

## LX.

This is the case in England ; at least was  
 During the dynasty of Dandies, now  
 Perchance succeeded by some other class  
 Of imitated Imitators :—how  
 Irreparably soon decline, alas !

The Demagogues of fashion : all below  
 Is frail ; how easily the world is lost  
 By Love, or War, and, now and then,—by  
 Frost !

## LXI.

Crushed was Napoleon by the northern Thor,  
 Who knocked his army down with icy  
 hammer,  
 Stopped by the *Elements*<sup>1</sup>—like a Whaler—or  
 A blundering novice in his new French  
 grammar ;  
 Good cause had he to doubt the chance of war,  
 And as for Fortune—but I dare not d—n her,  
 Because, were I to ponder to Infinity,  
 The more I should believe in her Divinity.

## LXII.

She rules the present, past, and all to be yet,  
 She gives us luck in lotteries, love, and  
 marriage ;  
 I cannot say that she's done much for me yet ;  
 Not that I mean her bounties to disparage,  
 We've not yet closed accounts, and we shall  
 see yet  
 How much she'll make amends for past  
 miscarriage ;  
 Meantime the Goddess I'll no more importune,  
 Unless to thank her when she's made my  
 fortune.

## LXIII.

To turn,—and to return ;—the Devil take it !  
 This story slips for ever through my fingers,  
 Because, just as the stanza likes to make it,  
 It needs must be—and so it rather lingers ;  
 This form of verse began, I can't well break it,  
 But must keep time and tune like public  
 singers ;  
 But if I once get through my present measure,  
 I'll take another when I'm next at leisure.

<sup>1</sup> [“When Brummel was obliged . . . to retire to France, he knew no French ; and having obtained a Grammar for the purposes of study, our friend Scrope Davies was asked what progress Brummel had made in French . . . he responded, ‘that Brummel had been stopped, like Buonaparte in Russia, by the *Elements*.’”—*Detached Thoughts*, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 422, 423.]

## LXIV.

They went to the Ridotto ('tis a place  
 To which I mean to go myself to-morrow,  
 Just to divert my thoughts a little space  
 Because I'm rather hippish, and may borrow  
 Some spirits, guessing at what kind of face  
 May lurk beneath each mask ; and as my  
 sorrow  
 Slackens its pace sometimes, I'll make, or find,  
 Something shall leave it half an hour behind.)

## LXV.

Now Laura moves along the joyous crowd,  
 Smiles in her eyes, and simpers on her lips ;  
 To some she whispers, others speaks aloud ;  
 To some she curtsies, and to some she dips,  
 Complains of warmth, and, this complaint  
 avowed,  
 Her lover brings the lemonade she sips ;  
 She then surveys, condemns, but pities still  
 Her dearest friends for being dressed so ill.

## LXVI.

One has false curls, another too much paint,  
 A third—where did she buy that frightful  
 turban ?  
 A fourth's so pale she fears she's going to faint,  
 A fifth's look's vulgar, dowdyish, and  
 suburban,  
 A sixth's white silk has got a yellow taint,  
 A seventh's thin muslin surely will be her  
 bane,  
 And lo ! an eighth appears,—“ I'll see no  
 more ! ”  
 For fear, like Banquo's kings, they reach a  
 score.

## LXVII.

Meantime, while she was thus at others  
 gazing,  
 Others were levelling their looks at her ;  
 She heard the men's half-whispered mode of  
 praising,  
 And, till 'twas done, determined not to  
 stir ;  
 The women only thought it quite amazing  
 That, at her time of life, so many were  
 Admirers still,—but “ Men are so debased—  
 Those brazen Creatures always suit their  
 taste.”

## LXVIII.

For my part, now, I ne'er could understand  
 Why naughty women—but I won't discuss  
 A thing which is a scandal to the land,  
 I only don't see why it should be thus;  
 And if I were but in a gown and band,  
 Just to entitle me to make a fuss,  
 I'd preach on this till Wilberforce and  
 Romilly  
 Should quote in their next speeches from my  
 homily.

## LXIX.

While Laura thus was seen and seeing,  
 smiling,  
 Talking, she knew not why, and cared not  
 what,  
 So that her female friends, with envy  
 broiling,  
 Beheld her airs, and triumph, and all that;  
 And well-dressed males still kept before her  
 filing,  
 And passing bowed and mingled with her  
 chat;  
 More than the rest one person seemed to  
 stare  
 With pertinacity that's rather rare.

## LXX.

He was a Turk, the colour of mahogany;  
 And Laura saw him, and at first was glad,  
 Because the Turks so much admire  
 philogyny,  
 Although their usage of their wives is sad;  
 'Tis said they use no better than a dog any  
 Poor woman, whom they purchase like a  
 pad:  
 They have a number, though they ne'er  
 exhibit 'em,  
 Four wives by law, and concubines "ad  
 libitum."

## LXXI.

They lock them up, and veil, and guard them  
 daily,  
 They scarcely can behold their male  
 relations,  
 So that their moments do not pass so gaily  
 As is supposed the case with northern  
 nations;  
 Confinement, too, must make them look  
 quite palely;  
 And as the Turks abhor long conversa-  
 tions,

Their days are either passed in doing  
 nothing,  
 Or bathing, nursing, making love, and  
 clothing.

## LXXII.

They cannot read, and so don't lisp in  
 criticism;  
 Nor write, and so they don't affect the  
 Muse;  
 Were never caught in epigram or witticism,  
 Have no romances, sermons, plays,  
 reviews,—  
 In Harams learning soon would make a  
 pretty schism!  
 But luckily these Beauties are no "Blues";  
 No bustling *Botherby*<sup>1</sup> have they to show 'em  
 "That charming passage in the last new  
 poem":

## LXXIII.

No solemn, antique gentleman of rhyme,  
 Who having angled all his life for Fame,  
 And getting but a nibble at a time,  
 Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same  
 Small "Triton of the minnows," the sublime  
 Of Mediocrity, the furious tame,  
 The Echo's echo, usher of the school  
 Of female wits, boy bards—in short, a fool!

## LXXIV.

A stalking oracle of awful phrase,  
 The approving "Good!" (by no means  
 GOOD in law)  
 Humming like flies around the newest blaze,  
 The bluest of bluebottles you e'er saw,  
 Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,  
 Gorging the little fame he gets all raw,  
 Translating tongues he knows not even by  
 letter,  
 And sweating plays so middling, bad were  
 better.

<sup>1</sup> [Botherby is the poet William Sotheby. In the *English Bards* (line 818) he is bracketed with Gifford and Macneil *honoris causa*, but at this time (1817-18) Byron was at odds with Sotheby, under the impression that he had sent him an anonymous note accompanying a copy of the *Prisoner of Chillon*.]

## LXXV.

One hates an author that's *all author*—  
 fellows  
 In foolscap uniforms turned up with ink,  
 So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous,  
 One don't know what to say to them, or  
 think,  
 Unless to puff them with a pair of bellows ;  
 Of Coxcombry's worst coxcombs e'en the  
 pink  
 Are preferable to these shreds of paper,  
 These unquenched snuffings of the midnight  
 taper.

## LXXVI.

Of these same we see several, and of others,  
 Men of the World, who know the World  
 like Men,  
 Scott, Rogers, Moore, and all the better  
 brothers,  
 Who think of something else besides the  
 pen ;  
 But for the children of the "Mighty  
 Mother's,"  
 The would-be wits, and can't-be gentle-  
 men,  
 I leave them to their daily "tea is ready,"  
 Smug coterie, and literary lady.

## LXXVII.

The poor dear Mussulwomen whom I  
 mention  
 Have none of these instructive pleasant  
 people,  
 And *one* would seem to them a new inven-  
 tion,  
 Unknown as bells within a Turkish  
 steeple ;  
 I think 'twould almost be worth while to  
 pension  
 (Though best-sown projects very often  
 reap ill)  
 A missionary author—just to preach  
 Our Christian usage of the parts of speech.

## LXXVIII.

No Chemistry for them unfolds her gases,  
 No Metaphysics are let loose in lectures,  
 No Circulating Library amasses  
 Religious novels, moral tales, and strictures  
 Upon the living manners, as they pass us ;  
 No Exhibition glares with annual pictures ;  
 They stare not on the stars from out their  
 attics,  
 Nor deal (thank God for that!) in Mathe-  
 matics.

## LXXIX.

Why I thank God for that is no great  
 matter,  
 I have my reasons, you no doubt suppose,  
 And as, perhaps, they would not highly  
 flatter,  
 I'll keep them for my life (to come) in  
 prose ;  
 I fear I have a little turn for Satire,  
 And yet methinks the older that one grows  
 Inclines us more to laugh than scold, though  
 Laughter  
 Leaves us so doubly serious shortly after.

## LXXX.

Oh, Mirth and Innocence ! Oh, Milk and  
 Water !  
 Ye happy mixtures of more happy days !  
 In these sad centuries of sin and slaughter,  
 Abominable Man no more allays  
 His thirst with such pure beverage. No  
 matter,  
 I love you both, and both shall have my  
 praise :  
 Oh, for old Saturn's reign of sugar-candy !—  
 Meantime I drink to your return in brandy.

## LXXXI.

Our Laura's Turk still kept his eyes upon her,  
 Less in the Mussulman than Christian way,  
 Which seems to say, "Madam, I do you  
 honour,  
 And while I please to stare, you'll please to  
 stay."  
 Could staring win a woman, this had won her,  
 But Laura could not thus be led astray ;  
 She had stood fire too long and well, to boggle  
 Even at this Stranger's most outlandish ogle.

## LXXXII.

The morning now was on the point of breaking,  
 A turn of time at which I would advise  
 Ladies who have been dancing, or partaking  
 In any other kind of exercise,  
 To make their preparation for forsaking  
 The ball-room ere the Sun begins to rise,  
 Because when once the lamps and candles fail,  
 His blushes make them look a little pale.

## LXXXIII.

I've seen some balls and revels in my time,  
 And stayed them over for some silly reason,  
 And then I looked (I hope it was no crime)  
 To see what lady best stood out the season ;

And though I've seen some thousands in their  
prime

Lovely and pleasing, and who still may  
please on,  
I never saw but one (the stars withdrawn)  
Whose bloom could after dancing dare the  
Dawn.

## LXXXIV.

The name of this Aurora I'll not mention,  
Although I might, for she was nought to me  
More than that patent work of God's invention,  
A charming woman, whom we like to see;  
But writing names would merit reprehension,  
Yet if you like to find out this fair *She*,  
At the next London or Parisian ball  
You still may mark her cheek, out-blooming  
all.

## LXXXV.

Laura, who knew it would not do at all  
To meet the daylight after seven hours'  
sitting  
Among three thousand people at a ball,  
To make her curtesy thought it right and  
fitting;  
The Count was at her elbow with her shawl,  
And they the room were on the point of  
quitting,  
When lo! those curséd Gondoliers had got  
Just in the very place where they *should not*.

## LXXXVI.

In this they're like our coachmen, and the  
cause  
Is much the same—the crowd, and pulling,  
hauling,  
With blasphemies enough to break their jaws,  
They make a never intermitted bawling.  
At home, our Bow-street gem'men keep the  
laws,  
And here a sentry stands within your calling;  
But for all that, there is a deal of swearing,  
And nauseous words past mentioning or  
bearing.

## LXXXVII.

The Count and Laura found their boat at last,  
And homeward floated o'er the silent tide,  
Discussing all the dances gone and past;  
The dancers and their dresses, too, beside;  
Some little scandals eke; but all aghast  
(As to their palace-stairs the rowers glide)  
Sate Laura by the side of her adorer,  
When lo! the Mussulman was there before  
her!

## LXXXVIII.

"Sir," said the Count, with brow exceeding  
grave,

"Your unexpected presence here will make  
It necessary for myself to crave

Its import? But perhaps 'tis a mistake;  
I hope it is so; and, at once to waive

All compliment, I hope so for *your* sake;  
You understand my meaning, or you *shall*."

"Sir," (quoth the Turk) "'tis no mistake at  
all:

## LXXXIX.

"That Lady is *my wife!*" Much wonder  
paints

The lady's changing cheek, as well it might;  
But where an Englishwoman sometimes faints,

Italian females don't do so outright;  
They only call a little on their Saints,

And then come to themselves, almost, or  
quite;

Which saves much hartshorn, salts, and  
sprinkling faces,

And cutting stays, as usual in such cases.

## XC.

She said,—what could she say? Why, not a  
word;

But the Count courteously invited in  
The Stranger, much appeased by what he  
heard:

"Such things, perhaps, we'd best discuss  
within,"

Said he; "don't let us make ourselves absurd  
In public, by a scene, nor raise a din,

For then the chief and only satisfaction  
Will be much quizzing on the whole trans-  
action."

## XCI.

They entered, and for Coffee called—it came,  
A beverage for Turks and Christians both,  
Although the way they make it's not the  
same.

Now Laura, much recovered, or less loth  
To speak, cries "Beppo! what's your pagan  
name?"

Bless me! your beard is of amazing growth!  
And how came you to keep away so long?  
Are you not sensible 'twas very wrong?

## XCII.

“Are you *really, truly*, now a Turk?  
 With any other women did you wive?  
 Is't true they use their fingers for a fork?  
 Well, that's the prettiest Shawl—as I'm  
 alive!  
 You'll give it me? They say you eat no pork.  
 And how so many years did you contrive  
 To—Bless me! did I ever? No, I never  
 Saw a man grown so yellow! How's your  
 liver?”

## XCIII.

“Beppo! that beard of yours becomes you  
 not;  
 It shall be shaved before you're a day older:  
 Why do you wear it? Oh! I had forgot—  
 Pray don't you think the weather here is  
 colder?  
 How do I look? You shan't stir from this  
 spot  
 In that queer dress, for fear that some  
 beholder  
 Should find you out, and make the story  
 known.  
 How short your hair is! Lord! how grey  
 it's grown!”

## XCIV.

What answer Beppo made to these demands  
 Is more than I know. He was cast away  
 About where Troy stood once, and nothing  
 stands;  
 Became a slave of course, and for his pay  
 Had bread and bastinadoes, till some bands  
 Of pirates landing in a neighbouring bay,  
 He joined the rogues and prospered, and  
 became  
 A renegado of indifferent fame.

## XCV.

But he grew rich, and with his riches grew so  
 Keen the desire to see his home again,  
 He thought himself in duty bound to do so,  
 And not be always thieving on the main;  
 Lonely he felt, at times, as Robin Crusoe,  
 And so he hired a vessel come from Spain,  
 Bound for Corfu: she was a fine polacca,  
 Manned with twelve hands, and laden with  
 tobacco.

## XCVI.

Himself, and much (heaven knows how  
 gotten!) cash,  
 He then embarked, with risk of life and limb,  
 And got clear off, although the attempt was  
 rash;  
 He said that *Providence* protected him—  
 For my part, I say nothing—lest we clash  
 In our opinions:—well—the ship was trim,  
 Set sail, and kept her reckoning fairly on,  
 Except three days of calm when off Cape Bonn.<sup>1</sup>

## XCVII.

They reached the Island, he transferred his  
 lading,  
 And self and live stock to another bottom,  
 And passed for a true Turkey-merchant,  
 trading  
 With goods of various names—but I've  
 forgot 'em.  
 However, he got off by this evading,  
 Or else the people would perhaps have  
 shot him;  
 And thus at Venice landed to reclaim  
 His wife, religion, house, and Christian name.

## XCVIII.

His wife received, the Patriarch re-baptized  
 him,  
 (He made the Church a present, by the way;)   
 He then threw off the garments which dis-  
 guised him,  
 And borrowed the Count's smallclothes for  
 a day:  
 His friends the more for his long absence  
 prized him,  
 Finding he'd wherewithal to make them gay,  
 With dinners, where he oft became the laugh  
 of them,  
 For stories—but I don't believe the half of them.

## XCIX.

Whate'er his youth had suffered, his old age  
 With wealth and talking made him some  
 amends;  
 Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,  
 I've heard the Count and he were always  
 friends.  
 My pen is at the bottom of a page,  
 Which being finished, here the story ends:  
 'Tis to be wished it had been sooner done,  
 But stories somehow lengthen when begun.

<sup>1</sup> [Cap Bon, or Ras Adden, is the northernmost point of Tunis.]

ODE ON VENICE.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

OH Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls  
Are level with the waters, there shall be  
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,

A loud lament along the sweeping sea!  
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,  
What should thy sons do?—anything but weep:  
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.

In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,  
The dull green ooze of the receding deep, 9  
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,  
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,  
Are they to those that were; and thus they  
creep,

Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping  
streets.

Oh! agony—that centuries should reap  
No mellow harvest! Thirteen hundred years  
Of wealth and glory turned to dust and tears;  
And every monument the stranger meets,  
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;  
And even the Lion all subdued appears,  
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,  
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats 21  
The echo of thy Tyrant's voice along  
The soft waves, once all musical to song,  
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the  
throng

Of gondolas—and to the busy hum  
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds  
Were but the overbeating of the heart,  
And flow of too much happiness, which needs  
The aid of age to turn its course apart  
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood 30  
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.  
But these are better than the gloomy errors,  
The weeds of nations in their last decay,  
When Vice walks forth with her unsoftened  
terrors,

And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;  
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,  
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere  
Death,

When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,  
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning  
Of the cold staggering race which Death is  
winning, 40

<sup>1</sup> [The *Ode on Venice* (originally *Ode*) was completed by July 10, 1818 (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 245), but was published at the same time as *Mazeppa* and *A Fragment*, June 28, 1819.]

Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;  
Yet so relieving the o'ertortured clay,  
To him appears renewal of his breath,  
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;—  
And then he talks of Life, and how again  
He feels his spirit soaring—albeit weak,  
And of the fresher air, which he would seek;  
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,  
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,  
And so the film comes o'er him—and the dizzy  
Chamber swims round and round—and  
shadows busy, 51

At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,  
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,  
And all is ice and blackness;—and the earth  
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

## II.

There is no hope for nations!—Search the page  
Of many thousand years—the daily scene,  
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,

The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*, 59  
Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean  
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear  
Our strength away in wrestling with the air;  
For 'tis our nature strikes us down: the beasts  
Slaughtered in hourly hecatombs for feasts  
Are of as high an order—they must go  
Even where their driver goads them, though  
to slaughter.

Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,  
What have they given your children in return?  
A heritage of servitude and woes,  
A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.  
What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares  
burn, 71

O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,  
And deem this proof of loyalty the *real*;  
Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,  
And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?  
All that your Sires have left you, all that Time  
Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,  
Spring from a different theme!—Ye see and  
read,

Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!  
Save the few spirits who, despite of all, 80  
And worse than all, the sudden crimes  
engendered

By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,  
And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tendered,  
Gushing from Freedom's fountains—when the  
crowd,

Maddened with centuries of drought, are loud,  
And trample on each other to obtain  
The cup which brings oblivion of a chain

Heavy and sore,—in which long yoked they  
ploughed

The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,  
'Twas not for them, their necks were too  
much bowed, 90

And their dead palates chewed the cud of  
pain:—

Yes! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds  
Which they abhor, confound not with the cause  
Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,  
Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite  
But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth  
With all her seasons to repair the blight  
With a few summers, and again put forth  
Cities and generations—fair, when free— 99  
For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

## III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers  
With Freedom—godlike Triad! how you  
sate!

The league of mightiest nations, in those hours  
When Venice was an envy, might abate,  
But did not quench, her spirit—in her fate  
All were enwrapped: the feasted monarchs  
knew

And loved their hostess, nor could learn  
to hate,

Although they humbled—with the kingly few  
The many felt, for from all days and climes  
She was the voyager's worship;—even her  
crimes 110

Were of the softer order, born of Love—  
She drank no blood, nor fattened on the dead,  
But gladdened where her harmless con-  
quests spread;

For these restored the Cross, that from above  
Hallowed her sheltering banners, which  
incessant

Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,  
Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may  
thank

The city it has clothed in chains, which clank  
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe 119  
The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;  
Yet she but shares with them a common woe,  
And called the "kingdom"<sup>1</sup> of a conquering  
foe,—

But knows what all—and, most of all, *we*  
know—

With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

<sup>1</sup> [In 1814 the Italian possessions of the Emperor of Austria were constituted into separate states, under the title of the kingdom of Venetian Lombardy.]

## IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone  
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;  
Venice is crushed, and Holland deigns to own

A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;<sup>1</sup>  
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone  
His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time, 130  
For Tyranny of late is cunning grown,  
And in its own good season tramples down  
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,  
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean  
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion  
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and  
Bequeathed—a heritage of heart and hand,  
And proud distinction from each other land,  
Whose sons must bow them at a Monarch's  
motion,

As if his senseless sceptre were a wand 140  
Full of the magic of exploded science—

Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,  
Yet rears her crest, unconquered and sublime,

Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught  
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,  
The floating fence of Albion's feeble crag,<sup>2</sup>

May strike to those whose red right hands  
have bought

Rights cheaply earned with blood.—Still, still,  
for ever

Better, though each man's life-blood were a  
river, 149

That it should flow, and overflow, than creep  
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,  
Dammed like the dull canal with locks and  
chains,

And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,  
Three paces, and then faltering:—better be  
Where the extinguished Spartans still are free,  
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,

Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep  
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,

One spirit to the souls our fathers had,  
One freeman more, America, to thee! 160

<sup>1</sup> [The Prince of Orange . . . was proclaimed Sovereign Prince of the Low Countries, December 1, 1813; and, August 13, 1814, he received the title of King of the Netherlands.]

<sup>2</sup> ["In October, 1812, the American sloop *Wasp* captured the English brig *Frolic*; and December 29, 1812, the *Constitution* compelled the frigate *Java* to surrender. . . . On June 28, 1814, the sloop-of-war *Wasp* captured and burned the sloop *Reindeer*, and on September 11, 1814, the *Confiance*, and other vessels surrendered."—*History of America*, by Justin Winsor, 1888, vii. 380, seq.]

# MAZEPPA.<sup>1</sup>

## ADVERTISEMENT.

"CELUI qui remplissait alors cette place était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Podolie: il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme polonais ayant été découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secoururent: il resta longtems parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques: sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine." — VOLTAIRE, *Hist. de Charles XII.*, 1772, p. 205.

"Le roi, fuyant et poursuivi, eut son cheval tué sous lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans la fuite, ce conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la bataille."—P. 222.

"Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit dans la marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrâce, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer, à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs, qui le cherchaient de tous côtés,"—P. 223.

<sup>1</sup> [Of the composition of *Mazeppa* we know nothing, except that on September 24, 1818, it was "still to finish." It was published together with *An Ode* (Venice: An Ode) and *A Fragment*, June 28, 1819.]

I.

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,<sup>1</sup>  
 When Fortune left the royal Swede—  
 Around a slaughtered army lay,  
 No more to combat and to bleed.  
 The power and glory of the war,  
 Faithless as their vain votaries, men,  
 Had passed to the triumphant Czar,  
 And Moscow's walls were safe again—  
 Until a day more dark and drear<sup>2</sup>  
 And a more memorable year, 10  
 Should give to slaughter and to shame  
 A mightier host and haughtier name;  
 A greater wreck, a deeper fall,  
 A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die;  
 The wounded Charles was taught to fly<sup>3</sup>  
 By day and night through field and flood,  
 Stained with his own and subjects' blood;  
 For thousands fell that flight to aid:  
 And not a voice was heard to upbraid 20  
 Ambition in his humbled hour,  
 When Truth had nought to dread from Power.  
 His horse was slain, and Gieta gave  
 His own—and died the Russians' slave.  
 This, too, sinks after many a league  
 Of well-sustained, but vain fatigue;  
 And in the depth of forests darkling,  
 The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—  
 The beacons of surrounding foes—  
 A King must lay his limbs at length. 30  
 Are these the laurels and repose  
 For which the nations strain their strength?  
 They laid him by a savage tree,  
 In outworn Nature's agony;  
 His wounds were stiff, his limbs were stark;  
 The heavy hour was chill and dark;  
 The fever in his blood forbade  
 A transient slumber's fitful aid:

<sup>1</sup> [The Battle of Poltáva on the Vórskla took place July 8, 1709.]

<sup>2</sup> [Napoleon began his retreat from Moscow, October 15, 1812.]

<sup>3</sup> ["It happened . . . that during the operations of June 27-28, Charles was severely wounded in the foot. On the morning of June 28 he was riding close to the river . . . when a ball struck him on the left heel, passed through his foot, and lodged close to the great toe. . . . On the night of July 7, 1709 . . . Charles had the foot carefully dressed, while he wore a spurred boot on his sound foot, put on his uniform, and placed himself on a kind of litter, in which he was drawn before the lines of the army."]



And thus it was ; but yet through all,  
 Kinglike the Monarch bore his fall, 40  
 And made, in this extreme of ill,  
 His pangs the vassals of his will :  
 All silent and subdued were they,  
 As once the nations round him lay.

## III.

A band of chiefs !—alas ! how few,  
 Since but the fleeting of a day  
 Had thinned it ; but this wreck was true  
 And chivalrous : upon the clay  
 Each sate him down, all sad and mute,  
 Beside his monarch and his steed ; 50  
 For danger levels man and brute,  
 And all are fellows in their need.  
 Among the rest, Mazeppa made<sup>1</sup>  
 His pillow in an old oak's shade—  
 Himself as rough, and scarce less old,  
 The Ukraine's Hetman, calm and bold ;  
 But first, outspent with this long course,  
 The Cossack prince rubbed down his horse,  
 And made for him a leafy bed,  
 And smoothed his fetlocks and his mane, 60  
 And slacked his girth, and stripped his rein,  
 And joyed to see how well he fed ;  
 For until now he had the dread  
 His wearied courser might refuse  
 To browse beneath the midnight dews :  
 But he was hardy as his lord,  
 And little cared for bed and board ;  
 But spirited and docile too,  
 Whate'er was to be done, would do.  
 Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb, 70  
 All Tartar-like he carried him ;  
 Obeyed his voice, and came to call,  
 And knew him in the midst of all :  
 Though thousands were around,—and Night,  
 Without a star, pursued her flight,—

<sup>1</sup> [Ivan Stepánovitch Mazeppa (*circ.* 1645-1710) was of Cossack origin. He began life as page of honour in the Court of John Casimir V., King of Poland, 1660, was banished on account of his intrigue with the wife of the *pane* [Lord] Falbowski, was appointed Hetman or viceroy of the Ukraine ("a fertile no-man's land" watered by the Dniéper and its tributaries) in 1687, and after more than twenty years' service to his suzerain, Peter the Great, turned traitor, and threw in his lot with Charles XII. of Sweden, then meditating the invasion of Russia. "Pultowa's Day" was the last of Mazeppa's power and influence, and, in the following year (March 31, 1710) "he died of old age, perhaps of a broken heart," at Varnitza, a village near Bender on the Dneister.]

That steed from sunset until dawn  
 His chief would follow like a fawn.

## IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,  
 And laid his lance beneath his oak,  
 Felt if his arms in order good 80  
 The long day's march had well withstood—  
 If still the powder filled the pan,  
 And flints unloosened kept their lock—  
 His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,  
 And whether they had chafed his belt ;  
 And next the venerable man,  
 From out his havresack and can,  
 Prepared and spread his slender stock ;  
 And to the Monarch and his men  
 The whole or portion offered then 90  
 With far less of inquietude  
 Than courtiers at a banquet would.  
 And Charles of this his slender share  
 With smiles partook a moment there,  
 To force of cheer a greater show,  
 And seem above both wounds and woe ;—  
 And then he said—"Of all our band,  
 Though firm of heart and strong of hand,  
 In skirmish, march, or forage, none  
 Can less have said or more have done 100  
 Than thee, Mazeppa ! On the earth  
 So fit a pair had never birth,  
 Since Alexander's days till now,  
 As thy Bucephalus and thou :  
 All Scythia's fame to thine should yield  
 For pricking on o'er flood and field."  
 Mazeppa answered—"I'll betide  
 The school wherein I learned to ride !"  
 Quoth Charles—"Old Hetman, wherefore so,  
 Since thou hast learned the art so well?" 110  
 Mazeppa said—" 'Twere long to tell ;  
 And we have many a league to go,  
 With every now and then a blow,  
 And ten to one at least the foe,  
 Before our steeds may graze at ease,  
 Beyond the swift Borysthenes :<sup>1</sup>  
 And, Sire, your limbs have need of rest,  
 And I will be the sentinel  
 Of this your troop."—"But I request,"  
 Said Sweden's monarch, "Thou wilt tell 120  
 This tale of thine, and I may reap,  
 Perchance, from this the boon of sleep ;  
 For at this moment from my eyes  
 The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, Sire, with such a hope, I'll track  
 My seventy years of memory back :

<sup>1</sup> [The Dniéper.]

I think 'twas in my twentieth spring,—  
 Aye 'twas,—when Casimir was king<sup>1</sup>—  
 John Casimir,—I was his page  
 Six summers, in my earlier age : 130  
 A learned monarch, faith ! was he,  
 And most unlike your Majesty ;  
 He made no wars, and did not gain  
 New realms to lose them back again ;  
 And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)  
 He reigned in most unseemly quiet ;  
 Not that he had no cares to vex ;  
 He loved the muses and the Sex ;<sup>2</sup>  
 And sometimes these so froward are,  
 They made him wish himself at war ; 140  
 But soon his wrath being o'er, he took  
 Another mistress—or new book :  
 And then he gave prodigious fêtes—  
 All Warsaw gathered round his gates  
 To gaze upon his splendid court,  
 And dames, and chiefs, of princely port.  
 He was the Polish Solomon,  
 So sung his poets, all but one,  
 Who, being unpensioned, made a satire,  
 And boasted that he could not flatter. 150  
 It was a court of jousts and mimes,  
 Where every courtier tried at rhymes ;  
 Even I for once produced some verses,  
 And signed my odes ' Despairing Thyrsis.'  
 There was a certain Palatine,<sup>3</sup>  
 A Count of far and high descent,  
 Rich as a salt or silver mine ;<sup>4</sup>  
 And he was proud, ye may divine,  
 As if from Heaven he had been sent ;  
 He had such wealth in blood and ore 160  
 As few could match beneath the throne ;  
 And he would gaze upon his store,  
 And o'er his pedigree would pore,

<sup>1</sup> [John Casimir (1609-1672), Jesuit, cardinal, and king. He "made wars," and was victorious, but he strove to do justice to and by his enemies. Hence his unpopularity.]

<sup>2</sup> [There was a report that Casimir, after his retirement to Paris in 1670, secretly married "*Marie Mignot, fille d'une blanchisseuse*"; and there are other tales of other loves, e.g. Ninon de Lenclos.]

<sup>3</sup> [According to the biographers, Mazeppa's intrigue took place after he had been banished from the court of Warsaw, and had retired to his estate in Volhynia. The *pane* [Lord] Falbowsky, the old husband of the young wife, was a neighbouring magnate. It was a case of "love in idleness."] ]

<sup>4</sup> This comparison of a "salt mine" may, perhaps, be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

Until by some confusion led,  
 Which almost looked like want of head,  
 He thought their merits were his own.  
 His wife was not of this opinion ;  
 His junior she by thirty years,  
 Grew daily tired of his dominion ;  
 And, after wishes, hopes, and fears, 170  
 To Virtue a few farewell tears,  
 A restless dream or two—some glances  
 At Warsaw's youth — some songs, and  
 dances,  
 Awaited but the usual chances,  
 Those happy accidents which render  
 The coldest dames so very tender,  
 To deck her Count with titles given,  
 'Tis said, as passports into Heaven ;  
 But, strange to say, they rarely boast  
 Of these, who have deserved them most. 180

## v.

" I was a goodly stripling then ;  
 At seventy years I so may say,  
 That there were few, or boys or men,  
 Who, in my dawning time of day,  
 Of vassal or of knight's degree,  
 Could vie in vanities with me ;  
 For I had strength—youth—gaiety,  
 A port, not like to this ye see,  
 But smooth, as all is rugged now ;  
 For Time, and Care, and War, have  
 ploughed 190  
 My very soul from out my brow ;  
 And thus I should be disavowed  
 By all my kind and kin, could they  
 Compare my day and yesterday ;  
 This change was wrought, too, long ere age  
 Had ta'en my features for his page :  
 With years, ye know, have not declined  
 My strength—my courage—or my mind,  
 Or at this hour I should not be  
 Telling old tales beneath a tree, 200  
 With starless skies my canopy.  
 But let me on : Theresa's form—  
 Methinks it glides before me now,  
 Between me and yon chestnut's bough,  
 The memory is so quick and warm ;  
 And yet I find no words to tell  
 The shape of her I loved so well :  
 She had the Asiatic eye,  
 Such as our Turkish neighbourhood  
 Hath mingled with our Polish blood, 210  
 Dark as above us is the sky ;  
 But through it stole a tender light,  
 Like the first moonrise of midnight ;

Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,  
 Which seemed to melt to its own beam ;  
 All love, half languor, and half fire,  
 Like saints that at the stake expire,  
 And lift their raptured looks on high,  
 As though it were a joy to die.  
 A brow like a midsummer lake, 220  
     Transparent with the sun therein,  
 When waves no murmur dare to make,  
     And Heaven beholds her face within.  
 A cheek and lip—but why proceed ?  
     I loved her then, I love her still ;  
 And such as I am, love indeed  
     In fierce extremes—in good and ill.  
 But still we love even in our rage,  
 And haunted to our very age  
 With the vain shadow of the past,— 230  
 As is Mazeppa to the last.

## VI.

“ We met—we gazed—I saw, and sighed ;  
 She did not speak, and yet replied ;  
 There are ten thousand tones and signs  
 We hear and see, but none defines—  
 Involuntary sparks of thought,  
 Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,  
 And form a strange intelligence,  
 Alike mysterious and intense,  
 Which link the burning chain that binds, 240  
 Without their will, young hearts and minds ;  
 Conveying, as the electric wire,  
 We know not how, the absorbing fire.  
 I saw, and sighed—in silence wept,  
 And still reluctant distance kept,  
 Until I was made known to her,  
 And we might then and there confer  
 Without suspicion—then, even then,  
     I longed, and was resolved to speak ;  
 But on my lips they died again, 250  
     The accents tremulous and weak,  
 Until one hour.—There is a game,  
     A frivolous and foolish play,  
     Wherewith we while away the day ;  
 It is—I have forgot the name—  
 And we to this, it seems, were set,  
 By some strange chance, which I forget :  
 I recked not if I won or lost,  
     It was enough for me to be  
     So near to hear, and oh ! to see 260  
 The being whom I loved the most.  
 I watched her as a sentinel,  
 (May ours this dark night watch as well !)  
     Until I saw, and thus it was,  
 That she was pensive, nor perceived  
 Her occupation, nor was grieved

Nor glad to lose or gain ; but still  
 Played on for hours, as if her will  
 Yet bound her to the place, though not  
 That hers might be the winning lot. 270  
     Then through my brain the thought did  
     pass,  
 Even as a flash of lightning there,  
 That there was something in her air  
 Which would not doom me to despair ;  
 And on the thought my words broke forth,  
     All incoherent as they were ;  
 Their eloquence was little worth,  
 But yet she listened—'tis enough—  
     Who listens once will listen twice ;  
     Her heart, be sure, is not of ice— 280  
 And one refusal no rebuff.

## VII.

“ I loved, and was beloved again—  
     They tell me, Sire, you never knew  
     Those gentle frailties ; if 'tis true,  
 I shorten all my joy or pain ;  
 To you 'twould seem absurd as vain ;  
 But all men are not born to reign,  
 Or o'er their passions, or as you  
 Thus o'er themselves and nations too.  
 I am—or rather *was*—a Prince, 290  
     A chief of thousands, and could lead  
     Them on where each would foremost  
     bleed ;  
 But could not o'er myself evince  
 The like control—But to resume :  
     I loved, and was beloved again ;  
 In sooth, it is a happy doom,  
     But yet where happiest ends in pain.—  
 We met in secret, and the hour  
 Which led me to that lady's bower  
 Was fiery Expectation's dower. 300  
 My days and nights were nothing—all  
 Except that hour which doth recall,  
 In the long lapse from youth to age,  
     No other like itself : I'd give  
     The Ukraine back again to live  
 It o'er once more, and be a page,  
 The happy page, who was the lord  
 Of one soft heart, and his own sword,  
 And had no other gem nor wealth,  
 Save Nature's gift of Youth and Health. 310  
 We met in secret—doubly sweet,  
 Some say, they find it so to meet ;  
 I know not that—I would have given  
     My life but to have called her mine  
 In the full view of Earth and Heaven ;  
     For I did oft and long repine  
 That we could only meet by stealth.

