the creature built, both broad and long,
And with a true proportion to be strong;
And yet so "horsely" and so quick of eye,
As if it were a steed of Araby;
So that from tail to ear there was no part
Nature herself could better, much less art;
Only the people dreaded to perceive
How cold it was, although it seemed alive;
And on all sides the constant wonder was
How it could move, and yet was plainly brass.
Of magic some discours'd, and some of powers
By planets countenanced in kindly hours,
Through which wise men had compassed mighty things
Of natural wit to please illustrious kings;
And some fell talking of the iron chain
That fell from heaven in old king Argoun's⁶ reign.
And then they spoke of visions in the air,
And how this creature might have been made there,
Of white lights heard at work, and fiery fights,

Seen in the north on coldest winter nights,
And pale traditions of Pre-Adamites.
Much did the talk run also on the sword,
That harmed and healed, fit gift for sovereign lord.
One said that he had heard or read somewhere,
Of a great southern king, with such a spear;
A chief, who had for mother a sea-fairy,
And slew a terror called the Sagittary.
As to the glass, some thought that it might be
Made by a certain clear congruity
Of angles and reflections, as a pond
Shows not its sides alone, but things beyond;
Iskander set one, like a sleepless eye,
O'er a sea-town, its twin security,
In which the merchant read of storms to come,
Or saw his sunny ships blown softly home.
But most the ring was talked of: every one
Quoting that other ring of Solomon,⁷
Which, wheresoe'er it married, brought a dower
Of wisdom, and upon the hand put power.
A knowledge of the speech of birds was known
To be a gift especially its own,
Which made them certain that this ring of green
Was part of it, perhaps a sort of skin
Shed for some reason as a serpent's is;
And here their reasoning was not much amiss.
The wiser sort pondered and doubted; folly
Determined every thing, or swallowed wholly;
The close and cunning, foolishest of all,
Feared that the whole was diabolical,
And wished the stranger might not prove a knave
Come to find out what liberal monarchs gave,
And ruin with his very dangerous horses

People's eternal safety, and their purses.
For what surpasses vice to comprehend,
It gladly construes to the baser end.
Some wits there were began at last to doubt
Whether the horse could really move about,
And on their fingers' ends were arguing,
When lo! their subject vanished from the ring;
Vanished like lightning; an impatient beast!
But, hark! I hear them rising from the feast.

The dinner done, Cambus arose; and all
Stood up, prepared to follow from the hall:
On either side they bend beneath his eye:
"Before him goeth the loud minstrelsy;"
And thus they pace into a noble room,
Where dance and song were waiting till they come
With throng of waxen lights that shed a thin perfume.
But first the king and his young visitor
Go where the horse was put, and close the door;
And there the Khan learns all about the pin,
And how the horse is hastened or held in,
And turned, and made to rise or to descend,
And all by a mere thumb and finger's end.
The stranger further tells him of a word,
By which the horse, the instant it is heard,
Vanishes with his sparkling shape, like light,
And comes again, whether it be day or night.
"And, Sir," said he, "my master bade me say
The first time I was honoured in this way,
(For on the throne you might prefer, he said,
To wave such speeches from a crowned head)
That one like you were fitter far than he
To ride the elements like a deity,

And with a speed proportioned to your will,
Shine on the good, and fall upon the ill;
For he, too sensual and too satisfied
With what small good lay near him, like a bride,
Was ever but a common king; but you
A king, and a reforming conqueror too.”*

Glad is great Cambus, both at this discourse,
And to be master of so strange a horse,
And longs to mount at once, and go and see
His highest mountain tops in Tartary,⁸
Or look upon the Caspian,⁹ or appear
Suddenly in Cathay,¹⁰ a sparkling fear.
And any other time he would have gone,
So much he longed to put his pinions on,
But on his birth-day ’twas not to be done;
And so they have returned and joined the guests
Who wait the finish of this feast of feasts.

But how shall I describe the high delight,
And all the joys that danced into the night?
Imagine all that should conclude a feast
Given by a mighty prince, and in the east,
And all was here, from song to supper stand,
As though it had arisen from fairy-land.
The feast before it was a thing of state;
But this the flowery top, and finish delicate.
Here were the cushioned sophas, the perfumes,
The heavenly mirrors making endless rooms;

*In making these additions to the original, the author had an eye to a continuation of the story, which he would willingly conclude, if he had health and leisure.

The last quintessences of drinks, the trays
Of coloured relishes dressed a thousand ways;
The dancing girls, that bending here and there,
With asking beauty lay along the air;
And lighter instruments, guitars and lutes,
Sprinkling their silver graces on the flutes;
And all the sounds, and all the sweets of show,
Feeling victorious while the harpings go.
Not all the lords were there, only the best
And greatest, all in change of garments drest;
And with them were the wives they thought the loveliest.
You must not judge, my Tartars, by the tales
Of nations merely eastern and serails:
The eastern manners were in due degree,
But mixed and raised with northern liberty;
And women came with their impetuous lords,
To pitch the talk and humanize the boards,
And shed a gentle pleasure in the place,—
The smooth alternate with the bearded face,
As summer airs divide the blustering trees,
And sway them into smiles and whispering gentleness.

Our young Ambassador conversed with all,
But still attendant on the sovereign's call,
Who, like the rest, whatever the discourse,
Was sure to turn it to the gifts and horse;
Till to the terror of some lovers, word
Was given to fetch the mirror and the sword;
The ring meanwhile being handed round, and tried
Upon fair fingers with a fluttering pride.
Some longed to have the birds awake, and some
Were glad enough the tattling things were dumb.

Good God! thought one, and seemed to faint away,
“What (ah! my Togral!)¹¹ would the parrot say?”
“And what,” conceived another, “would the jay?
“I’ve often thought the wretch was going to speak,
“He trolls the shocking words so in his beak:
“I’m sure the very first would make me shriek,”
Cambus, as sage as he was valiant, thought
There was no need to have the creatures brought;
Nor, when the mirror came, would he permit
That any but himself should read in it;
For which, as he perceived, but mentioned not,
Full thirty ladies loved him on the spot.
As to the sword, he thought it best to try
So masculine a thing in open sky;
Which made him also chuse¹² to take a course
Over the towers of Sarra on his horse.
So issuing forth, he led into the air,
Saluting the sweet moon which met them there,
And forth the steed was brought; you would have said,
It knew for what, so easily ’twas led,
And leant with such an air its lively head.
But when at rest, still as before it stood,
As though its legs had to the ground been glued.
Some urged it on, some dragged, and some would fain
Have made it lift a foot, but all in vain.
And yet when Cambus whispered it, a thrill
Flashed through its¹³ limbs, nor could its¹⁴ feet be still,
But rocked the body with a sprightly grace,
As though it yearned aloft, and weighed it for the race.

The youth had talked of armour like an oak,
And how the sword would joint it with a stroke.
The Khan had no convenient foe at hand,

To see what sort of carving he would stand:
But in the moon there stood some oaken trees,
And suddenly, he struck at one of these:
Back, like a giant, fell its towering size,
And let the light on his victorious eyes.
The blow was clearly the sword's own, and yet
The Khan, as if inspired, felt proud of it,
And leaping on the horse as suddenly,
He touched the pin, and bade the fair good bye,
And, 'midst their pretty shrieks, went mounting to the sky.

Cambus scended such a height so soon,
It seemed as if he meant to reach the moon;
And you might know by a tremendous shout,
That not a soul in Sarra but looked out;
But the fierce noise made some of them afraid,
That it might startle even a brazen head,
And threatening looks were turned upon the youth,
Who glowed and said, "By all the faith and truth
That is, or can be in the heart of man,
Nothing can happen to the noble Khan:
See, he returns!" And at the word, indeed,
They saw returning the descending steed;
Not round and round, careering; but at once,
Oblique and to the point, a fervid pounce.
For to say truth, the noble Khan himself,
Though he had fought on many a mountain shelf,
And drooped through desarts, and been drenched in seas,
Felt somewhat strange in that great emptiness,
And was not sorry to relieve his court,
By cutting his return some fathom short:
Such awful looks has utter novelty
To dash and to confuse the boldest eye.

The Khan returned, they all go back again
To their warm room, but do not long remain:
For late, and long, and highly-wrought delight
Cannot, at will, resume its giddy height;
And so his story told, and flatteries paid,
He kindly waved his gaping court to bed;
For that they did gape, ladies e'en and lords,
Our bard, a courtier, specially records;
By which we must suppose that courtiers then,
In some respect, resembled natural men.
Yet still in bed, and dozing oft between,
Their fading words recalled what they had seen:
Still of the ring they mumbled, and the glass,
And what amazing things might come to pass:
And when they slept, a thousand souls that night
Were riding on the horse with all their might;
They skim, they dive, they shoot about, they soar,
And wonder that they never rode before.

Aye: such, quoth the wise wit, is human life:
We dream of joy, and wake, and find one's wife:
Nay: quoth the wiser wit, the best way then
Is to wake little, and go sleep again.
Wake much, if life go right: if it go wrong,
Learn how to dream with Chaucer¹⁵ all day long:
Or learn still better, if you can, to make
Your world at all times, sleeping or awake;
The true receipt, whether by days or nights,
To charm your griefs, and double your delights.
Fancy and fact differ in this alone;
One strikes us like a thought, one like a stone;
But both alike can bring into our eyes
The tears, and make a thousand feelings rise

Of smarting wrongs, or pleasant sympathies.
E'en Fact, the little, worldly gentleman,
Must get from poor starv'd Fancy all he can;
Talks, dresses, dines, has notions, makes a stir,
Endures himself, nay loves himself, through her;
And cannot clothe even his ungrateful scorn,
But in the web she weaves from night till morn.

See—like the others, whom I've sent to bed,
The horse itself is put out of my head:
Ring, sword, and mirror, all of them depart,
While the dear kind one clasps me to her heart;
And I intend to have a dream divine,
With arm across her, and her hand in mine.
Like all, however, when we've rested well,
We'll meet again; and talk of what befel¹⁶
The lady of the ring within a warbling dell.

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¹ “The Squire’s Tale” is one of the verse narratives in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* (c. 1400). Chaucer (c. 1340-1400) is often referred to as the Father of English literature. In “The Squire’s Tale”, the Squire tells the story of a knight named Cambyuskan, who receives magical gifts from a mysterious, otherworldly figure. The tale includes a mechanical horse that can fly, a mirror that shows the future, and a sword that protects the person wielding it. The unfinished narrative blends themes of chivalry, love, and the supernatural.

² Genghis Khan (c. 1162-1227), called Cambyuskan in Chaucer’s version, founder and first khan of the Mongol Empire.

³ Antoine-Jacques Rouston (1734-1808), Genevan pastor and theologian.

⁴ Hatim al-Tai (d. 578), Arab knight and poet, known for his altruism and as a model of Arab manliness.

