

But sad his light to agonizing eyes,  
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes :  
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seemed to pour,  
The land, where Phœbus never frowned  
before :

But ere he sunk below Cithæron's head,  
The cup of woe was quaffed—the Spirit fled ;  
The Soul of him who scorned to fear or fly—  
Who lived and died, as none can live or  
die ! 1200

But lo ! from high Hymettus to the plain,  
The Queen of night asserts her silent reign :<sup>1</sup>  
No murky vapour, herald of the storm,  
Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form ;  
With cornice glimmering as the moon-beams  
play,

There the white column greets her grateful  
ray,  
And bright around with quivering beams beset,  
Her emblem sparkles o'er the Minaret :  
The groves of olive scattered dark and wide  
Where meek Cephisus pours his scanty  
tide ; 1210

The cypress saddening by the sacred Mosque,  
The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk ;<sup>2</sup>  
And, dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm,  
Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm,  
All tinged with varied hues arrest the eye—  
And dull were his that passed them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,  
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war ;  
Again his waves in milder tints unfold  
Their long array of sapphire and of gold, 1220

<sup>1</sup> The twilight in Greece is much shorter than in our own country: the days in winter are longer, but in summer of shorter duration.

<sup>2</sup> The Kiosk is a Turkish summer house: the palm is without the present walls of Athens, not far from the temple of Theseus, between which and the tree, the wall intervenes. — Cephisus' stream is indeed scanty, and Ilissus has no stream at all.

[E. Dodwell (*Classical Tour*, 1819, i. 371) speaks of "a magnificent palm tree, which shoots among the ruins of the Ptolemaion," a short distance to the east of the Theseion. There is an illustration in its honour. The Theseion—which was "within five minutes' walk" of Byron's lodgings—contains the remains of the scholar, John Tweddell, died 1793, "over which a stone was placed, owing to the exertions of Lord Byron" (Clarke's *Travels*, Part II. sect. i. p. 534). When Byron died, Colonel Stanhope proposed, and the chief, Odysseus, decreed, that he should be buried in the same spot. —*Life*, p. 640.]

Mixed with the shades of many a distant isle,  
That frown—where gentler Ocean seems to  
smile.

## II.

Not now my theme—why turn my thoughts  
to thee?

Oh ! who can look along thy native sea,  
Nor dwell upon thy name, whate'er the tale,  
So much its magic must o'er all prevail?  
Who that beheld that Sun upon thee set,  
Fair Athens ! could thine evening face forget?  
Not he—whose heart nor time nor distance  
frees,

Spell-bound within the clustering Cy-  
clades ! 1230

Nor seems this homage foreign to its strain,  
His Corsair's isle was once thine own domain—<sup>1</sup>  
Would that with freedom it were thine again !

## III.

The Sun hath sunk—and, darker than the  
night,

Sinks with its beam upon the beacon height  
Medora's heart—the third day's come and  
gone—

With it he comes not—sends not—faithless  
one !

The wind was fair though light ! and storms  
were none.

Last eve Anselmo's bark returned, and yet  
His only tidings that they had not met ! 1240  
Though wild, as now, far different were the  
tale

Had Conrad waited for that single sail.  
The night-breeze freshens—she that day had  
passed

In watching all that Hope proclaimed a mast ;  
Sadly she sate on high—Impatience bore  
At last her footsteps to the midnight shore,  
And there she wandered, heedless of the spray  
That dashed her garments oft, and warned  
away :

She saw not, felt not this—nor dared depart,  
Nor deemed it cold—her chill was at her  
heart ; 1250

Till grew such certainty from that suspense—  
His very Sight had shocked from life or sense !

It came at last—a sad and shattered boat,  
Whose inmates first beheld whom first they  
sought ;

<sup>1</sup> [After the battle of Salamis, B.C. 480, Paros fell under the dominion of Athens.]



Some bleeding—all most wretched—these the  
few—

Scarce knew they how escaped—*this* all they  
knew.

In silence, darkling, each appeared to wait  
His fellow's mournful guess at Conrad's fate :  
Something they would have said ; but seemed  
to fear

To trust their accents to Medora's ear. 1260  
She saw at once, yet sunk not—trembled not—  
Beneath that grief, that loneliness of lot ;  
Within that meek fair form were feelings high,  
That deemed not, till they found, their energy.  
While yet was Hope they softened, fluttered,  
wept—

All lost—that Softness died not—but it slept ;  
And o'er its slumber rose that Strength which  
said,

“ With nothing left to love, there's nought to  
dread.”

'Tis more than Nature's—like the burning  
might

Delirium gathers from the fever's height. 1270

“ Silent you stand—nor would I hear you tell  
What—speak not—breathe not—for I know  
it well—

Yet would I ask—almost my lip denies  
The—quick your answer—tell me where he  
lies.”

“ Lady ! we know not—scarce with life we  
fled ;

But here is one denies that he is dead :  
He saw him bound ; and bleeding—but alive.”

She heard no further—'twas in vain to strive—  
So throbb'd each vein—each thought—till  
then withstood ;

Her own dark soul these words at once  
subdued : 1280

She totters—falls—and senseless had the wave  
Perchance but snatched her from another  
grave ;

But that with hands though rude, yet weeping  
eyes,

They yield such aid as Pity's haste supplies :  
Dash o'er her deathlike cheek the ocean dew,  
Raise, fan, sustain—till life returns anew ;  
Awake her handmaids, with the matrons leave  
That fainting form o'er which they gaze and  
grieve ;

Then seek Anselmo's cavern, to report  
The tale too tedious — when the triumph  
short. 1290

## IV.

In that wild council words waxed warm and  
strange,

With thoughts of ransom, rescue, and revenge ;  
All, save repose or flight : still lingering there  
Breathed Conrad's spirit, and forbade despair ;  
What'er his fate—the breasts he formed and led  
Will save him living, or appease him dead.  
Woe to his foes ! there yet survive a few,  
Whose deeds are daring, as their hearts are  
true.

## V.

Within the Haram's secret chamber sate  
Stern Seyd, still pondering o'er his Captive's  
fate ; 1300

His thoughts on love and hate alternate dwell,  
Now with Gulnare, and now in Conrad's cell ;  
Here at his feet the lovely slave reclined  
Surveys his brow—would soothe his gloom of  
mind ;

While many an anxious glance her large  
dark eye

Sends in its idle search for sympathy,  
*His* only bends in seeming o'er his beads,  
But inly views his victim as he bleeds.

“ Pacha ! the day is thine ; and on thy crest  
Sits Triumph — Conrad taken — fall'n the  
rest ! 1310

His doom is fixed—he dies ; and well his fate  
Was earned — yet much too worthless for thy  
hate :

Methinks, a short release, for ransom told  
With all his treasure, not unwisely sold ;  
Report speaks largely of his pirate-ward—  
Would that of this my Pacha were the lord !  
While baffled, weakened by this fatal fray—  
Watched—followed—he were then an easier  
prey ;

But once cut off—the remnant of his band  
Embark their wealth, and seek a safer  
strand.” 1320

“ Gulnare ! —if for each drop of blood a gem  
Were offered rich as Stamboul's diadem ;  
If for each hair of his a massy mine  
Of virgin ore should supplicating shine ;  
If all our Arab tales divulge or dream  
Of wealth were here—that gold should not  
redeem !

It had not now redeemed a single hour,  
But that I know him fettered, in my power ;  
And, thirsting for revenge, I ponder still  
On pangs that longest rack — and latest  
kill.” 1330



“Nay, Seyd! I seek not to restrain thy rage.  
Too justly moved for Mercy to assuage;  
My thoughts were only to secure for thee  
His riches—thus released, he were not free:  
Disabled—shorn of half his might and band,  
His capture could but wait thy first command.”  
“His capture *could!*—and shall I then resign  
One day to him—the wretch already mine?  
Release my foe!—at whose remonstrance?—  
thine!

Fair suitor!—to thy virtuous gratitude, 1340  
That thus repays this Giaour’s relenting mood,  
Which thee and thine alone of all could  
spare—

No doubt, regardless—if the prize were fair—  
My thanks and praise alike are due—now hear!  
I have a counsel for thy gentler ear:  
I do mistrust thee, Woman! and each word  
Of thine stamps truth on all Suspicion heard.  
Borne in his arms through fire from yon  
Serai—

Say, wert thou lingering there with him to fly?  
Thou need’st not answer—thy confession  
speaks, 1350

Already reddening on thy guilty cheeks:  
Then—Lovely Dame—bethink thee! and  
beware:

’Tis not *his* life alone may claim such care!  
Another word and—nay—I need no more.  
Accurséd was the moment when he bore  
Thee from the flames, which better far—but  
no—

I then had mourned thee with a lover’s woe—  
Now ’tis thy lord that warns—deceitful thing!  
Know’st thou that I can clip thy wanton  
wing?

In words alone I am not wont to chafe: 1360  
Look to thyself—nor deem thy falsehood  
safe!”

He rose—and slowly, sternly thence withdrew,  
Rage in his eye, and threats in his adieu:  
Ah! little recked that Chief of womanhood—  
Which frowns ne’er quelled, nor menaces  
subdued;

And little deemed he what thy heart, Gulnare!  
When soft could feel—and when incensed  
could dare!

His doubts appeared to wrong—nor yet  
she knew

How deep the root from whence Compassion  
grew—

She was a slave—from such may captives  
claim

A fellow-feeling, differing but in name; 1370

Still half unconscious—heedless of his wrath,  
Again she ventured on the dangerous path,  
Again his rage repelled—until arose  
That strife of thought, the source of Woman’s  
woes!

## VI.

Meanwhile—long—anxious—weary—still the  
same

Rolled day and night: his soul could Terror  
tame—

This fearful interval of doubt and dread,  
When every hour might doom him worse  
than dead;

When every step that echoed by the gate, 1380  
Might entering lead where axe and stake  
await;

When every voice that grated on his ear  
Might be the last that he could ever hear;  
Could Terror tame—that Spirit stern and  
high

Had proved unwilling as unfit to die;  
’Twas worn—perhaps decayed—yet silent bore  
That conflict, deadlier far than all before:  
The heat of fight, the hurry of the gale,  
Leave scarce one thought inert enough to  
quail:

But bound and fixed in fettered solitude, 1390  
To pine, the prey of every changing mood;  
To gaze on thine own heart—and meditate  
Irrevocable faults, and coming fate—

Too late the last to shun—the first to mend—  
To count the hours that struggle to thine end,  
With not a friend to animate, and tell  
To other ears that Death became thee well;  
Around thee foes to forge the ready lie,  
And blot Life’s latest scene with calumny;  
Before thee tortures, which the Soul can  
dare, 1400

Yet doubts how well the shrinking flesh may  
bear,

But deeply feels a single cry would shame—  
To Valour’s praise thy last and dearest claim;  
The life thou leav’st below, denied above  
By kind monopolists of heavenly love,  
And—more than doubtful Paradise—thy  
Heaven

Of earthly hope, thy loved one from thee  
riven!

Such were the thoughts that outlaw must  
sustain,

And govern pangs surpassing mortal pain:  
And those sustained he—boots it well or  
ill? 1410

Since not to sink beneath, is something still!



## VII.

The first day passed—he saw not her—  
 Gulnare—  
 The second, third—and still she came not  
 there;  
 But what her words avouched, her charms  
 had done,  
 Or else he had not seen another Sun.  
 The fourth day rolled along, and with the  
 night  
 Came storm and darkness in there mingling  
 might.  
 Oh! how he listened to the rushing deep,  
 That ne'er till now so broke upon his sleep;  
 And his wild Spirit wilder wishes sent, 1420  
 Roused by the roar of his own element!  
 Oft had he ridden on that wingéd wave,  
 And loved its roughness for the speed it gave;  
 And now its dashing echoed on his ear,  
 A long known voice—alas! too vainly near!  
 Loud sung the wind above; and, doubly loud,  
 Shook o'er his turret cell the thunder-cloud;  
 And flashed the lightning by the latticed bar,  
 To him more genial than the Midnight Star:  
 Close to the glimmering grate he dragged his  
 chain, 1430  
 And hoped *that* peril might not prove in vain.  
 He raised his iron hand to Heaven, and prayed  
 One pitying flash to mar the form it made:  
 His steel and impious prayer attract alike—  
 The storm rolled onward, and disdained to  
 strike;  
 Its peal waxed fainter—ceased—he felt alone,  
 As if some faithless friend had spurned his  
 groan!

## VIII.

The midnight passed—and to the massy door  
 A light step came—it paused—it moved once  
 more;  
 Slow turns the grating bolt and sullen key: 1440  
 'Tis as his heart foreboded—that fair She!  
 Whate'er her sins, to him a Guardian Saint,  
 And beauteous still as hermit's hope can  
 paint;  
 Yet changed since last within that cell she  
 came,  
 More pale her cheek, more tremulous her  
 frame:  
 On him she cast her dark and hurried eye,  
 Which spoke before her accents—"Thou  
 must die!  
 Yes, thou must die—there is but one resource,  
 The last—the worst—if torture were not  
 worse."

"Lady! I look to none; my lips pro-  
 claim 1450  
 What last proclaimed they—Conrad still the  
 same:  
 Why should'st thou seek an outlaw's life to  
 spare,  
 And change the sentence I deserve to bear?  
 Well have I earned—nor here alone—the  
 meed  
 Of Seyd's revenge, by many a lawless deed."

"Why should I seek? because—Oh! didst  
 thou not  
 Redeem my life from worse than Slavery's  
 lot?  
 Why should I seek?—hath Misery made thee  
 blind  
 To the fond workings of a woman's mind?  
 And must I say?—albeit my heart rebel 1460  
 With all that Woman feels, but should not  
 tell—  
 Because—despite thy crimes—that heart is  
 moved:  
 It feared thee—thanked thee—pitied—  
 maddened—loved.  
 Reply not, tell not now thy tale again,  
 Thou lov'st another—and I love in vain:  
 Though fond as mine her bosom, form more  
 fair,  
 I rush through peril which she would not  
 dare.  
 If that thy heart to hers were truly dear,  
 Were I thine own—thou wert not lonely  
 here:  
 An outlaw's spouse—and leave her Lord to  
 roam! 1470  
 What hath such gentle dame to do with  
 home?  
 But speak not now—o'er thine and o'er my  
 head  
 Hangs the keen sabre by a single thread;  
 If thou hast courage still, and would'st be  
 free,  
 Receive this poniard—rise and follow me!"

"Aye—in my chains! my steps will gently  
 tread,  
 With these adornments, o'er such slumbering  
 head!  
 Thou hast forgot—is this a garb for flight?  
 Or is that instrument more fit for fight?"

"Misdoubting Corsair! I have gained the  
 guard, 1480  
 Ripe for revolt, and greedy for reward."



A single word of mine removes that chain :  
Without some aid how here could I remain?  
Well, since we met, hath sped my busy  
time,

If in aught evil, for thy sake the crime :  
The crime—'tis none to punish those of Seyd.  
That hated tyrant, Conrad—he must bleed !  
I see thee shudder, but my soul is changed—  
Wronged—spurned—reviled—and it shall be  
avenged—

Accused of what till now my heart dis-  
dained—  
Too faithful, though to bitter bondage  
chained. 1490

Yes, smile!—but he had little cause to sneer,  
I was not treacherous then—nor thou too  
dear :

But he has said it—and the jealous well,—  
Those tyrants—teasing—tempting to rebel,—  
Deserve the fate their fretting lips foretell.  
I never loved—he bought me—somewhat  
high—

Since with me came a heart he could not buy.  
I was a slave unmurmuring ; he hath said,  
But for his rescue I with thee had fled. 1500  
'Twas false thou know'st—but let such  
Augurs rue,

Their words are omens Insult renders true.  
Nor was thy respite granted to my prayer ;  
This fleeting grace was only to prepare  
New torments for thy life—and my despair.  
Mine, too, he threatens ; but his dotage still  
Would fain reserve me for his lordly will :  
When wearier of these fleeting charms and  
me,

There yawns the sack—and yonder rolls the  
sea !

What, am I then a toy for dotard's play, 1510  
To wear but till the gilding frets away?  
I saw thee—loved thee—owe thee all—would  
save,

If but to show how grateful is a slave.  
But had he not thus menaced fame and  
life,—

And well he keeps his oaths pronounced in  
strife—

I still had saved thee—but the Pacha spared.  
Now I am all thine own—for all prepared :  
Thou lov'st me not—nor know'st—or but the  
worst.

Alas ! *this* love—*that* hatred—are the first—  
Oh ! could'st thou prove my truth, thou  
would'st not start, 1520  
Nor fear the fire that lights an Eastern  
heart ;

'Tis now the beacon of thy safety—now  
It points within the port a Mainote prow :  
But in one chamber, where our path must  
lead,

There sleeps — he must not wake — the  
oppressor Seyd !”

“ Gulnare—Gulnare—I never felt till now  
My abject fortune, withered fame so low :  
Seyd is mine enemy ; had swept my band  
From earth with ruthless but with open hand,  
And therefore came I, in my bark of  
war, 1530

To smite the smiter with the scimitar ;  
Such is my weapon—not the secret knife ;  
Who spares a Woman's seeks not Slumber's  
life.

Thine saved I gladly, Lady—not for this ;  
Let me not deem that mercy shown amiss.  
Now fare thee well—more peace be with thy  
breast !

Night wears apace, my last of earthly rest !”

“ Rest ! rest ! by sunrise must thy sinews  
shake,  
And thy limbs writhe around the ready  
stake,—

I heard the order—saw—I will not see— 1540  
If thou wilt perish, I will fall with thee.  
My life—my love—my hatred—all below  
Are on this cast—Corsair ! 'tis but a blow !  
Without it flight were idle—how evade  
His sure pursuit?—my wrongs too unrepaid,  
My youth disgraced—the long, long wasted  
years,

One blow shall cancel with our future fears ;  
But since the dagger suits thee less than  
brand,

I'll try the firmness of a female hand.  
The guards are gained—one moment all  
were o'er— 1550

Corsair ! we meet in safety or no more ;  
If errs my feeble hand, the morning cloud  
Will hover o'er thy scaffold, and my shroud.

## IX.

She turned, and vanished ere he could reply,  
But his glance followed far with eager eye ;  
And gathering, as he could, the links that  
bound

His form, to curl their length, and curb their  
sound,  
Since bar and bolt no more his steps  
preclude,

He, fast as fettered limbs allow, pursued.



'Twas dark and winding, and he knew not  
 where 1560  
 That passage led; nor lamp nor guard was  
 there:  
 He sees a dusky glimmering—shall he seek  
 Or shun that ray so indistinct and weak?  
 Chance guides his steps—a freshness seems  
 to bear  
 Full on his brow, as if from morning air;  
 He reached an open gallery—on his eye  
 Gleamed the last star of night, the clearing  
 sky:  
 Yet scarcely heeded these—another light  
 From a lone chamber struck upon his sight.  
 Towards it he moved; a scarcely closing  
 door 1570  
 Revealed the ray within, but nothing more.  
 With hasty step a figure outward passed,  
 Then paused, and turned—and paused—'tis  
 She at last!  
 No poniard in that hand, nor sign of ill—  
 “Thanks to that softening heart—she could  
 not kill!”  
 Again he looked, the wildness of her eye  
 Starts from the day, abrupt and fearfully.  
 She stopped—threw back her dark far-floating  
 hair,  
 That nearly veiled her face and bosom fair,  
 As if she late had bent her leaning head 1580  
 Above some object of her doubt or dread.  
 They meet—upon her brow—unknown—  
 forgot—  
 Her hurrying hand had left—'twas but a  
 spot—  
 Its hue was all he saw, and scarce with-  
 stood—  
 Oh! slight but certain pledge of crime—'tis  
 Blood!

## X.

He had seen battle—he had brooded lone  
 O'er promised pangs to sentenced Guilt fore-  
 shown;  
 He had been tempted—chastened—and the  
 chain  
 Yet on his arms might ever there remain: 1589  
 But ne'er from strife—captivity—remorse—  
 From all his feelings in their inmost force—  
 So thrilled, so shuddered every creeping  
 vein,  
 As now they froze before that purple stain.  
 That spot of blood, that light but guilty  
 streak,  
 Had banished all the beauty from her cheek!

Blood he had viewed—could view unmoved—  
 but then  
 It flowed in combat, or was shed by men!

## XI.

“'Tis done—he nearly waked—but it is done.  
 Corsair! he perished—thou art dearly won.  
 All words would now be vain—away—  
 away! 1600  
 Our bark is tossing—'tis already day.  
 The few gained over, now are wholly mine,  
 And these thy yet surviving band shall join:  
 Anon my voice shall vindicate my hand,  
 When once our sail forsakes this hated  
 strand.”

## XII.

She clapped her hands, and through the  
 gallery pour.  
 Equipped for flight, her vassals—Greek and  
 Moor;  
 Silent but quick they stoop, his chains  
 unbind;  
 Once more his limbs are free as mountain  
 wind!  
 But on his heavy heart such sadness sate, 1610  
 As if they there transferred that iron weight.  
 No words are uttered—at her sign, a door  
 Reveals the secret passage to the shore;  
 The city lies behind—they speed, they reach  
 The glad waves dancing on the yellow beach;  
 And Conrad following, at her beck, obeyed,  
 Nor cared he now if rescued or betrayed;  
 Resistance were as useless as if Seyd  
 Yet lived to view the doom his ire decreed.

## XIII.

Embarked—the sail unfurled—the light  
 breeze blew— 1620  
 How much had Conrad's memory to  
 review!  
 Sunk he in contemplation, till the Cape,  
 Where last he anchored, reared its giant  
 shape.  
 Ah!—since that fatal night, though brief the  
 time,  
 Had swept an age of terror, grief, and crime.  
 As its far shadow frowned above the mast,  
 He veiled his face, and sorrowed as he  
 passed;  
 He thought of all—Gonsalvo and his band,  
 His fleeting triumph and his failing hand;  
 He thought on her afar, his lonely bride: 1630  
 He turned and saw—Gulnare, the Homicide!