## VIII.

"For lovers there are many eyes,  
 And such there were on us; the Devil  
 On such occasions should be civil— 320  
 The Devil!—I'm loth to do him wrong,  
 It might be some untoward saint,  
 Who would not be at rest too long,  
 But to his pious bile gave vent—  
 But one fair night, some lurking spies  
 Surprised and seized us both.  
 The Count was something more than wroth—  
 I was unarmed; but if in steel,  
 All cap-à-pie from head to heel,  
 What 'gainst their numbers could I do? 330  
 'Twas near his castle, far away  
 From city or from succour near,  
 And almost on the break of day;  
 I did not think to see another,  
 My moments seemed reduced to few;  
 And with one prayer to Mary Mother,  
 And, it may be, a saint or two,  
 As I resigned me to my fate,  
 They led me to the castle gate:  
 Theresa's doom I never knew, 340  
 Our lot was henceforth separate.—  
 An angry man, ye may opine,  
 Was he, the proud Count Palatine;  
 And he had reason good to be,  
 But he was most enraged lest such  
 An accident should chance to touch  
 Upon his future pedigree;  
 Nor less amazed, that such a blot  
 His noble 'scutcheon should have got,  
 While he was highest of his line; 350  
 Because unto himself he seemed  
 The first of men, nor less he deemed  
 In others' eyes, and most in mine.  
 'Sdeath! with a *page*—perchance a king  
 Had reconciled him to the thing;  
 But with a stripling of a page—  
 I felt—but cannot paint his rage.

## IX.

"Bring forth the horse!"—the horse was  
 brought!  
 In truth, he was a noble steed,  
 A Tartar of the Ukraine breed, 360  
 Who looked as though the speed of thought  
 Were in his limbs; but he was wild,  
 Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,  
 With spur and bridle undefiled—  
 'Twas but a day he had been caught;  
 And snorting, with erected mane,  
 And struggling fiercely, but in vain,

In the full foam of wrath and dread  
 To me the desert-born was led:  
 They bound me on, that menial throng, 370  
 Upon his back with many a thong;  
 They loosed him with a sudden lash—  
 Away!—away!—and on we dash!—  
 Torrents less rapid and less rash.

## X.

"Away!—away!—My breath was gone,  
 I saw not where he hurried on:  
 'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,  
 And on he foamed—away!—away!  
 The last of human sounds which rose,  
 As I was darted from my foes, 380  
 Was the wild shout of savage laughter,  
 Which on the wind came roaring after  
 A moment from that rabble rout:  
 With sudden wrath I wrenched my head,  
 And snapped the cord, which to the mane  
 Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,  
 And, writhing half my form about,  
 Howled back my curse; but 'midst the tread,  
 The thunder of my courser's speed,  
 Perchance they did not hear nor heed: 390  
 It vexes me—for I would fain  
 Have paid their insult back again.  
 I paid it well in after days:  
 There is not of that castle gate,  
 Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,  
 Stone—bar—moat—bridge—or barrier left;  
 Nor of its fields a blade of grass,  
 Save what grows on a ridge of wall,  
 Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;  
 And many a time ye there might pass, 400  
 Nor dream that e'er the fortress was.  
 I saw its turrets in a blaze,  
 Their crackling battlements all cleft,  
 And the hot lead pour down like rain  
 From off the scorched and blackening roof  
 Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.  
 They little thought that day of pain,  
 When launched, as on the lightning's flash,  
 They bade me to destruction dash,  
 That one day I should come again, 410  
 With twice five thousand horse, to thank  
 The Count for his uncourteous ride.  
 They played me then a bitter prank,  
 When, with the wild horse for my guide,  
 They bound me to his foaming flank:  
 At length I played them one as frank—  
 For Time at last sets all things even—  
 And if we do but watch the hour,  
 There never yet was human power

Which could evade, if unforgiven,  
The patient search and vigil long  
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

## XI.

“ Away!—away!—my steed and I,  
Upon the pinions of the wind!  
All human dwellings left behind,  
We sped like meteors through the sky,  
When with its crackling sound the night  
Is chequered with the Northern light.  
Town—village—none were on our track,  
But a wild plain of far extent,  
And bounded by a forest black;  
And, save the scarce seen battlement  
On distant heights of some strong hold,  
Against the Tartars built of old,  
No trace of man. The year before  
A Turkish army had marched o’er;  
And where the Spahi’s hoof hath trod,  
The verdure flies the bloody sod:  
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,  
And a low breeze crept moaning by—  
I could have answered with a sigh—  
But fast we fled,—away!—away!—  
And I could neither sigh nor pray;  
And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain  
Upon the courser’s bristling mane;  
But, snorting still with rage and fear,  
He flew upon his far career:  
At times I almost thought, indeed,  
He must have slackened in his speed;  
But no—my bound and slender frame  
Was nothing to his angry might,  
And merely like a spur became:  
Each motion which I made to free  
My swoln limbs from their agony  
Increased his fury and affright:  
I tried my voice,—’twas faint and low—  
But yet he swerved as from a blow;  
And, starting to each accent, sprang  
As from a sudden trumpet’s clang:  
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,  
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o’er;  
And in my tongue the thirst became  
A something fierier far than flame.

## XII.

“ We neared the wild wood—’twas so wide,  
I saw no bounds on either side:  
’Twas studded with old sturdy trees,  
That bent not to the roughest breeze

420 Which howls down from Siberia’s waste,  
And strips the forest in its haste,—  
But these were few and far between,  
Set thick with shrubs more young and  
470 green,  
Luxuriant with their annual leaves,  
Ere strown by those autumnal eves  
That nip the forest’s foliage dead,  
Discoloured with a lifeless red,  
Which stands thereon like stiffened gore  
Upon the slain when battle’s o’er;  
And some long winter’s night hath shed  
Its frost o’er every tombless head—  
So cold and stark—the raven’s beak  
480 May peck unpierced each frozen cheek:  
’Twas a wild waste of underwood,  
And here and there a chestnut stood,  
The strong oak, and the hardy pine;  
But far apart—and well it were,  
Or else a different lot were mine—  
The boughs gave way, and did not tear  
My limbs; and I found strength to bear  
My wounds, already scarred with cold;  
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.  
490 We rustled through the leaves like wind,—  
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;  
By night I heard them on the track,  
Their troop came hard upon our back,  
With their long gallop, which can tire  
The hound’s deep hate, and hunter’s fire:  
Where’er we flew they followed on,  
Nor left us with the morning sun;  
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,  
At day-break winding through the wood,  
500 And through the night had heard their  
feet  
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.  
Oh! how I wished for spear or sword,  
At least to die amidst the horde,  
And perish—if it must be so—  
At bay, destroying many a foe!  
When first my courser’s race begun,  
I wished the goal already won;  
But now I doubted strength and speed:  
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed  
510 Had nerved him like the mountain-roe—  
Nor faster falls the blinding snow  
Which whelms the peasant near the door  
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,  
Bewildered with the dazzling blast,  
Than through the forest-paths he passed—  
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild—  
All furious as a favoured child  
Balked of its wish; or—fiercer still—  
A woman piqued—who has her will!  
520

## XIII.

"The wood was passed; 'twas more than noon,  
 But chill the air, although in June;  
 Or it might be my veins ran cold—  
 Prolonged endurance tames the bold;  
 And I was then not what I seem,  
 But headlong as a wintry stream,  
 And wore my feelings out before  
 I well could count their causes o'er:  
 And what with fury, fear, and wrath,  
 The tortures which beset my path— 530  
 Cold—hunger—sorrow—shame—distress—  
 Thus bound in Nature's nakedness;  
 Sprung from a race whose rising blood  
 When stirred beyond its calmer mood,  
 And trodden hard upon, is like  
 The rattle-snake's, in act to strike—  
 What marvel if this worn-out trunk  
 Beneath its woes a moment sunk?  
 The earth gave way, the skies rolled round,  
 I seemed to sink upon the ground; 540  
 But erred—for I was fastly bound.  
 My heart turned sick, my brain grew sore,  
 And throbbed awhile, then beat no more:  
 The skies spun like a mighty wheel;  
 I saw the trees like drunkards reel,  
 And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,  
 Which saw no farther. He who dies  
 Can die no more than then I died,  
 O'ertortured by that ghastly ride.  
 I felt the blackness come and go, 550  
 And strove to wake; but could not make  
 My senses climb up from below:  
 I felt as on a plank at sea,  
 When all the waves that dash o'er thee,  
 At the same time upheave and whelm,  
 And hurl thee towards a desert realm.  
 My undulating life was as  
 The fancied lights that flitting pass  
 Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when  
 Fever begins upon the brain; 560  
 But soon it passed, with little pain,  
 But a confusion worse than such:  
 I own that I should deem it much,  
 Dying, to feel the same again;  
 And yet I do suppose we must  
 Feel far more e'er we turn to dust!  
 No matter! I have bared my brow  
 Full in Death's face—before—and now.

## XIV.

"My thoughts came back. Where was I?  
 Cold,  
 And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse 570  
 Life reassumed its lingering hold,  
 And throb by throb,—till grown a pang

Which for a moment would convulse,  
 My blood reflowed, though thick and chill;  
 My ear with uncouth noises rang,  
 My heart began once more to thrill;  
 My sight returned, though dim; alas!  
 And thickened, as it were, with glass.  
 Methought the dash of waves was nigh;  
 There was a gleam too of the sky, 580  
 Studded with stars;—it is no dream;  
 The wild horse swims the wilder stream!  
 The bright broad river's gushing tide  
 Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,  
 And we are half-way, struggling o'er  
 To yon unknown and silent shore.  
 The waters broke my hollow trance,  
 And with a temporary strength  
 My stiffened limbs were rebaptized.  
 My courser's broad breast proudly braves, 590  
 And dashes off the ascending waves,  
 And onward we advance!  
 We reach the slippery shore at length,  
 A haven I but little prized,  
 For all behind was dark and drear,  
 And all before was night and fear.  
 How many hours of night or day  
 In those suspended pangs I lay,  
 I could not tell; I scarcely knew  
 If this were human breath I drew. 600

## XV.

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,  
 And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,  
 The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain  
 Up the repelling bank.  
 We gain the top: a boundless plain  
 Spreads through the shadow of the night,  
 And onward, onward, onward—seems,  
 Like precipices in our dreams,  
 To stretch beyond the sight;  
 And here and there a speck of white, 610  
 Or scattered spot of dusky green,  
 In masses broke into the light,  
 As rose the moon upon my right:  
 But nought distinctly seen  
 In the dim waste would indicate  
 The omen of a cottage gate;  
 No twinkling taper from afar  
 Stood like a hospitable star;  
 Not even an ignis-fatuus rose  
 To make him merry with my woes: 620  
 That very cheat had cheered me then!  
 Although detected, welcome still,  
 Reminding me, through every ill,  
 Of the abodes of men.

## XVI.

" Onward we went—but slack and slow ;  
 His savage force at length o'erspent,  
 The drooping courser, faint and low,  
 All feebly foaming went :  
 A sickly infant had had power  
 To guide him forward in that hour ! 630  
 But, useless all to me,  
 His new-born tameness nought availed—  
 My limbs were bound ; my force had failed,  
 Perchance, had they been free.  
 With feeble effort still I tried  
 To rend the bonds so starkly tied,  
 But still it was in vain ;  
 My limbs were only wrung the more,  
 And soon the idle strife gave o'er,  
 Which but prolonged their pain. 640  
 The dizzy race seemed almost done,  
 Although no goal was nearly won :  
 Some streaks announced the coming sun—  
 How slow, alas ! he came !  
 Methought that mist of dawning gray  
 Would never dapple into day,  
 How heavily it rolled away !  
 Before the eastern flame  
 Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,  
 And called the radiance from their cars, 650  
 And filled the earth, from his deep throne,  
 With lonely lustre, all his own.

## XVII.

" Uprose the sun ; the mists were curled  
 Back from the solitary world  
 Which lay around—behind—before.  
 What booted it to traverse o'er  
 Plain—forest—river ? Man nor brute,  
 Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,  
 Lay in the wild luxuriant soil—  
 No sign of travel, none of toil— 660  
 The very air was mute :  
 And not an insect's shrill small horn,  
 Nor matin bird's new voice was borne  
 From herb nor thicket. Many a *werst*,  
 Panting as if his heart would burst,  
 The weary brute still staggered on ;  
 And still we were—or seemed—alone :  
 At length, while reeling on our way,  
 Methought I heard a courser neigh,  
 From out yon tuft of blackening firs. 670  
 Is it the wind those branches stirs ?  
 No, no ! From out the forest prance  
 A trampling troop ; I see them come !  
 In one vast squadron they advance !  
 I strove to cry—my lips were dumb !

The steeds rush on in plunging pride ;  
 But where are they the reins to guide ?  
 A thousand horse, and none to ride !  
 With flowing tail, and flying mane,  
 Wide nostrils never stretched by pain, 680  
 Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,  
 And feet that iron never shod,  
 And flanks unscarred by spur or rod,  
 A thousand horse, the wild, the free,  
 Like waves that follow o'er the sea,  
 Came thickly thundering on,  
 As if our faint approach to meet !  
 The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,  
 A moment staggering, feebly fleet,  
 A moment, with a faint low neigh, 690  
 He answered, and then fell !  
 With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,  
 And reeking limbs immoveable,  
 His first and last career is done !  
 On came the troop—they saw him stoop,  
 They saw me strangely bound along  
 His back with many a bloody thong.  
 They stop—they start—they snuff the air,  
 Gallop a moment here and there, 699  
 Approach, retire, wheel round and round,  
 Then plunging back with sudden bound,  
 Headed by one black mighty steed,  
 Who seemed the Patriarch of his breed,  
 Without a single speck or hair  
 Of white upon his shaggy hide ;  
 They snort—they foam—neigh—they swerve  
 aside,  
 And backward to the forest fly,  
 By instinct, from a human eye.  
 They left me there to my despair,  
 Linked to the dead and stiffening wretch, 710  
 Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,  
 Relieved from that unwonted weight,  
 From whence I could not extricate  
 Nor him nor me—and there we lay,  
 The dying on the dead !  
 I little deemed another day  
 Would see my houseless, helpless head.  
 " And there from morn to twilight bound,  
 I felt the heavy hours toil round,  
 With just enough of life to see 720  
 My last of suns go down on me,  
 In hopeless certainty of mind,  
 That makes us feel at length resigned  
 To that which our foreboding years  
 Present the worst and last of fears :  
 Inevitable—even a boon,  
 Nor more unkind for coming soon,  
 Yet shunned and dreaded with such care,  
 As if it only were a snare

That Prudence might escape : 730  
 At times both wished for and implored,  
 At times sought with self-pointed sword,  
 Yet still a dark and hideous close  
 To even intolerable woes,  
 And welcome in no shape.  
 And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,  
 They who have revelled beyond measure  
 In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,  
 Die calm, or calmer, oft than he  
 Whose heritage was Misery: 740  
 For he who hath in turn run through  
 All that was beautiful and new,  
 Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave ;  
 And, save the future, (which is viewed  
 Not quite as men are base or good,  
 But as their nerves may be endued,)  
 With nought perhaps to grieve :  
 The wretch still hopes his woes must end,  
 And Death, whom he should deem his friend,  
 Appears, to his distempered eyes, 750  
 Arrived to rob him of his prize,  
 The tree of his new Paradise.  
 To-morrow would have given him all,  
 Repaid his pangs, repaired his fall ;  
 To-morrow would have been the first  
 Of days no more deplored or curst,  
 But bright, and long, and beckoning years,  
 Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,  
 Guerdon of many a painful hour ;  
 To-morrow would have given him power 760  
 To rule—to shine—to smite—to save—  
 And must it dawn upon his grave?

## XVIII.

“ The sun was sinking—still I lay  
 Chained to the chill and stiffening steed !  
 I thought to mingle there our clay ;  
 And my dim eyes of death had need,  
 No hope arose of being freed.  
 I cast my last looks up the sky,  
 And there between me and the sun  
 I saw the expecting raven fly, 770  
 Who scarce would wait till both should die,  
 Ere his repast begun ;  
 He flew, and perched, then flew once more,  
 And each time nearer than before ;  
 I saw his wing through twilight flit,  
 And once so near me he alit  
 I could have smote, but lacked the strength ;  
 But the slight motion of my hand,  
 And feeble scratching of the sand,  
 The exerted throat’s faint struggling noise, 780  
 Which scarcely could be called a voice,

Together scared him off at length.  
 I know no more—my latest dream  
 Is something of a lovely star  
 Which fixed my dull eyes from afar,  
 And went and came with wandering beam,  
 And of the cold—dull—swimming—dense  
 Sensation of recurring sense,  
 And then subsiding back to death,  
 And then again a little breath, 790  
 A little thrill—a short suspense,  
 An icy sickness curdling o’er  
 My heart, and sparks that crossed my brain—  
 A gasp—a throb—a start of pain,  
 A sigh—and nothing more.

## XIX.

“ I woke—where was I?—Do I see  
 A human face look down on me?  
 And doth a roof above me close?  
 Do these limbs on a couch repose?  
 Is this a chamber where I lie? 800  
 And is it mortal yon bright eye,  
 That watches me with gentle glance?  
 I closed my own again once more,  
 As doubtful that my former trance  
 Could not as yet be o’er.  
 A slender girl, long-haired, and tall,  
 Sate watching by the cottage wall :  
 The sparkle of her eye I caught,  
 Even with my first return of thought ;  
 For ever and anon she threw 810  
 A prying, pitying glance on me  
 With her black eyes so wild and free :  
 I gazed, and gazed, until I knew  
 No vision it could be,—  
 But that I lived, and was released  
 From adding to the vulture’s feast :  
 And when the Cossack maid beheld  
 My heavy eyes at length unsealed,  
 She smiled—and I essayed to speak,  
 But failed—and she approached, and made  
 With lip and finger signs that said, 821  
 I must not strive as yet to break  
 The silence, till my strength should be  
 Enough to leave my accents free ;  
 And then her hand on mine she laid,  
 And smoothed the pillow for my head,  
 And stole along on tiptoe tread,  
 And gently oped the door, and spake  
 In whispers—ne’er was voice so sweet !  
 Even music followed her light feet ;— 830  
 But those she called were not awake,  
 And she went forth ; but, ere she passed,  
 Another look on me she cast,



Another sign she made, to say,  
That I had nought to fear, that all  
Were near, at my command or call,  
And she would not delay  
Her due return :—while she was gone,  
Methought I felt too much alone.