⁵ Misprint for *befell*.

⁶ Arghun Khan (c. 1258-91), fourth ruler of the Ilkhanate division of the Mongol empire.

⁷ The Seal of Solomon or Ring of Solomon is a legendary artifact associated with King Solomon, who was believed to be possessed of magical powers. In various traditions, the ring is said to grant the wearer control over demons, the ability to communicate with animals, and wisdom.

⁸ Toponym used as a blanket term in Western European literature and cartography to describe a vast area of Asia, bordered by the Caspian Sea, the Ural Mountains, the Pacific Ocean, and the northern borders of China, India, and Persia, at a time when this region was mostly unexplored by European geographers.

⁹ The world’s largest inland body of water, the Caspian Sea lies between Europe and Asia.

¹⁰ Historical name employed in Europe to indicate China.

¹¹ In the 1855-60 editions of the text, *Togral* was substituted with *Khojah*, probably referring to the Khoja, a caste of Muslims.

¹² Archaic form of the verb *to choose*.

¹³ Misprint for *its*.

¹⁴ Misprint for *its*.

¹⁵ Geoffrey Chaucer, English poet.

¹⁶ Misprint for *befell*.

LETTER-WRITING.*

“THE polite Letter-writer,”¹ and “Every man his own Correspondent,”² I have never read. They are doubtless two bewitching books, able to transform any stick of a gentleman into at least a three-penny post. I am the more particular in disclaiming all knowledge of these Letterary authors, as I would not my reading public should imagine me guilty of plagiarism. Believe me, I am quite virtuous.

Something I have to say touching most sorts of letters—not all. For instance, I have nothing to say of Lawyers’ letters, those peremptory “how don’t you do’s,” Charons³ of Fleet-ditch, purveyors of bread and water, whose words run through the heart cork-screw-wise, outraging a tit-bit at the table, and mixing aloes in our wine:—they cannot reach me,—I am off, away from the land of credit—no dun can knock at my door,—we deal for ready money only. For the same reason I am silent about Tailors’ cross-legged scrawls, coming like a needle at the wind-up of one’s Christmas merriment, telling us, modest hurrying rogues, they have “a small bill to make up by Saturday next,” and “hoping for future favours.” I wear my own coat! A man, out of Britain, may live as happy as Job;⁴ for recollect Job had no debts. Nor will I speak of the letters of great men deceased, golden authors, or tinselled authorities; they speak for themselves. Nor of mercantile letters—yes, they must have their due; for they uphold our commerce,

* Author: Charles Armitage Brown / Transcribed by Alessandra Crotti; Annotated by Alessandra Crotti and Andrea Peghinelli.

and commerce upholds our brave old England, and all her old incumbrances—Alas! poor England! By the head of Hermes,⁵ though most interesting compositions to pursy exchangers and young ledger-students, they are unworthy of his votaries! His other votaries, thieves and pick-pockets, can surely write better—though not to my knowledge; fortunately for society at large, and perhaps for myself, I have no correspondence with these “gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon.”⁶ But look at their every day, or rather their every night language; is it not fanciful? While they decorate their theft of linen from a hedge with the cant expression of “nimming the snow,” with many other similar snatches at poetry, I cannot forbear, in an imaginative point of view, placing them far above Mercury’s⁷ humbler servants. To make short work, I divide merchants into two classes—the laconic and the flummery. Here is a specimen of the first:—

“Gentlemen. Your’s 9th received. Contents noted. Arrived, Jenny, Saunders. She cleared the Custom-house yesterday. Her hams not yet landed. Hope they are in good condition. Enclosed last price-current. Since which a spirit in the rum market. Wines, best, run off quickly. Lead heavy. Copper very dull. Tin plates look lively. Much done in tallow. Wax sticks on hand. Feathers, goose, are down. Skins do not get off. Great demand for hemp by the Government. Coffee, very good, this morning, with sundry parcels of sugar, eagerly sought after. Our Exchange, one half, has fallen. Money scarce, and therefore great difficulty with bills. Bristles rising. We are, Gentlemen, &c.”

The other style is “tedious as a King,” and I cannot “find in my heart to bestow it all on your Worships.”⁸ It generally contains advice of a bill being drawn, and rings

a bob-major, as thus:—"Honour to acknowledge your esteemed favour—have the honour to transmit—valued on your respected house in favour of our esteemed and valuable friend—not doubting but your respected house will favour us by duly honouring—and, with the most perfect esteem and respect, we have the honour to be, &c."

What a relief to turn from such perpetrations! Come, let us talk of servant-maids. Their letters are always worth something, to themselves or others, as they have neither time nor postage to throw away. They write only when a passion becomes too restless to stay within doors. I take great interest in their unskilful attempts to throw a veil over their impatience. Bad grammar, and worse spelling, a clumsy folding up, eccentric splashings of thimble sealing, and an upside down direction, are, to many persons, their chief recommendations; though, to my mind, these are no more than the scenery and dresses to a good comedy. "They hold, as it were, a mirror up to nature,"—a crooked one, I grant. Here I see many follies, mixed with their share of goodness, and sometimes without, making odd faces as they peep through our language in rags. The purchase of a new bonnet, with Mrs. Mansby's assurance "it is the prettiest thing she ever made, and, besides that, she has not a bit more of the stuff," is followed by challenging, per post, her former fellow servant to make holiday some day next week; and thus, at a trifling expense, vent is given to the exuberance of that vanity, without a becoming share of which neither a scullion nor a princess would look half so charming. In an affair of jealousy, when she writes to the crony friend of a rival, that she intends for evermore to have done with Mr. Jemmy, because she knows he keeps low and disagreeable acquaintances,—how innocent is her revenge compared to the cruel and ignorant Roxana's!

When I read Molly's wrathful story of some vail or perquisite being unjustly withheld from her share of the kitchen spoils, and observe her anger exhausting itself as her fingers become weary of the pen, I cannot but lament that Thetis¹⁰ did not teach her son to read and write, and thus have saved a whole Iliad¹¹ of fury and slaughter, though it were pity to lose the poem. What a blessed invention is the post, whether two-penny, general, or foreign! It carries off, by a thousand invisible channels, like the system of underground draining, half the disorders of the human heart. Let every one write down his worst, instead of putting it into practice. A spiteful scrawl cannot well do much harm in the world; while, on the other hand, a sheet of paper full of kindness does infinite good to all parties. One of this last description lately fell into my hands, from a cook at Canterbury to her old uncle. She enclosed, kind soul! a two pound note, saved from her quarter's wage; said a thousand affectionate things, and, after wishing him many happy days, she—what think you?—she quoted Shakespear! —“May gudness and you feel up one moniment.”¹² Thomson's Seasons¹³ lying in the window-seat of a cottage has been pronounced sufficient evidence of the poet's fame; but what is that compared to being quoted by a Canterbury cook? There is another species of kind-hearted writing, where servant-maids almost equal their too susceptible mistresses; but this falls into the next division of my subject, and indeed I am ashamed of having neglected it so long.

Love-letters—here's a theme! In the first place, let every one beware of counterfeits, for such are abroad. Few genuine ones are to be had for love, and none for money. Finely wrought compliments, an epigrammatic style, or any thing that looks like great care and study, is a sure proof of

heresy—that rogue is thinking of the girl’s money. Raptures and complaints, sprinkled with something stolen from Ovid¹⁴ or Moore,¹⁵ and crow-quilled on the best gilt-edge, are enough to startle the virtue of any considerate young lady. Folks cannot be too cautious. There is another sort of love writing, much in vogue in this our philosophic age, down-right profanation, taking upon itself to prove that Cupid¹⁶ has found out a new cut to the heart; namely, by sending his arrows first through the brain—it makes me wince to think of it. Such letters are treatises on præternatural history. These sedate persons, who generally wear flannel night-caps because the head should be kept warm, and Angola socks for winter wear because the damp is so bad for the feet—these mock-heroic gentry, I say, absolutely assert there can be no true love except what is founded on the qualities of the mind. At first, as they argue, it must be no more than simple esteem, till ripened into a softer feeling, by a similarity of taste, and a congeniality of sentiment in matters of religion and morality, it haply attains to something of the value of—a plain gold ring and the parson’s blessing. A very comfortable doctrine for those with whom it is impossible to fall in love. Just as if Romeo and Juliet¹⁷ ever thought of more than one sentiment in each other’s breast; and their love was truer than metaphysics. I must quit such a subject; flesh and blood can’t bear it. Now for a hint at what is more to the purpose. It is no such difficult matter to distinguish between truth and hypocrisy in these affairs, as some old people imagine. For the benefit of the rising generation, here are a few infallible signs of an unfeigned passion. Let them always bear in mind that obscurity is the grand point. There ought to be so restless a confusion in the lover, that far from its being necessary his mistress should find his letter intelligible, he

should be, after an hour's respite, incapable of explaining his own meaning; it is quite sufficient if he thought he understood himself at the time. If thou art guilty of a pretence to the drowsiness of reason, "there is no more faith in thee than in a stewed prune."¹⁸ This is a general rule, and as the style is inimitable, there can be no fear of deception. Any attempt, though a flurried one, at sense or connection of sentences, is fatal. Again, a constant interchange of the sublime and the bathos is indispensable; together with certain usual epithets of endearment, in endless repetition; and, here and there, a lively idea of dying. To uninterested persons such effusions may appear insipid, and probably silly, but their opinion is of no importance. In fact, to the parties themselves, if they ever happen to fall out of love, they will certainly be as little amusing as a physician's prescriptions to his patient just happily recovered from a fever. Let not my readers, fair ones I mean, imagine I entertain any disrespectful notions of love, or that my temper is soured by a parcel of billets-doux returned on my hands. All my intention is to show that the young blooming God ought not to expose himself in black and white.

Hate-letters ought not to come next; yet, for the sake of variety, they are welcome. These, whether expressed in reproaches or threats, contempt or indignation, are wonderfully energetic. Of all passions, anger is the most eloquent. It is easier to say a cruel thing than a kind one. Milton's¹⁹ devils talk better than his angels. It is more difficult for love to express itself in words, because it has so much to say; while hatred can utter its heart-full in a breath, and afterwards expatriate on the strength of its own inspiration. An angry man, and a good one at the same time, always writes more bitterly than he would have spoken; this, at first sight, seems unaccountable, as the comparatively slow

motions of the pen must give him the more time for reflection; but I am convinced the cause of this excess arises from having a blank piece of paper before him instead of a human countenance, which latter must be very bad indeed not to awaken some remorse. The greatest provocation to write a hate-letter is in answer to a treacherous friend, who still addresses you throughout in the kindest manner, with a "My dear Sir" at the beginning, and ends with a "Yours, most sincerely." In this case, it may be excusable to dip your pen in gall; but will that do any good? On the contrary, it is more noble, more manly, to pay respect even to the ashes of friendship.