## XIV.

She watched his features till she could not  
bear  
Their freezing aspect and averted air ;  
And that strange fierceness foreign to her  
eye  
Fell quenched in tears, too late to shed or  
dry.  
She knelt beside him and his hand she  
pressed,  
"Thou may'st forgive though Allah's self  
detest ;  
But for that deed of darkness what wert  
thou ?  
Reproach me—but not yet—Oh ! spare me  
*now !*  
I am not what I seem—this fearful night 1640  
My brain bewildered—do not madden quite !  
If I had never loved—though less my guilt—  
Thou hadst not lived to—hate me—if thou  
wilt."

## XV.

She wrongs his thoughts—they more himself  
upbraid  
Than her—though undesigned—the wretch  
he made ;  
But speechless all, deep, dark, and unexpressed,  
They bleed within that silent cell—his breast.  
Still onward, fair the breeze, nor rough the  
surge,  
The blue waves sport around the stern they  
urge ;  
Far on the Horizon's verge appears a  
speck, 1650  
A spot—a mast—a sail—an armed deck !  
Their little bark her men of watch descry,  
And ampler canvass woos the wind from  
high ;  
She bears her down majestically near,  
Speed on her prow, and terror in her tier ;  
A flash is seen—the ball beyond her bow  
Booms harmless, hissing to the deep below.  
Up rose keen Conrad from his silent trance,  
A long, long absent gladness in his glance ;  
" 'Tis mine—my blood-red flag again—  
again— 1660  
I am not all deserted on the main !"  
They own the signal, answer to the hail,  
Hoist out the boat at once, and slacken sail.  
" 'Tis Conrad ! Conrad !" shouting from the  
deck,  
Command nor Duty could their transport  
check !

With light alacrity and gaze of Pride,  
They view him mount once more his vessel's  
side ;  
A smile relaxing in each rugged face,  
Their arms can scarce forbear a rough  
embrace.  
He, half forgetting danger and defeat, 1670  
Returns their greeting as a Chief may greet,  
Wrings with a cordial grasp Anselmo's hand,  
And feels he yet can conquer and command !

## XVI.

These greetings o'er, the feelings that o'erflow,  
Yet grieve to win him back without a blow ;  
They sailed prepared for vengeance—had they  
known  
A woman's hand secured that deed her own,  
She were their Queen—less scrupulous are they  
Than haughty Conrad how they win their way.  
With many an asking smile, and wondering  
stare, 1680  
They whisper round, and gaze upon Gulnare ;  
And her, at once above—beneath her sex,  
Whom blood appalled not, their regards  
perplex.  
To Conrad turns her faint imploring eye,  
She drops her veil, and stands in silence by ;  
Her arms are meekly folded on that breast,  
Which—Conrad safe—to Fate resigned the  
rest.  
Though worse than frenzy could that bosom fill,  
Extreme in love or hate, in good or ill, 1689  
The worst of crimes had left her Woman still !

## XVII.

This Conrad marked, and felt—ah ! could he  
less ?—  
Hate of that deed—but grief for her distress ;  
What she has done no tears can wash away,  
And Heaven must punish on its angry day :  
But—it was done : he knew, whate'er her guilt,  
For him that poniard smote, that blood was  
spilt ;  
And he was free !—and she for him had given  
Her all on earth, and more than all in heaven !  
And now he turned him to that dark-eyed slave  
Whose brow was bowed beneath the glance  
he gave, 1700  
Who now seemed changed and humbled,  
faint and meek,  
But varying oft the colour of her cheek  
To deeper shades of paleness—all its red  
That fearful spot which stained it from the  
dead !



He took that hand—it trembled—now too  
late—  
So soft in love—so wildly nerved in hate ;  
He clasped that hand—it trembled—and his  
own  
Had lost its firmness, and his voice its tone.  
“Gulnare!”—but she replied not—“dear  
Gulnare!” 1709  
She raised her eye—her only answer there—  
At once she sought and sunk in his embrace :  
If he had driven her from that resting-place,  
His had been more or less than mortal heart,  
But—good or ill—it bade her not depart.  
Perchance, but for the bodings of his breast,  
His latest virtue then had joined the rest.  
Yet even Medora might forgive the kiss  
That asked from form so fair no more than this,  
The first, the last that Frailty stole from Faith—  
To lips where Love had lavished all his  
breath, 1720  
To lips—whose broken sighs such fragrance  
fling,  
As he had fanned them freshly with his wing !

## XVIII.

They gain by twilight's hour their lonely isle.  
To them the very rocks appear to smile ;  
The haven hums with many a cheering sound,  
The beacons blaze their wonted stations round,  
The boats are darting o'er the curly bay,  
And sportive Dolphins bend them through  
the spray ;  
Even the hoarse sea-bird's shrill, discordant  
shriek, 1729  
Greets like the welcome of his tuneless beak !  
Beneath each lamp that through its lattice  
gleams,  
Their fancy paints the friends that trim the  
beams.  
Oh ! what can sanctify the joys of home,  
Like Hope's gay glance from Ocean's  
troubled foam ?

## XIX.

The lights are high on beacon and from bower,  
And 'midst them Conrad seeks Medora's tower :  
He looks in vain—'tis strange—and all remark,  
Amid so many, hers alone is dark.  
'Tis strange—of yore its welcome never failed,  
Nor now, perchance, extinguished—only  
veiled. 1740  
With the first boat descends he for the shore,  
And looks impatient on the lingering oar.  
Oh ! for a wing beyond the falcon's flight,  
To bear him like an arrow to that height !

With the first pause the resting rowers gave,  
He waits not—looks not—leaps into the wave,  
Strives through the surge, bestrides the beach,  
and high  
Ascends the path familiar to his eye.

He reached his turret door—he paused—no  
sound 1749  
Broke from within ; and all was night around.  
He knocked, and loudly—footstep nor reply  
Announced that any heard or deemed him nigh ;  
He knocked, but faintly—for his trembling  
hand  
Refused to aid his heavy heart's demand.  
The portal opens—'tis a well-known face—  
But not the form he panted to embrace.  
Its lips are silent—twice his own essayed,  
And failed to frame the question they delayed ;  
He snatched the lamp—its light will answer  
all—  
It quits his grasp, expiring in the fall. 1760  
He would not wait for that reviving ray—  
As soon could he have lingered there for day ;  
But, glimmering through the dusky corridor,  
Another chequers o'er the shadowed floor ;  
His steps the chamber gain—his eyes behold  
All that his heart believed not—yet foretold !

## XX.

He turned not—spoke not—sunk not—fixed  
his look,  
And set the anxious frame that lately shook :  
He gazed—how long we gaze despite of pain,  
And know, but dare not own, we gaze in vain !  
In life itself she was so still and fair, 1771  
That Death with gentler aspect withered there ;  
And the cold flowers<sup>1</sup> her colder hand con-  
tained,  
In that last grasp as tenderly were strained  
As if she scarcely felt, but feigned a sleep—  
And made it almost mockery yet to weep :  
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow,  
And veiled—Thought shrinks from all that  
lurked below—  
Oh ! o'er the eye Death most exerts his might,  
And hurls the Spirit from her throne of  
light ; 1780  
Sinks those blue orbs in that long last eclipse,  
But spares, as yet, the charm around her lips—  
Yet, yet they seem as they forebore to smile,  
And wished repose,—but only for a while ;

<sup>1</sup> In the Levant it is the custom to strew flowers on the bodies of the dead, and in the hands of young persons to place a nosegay.



But the white shroud, and each extended tress,  
 Long, fair—but spread in utter lifelessness,  
 Which, late the sport of every summer wind,  
 Escaped the baffled wreath that strove to bind;  
 These—and the pale pure cheek, became the  
 bier—  
 But She is nothing—wherefore is he here? 1790

## XXI.

He asked no question—all were answered now  
 By the first glance on that still, marble brow.  
 It was enough—she died—what recked it how?  
 The love of youth, the hope of better years,  
 The source of softest wishes, tenderest fears,  
 The only living thing he could not hate,  
 Was reft at once—and he deserved his fate,  
 But did not feel it less;—the Good explore,  
 For peace, those realms where Guilt can never  
 soar:

The proud, the wayward—who have fixed  
 below 1800

Their joy, and find this earth enough for woe,  
 Lose in that one their all—perchance a mite—  
 But who in patience parts with all delight?  
 Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern  
 Mask hearts where Grief hath little left to learn;  
 And many a withering thought lies hid, not lost,  
 In smiles that least befit who wear them most.

## XXII.

By those, that deepest feel, is ill exprest  
 The indistinctness of the suffering breast;  
 Where thousand thoughts begin to end in  
 one, 1810  
 Which seeks from all the refuge found in none;  
 No words suffice the secret soul to show,  
 For Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.  
 On Conrad's stricken soul Exhaustion prest,  
 And Stupor almost lulled it into rest;  
 So feeble now—his mother's softness crept  
 To those wild eyes, which like an infant's wept:  
 It was the very weakness of his brain,  
 Which thus confessed without relieving pain.  
 None saw his trickling tears—perchance, if  
 seen, 1820

That useless flood of grief had never been:  
 Nor long they flowed—he dried them to depart,  
 In helpless—hopeless—brokenness of heart:  
 The Sun goes forth, but Conrad's day is dim:  
 And the night cometh—ne'er to pass from him.  
 There is no darkness like the cloud of mind,  
 On Grief's vain eye—the blindest of the blind!  
 Which may not—dare not see—but turns aside  
 To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide!

## XXIII.

His heart was formed for softness—warped to  
 wrong, 1830  
 Betrayed too early, and beguiled too long;  
 Each feeling pure—as falls the dropping dew  
 Within the grot—like that had hardened too;  
 Less clear, perchance, its earthly trials passed  
 But sunk, and chilled, and petrified at last.  
 Yet tempests wear, and lightning cleaves the  
 rock;  
 If such his heart, so shattered it the shock.  
 There grew one flower beneath its rugged brow,  
 Though dark the shade—it sheltered—saved  
 till now.  
 The thunder came—that bolt hath blasted  
 both, 1840  
 The Granite's firmness, and the Lily's growth:  
 The gentle plant hath left no leaf to tell  
 Its tale, but shrunk and withered where it fell;  
 And of its cold protector, blacken round  
 But shivered fragments on the barren ground.

## XXIV.

'Tis morn—to venture on his lonely hour  
 Few dare; though now Anselmo sought his  
 tower.  
 He was not there, nor seen along the shore;  
 Ere night, alarmed, their isle is traversed o'er:  
 Another morn—another bids them seek, 1850  
 And shout his name till Echo waxeth weak;  
 Mount—grotto—cavern—valley searched in  
 vain,  
 They find on shore a sea-boat's broken chain:  
 Their hope revives—they follow o'er the main.  
 'Tis idle all—moons roll on moons away,  
 And Conrad comes not, came not since that  
 day:  
 Nor trace nor tidings of his doom declare  
 Where lives his grief, or perished his despair!  
 Long mourned his band whom none could  
 mourn beside; 1859  
 And fair the monument they gave his Bride:  
 For him they raise not the recording stone—  
 His death yet dubious, deeds too widely known;  
 He left a Corsair's name to other times,  
 Linked with one virtue, and a thousand crimes;



## ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.<sup>1</sup>

“Expende Annibalem :—quot libras in duce summo Invenies?”

—JUVENAL, [Lib. iv.] *Sat.* x. line 147.

“The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the *Senate*, by the *Italians*, and by the *Provincials of Gaul*; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced, in prophetic strains, the restoration of the public felicity. \* \* By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life about five years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till !!!”—Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall*, 1848, iv. 373, 374.

### I.

’Tis done—but yesterday a King !  
And armed with Kings to strive—  
And now thou art a nameless thing :  
So abject—yet alive !  
Is this the man of thousand thrones,  
Who strewed our earth with hostile bones,  
And can he thus survive ?  
Since he, miscalled the Morning Star,  
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

### II.

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

### III.

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

<sup>1</sup> [The *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte* was begun April 9, and published April 16, 1814.]

### IV.

The triumph, and the vanity,  
The rapture of the strife—<sup>1</sup>  
The earthquake-voice of Victory,  
To thee the breath of life ;  
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway  
Which man seemed made but to obey,  
Wherewith renown was rife—  
All quelled !—Dark Spirit ! what must be  
The madness of thy memory !

### V.

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

### VI.

He who of old would rend the oak,<sup>2</sup>  
Dreamed not of the rebound ;  
Chained by the trunk he vainly broke—  
Alone—how looked he round ?  
Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,  
An equal deed hast done at length,  
And darker fate hast found :  
He fell, the forest prowlers’ prey ;  
But thou must eat thy heart away !

### VII.

The Roman,<sup>3</sup> when his burning heart  
Was slaked with blood of Rome,  
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,  
In savage grandeur, home.—  
He dared depart in utter scorn  
Of men that such a yoke had borne,  
Yet left him such a doom !  
His only glory was that hour  
Of self-upheld abandoned power.

<sup>1</sup> “*Certaminis gaudia*”—the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

<sup>2</sup> [Milo of Crotona.]

<sup>3</sup> Sylla. [Compare : — “I mark this day ! Napoleon Buonaparte has abdicated the throne of the world. ‘Excellent well.’ Methinks Sylla did better ; for he revenged, and resigned in the height of his sway, red with the slaughter of his foes—the finest instance of glorious contempt of the rascals upon record. Dioclesian did well too—Amurath not amiss, had he become aught except a dervise—Charles the Fifth but so so ; but Napoleon, worst of all.”—*Journal*, April 9, 1814, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 409.]



## VIII.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway  
 Had lost its quickening spell,  
 Cast crowns for rosaries away,  
 An empire for a cell ;  
 A strict accountant of his beads,  
 A subtle disputant on creeds,  
 His dotage trifled well :<sup>1</sup>  
 Yet better had he neither known—  
 A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

## IX.

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

## X.

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

## XI.

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

<sup>1</sup> [Charles V. resigned the kingdom to his son Philip, circ. October, 1555, and the imperial crown to his brother Ferdinand, August 27, 1556, and entered the Jeronymite Monastery of St. Justus at Placencia in Estremadura. Before his death (September 21, 1558) he dressed himself in his shroud, was laid in his coffin, "joined in the prayers which were offered up for the rest of his soul, mingling his tears with those which his attendants shed, as if they had been celebrating a real funeral."—Robertson's *Charles V.*, 1798, iv. 180, 205, 254.]

## XII.

Weighed in the balance, hero dust  
 Is vile as vulgar clay ;  
 Thy scales, Mortality ! are just  
 To all that pass away :  
 But yet, methought, the living great  
 Some higher sparks should animate,  
 To dazzle and dismay :  
 Nor deemed Contempt could thus make  
 mirth  
 Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

## XIII.

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

## XIV.

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,  
 And gaze upon the sea ;  
 That element may meet thy smile—  
 It ne'er was ruled by thee !  
 Or trace with thine all idle hand,  
 In loitering mood upon the sand,  
 That Earth is now as free !  
 That Corinth's pedagogue<sup>1</sup> hath now  
 Transferred his by-word to thy brow.

## XV.

Thou Timour ! in his captive's cage<sup>2</sup>  
 What thoughts will there be thine,  
 While brooding in thy prisoned rage ?  
 But one—"The world *was* mine !"  
 Unless, like he of Babylon,  
 All sense is with thy sceptre gone,<sup>3</sup>  
 Life will not long confine  
 That spirit poured so widely forth—  
 So long obeyed—so little worth !

<sup>1</sup> [Dionysius the Younger, on being for the second time banished from Syracuse, retired to Corinth (B.C. 344), where "he is said to have opened a school for teaching boys to read," but not, apparently, with a view to making a living by pedagogy.—Grote's *Hist. of Greece*, 1872, ix. 152.]

<sup>2</sup> The cage of Bajazet, by order of Tamerlane.

<sup>3</sup> ["Have you heard that Bertrand has returned to Paris with the account of Napoleon's having lost his senses? It is a *report*; but, if true, I must, like Mr. Fitzgerald and Jeremiah (of lamentable memory), lay claim to prophecy."—*Letters*, 1899, iii. 95.]



## XVI.

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,<sup>1</sup>  
 Wilt thou withstand the shock?  
 And share with him, the unforgiven,  
 His vulture and his rock!  
 Foredoomed by God—by man accurst,  
 And that last act, though not thy worst,  
 The very Fiend's arch mock;<sup>2</sup>  
 He in his fall preserved his pride,  
 And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

## XVII.

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

## XVIII.

But thou, forsooth, must be a King  
 And don the purple vest,  
 As if that foolish robe could wring  
 Remembrance from thy breast.  
 Where is that faded garment? where  
 The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,  
 The star, the string, the crest?<sup>3</sup>  
 Vain forward child of Empire! say,  
 Are all thy playthings snatched away?

## XIX.

Where may the wearied eye repose  
 When gazing on the Great;  
 Where neither guilty glory glows,  
 Nor despicable state?  
 Yes—One—the first—the last—the best—  
 The Cincinnatus of the West,  
 Whom Envy dared not hate,  
 Bequeathed the name of Washington,  
 To make man blush there was but one!

<sup>1</sup> Prometheus.

<sup>2</sup> "O! 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,  
 To lip a wanton in a secure couch,  
 And to suppose her chaste!"

—*Othello*, act iv. sc. 1, lines 69-71.

<sup>3</sup> [Byron had recently become possessed of a "fine print" (by Raphael Morghen, after Gérard) of Napoleon in his imperial robes, which (see *Letters*, 1898, ii. 393, note 2) became him "as if he had been hatched in them." According to the catalogue of Morghen's works, the engraving represents "the head nearly full-face, looking to

LARA :<sup>1</sup>

## A TALE.

CANTO THE FIRST.<sup>2</sup>

## I.

THE Serfs<sup>3</sup> are glad through Lara's wide  
 domain,  
 And Slavery half forgets her feudal chain;  
 He, their unhop'd, but unforgotten lord,  
 The long self-exiled Chieftain, is restored:  
 There be bright faces in the busy hall,  
 Bowls on the board, and banners on the wall;  
 Far checkering o'er the pictured window, plays  
 The unwonted faggot's hospitable blaze;  
 And gay retainers gather round the hearth,  
 With tongues all loudness, and with eyes all  
 mirth. 10

## II.

The Chief of Lara is returned again:  
 And why had Lara crossed the bounding  
 main?

the right, crowned with laurel. He wears an enormous velvet robe embroidered with bees—hanging over it the collar and jewel of the Legion of Honour." It was no doubt this "fine print" which suggested "the star, the string [i.e. the chain of enamelled eagles], the crest."

<sup>1</sup> [*Lara* was begun *circ.* May 14, and (together with *Jacqueline, A Tale*, by Samuel Rogers) published, August 6, 1814.]

<sup>2</sup> [A revised version of the following "Advertisement" was prefixed to the First Edition:—

"The Reader—if the tale of *Lara* has the fortune to meet with one—may probably regard it as a sequel to the *Corsair*;—the colouring is of a similar cast, and although the situations of the characters are changed, the stories are in some measure connected. The countenance is nearly the same—but with a different expression. . . .

"The poem of *Jacqueline* is the production of a different author and is added at the request of the writer of the former tale. . . ."]

<sup>3</sup> The reader is apprised, that the name of Lara being Spanish, and no circumstance of local and natural description fixing the scene or hero of the poem to any country or age, the word "Serf," which could not be correctly applied to the lower classes in Spain, who were never vassals of the soil, has nevertheless been employed to designate the followers of our fictitious chieftain.

[Byron, writing to Murray, July 14, 1814, says, "The name only is Spanish; the country is not Spain, but the Moon" (not "Morea," as hitherto printed).—*Letters*, 1899, iii. 110.]



Left by his Sire, too young such loss to know,  
 Lord of himself,—that heritage of woe,  
 That fearful empire which the human breast  
 But holds to rob the heart within of rest!—  
 With none to check, and few to point in time  
 The thousand paths that slope the way to  
     crime;  
 Then, when he most required commandment,  
     then  
 Had Lara's daring boyhood governed men. 20  
 It skills not, boots not, step by step, to trace  
 His youth through all the mazes of its race;  
 Short was the course his restlessness had run,  
 But long enough to leave him half undone.

## III.

And Lara left in youth his father-land;  
 But from the hour he waved his parting hand  
 Each trace waxed fainter of his course, till all  
 Had nearly ceased his memory to recall.  
 His sire was dust, his vassals could declare,  
 'Twas all they knew, that Lara was not  
     there; 30  
 Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew  
 Cold in the many, anxious in the few.  
 His hall scarce echoes with his wonted name,  
 His portrait darkens in its fading frame,  
 Another chief consoled his destined bride,  
 The young forgot him, and the old had died;  
 "Yet doth he live!" exclaims the impatient  
     heir,  
 And sighs for sables which he must not wear.  
 A hundred scutcheons deck with gloomy grace  
 The Laras' last and longest dwelling-place; 40  
 But one is absent from the mouldering file,  
 That now were welcome in that Gothic pile.

## IV.

He comes at last in sudden loneliness,  
 And whence they know not, why they need  
     not guess;  
 They more might marvel, when the greeting's  
     o'er  
 Not that he came, but came not long before:  
 No train is his beyond a single page,  
 Of foreign aspect, and of tender age.  
 Years had rolled on, and fast they speed away  
 To those that wander as to those that stay; 50  
 But lack of tidings from another clime  
 Had lent a flagging wing to weary Time.  
 They see, they recognise, yet almost deem  
 The present dubious, or the past a dream.