## XX.

“She came with mother and with sire— 840  
What need of more?—I will not tire  
With long recital of the rest,  
Since I became the Cossack’s guest.  
They found me senseless on the plain,  
They bore me to the nearest hut,  
They brought me into life again—  
Me—one day o’er their realm to reign !  
Thus the vain fool who strove to glut  
His rage, refining on my pain,  
Sent me forth to the wilderness, 850  
Bound—naked—bleeding—and alone,  
To pass the desert to a throne,—  
What mortal his own doom may guess?  
Let none despond, let none despair !  
To-morrow the Borysthenes  
May see our coursers graze at ease  
Upon his Turkish bank,—and never  
Had I such welcome for a river  
As I shall yield when safely there.  
Comrades, good night !”—The Hetman threw  
His length beneath the oak-tree shade, 861  
With leafy couch already made—  
A bed nor comfortless nor new  
To him, who took his rest whene’er  
The hour arrived, no matter where :  
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.—  
And if ye marvel Charles forgot  
To thank his tale, *he* wondered not,—  
The King had been an hour asleep !

## THE PROPHECY OF DANTE.<sup>1</sup>

“’Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,  
And coming events cast their shadows before.”  
—CAMPBELL, [*Lochiel’s Warning.*]

<sup>1</sup> [The *Prophecy of Dante* was written during the month of June, 1819, “to gratify the Countess Guiccioli.” It was published together with *Marino Faliero*, April 21, 1821.]

## DEDICATION.

LADY!<sup>1</sup> if for the cold and cloudy clime  
Where I was born, but where I would not  
die,  
Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy  
I dare to build the imitative rhyme,  
Harsh Runic copy of the South’s sublime,  
THOU art the cause ; and howsoever I  
Fall short of his immortal harmony,  
Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.  
Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,  
Spakest ; and for thee to speak and be  
obeyed  
Are one ; but only in the sunny South  
Such sounds are uttered, and such charms  
displayed,  
So sweet a language from so fair a mouth—  
Ah ! to what effort would it not persuade ?

Ravenna, June 21, 1819.

## PREFACE.

IN the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that having composed something on the subject of Tasso’s confinement, he should do the same on Dante’s exile,—the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

“On this hint I spake,” and the result has been the following four cantos, in *terza rima*, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the *Divina Commedia* and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan I have had in my mind the Cassandra of Lycophron, and the Prophecy of Nereus by Horace, as well as the Prophecies of Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the *terza rima* of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto *tried in our language, except it*

<sup>1</sup> [The Countess Guiccioli.]

may be by Mr. Hayley, of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to *Caliph Vathek*; so that—if I do not err—this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet, whose name I have borrowed, and, most likely, taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* translated into Italian *versi sciolti*,—that is, a poem written in the *Spenserean stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza or the sense. If the present poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember that when I have failed in the imitation of his great “Padre Alighier,” I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the *Inferno*, unless Count Marchetti’s ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation—their literature; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them, without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, where my business is with the English one; and be they few or many, I must take my leave of both.

## CANTO THE FIRST.

ONCE more in Man’s frail world! which I  
had left

So long that ’twas forgotten; and I feel  
The weight of clay again,—too soon bereft  
Of the Immortal Vision which could heal  
My earthly sorrows, and to God’s own skies  
Lift me from that deep Gulf without repeal,  
Where late my ears rung with the damnéd  
cries

Of Souls in hopeless bale; and from that  
place

Of lesser torment, whence men may arise  
Pure from the fire to join the Angelic race; 10  
Midst whom my own bright Beatricē<sup>1</sup>  
blessed

My spirit with her light; and to the base  
Of the Eternal Triad! first, last, best,  
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God!  
Soul universal! led the mortal guest,  
Unblasted by the Glory, though he trod  
From star to star to reach the almighty  
throne.

Oh Beatricē! whose sweet limbs the sod  
So long hath pressed, and the cold marble  
stone,

Thou sole pure Seraph of my earliest love, 20  
Love so ineffable, and so alone,  
That nought on earth could more my bosom  
move,

And meeting thee in Heaven was but to  
meet

That without which my Soul, like the  
arkless dove,

Had wandered still in search of, nor her feet  
Relieved her wing till found; without thy  
light

My Paradise had still been incomplete.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The reader is requested to adopt the Italian pronunciation of Beatrice, sounding all the syllables.

<sup>2</sup> “Ché sol per le belle’ opre  
Che sono in cielo, il sole e l’altre stelle,  
Dentro da lor si crede il Paradiso:  
Così se guardi fiso  
Pensar ben dei, che ogni terren piacere.  
[Si trova in lei, ma tu nol puoi vedere.]”

Canzone, in which Dante describes the person of Beatrice, Strophe third.

[Byron was mistaken in attributing these lines to Dante. Neither external nor internal evidence supports such an ascription. The Canzone is attributed in the MSS. either to Fazio degli Uberti, or to Bindo Borrichi da Siena, but was not assigned to Dante before 1518.]

Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight  
 Thou wert my Life, the Essence of my  
 thought,  
 Loved ere I knew the name of Love, and  
 bright 30  
 Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought  
 With the World's war, and years, and  
 banishment,  
 And tears for thee, by other woes untaught;  
 For mine is not a nature to be bent  
 By tyrannous faction, and the brawling  
 crowd,  
 And though the long, long conflict hath been  
 spent  
 In vain,—and never more, save when the cloud  
 Which overhangs the Apennine my mind's  
 eye  
 Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud  
 Of me, can I return, though but to die, 40  
 Unto my native soil,—they have not yet  
 Quenched the old exile's spirit, stern and  
 high.  
 But the Sun, though not overcast, must set,  
 And the night cometh; I am old in days,  
 And deeds, and contemplation, and have met  
 Destruction face to face in all his ways.  
 The World hath left me, what it found me,  
 pure,  
 And if I have not gathered yet its praise,  
 I sought it not by any baser lure;  
 Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my  
 name 50  
 May form a monument not all obscure,  
 Though such was not my Ambition's end or aim,  
 To add to the vain-glorious list of those  
 Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,  
 And make men's fickle breath the wind that  
 blows  
 Their sail, and deem it glory to be classed  
 With conquerors, and Virtue's other foes,  
 In bloody chronicles of ages past.  
 I would have had my Florence great and  
 free;<sup>1</sup> 59  
 Oh Florence! Florence! unto me thou wast  
 Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He

1 "L'Esilio che m' è dato onor mi tegno

\* \* \* \* \*

Cader tra' buoni è pur di lode degno."  
 —*Sonnet of Dante* [Canzone xx. lines 76-80,  
*Opere di Dante*, 1897, p. 171]

in which he represents Right, Generosity, and  
 Temperance as banished from among men, and  
 seeking refuge from Love, who inhabits his bosom.

Wept over, "but thou wouldst not"; as  
 the bird  
 Gathers its young, I would have gathered thee  
 Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard  
 My voice; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,  
 Against the breast that cherished thee was  
 stirred  
 Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,  
 And doom this body forfeit to the fire.<sup>1</sup>  
 Alas! how bitter is his country's curse  
 To him who *for* that country would expire,  
 But did not merit to expire *by* her, 71  
 And loves her, loves her even in her ire.  
 The day may come when she will cease to err,  
 The day may come she would be proud  
 to have  
 The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer  
 Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.  
 But this shall not be granted; let my dust  
 Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil which  
 gave  
 Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust 79  
 Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reassume  
 My indignant bones, because her angry gust  
 Forsooth is over, and repealed her doom;  
 No,—she denied me what was mine—  
 my roof,  
 And shall not have what is not hers—my  
 tomb.  
 Too long her armed wrath hath kept aloof  
 The breast which would have bled for her,  
 the heart  
 That beat, the mind that was temptation  
 proof,  
 The man who fought, toiled, travelled, and  
 each part  
 Of a true citizen fulfilled, and saw  
 For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art  
 Pass his destruction even into a law. 91  
 These things are not made for forgetfulness,  
 Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw  
 The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress  
 Of such endurance too prolonged to make  
 My pardon greater, her injustice less,  
 Though late repented; yet—yet for her sake  
 I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,  
 My own Beatricē, I would hardly take

1 "Ut si quis predictorum ullo tempore in fortiam  
 dicti communis pervenerit, *talis perveniens igne  
 comburatur, sic quod moriatur.*" Second sentence  
 of Florence against Dante, and the fourteen accused  
 with him. The Latin is worthy of the sentence.  
 [The decree (March 11, 1302) that Dante and his  
 associates in exile should be burned, if they fell  
 into the hands of their enemies, was first dis-  
 covered, in 1772, by the Conte Ludovico Savioli.]

Vengeance upon the land which once was  
mine, 100  
And still is hallowed by thy dust's return,  
Which would protect the murderess like a  
shrine,  
And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.  
Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's  
marsh  
And Carthageruins, my lone breast may burn  
At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,  
And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe  
Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch  
My brow with hopes of triumph,—let them  
go!  
Such are the last infirmities of those 110  
Who long have suffered more than mortal  
woe,  
And yet being mortal still, have no repose  
But on the pillow of Revenge—Revenge,  
Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking  
glows  
With the oft-baffled, slakeless thirst of change,  
When we shall mount again, and they  
that trod  
Be trampled on, while Death and Até range  
O'er humbled heads and severed necks—  
Great God!  
Take these thoughts from me—to thy hands  
I yield 119  
My many wrongs, and thine Almighty rod  
Will fall on those who smote me,—be my  
Shield!  
As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,  
In turbulent cities, and the tented field—  
In toil, and many troubles borne in vain  
For Florence,—I appeal from her to Thee!  
Thee, whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,  
Even in that glorious Vision, which to see  
And live was never granted until now,  
And yet thou hast permitted this to me.  
Alas! with what a weight upon my brow 130  
The sense of earth and earthly things come  
back,  
Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,  
The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,  
Long day, and dreary night; the retrospect  
Of half a century bloody and black,  
And the frail few years I may yet expect  
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,  
For I have been too long and deeply wrecked  
On the lone rock of desolate Despair,  
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail 140  
Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare;  
Nor raise my voice—for who would heed my  
wail?

I am not of this people, nor this age,  
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale  
Which shall preserve these times when not  
a page  
Of their perturbéd annals could attract  
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,  
Did not my verse embalm full many an act  
Worthless as they who wrought it: 'tis the  
doom  
Of spirits of my order to be racked 150  
In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume  
Their days in endless strife, and die alone;  
Then future thousands crowd around their  
tomb,  
And pilgrims come from climes where they  
have known  
The name of him—who now is but a name,  
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,  
Spread his—by him unheard, unheeded—  
fame;  
And mine at least hath cost me dear: to die  
Is nothing; but to wither thus—to tame  
My mind down from its own infinity— 160  
To live in narrow ways with little men,  
A common sight to every common eye,  
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,  
Ripped from all kindred, from all home,  
all things  
That make communion sweet, and soften  
pain—  
To feel me in the solitude of kings  
Without the power that makes them bear  
a crown—  
To envy every dove his nest and wings  
Which waft him where the Apeninne looks  
down  
On Arno, till he perches, it may be, 170  
Within my all inexorable town,  
Where yet my boys are, and that fatal She,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This lady, whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelph families, named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being "*Admodum morosa, ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scriptum esse legimus*," according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalised with Boccace, in his life of Dante, for saying that literary men should not marry. "Qui il Boccaccio non ha pazienza, e dice, le mogli esser contrarie agli studj; e non si ricorda che Socrate, il più nobile filosofo che mai fusse, ebbe moglie e figliuoli e uffici nella Repubblica nella sua Città; e Aristotile che, etc., etc., ebbe due moglie in varj tempi, ed ebbe figliuoli, e ricchezze assai.—E Marco Tullio—e Catone—e Varrone—e Seneca—ebbero moglie,"

Their mother, the cold partner who hath  
brought  
Destruction for a dowry—this to see  
And feel, and know without repair, hath taught  
A bitter lesson ; but it leaves me free :  
I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,  
They made an Exile—not a Slave of me.

### CANTO THE SECOND.

THE Spirit of the fervent days of Old,  
When words were things that came to pass,  
and Thought  
Flashed o'er the future, bidding men behold  
Their children's children's doom already  
brought  
Forth from the abyss of Time which is to be,  
The Chaos of events, where lie half-wrought  
Shapes that must undergo mortality ;  
What the great Seers of Israel wore within,  
That Spirit was on them, and is on me,  
And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din 10  
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed  
This voice from out the Wilderness, the sin  
Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,  
The only guerdon I have ever known.  
Hast thou not bled ? and hast thou still to  
bleed,  
Italia ? Ah ! to me such things, foreshown  
With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget  
In thine irreparable wrongs my own ;

etc., etc. It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Seneca, and, for anything I know, of Aristotle, are not the most felicitous. Tully's Terentia, and Socrates' Xantippe, by no means contributed to their husband's happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy—Cato gave away his wife—of Varro's we know nothing—and of Seneca's, only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered and lived several years afterwards. But says Lionardo, "L'uomo è animale civile, secondo piace a tutti i filosofi." And thence concludes that the greatest proof of the *animal's civism* is "la prima congiunzione, dalla quale moltiplicata nasce la Città."

[There is nothing in the *Divina Commedia*, or elsewhere in his writings, to justify the common belief that Dante was unhappily married, unless silence may be taken to imply dislike and alienation. But with Byron, as with Boccaccio, "the wish was father to the thought," and both were glad to quote Dante as a victim to matrimony.]

We can have but one Country, and even yet  
Thou'rt mine—my bones shall be within  
thy breast, 20  
My Soul within thy language, which once set  
With our old Roman sway in the wide  
West ;  
But I will make another tongue arise  
As lofty and more sweet, in which expressed  
The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,  
Shall find alike such sounds for every theme  
That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,  
Shall realise a Poet's proudest dream,  
And make thee Europe's Nightingale of  
Song ;  
So that all present speech to thine shall  
seem 30  
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue  
Confess its barbarism when compared with  
thine.  
This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so  
wrong,  
Thy Tuscan bard, the banished Ghibelline.  
Woe ! woe ! the veil of coming centuries  
Is rent,—a thousand years which yet  
supine  
Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,  
Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,  
Float from Eternity into these eyes ;  
The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep  
their station, 40  
The unborn Earthquake yet is in the  
womb,  
The bloody Chaos yet expects Creation,  
But all things are disposing for thy doom ;  
The Elements await but for the Word,  
"Let there be darkness !" and thou grow'st  
a tomb !  
Yes ! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the sword,  
Thou, Italy ! so fair that Paradise,  
Revived in thee, blooms forth to man  
restored :  
Ah ! must the sons of Adam lose it twice ?  
Thou, Italy ! whose ever golden fields, 50  
Ploughed by the sunbeams solely, would  
suffice  
For the world's granary ; thou, whose sky  
Heaven gilds  
With brighter stars, and robes with deeper  
blue ;  
Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer  
builds  
Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,  
And formed the Eternal City's ornaments  
From spoils of Kings whom freemen over-  
threw ;

Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of Saints,  
Where earthly first, then heavenly glory  
made

Her home; thou, all which fondest Fancy  
paints, 60

And finds her prior vision but portrayed  
In feeble colours, when the eye—from the Alp  
Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy shade  
Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp  
Nods to the storm—dilates and dotes o'er  
thee,

And wistfully implores, as 'twere, for help  
To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,  
Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still  
The more approached, and dearest were  
they free, 69

Thou—Thou must wither to each tyrant's will:  
The Goth hath been,—the German, Frank,  
and Hun

Are yet to come,—and on the imperial hill  
Ruin, already proud of the deeds done  
By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,  
Throned on the Palatine, while lost and won  
Rome at her feet lies bleeding; and the hue  
Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter  
Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,

And deepens into red the saffron water 79  
Of Tiber, thick with dead; the helpless priest,  
And still more helpless, nor less holy  
daughter,

Vowed to their God, have shrieking fled, and  
ceased

Their ministry: the nations take their prey,  
Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast  
And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they  
Are; these but gorge the flesh, and lap the  
gore

Of the departed, and then go their way;  
But those, the human savages, explore  
All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,  
With Ugolino hunger prowl for more. 90  
Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and  
set;<sup>1</sup>

The chiefless army of the dead, which late  
Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,  
Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;  
Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance  
Thou hadst been spared, but his involved  
thy fate.

<sup>1</sup> See "Sacco di Roma," generally attributed  
to Guicciardini [Francesco (1482-1540).] There is  
another written by a Jacopo Buonaparte.

[The "traitor Prince" was Charles IV.,  
Connétable de Bourbon, Comte de Montpensier,  
born 1490, who was killed at the capture of Rome,  
May 6, 1527.]

Oh! Rome, the Spoiler or the spoil of France,  
From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never  
Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance,  
But Tiber shall become a mournful river. 100  
Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,  
Crush them, ye Rocks! Floods overwhelm them,  
and for ever!

Why sleep the idle Avalanches so,  
To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?  
Why doth Eridanus but overflow  
The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?  
Were not each barbarous horde a nobler  
prey?

Over Cambyses' host the desert spread  
Her sandy ocean, and the Sea-waves' sway  
Rolled over Pharaoh and his thousands,—  
why, 110

Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?  
And you, ye Men! Romans, who dare not  
die,

Sons of the conquerors who overthrew  
Those who overthrew proud Xerxes, where  
yet lie

The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,  
Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?  
Their passes more alluring to the view

Of an invader? is it they, or ye,  
That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,  
And leave the march in peace, the passage  
free? 120

Why, Nature's self detains the Victor's car,  
And makes your land impregnable, if earth  
Could be so; but alone she will not war,

Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth  
In a soil where the mothers bring forth men:  
Not so with those whose souls are little worth;  
For them no fortress can avail,—the den

Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting  
Is more secure than walls of adamant, when  
The hearts of those within are quivering. 130  
Are ye not brave? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil  
Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and  
hosts to bring

Against Oppression; but how vain the toil,  
While still Division sows the seeds of woe  
And weakness, till the Stranger reaps the  
spoil.

Oh! my own beauteous land! so long laid low,  
So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,  
When there is but required a single blow  
To break the chain, yet—yet the Avenger stops,  
And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine  
and thee, 140

And join their strength to that which with  
thee copes;

What is there wanting then to set thee free,  
And show thy beauty in its fullest light?  
To make the Alps impassable; and we,  
Her Sons, may do this with *one* deed—Unite.

CANTO THE THIRD.