Now are a swarm of notes, like gnats, buzzing about me, all claiming attention to their several merits. One, without a seal, yet pretending to the title of "a letter," boasts of introducing strange gentlemen to one another. A second makes wary inquiries about the "cleanliness, sobriety, and honesty," of a housemaid, footman, or cook. Then a crowd of borrowers perplex me, by requesting the loan of a fish-kettle, or the last Canto of Don Juan,²⁰ or a trifle to be repaid in a fortnight. And lastly, a very agreeable one offers to bribe me with an invitation to dinner.—I cannot possibly accept it.

At length I arrive at what my fingers have been aching to come at,—letters from a friend; or, if the world will allow it, from many friends. In my opinion, friendship can best express itself by the pen; from which alone the closest friendships have sometimes originated. "The pleasure of society among friends," La Bruyere²¹ tells us, "is cultivated by a resemblance of opinion on points of morality, and by some difference of taste in the sciences."²² Yet this pleasure may exist in parties who can separate for ever without much regret. While that honest, glowing sentiment, of all others

the least selfish, never so thrills in our hearts as when our friend writes to us; and it must be often, and in all his moods, in his hopes and fears, in his joys and sorrows. Not the careless correspondence between two worthy gentlemen in adjoining counties, when a day's ride, or haply a walk, can bring them face to face. No; the letter must have been long on the road, must be stamped with a foreign post-mark, to make it precious; or with an English stamp, to him who is called the "foreigner," wherever he travels away from his endeared associates. It is enough to make sweet the pain of actual banishment. Let those who live out of their own country describe, if they can, the emotion they feel as they burst the seal of such a letter.

It is a frequent complaint with those at home that the one abroad does not write so often as he ought. I suspect there is little justice in it. The one abroad will hardly fail, until wearied out by neglect. He will be wise enough to bait his hook. The fact is—and why conceal it?—there is manual labour, time occupied, and no small resolution requisite, to fill a sheet of paper in a minute character, which, every one knows, is expected between friends; and these are the sole reasons of their deferring it from day to day, with an evil worrying conscience, till at last they are often ashamed of writing. I never have put faith in the phrase of "the pleasure of writing to you;" as I invariably find it used by the worst correspondents; it is a lying bit of civility. Nothing indeed can be more delightful than to stroll about the fields, filling up an imaginary letter; but when we sit at our desks to turn it into a reality, it becomes downright work, and is cheerfully performed solely because it is the means of getting another in return. Besides, an absentee, if he happens to be remiss, should be treated with charity. He requires evidently more attention than those

left behind. They have their ordinary occupations and associations; they miss but a single link in the chain; a traveller has torn himself from all. Again, this feeling must not be omitted in the balance; he who is at a distance has better grounds for the suspicion of being forgotten, while his friends have an assurance that he cannot possibly forget his home.

Some there are whose labours might be spared. I have long ceased to encourage them. They fill the first page with apologies for not having answered me earlier—this is worse than their silence. The next thing is, to echo every circumstance I have related for their amusement; and their sentences, one after the other, set out with—“Your account of”—“How delighted you must have been when”—“I envy the journey you had from”—“As you observe, the climate must be”—and so on to the end of the chapter; and this they call answering me. Then follow loving remembrances from all the family, severally and collectively. And they finish with another apology, far more reasonable than the first, for having “troubled me with so much nonsense.” There are others who fly off into the opposite extreme. To execute something worthy of being sent across the channel, and of the postage, is to them a serious matter; quite an undertaking. They tease their brains for a fit subject, ponder on the best things that may be said upon it, and send you, not a letter, but an intolerable essay. A few general rules may be of use. The principal one is, as in conversation, to keep in mind the taste and character of the person to whom you are writing. It is always folly to assert you have “really nothing to say,” unless it is your belief you would remain dumb in his company. Never touch on politics to one who cares not for a newspaper; indeed it is well to omit them on every occasion, as they read better in

print. With a matter-of-fact man, you must imagine yourself in a witness-box; no exaggeration, nothing figurative—I would not trust a metaphor; he may be confused, or misled, or, what is worse, suspect you intend to impose upon him. You have no small advantage in addressing a literary man; with him every thing is interesting that is worth telling; however, news of new books, or of a very old one, ought to occupy a considerable space. To a lady, young or old, a story is acceptable; and let it be spiced with love. By the bye, I have to beg pardon of the ladies for not having yet said a word about them. Perhaps, as they have so constantly been praised for their skill in letter-writing, it appeared to me a work of supererogation. I assure them, that, were the world entirely composed of ladies, a gentleman, and then he must be the man in the moon, would know better than to drop any instructions on this point. It is said the reason of their excelling is, that they write as they talk. I insist upon it their writing is superior; at least that their pens run on like their tongues in their pleasantest and happiest moods. Then, a great recommendation to a traveller, they have the art of bringing to one's mind, home, more than can any master of a house; every word breathes of their own atmosphere, till it is difficult to believe you can be at so great a distance—surely I am only next door! After what I have thus said publicly, I trust I shall be rewarded—secretly, if they prefer it; and no doubt this will increase the number of my fair-handed correspondents. Men's letters are, for the most part, of too stubborn a nature. They will not bend to petty circumstances; or, if they do, it is but a kind of Dutch painting. They either omit them altogether, or paint them with an awkward minuteness, leaving nothing to the imagination. “In your next describe your present sitting-room”—were

the few words which made me feel the force of the writer's friendship, and the interest he took in all that concerned me, far more than a very long sentence which preceded it, where he expressed his regret at our being separated. Of all letters the most magical in their effect are those written in a state of pure enjoyment, full of high animal spirits. Sorrows will have their way, and it is fit they should; but if we are happy, why not make it appear? The gravest philosopher can, if he chooses, clap on his wig with the hind part before; and his profoundest thoughts will lose nothing in being uttered with a laugh. So great an epicure in this science as I am could give as many receipts as that kitchen-favourite, Dr. Kitchener.²³ But at this moment I am all impatience. The post arrived an hour ago, and the treasures of the leathern bag must by this time be sorted.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ *The Polite Letter-Writer; containing a great variety of plain, easy, entertaining and familiar original letters, adapted to every age & situation in Life, but more particularly on Business, Education, and Love*, London, B. and R. Crosby and Co, 1815. Earlier editions existed.

² Untraced publication.

³ Charon is the son of Erebus in Greek mythology. He ferries the souls of the dead over the Styx, one of the rivers of the classical underworld.

⁴ Protagonist of the *Book of Job* in the Bible. A righteous and wealthy family man, he is unexpectedly struck by severe calamities that rob him of everything he cherishes.

⁵ Hermes is a deity of Greek mythology, protector of heralds, travellers and merchants.

⁶ See William Shakespeare, *Henry IV I*, I.ii.27-28.

⁷ Roman god.

⁸ See William Shakespeare, *Much Ado about Nothing* III.v.20-21.

⁹ See William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* III.ii.23-24.

¹⁰ In Greek mythology, Thetis is a sea nymph or goddess of water, mother of the hero Achilles. Her role is significant in the *Iliad* and the myths of the Trojan War.

¹¹ An ancient Greek epic poem attributed to Homer, the *Iliad* is set during the Trojan War and focuses on the conflicts between Greek and Trojan forces, and the effects of war on warriors and their clans.

¹² See William Shakespeare, *Henry VIII* II.i.112.

¹³ *The Seasons* (1726-30) is a series of four poems, each representing one season, by the Scottish poet and playwright James Thomson (1700-48), a key figure in the early development of nature poetry in English.

¹⁴ Ovid, Roman poet.

¹⁵ Thomas Moore (1779-1852), Irish poet and songwriter, famous for his *Irish Melodies* (1807) and *Lalla Rookh* (1817).

¹⁶ Cupid, Roman god of love and desire, often depicted as a playful, winged child with a bow and arrows. In mythology, he causes individuals to fall in love by shooting them with his arrows.

¹⁷ The two young lovers from feuding families in Verona in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Their secret love leads to a series of misfortunes, culminating in their untimely deaths, which ultimately reconcile their warring families.

¹⁸ See William Shakespeare, *Henry IV I*, III.iii.119-20.

¹⁹ John Milton, English poet.

²⁰ Lord Byron's unfinished satirical poem *Don Juan* (1819-24). At the time of the publication of the last instalment of *The Liberal*, only cantos I-VIII had appeared.

²¹ Jean de La Bruyère (1645-96), French philosopher and moralist, celebrated for *Les Caractères* (1688), a sharp critique of French society and its manners.

²² See chapter 5, "De la société et de la conversation" in La Bruyère's *Les Caractères*.

²³ Probably a tea dealer. See P.P. Howe, *The Life of William Hazlitt* (London: Martin Secker, 1922), p.50.

ARGUING IN A CIRCLE.*

THERE was an account in the newspapers the other day of a fracas in the street, in which a Lord and one or two Members of Parliament were concerned. It availed them nought to plead the privilege of Peerage, or to have made speeches in the House—they were held to bail, like the vilest of the rabble, and the circumstance was not considered a very creditable one to come before the public. Ah! it is that public that is the sad thing. It is the most tremendous ring that ever was formed to see fair play between man and man; it puts people on their good behaviour immediately; and wherever it exists, there is an end of the airs and graces which individuals, high in rank, and low in understanding and morals, may chuse to give themselves. While the affair is private and can be kept in a corner, personal fear and favour are the ruling principles, *might* prevails over *right*: but bring it before the world, and truth and justice stand some chance. The public is too large a body to be bribed or browbeat. Its voice, deep and loud, quails the hearts of princes: its breath would make the feather in a lord's cap bend and cower before it, if its glance, measuring the real magnitude of such persons with their lofty, tiptoe, flaunting pretensions, had not long since taken the feathers out of their caps. A lord is now dressed (oh! degenerate world) like any other man; and a watchman will no sooner let go his grasp of his plain collar than he will that of a

* Author: William Hazlitt / Transcribed by Alessandra Crotti; Annotated by Alessandra Crotti and Andrea Peghinelli.