He lives, nor yet is past his Manhood's prime,  
 Though seared by toil, and something touched  
     by Time;  
 His faults, what'er they were, if scarce forgot,  
 Might be untaught him by his varied lot;  
 Nor good nor ill of late were known, his name  
 Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame: 60  
 His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins  
 No more than pleasure from the stripling  
     wins;  
 And such, if not yet hardened in their course,  
 Might be redeemed, nor ask a long remorse.

## V.

And they indeed were changed—'tis quickly  
     seen,  
 Whate'er he be, 'twas not what he had been:  
 That brow in furrowed lines had fixed at last,  
 And spake of passions, but of passion past:  
 The pride, but not the fire, of early days,  
 Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise; 70  
 A high demeanour, and a glance that took  
 Their thoughts from others by a single look;  
 And that sarcastic levity of tongue,  
 The stinging of a heart the world hath stung,  
 That darts in seeming playfulness around,  
 And makes those feel that will not own the  
     wound;  
 All these seemed his, and something more  
     beneath  
 Than glance could well reveal, or accent  
     breathe.  
 Ambition, Glory, Love, the common aim,  
 That some can conquer, and that all would  
     claim, 80  
 Within his breast appeared no more to strive,  
 Yet seemed as lately they had been alive;  
 And some deep feeling it were vain to trace  
 At moments lightened o'er his livid face.

## VI.

Not much he loved long question of the past,  
 Nor told of wondrous wilds, and deserts vast,  
 In those far lands where he had wandered lone,  
 And—as himself would have it seem—un-  
     known:  
 Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely scan,  
 Nor glean experience from his fellow man; 90  
 But what he had beheld he shunned to show,  
 As hardly worth a stranger's care to know;  
 If still more prying such inquiry grew,  
 His brow fell darker, and his words more few.



## VII.

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,  
 Warm was his welcome to the haunts of men ;  
 Born of high lineage, linked in high command,  
 He mingled with the Magnates of his land ;  
 Joined the carousals of the great and gay,  
 And saw them smile or sigh their hours away ;  
 But still he only saw, and did not share, 101  
 The common pleasure or the general care ;  
 He did not follow what they all pursued  
 With hope still baffled still to be renewed ;  
 Nor shadowy Honour, nor substantial Gain,  
 Nor Beauty's preference, and the rival's pain :  
 Around him some mysterious circle thrown  
 Repelled approach, and showed him still alone ;  
 Upon his eye sat something of reproof,  
 That kept at least Frivolity aloof ; 110  
 And things more timid that beheld him near  
 In silence gazed, or whispered mutual fear ;  
 And they the wiser, friendlier few confessed  
 They deemed him better than his air expressed.

## VIII.

'Twas strange—in youth all action and all life,  
 Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife ;  
 Woman—the Field—the Ocean, all that gave  
 Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,  
 In turn he tried—he ransacked all below,  
 And found his recompense in joy or woe, 120  
 No tame, trite medium ; for his feelings sought  
 In that intenseness an escape from thought :  
 The Tempest of his Heart in scorn had gazed  
 On that the feebler Elements hath raised ;  
 The Rapture of his Heart had looked on high,  
 And asked if greater dwelt beyond the sky :  
 Chained to excess, the slave of each extreme,  
 How woke he from the wildness of that dream !  
 Alas ! he told not—but he did awake  
 To curse the withered heart that would not  
 break. 130

## IX.

Books, for his volume heretofore was Man,  
 With eye more curious he appeared to scan,  
 And oft in sudden mood, for many a day,  
 From all communion he would start away :  
 And then, his rarely called attendants said,  
 Through night's long hours would sound his  
 hurried tread  
 O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers frowned  
 In rude but antique portraiture around :  
 They heard, but whispered—"that must not  
 be known—  
 The sound of words less earthly than his  
 own. 140

Yes, they who chose might smile, but some  
 had seen

They scarce knew what, but more than  
 should have been.

Why gazed he so upon the ghastly head<sup>1</sup>  
 Which hands profane had gathered from the  
 dead,

That still beside his opened volume lay,  
 As if to startle all save him away ?

Why slept he not when others were at rest ?  
 Why heard no music, and received no guest ?  
 All was not well, they deemed—but where  
 the wrong ?

Some knew perchance—but 'twere a tale too  
 long ; 150

And such besides were too discreetly wise,  
 To more than hint their knowledge in surmise ;  
 But if they would—they could"—around the  
 board

Thus Lara's vassals prattled of their lord.

## X.

It was the night—and Lara's glassy stream  
 The stars are studding, each with imaged beam ;  
 So calm, the waters scarcely seem to stray,  
 And yet they glide like Happiness away ;  
 Reflecting far and fairy-like from high  
 The immortal lights that live along the sky : 160  
 Its banks are fringed with many a goodly tree,  
 And flowers the fairest that may feast the bee ;  
 Such in her chaplet infant Dian wove,  
 And Innocence would offer to her love.  
 These deck the shore ; the waves their  
 channel make

In windings bright and mazy like the snake.  
 All was so still, so soft in earth and air,  
 You scarce would start to meet a spirit there ;  
 Secure that nought of evil could delight  
 To walk in such a scene, on such a night ! 170  
 It was a moment only for the good :

So Lara deemed, nor longer there he stood,  
 But turned in silence to his castle-gate ;  
 Such scene his soul no more could contem-  
 plate :

Such scene reminded him of other days,  
 Of skies more cloudless, moons of purer blaze,  
 Of nights more soft and frequent, hearts that  
 now—

No—no—the storm may beat upon his brow,

<sup>1</sup> ["The circumstance of his having at this time [1808-9] among the ornaments of his study, a number of skulls highly polished, and placed on light stands round the room, would seem to indicate that he rather courted than shunned such gloomy associations."—*Life*, p. 87.]



Unfelt, unsparing—but a night like this, 179  
A night of Beauty, mocked such breast as his.

## XI.

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

And half a column of the pompous page,  
That speeds the specious tale from age to age;  
Where History's pen its praise or blame  
supplies,

And lies like Truth, and still most truly lies. 190  
He wandering mused, and as the moonbeam  
shone

Through the dim lattice, o'er the floor of stone,  
And the high fretted roof, and saints, that there  
O'er Gothic windows knelt in pictured prayer,  
Reflected in fantastic figures grew

Like life, but not like mortal life, to view;  
His bristling locks of sable, brow of gloom,  
And the wide waving of his shaken plume,  
Glanced like a spectre's attributes—and gave  
His aspect all that terror gives the grave. 200

## XII.

'Twas midnight—all was slumber; the lone  
light

Dimmed in the lamp, as loth to break the night.  
Hark! there be murmurs heard in Lara's hall—  
A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call!  
Along, loud shriek—and silence—did they hear  
That frantic echo burst the sleeping ear?  
They heard and rose, and, tremulously brave,  
Rush where the sound invoked their aid to save;  
They come with half-lit tapers in their hands,  
And snatched, in startled haste, unbelted  
brands. 210

## XIII.

Cold as the marble where his length was laid,  
Pale as the beam that o'er his features played  
Was Lara stretched; his half-drawn sabre near,  
Dropped it should seem in more than Nature's  
fear;

Yet he was firm, or had been firm till now,  
And still Defiance knit his gathered brow;  
Though mixed with terror, senseless as he lay,  
There lived upon his lip the wish to slay;  
Some half formed threat in utterance there  
had died,

Some imprecation of despairing Pride; 220

His eye was almost sealed, but not forsook,  
Even in its trance, the gladiator's look,  
That oft awake his aspect could disclose,  
And now was fixed in horrible repose.

They raise him—bear him;—hush! he  
breathes, he speaks,

The swarthy blush recolours in his cheeks,  
His lip resumes its red—his eye, though dim,  
Rolls wide and wild; each slowly quivering limb  
Recalls its function, but his words are strung  
In terms that seem not of his native tongue; 230  
Distinct but strange, enough they understand  
To deem them accents of another land;  
And such they were, and meant to meet an ear  
That hears him not—alas! that cannot hear!

## XIV.

His page approached, and he alone appeared  
To know the import of the words they heard;  
And, by the changes of his cheek and brow,  
They were not such as Lara should avow,  
Nor he interpret,—yet with less surprise,  
Than those around, their Chieftain's state he  
eyes; 240

But Lara's prostrate form he bent beside,  
And in that tongue which seemed his own  
replied;

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

## XV.

Whate'er his frenzy dreamed or eye beheld,—  
If yet remembered ne'er to be revealed,—  
Rests at his heart: the custom'd morning  
came,

And breathed new vigour in his shaken  
frame; 250

And solace sought he none from priest nor leech,  
And soon the same in movement and in speech,  
As heretofore he filled the passing hours,  
Nor less he smiles, nor more his forehead  
lowers,

Than these were wont; and if the coming night  
Appeared less welcome now to Lara's sight,  
He to his marvelling vassals showed it not,  
Whose shuddering proved *their* fear was less  
forgot.

In trembling pairs (alone they dared not)  
crawl

The astonished slaves, and shun the fated  
hall; 260

The waving banner, and the clapping door,  
The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;



The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,  
The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze;  
Aught they behold or hear their thought appals,  
As evening saddens o'er the dark grey walls.

## XVI.

Vain thought! that hour of ne'er unravelled  
gloom  
Came not again, or Lara could assume  
A seeming of forgetfulness that made  
His vassals more amazed, nor less afraid. 270  
Had Memory vanished then with sense  
restored?  
Since word, nor look, nor gesture of their lord  
Betrayed a feeling that recalled to these  
That fevered moment of his mind's disease.  
Was it a dream? was his the voice that spoke  
Those strange wild accents; his the cry that  
broke  
Their slumber? his the oppressed, o'er-  
laboured heart  
That ceased to beat, the look that made them  
start?  
Could he who thus had suffered so forget,  
When such as saw that suffering shudder  
yet? 280  
Or did that silence prove his memory fixed  
Too deep for words, indelible, unmixed  
In that corroding secrecy which gnaws  
The heart to show the effect, but not the  
cause?  
Not so in him; his breast had buried both,  
Nor common gazers could discern the growth  
Of thoughts that mortal lips must leave half  
told;  
They choke the feeble words that would unfold.

## XVII.

In him, inexplicably mixed, appeared  
Much to be loved and hated, sought and  
feared; 290  
Opinion varying o'er his hidden lot,  
In praise or railing ne'er his name forgot:  
His silence formed a theme for others' prate—  
They guessed—they gazed—they fain would  
know his fate.  
What had he been? what was he, thus  
unknown,  
Who walked their world, his lineage only  
known?  
A hater of his kind? yet some would say,  
With them he could seem gay amidst the gay;  
But owned that smile, if oft observed and near,  
Waned in its mirth, and withered to a sneer; 300

That smile might reach his lip, but passed  
not by,  
Nor e'er could trace its laughter to his eye:  
Yet there was softness too in his regard,  
At times, a heart as not by nature hard,—  
But once perceived, his Spirit seemed to chide  
Such weakness as unworthy of its pride,  
And steeled itself, as scorning to redeem  
One doubt from others' half-withheld esteem;  
In self-inflicted penance of a breast  
Which Tenderness might once have wrung  
from Rest; 310  
In vigilance of Grief that would compel  
The soul to hate for having loved too well.

## XVIII.

There was in him a vital scorn of all:  
As if the worst had fallen which could befall,  
He stood a stranger in this breathing world,  
An erring Spirit from another hurled;  
A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped  
By choice the perils he by chance escaped;  
But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory yet  
His mind would half exult and half regret: 320  
With more capacity for love than Earth  
Bestows on most of mortal mould and birth.  
His early dreams of good outstripped the truth,  
And troubled Manhood followed baffled  
Youth;  
With thought of years in phantom chase  
misspent,  
And wasted powers for better purpose lent;  
And fiery passions that had poured their wrath  
In hurried desolation o'er his path,  
And left the better feelings all at strife  
In wild reflection o'er his stormy life; 330  
But haughty still, and loth himself to blame,  
He called on Nature's self to share the shame,  
And charged all faults upon the fleshly form  
She gave to clog the soul, and feast the worm;  
Till he at last confounded good and ill,  
And half mistook for fate the acts of will:  
Too high for common selfishness, he could  
At times resign his own for others' good,  
But not in pity—not because he ought,  
But in some strange perversity of thought, 340  
That swayed him onward with a secret pride  
To do what few or none would do beside;  
And this same impulse would, in tempting  
time,  
Mislead his spirit equally to crime;  
So much he soared beyond, or sunk beneath,  
The men with whom he felt condemned to  
breathe,



And longed by good or ill to separate  
Himself from all who shared his mortal state ;  
His mind abhorring this had fixed her throne  
Far from the world, in regions of her own : 350  
Thus coldly passing all that passed below,  
His blood in temperate seeming now would  
flow :

Ah ! happier if it ne'er with guilt had glowed,  
But ever in that icy smoothness flowed !  
'Tis true, with other men their path he walked,  
And like the rest in seeming did and talked,  
Nor outraged Reason's rules by flaw nor start,  
His Madness was not of the head, but heart ;  
And rarely wandered in his speech, or drew  
His thoughts so forth as to offend the view. 360

## XIX.

With all that chilling mystery of mien,  
And seeming gladness to remain unseen,  
He had (if 'twere not nature's boon) an art  
Of fixing memory on another's heart :  
It was not love perchance—nor hate—nor  
aught

That words can image to express the thought ;  
But they who saw him did not see in vain,  
And once beheld—would ask of him again :  
And those to whom he spake remembered  
well,  
And on the words, however light, would  
dwell : 370  
None knew, nor how, nor why, but he  
entwined

Himself perforce around the hearer's mind ;  
There he was stamped, in liking, or in hate,  
If greeted once ; however brief the date  
That friendship, pity, or aversion knew,  
Still there within the inmost thought he grew.  
You could not penetrate his soul, but found,  
Despite your wonder, to your own he wound ;  
His presence haunted still ; and from the  
breast

He forced an all unwilling interest : 380  
Vain was the struggle in that mental net—  
His spirit seemed to dare you to forget !

## XX.

There is a restival, where knights and dames,  
And aught that wealth or lofty lineage claims,  
Appear—a high-born and a welcome guest  
To Otho's hall came Lara with the rest.  
The long carousal shakes the illumined hall,  
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball ;  
And the gay dance of bounding Beauty's train  
Links grace and harmony in happiest  
chain : 390

Blest are the early hearts and gentle hands  
That mingle there in well according bands ;  
It is a sight the careful brow might smooth,  
And make Age smile, and dream itself to  
youth,  
And Youth forget such hour was passed on  
earth,  
So springs the exulting bosom to that mirth !

## XXI.

And Lara gazed on these, sedately glad,  
His brow belied him if his soul was sad ;  
And his glance followed fast each fluttering  
fair,

Whose steps of lightness woke no echo  
there : 400

He leaned against the lofty pillar nigh,  
With folded arms and long attentive eye,  
Nor marked a glance so sternly fixed on his—  
Ill brooked high Lara scrutiny like this :  
At length he caught it—'tis a face unknown,  
But seems as searching his, and his alone ;  
Prying and dark, a stranger's by his mien,  
Who still till now had gazed on him unseen :  
At length encountering meets the mutual gaze  
Of keen enquiry, and of mute amaze ; 410  
On Lara's glance emotion gathering grew,  
As if distrusting that the stranger threw ;  
Along the stranger's aspect, fixed and stern,  
Flashed more than thence the vulgar eye  
could learn.

## XXII.

" 'Tis he ! " the stranger cried, and those that  
heard

Re-echoed fast and far the whispered word.  
" 'Tis he ! "—" 'Tis who ? " they question far  
and near,

Till louder accents rung on Lara's ear ;  
So widely spread, few bosoms well could brook  
The general marvel, or that single look : 420  
But Lara stirred not, changed not, the surprise  
That sprung at first to his arrested eyes  
Seemed now subsided—neither sunk nor raised  
Glanced his eye round, though still the  
stranger gazed,—

And drawing nigh, exclaimed, with haughty  
sneer,

" 'Tis he !—how came he thence ?—what doth  
he here ? "

## XXIII.

It were too much for Lara to pass by  
Such questions, so repeated fierce and high ;



With look collected, but with accent cold,  
 More mildly firm than petulantly bold, 430  
 He turned, and met the inquisitorial tone—  
 "My name is Lara—when thine own is known,  
 Doubt not my fitting answer to requite  
 The unlooked for courtesy of such a knight.  
 'Tis Lara!—further wouldst thou mark or ask?  
 I shun no question, and I wear no mask."

"Thou shunn'st no question! Ponder—is  
 there none  
 Thy *heart* must answer, though thine *ear*  
 would shun?  
 And deem'st thou me unknown too? Gaze  
 again!  
 At least thy memory was not given in vain. 440  
 Oh! never canst thou cancel half her debt—  
 Eternity forbids thee to forget."  
 With slow and searching glance upon his face  
 Grew Lara's eyes, but nothing there could  
 trace  
 They knew, or chose to know—with dubious  
 look  
 He deigned no answer, but his head he shook,  
 And half contemptuous turned to pass away;  
 But the stern stranger motioned him to stay.

"A word!—I charge thee stay, and answer  
 here  
 To one, who, wert thou noble, were thy  
 peer, 450  
 But as thou wast and art—nay, frown not,  
 Lord,  
 If false, 'tis easy to disprove the word—  
 But as thou wast and art, on thee looks down,  
 Distrusts thy smiles, but shakes not at thy  
 frown.  
 Art thou not he? whose deeds——"

"Whate'er I be,  
 Words wild as these, accusers like to thee,  
 I list no further; those with whom they weigh  
 May hear the rest, nor venture to gainsay  
 The wondrous tale no doubt thy tongue can  
 tell,  
 Which thus begins so courteously and well. 460  
 Let Otho cherish here his polished guest,  
 To him my thanks and thoughts shall be  
 expressed."

And here their wondering host hath inter-  
 posed—

"Whate'er there be between you undis-  
 closed,  
 This is no time nor fitting place to mar  
 The mirthful meeting with a wordy war.  
 If thou, Sir Ezzelin, has aught to show  
 Which it befits Count Lara's ear to know,

To-morrow, here, or elsewhere, as may best  
 Beseem your mutual judgment, speak the  
 rest; 470  
 I pledge myself for thee, as not unknown,  
 Though, like Count Lara, now returned alone  
 From other lands, almost a stranger grown;  
 And if from Lara's blood and gentle birth  
 I augur right of courage and of worth,  
 He will not that untainted line belie,  
 Nor aught that Knighthood may accord, deny."

"To-morrow be it," Ezzelin replied,  
 "And here our several worth and truth be  
 tried;  
 I gage my life, my falchion to attest 480  
 My words, so may I mingle with the blest!"  
 What answers Lara? to its centre shrunk  
 His soul, in deep abstraction sudden sunk;  
 The words of many, and the eyes of all  
 That there were gathered, seemed on him to  
 fall;  
 But his were silent, his appeared to stray  
 In far forgetfulness away—away—  
 Alas! that heedlessness of all around  
 Bespoke remembrance only too profound.

## XXIV.

"To-morrow!—aye, to-morrow!" further  
 word, 490  
 Than those repeated, none from Lara heard;  
 Upon his brow no outward passion spoke;  
 From his large eye no flashing anger broke;  
 Yet there was something fixed in that low tone,  
 Which showed resolve, determined, though  
 unknown.  
 He seized his cloak—his head he slightly  
 bowed,  
 And passing Ezzelin, he left the crowd;  
 And, as he passed him, smiling met the frown  
 With which that Chieftain's brow would bear  
 him down:  
 It was nor smile of mirth, nor struggling  
 pride 500  
 That curbs to scorn the wrath it cannot hide;  
 But that of one in his own heart secure  
 Of all that he would do, or could endure.  
 Could this mean peace? the calmness of the  
 good?  
 Or guilt grown old in desperate hardihood?  
 Alas! too like in confidence are each,  
 For man to trust to mortal look or speech;  
 From deeds, and deeds alone, may he discern  
 Truths which it wrings the unpractised heart  
 to learn.



## XXV.

And Lara called his page, and went his  
 way—<sup>510</sup>  
 Well could that stripling word or sign obey :  
 His only follower from those climes afar,  
 Where the Soul glows beneath a brighter star ;  
 For Lara left the shore from whence he sprung,  
 In duty patient, and sedate though young ;  
 Silent as him he served, his faith appears  
 Above his station, and beyond his years.  
 Though not unknown the tongue of Lara's  
 land,  
 In such from him he rarely heard command ;  
 But fleet his step, and clear his tones would  
 come,<sup>520</sup>  
 When Lara's lip breathed forth the words of  
 home :  
 Those accents, as his native mountains dear,  
 Awake their absent echoes in his ear,  
 Friends'—kindred's—parents'—wonted voice  
 recall,  
 Now lost, abjured, for one—his friend, his  
 all :  
 For him earth now disclosed no other guide ;  
 What marvel then he rarely left his side ?

## XXVI.

Light was his form, and darkly delicate  
 That brow whereon his native sun had sate,  
 But had not marred, though in his beams he  
 grew,<sup>530</sup>  
 The cheek where oft the unbidden blush  
 shone through ;  
 Yet not such blush as mounts when health  
 would show  
 All the heart's hue in that delighted glow ;  
 But 'twas a hectic tint of secret care  
 That for a burning moment fevered there ;  
 And the wild sparkle of his eye seemed caught  
 From high, and lightened with electric thought,  
 Though its black orb those long low lashes'  
 fringe  
 Had tempered with a melancholy tinge ;  
 Yet less of sorrow than of pride was there,<sup>540</sup>  
 Or, if 'twere grief, a grief that none should  
 share :  
 And pleased not him the sports that please  
 his age,  
 The tricks of Youth, the frolics of the Page ;  
 For hours on Lara he would fix his glance,  
 As all-forgotten in that watchful trance ;  
 And from his chief withdrawn, he wandered  
 lone,  
 Brief were his answers, and his questions none ;

His walk the wood, his sport some foreign  
 book ;  
 His resting-place the bank that curbs the  
 brook :  
 He seemed, like him he served, to live apart<sup>550</sup>  
 From all that lures the eye, and fills the heart ;  
 To know no brotherhood, and take from earth  
 No gift beyond that bitter boon—our birth.