FROM out the mass of never-dying ill,  
The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and  
the Sword,  
Vials of Wrath but emptied to refill  
And flow again, I cannot all record  
That crowds on my prophetic eye: the Earth  
And Ocean written o'er would not afford  
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth;  
Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,  
There where the farthest sons and stars  
have birth, 9  
Spread like a banner at the gate of Heaven,  
The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs  
Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven  
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,  
And Italy, the martyred nation's gore,  
Will not in vain arise to where belongs  
Omnipotence and Mercy evermore:  
Like to a harpstring stricken by the wind,  
The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er  
The Seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.  
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of  
Earth's dust by immortality refined 21  
To Sense and Suffering, though the vain  
may scoff,  
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow  
Before the storm because its breath is rough,  
To thee, my Country! whom before, as now,  
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre  
And melancholy gift high Powers allow  
To read the future: and if now my fire  
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive!  
I but foretell thy fortunes—then expire; 30  
Think not that I would look on them and live.  
A Spirit forces me to see and speak,  
And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;  
My Heart shall be poured over thee and break:  
Yet for a moment, ere I must resume  
Thy sable web of Sorrow, let me take  
Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom  
A softer glimpse; some stars shine through  
thy night,  
And many meteors, and above thy tomb  
Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot  
blight; 40  
And from thine ashes boundless Spirits rise  
To give thee honour, and the earth delight;  
Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,

The gay, the learned, the generous, and  
the brave,  
Native to thee as Summer to thy skies,  
Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far  
wave,<sup>1</sup>  
Discoverers of new worlds, which take their  
name; <sup>2</sup>  
For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,  
And all thy recompense is in their fame,  
A noble one to them, but not to thee— 50  
Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same?  
Oh! more than these illustrious far shall be  
The Being—and even yet he may be born—  
The mortal Saviour who shall set thee free,  
And see thy diadem, so changed and worn  
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;  
And the sweet Sun replenishing thy morn,  
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced,  
And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,  
Such as all they must breathe who are debased  
By Servitude, and have the mind in prison. 61  
Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe  
Some voices shall be heard, and Earth  
shall listen;  
Poets shall follow in the path I show,  
And make it broader: the same brilliant sky  
Which cheers the birds to song shall bid  
them glow,  
And raise their notes as natural and high:  
Tuneful shall be their numbers; they shall  
sing  
Many of Love, and some of Liberty,  
But few shall soar upon that Eagle's wing, 70  
And look in the Sun's face, with Eagle's gaze,  
All free and fearless as the feathered King,  
But fly more near the earth; how many a phrase  
Sublime shall lavished be on some small  
prince  
In all the prodigality of Praise!  
And language, eloquently false, evince  
The harlotry of Genius, which, like Beauty,  
Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,  
And looks on prostitution as a duty.  
He who once enters in a Tyrant's hall<sup>3</sup> 80  
As guest is slave—his thoughts become a  
booty,  
And the first day which sees the chain enthrall

<sup>1</sup> Alexander of Parma, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecucoli.  
<sup>2</sup> Columbus, Americus Vesputius, Sebastian Cabot.  
<sup>3</sup> A verse from the Greek tragedians, with which Pompey took leave of Cornelia [daughter of Metellus Scipio, and widow of P. Crassus] on entering the boat in which he was slain. [The verse, or verses, are said to be by Sophocles, and

A captive, sees his half of Manhood gone<sup>1</sup>—  
 The Soul's emasculation saddens all  
 His spirit; thus the Bard too near the throne  
 Quails from his inspiration, bound to  
*please,—*  
 How servile is the task to please alone!  
 To smooth the verse to suit his Sovereign's ease  
 And royal leisure, nor too much prolong  
 Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize,  
 Or force, or forge fit argument of Song! 91  
 Thus trammelled, thus condemned to  
 Flattery's trebles,  
 He toils through all, still trembling to be  
 wrong:  
 For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly  
 rebels,  
 Should rise up in high treason to his brain,  
 Hesings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles  
 In's mouth, lest Truth should stammer  
 through his strain.  
 But out of the long file of sonneteers  
 There shall be some who will not sing in vain,  
 And he, their Prince, shall rank among my  
 peers,<sup>2</sup> 100  
 And Love shall be his torment; but his  
 grief  
 Shall make an immortality of tears,  
 And Italy shall hail him as the Chief  
 Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song  
 Of Freedom wreath him with as green a  
 leaf.  
 But in a farther age shall rise along  
 The banks of Po two greater still than he;<sup>3</sup>  
 The World which smiled on him shall do  
 them wrong  
 Till they are ashes, and repose with me. 109  
 The first will make an epoch with his lyre,  
 And fill the earth with feats of Chivalry:  
 His Fancy like a rainbow, and his Fire,  
 Like that of Heaven, immortal, and his  
 Thought  
 Borne onward with a wing that cannot  
 tire;  
 Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,  
 Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,  
 And Art itself seem into Nature wrought  
 By the transparency of his bright dream.—

are quoted by Plutarch, in his Life of Pompey.  
 They run thus—

"Seek'st thou a tyrant's door? then farewell,  
 freedom!

Though *free* as air before."]

<sup>1</sup> The verse and sentiment are taken from Homer.  
 —*Odyssey*, xvii. 322, 323.

<sup>2</sup> Petrarch.

<sup>3</sup> [Ariosto and Tasso.]

The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,  
 Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem; 120  
 He, too, shall sing of Arms, and Christian  
 blood  
 Shed where Christ bled for man; and his  
 high harp  
 Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,  
 Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp  
 Conflict, and final triumph of the brave  
 And pious, and the strife of Hell to warp  
 Their hearts from their great purpose, until  
 wave  
 The red-cross banners where the first red  
 Cross  
 Was crimsoned from His veins who died  
 to save,  
 Shall be his sacred argument; the loss 130  
 Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame  
 Contested for a time, while the smooth  
 gloss  
 Of Courts would slide o'er his forgotten name  
 And call Captivity a kindness—meant  
 To shield him from insanity or shame—  
 Such shall be his meek guerdon! who was  
 sent  
 To be Christ's Laureate—they reward him  
 well!  
 Florence dooms me but death or banish-  
 ment,  
 Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,  
 Harder to bear and less deserved, for I 140  
 Had stung the factions which I strove to  
 quell;  
 But this meek man who with a lover's eye  
 Will look on Earth and Heaven, and who  
 will deign  
 To embalm with his celestial flattery,  
 As poor a thing as e'er was spawned to  
 reign,<sup>1</sup>  
 What will *he* do to merit such a doom?  
 Perhaps he'll *love*,—and is not Love in  
 vain  
 Torture enough without a living tomb?  
 Yet it will be so—he and his compeer,  
 The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume  
 In penury and pain too many a year, 151  
 And, dying in despondency, bequeath  
 To the kind World, which scarce will  
 yield a tear,  
 A heritage enriching all who breathe  
 With the wealth of a genuine Poet's soul,  
 And to their country a redoubled wreath,  
 Unmatched by time; not Hellas can unroll

<sup>1</sup> [Alfonso d'Este (II.), Duke of Ferrara, died  
 1597.]



Through her Olympiads two such names,  
 though one  
 Of hers be mighty ;—and is this the whole  
 Of such men's destiny beneath the Sun? 160  
 Must all the finer thoughts, the thrilling  
 sense,  
 The electric blood with which their arteries  
 run,  
 Their body's self turned soul with the intense  
 Feeling of that which is, and fancy of  
 That which should be, to such a recom-  
 pense  
 Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the  
 rough  
 Storm be still scattered? Yes, and it  
 must be ;  
 For, formed of far too penetrable stuff,  
 These birds of Paradise but long to flee  
 Back to their native mansion, soon they  
 find 170  
 Earth's mist with their pure pinions not  
 agree,  
 And die or are degraded ; for the mind  
 Succumbs to long infection, and despair,  
 And vulture Passions flying close behind,  
 Await the moment to assail and tear ;  
 And when, at length, the wingéd wanderers  
 stoop,  
 Then is the Prey-birds' triumph, then they  
 share  
 The spoil, o'erpowered at length by one fell  
 swoop.  
 Yet some have been untouched who learned  
 to bear,  
 Some whom no Power could ever force to  
 droop, 180  
 Who could resist themselves even, hardest  
 care !  
 And task most hopeless ; but some such  
 have been,  
 And if my name amongst the number were,  
 That Destiny austere, and yet serene,  
 Were prouder than more dazzling fame  
 unblest ;  
 The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen  
 Than the Volcano's fierce eruptive crest,  
 Whose splendour from the black abyss is  
 flung,  
 While the scorched mountain, from whose  
 burning breast  
 A temporary torturing flame is wrung, 190  
 Shines for a night of terror, then repels  
 Its fire back to the Hell from whence it  
 sprung,  
 The Hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

## CANTO THE FOURTH.

MANY are Poets who have never penned  
 Their inspiration, and perchance the best :  
 They felt, and loved, and died, but would  
 not lend  
 Their thoughts to meaner beings ; they  
 compressed  
 The God within them, and rejoined the stars,  
 Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more  
 blessed  
 Than those who are degraded by the jars  
 Of Passion, and their frailties linked to fame,  
 Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.  
 Many are Poets but without the name ; 10  
 For what is Poesy but to create,  
 From overfeeling, Good or Ill, and aim  
 At an external life beyond our fate,  
 And be the new Prometheus of new men,  
 Bestowing fire from Heaven, and then, too  
 late,  
 Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,  
 And vultures to the heart of the bestower,  
 Who, having lavished his high gift in vain,  
 Lies chained to his lone rock by the sea-  
 shore?  
 So be it : we can bear.—But thus all they 20  
 Whose Intellect is an o'ermastering Power  
 Which still recoils from its encumbering clay  
 Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er  
 The form which their creations may essay,  
 Are bards ; the kindled Marble's bust may  
 wear  
 More poesy upon its speaking brow  
 Than aught less than the Homeric page  
 may bear ;  
 One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,  
 Or deify the canvass till it shine  
 With beauty so surpassing all below, 30  
 That they who kneel to Idols so divine  
 Break no commandment, for high Heaven  
 is there  
 Transfused, transfigured : and the line  
 Of Poesy, which peoples but the air  
 With Thought and Beings of our thought  
 reflected,  
 Can do no more : then let the artist share  
 The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected  
 Faints o'er the labour unapproved—Alas !  
 Despair and Genius are too oft connected.  
 Within the ages which before me pass 40  
 Art shall resume and equal even the sway  
 Which with Apelles and old Phidias  
 She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.  
 Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive  
 The Grecian forms at least from their decay,

And Roman souls at last again shall live  
 In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,  
 And temples, loftier than the old temples,  
 give  
 New wonders to the World; and while still  
 stands  
 The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall  
 soar 50  
 A Dome,<sup>1</sup> its image, while the base expands  
 Into a fane surpassing all before,  
 Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in:  
 ne'er  
 Such sight hath been unfolded by a door  
 As this, to which all nations shall repair,  
 And lay their sins at this huge gate of  
 Heaven.  
 And the bold Architect unto whose care  
 The daring charge to raise it shall be given,  
 Whom all Arts shall acknowledge as their  
 Lord,  
 Whether into the marble chaos driven 60  
 His chisel bid the Hebrew,<sup>2</sup> at whose word  
 Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,  
 Or hues of Hell be by his pencil poured  
 Over the damned before the Judgment-  
 throne,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Cupola of St. Peter's.

[Michel Angelo, then in his seventy-second year, received the appointment of architect of St. Peter's from Pope Paul III. He began the dome on a different plan from that of the first architect, Bramante, "declaring that he would raise the Pantheon in the air."]

<sup>2</sup> The statue of Moses on the monument of Julius II.

#### "SONNET

"By Giovanni Battista Zappi.

"And who is he that, shaped in sculptured stone  
 Sits giant-like? stern monument of art  
 Unparalleled, while language seems to start  
 From his prompt lips, and we his precepts own?  
 —'Tis Moses; by his beard's thick honours  
 known,  
 And the twin beams that from his temples  
 dart;  
 'Tis Moses; seated on the mount apart,  
 Whilst yet the Godhead o'er his features shone.  
 Such once he looked, when Ocean's sounding  
 wave  
 Suspended hung, and such amidst the storm,  
 When o'er his foes the refluent waters roared.  
 An idol calf his followers did engrave:  
 But had they raised this awe-commanding form,  
 Then had they with less guilt their work  
 adored." [Samuel Rogers.]  
<sup>3</sup> The Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel.

Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,  
 Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown—  
 The Stream of his great thoughts shall spring  
 from me<sup>1</sup>  
 The Ghibelline, who traversed the three  
 realms  
 Which form the Empire of Eternity.  
 Amidst the clash of swords, and clang of  
 helms, 70  
 The age which I anticipate, no less  
 Shall be the Age of Beauty, and while  
 whelms  
 Calamity the nations with distress,  
 The Genius of my Country shall arise,  
 A Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,  
 Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,  
 Fragrant as fair, and recognised afar,  
 Wafting its native incense through the skies.  
 Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport  
 of war,  
 Weaned for an hour from blood, to turn  
 and gaze 80  
 On canvass or on stone; and they who mar  
 All beauty upon earth, compelled to praise,  
 Shall feel the power of that which they  
 destroy;  
 And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise  
 To tyrants, who but take her for a toy,  
 Emblems and monuments, and prostitute  
 Her charms to Pontiffs proud,<sup>2</sup> who but  
 employ  
 The man of Genius as the meanest brute  
 To bear a burthen, and to serve a need,  
 To sell his labours, and his soul to boot. 90  
 Who toils for nations may be poor indeed,  
 But free; who sweats for Monarchs is  
 no more  
 Than the gilt Chamberlain, who, clothed  
 and feed,  
 Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his door.  
 Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest! how  
 Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power  
 Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,  
 Least like to thee in attributes divine,  
 Tread on the universal necks that bow, 99  
 And then assure us that their rights are thine?  
 And how is it that they, the Sons of Fame,  
 Whose inspiration seems to them to shine  
 From high, they whom the nations ofttest name,  
<sup>1</sup> I have read somewhere (if I do not err, for I  
 cannot recollect where), that Dante was so great a  
 favourite of Michael Angelo's, that he had designed  
 the whole of the Divina Commedia: but that the  
 volume containing these studies was lost by sea.  
<sup>2</sup> See the treatment of Michel Angelo by Julius  
 II., and his neglect by Leo X.

Must pass their days in penury or pain,  
 Or step to grandeur through the paths of  
 shame,  
 And wear a deeper brand and gaudier chain?  
 Or if their Destiny be born aloof  
 From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,  
 In their own souls sustain a harder proof,  
 The inner war of Passions deep and fierce?  
 Florence! when thy harsh sentence razed  
 my roof, 111  
 I loved thee; but the vengeance of my verse,  
 The hate of injuries which every year  
 Makes greater, and accumulates my curse,  
 Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear—  
 Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and  
 even *that*,  
 The most infernal of all evils here,  
 The sway of petty tyrants in a state;  
 For such sway is not limited to Kings,  
 And Demagogues yield to them but in date,  
 As swept off sooner; in all deadly things, 121  
 Which make men hate themselves, and  
 one another,  
 In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that  
 springs  
 From Death the Sin-born's incest with his  
 mother,  
 In rank oppression in its rudest shape,  
 The faction Chief is but the Sultan's brother,  
 And the worst Despot's far less human ape.  
 Florence! when this lone spirit, which  
 so long  
 Yearned, as the captive toiling at escape,  
 To fly back to thee in despite of wrong, 130  
 An exile, saddest of all prisoners,  
 Who has made the whole world for a  
 dungeon strong,  
 Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge  
 for bars,  
 Which shut him from the sole small spot  
 of earth  
 Where—whatsoe'er his fate—he still were  
 hers,  
 His Country's, and might die where he had  
 birth—  
 Florence! when this lone Spirit shall return  
 To kindred Spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,  
 And seek to honour with an empty urn <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ["Between the second and third chapels [in the nave of Santa Croce at Florence] is the colossal monument to Dante, by Ricci . . . raised by subscription in 1829. The inscription, '*A majoribus ter frustra decretum*,' refers to the successive efforts of the Florentines to recover his remains, and raise a monument to their great countryman."—*Handbook, Central Italy*, p. 32.]

The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain—Alas!  
 "What have I done to thee, my People?" <sup>1</sup>  
 Stern 141  
 Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass  
 The limits of Man's common malice, for  
 All that a citizen could be I was—  
 Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war—  
 And for this thou hast warred with me.—  
 'Tis done:  
 I may not overleap the eternal bar  
 Built up between us, and will die alone,  
 Beholding with the dark eye of a Seer  
 The evil days to gifted souls foreshown, 150  
 Foretelling them to those who will not hear;  
 As in the old time, till the hour be come  
 When Truth shall strike their eyes through  
 many a tear,  
 And make them own the Prophet in his tomb.  
Ravenna, 1819.

## THE MORGANTE MAGGIORE <sup>2</sup> OF PULCI.

### ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Morgante Maggiore, of the first canto of which this translation is offered, divides with the Orlando Innamorato the honour of having formed and suggested the style and story of Ariosto.<sup>3</sup> The great defects of Boiardo were his treating too seriously the narratives of chivalry, and his harsh style.

<sup>1</sup> "E scrisse più volte non solamente a' particolari Cittadini del Reggimento, ma ancora al Popolo; e intra l' altre un' Epistola assai lunga che incomincia: '*Popule mee (sic), quid feci tibi?*'"—*Le Vite di Dante, etc., scritte da Lionardo Aretino*, 1672, p. 47. The Vulgate reads, "O my people, what have I done to thee?" *Micah*, vi. 3. "Popule meus quid feci tibi?"

<sup>2</sup> [The translation of the first canto of *Morgante Maggiore* was finished, at Ravenna, in February, 1820, and first published in the fourth Number of the *Liberal*, July 30, 1823.]

<sup>3</sup> [Matteo Maria Boiardo (1434-1494) published his *Orlando Innamorato* in 1486; Lodovico Ariosto (1474-1533) published the *Orlando Furioso* in 1516. A first edition of Cantos I.-XXV. of Luigi Pulci's (1431-1487) *Il Morgante Maggiore* was printed surreptitiously by Luca Veneziano in 1481. Francesco Berni, who recast the *Orlando Innamorato*, was born *circ.* 1490, and died in 1536.]