Commoner or any other man, who has his “fancies and good-nights.”² What a falling off is here from the time when if a “base cullionly fellow”³ had dared to lay hands on a nobleman, on “one of quality,” he would have whipped his sword out of its scabbard and run him through the body; the “beggarly, unmannered corse”⁴ would have been thrown into the Thames or the next ditch; and woe to any person that should have attempted to make a stir in the matter! “The age of chivalry is gone, that of constables, legislators, and Grub-street writers, has succeeded, and the glory of heraldry is extinguished for ever.”⁵

“The melancholy Jacques grieves at that.”⁶

Poor Sir Walter!⁷ the times are changed indeed, since a Duke of Buckingham could send a couple of bullies, equipped in his livery, with swords and ribbons, to carry off a young lady from a Peveril of the Peak, by main force, in the face of day, and yet the bye-standers not dare to interfere, from a dread of the Duke’s livery and the High Court of Star Chamber!⁸ It is no wonder that the present Duke of Buckingham⁹ (the old title new revived) makes speeches in the Upper House to prove that legitimate monarchs have a right, whenever they please, to run their swords through the heart of a nation and *pink* the liberties of mankind, thinking if this doctrine were once fully restored, the old times of his predecessor might come again,—

“New manners and the pomp of elder days!”¹⁰

It is in tracing the history of private manners that we see (more than by any thing else) the progress that has been made in public opinion and political liberty, and that may be still farther made. No one individual now sets up his will as higher than the law: no noble Duke or Baron bold

acts the professed bully or glories in the character of a lawless ruffian, as a part of the etiquette and privileges of high rank: no gay, gaudy minion of the court takes the wall of the passengers, sword in hand, cuts a throat, washes his white, crimson-spotted hands, and then to dinner with the king and the ladies.—*That* is over with us at present; and while that is the case, Hampden¹¹ will not have bled in the field, nor Sydney¹² on the scaffold, in vain! Even the monarch in this country, though he is above the law, is subject to opinion; “submits,” as Mr. Burke¹³ has it, both from choice and necessity, “to the soft collar of social esteem, and gives a domination, vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by manners!”¹⁴

It is this which drives the Despots of the Continent mad, and makes their nobles and chief vassals league together, like a herd of tygers, to destroy the example of liberty which we (the people of England) have set to the rest of the world. They are afraid that if this example should spread and things go on much farther in the road they have taken, they will no longer be able to give their subjects and dependants the *knout*, to send them to the galleys or a dungeon without any warrant but their own unbridled will, and that a lord or a king will be no more above the law than any other man. Mankind, in short, till lately and except in this country, were considered as a herd of deer which the privileged classes were to use for their pleasure, or which they were to hunt down for spite or sport, as liked them best. That they should combine together with a knot of obscure philosophers and hair-brained philanthropists, to set up a plea not to be used at any man’s pleasure, or hunted down like vermin for any man’s sport, was an insult to be avenged with seas of blood, an attack upon the foundations of social order, and the very existence of all law, religion, and morality. In all

the legitimate governments of Europe there existed, and there still exist, a number of individuals who were exempted (by birth and title) from the law, who could offer every affront to religion, and commit every outrage upon morality with impunity, with insolence and loud laughter, and who pretended that is asserting this monstrous privilege of theirs to the very letter, the essence of all law, religion, and morality consisted. This was the case in France till the year 1789. The only law was the will of the rich to insult and harass the poor, the only religion a superstitious mummary, the only morality subserviency to the pleasures of the great. In the mild reign of Louis XV. only,¹⁵ there were fifteen thousand *lettres de cachet*¹⁶ issued for a number of private, nameless offences, such as the withholding a wife or daughter from the embraces of some man of rank, for having formerly received favours from a king's mistress, or writing an epigram on a Minister of State. It was on the ruins of this flagitious system (no less despicable than detestable) that the French Revolution rose; and the towers of the Bastille,¹⁷ as they fell, announced the proud truth in welcome thunder to the human race—to all but those who thought they were born, and who only wished to live, to exercise their sweeping, wholesale, ruthless tyranny, or to vent the workings of their petty, rankling spleen, pride, bigotry, and malice, in endless, tormenting details on their fellow-creatures.

It will, I conceive, hereafter be considered as the greatest enormity in history, the stupidest and the most barefaced insult that ever was practised on the understandings or the rights of men, that we should interfere in this quarrel between liberty and slavery, take the wrong side, and endeavour to suppress the natural consequences of that very example of freedom we had set. That we should do this, we who had “long insulted the slavery of Europe by the

loudness of our boasts of freedom,”¹⁸ who had laughed at the *Grand Monarque*¹⁹ for the last hundred and fifty years, and treated his subjects with every indignity, as belonging to an inferior species to ourselves, for submitting to his cruel and enervated sway; that the instant they took us at our word and were willing to break the chains of Popery and Slavery that we never ceased to taunt them with, we should turn against them, stand passive by “with jealous leer malign,”²⁰ witnessing the machinations of despots to extinguish the rising liberties of the world, and with the first plausible pretext, the first watch-word given (the blow aimed at the head of a king confederate with the enemies of his country against its freedom) should join the warwhoop, and continue it loudest and longest, and never rest, under one hollow, dastard, loathsome pretence or other, till we had put down “the last example of democratic rebellion”²¹ (we, who are nothing but rebellion all over, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot!) and had restored the doctrine of Divine Right, that had fallen headless from its throne of Ignorance and Superstition with the First Charles,²² long before it was condemned to the same fate in the person of the French king;²³ that we should do this, and be led, urged on to the unhallowed task by a descendant of the House of Brunswick, who held his crown in contempt of the Stuarts, and grew old, blind, and crazed in the unsated, undiverted, sacred thirst of Legitimacy,²⁴ is a thing that posterity will wonder at. We pretend to have interfered to put down the horrors of the French Revolution, when it was our interference (with that of others) that produced those horrors, of which we were glad as an excuse to justify our crooked policy and to screen the insidious, deadly, fatal blow aimed at liberty. No; the “cause was hearted”²⁵ in the breasts of those who reign, or who would reign, in contempt of the people, and with whom

it rests to make peace or war. Is not the same principle at work still? What horrors have the *Holy ALLIANCE*²⁶ to plead in vindication of their interference with Spain? They have not a rag, a thread of all their hideous tissue of sophistry and lies to cover “the open and apparent shame”²⁷ of this sequel and consistent comment on their former conduct. It is a naked, barefaced, undisguised attack upon the rights and liberties of the world: it is putting the thing upon its true and proper footing—the claim of Kings to hold mankind as a property in perpetuity. There are no horrors, real or pretended, to warrant this new outrage on common sense and human nature. It stands on its own proud basis of injustice—it towers and mocks the skies in all the majesty of regal wrong. “The shame, the blood be upon their heads.”²⁸ If there are no horrors ready-made to their hands, they stand upon their privilege to commit wanton outrage and unqualified aggression; and if by these means they can provoke horrors, then the last are put first as the most plausible plea, as a handsome mask and soft lining to the hard gripe and features of Legitimacy—Religion consecrates, and Loyalty sanctions the fraud! But, should the scheme fail in spite of every art and effort, and the wrong they have meditated be retorted on their own heads, then we shall have, as before an appeal made to Liberty and Humanity—the motto of despots will once more be *peace on earth and good-will to men*²⁹—and we too shall join in the yell of blood and the whine of humanity. We are only waiting for an excuse now—till the threats and insults and cruelties of insolent invaders call forth reprisals, and lead to some act of popular fury or national justice that shall serve as a signal to rouse the torpid spirit of trade in the city, or to inflame the loyalty of country gentlemen, deaf for the present to all other sounds but that appalling³⁰ one of RENT! We must remain neuter while a

grievous wrong is acting, unless we can get something by the change, or pick a quarrel with the right. We are peaceable, politic, when a nation's liberty only is at stake, but were it a monarch's crown that hung tottering in the air, oh! how soon would a patriot senate and people start out to avenge the idle cause: a single speech from the throne would metamorphose us into martyrs of self-interest, saviours of the world, deliverers of Europe from lawless violence and unexampled wrong. But here we have no heart to stir, because the name of liberty alone (without the cant of loyalty) has lost its magic charm on the ears of Englishmen—impotent to save, powerful only to betray and destroy themselves and others!

We want a Burke to give the thing a legitimate turn at present. I am afraid the Editor of the *New Times*³¹ can hardly supply his place. They could hardly have done before, without that eloquent apostate, that brilliant sophist, to throw his pen into the scale against truth and liberty. He varnished over a bad cause with smooth words, and had power to "make the worse appear the better reason"³²—the devil's boast! The madness of genius was necessary to second the madness of a court; his flaming imagination was the torch that kindled the smouldering fire in the inmost sanctuary of pride and power, and spread havoc, dismay, and desolation through the world. The light of his imagination, sportive, dazzling, beauteous as it seemed, was followed by the stroke of death. It so happens that I myself have played all my life with his forked shafts unhurt, because I had a metaphysical clue to carry off the noxious particles, and let them sink into the earth, like drops of water. But the English nation are not a nation of metaphysicians, or they would have detected, and smiled or wept over the glittering fallacies of this half-bred reasoner, but,

at the same time, most accomplished rhetorician that the world ever saw. But they are perplexed by sophistry, stupefied by prejudice, staggered by authority. In the way of common sense and practical inquiry, they do well enough; but start a paradox, and they know not what to make of it. They either turn from it altogether, or, if interest or fear give them motives to attend to it, are fascinated by it. They cannot analyze or separate the true from the *seeming* good. Mr. Pitt,³³ with his deep-mouthed *common-places*, was able to follow in the same track, and fill up the cry; but he could not have given the tone to political feeling, or led on the chase with “so musical a discord, such sweet thunder.”³⁴ Burke strewed the flowers of his style over the rotten carcase of corruption, and embalmed it in immortal prose: he contrived, by the force of artful invective and misapplied epithets, to persuade the people of England that Liberty was an illiberal, hollow sound; that humanity was a barbarous modern invention, that prejudices were the test of truth, that reason was a strumpet, and right a fiction. Every other view of the subject but his (“so well the tempter glozed”)³⁵ seemed to be without attraction, elegance, or refinement. Politics became poetry in his hands, his sayings passed like proverbs from mouth to mouth, and his descriptions and similes were admired and repeated by the fashionable and the fair. Liberty from thenceforward became a low thing: philosophy was a spring-nailed, velvet-pawed tyger-cat, with green eyes, watching its opportunity to dart upon its prey: humanity was a lurking assassin. The emblems of our cardinal and favourite virtues were overturned: the whole vocabulary of national watch-words was inverted or displaced. This was a change indeed in our style of thinking, more alarming than that in our calendar formerly: and this change was brought about by Mr. Burke,

who softened down hard reasons in the crucible of his fancy, and who gave to his epithets the force of nick-names. Half the business was done by his description of the Queen of France.³⁶ It was an appeal to all women of quality; to all who were, or would be thought, cavaliers or men of honour; to all who were admirers of beauty, or rank, or sex. Yet what it had to do with the question, it would be difficult to say. If a woman is handsome, it is well: but it is no reason why she should poison her husband, or betray a country. If, instead of being young, beautiful, and free of manners, Marie Antoinette had been old, ugly, and chaste, all this mischief had been prevented. The author of the *Reflections* had seen or dreamt he saw a most delightful vision sixteen years before, which had thrown his brain into a ferment; and he was determined to throw his readers and the world into one too. It was a theme for a copy of verses, or a romance; not for a work in which the destinies of mankind were to be weighed. Yet she was the Helen that opened another *Iliad* of woes;³⁷ and the world has paid for that accursed glance at youthful beauty with rivers of blood. If there was any one of sufficient genius now to deck out some Castilian maid, or village girl in the Army of the Faith, in all the colours of fancy, to reflect her image in a thousand ages and hearts, making a saint and a martyr of her; turning loyalty into religion, and the rights and liberties of the Spanish nation, and of all other nations, into a mockery, a bye-word, and a bugbear, how soon would an end be put to Mr. Canning's present *bizarre* (almost afraid to know itself) situation!³⁸ How gladly he would turn round on the pivot of his forced neutrality, and put all his drooping tropes and figures on their splendid war-establishment again!