## XXVII.

If aught he loved, 'twas Lara ; but was shown  
 His faith in reverence and in deeds alone ;  
 In mute attention ; and his care, which guessed  
 Each wish, fulfilled it ere the tongue expressed.  
 Still there was haughtiness in all he did,  
 A spirit deep that brooked not to be chid ;  
 His zeal, though more than that of servile  
 hands,<sup>560</sup>  
 In act alone obeys, his air commands ;  
 As if 'twas Lara's less than *his* desire  
 That thus he served, but surely not for hire.  
 Slight were the tasks enjoined him by his Lord,  
 To hold the stirrup, or to bear the sword ;  
 To tune his lute, or, if he willed it more,  
 On tomes of other times and tongues to pore ;  
 But ne'er to mingle with the menial train,  
 To whom he showed nor deference nor disdain,  
 But that well-worn reserve which proved he  
 knew<sup>570</sup>  
 No sympathy with that familiar crew :  
 His soul, whate'er his station or his stem,  
 Could bow to Lara, not descend to them.  
 Of higher birth he seemed, and better days,  
 Nor mark of vulgar toil that hand betrays,  
 So femininely white it might bespeak  
 Another sex, when matched with that smooth  
 cheek,  
 But for his garb, and something in his gaze,  
 More wild and high than Woman's eye  
 betrays ;  
 A latent fierceness that far more became<sup>580</sup>  
 His fiery climate than his tender frame :  
 True, in his words it broke not from his breast,  
 But from his aspect might be more than  
 guessed.  
 Kaled his name, though rumour said he bore  
 Another ere he left his mountain-shore ;  
 For sometimes he would hear, however nigh,  
 That name repeated loud without reply,  
 As unfamiliar—or, if roused again,  
 Start to the sound, as but remembered then ;  
 Unless 'twas Lara's wonted voice that  
 spake,<sup>590</sup>  
 For then—ear—eyes—and heart would all  
 awake.



## XXVIII.

He had looked down upon the festive hall,  
And marked that sudden strife so marked of  
all :

And when the crowd around and near him  
told

Their wonder at the calmness of the bold,  
Their marvel how the high-born Lara bore  
Such insult from a stranger, doubly sore,  
The colour of young Kaled went and came—  
The lip of ashes, and the cheek of flame ;  
And o'er his brow the dampening heart-drops  
threw 600

The sickening iciness of that cold dew,  
That rises as the busy bosom sinks  
With heavy thoughts from which Reflection  
shrinks.

Yes—there be things which we must dream  
and dare,

And execute ere thought be halt aware :  
Whate'er might Kaled's be, it was enow  
To seal his lip, but agonize his brow.

He gazed on Ezzelin till Lara cast  
That sidelong smile upon the knight he past ;  
When Kaled saw that smile his visage fell, 610  
As if on something recognised right well :  
His memory read in such a meaning more  
Than Lara's aspect unto others wore :  
Forward he sprung—a moment, both were  
gone,

And all within that hall seemed left alone ;  
Each had so fixed his eye on Lara's mien,  
All had so mixed their feelings with that scene,  
That when his long dark shadow through the  
porch

No more relieves the glare of yon high torch,  
Each pulse beats quicker, and all bosoms  
seem 620

To bound as doubting from too black a dream,  
Such as we know is false, yet dread in sooth,  
Because the worst is ever nearest truth.

And they are gone—but Ezzelin is there,  
With thoughtful visage and imperious air ;  
But long remained not ; ere an hour expired  
He waved his hand to Otho, and retired.

## XXIX.

The crowd are gone, the revellers at rest ;  
The courteous host, and all-approving guest,  
Again to that accustomed couch must creep 630  
Where Joy subsides, and Sorrow sighs to sleep,  
And Man, o'erlaboured with his Being's strife,  
Shrinks to that sweet forgetfulness of life :

There lie Love's feverish hope, and Cunning's  
guile,  
Hate's working brain, and lulled Ambition's  
wile ;

O'er each vain eye Oblivion's pinions wave,  
And quenched Existence crouches in a grave.  
What better name may Slumber's bed become?  
Night's sepulchre, the universal home,  
Where Weakness—Strength—Vice—Virtue  
—sunk supine, 640

Alike in naked helplessness recline ;  
Glad for a while to heave unconscious breath,  
Yet wake to wrestle with the dread of Death,  
And shun—though Day but dawn on ills  
increased—

*That* sleep,—the loveliest, since it dreams the  
least.

## CANTO THE SECOND.

## I.

NIGHT wanes — the vapours round the  
mountains curled

Melt into morn, and Light awakes the world,  
Man has another day to swell the past,  
And lead him near, to little but his last ;  
But mighty Nature bounds as from her  
birth, 650

The Sun is in the heavens, and Life on earth ;  
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,  
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.  
Immortal Man ! behold her glories shine,  
And cry, exulting inly, " They are thine ! "

Gaze on, while yet thy gladdened eye may see,—  
A morrow comes when they are not for thee :  
And grieve what may above thy senseless bier,  
Nor earth nor sky will yield a single tear ;  
Nor cloud shall gather more, nor leaf shall  
fall, 660

Nor gale breathe forth one sigh for thee, for  
all ;

But creeping things shall revel in their spoil,  
And fit thy clay to fertilise the soil.

## II.

'Tis morn—'tis noon—assembled in the hall,  
The gathered Chieftains come to Otho's call ;  
'Tis now the promised hour, that must  
proclaim

The life or death of Lara's future fame ;  
And Ezzelin his charge may here unfold,  
And whatso'er the tale, it must be told.



His faith was pledged, and Lara's promise  
 given, 670  
 To meet it in the eye of Man and Heaven.  
 Why comes he not? Such truths to be  
 divulged,  
 Methinks the accuser's rest is long indulged.

## III.

The hour is past, and Lara too is there,  
 With self-confiding, coldly patient air;  
 Why comes not Ezzelin? The hour is past,  
 And murmurs rise, and Otho's brow's o'er-cast.  
 "I know my friend! his faith I cannot fear,  
 If yet he be on earth, expect him here;  
 The roof that held him in the valley stands 680  
 Between my own and noble Lara's lands;  
 My halls from such a guest had honour  
 gained,  
 Nor had Sir Ezzelin his host disdained,  
 But that some previous proof forbade his stay,  
 And urged him to prepare against to-day;  
 The word I pledged for his I pledge again,  
 Or will myself redeem his knighthood's stain."  
 He ceased—and Lara answered, "I am here  
 To lend at thy demand a listening ear  
 To tales of evil from a stranger's tongue, 690  
 Whose words already might my heart have  
 wrung,  
 But that I deemed him scarcely less than mad,  
 Or, at the worst, a foe ignobly bad.  
 I know him not—but me it seems he knew  
 In lands where—but I must not trifle too:  
 Produce this babbler—or redeem the pledge,  
 Here in thy hold, and with thy falchion's  
 edge."

Proud Otho on the instant, reddening, threw  
 His glove on earth, and forth his sabre flew.  
 "The last alternative befits me best, 700  
 And thus I answer for mine absent guest."

With cheek unchanging from its sallow gloom,  
 However near his own or other's tomb;  
 With hand, whose almost careless coolness  
 spoke  
 Its grasp well-used to deal the sabre-stroke;  
 With eye, though calm, determined not to  
 spare,  
 Did Lara too his willing weapon bare.  
 In vain the circling Chieftains round them  
 closed,  
 For Otho's frenzy would not be opposed;  
 And from his lip those words of insult  
 fell— 710  
 His sword is good who can maintain them well.

## IV.

Short was the conflict; furious, blindly rash,  
 Vain Otho gave his bosom to the gash:  
 He bled, and fell; but not with deadly wound,  
 Stretched by a dextrous sleight along the  
 ground.

"Demand thy life!" He answered not: and  
 then

From that red floor he ne'er had risen again,  
 For Lara's brow upon the moment grew  
 Almost to blackness in its demon hue;  
 And fiercer shook his angry falchion now 720  
 Than when his foe's was levelled at his brow;  
 Then all was stern collectedness and art,  
 Now rose the unleavened hatred of his heart;  
 So little sparing to the foe he felled,  
 That when the approaching crowd his arm  
 withheld,

He almost turned the thirsty point on those  
 Who thus for mercy dared to interpose;  
 But to a moment's thought that purpose bent;  
 Yet looked he on him still with eye intent,  
 As if he loathed the ineffectual strife 730  
 That left a foe, how'er o'erthrown, with life;  
 As if to search how far the wound he gave  
 Had sent its victim onward to his grave.

## V.

They raised the bleeding Otho, and the Leech  
 Forbade all present question, sign, and  
 speech;

The others met within a neighbouring hall,  
 And he, incensed, and heedless of them all,  
 The cause and conqueror in this sudden fray,  
 In haughty silence slowly strode away;  
 He backed his steed, his homeward path he  
 took, 740  
 Nor cast on Otho's towers a single look.

## VI.

But where was he? that meteor of a night,  
 Who menaced but to disappear with light.  
 Where was this Ezzelin? who came and went,  
 To leave no other trace of his intent.  
 He left the dome of Otho long ere morn,  
 In darkness, yet so well the path was worn  
 He could not miss it: near his dwelling lay,  
 But there he was not; and with coming day  
 Came fast inquiry, which unfolded nought, 750  
 Except the absence of the Chief it sought.  
 A chamber tenantless, a steed at rest,  
 His host alarmed, his murmuring squires  
 distressed:  
 Their search extends along, around the path,  
 In dread to meet the marks of prowlers' wrath:



But none are there, and not a brake hath  
borne  
Nor gout of blood, nor shred of mantle torn;  
Nor fall nor struggle hath defaced the grass,  
Which still retains a mark where Murder was;  
Nor dabbling fingers left to tell the tale, 760  
The bitter print of each convulsive nail,  
When agonizéd hands that cease to guard,  
Wound in that pang the smoothness of the  
sward.

Some such had been, if here a life was reft,  
But these were not—and doubting Hope is  
left;  
And strange Suspicion, whispering Lara's  
name,  
Now daily mutters o'er his blackened fame;  
Then sudden silent when his form appeared,  
Awaits the absence of the thing it feared,  
Again its wonted wondering to renew, 770  
And dye conjecture with a darker hue.

## VII.

Days roll along, and Otho's wounds are healed,  
But not his pride, and hate no more  
concealed:

He was a man of power, and Lara's foe,  
The friend of all who sought to work him woe,  
And from his country's justice now demands  
Account of Ezzelin at Lara's hands.

Who else than Lara could have cause to fear  
His presence? who had made him disappear,  
If not the man on whom his menaced  
charge 780

Had sate too deeply were he left at large?  
The general rumour ignorantly loud,  
The mystery dearest to the curious crowd;  
The seeming friendliness of him who strove  
To win no confidence, and wake no love;  
The sweeping fierceness which his soul  
betrayed,  
The skill with which he wielded his keen blade;  
Where had his arm unwarlike caught that art?  
Where had that fierceness grown upon his  
heart?

For it was not the blind capricious rage 790  
A word can kindle and a word assuage;  
But the deep working of a soul unmixed  
With aught of pity where its wrath had fixed;  
Such as long power and overgorged success  
Concentrates into all that's merciless:  
These, linked with that desire which ever  
sways

Mankind, the rather to condemn than praise,

'Gainst Lara, gathering, raised at length a  
storm,  
Such as himself might fear, and foes would  
form,  
And he must answer for the absent head 800  
Of one that haunts him still, alive or dead.

## VIII.

Within that land was many a malcontent,  
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;  
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,  
Who worked his wantonness in form of law;  
Long war without and frequent broil within  
Had made a path for blood and giant sin,  
That waited but a signal to begin  
New havoc, such as civil discord blends,  
Which knows no neuter, owns but foes or  
friends; 810  
Fixed in his feudal fortress each was lord,  
In word and deed obeyed, in soul abhorred.  
Thus Lara had inherited his lands,  
And with them pining hearts and sluggish  
hands;

But that long absence from his native clime  
Had left him stainless of Oppression's crime,  
And now, diverted by his milder sway  
All dread by slow degrees had worn away.  
The menials felt their usual awe alone,  
But more for him than them that fear was  
grown; 820

They deemed him now unhappy, though at  
first

Their evil judgment augured of the worst;  
And each long restless night, and silent mood,  
Was traced to sickness, fed by solitude:  
And though his lonely habits threw of late  
Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his  
gate;

For thence the wretched ne'er unsoothed  
withdrew,

For them, at least, his soul compassion knew.  
Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,  
The humble passed not his unheeding eye; 830  
Much he would speak not, but beneath his  
roof

They found asylum oft, and ne'er reproof.  
And they who watched might mark that, day  
by day,

Some new retainers gathered to his sway;  
But most of late, since Ezzelin was lost,  
He played the courteous lord and bounteous  
host:

Perchance his strife with Otho made him  
dread

Some snare prepared for his obnoxious head;



Whate'er his view, his favour more obtains  
 With these, the people, than his fellow  
 thanes. 840

If this were policy, so far 'twas sound,  
 The million judged but of him as they found ;  
 From him by sterner chiefs to exile driven  
 They but required a shelter, and 'twas given.  
 By him no peasant mourned his rifled cot,  
 And scarce the Serf could murmur o'er his  
 lot ;

With him old Avarice found its hoard secure,  
 With him Contempt forbore to mock the  
 poor ;

Youth present cheer and promised recom-  
 pense  
 Detained, till all too late to part from  
 thence : 850

To Hate he offered, with the coming change,  
 The deep reversion of delayed revenge ;  
 To Love, long baffled by the unequal match,  
 The well-won charms success was sure to  
 snatch.

All now was ripe, he waits but to proclaim  
 That slavery nothing which was still a name.  
 The moment came, the hour when Otho  
 thought

Secure at last the vengeance which he sought :  
 His summons found the destined criminal  
 Begirt by thousands in his swarming hall ; 860  
 Fresh from their feudal fetters newly riven,  
 Defying earth, and confident of heaven.

That morning he had freed the soil-bound  
 slaves,

Who dig no land for tyrants but their  
 graves !

Such is their cry—some watchword for the  
 fight

Must vindicate the wrong, and warp the  
 right ;

Religion—Freedom—Vengeance—what you  
 will,

A word's enough to raise Mankind to kill ;  
 Some factious phrase by cunning caught and  
 spread,

That Guilt may reign—and wolves and  
 worms be fed ! 870

## IX.

Throughout that clime the feudal Chieftains had  
 gained

Such sway, their infant monarch hardly  
 reigned ;

Now was the hour for Faction's rebel growth,  
 The Serfs contemned the one, and hated  
 both :

They waited but a leader, and they found  
 One to their cause inseparably bound ;  
 By circumstance compelled to plunge again,  
 In self-defence, amidst the strife of men.  
 Cut off by some mysterious fate from those  
 Whom Birth and Nature meant not for his  
 foes, 880

Had Lara from that night, to him accurst,  
 Prepared to meet, but not alone, the worst :  
 Some reason urged, whate'er it was, to shun  
 Inquiry into deeds at distance done ;

By mingling with his own the cause of all,  
 E'en if he failed, he still delayed his fall.  
 The sullen calm that long his bosom kept,  
 The storm that once had spent itself and  
 slept,

Roused by events that seemed foredoomed to  
 urge

His gloomy fortunes to their utmost verge,  
 Burst forth, and made him all he once had  
 been, 891

And is again ; he only changed the scene.  
 Light care had he for life, and less for fame,  
 But not less fitted for the desperate game :  
 He deemed himself marked out for others'  
 hate,

And mocked at Ruin so they shared his fate.  
 And cared he for the freedom of the crowd ?  
 He raised the humble but to bend the proud.  
 He had hoped quiet in his sullen lair,  
 But Man and Destiny beset him there : 900  
 Inured to hunters, he was found at bay ;  
 And they must kill, they cannot snare the  
 prey.

Stern, unambitious, silent, he had been  
 Henceforth a calm spectator of Life's scene ;  
 But dragged again upon the arena, stood  
 A leader not unequal to the feud ;  
 In voice—mien—gesture—savage nature  
 spoke,

And from his eye the gladiator broke.

## X.

What boots the oft-repeated tale of strife,  
 The feast of vultures, and the waste of  
 life ? 910

The varying fortune of each separate field,  
 The fierce that vanquish, and the faint that  
 yield ?

The smoking ruin, and the crumbled wall ?  
 In this the struggle was the same with all ;  
 Save that distempered passions lent their  
 force

In bitterness that banished all remorse.



None sued, for Mercy knew her cry was  
vain,  
The captive died upon the battle-plain :  
In either cause, one rage alone possessed  
The empire of the alternate victor's  
breast ; 920  
And they that smote for freedom or for sway,  
Deemed few were slain, while more remained  
to slay.  
It was too late to check the wasting brand,  
And Desolation reaped the famished land ;  
The torch was lighted, and the flame was  
spread,  
And Carnage smiled upon her daily dead.

## XI.

Fresh with the nerve the new-born impulse  
strung,  
The first success to Lara's numbers clung :  
But that vain victory hath ruined all ;  
They form no longer to their leader's call : 930  
In blind confusion on the foe they press,  
And think to snatch is to secure success.  
The lust of booty, and the thirst of hate,  
Lure on the broken brigands to their fate :  
In vain he doth whate'er a chief may do,  
To check the headlong fury of that crew ;  
In vain their stubborn ardour he would tame,  
The hand that kindles cannot quench the  
flame ;  
The wary foe alone hath turned their mood,  
And shown their rashness to that erring  
brood : 940  
The feigned retreat, the nightly ambushade,  
The daily harass, and the fight delayed,  
The long privation of the hoped supply,  
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,  
The stubborn wall that mocks the leaguer's  
art,  
And palls the patience of his baffled heart,  
Of these they had not deemed : the battle-  
day  
They could encounter as a veteran may ;  
But more preferred the fury of the strife,  
And present death, to hourly suffering  
life : 950  
And Famine wrings, and Fever sweeps away  
His numbers melting fast from their array ;  
Intemperate triumph fades to discontent,  
And Lara's soul alone seems still unbent ;  
But few remain to aid his voice and hand,  
And thousands dwindled to a scanty band :

Desperate, though few, the last and best  
remained  
To mourn the discipline they late disdained.  
One hope survives, the frontier is not far,  
And thence they may escape from native  
war : 960  
And bear within them to the neighbouring  
state  
An exile's sorrows, or an outlaw's hate :  
Hard is the task their father-land to quit,  
But harder still to perish or submit.

## XII.

It is resolved—they march—consenting Night  
Guides with her star their dim and torchless  
flight ;  
Already they perceive its tranquil beam  
Sleep on the surface of the barrier stream ;  
Already they descry—Is yon the bank ?  
Away ! 'tis lined with many a hostile rank. 970  
Return or fly !—What glitters in the rear ?  
'Tis Otho's banner—the pursuer's spear !  
Are those the shepherds' fires upon the  
height ?  
Alas ! they blaze too widely for the flight :  
Cut off from hope, and compassed in the toil,  
Less blood perchance hath bought a richer  
spoil !

## XIII.

A moment's pause—'tis but to breathe their  
band,  
Or shall they onward press, or here with-  
stand ?  
It matters little—if they charge the foes  
Who by the border-stream their march  
oppose, 980  
Some few, perchance, may break and pass  
the line,  
However linked to baffle such design.  
"The charge be ours ! to wait for their  
assault  
Were fate well worthy of a coward's halt."  
Forth flies each sabre, reined is every  
steed,  
And the next word shall scarce outstrip the  
deed :  
In the next tone of Lara's gathering breath  
How many shall but hear the voice of Death !

## XIV.

His blade is bared,—in him there is an air  
As deep, but far too tranquil for despair ; 990  
A something of indifference more than then  
Becomes the bravest, if they feel for men—



He turned his eye on Kaled, ever near,  
And still too faithful to betray one fear ;  
Perchance 'twas but the moon's dim twilight  
threw

Along his aspect an unwonted hue  
Of mournful paleness, whose deep tint  
expressed

The truth, and not the terror of his breast.  
This Lara marked, and laid his hand on his :  
It trembled not in such an hour as this ; 1000  
His lip was silent, scarcely beat his heart,  
His eye alone proclaimed, " We will not  
part !

" Thy band may perish, or thy friends may  
flee,  
" Farewell to Life—but not Adieu to thee ! "

The word hath passed his lips, and onward  
driven,  
Pours the linked band through ranks asunder  
riven :

Well has each steed obeyed the arméd heel,  
And flash the scimitars, and rings the steel ;  
Outnumbered, not outbraved, they still  
oppose

Despair to daring, and a front to foes ; 1010  
And blood is mingled with the dashing  
stream,

Which runs all redly till the morning beam.

## XV.

Commanding—aiding—animating all,  
Where foe appeared to press, or friend to fall,  
Cheers Lara's voice, and waves or strikes his  
steel,

Inspiring hope, himself had ceased to feel.  
None fled, for well they knew that flight were  
vain ;

But those that waver turn to smite again,  
While yet they find the firmest of the foe  
Recoil before their leader's look and blow : 1020  
Now girt with numbers, now almost alone,  
He foils their ranks, or re-unites his own ;  
Himself he spared not—once they seemed to  
fly—

Now was the time, he waved his hand on high,  
And shook—Why sudden droops that pluméd  
crest ?