Ariosto, in his continuation, by a judicious mixture of the gaiety of Pulci, has avoided the one; and Berni, in his reformation of Boiardo's poem, has corrected the other. Pulci may be considered as the precursor and model of Berni altogether, as he has partly been to Ariosto, however inferior to both his copyists. He is no less the founder of a new style of poetry very lately sprung up in England. I allude to that of the ingenious Whistlecraft. The serious poems on Roncesvalles in the same language, and more particularly the excellent one of Mr. Merivale, are to be traced to the same source.<sup>1</sup> It has never yet been decided entirely whether Pulci's intention was or was not to deride the religion which is one of his favourite topics. It appears to me, that such an intention would have been no less hazardous to the poet than to the priest, particularly in that age and country; and the permission to publish the poem, and its reception among the classics of Italy, prove that it neither was nor is so interpreted. That he intended to ridicule the monastic life, and suffered his imagination to play with the simple dulness of his converted giant, seems evident enough; but surely it were as unjust to accuse him of irreligion on this account, as to denounce Fielding for his Parson Adams, Barnabas, Thwackum, Supple, and the Ordinary in Jonathan Wild, —or Scott, for the exquisite use of his Covenanters in the "Tales of my Landlord."

In the following translation I have used the liberty of the original with the proper names, as Pulci uses Gan, Ganellon, or Ganellone; Carlo, Carlomagno, or Carlomano; Rondel, or Rondello, etc., as it suits his convenience; so has the translator. In other respects the version is faithful to the best of the translator's ability in combining his interpretation of the one language with the not very easy task of reducing it to the same versification in the other. The reader,

<sup>1</sup> [John Herman Merivale (1779-1844), the father of Charles Merivale, the historian (Dean of Ely, 1869), and of Herman, Under-Secretary for India, published his *Orlando in Roncesvalles* in 1814.]

on comparing it with the original, is requested to remember that the antiquated language of Pulci, however pure, is not easy to the generality of Italians themselves, from its great mixture of Tuscan proverbs; and he may therefore be more indulgent to the present attempt. How far the translator has succeeded, and whether or no he shall continue the work, are questions which the public will decide. He was induced to make the experiment partly by his love for, and partial intercourse with, the Italian language, of which it is so easy to acquire a slight knowledge, and with which it is so nearly impossible for a foreigner to become accurately conversant. The Italian language is like a capricious beauty, who accords her smiles to all, her favours to few, and sometimes least to those who have courted her longest. The translator wished also to present in an English dress a part at least of a poem never yet rendered into a northern language; at the same time that it has been the original of some of the most celebrated productions on this side of the Alps, as well of those recent experiments in poetry in England which have been already mentioned.

### CANTO THE FIRST.

#### I.

IN the beginning was the Word next God;  
God was the Word, the Word no less was  
He:

This was in the beginning, to my mode  
Of thinking, and without Him nought  
could be:

Therefore, just Lord! from out thy high  
abode,

Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,  
One only, to be my companion, who  
Shall help my famous, worthy, old song  
through.

#### II.

And thou, oh Virgin! daughter, mother,  
bride,

Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key  
Of Heaven, and Hell, and every thing beside,  
The day thy Gabriel said "All hail!" to  
thee,

Since to thy servants Pity's ne'er denied,  
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and  
free,

Be to my verses then benignly kind,  
And to the end illuminate my mind.

## III.

'Twas in the season when sad Philomel  
Weeps with her sister, who remembers and  
Deplores the ancient woes which both befel,  
And makes the nymphs enamoured, to the  
hand

Of Phaëton, by Phœbus loved so well,  
His car (but tempered by his sire's command)  
Was given, and on the horizon's verge just now  
Appeared, so that Tithonus scratched his brow:

## IV.

When I prepared my bark first to obey,  
As it should still obey, the helm, my mind,  
And carry prose or rhyme, and this my lay  
Of Charles the Emperor, whom you will find  
By several pens already praised; but they  
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined,  
For all that I can see in prose or verse,  
Have understood Charles badly, and wrote  
worse.

## V.

Leonardo Aretino said already,  
That if, like Pepin, Charles had had a writer  
Of genius quick, and diligently steady,  
No hero would in history look brighter;  
He in the cabinet being always ready,  
And in the field a most victorious fighter,  
Who for the church and Christian faith had  
wrought,  
Certes, far more than yet is said or thought.

## VI.

You still may see at Saint Liberatore,<sup>1</sup>  
The abbey, no great way from Manopell,  
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,  
Because of the great battle in which fell  
A pagan king, according to the story,  
And felon people whom Charles sent to Hell:  
And there are bones so many, and so many,  
Near them Giusaffa's<sup>2</sup> would seem few, if any.

<sup>1</sup> The Benedictine Monastery of San Liberatore alla Majella, lies to the south of Manoppello, eight miles south-west of Chieti, in the Abruzzi. The abbey is in a ruinous condition, but on the walls there is still to be seen a fresco of Charlemagne, holding in his hands the deed of gift of the Abbey lands.]

<sup>2</sup> [That is, the valley of Jehoshaphat, the "valley where Jehovah judges" (see Joel iii. 2-12); and, hence, a favourite burial-ground of Jews and Moslems.]

## VII.

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't prize  
His virtues as I wish to see them: thou,  
Florence, by his great bounty don't arise,<sup>1</sup>  
And hast, and may have, if thou wilt allow,  
All proper customs and true courtesies:  
Whate'er thou hast acquired from then till  
now,  
With knightly courage, treasure, or the lance,  
Is sprung from out the noble blood of France.

## VIII.

Twelve Paladins had Charles in court, of whom  
The wisest and most famous was Orlando.  
Him traitor Gan conducted to the tomb  
In Roncesvalles, as the villain planned too,  
While the horn rang so loud, and knelled the  
doom  
Of their sad rout, though he did all knight  
can do:  
And Dante in his comedy has given  
To him a happy seat with Charles in Heaven.

## IX.

'Twas Christmas-day; in Paris all his court  
Charles held; the Chief, I say, Orlando was,  
The Dane; Astolfo there too did resort,  
Also Ansuigi, the gay time to pass  
In festival and in triumphal sport,  
The much-renowned St. Dennis being the  
cause;  
Angiolin of Bayonne, and Oliver,  
And gentle Belinghieri too came there:

## X.

Avolio, and Arino, and Othone  
Of Normandy, and Richard Paladin,  
Wise Hamo, and the ancient Salamone,  
Walter of Lion's Mount, and Baldovin,  
Who was the son of the sad Ganellone,  
Were there, exciting too much gladness in  
The son of Pepin:—when his knights came  
hither,  
He groaned with joy to see them altogether.

## XI.

But watchful Fortune, lurking, takes good heed  
Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to bring.  
While Charles reposed him thus, in word and  
deed,  
Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every  
thing;

<sup>1</sup> [The text as it stands is meaningless. Probably Byron wrote "dost arise." The reference is no doubt to the supposed restoration of Florence by Charlemagne.]

Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such need  
To vent his spite, that thus with Charles  
the king  
One day he openly began to say,  
"Orlando must we always then obey?"

## XII.

"A thousand times I've been about to say,  
Orlando too presumptuously goes on;  
Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own thy  
sway,

Hamo, and Otho, Ogier, Solomon,  
Each have to honour thee and to obey;  
But he has too much credit near the throne,  
Which we won't suffer, but are quite decided  
By such a boy to be no longer guided.

## XIII.

"And even at Aspramont thou didst begin  
To let him know he was a gallant knight,  
And by the fount did much the day to win;  
But I know *who* that day had won the fight  
If it had not for good Gherardo been;  
The victory was Almonte's else; his sight  
He kept upon the standard—and the laurels,  
In fact and fairness, are his earning, Charles!"

## XIV.

"If thou rememberest being in Gascony,  
When there advanced the nations out of  
Spain,  
The Christian cause had suffered shamefully,  
Had not his valour driven them back again.  
Best speak the truth when there's a reason  
why,—

Know then, oh Emperor! that all complain:  
As for myself, I shall repass the mounts  
O'er which I crossed with two and sixty counts.

## XV.

"'Tis fit thy grandeur should dispense relief,  
So that each here may have his proper part,  
For the whole court is more or less in grief:  
Perhaps thou deem'st this lad a Mars in  
heart?"

Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,  
As by himself it chanced he sate apart:  
Displeased he was with Gan because he said  
it,  
But much more still that Charles should give  
him credit.

## XVI.

And with the sword he would have murdered  
Gan,  
But Oliver thrust in between the pair,  
And from his hand extracted Durlindan,  
And thus at length they separated were.

Orlando angry too with Carloman,  
Wanted but little to have slain him there;  
Then forth alone from Paris went the Chief,  
And burst and maddened with disdain and  
grief.

## XVII.

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,  
He took Cortana, and then took Rondell,  
And on towards Brara pricked him o'er the  
plain;

And when she saw him coming, Aldabelle  
Stretched forth her arms to clasp her lord  
again:

Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,  
As "Welcome, my Orlando, home," she said,  
Raised up his sword to smite her on the head.

## XVIII.

Like him a Fury counsels, his revenge  
On Gan in that rash act he seemed to take,  
Which Aldabella thought extremely strange;  
But soon Orlando found himself awake;  
And his spouse took his bridle on this change,  
And he dismounted from his horse, and  
spake

Of every thing which passed without demur,  
And then reposed himself some days with her.

## XIX.

Then full of wrath departed from the place,  
As far as pagan countries roamed astray,  
And while he rode, yet still at every pace  
The traitor Gan remembered by the way;  
And wandering on in error a long space,  
An abbey which in a lone desert lay,  
'Midst glens obscure, and distant lands, he  
found,  
Which formed the Christian's and the Pagan's  
bound.

## XX.

The Abbot was called Clermont, and by  
blood  
Descended from Angrante: under cover  
Of a great mountain's brow the abbey stood,  
But certain savage giants looked him over;  
One Passamont was foremost of the brood,  
And Alabaster and Morgante hover  
Second and third, with certain slings, and  
throw  
In daily jeopardy the place below.

## XXI.

The monks could pass the convent gate no  
more,  
Nor leave their cells for water or for wood;  
Orlando knocked, but none would ope, before  
Unto the Prior at length seemed good;

Entered, he said that he was taught to adore  
Him who was born of Mary's holiest blood,  
And was baptized a Christian; and then  
showed  
How to the abbey he had found his road.

## XXII.

Said the Abbot, "You are welcome; what is  
mine

We give you freely, since that you believe  
With us in Mary Mother's Son divine;

And that you may not, Cavalier, conceive  
The cause of our delay to let you in

To be rusticity, you shall receive  
The reason why our gate was barred to you:  
Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

## XXIII.

"When hither to inhabit first we came  
These mountains, albeit that they are  
obscure,

As you perceive, yet without fear or blame  
They seemed to promise an asylum sure:  
From savage brutes alone, too fierce to tame,

'Twas fit our quiet dwelling to secure;  
But now, if here we'd stay, we needs must  
guard  
Against domestic beasts with watch and ward.

## XXIV.

"These make us stand, in fact, upon the  
watch;

For late there have appeared three giants  
rough,  
What nation or what kingdom bore the batch  
I know not, but they are all of savage  
stuff;

When Force and Malice with some genius  
match,

You know, they can do all—we are not  
enough:  
And these so much our orisons derange,  
I know not what to do, till matters change.

## XXV.

"Our ancient fathers, living the desert in,  
For just and holy works were duly fed;  
Think not they lived on locusts sole, 'tis  
certain

That manna was rained down from heaven  
instead;

But here 'tis fit we keep on the alert in  
Our bounds, or taste the stones showered  
down for bread,

From off yon mountain daily raining faster,  
And flung by Passamont and Alabaster.

## XXVI

"The third, Morgante, 's savagest by far; he  
Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees, and  
oaks,

And flings them, our community to bury;  
And all that I can do but more provokes."

While thus they parley in the cemetery,  
A stone from one of their gigantic strokes,  
Which nearly crushed Rondell, came  
tumbling over,  
So that he took a long leap under cover.

## XXVII.

"For God-sake, Cavalier, come in with speed;  
The manna's falling now," the Abbot cried.  
"This fellow does not wish my horse should  
feed,

Dear Abbot," Roland unto him replied,  
"Of restiveness he'd cure him had he need;  
That stone seems with good will and aim  
applied."

The holy father said, "I don't deceive;  
They'll one day fling the mountain, I believe."

## XXVIII.

Orlando bade them take care of Rondello,  
And also made a breakfast of his own;  
"Abbot," he said, "I want to find that  
fellow

Who flung at my good horse yon corner-  
stone."  
Said the Abbot, "Let not my advice seem  
shallow;

As to a brother dear I speak alone;  
I would dissuade you, Baron, from this strife,  
As knowing sure that you will lose your life.

## XXIX.

"That Passamont has in his hand three  
darts—

Such slings, clubs, ballast-stones, that yield  
you must:  
You know that giants have much stouter  
hearts

Than us, with reason, in proportion just:  
If go you will, guard well against their arts,  
For these are very barbarous and robust."  
Orlando answered, "This I'll see, be sure,  
And walk the wild on foot to be secure."

## XXX.

The Abbot signed the great cross on his front,  
"Then go you with God's benison and  
mine."

Orlando, after he had scaled the mount,  
As the Abbot had directed, kept the line

Right to the usual haunt of Passamont;  
 Who, seeing him alone in this design,  
 Surveyed him fore and aft with eyes obser-  
 vant,  
 Then asked him, "If he wished to stay as  
 servant?"

## XXXI.

And promised him an office of great ease.  
 But, said Orlando, "Saracen insane!  
 I come to kill you, if it shall so please  
 God, not to serve as footboy in your train;  
 You with his monks so oft have broke the  
 peace—  
 Vile dog! 'tis past his patience to sustain."  
 The Giant ran to fetch his arms, quite furious,  
 When he received an answer so injurious.

## XXXII.

And being returned to where Orlando stood,  
 Who had not moved him from the spot,  
 and swinging  
 The cord, he hurled a stone with strength  
 so rude,  
 As showed a sample of his skill in slinging;  
 It rolled on Count Orlando's helmet good  
 And head, and set both head and helmet  
 ringing,  
 So that he swooned with pain as if he died,  
 But more than dead, he seemed so stupified.

## XXXIII.

Then Passamont, who thought him slain  
 outright,  
 Said, "I will go, and while he lies along,  
 Disarm me: why such craven did I fight?"  
 But Christ his servants ne'er abandons long,  
 Especially Orlando, such a knight,  
 As to desert would almost be a wrong.  
 While the giant goes to put off his defences,  
 Orlando has recalled his force and senses:

## XXXIV.

And loud he shouted, "Giant, where dost go?  
 Thou thought'st me doubtless for the bier  
 outlaid;  
 To the right about—without wings thou'rt  
 too slow  
 To fly my vengeance—currish renegade!  
 'Twas but by treachery thou laid'st me low."  
 The giant his astonishment betrayed,  
 And turned about, and stopped his journey on,  
 And then he stooped to pick up a great stone.

## XXXV.

Orlando had Cortana bare in hand;  
 To split the head in twain was what he  
 schemed:  
 Cortana clave the skull like a true brand,  
 And pagan Passamont died unredeemed;  
 Yet harsh and haughty, as he lay he banned,  
 And most devoutly Macon still blasphemed;<sup>1</sup>  
 But while his crude, rude, blasphemies he heard,  
 Orlando thanked the Father and the Word,—

## XXXVI.

Saying, "What grace to me thou'st this  
 day given!  
 And I to thee, O Lord! am ever bound;  
 I know my life was saved by thee from Heaven,  
 Since by the Giant I was fairly downed.  
 All things by thee are measured just and even;  
 Our power without thine aid would nought  
 be found:  
 I pray thee take heed of me, till I can  
 At least return once more to Carloman."

## XXXVII.

And having said thus much, he went his way;  
 And Alabaster he found out below,  
 Doing the very best that in him lay  
 To root from out a bank a rock or two.  
 Orlando, when he reached him, loud 'gan say,  
 "How think'st thou, glutton, such a stone  
 to throw?"  
 When Alabaster heard his deep voice ring,  
 He suddenly betook him to his sling,

## XXXVIII.

And hurled a fragment of a size so large,  
 That if it had in fact fulfilled its mission,  
 And Roland not availed him of his targe,  
 There would have been no need of a  
 physician.  
 Orlando set himself in turn to charge,  
 And in his bulky bosom made incision  
 With all his sword. The lout fell; but o'er-  
 thrown, he  
 However by no means forgot Macone.

## XXXIX.

Morgante had a palace in his mode,  
 Composed of branches, logs of wood, and  
 earth,  
 And stretched himself at ease in this abode,  
 And shut himself at night within his berth.

<sup>1</sup> ["Macon" is another form of "Mahomet."]



Orlando knocked, and knocked again, to goad  
The giant from his sleep; and he came forth,  
The door to open, like a crazy thing,  
For a rough dream had shook him slumbering.

## XL.

He thought that a fierce serpent had attacked  
him,  
And Mahomet he called; but Mahomet  
Is nothing worth, and, not an instant backed  
him;  
But praying blessed Jesu, he was set  
At liberty from all the fears which racked him;  
And to the gate he came with great regret—  
“Who knocks here?” grumbling all the  
while, said he.  
“That,” said Orlando, “you will quickly see:

## XLI.

“I come to preach to you, as to your brothers,—  
Sent by the miserable monks—repentance;  
For Providence divine, in you and others,  
Condemns the evil done, my new acquaint-  
ance!  
'Tis writ on high—your wrong must pay  
another's:  
From Heaven itself is issued out this  
sentence.  
Know then, that colder now than a pilaster  
I left your Passamont and Alabaster.”

## XLII.

Morgante said, “Oh gentle Cavalier!  
Now by thy God say me no villany;  
The favour of your name I fain would hear,  
And if a Christian, speak for courtesy.”  
Replied Orlando, “So much to your ear  
I by my faith disclose contentedly;  
Christ I adore, who is the genuine Lord,  
And, if you please, by you may be adored.”

## XLIII.

The Saracen rejoined in humble tone,  
“I have had an extraordinary vision;  
A savage serpent fell on me alone,  
And Macon would not pity my condition;  
Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone  
Upon the cross, preferred I my petition;  
His timely succour set me safe and free,  
And I a Christian am disposed to be.”

## XLIV.

Orlando answered, “Baron just and pious,  
If this good wish your heart can really move  
To the true God, who will not then deny us  
Eternal honour, you will go above,

And, if you please, as friends we will ally us,  
And I will love you with a perfect love.  
Your idols are vain liars, full of fraud:  
The only true God is the Christian's God.

## XLV.

“The Lord descended to the virgin breast  
Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine;  
If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest,  
Without whom neither sun nor star can shine,  
Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,  
Your renegado god, and worship mine,  
Baptize yourself with zeal, since you repent.”  
To which Morgante answered, “I'm content.”