Mr. Burke was much of a theatrical man. I do not mean that his high-wrought enthusiasm or vehemence was not natural to him; but the direction that he gave to it was exceedingly capricious and arbitrary. It was for some time a doubtful question which way he should turn with respect to the French revolution, whether for or against it. His pride took the alarm, that so much had been done with which he had nothing to do, and that a great empire had been overturned with his favourite engines, wit and eloquence, while he had been reforming the “turn-spit of the king’s kitchen,”³⁹ in set speeches far superior to the occasion. Rousseau and the Encyclopædists⁴⁰ had lamentably got the start of him; and he was resolved to drag them back somehow by the heels, and bring what they had affected to an untimely end,—

“Undoing all, as all had never been.”⁴¹

The “Reflections on the French Revolution” was a spiteful and dastard but too successful attempt to *put a spoke in the wheels* of knowledge and progressive civilization, and throw them back for a century and a half at least. In viewing the change in the prospects of society, in producing which he had only a slight and indirect hand by his efforts in the cause of American freedom, he seemed to say, with Iago in the play,—

“Though that their joy be joy,
Yet will I contrive
To throw such changes of vexations on it,
As it may lose some colour.”⁴²

He went beyond his own most sanguine hopes, but did not live to witness their final accomplishment, by seeing France literally “blotted out of the map of Europe.”⁴³ He died in the most brilliant part of Buonaparte’s⁴⁴ victorious and

captain-like campaigns in Italy. If it could have been foreseen what an “ugly customer”⁴⁵ he was likely to prove, the way would have been to have bribed his vanity (a great deal stronger than his interest) over to the other side, by asking his opinion; and, indeed, he has thrown out pretty broad hints in the early stages of his hostility, and before the unexpected success of the French arms, and the whizzing arrows flung at him by his old friends and new antagonists had stung him to madness, that the great error of the National Assembly was in not having consulted able and experienced heads on this side the water,⁴⁶ as to demolish the old, and constructing the new edifice. If he had been employed to lay the first stone, or to assist, by an inaugural dissertation, at the baptism of the new French Constitution, the fabric of the Revolution would thenceforth have risen,—

“Like an exhalation of rich distilled perfumery,”⁴⁷

without let or molestation from his tongue or pen. But he was overlooked. He was not called from his closet, or from his place in the House (where, it must be confessed, he was out of his place) to “ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm;”⁴⁸ and therefore he tried, like some malicious hag, to urge the veering gale into a hurricane; to dash the labouring vessel of the state in pieces, and make shipwreck of the eternal jewel of man’s happiness, which it had on board—Liberty. The stores of practical and speculative knowledge which he had been for years collecting and digesting, and for which he had no use at home, were not called into play abroad. His genius had hitherto been always too mighty for the occasion; but here his utmost grasp of intellect would hardly have been sufficient to grapple with it. What an opportunity was lost! Something, therefore, was to be done, to relieve the galling sense of disappointed ambition

and mortified self-consequence. Our political *Busy-body* turned *Marplot*; and maliciously, and like a felon, strangled the babe that he was not professionally called in to swaddle, and dandle, and bring to maturity. He had his revenge: but so must others have their's on his memory.

Burke was not an honest man. There was always a *dash* of insincerity, a sinister bias in his disposition. We see, from the Letters that passed between him and his two brothers,⁴⁹ and Barry the painter,⁵⁰ that there was constantly a balancing of self-interest and principle in his mind; a thanking of God that he was in no danger of yielding to temptation, yet as if it were a doubtful or ticklish point; and a patient, pensive expectation of place and emolument, till he could reconcile it with integrity and fidelity to his party; which might easily be construed into a querulous hankering after it, and an opinion that this temporary self-denial implied a considerable sacrifice on his part, or that he displayed no small share of virtue in not immediately turning knave. All this, if narrowly looked into, has a very suspicious appearance. Burke, with all his capricious wildness and flighty impulses, was a self-seeker and more constant in his enmities than in his friendships. He bore malice, and did not forgive to the last. His cold, sullen behaviour to Fox,⁵¹ who shed tears when they had a quarrel in the House, and his refusal to see him afterwards, when the latter came to visit him on his death-bed, will for ever remain a stigma on his memory. He was, however, punished for his fault. In his latter writings, he complains bitterly of the solitariness of his old age, and of the absence of the friends of his youth—whom he had deserted. This is natural justice, and the tribute due to apostacy. A man may carry over his own conscience to the side of his vanity or interest, but he cannot expect, at the same time, to carry

over along with him all those with whom he has been connected in thought and action, and whose society he will miss, sooner or later. Mr. Burke could hardly hope to find, in his casual, awkward, unaccountable intercourse with such men as Pitt⁵² or Dundas,⁵³ amends for the loss of his old friends, Fox⁵⁴ and Sheridan,⁵⁵ to whom he was knit not only by political ties, but by old habitudes, lengthened recollections, and a variety of common studies and pursuits. Pitt was a mere politician; Dundas, a mere worldling. What would they care about him, and his “winged words”? *No more of talk*⁵⁶ about the meetings at Sir Joshua’s⁵⁷—the *Noctes cænæque Deûm*;⁵⁸ about the fine portraits of that great colourist; about Johnson or Goldsmith,⁵⁹ or Dunning or Barrè;⁶⁰ or their early speeches; or the trying times in the beginning of the American war; or the classic taste and free-born spirit of Greece and Rome;—

“The beautiful was vanish’d, and return’d not.”⁶¹

Perhaps, indeed, he would wish to forget most of these, as ungrateful topics; but when a man seeks for repose in oblivion of himself, he had better seek it, where he will soonest find it,—in the grave! Whatever the talents, or the momentary coincidence of opinion of his new allies, there would be a want of previous sympathy between them. Their notions would not amalgamate, or they would not be sure that they did. Every thing would require to be explained, to be reconciled. There would be none of the freedom of habitual intimacy. Friendship, like the clothes we wear, becomes the easier from custom. New friendships do not sit well on old or middle age. Affection is a science, to which it is too late to serve an apprenticeship after a certain period of life. This is the case with all patched-up, conventional intimacies; but it is worse when they are built on

inveterate hostility and desertion from an opposite party, where their naturally crude taste is embittered by jealousy and rankling wounds. We think to exchange old friends and connections for new ones, and to be received with an additional welcome for the sacrifice we have made; but we gain nothing by it but the contempt of those whom we have left, and the suspicions of those whom we have joined. By betraying a cause, and turning our backs on a principle, we forfeit the esteem of the honest, and do not inspire one particle of confidence or respect in those who may profit by and pay us for our treachery.

Deserters are never implicitly trusted. There is, besides the sentiment or general principle of the thing, a practical reason for this. Their zeal, their eagerness to distinguish themselves in their new career, makes them rash and extravagant; and not only so, but there is always a leaven of their old principles remaining behind, which breaks out in spite of themselves, and which it is difficult for their encouragers and patrons to guard against. This was remarkably the case with the late Mr. Windham.⁶² He was constantly *running a-muck* at some question or other, and committing the Ministers. His old, free-thinking, Opposition habits returned upon him before he was aware of it; and he was sure to hazard some paradox, or stickle for some objectionable point, contrary to the forms of office. The cabinet had contemplated no such thing. He was accordingly kept in check, and alarmed the treasury-bench whenever he rose. He was like a dog that gives mouth before the time, or is continually running on a stray scent: he was chid and fed! The same thing is observable in the present Poet-Laureat,⁶³ whose jacobinical principles have taken such deep root in him (*intus et in cute*)⁶⁴ that they break out even in his Court poems, like “a thick scurf”⁶⁵ on loyalty; and he presents

them unconsciously, as an offering of "sweet-smelling gums,"⁶⁶ at the very foot of the throne. He at present retains his place apparently on condition of holding his tongue. He writes such Odes on kings, that it is next to impossible not to travestie them into lampoons!

The remarks I have made above apply strongly to him and some of his associates of the *Lake School*.⁶⁷ I fancy he has felt, as much as any one, the inconvenience of drawing off from a cause, and that by so doing we leave our oldest and our best friends behind. There are those among the favourers and admirers of his youth, whom his dim eyes discover not, and who do not count his grey hairs. Not one or two, but more;—men of character and understanding, who had pledged mutual faith, and drank the cup of freedom with him, warm from the wine-press, as well as the "dews of Castilie."⁶⁸ He gave up a principle, and one left him;—he insulted a feeling, and another fled;—he accepted a place, and received the congratulations of no one but Mr. Croker.⁶⁹ He looks round for them in vain, with throbbing heart, (the heart of a poet can never lie still; he should take the more care what it is that agitates it!)—sees only the shadows or the carcasses of old friendships; or stretches out his hand to grasp some new patron, and finds that also cold. If our friends are sometimes accused of short memories, our enemies make it up by having long ones. We had better adhere to the first; for we must despair of making cordial converts of the last. This double desolation is cheerless, and makes a man bethink himself. We may make a shift (a shabby one) without our self-respect; but it will never do to have it followed by the loss of the respect of those whose opinion we once valued most. We may tamper with our own consciences; but we feel at a loss without the testimony of others in our favour, which is

seldom paid, except to integrity of purpose and principle. Perhaps, however, Mr. Southey consoles himself for a certain void without and within, by receiving the compliments of some Under-graduate of either of our Universities, on his last article in defence of Rotten Boroughs,⁷⁰ in the Quarterly Review; or of a Dignitary of the Church, on his share in the Six Acts,⁷¹ and for suggesting to Lord Sidmouth⁷² the propriety of punishing the second conviction for libel with banishment. We do not know how this may be: but with us, it would barb the dart.