The shaft is sped—the arrow's in his breast !  
That fatal gesture left the unguarded side,  
And Death has stricken down yon arm of pride.  
The word of triumph fainted from his tongue ;  
That hand, so raised, how droopingly it hung !  
But yet the sword instinctively retains, 1031  
Though from its fellow shrink the falling reins ;

These Kaled snatches : dizzy with the blow,  
And senseless bending o'er his saddle-bow,  
Perceives not Lara that his anxious page  
Beguiles his charger from the combat's rage :  
Meantime his followers charge, and charge  
again ;

Too mixed the slayers now to heed the slain !

## XVI.

Day glimmers on the dying and the dead,  
The cloven cuirass, and the helmless head ; 1040  
The war-horse masterless is on the earth,  
And that last gasp hath burst his bloody girth ;  
And near, yet quivering with what life  
remained,

The heel that urged him and the hand that  
reined ;

And some too near that rolling torrent lie,  
Whose waters mock the lip of those that die ;  
That panting thirst which scorches in the  
breath

Of those that die the soldier's fiery death,  
In vain impels the burning mouth to crave  
One drop—the last—to cool it for the grave ;  
With feeble and convulsive effort swept, 1051  
Their limbs along the crimsoned turf have  
crept ;

The faint remains of life such struggles waste,  
But yet they reach the stream, and bend to  
taste :

They feel its freshness, and almost partake—  
Why pause? No further thirst have they to  
slake—

It is unquenched, and yet they feel it not ;  
It was an agony—but now forgot !

## XVII.

Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,  
Where but for him that strife had never been,  
A breathing but devoted warrior lay : 1061  
'Twas Lara bleeding fast from life away.  
His follower once, and now his only guide,  
Kneels Kaled watchful o'er his welling side,  
And with his scarf would staunch the tides  
that rush,

With each convulsion, in a blacker gush ;  
And then, as his faint breathing waxes low,  
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow :  
He scarce can speak, but motions him 'tis vain,  
And merely adds another throb to pain. 1070  
He clasps the hand that pang which would  
assuage,

And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page,



Who nothing fears—nor feels—nor heeds—  
 nor sees—  
 Save that damp brow which rests upon his  
 knees ;  
 Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though  
 dim,  
 Held all the light that shone on earth for him.

## XVIII.

The foe arrives, who long had searched the field,  
 Their triumph nought till Lara too should  
 yield :  
 They would remove him, but they see 'twere  
 vain,  
 And he regards them with a calm disdain,  
 That rose to reconcile him with his fate, 1081  
 And that escape to death from living hate :  
 And Otho comes, and leaping from his steed,  
 Looks on the bleeding foe that made him bleed,  
 And questions of his state ; he answers not,  
 Scarce glances on him as on one forgot,  
 And turns to Kaled :—each remaining word  
 They understood not, if distinctly heard ;  
 His dying tones are in that other tongue,  
 To which some strange remembrance wildly  
 clung. 1090  
 They spake of other scenes, but what—is known  
 To Kaled, whom their meaning reached alone ;  
 And he replied, though faintly, to their sound,  
 While gazed the rest in dumb amazement  
 round :  
 They seemed even then—that twain—unto  
 the last  
 To half forget the present in the past ;  
 To share between themselves some separate  
 fate,  
 Whose darkness none beside should penetrate.

## XIX.

Their words though faint were many—from  
 the tone  
 Their import those who heard could judge  
 alone ; 1100  
 From this you might have deemed young  
 Kaled's death  
 More near than Lara's by his voice and breath,  
 So sad—so deep—and hesitating broke  
 The accents his scarce-moving pale lips spoke ;  
 But Lara's voice, though low, at first was clear  
 And calm, till murmuring Death gasped  
 hoarsely near ;  
 But from his visage little could we guess,  
 So unrepentant—dark—and passionless,  
 Save that when struggling nearer to his last,  
 Upon that page his eye was kindly cast ; 1110

And once, as Kaled's answering accents  
 ceased,  
 Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East :  
 Whether (as then the breaking Sun from high  
 Rolled back the clouds) the morrow caught  
 his eye,  
 Or that 'twas chance—or some remembered  
 scene,  
 That raised his arm to point where such had  
 been,  
 Scarce Kaled seemed to know, but turned  
 away,  
 As if his heart abhorred that coming day,  
 And shrunk his glance before that morning  
 light,  
 To look on Lara's brow—where all grew  
 night. 1120  
 Yet sense seemed left, though better were  
 its loss ;  
 For when one near displayed the absolving  
 Cross,  
 And proffered to his touch the holy bead,  
 Of which his parting soul might own the need,  
 He looked upon it with an eye profane,  
 And smiled—Heaven pardon ! if 'twere with  
 disdain :  
 And Kaled, though he spoke not, nor withdrew  
 From Lara's face his fixed despairing view,  
 With brow repulsive, and with gesture swift,  
 Flung back the hand which held the sacred  
 gift, 1130  
 As if such but disturbed the expiring man,  
 Nor seemed to know his life but *then* began—  
 That Life of Immortality, secure  
 To none, save them whose faith in Christ  
 is sure.

## XX.

But gasping heaved the breath that Lara drew,  
 And dull the film along his dim eye grew ;  
 His limbs stretched fluttering, and his head  
 drooped o'er  
 The weak yet still untiring knee that bore ;  
 He pressed the hand he held upon his heart—  
 It beats no more, but Kaled will not part 1140  
 With the cold grasp, but feels, and feels in vain  
 For that faint throb which answers not again.  
 "It beats!"—Away, thou dreamer ! he is  
 gone—  
 It once *was* Lara which thou look'st upon.

## XXI.

He gazed, as if not yet had passed away  
 The haughty spirit of that humbled clay ;



And those around have roused him from his  
trance,  
But cannot tear from thence his fixed glance;  
And when, in raising him from where he bore  
Within his arms the form that felt no more, 1150  
He saw the head his breast would still sustain,  
Roll down like earth to earth upon the plain;  
He did not dash himself thereby, nor tear  
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,  
But strove to stand and gaze, but reeled and fell,  
Scarce breathing more than that he loved so  
well.

Than that *he* loved! Oh! never yet beneath  
The breast of *man* such trusty love may breathe!  
That trying moment hath at once revealed  
The secret long and yet but half concealed;  
In baring to revive that lifeless breast, 1161  
Its grief seemed ended, but the sex confessed;  
And life returned,—and Kaled felt no shame—  
What now to her was Womanhood or Fame?

## XXII.

And Lara sleeps not where his fathers sleep,  
But where he died his grave was dug as deep;  
Nor is his mortal slumber less profound,  
Though priest nor blessed nor marble decked  
the mound,

And he was mourned by one whose quiet grief,  
Less loud, outlasts a people's for their  
Chief. 1170

Vain was all question asked her of the past,  
And vain e'en menace—silent to the last;  
She told nor whence, nor why she left behind  
Her all for one who seemed but little kind.  
Why did she love him? Curious fool!—be  
still—

Is human love the growth of human will?  
To her he might be gentleness; the stern  
Have deeper thoughts than your dull eyes  
discern,

And when they love, your smilers guess not how  
Beats the strong heart, though less the lips  
avow. 1180

They were not common links, that formed the  
chain

That bound to Lara Kaled's heart and brain;  
But that wild tale she brooked not to unfold,  
And sealed is now each lip that could have told.

## XXIII.

They laid him in the earth, and on his breast,  
Besides the wound that sent his soul to rest,  
They found the scattered dints of many a scar,  
Which were not planted there in recent war;

Where'er had passed his summer years of life,  
It seems they vanished in a land of strife; 1190  
But all unknown his Glory or his Guilt,  
These only told that somewhere blood was spilt,  
And Ezzelin, who might have spoke the past,  
Returned no more—that night appeared his  
last.

## XXIV.

Upon that night (a peasant's is the tale)  
A Serf that crossed the intervening vale,<sup>1</sup>  
When Cynthia's light almost gave way to morn,  
And nearly veiled in mist her waning horn;  
A Serf, that rose betimes to thread the wood,  
And hew the bough that bought his children's  
food, 1200

Passed by the river that divides the plain  
Of Otho's lands and Lara's broad domain:  
He heard a tramp—a horse and horseman broke  
From out the wood—before him was a cloak  
Wrapt round some burthen at his saddle-bow,  
Bent was his head, and hidden was his brow.  
Roused by the sudden sight at such a time,  
And some foreboding that it might be crime,  
Himself unheeded watched the stranger's  
course,

Who reached the river, bounded from his  
horse, 1210  
And lifting thence the burthen which he bore  
Heaved up the bank, and dashed it from the  
shore,

Then paused—and looked—and turned—and  
seemed to watch,  
And still another hurried glance would snatch,  
And follow with his step the stream that flowed,  
As if even yet too much its surface showed;  
At once he started—stooped—around him  
strown

The winter floods had scattered heaps of stone;  
Of these the heaviest thence he gathered there,  
And slung them with a more than common  
care. 1220

Meantime the Serf had crept to where unseen  
Himself might safely mark what this might  
mean;

He caught a glimpse, as of a floating breast,  
And something glittered starlight on the vest,  
But ere he well could mark the buoyant trunk,  
A massy fragment smote it, and it sunk:  
It rose again, but indistinct to view,  
And left the waters of a purple hue,

<sup>1</sup> The event in this section was suggested by the description of the death or rather burial of the Duke of Gandia. [See Roscoe's *Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth*, 1805, i. 265.]



Then deeply disappeared: the horseman gazed  
 Till ebb'd the latest eddy it had raised ; 1230  
 Then turning, vaulted on his pawing steed,  
 And instant spurred him into panting speed.  
 His face was masked—the features of the dead,  
 If dead it were, escaped the observer's dread ;  
 But if in sooth a Star its bosom bore,  
 Such is the badge that Knighthood ever wore,  
 And such 'tis known Sir Ezzelin had worn  
 Upon the night that led to such a morn.  
 If thus he perished, Heaven receive his soul !  
 His undiscovered limbs to ocean roll ;— 1240  
 And Charity upon the hope would dwell  
 It was not Lara's hand by which he fell.

## XXV.

And Kaled—Lara—Ezzelin, are gone,  
 Alike without their monumental stone !  
 The first, all efforts vainly strove to wean  
 From lingering where her Chieftain's blood  
 had been :  
 Grief had so tamed a spirit once too proud,  
 Her tears were few, her wailing never loud ;  
 But furious, would you tear her from the spot  
 Where yet she scarce believed that he was  
 not, 1250  
 Her eye shot forth with all the living fire  
 That haunts the tigress in her whelpless ire ;  
 But left to waste her weary moments there,  
 She talked all idly unto shapes of air,  
 Such as the busy brain of Sorrow paints,  
 And woos to listen to her fond complaints :  
 And she would sit beneath the very tree  
 Where lay his drooping head upon her knee ;  
 And in that posture where she saw him fall,  
 His words, his looks, his dying grasp  
 recall ; 1260  
 And she had shorn, but saved her raven hair,  
 And oft would snatch it from her bosom there,  
 And fold, and press it gently to the ground,  
 As if she staunch'd anew some phantom's  
 wound.  
 Herself would question, and for him reply ;  
 Then rising, start, and beckon him to fly  
 From some imagined Spectre in pursuit ;  
 Then seat her down upon some linden's root,  
 And hide her visage with her meagre hand,  
 Or trace strange characters along the  
 sand— 1270  
 This could not last—she lies by him she loved ;  
 Her tale untold—her truth too dearly proved.

HEBREW MELODIES.<sup>1</sup>

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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

January, 1815.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.<sup>2</sup>

## I.

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

## II.

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

## III.

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

June 12, 1814.

<sup>1</sup> [The *Hebrew Melodies* were written during the late autumn of 1814, and early spring of 1815, and were first published ("with appropriate symphonies and accompaniments by I. Braham and I. Nathan"), in April, 1815.]

<sup>2</sup> [The inspirer of these lines was Anne Beatrix, daughter and co-heiress of Eusebius Horton, of Catton Hall, Derbyshire, who married Byron's cousin, Robert John Wilmot (1784-1841), son of Sir Robert Wilmot of Osmaston, by Juliana, second daughter of the Hon. John Byron, and widow of the Hon. William Byron. She died February 4, 1871.]

Nathan (*Fugitive Pieces*, 1829, pp. 2, 3) has a note to the effect that Byron, while arranging the first edition of the *Melodies*, used to ask for this song, and would not unfrequently join in its execution.]



THE HARP THE MONARCH  
MINSTREL SWEPT.

I.

THE Harp the Monarch Minstrel swept,  
The King of men, the loved of Heaven!  
Which Music hallowed while she wept  
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given—  
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!  
It softened men of iron mould,  
It gave them virtues not their own;  
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,  
That felt not—fired not to the tone,  
Till David's Lyre grew mightier than his  
Throne!

II.

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

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

I.

IF that high world, which lies beyond  
Our own, surviving Love endears;  
If there the cherished heart be fond,  
The eye the same, except in tears—  
How welcome those untrodden spheres!  
How sweet this very hour to die!  
To soar from earth and find all fears  
Lost in thy light—Eternity!

II.

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

THE WILD GAZELLE.

I.

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

II.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,  
Hath Judah witnessed there;  
And o'er her scenes of lost delight  
Inhabitants more fair.  
The cedars wave on Lebanon,  
But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

III.

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

IV.

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

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE.

I.

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

II.

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?  
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?  
And Judah's melody once more rejoice  
The hearts that leaped before its heavenly  
voice?



## III.

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

## ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

## I.

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

## II.

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

## III.

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

## JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

## I.

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

## II.

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

## III.

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

## IV.

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

## V.

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

OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN  
BEAUTY'S BLOOM.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

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

## II.

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

## III.

Away! we know that tears are vain,  
That Death nor heeds nor hears distress:  
Will this unteach us to complain?  
Or make one mourner weep the less?  
And thou—who tell'st me to forget—  
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.  
[Published in the *Examiner*, April 23, 1815.]

## MY SOUL IS DARK.

## I.

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

## II.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,  
Nor let thy notes of joy be first:  
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,  
Or else this heavy heart will burst;

<sup>1</sup> [It has been surmised, indeed, it may be taken for granted, that these lines contain a final reminiscence of the mysterious Thyrsa.]



For it hath been by sorrow nursed,  
And ached in sleepless silence long;  
And now 'tis doomed to know the worst,  
And break at once—or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

I.

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

II.

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

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

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

SAUL.

I.

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,  
Bid the Prophet's form appear:—  
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!  
King, behold the phantom Seer!"  
Earth yawned; he stood the centre of a cloud:  
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.  
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;  
His hand was withered, and his veins were dry;  
His foot, in bony whiteness, glittered there,  
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare;  
From lips that moved not and unbreathing  
frame,  
Like caverned winds, the hollow accents came.  
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak  
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

II.

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

Seaham, Feb., 1815.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS  
LAST BATTLE.

I.

WARRIORS and Chiefs! should the shaft or  
the sword  
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,

<sup>1</sup> ["Since we have spoken of witches," said Lord Byron at Cephalonia, in 1823, "what think you of the witch of Endor? I have always thought this the finest and most finished witch-scene that ever was written or conceived; and you will be of my opinion, if you consider all the circumstances and the actors in the case, together with the gravity, simplicity, and dignity of the language." — *Conversations on Religion with Lord Byron*, by James Kennedy M.D., London, 1830, p. 154.]



Heed not the corse, though a King's, in your  
path :

Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

## II.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,  
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from  
the foe,

Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet !  
Mine be the doom which they dared not to  
meet.

## III.

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

Seaham, 1815.

“ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE  
PREACHER.”

## I.

FAME, Wisdom, Love, and Power were mine,  
And Health and Youth possessed me ;  
My goblets blushed from every vine,  
And lovely forms caressed me ;  
I sunned my heart in Beauty's eyes,  
And felt my soul grow tender ;  
All Earth can give, or mortal prize,  
Was mine of regal splendour.

## II.

I strive to number o'er what days  
Remembrance can discover,  
Which all that Life or Earth displays  
Would lure me to live over.  
There rose no day, there rolled no hour  
Of pleasure unembittered ;  
And not a trapping decked my Power  
That galled not while it glittered.

## III.

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

Seaham, 1815.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS  
SUFFERING CLAY.

## I.

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

## II.

Eternal—boundless,—undecayed,  
A thought unseen, but seeing all,  
All, all in earth, or skies displayed,  
Shall it survey, shall it recall :  
Each fainter trace that Memory holds  
So darkly of departed years,  
In one broad glance the Soul beholds,  
And all, that was, at once appears.

## III.

Before Creation peopled earth,  
Its eye shall roll through chaos back ;  
And where the farthest heaven had birth,  
The Spirit trace its rising track.  
And where the future mars or makes,  
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,  
While sun is quenched—or System breaks,  
Fixed in its own Eternity.

## IV.

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

Seaham, 1815.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

## I.

THE King was on his throne,  
The Satraps thronged the hall :  
A thousand bright lamps shone  
O'er that high festival.



A thousand cups of gold,  
 In Judah deemed divine—  
 Jehovah's vessels hold  
 The godless Heathen's wine!

II.

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

III.

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

IV.

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

V.

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

VI.

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

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS!

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

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS  
 THOU DEEMS'T IT TO BE.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

I have lost for that faith more than thou  
 canst bestow,  
 As the God who permits thee to prosper doth  
 know;  
 In his hand is my heart and my hope—and  
 in thine  
 The land and the life which for him I resign.  
 Seaham, 1815.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR  
 MARIAMNE.<sup>1</sup>

I.

OH, Mariamne! now for thee  
 The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding;  
 Revenge is lost in Agony  
 And wild Remorse to rage succeeding.

<sup>1</sup> [Mariamne, the wife of Herod the Great, falling under the suspicion of infidelity, was put to death by his order. Ever after, Herod was



Oh, Mariamne! where art thou?

Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading:  
Ah! could'st thou—thou would'st pardon now,  
Though Heaven were to my prayer unheed-  
ing.

## II.

And is she dead?—and did they dare  
Obey my Frenzy's jealous raving?  
My Wrath but doomed my own despair:  
The sword that smote her 's o'er me  
waving.—

But thou art cold, my murdered Love!  
And this dark heart is vainly craving  
For her who soars alone above,  
And leaves my soul, unworthy saving.

## III.

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

*Jan. 15, 1815.*

### ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

## I.

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

## II.

I looked for thy temple—I looked for my  
home,  
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come;  
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy  
fane,  
And the fast-fettered hands that made venge-  
ance in vain.

haunted by the image of the murdered Mariamne,  
until disorder of the mind brought on disorder of  
body, which led to temporary derangement. See  
*History of the Jews*, by H. H. Milman, 1878, pp.  
236, 237. See, too, Voltaire's drama, *Mariamne*,  
*passim*.]

## III.

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

## IV.

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

## V.

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

1815.

### BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT.

## I.

WE sate down and wept by the waters  
Of Babel, and thought of the day  
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,  
Made Salem's high places his prey;  
And Ye, oh her desolate daughters!  
Were scattered all weeping away.

## II.

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

## III.

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

*Jan. 15, 1813.*



“BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON.”

I.

IN the valley of waters we wept on the day  
When the host of the Stranger made Salem  
his prey;  
And our heads on our bosoms all droopingly  
lay,  
And our hearts were so full of the land far  
away!

II.

The song they demanded in vain—it lay still  
In our souls as the wind that hath died on  
the hill—  
They called for the harp—but our blood they  
shall spill  
Ere our right hands shall teach them one tone  
of their skill.

III.

All stringlessly hung in the willow's sad tree,  
As dead as her dead-leaf, those mute harps  
must be:  
Our hands may be fettered—our tears still  
are free  
For our God—and our Glory—and Sion, Oh  
*Thee!*

1815.

[First published, *Fugitive Pieces*, by  
I. Nathan, 1829.]

THE DESTRUCTION OF  
SENNACHERIB.

I.

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

II.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is  
green,  
That host with their banners at sunset were  
seen:

Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn  
hath blown,  
That host on the morrow lay withered and  
strown.

III.

For the angel of Death spread his wings on  
the blast,  
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;

And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly  
and chill,  
And their hearts but once heaved—and for  
ever grew still!

IV.

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

V.

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

VI.

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

Seaham, Feb. 17, 1815.

A SPIRIT PASSED BEFORE ME.  
FROM JOB.

I.

A SPIRIT passed before me: I beheld  
The face of Immortality unveiled—  
Deep Sleep came down on every eye save  
mine—  
And there it stood,—all formless—but divine:  
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;  
And as my damp hair stiffened, thus it spake:

II.

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



## POEMS 1814-1816.

FAREWELL! IF EVER FONDEST  
PRAYER.

1.

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer  
For other's weal availed on high,  
Mine will not all be lost in air,  
But waft thy name beyond the sky.  
'Twere vain to speak—to weep—to sigh:  
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,  
When wrung from Guilt's expiring eye,  
Are in that word—Farewell!—Farewell!

2.

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry;  
But in my breast and in my brain,  
Awake the pangs that pass not by,  
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.  
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,  
Though Grief and Passion there rebel:  
I only know we loved in vain—  
I only feel—Farewell!—Farewell!

[First published, *Corsair*, Second  
Edition, 1814.]

## WHEN WE TWO PARTED.

1.

WHEN we two parted  
In silence and tears,  
Half broken-hearted  
To sever for years,  
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,  
Colder thy kiss;  
Truly that hour foretold  
Sorrow to this.

2.

The dew of the morning  
Sunk chill on my brow—  
It felt like the warning  
Of what I feel now.  
Thy vows are all broken,  
And light is thy fame:  
I hear thy name spoken,  
And share in its shame.

3.