## XLVI.

And then Orlando to embrace him flew,  
And made much of his convert, as he cried,  
“To the abbey I will gladly marshal you.”  
To whom Morgante, “Let us go,” replied;  
“I to the friars have for peace to sue.”  
Which thing Orlando heard with inward  
pride,  
Saying, “My brother, so devout and good,  
Ask the Abbot pardon, as I wish you would:

## XLVII.

“Since God has granted your illumination,  
Accepting you in mercy for his own,  
Humility should be your first oblation.”  
Morgante said, “For goodness' sake, make  
known,—  
Since that your God is to be mine—your station,  
And let your name in verity be shown;  
Then will I everything at your command do.”  
On which the other said, he was Orlando.

## XLVIII.

“Then,” quoth the Giant, “blesséd be Jesu  
A thousand times with gratitude and praise!  
Oft, perfect Baron! have I heard of you  
Through all the different periods of my days:  
And, as I said, to be your vassal too  
I wish, for your great gallantry always.”  
Thus reasoning, they continued much to say,  
And onwards to the abbey went their way.

## XLIX.

And by the way about the giants dead  
Orlando with Morgante reasoned: “Be,  
For their decease, I pray you, comforted,  
And, since it is God's pleasure, pardon me;  
A thousand wrongs unto the monks they bred;  
And our true Scripture soundeth openly,  
Good is rewarded, and chastised the ill,  
Which the Lord never faileth to fulfil:

## L.

“ Because His love of justice unto all  
 Issuch, He wills His judgment should devour  
 All who have sin, however great or small ;  
 But good He well remembers to restore.  
 Nor without justice holy could we call  
 Him, whom I now require you to adore.  
 All men must make His will their wishes sway,  
 And quickly and spontaneously obey.

## LI.

“ And here our doctors are of one accord,  
 Coming on this point to the same con-  
 clusion,—  
 That in their thoughts, who praise in Heaven  
 the Lord,  
 If Pity e'er was guilty of intrusion  
 For their unfortunate relations stored  
 In Hell below, and damned in great  
 confusion,  
 Their happiness would be reduced to nought,—  
 And thus unjust the Almighty's self be thought.

## LII.

“ But they in Christ have firmest hope, and all  
 Which seems to Him, to them too must  
 appear  
 Well done ; nor could it otherwise befall ;  
 He never can in any purpose err.  
 If sire or mother suffer endless thrall,  
 They don't disturb themselves for him or her:  
 What pleases God to them must joy inspire;—  
 Such is the observance of the eternal choir.”

## LIII.

“ A word unto the wise,” Morgante said,  
 “ Is wont to be enough, and you shall see  
 How much I grieve about my brethren dead ;  
 And if the will of God seem good to me,  
 Just, as you tell me, 'tis in Heaven obeyed—  
 Ashes to ashes,—merry let us be !  
 I will cut off the hands from both their trunks,  
 And carry them unto the holy monks.

## LIV.

“ So that all persons may be sure and certain  
 That they are dead, and have no further fear  
 To wander solitary this desert in,  
 And that they may perceive my spirit clear  
 By the Lord's grace, who hath withdrawn the  
 curtain  
 Of darkness, making His bright realm  
 appear.”  
 He cut his brethren's hands off at these words,  
 And left them to the savage beasts and birds.

## LV.

Then to the abbey they went on together,  
 Where waited them the Abbot in great doubt.  
 The monks, who knew not yet the fact, ran  
 thither  
 To their superior, all in breathless rout,  
 Saying with tremor, “ Please to tell us whether  
 You wish to have this person in or out ? ”  
 The Abbot, looking through upon the Giant,  
 Too greatly feared, at first, to be compliant.

## LVI.

Orlando seeing him thus agitated,  
 Said quickly, “ Abbot, be thou of good cheer ;  
 He Christ believes, as Christian must be rated,  
 And hath renounced his Macon false ; ”  
 which here  
 Morgante with the hands corroborated,  
 A proof of both the giants' fate quite clear :  
 Thence, with due thanks, the Abbot God  
 adored,  
 Saying, “ Thou hast contented me, O Lord ! ”

## LVII.

He gazed ; Morgante's height he calculated,  
 And more than once contemplated his size ;  
 And then he said, “ O Giant celebrated !  
 Know, that no more my wonder will arise,  
 How you could tear and fling the trees you  
 late did,  
 When I behold your form with my own eyes.  
 You now a true and perfect friend will show  
 Yourself to Christ, as once you were a foe.

## LVIII.

“ And one of our apostles, Saul once named,  
 Long persecuted sore the faith of Christ,  
 Till, one day, by the Spirit being inflamed,  
 ‘ Why dost thou persecute me thus ? ’ said  
 Christ ;  
 And then from his offence he was reclaimed,  
 And went for ever after preaching Christ,  
 And of the faith became a trump, whose  
 sounding  
 O'er the whole earth is echoing and rebounding.

## LIX.

“ So, my Morgante, you may do likewise :  
 He who repents — thus writes the  
 Evangelist—  
 Occasions more rejoicing in the skies  
 Than ninety-nine of the celestial list.  
 You may be sure, should each desire arise  
 With just zeal for the Lord, that you'll exist  
 Among the happy saints for evermore ;  
 But you were lost and damned to Hell before ! ”

## LX.

And thus great honour to Morgante paid  
 The Abbot: many days they did repose.  
 One day, as with Orlando they both strayed,  
 And sauntered here and there, where'er  
 they chose,  
 The Abbot showed a chamber, where arrayed  
 Much armour was, and hung up certain  
 bows;  
 And one of these Morgante for a whim  
 Girt on, though useless, he believed, to him.

## LXI.

There being a want of water in the place,  
 Orlando, like a worthy brother, said,  
 "Morgante, I could wish you in this case  
 To go for water." "You shall be obeyed  
 In all commands," was the reply, "straight-  
 ways."  
 Upon his shoulder a great tub he laid,  
 And went out on his way unto a fountain,  
 Where he was wont to drink, below the  
 mountain.

## LXII.

Arrived there, a prodigious noise he hears,  
 Which suddenly along the forest spread;  
 Whereat from out his quiver he prepares  
 An arrow for his bow, and lifts his head;  
 And lo! a monstrous herd of swine appears,  
 And onward rushes with tempestuous tread,  
 And to the fountain's brink precisely pours;  
 So that the Giant's joined by all the boars.

## LXIII.

Morgante at a venture shot an arrow,  
 Which pierced a pig precisely in the ear,  
 And passed unto the other side quite through;  
 So that the boar, defunct, lay tripped up near.  
 Another, to revenge his fellow farrow,  
 Against the Giant rushed in fierce career,  
 And reached the passage with so swift a foot,  
 Morgante was not now in time to shoot.

## LXIV.

Perceiving that the pig was on him close,  
 He gave him such a punch upon the head,<sup>1</sup>  
 As floored him so that he no more arose,  
 Smashing the very bone; and he fell dead

<sup>1</sup> "Gli dette in su la testa un gran punzone."  
 It is strange that Pulci should have literally  
 anticipated the technical terms of my old friend  
 and master, Jackson, and the art which he has  
 carried to its highest pitch. "*A punch on the  
 head,*" or "*a punch in the head,*"—"un punzone  
 in su la testa,"—is the exact and frequent phrase  
 of our best pugilists, who little dream that they are  
 talking the purest Tuscan.

Next to the other. Having seen such blows,  
 The other pigs along the valley fled;  
 Morgante on his neck the bucket took,  
 Full from the spring, which neither swerved  
 nor shook.

## LXV.

The tub was on one shoulder, and there were  
 The hogs on t'other, and he brushed apace  
 On to the abbey, though by no means near,  
 Nor spilt one drop of water in his race.  
 Orlando, seeing him so soon appear  
 With the dead boars, and with that brimful  
 vase,  
 marvelled to see his strength so very great;  
 So did the Abbot, and set wide the gate.

## LXVI.

The monks, who saw the water fresh and good,  
 Rejoiced, but much more to perceive the  
 pork;  
 All animals are glad at sight of food:  
 They lay their breviaries to sleep, and work  
 With greedy pleasure, and in such a mood,  
 That the flesh needs no salt beneath their  
 fork.  
 Of rankness and of rot there is no fear,  
 For all the fasts are now left in arrear.

## LXVII.

Astthough they wished to burst at once, they ate;  
 And gorged so that, as if the bones had been  
 In water, sorely grieved the dog and cat,  
 Perceiving that they all were picked too clean  
 The Abbot, who to all did honour great,  
 A few days after this convivial scene,  
 Gave to Morgante a fine horse, well trained,  
 Which he long time had for himself maintained.

## LXVIII.

The horse Morgante to a meadow led  
 To gallop, and to put him to the proof,  
 Thinking that he a back of iron had,  
 Or to skim eggs unbroke was light enough;  
 But the horse, sinking with the pain, fell dead,  
 And burst, while cold on earth lay head and  
 hoof.  
 Morgante said, "Get up, thou sulky cur!"  
 And still continued pricking with the spur.

## LXIX.

But finally he thought fit to dismount,  
 And said, "I am as light as any feather,  
 And he has burst;—to this what say you,  
 Count?"  
 Orlando answered, "Like a ship's mast  
 rather

You seem to me, and with the truck for  
front:

Let him go! Fortune wills that we together  
Should march, but you on foot Morgante  
still."

To which the Giant answered, "So I will.

## LXX.

"When there shall be occasion, you will  
see

How I approve my courage in the fight."  
Orlando said, "I really think you'll be,  
If it should prove God's will, a goodly  
knight;

Nor will you napping there discover me.

But never mind your horse, though out of  
sight

'Twere best to carry him into some wood,  
If but the means or way I understood."

## LXXI.

The Giant said, "Then carry him I will,  
Since that to carry me he was so slack—  
To render, as the gods do, good for ill;  
But lend a hand to place him on my back."

Orlando answered, "If my counsel still  
May weigh, Morgante, do not undertake  
To lift or carry this dead courser, who,  
As you have done to him, will do to you.

## LXXII.

"Take care he don't revenge himself, though  
dead,

As Nessus did of old beyond all cure.  
I don't know if the fact you've heard or read;  
But he will make you burst, you may be  
sure."

"But help him on my back," Morgante said,  
"And you shall see what weight I can  
endure.

In place, my gentle Roland, of this palfrey,  
With all the bells, I'd carry yonder belfry."

## LXXIII.

The Abbot said, "The steeple may do well,  
But for the bells, you've broken them, I  
wot."

Morgante answered, "Let them pay in Hell  
The penalty who lie dead in yon grot;"  
And hoisting up the horse from where he  
fell,

He said, "Now look if I the gout have  
got,  
Orlando, in the legs,—or if I have force;"—  
And then he made two gambols with the  
horse,

## LXXIV.

Morgante was like any mountain framed;  
So if he did this 'tis no prodigy;  
But secretly himself Orlando blamed,  
Because he was one of his family;  
And fearing that he might be hurt or  
maimed,

Once more he bade him lay his burden  
by:

"Put down, nor bear him further the desert  
in."

Morgante said, "I'll carry him for certain."

## LXXV.

He did; and stowed him in some nook away,  
And to the abbey then returned with  
speed.

Orlando said, "Why longer do we stay?  
Morgante, here is nought to do indeed."

The Abbot by the hand he took one day,  
And said, with great respect, he had agreed  
To leave his reverence; but for this decision  
He wished to have his pardon and permission.

## LXXVI.

The honours they continued to receive  
Perhaps exceeded what his merits claimed:  
He said, "I mean, and quickly, to retrieve  
The lost days of time past, which may be  
blamed;

Some days ago I should have asked your  
leave,

Kind father, but I really was ashamed,  
And know not how to show my sentiment,  
So much I see you with our stay content.

## LXXVII.

"But in my heart I bear through every clime  
The Abbot, abbey, and this solitude—  
So much I love you in so short a time;  
For me, from Heaven reward you with all  
good

The God so true, the eternal Lord sublime!  
Whose kingdom at the last hath open  
stood.

Meantime we stand expectant of your  
blessing,  
And recommend us to your prayers with  
pressing."

## LXXVIII.

Now when the Abbot Count Orlando heard,  
His heart grew soft with inner tenderness,  
Such fervour in his bosom bred each word;  
And, "Cavalier," he said, "if I have less

Courteous and kind to your great worth  
 appeared,  
 Than fits me for such gentle blood to  
 express,  
 I know I have done too little in this case;  
 But blame our ignorance, and this poor  
 place.

## LXXIX.

“We can indeed but honour you with  
 masses,  
 And sermons, thanksgivings, and pater-  
 nosters,  
 Hot suppers, dinners (fitting other places  
 In verity much rather than the cloisters);  
 But such a love for you my heart embraces,  
 For thousand virtues which your bosom  
 fosters,  
 That wheresoe'er you go I too shall be,  
 And, on the other part, you rest with me.

## LXXX.

“This may involve a seeming contradiction;  
 But you I know are sage, and feel, and  
 taste,  
 And understand my speech with full  
 conviction.  
 For your just pious deeds may you be  
 graced  
 With the Lord's great reward and benedic-  
 tion,  
 By whom you were directed to this waste:  
 To His high mercy is our freedom due,  
 For which we render thanks to Him and you.

## LXXXI.

“You saved at once our life and soul: such  
 fear  
 The Giants caused us, that the way was  
 lost  
 By which we could pursue a fit career  
 In search of Jesus and the saintly Host;  
 And your departure breeds such sorrow here,  
 That comfortless we all are to our cost;  
 But months and years you would not stay in  
 sloth,  
 Nor are you formed to wear our sober cloth;

## LXXXII.

“But to bear arms, and wield the lance;  
 indeed,  
 With these as much is done as with this  
 cowl;  
 In proof of which the Scripture you may  
 read,  
 This Giant up to Heaven may bear his  
 soul

By your compassion: now in peace proceed.  
 Your state and name I seek not to unroll;  
 But, if I'm asked, this answer shall be given,  
 That here an angel was sent down from  
 Heaven.

## LXXXIII.

“If you want armour or aught else, go in,  
 Look o'er the wardrobe, and take what  
 you choose,  
 And cover with it o'er this Giant's skin.”  
 Orlando answered, “If there should lie  
 loose  
 Some armour, ere our journey we begin,  
 Which might be turned to my companion's  
 use,  
 The gift would be acceptable to me.”  
 The Abbot said to him, “Come in and see.”

## LXXXIV.

And in a certain closet, where the wall  
 Was covered with old armour like a crust,  
 The Abbot said to them, “I give you all.”  
 Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the  
 dust  
 The whole, which, save one cuirass, was too  
 small,  
 And that too had the mail inlaid with rust.  
 They wondered how it fitted him exactly,  
 Which ne'er had suited others so compactly.

## LXXXV.

'Twas an immeasurable Giant's, who  
 By the great Milo of Agrante fell  
 Before the abbey many years ago.  
 The story on the wall was figured well;  
 In the last moment of the abbey's foe,  
 Who long had waged a war implacable:  
 Precisely as the war occurred they drew him,  
 And there was Milo as he overthrew him.

## LXXXVI.

Seeing this history, Count Orlando said  
 In his own heart, “O God who in the sky  
 Know'st all things! how was Milo hither led?  
 Who caused the Giant in this place to die?”  
 And certain letters, weeping, then he read,  
 So that he could not keep his visage dry,—  
 As I will tell in the ensuing story:  
 From evil keep you the high King of Glory!

FRANCESCA OF RIMINI.<sup>1</sup>FROM THE *INFERNO* OF  
DANTE.

## CANTO THE FIFTH.

“THE Land where I was born sits by the Seas  
Upon that shore to which the Po descends,  
With all his followers, in search of peace.  
Love, which the gentle heart soon apprehends,  
Seized him for the fair person which was ta'en  
From me, and me even yet the mode offends.  
Love, who to none beloved to love again  
Remits, seized me with wish to please, so  
strong,  
That, as thou see'st, yet, yet it doth remain.  
Love to one death conducted us along, 10  
But Cainà<sup>2</sup> waits for him our life who ended:”  
These were the accents uttered by her  
tongue.—  
Since I first listened to these Souls offended,  
I bowed my visage, and so kept it till—  
'What think'st thou?' said the bard;<sup>3</sup>  
when I unbended,

<sup>1</sup> [The MS. of the translation of the episode of Francesca da Rimini was sent to Murray from Ravenna, March 20, 1820. It was first published in 1830, in the *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*, ii. 309-311.]

Dante, in his *Inferno* (Canto V. lines 97-142), places Francesca and her lover Paolo among the lustful in the second circle of Hell. Francesca, daughter of Guido Vecchio da Polenta, Lord of Ravenna, married (circ. 1275) Gianciotto, second son of Malatesta da Verrucchio, Lord of Rimini. According to Boccaccio, Gianciotto was “hideously deformed in countenance and figure,” and determined to woo and marry Francesca by proxy. He accordingly “sent, as his representative, his younger brother Paolo, the handsomest and most accomplished man in all Italy. Francesca saw Paolo arrive, and imagined she beheld her future husband. That mistake was the commencement of her passion.” A day came when the lovers were surprised together, and Gianciotto slew both his brother and his wife.]

<sup>2</sup> [Caina is the first belt of Cocytus, that is, circle ix. of the *Inferno*, in which fratricides and betrayers of their kindred are immersed up to the neck.]

<sup>3</sup> [Virgil.]

And recommenced: ‘Alas! unto such ill  
How many sweet thoughts, what strong  
ecstacies,  
Led these their evil fortune to fulfil!’  
And then I turned unto their side my eyes,  
And said, ‘Francesca, thy sad destinies 20  
Have made me sorrow till the tears arise.  
But tell me, in the Season of sweet sighs,  
By what and how thy Love to Passion rose,  
So as his dim desires to recognize?’  
Then she to me: ‘The greatest of all woes  
Is to remind us of our happy days 1  
In misery, and that thy teacher knows.  
But if to learn our Passion's first root preys  
Upon thy spirit with such Sympathy, 29  
I will do even as he who weeps and says.  
We read one day for pastime, seated nigh,  
Of Lancilot, how Love enchained him too.  
We were alone, quite unsuspectingly.  
But oft our eyes met, and our cheeks in hue  
All o'er discoloured by that reading were;  
But one point only wholly us o'erthrew;  
When we read the long-sighed-for smile of her,  
To be thus kissed by such devoted lover,  
He, who from me can be divided ne'er, 39  
Kissed my mouth, trembling in the act all over:  
Accurséd was the book and he who wrote!<sup>2</sup>  
That day no further leaf we did uncover.’  
While thus one Spirit told us of their lot,  
The other wept, so that with Pity's thralls,  
I swooned, as if by Death I had been smote,  
And fell down even as a dead body falls.”

March 20, 1820.