It would not matter, if these turn-coats were not in such violent extremes. Between the two, they must be strangely perplexed in their own minds, and scarcely know what to make of themselves. They must have singular qualms come over them at times—the apparitions of former acquaintance and opinions. If they were contented to correct, to qualify their youthful extravagances, and to be taught by experience to steer a middle course, and pay some deference to the conclusions of others, it would be mighty well; but this is not their humour. They must be conspicuous, dogmatical, exclusive, intolerant, on whichever side they are: the mode may be different, the principle is the same. A man's nature does not change, though he may profess different sentiments. A Socinian⁷³ may become a Calvinist,⁷⁴ or a Whig a Tory;⁷⁵ but a bigot is always a bigot; an egotist never becomes humble. Besides, what excuse has a man, after thirty, to change about all of a sudden to the very opposite side? If he is an uneducated man, he may indeed plead ignorance yesterday of what he has learnt to-day: but a man of study and reading can't pretend that a whole host of arguments has suddenly burst upon him, of which he never heard before, and that they have upset all his earlier notions: he must have known them long before, and

if they made no impression on him then to modify his violent zeal (supposing them to be right now) it is a sign either of a disinclination, or of an incapacity, on his part, to give truth a fair hearing—a bad ground to build his present dogmatical and infallible tone upon! It is certain, that the common sense of the world condemns these violent changes of opinion; and if they do not prove that a man prefers his convenience to his virtue, they at least show that he prefers it to his reputation; for he loses his character by them. An apostate is a name that all men abhor, that no man ever willingly acknowledges; and the tergiversation which it denotes is not likely to come into much greater request, till it is no longer observed that a man seldom changes his principles except for his interest! Those who go over from the winning to the losing side, do not incur this appellation; and however we may count them fools, they can't be called knaves into the bargain.

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- ¹ Misprint.
- ² Little poems. See William Shakespeare, *Henry IV* II, III.ii.330.
- ³ Possible reference to William Shakespeare, *Henry VI* II, I.iii.42.
- ⁴ Possible reference to William Shakespeare, *Henry IV* I, I.iii.44-45.
- ⁵ See Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790).
- ⁶ See William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* II.i.25.
- ⁷ Sir Walter Scott, Scottish novelist and poet.
- ⁸ Allusion to Walter Scott's historical novel *Peveril of the Peak* (1823), which explores the tensions between Royalist and Parliamentary factions particularly around the context of the popish plot (1678-81) and the Restoration (1660).
- ⁹ Richard Plantagenet Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos-Grenville (1797-1861), appointed Duke of Buckingham and Chandos in 1822.
- ¹⁰ Reference to Thomas Warton's sonnet "Written in a Blank Leaf of Dugdale's *Monasticon*."
- ¹¹ John Hampden (c. 1594-1643), English politician and ally of Parliamentary leader John Pym (1584-1643). He was fatally wounded at the Battle of Chalgrove Field while fighting for Parliament in the First English Civil War.
- ¹² Algernon Sidney (1622-83), English politician and member of the Long Parliament. He is best known for his involvement in the Rye House Plot and his execution in 1683 for allegedly conspiring to assassinate King Charles II.
- ¹³ Edmund Burke (1729-97), Anglo-Irish statesman, philosopher, and political theorist. He served as Member of Parliament in Britain and is best known for his criticism of the French Revolution in his work *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.
- ¹⁴ Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.
- ¹⁵ Misprint.
- ¹⁶ Signed by the King of France, the *lettres de cachet* carried direct orders from the king, typically enjoining actions and judgments that were beyond appeal.
- ¹⁷ Allusion to the Storming of the Bastille. On 14 July 1789, in Paris, France, revolutionary insurgents stormed and took control of the Bastille, a medieval armoury, fortress, and political prison.
- ¹⁸ Untraced quotation. Also quoted in Hazlitt's essay "On the Late War" (1814).
- ¹⁹ The expression *Grand Monarque* refers to King Louis XIV (1638-1715) of France, who reigned from 1643 to 1715. He is known for his absolute rule, centralizing power in the monarchy, and making France a dominant European power.
- ²⁰ See John Milton, *Paradise Lost* IV.502-4.
- ²¹ Possible reference to the words of the Editor of *The Times*, quoted in Hazlitt's "On the connexion between toad-eaters and tyrants" (1817).
- ²² Charles I (1600-49), king of England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1625 to 1649. His conflicts with Parliament over royal authority led to the English Civil War. After being defeated by Parliamentary forces, he was tried for treason and executed, becoming the first British monarch to be beheaded.
- ²³ Louis XVI (1754-93), king of France from 1774 until 1792, during a period of financial crisis and social unrest. His inability to address France's economic problems and his resistance to reform led to the outbreak of the French Revolution. In 1793, he was tried for treason and executed by guillotine.
- ²⁴ Allusion to George III (1738-1820), king of Great Britain and Ireland from 1760 to 1820. His mental health issues, particularly later in life, led to his son, George IV (1762-1830), serving as Regent from 1811.
- ²⁵ See William Shakespeare, *Othello* I.iii.409.
- ²⁶ The Holy or Great Alliance was a coalition formed by the absolute monarchist great powers of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, established after Napoleon's final defeat at the request of Tsar Alexander I of Russia, and formalized in Paris in 1815.
- ²⁷ See John Milton, *Paradise Lost* X.112-13.
- ²⁸ See 2 *Samuel* 1.16.

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- ²⁹ See *Luke* 2.11-14.
- ³⁰ Misprint for *appalling*.
- ³¹ Sir John Stoddart (1773-1856), English journalist and editor of *The Times*. In 1814, Stoddart founded a rival daily called *New Times*, which survived until 1828.
- ³² See John Milton, *Paradise Lost* II.113-14.
- ³³ William Pitt (1759-1806), British statesman and prime minister from 1783 to 1801 and again from 1804 to 1806. He is remembered for his strong leadership during the Napoleonic Wars and for his financial reforms, including the establishment of the Bank of England.
- ³⁴ See William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* IV.i.122.
- ³⁵ See John Milton, *Paradise Lost* IX.549.
- ³⁶ See Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.
- ³⁷ Allusion to Helen of Troy, in Greek mythology the most beautiful woman in the world. In Homer's *Iliad*, Helen is the cause of the Trojan War, as her abduction by (or elopement with) the Trojan prince Paris sparks the conflict between Troy and the Greek states.
- ³⁸ George Canning, British Tory statesman. He became Foreign Secretary in 1822, and soon after recognized the independence of the Spanish American colonies.
- ³⁹ See Edmund Burke's "Speech on the Economical Reform" (1780), in which he supports the Whig policy of diminishing the king's influence over Parliament.
- ⁴⁰ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, French philosopher and writer. The *Encyclopédistes* were a group of eighteenth-century French intellectuals who contributed to the *Encyclopédie*, a comprehensive work aimed at compiling and spreading knowledge. They were key figures of the Enlightenment, promoting reason, science, and secular thought. Prominent members included Denis Diderot (1713-84), Jean le Rond d'Alembert (1717-83), and Voltaire (1694-1778).
- ⁴¹ See William Shakespeare, *Henry VI* II, I.i.108.
- ⁴² See William Shakespeare, *Othello* I.i.80.
- ⁴³ Untraced quotation.
- ⁴⁴ Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), French military leader who rose to prominence during the French Revolution and later became Emperor of France. He is known for his military campaigns across Europe, which reshaped the continent's political landscape.
- ⁴⁵ Untraced quotation.
- ⁴⁶ Misprint for *side of the water*.
- ⁴⁷ See John Milton, *Comus* l. 556.
- ⁴⁸ See Joseph Addison, "The Campaign" l.292 and Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad* III.264.
- ⁴⁹ Garrett Burke (c. 1725-65) and Richard Burke (1733-94).
- ⁵⁰ James Barry (1741-1806), Irish painter known for his series of six historical paintings *The Progress of Human Culture* (1777-83). In 1763, Barry attracted the patronage of Edmund Burke, who funded Barry's stay in Italy to study the Old Masters.
- ⁵¹ Charles James Fox (1749-1806), British Whig politician and statesman. His relationship with Burke, who had played a key role in shaping Fox's political position, soured over time, particularly during the French Revolution. Burke became a fierce critic of the Revolution, advocating for conservative principles, while Fox continued to support the Revolution and its original ideals of liberty and democracy. This ideological rift led to a public split between the two, marking the end of their once-close friendship and political partnership.
- ⁵² William Pitt, British statesman. The political relationship between Burke and Pitt was marked by both cooperation and divergence particularly on key political issues relating to the American colonies and the French Revolution.
- ⁵³ Henry Dundas (1742-1811), Scottish politician and lieutenant of Prime Minister William Pitt. Burke and Dundas had a complex relationship, shaped by their roles in British politics and differing views on governance and reform. See Edmund Burke, *Letter to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas* (1792).
- ⁵⁴ Charles James Fox, British Whig politician.

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⁵⁵ Richard Brinsley Butler Sheridan (1751-1816), Anglo-Irish playwright and Whig politician. After the publication of Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Sheridan and Fox expressed their disagreement with Burke's sharp condemnation of the French Revolution, accusing him of being overly conservative and endorsing Tory principles. Their relationship became strained and eventually they parted ways with Burke.

⁵⁶ See John Milton, *Paradise Lost* IX.1.

⁵⁷ Allusion to the London dining club known as The Club or Literary Club, founded by the painter Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-92) in 1764. Edmund Burke was one of the nine original members, who would meet once a week at the Turk's Head Inn in Soho, London, and later in rooms in St. James' Street.

⁵⁸ See Horace, *Satires* II.vi.65.

⁵⁹ Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74), Anglo-Irish writer. Johnson and Goldsmith were, like Burke, members of Reynold's The Club.

⁶⁰ John Dunning (1731-83), English lawyer and Whig politician, and Isaac Barré (1726-1802), British Army officer and Whig politician. Together with Burke, they were engaged in issues relating to the defence of parliamentary sovereignty and opposition to government policies toward the American colonies.

⁶¹ See Friedrich Schiller, *The Death of Wallenstein* V.iii.

⁶² William Windham (1750-1810), British Whig statesman well known for his oratory in the House of Commons.

⁶³ Allusion to Robert Southey (1774-1843), English Romantic poet and Poet Laureate from 1813 until his death. Other Romantics, among them Lord Byron, accused Southey of siding with the Establishment for financial gain and social standing, as his political position became increasingly conservative.

⁶⁴ Latin locution meaning *intimately, without reservation*.

⁶⁵ See Thomas Middleton, *The Witch* I.ii.

⁶⁶ See John Milton, *Paradise Lost* XI.327.

⁶⁷ The Lake School of Poets – the group of poets formed by William Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge, and Robert Southey, who lived in the Lake District.

⁶⁸ See Edmund Spencer, *The Ruines of Time* 431.

⁶⁹ John Wilson Croker, Anglo-Irish statesman.

⁷⁰ A rotten borough was a parliamentary constituency in Britain with very few voters, often controlled by a wealthy landowner or aristocrat, allowing them to manipulate elections. In 1826 Robert Southey himself was elected member of parliament, without his knowledge, for the rotten borough of Downton in Wiltshire.