They name thee before me,  
A knell to mine ear;  
A shudder comes o'er me—  
Why wert thou so dear?  
They know not I knew thee,  
Who knew thee too well:—  
Long, long shall I rue thee,  
Too deeply to tell.

4.

In secret we met—  
In silence I grieve,  
That thy heart could forget,  
Thy spirit deceive.  
If I should meet thee  
After long years,  
How should I greet thee?—  
With silence and tears.

[First published, *Poems*, 1816.]

## [LOVE AND GOLD.]

1.

I CANNOT talk of Love to thee,  
Though thou art young and free and fair  
There is a spell thou dost not see,  
That bids a genuine love despair.

2.

And yet that spell invites each youth,  
For thee to sigh, or seem to sigh;  
Makes falsehood wear the garb of truth,  
And Truth itself appear a lie.

3.

If ever doubt a place possess  
In woman's heart, 'twere wise in thine:  
Admit not Love into thy breast,  
Doubt others' love, nor trust in mine.

4.

Perchance 'tis feigned, perchance sincere,  
But false or true thou canst not tell;  
So much hast thou from all to fear,  
In that unconquerable spell.

5.

Of all the herd that throng around,  
Thy simpering or thy sighing train,  
Come tell me who to thee is bound  
By Love's or Plutus' heavier chain.



6.

In some 'tis Nature, some 'tis Art  
That bids them worship at thy shrine;  
But thou deserv'st a better heart,  
Than they or I can give for thine.

7.

For thee, and such as thee, behold,  
Is Fortune painted truly—blind!  
Who doomed thee to be bought or sold,  
Has proved too bounteous to be kind.

8.

Each day some tempter's crafty suit  
Would woo thee to a loveless bed:  
I see thee to the altar's foot  
A decorated victim led.

9.

Adieu, dear maid! I must not speak  
Whate'er my secret thoughts may be;  
Though thou art all that man can seek  
I dare not talk of Love to *thee*.

[First published, 1900.]

### STANZAS FOR MUSIC.<sup>1</sup>

1.

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

2.

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

<sup>1</sup> ["Thou hast asked me for a song, and I enclose you an experiment, which has cost me something more than trouble, and is, therefore, less likely to be worth your taking any in your proposed setting. Now, if it be so, throw it into the fire without *phrase*."—Letter to Moore, May 4, 1814.]

3.

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

4.

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

5.

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

May 4, 1814.

[First published, *Fugitive Pieces*, by  
I. Nathan, 1829.]

### ADDRESS INTENDED TO BE RE- CITED AT THE CALEDONIAN MEETING.<sup>1</sup>

WHO hath not glowed above the page where  
Fame  
Hath fixed high Caledon's unconquered name;  
The mountain-land which spurned the Roman  
chain,  
And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,  
Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand  
No foe could tame—no tyrant could command?  
That race is gone—but still their children  
breathe,  
And Glory crowns them with redoubled  
wreath:  
O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,  
And, England! add their stubborn strength  
to thine.  
The blood which flowed with Wallace flows  
as free,  
But now 'tis only shed for Fame and thee!

<sup>1</sup> [The "Caledonian Meeting," at which these lines were, or were intended to be, recited was a meeting of subscribers to the Highland Society, held annually in London, in support of the [Royal] *Caledonian Asylum* "for educating and supporting children of soldiers, sailors, and marines, natives of Scotland."]



Oh! pass not by the northern veteran's claim,  
But give support—the world hath given him  
fame!

The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who bled  
While cheerly following where the Mighty  
led—

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

'Tis Heaven—not man—must charm away  
the woe,

Which bursts when Nature's feelings newly  
flow;

Yet Tenderness and Time may rob the tear  
Of half its bitterness for one so dear;  
A Nation's gratitude perchance may spread  
A thornless pillow for the widowed head;  
May lighten well her heart's maternal care,  
And wean from Penury the soldier's heir;  
Or deem to living war-worn Valour just  
Each wounded remnant—Albion's cherished  
trust—

Warm his decline with those endearing rays,  
Whose bounteous sunshine yet may gild his  
days—

So shall that Country—while he sinks to rest—  
His hand hath fought for—by his heart be blest!

May, 1814.

[First published, *Letters and Journals*,  
1830, i. 559.]

### ELEGIAC STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER, BART.<sup>1</sup>

#### I.

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

<sup>1</sup> [Sir P. Parker fell in August, 1814, in his  
twenty-ninth year, whilst leading a party from

#### 2.

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

#### 3.

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

#### 4.

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

#### 5.

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

#### 6.

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

#### 7.

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

#### 8.

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

#### 9.

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

October 7, 1814.

[First published, *Morning Chronicle*,  
October 7, 1814.]

his ship, the *Menelaus*, at the storming of the  
American camp near Baltimore. He was Byron's  
first cousin (his father, Christopher Parker (1761-  
1804), married Charlotte Augusta, daughter of  
Admiral the Hon. John Byron); but they had  
never met since boyhood.]



JULIAN [A FRAGMENT].

I.

THE Night came on the Waters—all was rest  
On Earth—but Rage on Ocean's troubled  
Heart.

The Waves arose and rolled beneath the blast;  
The Sailors gazed upon their shivered Mast.  
In that dark Hour a long loud gathered cry  
From out the billows pierced the sable sky,  
And borne o'er breakers reached the craggy  
shore—

The Sea roars on—that Cry is heard no more.

2.

There is no vestige, in the Dawning light,  
Of those that shrieked thro' shadows of the  
Night.

The Bark—the Crew—the very Wreck is gone,  
Marred—mutilated—traceless—all save one.  
In him there still is Life, the Wave that dashed  
On shore the plank to which his form was  
lashed,

Returned unheeding of its helpless Prey—  
The lone survivor of that Yesterday—  
The one of Many whom the withering Gale  
Hath left unpunished to record their Tale.  
But who shall hear it? on that barren Sand  
None comes to stretch the hospitable hand.  
That shore reveals no print of human foot,  
Nor e'en the pawing of the wilder Brute;  
And niggard vegetation will not smile,  
All sunless on that solitary Isle.

3.

The naked Stranger rose, and wrung his hair,  
And that first moment passed in silent prayer.  
Alas! the sound—he sunk into Despair—  
He was on Earth—but what was Earth to him,  
Houseless and homeless—bare both breast  
and limb?

Cut off from all but Memory he curst  
His fate—his folly—but himself the worst.  
What was his hope? he looked upon the  
Wave—

Despite of all—it still may be his Grave!

4.

He rose and with a feeble effort shaped  
His course unto the billows—late escaped:  
But weakness conquered—swam his dizzy  
glance,  
And down to Earth he sunk in silent trance.

How long his senses bore its chilling chain,  
He knew not—but, recalled to Life again,  
A stranger stood beside his shivering form—  
And what was he? had he, too, 'scaped the  
storm?

5.

He raised young Julian. "Is thy Cup so full  
"Of bitterness—thy Hope—thy heart so dull  
"That thou shouldst from Thee dash the  
Draught of Life,

"So late escaped the elemental strife!  
"Rise—tho' these shores few aids to Life  
supply,

"Look upon me, and know thou shalt not  
die.

"Thou gazest in mute wonder—more may be  
"Thy marvel when thou knowest mine and  
me.

"But come—The bark that bears us hence  
shall find

"Her Haven, soon, despite the warning  
Wind."

6.

He raised young Julian from the sand, and  
such

Strange power of healing dwelt within the  
touch,

That his weak limbs grew light with freshened  
Power,

As he had slept not fainted in that hour,  
And woke from Slumber—as the Birds awake,  
Recalled at morning from the branched brake,  
When the day's promise heralds early Spring,  
And Heaven unfolded woos their soaring  
wing:

So Julian felt, and gazed upon his Guide,  
With honest Wonder what might next betide.

*Dec. 12, 1814.*

[First published, 1900.]

TO BELSHAZZAR.

I.

BELSHAZZAR! from the banquet turn,  
Nor in thy sensual fulness fall;

Behold! while yet before thee burn

The graven words, the glowing wall:  
Many a despot men miscall

Crowned and anointed from on high;  
But thou, the weakest, worst of all—

Is it not written, thou must die?



2.

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

3.

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

*February 12, 1815.*  
 [First published, 1831.]

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.<sup>1</sup>

“O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros  
 Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater  
 Felix! in imo qui scatentem  
 Pectore te, pia Nympha sensit.”  
 —GRAY'S *Poemata*.  
 [Motto to “The Tear.”]

1.

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

2.

Then the few whose spirits float above the  
 wreck of happiness  
 Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean  
 of excess:

<sup>1</sup> [Byron gave these verses to Moore for Mr. Power of the Strand, who published them, with music by Sir John Stevenson. “I feel merry enough,” he wrote, March 2, “to send you a sad song.” And again, March 8, 1815, “An event—the death of poor Dorset—and the recollection of what I once felt, and ought to have felt now, but could not—set me pondering, and finally into the train of thought which you have in your hands.”]

The magnet of their course is gone, or only  
 points in vain  
 The shore to which their shivered sail shall  
 never stretch again.

3.

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

4.

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

5.

Oh, could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I  
 have been,  
 Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er  
 many a vanished scene;  
 As springs, in deserts found, seem sweet, all  
 brackish though they be,  
 So, midst the withered waste of life, those  
 tears would flow to me.

*March, 1815.*  
 [First published, *Poems*, 1816.]

ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE  
OF DORSET.<sup>1</sup>

1.

I HEARD thy fate without a tear,  
 Thy loss with scarce a sigh;  
 And yet thou wast surpassing dear,  
 Too loved of all to die.  
 I know not what hath seared my eye—  
 Its tears refuse to start;  
 But every drop, it bids me dry,  
 Falls dreary on my heart.

<sup>1</sup> [From an autograph MS. in the possession of Mr. Murray. The MS. is headed, in pencil, “Lines written on the Death of the Duke of Dorset, a College Friend of Lord Byron's, who was killed by a fall from his horse while hunting.”]



2.

Yes, dull and heavy, one by one,  
They sink and turn to care,  
As caverned waters wear the stone,  
Yet dropping harden there :  
They cannot petrify more fast,  
Than feelings sunk remain,  
Which coldly fixed regard the past,  
But never melt again.

[First published, *Works*, Paris, 1826, p. 716.]

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

1.

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul  
No lovelier spirit than thine  
E'er burst from its mortal control,  
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.  
On earth thou wert all but divine,  
As thy soul shall immortally be ;  
And our sorrow may cease to repine  
When we know that thy God is with thee.

2.

Light be the turf of thy tomb !  
May its verdure like emeralds be !  
There should not be the shadow of gloom  
In aught that reminds us of thee.  
Young flowers and an evergreen tree  
May spring from the spot of thy rest :  
But nor cypress nor yew let us see ;  
For why should we mourn for the blest ?

[First published, *Examiner*, June 4, 1815.]

## NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

1.

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of  
my Glory  
Arose and o'ershadowed the earth with her  
name—  
She abandons me now—but the page of her  
story,  
The brightest or blackest, is filled with my  
fame.  
I have warred with a World which vanquished  
me only  
When the meteor of conquest allured me too  
far ;  
I have coped with the nations which dread  
me thus lonely,  
The last single Captive to millions in war.

2.

Farewell to thee, France! when thy diadem  
crowned me,  
I made thee the gem and the wonder of  
earth,—  
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I  
found thee,  
Decayed in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.  
Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted  
In strife with the storm, when their battles  
were won—  
Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment  
was blasted,  
Had still soared with eyes fixed on Victory's  
sun!

3.

Farewell to thee, France!—but when Liberty  
rallies  
Once more in thy regions, remember me  
then,—  
The Violet still grows in the depth of thy  
valleys ;  
Though withered, thy tear will unfold it  
again—  
Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that surround  
us,  
And yet may thy heart leap awake to my  
voice—  
There are links which must break in the  
chain that has bound us,  
*Then* turn thee and call on the Chief of thy  
choice!

July 25, 1815. London.

[First published, *Examiner*, July 30, 1815.]

FROM THE FRENCH.<sup>1</sup>

1.

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

<sup>1</sup> ["All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer who had been exalted from the ranks by Buonaparte. He clung to his master's knees; wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted."—*Private Letter from Brussels.*]



## II.

Idol of the soldier's soul!  
 First in fight, but mightiest now:  
 Many could a world control;  
 Thee alone no doom can bow.  
 By thy side for years I dared  
 Death; and envied those who fell,  
 When their dying shout was heard,  
 Blessing him they served so well.<sup>1</sup>

## III.

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

## IV.

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

## V.

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

[First published, *Poems*, 1816.]

## ODE FROM THE FRENCH.

## I.

WE do not curse thee, Waterloo!  
 Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew;

<sup>1</sup> ["At Waterloo one man was seen, whose left arm was shattered by a cannon-ball, to wrench it off with the other, and, throwing it up in the air, exclaimed to his comrades, 'Vive l'Empereur, jusqu'à la mort!' There were many other instances of the like: this you may, however, depend on as true."—*Private Letter from Brussels.*]

There 'twas shed, but is not sunk—  
 Rising from each gory trunk,  
 Like the water-spout from ocean,  
 With a strong and growing motion—  
 It soars, and mingles in the air,  
 With that of lost La Bédoyère—<sup>1</sup>  
 With that of him whose honoured grave  
 Contains the "bravest of the brave."<sup>2</sup>  
 A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,  
 But shall return to whence it rose;  
 When 'tis full 'twill burst asunder—  
 Never yet was heard such thunder  
 As then shall shake the world with wonder—  
 Never yet was seen such lightning  
 As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!  
 Like the Wormwood Star foretold  
 By the sainted Seer of old,  
 Show'ring down a fiery flood,  
 Turning rivers into blood.<sup>3</sup>

## II.

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

<sup>1</sup> [Charles Angélique François Huchet, Comte de La Bédoyère, born 1786, was in the retreat from Moscow, and, in 1813, distinguished himself at the battles of Lutzen and Bautzen. On the return of Napoleon from Elba he was the first to bring him a regiment. He was raised to the peerage, but being found in Paris by the Allied army, he was tried by a court-martial, and suffered death August 15, 1815.]

<sup>2</sup> [Michel Ney. (Compare *Don Juan*, Canto IX. stanza i. line 8.)]

<sup>3</sup> See *Rev.* Chap. viii. V. 7, etc., "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood," etc. V. 8, "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood," etc. V. 10, "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." V. 11, "And the name of the star is called *Wormwood*: and the third part of the waters became *wormwood*; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."



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

## III.

And thou, too, of the snow-white plume!  
Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb;<sup>1</sup>  
Better hadst thou still been leading  
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,  
Than sold thyself to death and shame  
For a meanly royal name;  
Such as he of Naples wears,  
Who thy blood-bought title bears.  
Little didst thou deem, when dashing  
On thy war-horse through the ranks,  
Like a stream which burst its banks,  
While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,  
Shone and shivered fast around thee—  
Of the fate at last which found thee:  
Was that haughty plume laid low  
By a slave's dishonest blow?  
Once—as the Moon sways o'er the tide,  
It rolled in air, the warrior's guide  
Through the smoke-created night  
Of the black and sulphurous fight,  
The soldier raised his seeking eye  
To catch that crest's ascendancy,—  
And, as it onward rolling rose,  
So moved his heart upon our foes.  
There, where Death's brief pang was  
quickest,  
And the battle's wreck lay thickest,  
Strewed beneath the advancing banner  
Of the eagle's burning crest—  
(There with thunder-clouds to fan her,  
Who could then her wing arrest—  
Victory beaming from her breast?)  
While the broken line enlarging  
Fell, or fled along the plain;  
There be sure was Murat charging!  
There he ne'er shall charge again!

## IV.

O'er glories gone the invaders march,  
Weeps Triumph o'er each levelled arch—  
But let Freedom rejoice,  
With her heart in her voice;

<sup>1</sup> Murat's remains are said to have been torn from the grave and burnt. ["Poor dear Murat, what an end . . . ! His white plume used to be a rallying point in battle, like Henry the Fourth's. He refused a confessor and a bandage; so would neither suffer his soul or body to be bandaged."—Letter to Moore, November 4, 1815.]

But, her hand on her sword,  
Doubly shall she be adored;  
France hath twice too well been taught  
The "moral lesson"<sup>1</sup> dearly bought—  
Her safety sits not on a throne,  
With Capet or Napoleon!  
But in equal rights and laws,  
Hearts and hands in one great cause—  
Freedom, such as God hath given  
Unto all beneath his heaven,  
With their breath, and from their birth,  
Though guilt would sweep it from the earth;  
With a fierce and lavish hand  
Scattering nations' wealth like sand;  
Pouring nations' blood like water,  
In imperial seas of slaughter!

## V.

But the heart and the mind,  
And the voice of mankind,  
Shall arise in communion—  
And who shall resist that proud union?  
The time is past when swords subdued—  
Man may die—the soul's renewed:  
Even in this low world of care  
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;  
Millions breathe but to inherit  
Her, for ever bounding, spirit—  
When once more her hosts assemble,  
Tyrants shall believe and tremble—  
Smile they at this idle threat?  
Crimson tears will follow yet.<sup>2</sup>

[First published, *Morning Chronicle*,  
March 15, 1816.]

<sup>1</sup> ["Write, Britain, write the moral lesson down"  
Scott's *Field of Waterloo*, Conclusion,  
stanza vi. line 3.]

<sup>2</sup> ["Talking of politics, as Caleb Quotem says,  
pray look at the *conclusion* of my 'Ode on  
Waterloo,' written in the year 1815, and compar-  
ing it with the Duke de Berri's catastrophe in 1820,  
tell me if I have not as good a right to the character  
of 'Vates,' in both senses of the word, as Fitzgerald  
and Coleridge?"]

'Crimson tears will follow yet;—  
and have not they?'—Letter to Murray, April 24,  
1820.

In the Preface to *The Tyrant's Downfall, etc.*,  
1814, W. L. Fitzgerald "begs leave to refer his  
reader to the dates of his Napoleonic . . . to  
prove his legitimate title to the prophetic mean-  
ing of *Vates*." Coleridge claimed to have foretold  
the restoration of the Bourbons in his *Biographia  
Literaria* (cap. x.).]



## STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

1.

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

2.

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

March 28 [1816].

[First published, *Poems*, 1816.]

ON THE STAR OF "THE LEGION  
OF HONOUR."

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

1.

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

2.

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

3.

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

4.

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

5.

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

6.

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

7.

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

[First published, *Examiner*, April 7, 1816.]

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

I.

THEY say that Hope is happiness;  
 But genuine Love must prize the past,  
 And Memory wakes the thoughts that bless  
 They rose the first—they set the last;

II.

And all that Memory loves the most  
 Was once our only Hope to be,  
 And all that Hope adored and lost  
 Hath melted into Memory.

III.

Alas! it is delusion all:  
 The future cheats us from afar,  
 Nor can we be what we recall,  
 Nor dare we think on what we are.

[First published, *Fugitive Pieces*, 1829.

<sup>1</sup> The tricolor.



THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.<sup>1</sup>

"Guns, Trumpets, Blunderbusses, Drums and Thunder."  
—POPE, *Sat.* i. 26.

TO  
JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS

FRIEND.

January 22nd, 1816.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

"THE grand army of the Turks (in 1715), under the Prime Vizier, to open to themselves a way into the heart of the Morea, and to form the siege of Napoli di Romania, the most considerable place in all that country,<sup>2</sup> thought it best in the first place to attack Corinth, upon which they made several storms. The garrison being weakened, and

<sup>1</sup> [The *Siege of Corinth* was written in the early spring of 1816 and was published (together with *Parisina*, which had been written in 1815), February 7, 1816.]

<sup>2</sup> Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napoli is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810-11; and, in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1809, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains; or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness; but the voyage, being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Ægina, Poros, etc., and the coast of the Continent.

["Independently of the suitability of such an event to the power of Lord Byron's genius, the Fall of Corinth afforded local attractions, by the intimate knowledge which the poet had of the place and surrounding objects. . . . Thus furnished with that topographical information which could not be well obtained from books and maps, he was admirably qualified to depict the various operations and progress of the siege."—*Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Right Honourable Lord Byron*, London, 1822, p. 222.]

the governor seeing it was impossible to hold out such a place against so mighty a force, thought it fit to beat a parley: but while they were treating about the articles, one of the magazines in the Turkish camp, wherein they had six hundred barrels of powder, blew up by accident, whereby six or seven hundred men were killed; which so enraged the infidels, that they would not grant any capitulation, but stormed the place with so much fury, that they took it, and put most of the garrison, with Signior Minotti, the governor, to the sword. The rest, with Signior or Antonio Bembo, Proveditor Extraordinary, were made prisoners of war."—*A Compleat History of the Turks* [London, 1719], iii. 151.

IN the year since Jesus died for men,<sup>1</sup>  
Eighteen hundred years and ten,<sup>2</sup>  
We were a gallant company,  
Riding o'er land, and sailing o'er sea.  
Oh! but we went merrily!  
We forded the river, and clomb the high hill,  
Never our steeds for a day stood still;  
Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,  
Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed;  
Whether we couched in our rough capote, 10  
On the rougher plank of our gliding boat,  
Or stretched on the beach, or our saddles  
spread,  
As a pillow beneath the resting head,  
Fresh we woke upon the morrow:  
All our thoughts and words had scope,  
We had health, and we had hope,  
Toil and travel, but no sorrow.  
We were of all tongues and creeds;—  
Some were those who counted beads,

<sup>1</sup> [The introductory lines, 1-45, were not published in the First Edition. First published in *Letters and Journals*, 1830, i. 638, they were included among the *Occasional Poems* in the edition of 1831, and first prefixed to the poem in the edition of 1832.]

<sup>2</sup> [The metrical rendering of the date (miscalculated from the death instead of the birth of Christ) may be traced to the opening lines of an old ballad—

"Upon the sixteen hunder year  
Of God, and fifty-three,  
From Christ was born, that bought us dear,  
As writings testifie," etc.]



Some of mosque, and some of church, 20  
 And some, or I mis-say, of neither ;  
 Yet through the wide world might ye search,  
 Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.

But some are dead, and some are gone,  
 And some are scattered and alone,  
 And some are rebels on the hills<sup>1</sup>  
 That look along Epirus' valleys,  
 Where Freedom still at moments rallies,  
 And pays in blood Oppression's ills ;  
 And some are in a far coundree, 30  
 And some all restlessly at home ;  
 But never more, oh ! never, we  
 Shall meet to revel and to roam.  
 But those hardy days flew cheerily !  
 And when they now fall drearily,  
 My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main,  
 And bear my spirit back again  
 Over the earth, and through the air,  
 A wild bird and a wanderer.  
 'Tis this that ever wakes my strain, 40  
 And oft, too oft, implores again  
 The few who may endure my lay,  
 To follow me so far away.  
 Stranger, wilt thou follow now,  
 And sit with me on Acro-Corinth's brow ?

## I.

Many a vanished year and age,  
 And Tempest's breath, and Battle's rage,  
 Have swept o'er Corinth ; yet she stands,  
 A fortress formed to Freedom's hands.  
 The Whirlwind's wrath, the Earthquake's  
 shock, 50  
 Have left untouched her hoary rock,  
 The keystone of a land, which still,  
 Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,  
 The landmark to the double tide  
 That purpling rolls on either side,  
 As if their waters chafed to meet,  
 Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.  
 But could the blood before her shed  
 Since first Timoleon's brother bled,<sup>2</sup>  
 Or baffled Persia's despot fled, 60  
 Arise from out the Earth which drank  
 The stream of Slaughter as it sank,

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

<sup>2</sup> [Timoleon, who had saved the life of his brother Timophanes in battle, afterwards put him to death for aiming at the supreme power in Corinth.]

That sanguine Ocean would o'erflow  
 Her isthmus idly spread below :  
 Or could the bones of all the slain,  
 Who perished there, be piled again,  
 That rival pyramid would rise  
 More mountain-like, through those clear skies,  
 Than yon tower-capped Acropolis,  
 Which seems the very clouds to kiss. 70

## II.

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears  
 The gleam of twice ten thousand spears ;  
 And downward to the Isthmian plain,  
 From shore to shore of either main,  
 The tent is pitched, the Crescent shines  
 Along the Moslem's leaguering lines ;  
 And the dusk Spahi's bands<sup>1</sup> advance  
 Beneath each bearded Pacha's glance ;  
 And far and wide as eye can reach  
 The turbaned cohorts throng the beach ; 80  
 And there the Arab's camel kneels,  
 And there his steed the Tartar wheels ;  
 The Turcoman hath left his herd,<sup>2</sup>  
 The sabre round his loins to gird ;  
 And there the volleying thunders pour,  
 Till waves grow smoother to the roar.  
 The trench is dug, the cannon's breath  
 Wings the far hissing globe of death ;  
 Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,  
 Which crumbles with the ponderous ball ; 90  
 And from that wall the foe replies,  
 O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,  
 With fires that answer fast and well  
 The summons of the Infidel.

## III.

But near and nearest to the wall  
 Of those who wish and work its fall,  
 With deeper skill in War's black art,  
 Than Othman's sons, and high of heart  
 As any Chief that ever stood  
 Triumphant in the fields of blood ; 100  
 From post to post, and deed to deed,  
 Fast spurring on his reeking steed,  
 Where sallying ranks the trench assail,  
 And make the foremost Moslem quail ;  
 Or where the battery, guarded well,  
 Remains as yet impregnable,  
 Alighting cheerly to inspire  
 The soldier slackening in his fire ;  
 The first and freshest of the host  
 Which Stamboul's Sultan there can boast, 110

<sup>1</sup> [Turkish holders of military fiefs.]

<sup>2</sup> The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal : they dwell in tents.



To guide the follower o'er the field,  
To point the tube, the lance to wield,  
Or whirl around the bickering blade ;—  
Was Alp, the Adrian renegade !<sup>1</sup>

## IV.

From Venice—once a race of worth  
His gentle Sires—he drew his birth ;  
But late an exile from her shore,  
Against his countrymen he bore  
The arms they taught to bear ; and now  
The turban girt his shaven brow. 120  
Through many a change had Corinth passed  
With Greece to Venice' rule at last ;  
And here, before her walls, with those  
To Greece and Venice equal foes,  
He stood a foe, with all the zeal  
Which young and fiery converts feel,  
Within whose heated bosom throngs  
The memory of a thousand wrongs.  
To him had Venice ceased to be  
Her ancient civic boast—" the Free ;" 130  
And in the palace of St. Mark  
Unnamed accusers in the dark  
Within the " Lion's mouth " had placed  
A charge against him uneffaced :<sup>2</sup>  
He fled in time, and saved his life,  
To waste his future years in strife,  
That taught his land how great her loss  
In him who triumphed o'er the Cross,  
'Gainst which he reared the Crescent high,  
And battled to avenge or die. 140

## V.

Coumourgi<sup>3</sup>—he whose closing scene  
Adorned the triumph of Eugene,

<sup>1</sup> [The name is probably derived from Mohammed surnamed Alp-Arslan or " Brave Lion," the second of the Seljuk dynasty, in the eleventh century.]

<sup>2</sup> ["The *Lions' Mouths*, under the arcade at the summit of the Giants' Stairs, which gaped widely to receive anonymous charges, were no doubt far more often employed as vehicles of private malice than of zeal for the public welfare."—*Sketches from Venetian History*, 1832, ii. 380.]

<sup>3</sup> Ali Coumourgi [Damad Ali or Ali Cumurgi (*i.e.* son of the charcoal-burner)], the favourite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III., after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin (in the plain of Carlowitz), in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day [August 16, 1716]. His last order was the decapitation of General Breuner, and some other German prisoners, and his last

When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,  
The last and mightiest of the slain,  
He sank, regretting not to die,  
But cursed the Christian's victory—  
Coumourgi—can his glory cease,  
That latest conqueror of Greece,  
Till Christian hands to Greece restore  
The freedom Venice gave of yore? 150  
A hundred years have rolled away  
Since he refixed the Moslem's sway ;  
And now he led the Mussulman,  
And gave the guidance of the van  
To Alp, who well repaid the trust  
By cities levelled with the dust ;  
And proved, by many a deed of death,  
How firm his heart in novel faith.

## VI.

The walls grew weak ; and fast and hot  
Against them poured the ceaseless shot, 160  
With unabating fury sent  
From battery to battlement ;  
And thunder-like the pealing din  
Rose from each heated culverin ;  
And here and there some crackling dome  
Was fired before the exploding bomb ;  
And as the fabric sank beneath  
The shattering shell's volcanic breath,  
In red and wreathing columns flashed  
The flame, as loud the ruin crashed, 170  
Or into countless meteors driven,  
Its earth-stars melted into heaven ;  
Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,  
Impervious to the hidden sun,  
With volumed smoke that slowly grew  
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

## VII.

But not for vengeance, long delayed,  
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,  
The Moslem warriors sternly teach  
His skill to pierce the promised breach : 180  
Within these walls a Maid was pent  
His hope would win, without consent  
Of that inexorable Sire,  
Whose heart refused him in its ire,  
When Alp, beneath his Christian name,  
Her virgin hand aspired to claim.

words, "Oh that I could thus serve all the Christian dogs!" a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption: on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, "was a great general," he said, "I shall become a greater, and at his expense."



In happier mood, and earlier time,  
While unimpeached for traitorous crime,  
Gayest in Gondola or Hall,  
He glittered through the Carnival ; 190  
And tuned the softest serenade  
That e'er on Adria's waters played  
At midnight to Italian maid.

## VIII.

And many deemed her heart was won ;  
For sought by numbers, given to none,  
Had young Francesca's hand remained  
Still by the Church's bonds unchained :  
And when the Adriatic bore  
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,  
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail, 200  
And pensive waxed the maid and pale ;  
More constant at confessional,  
More rare at masque and festival ;  
Or, seen at such, with downcast eyes  
Which conquered hearts they ceased to prize :  
With listless look she seems to gaze :  
With humbler care her form arrays ;  
Her voice less lively in the song ;  
Her step, though light, less fleet among  
The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance 210  
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

## IX.

Sent by the State to guard the land,  
(Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,<sup>1</sup>  
While Sobieski tamed his pride  
By Buda's wall and Danube's side,  
The chiefs of Venice wrung away  
From Patra to Eubœa's bay,)  
Minotti held in Corinth's towers  
The Doge's delegated powers,  
While yet the pitying eye of Peace 220  
Smiled o'er her long forgotten Greece :  
And ere that faithless truce was broke  
Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,  
With him his gentle daughter came ;  
Nor there, since Menelaus' dame  
Forsook her lord and land, to prove  
What woes await on lawless love,  
Had fairer form adorned the shore  
Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

<sup>1</sup> [The siege of Vienna was raised by John Sobieski, King of Poland (1629-1696), September 12, 1683. Buda was retaken from the Turks by Charles VII., Duke of Lorraine, and September 2, 1686. The conquest of the Morea was begun by the Venetians in 1685, and completed in 1699.]

## X.

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn ; 230  
And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,  
O'er the disjointed mass shall vault  
The foremost of the fierce assault.  
The bands are ranked—the chosen van  
Of Tartar and of Mussulman,  
The full of hope, misnamed "forlorn,"  
Who hold the thought of death in scorn,  
And win their way with falchion's force,  
Or pave the path with many a corse,  
O'er which the following brave may rise, 240  
Their stepping-stone—the last who dies !

## XI.

'Tis midnight : on the mountains brown  
The cold, round, moon shines deeply down ;  
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky  
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,  
Bespangled with those isles of light,  
So wildly, spiritually bright ;  
Who ever gazed upon them shining  
And turned to earth without repining,  
Nor wished for wings to flee away, 250  
And mix with their eternal ray ?  
The waves on either shore lay there  
Calm, clear, and azure as the air ;  
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,  
But murmured meekly as the brook.  
The winds were pillowed on the waves ;  
The banners drooped along their staves,  
And, as they fell around them furling,  
Above them shone the crescent curling ;  
And that deep silence was unbroke, 260  
Save where the watch his signal spoke,  
Save where the steed neighed oft and shrill,  
And echo answered from the hill,  
And the wide hum of that wild host  
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,  
As rose the Muezzin's voice in air  
In midnight call to wonted prayer ;  
It rose, that chanted mournful strain,  
Like some lone Spirit's o'er the plain :  
'Twas musical, but sadly sweet, 270  
Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,  
And take a long unmeasured tone,  
To mortal minstrelsy unknown.  
It seemed to those within the wall  
A cry prophetic of their fall :  
It struck even the besieger's ear  
With something ominous and drear,  
An undefined and sudden thrill,  
Which makes the heart a moment still,  
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed 280  
Of that strange sense its silence framed ;



Such as a sudden passing-bell  
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

## XII.

The tent of Alp was on the shore ;  
The sound was hushed, the prayer was o'er ;  
The watch was set, the night-round made,  
All mandates issued and obeyed :  
'Tis but another anxious night,  
His pains the morrow may requite  
With all Revenge and Love can pay, 290  
In guerdon for their long delay.  
Few hours remain, and he hath need  
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed  
Of slaughter ; but within his soul  
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.  
He stood alone among the host ;  
Not his the loud fanatic boast  
To plant the Crescent o'er the Cross,  
Or risk a life with little loss,  
Secure in paradise to be 300  
By Houris loved immortally :  
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,  
The stern exaltedness of zeal,  
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,  
When battling on the parent soil.  
He stood alone—a renegade  
Against the country he betrayed ;  
He stood alone amidst his band,  
Without a trusted heart or hand :  
They followed him, for he was brave, 310  
And great the spoil he got and gave ;  
They crouched to him, for he had skill  
To warp and wield the vulgar will :  
But still his Christian origin  
With them was little less than sin.  
They envied even the faithless fame  
He earned beneath a Moslem name ;  
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been  
In youth a bitter Nazarene.  
They did not know how Pride can stoop, 320  
When baffled feelings withering droop ;  
They did not know how Hate can burn  
In hearts once changed from soft to stern ;  
Nor all the false and fatal zeal  
The convert of Revenge can feel.  
He ruled them—man may rule the worst,  
By ever daring to be first :  
So lions o'er the jackals sway ;  
The jackal points, *he* fells the prey,  
Then on the vulgar, yelling, press, 330  
To gorge the relics of success.

## XIII.

His head grows fevered, and his pulse  
The quick successive throbs convulse ;  
In vain from side to side he throws  
His form, in courtship of repose ;  
Or if he dozed, a sound, a start  
Awoke him with a sunken heart.  
The turban on his hot brow pressed,  
The mail weighed lead-like on his breast,  
Though oft and long beneath its weight 340  
Upon his eyes had slumber sate,  
Without or couch or canopy,  
Except a rougher field and sky  
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,  
Than now along the heaven was spread.  
He could not rest, he could not stay  
Within his tent to wait for day,  
But walked him forth along the sand,  
Where thousand sleepers strewed the strand.  
What pillowed them ? and why should he 350  
More wakeful than the humblest be,  
Since more their peril, worse their toil ?  
And yet they fearless dream of spoil ;  
While he alone, where thousands passed  
A night of sleep, perchance their last,  
In sickly vigil wandered on,  
And envied all he gazed upon.

## XIV.

He felt his soul become more light  
Beneath the freshness of the night.  
Cool was the silent sky, though calm, 360  
And bathed his brow with airy balm :  
Behind, the camp—before him lay,  
In many a winding creek and bay,  
Lepanto's gulf ; and, on the brow  
Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,  
High and eternal, such as shone  
Through thousand summers brightly gone,  
Along the gulf, the mount, the clime ;  
It will not melt, like man, to time :  
Tyrant and slave are swept away, 370  
Less formed to wear before the ray ;  
But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,<sup>1</sup>  
Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,  
While tower and tree are torn and rent,  
Shines o'er its craggy battlement ;

<sup>1</sup> [The reference is to the almost perpetual "cap" of mist on Parnassus (Mount Likeri or Liakura), which lies some thirty miles to the north-west of Corinth. Compare *The Giaour*, line 566—

"For where is he that hath beheld  
The peak of Liakura unveiled?"]



In form a peak, in height a cloud,  
 In texture like a hovering shroud,  
 Thus high by parting Freedom spread,  
 As from her fond abode she fled,  
 And lingered on the spot, where, long, 380  
 Her prophet spirit spake in song.  
 Oh! still her step at moments falters  
 O'er withered fields, and ruined altars,  
 And fain would wake, in souls too broken,  
 By pointing to each glorious token:  
 But vain her voice, till better days  
 Dawn in those yet remembered rays,  
 Which shone upon the Persian flying,  
 And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

## XV.

Not mindless of these mighty times 390  
 Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes;  
 And through this night, as on he wandered,  
 And o'er the past and present pondered,  
 And thought upon the glorious dead  
 Who there in bitter cause had bled,  
 He felt how faint and feebly dim  
 The fame that could accrue to him,  
 Who cheered the band, and waved the sword,  
 A traitor in a turbaned horde;  
 And led them to the lawless siege, 400  
 Whose best success were sacrilege.  
 Not so had those his fancy numbered,  
 The chiefs whose dust around him slumbered;  
 Their phalanx marshalled on the plain,  
 Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.  
 They fell devoted, but undying,—  
 The very gale their names seemed sighing;  
 The waters murmured of their name,  
 The woods were peopled with their fame;  
 The silent pillar, lone and grey, 410  
 Claimed kindred with their sacred clay;  
 Their spirits wrapped the dusky mountain,  
 Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain—  
 The meanest rill, the mightiest river  
 Rolled mingling with their fame for ever.  
 Despite of every yoke she bears,  
 That land is Glory's still and theirs!  
 'Tis still a watchword to the earth:  
 When man would do a deed of worth  
 He points to Greece, and turns to tread, 420  
 So sanctioned, on the tyrant's head:  
 He looks to her, and rushes on  
 Where life is lost, or Freedom won.

## XVI.

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,  
 And wooed the freshness Night diffused.

There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea,<sup>1</sup>  
 Which changeless rolls eternally;  
 So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,  
 Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a  
 rood;  
 And the powerless moon beholds them flow,  
 Heedless if she come or go: 431  
 Calm or high, in main or bay,  
 On their course she hath no sway.  
 The rock unworn its base doth bare,  
 And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there;  
 And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,  
 On the line that it left long ages ago:—  
 A smooth short space of yellow sand  
 Between it and the greener land.

He wandered on along the beach, 440  
 Till within the range of a carbine's reach  
 Of the leagured wall; but they saw him not,  
 Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot?  
 Did traitors lurk in the Christian's hold?  
 Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts  
 waxed cold?  
 I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall  
 There flashed no fire, and there hissed no ball,  
 Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,  
 That flanked the seaward gate of the town;  
 Though he heard the sound, and could almost  
 tell 450  
 The sullen words of the sentinel,  
 As his measured step on the stone below  
 Clanked, as he paced it to and fro;  
 And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall  
 Hold o'er the dead their Carnival,  
 Gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb;  
 They were too busy to bark at him!  
 From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the  
 flesh,  
 As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;  
 And their white tusks crunched o'er the  
 whiter skull,<sup>2</sup> 460  
 As it slipped through their jaws, when their  
 edge grew dull,  
 As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,  
 When they scarce could rise from the spot  
 where they fed;

<sup>1</sup> The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.

<sup>2</sup> This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's *Travels [in Albania, 1855, ii. 215]*. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.



So well had they broken a lingering fast  
With those who had fallen for that night's  
repast :—

And Alp knew, by the turbans that rolled on  
the sand,

The foremost of these were the best of his band :  
Crimson and green were the shawls of their  
wear,

And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair,<sup>1</sup>  
All the rest was shaven and bare. 470

The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,  
The hair was tangled round his jaw :  
But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,  
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,  
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,  
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey ;  
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,  
Picked by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

## XVII.

Alp turned him from the sickening sight :  
Never had shaken his nerves in fight ; 480  
But he better could brook to behold the dying,  
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,  
Scorched with the death-thirst, and writhing  
in vain,

Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.  
There is something of pride in the perilous hour,  
Whate'er be the shape in which Death may  
lower ;

For Fame is there to say who bleeds,  
And Honour's eye on daring deeds !  
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread  
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead,  
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the  
air, 491

Beasts of the forest, all gathering there ;  
All regarding man as their prey,  
All rejoicing in his decay.

## XVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands,  
Fashioned by long forgotten hands ;  
Two or three columns, and many a stone,  
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown !  
Out upon Time ! it will leave no more  
Of the things to come than the things before !  
Out upon Time ! who for ever will leave 501  
But enough of the past for the future to grieve  
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that  
which must be :

What we have seen, our sons shall see ;

<sup>1</sup> This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mahomet will draw them into Paradise by it.

Remnants of things that have passed away,  
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay !

## XIX.

He sate him down at a pillar's base,  
And passed his hand athwart his face ;  
Like one in dreary musing mood,  
Declining was his attitude ; 510  
His head was drooping on his breast,  
Fevered, throbbing, and oppressed ;  
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,  
Oft his beating fingers went,  
Hurriedly, as you may see  
Your own run over the ivory key,  
Ere the measured tone is taken  
By the chords you would awaken.  
There he sate all heavily,  
As he heard the night-wind sigh. 520  
Was it the wind through some hollow stone,  
Sent that soft and tender moan ?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr. Coleridge, called "Christabel." It was not till after these lines were written that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited ; and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr. Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr. Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, of which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges.

[The lines in *Christabel*, Part the First, 43-52, 57, 59, are these—

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

" . . . What sees she there ?  
There she sees a damsel bright,  
Drest in a silken robe of white."

Byron, in a letter to Coleridge, dated October 27, 1815, had already expressly guarded himself against a charge of plagiarism, by explaining that lines 521-532 of stanza xix. were written before he heard Walter Scott repeat *Christabel* in the preceding June. Neither in letter or note does Byron attempt to deny or explain away the coincidence,



He lifted his head, and he looked on the sea,  
 But it was unrippled as glass may be ;  
 He looked on the long grass—it waved not a  
     blade ;  
 How was that gentle sound conveyed ?  
 He looked to the banners—each flag lay still,  
 So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill,  
 And he felt not a breath come over his cheek ;  
 What did that sudden sound bespeak ? 530  
 He turned to the left—is he sure of sight ?  
 There sate a lady, youthful and bright !

## XX.

He started up with more of fear  
 Than if an arméd foe were near.  
 "God of my fathers ! what is here ?  
 Who art thou ? and wherefore sent  
 So near a hostile armament ?"  
 His trembling hands refused to sign  
 The cross he deemed no more divine :  
 He had resumed it in that hour, 540  
 But Conscience wrung away the power.  
 He gazed, he saw ; he knew the face  
 Of beauty, and the form of grace ;  
 It was Francesca by his side,  
 The maid who might have been his bride !

The rose was yet upon her cheek,  
 But mellowed with a tenderer streak :  
 Where was the play of her soft lips fled ?  
 Gone was the smile that enlivened their red.  
 The Ocean's calm within their view, 550  
 Beside her eye had less of blue ;  
 But like that cold wave it stood still,  
 And its glance, though clear, was chill.  
 Around her form a thin robe twining,  
 Nought concealed her bosom shining ;  
 Through the parting of her hair,  
 Floating darkly downward there,  
 Her rounded arm showed white and bare :  
 And ere yet she made reply,  
 Once she raised her hand on high ; 560  
 It was so wan, and transparent of hue,  
 You might have seen the moon shine through.

but pleads that his lines were written before he had heard Coleridge's poem recited, and that he had not been guilty of a "wilful plagiarism." There is no difficulty in accepting his statement. Long before the summer of 1815 *Christabel* "had a pretty general circulation in the literary world," and he may have heard, without heeding, this and other passages quoted by privileged readers ; or, though never a line of *Christabel* had sounded in his ears, he may (as the late Professor Kölbing points out) have caught its lilt at second hand from the published works of Southey, or of Scott himself.]