⁷¹ The Six Acts were a set of laws passed by the British Government in 1819 for the suppression of political dissent and the prevention of unrest following the Peterloo Massacre.

⁷² Henry Addington (1757-1844), Tory statesman and Prime Minister from 1801 to 1804. He was responsible for the passing of the Six Acts in 1819.

⁷³ Socinianism is a theological belief system originated from the teachings of Lelio Sozzini (1525-62). It rejects the traditional Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus Christ, and emphasizes rationalism and the oneness of God.

⁷⁴ A branch of Protestant theology.

⁷⁵ Whigs and Tories were the two main political factions in Britain from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. The Whigs were generally in favour of parliamentary supremacy, constitutional monarchy, and reform, while the Tories more conservatively supported the power of the monarchy and traditional institutions.

MINOR PIECES.*

MAHMOUD.

I have just read a most amazing thing,
A true and noble story of a king:
And to show all men, by these presents, how
Good kings can please a Liberal, even now
I'll vent the warmth it gave me in a verse:
But recollect—these kings and emperors
Are very scarce; and when they do appear,
Had better not have graced that drunken sphere,
Which hurts the few whose brains can bear it best,
And turns the unhappy heads of all the rest.
This prince was worthy to have ruled a state
Plain as his heart, and by its freedom great:
But stripped of their guilt stuff, at what would t'others rate?

There came a man, making his hasty moan,
Before the Sultan Mahmoud on his throne,
And crying out—"My sorrow is my right,
And I *will* see the Sultan, and to-night."
"Sorrow," said Mahmoud, "is a reverend thing:
I recognize its right, as king with king;
Speak on." "A fiend has got into my house,"
Exclaimed the staring man, "and tortures us:
One of thine officers—he comes, the abhorr'd,
And takes possession of my house, my board,

* Author: Various authors / Transcribed by Alessandra Crotti; Annotated
by Alessandra Crotti and Andrea Peghinelli.

My bed:—I have two daughters and a wife,
And the wild villain comes and makes me mad with life.”
“Is he there now?” said Mahmoud:—“No;—he left
The house when I did, of my wits bereft;
And laugh’d me down the street, because I vowed
I’d bring the prince himself to lay him in his shroud.
I’m mad with want—I’m mad with misery
And, oh thou Sultan Mahmoud, God cries out for thee!”

The Sultan comforted the man, and said,
“Go home, and I will send thee wine and bread,”
(For he was poor) “and other comforts. Go;
And, should the wretch return, let Sultan Mahmoud know.”

In three days’ time, with haggard eyes and beard,
And shaken voice, the suitor re-appeared,
And said “He’s come.”—Mahmoud said not a word,
But rose and took four slaves, each with a sword,
And went with the vexed man. They reach the place,
And hear a voice, and see a female face,
That to the window fluttered in affright:
“Go in,” said Mahmoud, “and put out the light;
But tell the females first to leave the room;
And, when the drunkard follows them, we come.”

The man went in. There was a cry, and hark!
A table falls, the window is struck dark:
Forth rush the breathless women; and behind
With curses comes the fiend in desperate mind.
In vain: the sabres soon cut short the strife,
And chop the shrieking wretch, and drink his bloody life.

“Now *light* the light,” the Sultan cried aloud.

'Twas done, he took it in his hand, and bowed
Over the corpse, and looked upon the face;
Then turned and knelt beside it in the place,
And said a prayer, and from his lips there crept
Some gentle words of pleasure, and he wept.
In reverend silence the spectators wait,
Then bring him at his call both wine and meat;
And when he had refreshed his noble heart,
He bade his host be blest, and rose up to depart.

The man amazed, all mildness now, and tears,
Fell at the Sultan's feet, with many prayers,
And begged him to vouchsafe to tell his slave,
The reason first of that command he gave
About the light; then, when he saw the face,
Why he knelt down; and lastly, how it was,
That fare so poor as his detained him in the place.

The Sultan said, with much humanity,
"Since first I saw thee come, and heard thy cry,
I could not get it from my head, that one
By whom such daring villanies were done,
Must be some lord of mine, perhaps a lawless son.
Whoe'er he was, I knew my task, but feared
A father's heart, in case the worst appeared:
For this I had the light put out; but when
I saw the face, and found a stranger slain,
I knelt and thanked the sovereign arbiter,
Whose work I had performed through pain and fear;
And then I rose, and was refreshed with food,
The first time since thou cam'st, and marr'dst my solitude.

THE VENETIAN FISHERMAN.²

[*The burden, "With your gallant going vessel," is repeated at the end of every two lines.*]

Oh, fisher of the waters, Fidelin,
 Come fish for me, I pray,
 With your gallant going vessel,
 With your gallant pull away.
 La ra lo, la ra lay.

And what am I to fish for?
 Oh, a ring I've lost to day;
 A hundred crowns I'll give thee,
 And a purse both rich and gay.

Oh, a hundred crowns I'll have not,
 Nor a purse both rich and gay;
 Lady, I'll have a kiss of love,
 And that shall be my pay.

O pescator dell'onda, Fidelin,
 Vieni pescar in quà
 Colla bella sua barca,
 Colla bella se ne va,
 Fidelin, lin, la.

Che cosa vuoi ch'io peschi?
 L'anel che m'è casca;
 Ti darò cento scudi,
 Sta borsa ricamà.

Non voglio cento scudi,
 Nè borsa ricamà;
 Voglio un bazin d'amore,
 Con quel mi pagherà, &c.

DIALOGUE FROM ALFIERI,³

BETWEEN A CHAIR IN ITALY AND A GENTLEMAN FROM
ENGLAND.

CHAIR.

What is the reason, Sir, that every day
You load me thus for nothing, hours and hours?
Is this the manner, pray,
Of making love in that cold clime of yours?
You may be heavy for a century,
And get no further with the lovely she.

GENTLEMAN.

And hast thou too conspired against me, chair?
I love, tis true—too true—and dare not say it:
But surely my whole air,
My looks, my very silence, all display it:
Every one, doubtless, must perceive the fire,
That gnaws and eats me up with fierce desire.

CHAIR.

For God's sake, speak then, or you'll never do:
What you do now by the fair lady's side,
I boast of doing too:—
It makes her mad to find you thus tongue-tied,
To see you sit and stare, like a stuck pig:
You make me speak myself, who am but fig.

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B B

SEGGIOLA.

Signor, perchè⁴ del tuo disutil peso
Ogni giorno mi vuoi gravar tant'ore?
Si fa così all' amore
Tra i gelati Britanni?
Me premerai mill' anni,
E mai non ti avverrà d'essere inteso.

IL SEDUTO.

Sedia e tu pur congiuri a danno mio?
Amo pur troppo è vero, e dir non l'oso:
Ma l'amor sì nascoso
Non ho, che nel mio, sguardo
Non legga ognun, ch'io ardo,
Che mi consuma e rode un fier desio.

SEGGIOLA.

Non di parlar, bensì d'an dartene osa:
Ciò che tu fai della Sandrina accanto
Di farlo anch'io mi vento.
A lei l'anima e il senso
Toglie il tuo starti intenso:
Me fai parlare inanimata cosa.

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN ALFIERI AND HIS FLORENTINE LAUNDRESS,
NERA COLOMBOLI.*⁵

- A. Why, Mistress Nera, what the devil's here?
To bring my stockings home at last undone?
N. Undone! ah! God knows if I've sewn and sewn;
But they so *spider-web*, it's a despair.
- A. So *spider-web*, school-mistress! Why, that's queer.
N. How? Any thing that we put off and on,
And wear and wear, till all the stuff is gone,
Does'nt it *spider-web*? I think it's clear.
- A. *Spider-web*? I don't take it: what d'ye mean?
N. Lord bless me, Sir, break me a spider's web,
And see if I can sew it up again.
A. Ah! It is I that am the unlick'd cub.
I grow grey writing Tuscan, but in vain:
A sorry graft, fit only for the grub.

-
- A. Che diavol fate voi, Madonna Nera?
Darmi per sin co'buchi le calzette?
N. Co'buchi, eh? Dio 'l sa, s'i'l'ho rassette;
Ma elle ragnano sì, ch'è una dispéra.
A. *Ragnar*, cos'è, Monna vocaboliera?—

* Alfieri, a Piedmontese, writes this sonnet (which is doubtless a true recital) to shew the difficulty he found in acquiring the niceties of the Tuscan tongue, and how well they are felt and understood by the common people.

N. Oh! la roba, che l'uom mette e rimette,
 Che vien via per tropp'uso a fette a fette,
 Nun ragna ella e mattina e giorno e sera?

A. *Ragnar?* non l'ho più udito, e non l'intendo.

N. Pur gli è chiaro: la rompa un ragnatélo;
 Poi vedrem, se con l'ago i'lo rammendo.

A. Ah! son pur io la bestia! imbianco il pelo
 Questa lingua scrivendo, e non sapendo:
 Tosco innesto son io su immondo stelo.

A BLESSED SPOT.

FROM AN EPIGRAM OF ABULFADHEL AHMED, SURNAMED
 AL HAMADANI, RECORDED IN D'HERBELOT.⁶

HAMADAN⁷ is my native place;
 And I must say, in praise of it,
 It merits, for its ugly face,
 What every body says of it.

It's children equal it's old men
 In vices and avidity;
 And they reflect the babes again
 In exquisite stupidity.

MOUTH VERSUS EYES.

FROM THE FRENCH OF LA FONTAINE.⁸

CYPRUS⁹ to wit: Sweet Mouth *versus* Fine Eyes,
Before the Chamber of Precedencies.
The case was opened by Sweet Mouth, who said,
“I summon Hearts. Let their reports be read.
Let them decide, my Lords, which of us two
Has most to say, to charm with, and to do.
Do, did I say? I’m ready to take oath,
I’ve more than I can do, though nothing loth:
Only it seems, I’ve not the happy art,
Of shedding tears, like Eyes! With all my heart:
My glory centers not in sight alone:
I satisfy three senses, they but one.
Odours and sounds to my sweet state belong,
And to delightful words I join a charming song.
My very sighs exhale a world of sweets,
Like zephyrs in the time of violets:
I have such ways to make a lover blest,
Such heaps—your Lordships will excuse the list:
And then, if Fine Eyes lay a wager with us,
To see who first can strike some heart beneath us,
Lord! how Fine Eyes go toiling round and round,
While, speak we but a word—the man’s on ground:
We want no tricks, not we, to give the rosy wound.
Let Fine Eyes shut, they’re no such wonder, they:
Sweet Mouth has always treasures to display:
Coral without, and precious pearl within;
Who, when I deign to play, can hope to win?

Let presents fall in oriental showers,
The favours I bestow beat all their dowers.
Thirty-two pearls I wear about me here,
Of which the least in beauty and least clear,
Surpasses all with which the East is lit;
As many millions should not purchase it."