## XXI.

"I come from my rest to him I loved best,  
 That I may be happy, and he may be blessed.  
 I have passed the guards, the gate, the wall ;  
 Sought thee in safety through foes and all.  
 'Tis said the lion will turn and flee  
 From a maid in the pride of her purity ;  
 And the Power on high, that can shield the  
     good  
 Thus from the tyrant of the wood, 570  
 Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well  
 From the hands of the leaguering Infidel.  
 I come—and if I come in vain,  
 Never, oh never, we meet again !  
 Thou hast done a fearful deed  
 In falling away from thy fathers' creed :  
 But dash that turban to earth, and sign  
 The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine ;  
 Wring the black drop from thy heart,  
 And to-morrow unites us no more to  
     part." 580

"And where should our bridal couch be  
     spread ?  
 In the midst of the dying and the dead ?  
 For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and  
     flame  
 The sons and the shrines of the Christian  
     name.  
 None, save thou and thine, I've sworn,  
 Shall be left upon the morn :  
 But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,  
 Where our hands shall be joined, and our  
     sorrow forgot.  
 There thou yet shalt be my bride,  
 When once again I've quelled the pride 590  
 Of Venice ; and her hated race  
 Have felt the arm they would debase  
 Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those  
 Whom Vice and Envy made my foes."

Upon his hand she laid her own—  
 Light was the touch, but it thrilled to the  
     bone,  
 And shot a chillness to his heart,  
 Which fixed him beyond the power to start.  
 Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,  
 He could not loose him from its hold ; 600  
 But never did clasp of one so dear  
 Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,  
 As those thin fingers, long and white,  
 Froze through his blood by their touch that  
     night.  
 The feverish glow of his brow was gone,  
 And his heart sank so still that it felt like  
     stone,



As he looked on the face, and beheld its hue,  
 So deeply changed from what he knew :  
 Fair but faint—without the ray  
 Of mind, that made each feature play 610  
 Like sparkling waves on a sunny day ;  
 And her motionless lips lay still as death,  
 And her words came forth without her breath,  
 And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's  
 swell,  
 And there seemed not a pulse in her veins to  
 dwell.  
 Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were  
 fixed,  
 And the glance that it gave was wild and  
 unmixed  
 With aught of change, as the eyes may seem  
 Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream ;  
 Like the figures on arras, that gloomily  
 glare, 620  
 Stirred by the breath of the wintry air,  
 So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,  
 Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight ;  
 As they seem, through the dimness, about to  
 come down  
 From the shadowy wall where their images  
 frown ;  
 Fearfully flitting to and fro,  
 As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.<sup>1</sup>

“ If not for love of me be given  
 Thus much, then, for the love of Heaven,—  
 Again I say—that turban tear 630  
 From off thy faithless brow, and swear  
 Thine injured country's sons to spare,  
 Or thou art lost ; and never shalt see—  
 Not earth—that's past—but Heaven or me.  
 If this thou dost accord, albeit  
 A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet,  
 That doom shall half absolve thy sin,  
 And Mercy's gate may receive thee within :  
 But pause one moment more, and take  
 'The curse of Him thou didst forsake ; 640  
 And look once more to Heaven, and see  
 Its love for ever shut from thee.  
 There is a light cloud by the moon—<sup>2</sup>  
 'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—

<sup>1</sup> [In the summer of 1803, Byron, then turned fifteen, though offered a bed at Annesley, used at first to return every night to Newstead ; alleging that he was afraid of the family pictures of the Chaworths, which he fancied “ had taken a grudge to him on account of the duel, and would come down from their frames to haunt him.” Moore thinks this passage may have been suggested by the recollection (*Life*, p. 27).]

<sup>2</sup> I have been told that the idea expressed in

If, by the time its vapoury sail  
 Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,  
 Thy heart within thee is not changed,  
 Then God and man are both avenged ;  
 Dark will thy doom be, darker still  
 Thine immortality of ill.” 650

Alp looked to heaven, and saw on high  
 The sign she spake of in the sky ;  
 But his heart was swollen, and turned aside,  
 By deep interminable pride.  
 This first false passion of his breast  
 Rolled like a torrent o'er the rest.  
*He* sue for mercy ! *He* dismayed  
 By wild words of a timid maid !  
*He*, wronged by Venice, vow to save  
 Her sons, devoted to the grave ! 660  
 No—though that cloud were thunders worst,  
 And charged to crush him—let it burst !

He looked upon it earnestly,  
 Without an accent of reply ;  
 He watched it passing—it is flown :  
 Full on his eye the clear moon shone,  
 And thus he spake—“ Whate'er my fate,  
 I am no changeling—'tis too late :  
 The reed in storms may bow and quiver,  
 Then rise again ;—the tree must shiver. 670  
 What Venice made me, I must be,  
 Her foe in all, save love to thee :  
 'But thou art safe : oh, fly with me !”  
 He turned, but she is gone !  
 Nothing is there but the column stone.  
 Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air ?  
 He saw not—he knew not—but nothing is  
 there.

## XXII.

The night is past, and shines the sun  
 As if that morn were a jocund one.  
 Lightly and brightly breaks away 680  
 The Morning from her mantle grey,  
 And the Noon will look on a sultry day.  
 Hark to the trump, and the drum,  
 And the mournful sound of the barbarous  
 horn,  
 And the flap of the banners, that flit as  
 they're borne,

this and the five following lines has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it ; but it is not original—at least not mine ; it may be found much better expressed in pages 182-3-4 of the English version [Ed. 1786] of “ Vathek ” (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred ; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification.



And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's  
 hum,  
 And the clash, and the shout, "They come!  
 they come!"  
 The horsetails are plucked from the ground,  
 and the sword  
 From its sheath; and they form, and but  
 wait for the word.  
 Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman, 690  
 Strike your tents, and throng to the van;  
 Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,  
 That the fugitive may flee in vain,  
 When he breaks from the town, and none  
 escape,  
 Agéd or young, in the Christian shape;  
 While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,  
 Bloodstain the breach through which they  
 pass.  
 The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the  
 rein;  
 Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;  
 White is the foam of their champ on the  
 bit: 700  
 The spears are uplifted, the matches are lit,  
 The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,  
 And crush the wall they have crumbled before:  
 Forms in his phalanx each Janizar—  
 Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,  
 So is the blade of his scimitar;  
 The Khan and the Pachas are all at their post:—  
 The Vizier himself at the head of the host.  
 When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;  
 Leave not in Corinth a living one— 710  
 A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,  
 A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.  
 God and the prophet—Alla Hu!  
 Up to the skies with that wild halloo!  
 "There the breach lies for passage, the ladder  
 to scale;  
 And your hands on your sabres, and how  
 should ye fail?  
 He who first downs with the red cross may  
 crave  
 His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it, and  
 have!"  
 Thus uttered Coumourgi, the dauntless Vizier;  
 The reply was the brandish of sabre and  
 spear, 720  
 And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous  
 ire:—  
 Silence—hark to the signal—fire!

## XXIII.

As the wolves, that headlong go  
 On the stately buffalo,

Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,  
 And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,  
 He tramples on earth, or tosses on high  
 The foremost, who rush on his strength but  
 to die:  
 Thus against the wall they went,  
 Thus the first were backward bent; 730  
 Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,  
 Strewed the earth like broken glass,  
 Shivered by the shot, that tore  
 The ground whereon they moved no more:  
 Even as they fell, in files they lay,  
 Like the mower's grass at the close of day,  
 When his work is done on the levelled plain;  
 Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

## XXIV.

As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,  
 From the cliffs invading dash 740  
 Huge fragments, sapped by the ceaseless flow,  
 Till white and thundering down they go,  
 Like the avalanche's snow  
 On the Alpine vales below;  
 Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,  
 Corinth's sons were downward borne  
 By the long and oft renewed  
 Charge of the Moslem multitude.  
 In firmness they stood, and in masses they  
 fell,  
 Heaped by the host of the Infidel, 750  
 Hand to hand, and foot to foot:  
 Nothing there, save Death, was mute;  
 Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry  
 For quarter, or for victory,  
 Mingle there with the volleying thunder,  
 Which makes the distant cities wonder  
 How the sounding battle goes,  
 If with them, or for their foes;  
 If they must mourn, or may rejoice  
 In that annihilating voice, 760  
 Which pierces the deep hills through and  
 through  
 With an echo dread and new:  
 You might have heard it, on that day,  
 O'er Salamis and Megara,  
 (We have heard the hearers say,  
 Even unto Piræus' bay.

## XXV.

From the point of encountering blades to the  
 hilt,  
 Sabres and swords with blood were gilt;  
 But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,  
 And all but the after carnage done. 770



Shriller shrieks now mingling come  
 From within the plundered dome :  
 Hark to the haste of flying feet,  
 That splash in the blood of the slippery street ;  
 But here and there, where 'vantage ground  
 Against the foe may still be found,  
 Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,  
 Make a pause, and turn again—  
 With banded backs against the wall,  
 Fiercely stand, or fighting fall. 780  
 There stood an old man—his hairs were  
 white,  
 But his veteran arm was full of might :  
 So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,  
 The dead before him, on that day,  
 In a semicircle lay ;  
 Still he combated unwounded,  
 Though retreating, unsurrounded.  
 Many a scar of former fight  
 Lurked beneath his corslet bright ;  
 But of every wound his body bore, 790  
 Each and all had been ta'en before :  
 Though agéd, he was so iron of limb,  
 Few of our youth could cope with him ;  
 And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,  
 Outnumbered his thin hairs of silver grey.  
 From right to left his sabre swept :  
 Many an Othman mother wept  
 Sons that were unborn, when dipped  
 His weapon first in Moslem gore,  
 Ere his years could count a score. 800  
 Of all he might have been the sire  
 Who fell that day beneath his ire :  
 For, sonless left long years ago,  
 His wrath made many a childless foe ;  
 And since the day, when in the strait<sup>1</sup>  
 His only boy had met his fate,  
 His parent's iron hand did doom  
 More than a human hecatomb.  
 If shades by carnage be appeased,  
 Patroclus' spirit less was pleased 810  
 Than his, Minotti's son, who died  
 Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.  
 Buried he lay, where thousands before  
 For thousands of years were inhumed on the  
 shore ;  
 What of them is left, to tell  
 Where they lie, and how they fell ?  
 Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their  
 graves ;  
 But they live in the verse that immortally  
 saves.

<sup>1</sup> In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and Turks.

## XXVI.

Hark to the Allah shout ! a band  
 Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at  
 hand ; 820  
 Their leader's nervous arm is bare,  
 Swifter to smite, and never to spare—  
 Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on ;  
 Thus in the fight is he ever known :  
 Others a gaudier garb may show,  
 To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe ;  
 Many a hand's on a richer hilt,  
 But none on a steel more ruddily gilt ;  
 Many a loftier turban may wear,—  
 Alp is but known by the white arm bare ; 830  
 Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there !  
 There is not a standard on that shore  
 So well advanced the ranks before ;  
 There is not a banner in Moslem war  
 Will lure the Delhis half so far ;  
 It glances like a falling star !  
 Where'er that mighty arm is seen,  
 The bravest be, or late have been ;  
 There the craven cries for quarter  
 Vainly to the vengeful Tartar ; 840  
 Or the hero, silent lying,  
 Scorns to yield a groan in dying ;  
 Mustering his last feeble blow  
 'Gainst the nearest levelled foe,  
 Though faint beneath the mutual wound,  
 Grappling on the gory ground.

## XXVII.

Still the old man stood erect,  
 And Alp's career a moment checked.  
 "Yield thee, Minotti ! quarter take,  
 For thine own, thy daughter's sake." 850  
 "Never, Renegado, never !  
 Though the life of thy gift would last for  
 ever."  
 "Francesca !—Oh, my promised bride !  
 Must she too perish by thy pride ?"  
 "She is safe."—"Where? where?"—"In  
 Heaven ;  
 From whence thy traitor soul is driven—  
 Far from thee, and undefiled."  
 Grimly then Minotti smiled,  
 As he saw Alp staggering bow  
 Before his words, as with a blow. 860  
 "Oh God ! when died she?"—"Yester-  
 night—  
 Nor weep I for her spirit's flight :  
 None of my pure race shall be  
 Slaves to Mahomet and thee—



Come on!"—That challenge is in vain—  
 Alp's already with the slain!  
 While Minotti's words were wreaking  
 More revenge in bitter speaking  
 Than his falchion's point had found,  
 Had the time allowed to wound, 870  
 From within the neighbouring porch  
 Of a long defended church,  
 Where the last and desperate few  
 Would the failing fight renew,  
 The sharp shot dashed Alp to the ground;  
 Ere an eye could view the wound  
 That crashed through the brain of the infidel,  
 Round he spun, and down he fell;  
 A flash like fire within his eyes  
 Blazed, as he bent no more to rise, 880  
 And then eternal darkness sunk  
 Through all the palpitating trunk;  
 Nought of life left, save a quivering  
 Where his limbs were slightly shivering:  
 They turned him on his back; his breast  
 And brow were stained with gore and dust,  
 And through his lips the life-blood oozed,  
 From its deep veins lately loosed;  
 But in his pulse there was no throb,  
 Nor on his lips one dying sob; 890  
 Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath  
 Heralded his way to death:  
 Ere his very thought could pray,  
 Unaneled he passed away,  
 Without a hope from Mercy's aid,—  
 To the last a Renegade.

## XXVIII.

Fearfully the yell arose  
 Of his followers, and his foes;—  
 These in joy, in fury those:  
 Then again in conflict mixing, 900  
 Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,  
 Interchanged the blow and thrust,  
 Hurling warriors in the dust.  
 Street by street, and foot by foot,  
 Still Minotti dares dispute  
 The latest portion of the land  
 Left beneath his high command;  
 With him, aiding heart and hand,  
 The remnant of his gallant band.  
 Still the church is tenable, 910  
 Whence issued late the fated ball  
 That half avenged the city's fall,  
 When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell:  
 Thither bending sternly back,  
 They leave before a bloody track;  
 And, with their faces to the foe,  
 Dealing wounds with every blow,

The Chief, and his retreating train,  
 Join to those within the fane;  
 There they yet may breathe awhile, 920  
 Sheltered by the massy pile.

## XXIX.

Brief breathing-time! the turbaned host,  
 With added ranks and raging boast,  
 Press onwards with such strength and heat,  
 Their numbers balk their own retreat;  
 For narrow the way that led to the spot  
 Where still the Christians yielded not;  
 And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try  
 Through the massy column to turn and fly—  
 They perforce must do or die. 930  
 They die; but ere their eyes could close,  
 Avengers o'er their bodies rose;  
 Fresh and furious, fast they fill  
 The ranks unthinned, though slaughtered still;  
 And faint the weary Christians wax  
 Before the still renewed attacks:  
 And now the Othmans gain the gate;  
 Still resists its iron weight,  
 And still, all deadly aimed and hot,  
 From every crevice comes the shot; 940  
 From every shattered window pour  
 The volleys of the sulphurous shower:  
 But the portal wavering grows and weak—  
 The iron yields, the hinges creak—  
 It bends—it falls—and all is o'er;  
 Lost Corinth may resist no more!

## XXX.

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,  
 Minotti stood o'er the altar stone:  
 Madonna's face upon him shone,  
 Painted in heavenly hues above, 950  
 With eyes of light and looks of love;  
 And placed upon that holy shrine  
 To fix our thoughts on things divine,  
 When pictured there, we kneeling see  
 Her, and the boy-God on her knee,  
 Smiling sweetly on each prayer  
 To Heaven, as if to waft it there.  
 Still she smiled; even now she smiles,  
 Though slaughter streams along her aisles:  
 Minotti lifted his aged eye, 960  
 And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,  
 Then seized a torch which blazed thereby;  
 And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,  
 Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

## XXXI.

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone  
 Contained the dead of ages gone;



Their names were on the graven floor,  
 But now illegible with gore ;  
 The carved crests, and curious hues  
 The varied marble's veins diffuse, 970  
 Were smeared, and slippery—stained, and  
 strown  
 With broken swords, and helms o'erthrown :  
 There were dead above, and the dead below  
 Lay cold in many a confined row ;  
 You might see them piled in sable state,  
 By a pale light through a gloomy grate ;  
 But War had entered their dark caves,  
 And stored along the vaulted graves  
 Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread  
 In masses by the fleshless dead : 980  
 Here, throughout the siege, had been  
 The Christians' chiefest magazine ;  
 To these a late formed train now led,  
 Minotti's last and stern resource  
 Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

## XXXII.

The foe came on, and few remain  
 To strive, and those must strive in vain :  
 For lack of further lives, to slake  
 The thirst of vengeance now awake,  
 With barbarous blows they gash the dead,  
 And lop the already lifeless head, 991  
 And fell the statues from their niche,  
 And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,  
 And from each other's rude hands wrest  
 The silver vessels Saints had blessed.  
 To the high altar on they go ;  
 Oh, but it made a glorious show !  
 On its table still behold  
 The cup of consecrated gold ;  
 Massy and deep, a glittering prize, 1000  
 Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes :  
 That morn it held the holy wine,  
 Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,  
 Which his worshippers drank at the break  
 of day,  
 To shrive their souls ere they joined in the fray.  
 Still a few drops within it lay ;  
 And round the sacred table glow  
 Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,  
 From the purest metal cast ;  
 A spoil—the richest, and the last. 1010

## XXXIII.

So near they came, the nearest stretched  
 To grasp the spoil he almost reached,

When old Minotti's hand  
 Touched with the torch the train—  
 'Tis fired !  
 Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,  
 The turbaned victors, the Christian band,  
 All that of living or dead remain,  
 Hurl'd on high with the shivered fane,  
 In one wild roar expired ! 1020  
 The shattered town—the walls thrown down—  
 The waves a moment backward bent—  
 The hills that shake, although unrent,  
 As if an Earthquake passed—  
 The thousand shapeless things all driven  
 In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,  
 By that tremendous blast—  
 Proclaimed the desperate conflict o'er  
 On that too long afflicted shore :  
 Up to the sky like rockets go 1030  
 All that mingled there below :  
 Many a tall and goodly man,  
 Scorched and shrivelled to a span,  
 When he fell to earth again  
 Like a cinder strew'd the plain :  
 Down the ashes shower like rain ;  
 Some fell in the gulf, which received the  
 sprinkles  
 With a thousand circling wrinkles ;  
 Some fell on the shore, but, far away,  
 Scattered o'er the isthmus lay ; 1040  
 Christian or Moslem, which be they ?  
 Let their mothers see and say !  
 When in cradled rest they lay,  
 And each nursing mother smiled  
 On the sweet sleep of her child,  
 Little deemed she such a day  
 Would rend those tender limbs away.  
 Not the matrons that them bore  
 Could discern their offspring more ;  
 That one moment left no trace 1050  
 More of human form or face  
 Save a scattered scalp or bone :  
 And down came blazing rafters, strown  
 Around, and many a falling stone,  
 Deeply dinted in the clay,  
 All blackened there and reeking lay.  
 All the living things that heard  
 The deadly earth-shock disappeared :  
 The wild birds flew—the wild dogs fled,  
 And howling left the unburied dead ; 1060  
 The camels from their keepers broke ;  
 The distant steer forsook the yoke—  
 The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,  
 And burst his girth, and tore his rein ;  
 The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,  
 Deep-mouthed arose, and doubly harsh ;



The wolves yelled on the caverned hill  
 Where Echo rolled in thunder still;  
 The jackal's troop, in gathered cry,<sup>1</sup>  
 Bayed from afar complainingly,  
 With a mixed and mournful sound,  
 Like crying babe, and beaten hound:  
 With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,  
 The eagle left his rocky nest,  
 And mounted nearer to the sun,  
 The clouds beneath him seemed so dun;  
 Their smoke assailed his startled beak,  
 And made him higher soar and shriek—  
 Thus was Corinth lost and won!

1070

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PARISINA.<sup>2</sup>

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TO  
 SCROPE BERDMORE  
 DAVIES, ESQ.

THE FOLLOWING POEM

IS INSCRIBED,

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIRER HIS  
 TALENTS AND VALUED HIS FRIENDSHIP.

January 22, 1816.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's "Antiquities

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

<sup>2</sup> [The critics fell foul of the subject-matter of this poem—the guilty passion of a bastard son for his father's wife. "The story of *Parisina* includes adultery not to be named" (*Literary Panorama*); while the *Eclectic*, on grounds of taste rather than of morals, gave judgment that "the subject of the tale was purely unpleasing"—"the impression left simply painful." The modern reader, without being attracted or repelled by the story, will take pleasure in the strength and beauty of the poetic strain. Byron may have gone to the "nakedness of history" for his facts, but he clothed them in singing robes of a fine and delicate texture.]

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

"Under the reign of Nicholas III. [A.D. 1425] Ferrara was polluted with a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of a maid, and his own observation, the Marquis of Este discovered the incestuous loves of his wife Parisina, and Hugo his bastard son, a beautiful and valiant youth. They were beheaded in the castle by the sentence of a father and husband, who published his shame, and survived their execution. He was unfortunate, if they were guilty: if they were innocent, he was still more unfortunate; nor is there any possible situation in which I can sincerely approve the last act of the justice of a parent."—GIBBON'S *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 470.—[Ed. 1837, p. 830.]

I.

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

10

II.

BUT it is not to list to the waterfall  
 That Parisina leaves her hall,  
 And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light  
 That the Lady walks in the shadow of night,