Thus spoke Sweet Mouth; on which was seen to rise
A lover, who was counsel for Fine Eyes.
He said, as you may guess, that for their part,
Love, without them, could never find the heart:
That as to tears, he felt, he must own, shocked,
To hear their very tenderness rebuked.
What could sighs do, he should be glad to know,
Unless their warrants stood prepared to flow?
The fact was, both were good, and Sweet Mouth there
Wronged her own cause, and hurt her character.
There are delicious tears; and there are sighs,
On t'other hand, not over good or wise;
And Mouth had better, as she says she can,
Have gained the cause by silence than this plan.
"What are the silent charms, the godlike powers,
To shew for her cause, when compared with our's?
We charm an hundred and a thousand ways,
By sweetness, by a stealth, by sparkling rays,
And by what Sweet Mouth blames—but is the part
We glory in the most—the gentle art
Of melting with a tear the manliest heart.
Where Sweet Mouth gains a single conquest, we
Roll in a round of ceaseless victory:
And for one song in which she bears the prize,
A hundred thousand sparkle with Fine Eyes.
In courts, and cities, in the poet's groves,

What is there heard of but our darts and loves?
 Such sudden strokes we deal, such deeds we vaunt,
 That those do well, who say that we enchant:
 We come, and all surrender up their arms:
 Though often in the whirl of those alarms,
 Fine Mouth comes following in, and then pretends her charms.
 Heaven grant the people ask not who she is,
 Or she may speak, and "thank the Gods amiss."¹⁰
 'Tis true, she has two words of magic touch,
 "I love;" but cannot Fine Eyes say as much?
 We have a tongue that with no words at all
 Can ask, and hint, and tell a tale, and call,
 And ravish more than all the pearls and songs,
 Which Sweet Mouth musters round her tongue of tongues."

The Counsel started here, and took occasion
 To make a very happy peroration.
 He caught a lady's eye, just coming in,
 With an approach the sweetest ever seen:
 He changed his tone, and with a gravity,
 Seconded well by a reposing eye,
 Said—"I've been taking up your Lordship's time
 With trifling matters fitter for a rhyme;
 Look there: my Lords, I think 'twould be absurd,
 After that sight, to add another word.
 Pray give the sentence:—we are quite secure:
 My client would not tire the court, I'm sure."

The lady, with a pretty shame, looked round
 With speaking eyes, which dealt so wide a wound,
 That all hands dropt their papers for surprise,
 And not a heart but gave it for Fine Eyes.
 Sweet Mouth at this, seeing how matters went,

And forced to raise some new astonishment,
 Resumed, and said—"To what has just been dropt,
 (Which, by the way, is shockingly corrupt)
 There is one word alone I wish to say:
 My Lords, Fine Eyes do little but by day:
 The silent tongue of theirs, when in the dark
 Makes but a sorry sort of frigid spark:
 What I can do, needs surely no remark."

This reason settled the dispute *instantaner*:
 Fine Eyes were much, but Sweet Mouth the Enchanter.
 Fine Eyes, however, took it in good part,
 And Sweet Mouth gave the Judge a kiss with all her heart.

Belle Bouche et Beaux Yeux plaidaient pour les honneurs,
 Devant le juge d'Amathonte.¹¹
 Belle Bouche disait—"Je m'en rapporte aux cœurs,
 Et leur demande d'ils font compte
 Des Beaux Yeux ainsi que de moi.
 Qu'on examine notre emploi,
 Nos traits, nos beautés, et nos charmes.
 Que dis-je, notre emploi? J'ai bien plus d'un métier,¹²
 Mais j'ignore celui de répandre¹³ des larmes:
 De bon cœur, je le laisse aux Beaux Yeux tout entier.
 Je satisfais trois sens, eux seulement la vue.
 Ma gloire a bien plus d'étendue.
 Louie¹⁴ et l'odorat ont part à mes plaisirs,
 Outre qu'aux doux propos je joins les chansonnettes.¹⁵
 Belle Bouche fait des soupirs,
 Tels à peu près que les zephirs¹⁶
 Dans la saison des violettes.

Je sais par cent moyens rendre heureux un amant—
 Vous me dispenserez de vous dire, comment.
 S'il s'agit entre nous d'une conquête à faire,
 On voit Beaux Yeux se tourmenter;
 Belle Bouche n'a qu'à parler:
 Sans artifice elle sait plaire.
 Quand Beaux Yeux sont fermés, ce n'est pas grande affaire—
 Belle Bouche à toute heure étale ses trésors;¹⁷
 Le nacre est en dedans, le corail en dehors.
 Quand je daigne m'ouvrir, il n'est richesse égale:¹⁸
 Les présents que nous fait la rive orientale
 N'approchent pas les dons que je prétends¹⁹ avoir.
 Trente-deux perles se font voir,
 Dont la moins belle et la moins claire
 Passe celle que l'Inde a dans ses régions;²⁰
 Pour plus de trente-deux millions,
 Je ne m'en voudrais pas defaire."²¹

 Belle Bouche ainsi harangua.
 Un amant pour Beaux Yeux parla;
 Et, comme on peut penser, ne manqua pas de dire,
 Que c'est par eux qu'amour s'introduit dans les cœurs.
 Pourquoi les reprocher les pleurs?
 Il ne faut donc pas qu'on soupire?
 Mais tous les deux sont bons; Belle Bouche a grand tort.
 Il est des larmes de transport,
 Il est des soupirs, au contraire,
 Qui fort souvent ne disent rien.
 Belle Bouche n'entend pas bien
 Pour cette fois-là son affaire.
 Qu'elle se taise, au nom des dieux!
 Des appas qui lui sont répartis²² par les cieux,
 Qu'a t'-elle sur ce point qui nous soit comparable?

Nous savons plaire en cent façons,
 Par l'éclat, la douceur, et cet art admirable
 De tendre aux cœurs des hameçons.
 Belle Bouche le blâme, et nous en faisons gloire:
 Si l'on tient d'elle une victoire,
 On en tient cent de nous; et pour un chanson,
 Ou Belle Bouche est en renom,
 Beaux Yeux le sont en plus de mille.
 La cour, le parnasse, et la ville,
 Ne retentissent tout le jour
 Que du mot de Beaux Yeux et de celui d'Amour.
 Dès que nous paraissions, chacun nous rend les armes.
 Quiconque nous appellerait
 Enchanteurs, il ne mentirait,
 Tant est prompt l'effèt²³ de nos charmes.
 Sous une masque trompeur leur éclat fait si bien,
 Que maint objet tel quel, en plus d'une rencontre,
 Par ce moyen passe à la montre:
 On demande qui c'est, et souvent ce n'est rien.
 Cependant Beaux Yeux sont la cause
 Qu'on prend ce rien pour quelque chose.
 Belle Bouche dit "J'aime," et le disons nous pas?
 Sans autre bruit notre langage,²⁴
 Muet qu'il est, plaît davantage
 Que ces perles, ces chants, et ces autres appas
 Avec quoi Belle Bouche engage."

L'avocat de Beaux Yeux fit sa péroration
 Des regards d'un intervenante.
 Cette belle approcha d'un façon charmante;
 Puis il dit, en changeant le ton,
 "J'amuse ici la cour par des discours frivoles:
 Ai-je besoin d'autres paroles
 Que les yeux de Phillis?²⁵ Juge—regardez les;

Puis prononcez votre sentence:
Nous gagnerons notre procès.”

Phillis²⁶ eut quelque honte; et puis sur l'assistance
Repandit²⁷ des regards si remplis d'éloquence,
Que les papiers tombaient des mains.
Frappé de ses charmes soudains,
L'auditoire inclinait pour Beaux Yeux dans son âme.
Belle Bouche, en faveur des regards de la dame
Voyant que les esprits s'allaient préoccupant,
Prit la parole, et dit—“A votre rhétorique,
Dont Beaux Yeux vont ainsi les juges corrompant,
Je ne veux opposer qu'un seul mot en réplique.²⁸
La nuit mon emploi dure encore—
Beaux Yeux sont lors de peu d'usage.
On les laisse en repos, et leur muet langage
Fait un assez froid personnage.”²⁹

Chacun en demeura d'accord.
Cette raison regla³⁰ la chose:
On préféra Belle Bouche à Beaux Yeux;
En quelques chefs pourtant ils eurent gain de cause.
Belle Bouche baisa le juge de son mieux.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ¹ Incorrect page number.
- ² Traditional Italian folk song, associated with the Veneto region.
- ³ Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), Italian dramatist and poet, often regarded as the founder of Italian tragedy. “Dialogo fra una seggiola e chi vi sta su” is one of the epigrams Alfieri composed in Pisa in June 1766.
- ⁴ Misprint for *perché*.
- ⁵ Alfieri’s sonnet CLXXXV “Difficoltà dell’apprendere il parlar toscano,” composed on 28 March 1796; the two interlocutors are Alfieri and Nera Comboli, his Florentine maid.
- ⁶ Barthélemy d’Herbelot de Molainville (1625-95), French Orientalist. In his *Bibliothèque orientale* (1697), d’Herbelot mentions an Arab doctor called Abulfahdi Ahmed Hadamani, author of a book entitled *Mecamât* (“Commonplaces”) and of several poems collected in d’Herbelot’s work.
- ⁷ City in western Iran.
- ⁸ Jean de La Fontaine (1621-95), French fabulist and poet best known for his *Fables* (1668-94). The poem “Le différent. De beaux yeux et de belle bouche” was published in *Contes, troisième partie* (1671).
- ⁹ Cyprus is an island in the eastern Mediterranean Sea.
- ¹⁰ See John Milton, *The Measure* 177.
- ¹¹ Amathus, one of the ancient royal cities of Cyprus.
- ¹² Misprint for *métier*.
- ¹³ Misprint for *répandre*.
- ¹⁴ Misprint for *ouïe*.
- ¹⁵ Misprint for *chansonnettes*.
- ¹⁶ Misprint for *zéphyr*s.
- ¹⁷ Misprint for *trésors*.
- ¹⁸ Misprint for *égale*.
- ¹⁹ Misprint for *prétends*.
- ²⁰ Misprint for *régions*.
- ²¹ Misprint for *défaire*.
- ²² Misprint for *départis*.
- ²³ Misprint for *effet*.
- ²⁴ Misprint for *langage*.
- ²⁵ Misprint for *Phyllis*. A minor figure of Greek mythology, Phyllis falls in love with the hero Demophon, but after he leaves her, she dies of grief and the gods transform her into an almond tree.
- ²⁶ Misprint for *Phyllis*.
- ²⁷ Misprint for *répandit*.
- ²⁸ Misprint for *réplique*.
- ²⁹ Misprint for *personnage*.
- ³⁰ Misprint for *régl*a.