<sup>1</sup> [The sentiment is derived from Boethius. The earlier commentators assume that the “teacher” (line 27) is the author of the sentence, but later authorities point out that “mio dottore” can only apply to Virgil (v. 70), who, then and there, in the world of shades was suffering the bitter experience of having “known better days.”

Compare—

“A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering  
happier things.”

—Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*.]

<sup>2</sup> [“A Gallehaut was the book and he who wrote it” (A. J. Butler). The book which the lovers were reading is entitled *L'Illustre et Famosa Historia di Lancilotto del Lago*. The “one point” (l. 36) of the original runs thus: “Et la reina . . . lo piglia per il mento, et lo bacia davanti a Gallehaut, assai lungamente. [“And the Queen took him by the chin, and before the eyes of Gallehaut kissed him over and over again.”]—*Lib. Prim.* cap. lxvi. The Gallehaut of the *Lancilotto*, the shameless “purveyor,” must not be confounded with the stainless Galahad of the *Morte d'Arthur*.]

MARINO FALIERO,<sup>1</sup>  
 DOGE OF VENICE ;  
 AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY, IN  
 FIVE ACTS.

“*Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ.*”  
 —Horace, [*Od.* III. c. iii. line 5].

PREFACE.

THE conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Everything about Venice is, or was, extraordinary—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her Chronicles, and particularly detailed in the “Lives of the Doges,” by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the Appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is perhaps more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander-in-chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara,<sup>2</sup> where he beat the King of Hungary and his army of eighty thousand men, killing eight thousand men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check; an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Alesia, and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterwards commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo d’Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome,—at which last he received the news of his election to the dukedom; his absence being a proof that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprised of his predecessor’s death and his

<sup>1</sup> [*Marino Faliero* was written at Ravenna, April—July, 1820. It was published with *The Prophecy of Dante*, April 21, 1821.]

<sup>2</sup> [Marin Faliero was not in command of the land forces at the siege of Zara in 1346. According to contemporary documents, he held a naval command under Civran, who was in charge of the fleet.]

own succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable temper. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podesta and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host. For this, honest Sanuto “saddles him with a judgment,” as Thwackum did Square; but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the Senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterwards at peace with the church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of count, by Lorenzo, Count-bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are Sanuto, Vettor, Sandi, Andrea Navagero, and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abate Morelli, in his *Monumenti Veneziani di varia Letteratura*, printed in 1796, all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Darù, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his *jealousy*; but I find this nowhere asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says that “Altri scrissero che . . . . dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza,” etc. etc.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto, or by Navagero; and Sandi himself adds, a moment after, that “per altre Veneziane memorie traspire, che non il *solo* desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe indipendente.” The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their “tre Capi.”<sup>1</sup> The attentions of Steno himself

<sup>1</sup> [Michele Steno was not, as Sanudo and others state, one of the Capi of the Quarantia in 1355, but twenty years later, in 1375.]

appear to have been directed towards one of her damsels, and not to the "Dogaressa"<sup>1</sup> herself, against whose fame not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty, and remarked for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion), that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Dr. Moore in his *View of Italy*. His account is false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of *Zeluco* could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs. Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace of Utrecht—that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars, because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a window, and wished to give him another occupation—that Helen lost Troy—that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome—and that Cava brought the Moors to Spain—that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome—that a single verse of Frederick II.<sup>2</sup> of Prussia on the Abbé de Bernis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour,<sup>3</sup> led to the battle of Rosbach—that the elopement of Dearbhorgil with Mac Murchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland, that a personal pique between Maria Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons—and, not to multiply instances of the *teterrima causa*, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims not to their public

tyranny, but to private vengeance—and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America destroyed both King and Commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection, it is indeed extraordinary in Dr. Moore to seem surprised that a man used to command, who had served and swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent, in a fierce age, an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it—

"The young man's wrath is like [light] straw on fire,  
But like red hot steel is the old man's ire."  
[Davie Gellatley's song in *Waverley*, chap. xiv.]

"Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,  
Old age is slow at both."

Laugier's reflections are more philosophical:—"Tale fù il fine ignominioso di un' uomo, che la sua nascita, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi *talenti* per lungo tempo esercitati ne' maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne' governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de' cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragj per collocarlo alla testa della repubblica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamente la sua vita, il risentimento di un' ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che bastò a corrompere le antiche sue qualità, e a condurlo al termine dei scellerati; serio esempio, che prova *non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell' uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando non invigili sopra se stesso.*"

Where did Dr. Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chroniclers, and find nothing of the kind: it is true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue any thing but his having shown a want of firmness, which would

<sup>1</sup> [History does not bear out the tradition of her youth. Aluica Gradenigo was born in the first decade of the fourteenth century, and became Dogaressa when she was more than forty-five years of age.]

<sup>2</sup> ["Evitez de Bernis la stérile abondance."]

<sup>3</sup> ["Je ne la connais pas."]



doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians, who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and *at* which he died, as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification, at any distance of time, for calumniating an historical character: surely truth belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate: and they who have died upon a scaffold have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the place of Marino Faliero amongst the Doges, and the Giants' Staircase, where he was crowned, and discrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination; as did his fiery character and strange story. I went, in 1819, in search of his tomb more than once to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo; and, as I was standing before the monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, "I can show you finer monuments than that." I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. "Oh," said he, "I will show it you;" and, conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall with an illegible inscription. He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue<sup>1</sup> of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church is not, however, of a Faliero, but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino; Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara, in 1117 (where his descendant after-

<sup>1</sup> [In the Campo in front of the church is the equestrian statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni, designed by Andrea Verocchio, and cast in 1496 by Alessandro Leopardi.—*Handbook: Northern Italy*, p. 374.]

wards conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the tragedy, I have at least transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work; and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero. But, perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was, besides, well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. "If you make him jealous," said he, "recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakespeare, and an exhausted subject:—stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn; and make your plot as regular as you can." Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time. And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience. The sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his

judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that, even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will.<sup>1</sup> But I wish that others would, for surely there is dramatic power somewhere, where Joanna Baillie, and Milman, and John Wilson exist. The *City of the Plague* [1816] and the *Fall of Jerusalem* [1820] are full of the best "matériel" for tragedy that has been seen since Horace

<sup>1</sup> While I was in the sub-committee of Drury Lane Theatre, I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that we did our best to bring back the legitimate drama. I tried what I could to get *De Montfort* revived, but in vain, and equally in vain in favour of Sotheby's *Ivan*, which was thought an acting play; and I endeavoured also to wake Mr. Coleridge to write us a tragedy. Those who are not in the secret will hardly believe that the *School for Scandal* is the play which has brought the *least money*, averaging the number of times it has been acted since its production; so Manager Dibdin assured me. Of what has occurred since Maturin's *Bertram* I am not aware; so that I may be traducing, through ignorance, some excellent new writers; if so, I beg their pardon. I have been absent from England nearly five years, and, till last year, I never read an English newspaper since my departure, and am now only aware of theatrical matters through the medium of the *Parisian Gazette* of Galignani, and only for the last twelve months. Let me, then, deprecate all offence to tragic or comic writers, to whom I wish well, and of whom I know nothing. The long complaints of the actual state of the drama arise, however, from no fault of the performers. I can conceive nothing better than Kemble, Cooke, and Kean, in their very different manners, or than Elliston in *Gentleman's* comedy, and in some parts of tragedy. Miss O'Neill I never saw, having made and kept a determination to see nothing which should divide or disturb my recollection of Siddons. Siddons and Kemble were the *ideal* of tragic action; I never saw anything at all resembling them, even in *person*: for this reason, we shall never see again Coriolanus or Macbeth. When Kean is blamed for want of dignity, we should remember that it is a grace, not an art, and not to be attained by study. In all, *not* SUPER-natural parts, he is perfect; even his very defects belong, or seem to belong, to the parts themselves, and appear truer to nature. But of Kemble we may say, with reference to his acting, what the Cardinal de Retz said of the Marquis of Montrose, "that he was the only man he ever saw who reminded him of the heroes of Plutarch."

Walpole, except passages of *Ethwald* [1802] and *De Montfort* [1798]. It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman; but, to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters, and of the *Castle of Otranto* [1765], he is the "Ultimus Romanorum," the author of the *Mysterious Mother* [1768], a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.

In speaking of the drama of *Marino Faliero*, I forgot to mention that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge acceding to it; whereas, in fact, it was of his own preparation and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the Duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the consultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this, the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the Appendix.

[*Marino Faliero* was produced for the first time at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, April 25, 1821. Mr. Cooper played "The Doge"; Mrs. W. West, "Angiolina, wife of the Doge." The piece was repeated on April 30, May 1, 2, 3, 4, and 14, 1821.

A revival was attempted at Drury Lane, May 20, 21, 1842, when Macready appeared as "The Doge," and Helen Faucit as "Angiolina" (see *Life and Remains* of E. L. Blanchard, 1891, i. 346-348).

An adaptation of Byron's play, by W.

Bayle Bernard, was produced at Drury Lane, November 2, 1867. It was played till December 17, 1867. Phelps took the part of "The Doge," and Mrs. Hermann of "Angiolina." In Germany an adaptation by Arthur Fitger was performed nineteen times by the "Meiningers," *circ.* 1887 (see *Englische Studien*, 1899, xxvii. 146).]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge of Venice.*  
BERTUCCIO FALIERO, *Nephew of the Doge.*  
LIONI, *a Patrician and Senator.*  
BENINTENDE, *Chief of the Council of Ten.*  
MICHEL STENO, *One of the three Capi of the Forty.*

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *Chief of the Arsenal,*  
PHILIP CALENDARO,  
DAGOLINO,  
BERTRAM,

} *Conspirators.*

*Signor of the Night,* { "*Signore di Notte,*" one  
of the Officers belonging to the Republic.

*First Citizen.*

*Second Citizen.*

*Third Citizen.*

VINCENZO, } *Officers belonging to the Ducal*  
PIETRO, } *Palace.*  
BATTISTA, }

*Secretary of the Council of Ten.*

*Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, The Council of Ten, the Giunta, etc., etc.*

WOMEN.

ANGIOLINA, *Wife to the Doge.*

MARIANNA, *her Friend.*

*Female Attendants, etc.*

Scene VENICE—in the year 1355.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.*

PIETRO *speaks, in entering, to BATTISTA.*

*Pie.* Is not the messenger returned?

*Bat.*

Not yet;

I have sent frequently, as you commanded,  
But still the Signory is deep in council,  
And long debate on Steno's accusation.

*Pie.* Too long—at least so thinks the Doge.

*Bat.*

How bears he

These moments of suspense?

*Pie.*

With struggling patience.

Placed at the Ducal table, covered o'er  
With all the apparel of the state—petitions,  
Despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, re-  
ports,—

He sits as rapt in duty; but whene'er 10

He hears the jarring of a distant door,

Or aught that intimates a coming step,

Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,

And he will start up from his chair, then pause

And seat himself again, and fix his gaze

Upon some edict; but I have observed

For the last hour he has not turned a leaf.

*Bat.* 'Tis said he is much moved,—and  
doubtless 'twas

Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly.

*Pie.* Aye, if a poor man: Steno's a pat-  
rician, 20

Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.

*Bat.*

Then you think

He will not be judged hardly?

*Pie.*

'Twere enough

He be judged justly; but 'tis not for us

To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.

*Bat.* And here it comes.—What news,  
Vincenzo?

*Enter VINCENZO.*

*Vin.*

'Tis

Decided; but as yet his doom's unknown:

I saw the President in act to seal

The parchment which will bear the Forty's  
judgment

Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Ducal Chamber.*

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge; and his Nephew,*  
BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

*Ber. F.* It cannot be but they will do you  
justice.

*Doge.* Aye, such as the Avogadori<sup>1</sup> did,  
Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty  
To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.

<sup>1</sup> [The Avogadori, three in number, were the conductors of criminal prosecutions on the part of the State; and no act of the councils was valid, unless sanctioned by the presence of one of them; but they were not, as Byron seems to imply, a court of first instance. The implied reproach that they preferred to send the case to appeal because Steno was a member of the "Quarantia," is based on an error of Sanudo's.]

*Ber. F.* His peers will scarce protect him ;  
such an act

Would bring contempt on all authority.

*Doge.* Know you not Venice? Know you  
not the Forty?

But we shall see anon.

*Ber. F.* (*addressing VINCENZO, then enter-*  
*ing.*) How now—what tidings?

*Vin.* I am charged to tell his Highness  
that the court

Has passed its resolution, and that, soon, 10

As the due forms of judgment are gone through,

The sentence will be sent up to the Doge ;

In the mean time the Forty doth salute

The Prince of the Republic, and entreat

His acceptance of their duty.

*Doge.* Yes—

They are wond'rous dutiful, and ever humble.

Sentence is passed, you say?

*Vin.* It is, your Highness :

The President was sealing it, when I

Was called in, that no moment might be lost

In forwarding the intimation due 20

Not only to the Chief of the Republic,

But the complainant, both in one united.

*Ber. F.* Are you aware, from aught you  
have perceived,

Of their decision?

*Vin.* No, my Lord ; you know

The secret custom of the courts in Venice.

*Ber. F.* True ; but there still is something  
given to guess,

Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye would  
catch at ;

A whisper, or a murmur, or an air

More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.

The Forty are but men—most worthy men, 30

And wise, and just, and cautious—this I grant—

And secret as the grave to which they doom

The guilty : but with all this, in their aspects—

At least in some, the juniors of the number—

A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,

Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.

*Vin.* My Lord, I came away upon the  
moment,

And had no leisure to take note of that

Which passed among the judges, even in

seeming ;

Mystation near the accused too, Michel Steno,

Made me—

*Doge* (*abruptly*). And how looked *he*?  
deliver that. 41

*Vin.* Calm, but not overcast, he stood re-  
signed

To the decree, whate'er it were ;—but lo !

It comes, for the perusal of his Highness.

*Enter the SECRETARY of the Forty.*

*Sec.* The high tribunal of the Forty sends

Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,

Chief magistrate of Venice, and requests

His Highness to peruse and to approve

The sentence passed on Michel Steno, born

Patrician, and arraigned upon the charge 50

Contained, together with its penalty,

Within the rescript which I now present.

*Doge.* Retire, and wait without.

[*Exeunt SECRETARY and VINCENZO.*

Take thou this paper :

The misty letters vanish from my eyes ;

I cannot fix them.

*Ber. F.* Patience, my dear Uncle :

Why do you tremble thus?—nay, doubt not, all

Will be as could be wished.

*Doge.* Say on.

*Ber. F.* (*reading*). “Decreed

In council, without one dissenting voice,

That Michel Steno, by his own confession,

Guilty on the last night of Carnival 60

Of having graven on the ducal throne

The following words—”<sup>1</sup>

*Doge.* Would'st thou repeat them?

Would'st *thou* repeat them—*thou*, a Faliero,

Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,

Dishonoured in its Chief—that Chief the Prince

Of Venice, first of cities?—To the sentence.

*Ber. F.* Forgive me, my good Lord ; I will  
obey—

(*Reads*) “That Michel Steno be detained a  
month

In close arrest.”

*Doge.* Proceed.

*Ber. F.* My Lord, 'tis finished.

*Doge.* How say you?—finished! Do I  
dream?—'tis false— 70

Give me the paper—(*snatches the paper and  
reads*)—“'Tis decreed in council

That Michel Steno”——Nephew, thine arm!

*Ber. F.* Nay,

Cheer up, be calm ; this transport is uncalled  
for—

Let me seek some assistance.

*Doge.* Stop, sir—Stir not—

'Tis past.

*Ber. F.* I cannot but agree with you

The sentence is too slight for the offence ;

<sup>1</sup> [“Marin Faliero, dalla bella moglie—altri la  
gode, ed egli la mantien.” (“Marino Faliero  
the husband of the fair wife—others enjoy her,  
but he supports her.”)—Marino Sanuto, *Vita  
Ducum Venetorum, apud Muratori, Rerum  
Italicarum Scriptores*, 1733, xxii. 628-635.]

It is not honourable in the Forty  
To affix so slight a penalty to that  
Which was a foul affront to you, and even  
To them, as being your subjects; but 'tis  
not 80

Yet without remedy: you can appeal  
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,  
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,  
Will now take up the cause they once declined,  
And do you right upon the bold delinquent.  
Think you not thus, good Uncle? why do you  
stand

So fixed? You heed me not:—I pray you,  
hear me!

Oh! that the Saracen were in St. Mark's!  
*Doge (dashing down the ducal bonnet, and  
offering to trample upon it, exclaims,  
as he is withheld by his nephew)*

Thus would I do him homage.

*Ber. F.* For the sake  
Of Heaven and all its saints, my Lord——

*Doge.* Away! 90  
Oh, that the Genoese were in the port!  
Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at Zara  
Were ranged around the palace!

*Ber. F.* 'Tis not well  
In Venice' Duke to say so.

*Doge.* Venice' Duke!  
Who now is Duke in Venice? let me see him,  
That he may do me right.

*Ber. F.* If you forget  
Your office, and its dignity and duty,  
Remember that of man, and curb this passion.  
The Duke of Venice——

*Doge (interrupting him).* There is no such  
thing— 99  
It is a word—nay, worse—a worthless by-word:  
The most despised, wronged, outraged, help-  
less wretch,

Who begs his bread, if 'tis refused by one,  
May win it from another kinder heart;  
But he, who is denied his right by those  
Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer  
Than the rejected beggar—he's a slave—  
And that am I—and thou—and all our house,  
Even from this hour; the meanest artisan  
Will point the finger, and the haughty noble  
May spit upon us:—where is our redress? 110

*Ber. F.* The law, my Prince——

*Doge (interrupting him).* You see  
what it has done;

I asked no remedy but from the law—  
I sought no vengeance but redress by law—  
I called no judges but those named by law—  
As Sovereign, I appealed unto my subjects,

The very subjects who had made me  
Sovereign,

And gave me thus a double right to be so.  
The rights of place and choice, of birth and  
service,

Honours and years, these scars, these hoary  
hairs, 119

The travel—toil—the perils—the fatigues—  
The blood and sweat of almost eighty years,  
Were weighed i' the balance, 'gainst the  
foulest stain,

The grossest insult, most contemptuous  
crime

Of a rank, rash patrician — and found  
wanting!

And this is to be borne!

*Ber. F.* I say not that:—  
In case your fresh appeal should be rejected,  
We will find other means to make all even.

*Doge.* Appeal again! art thou my brother's  
son?

A scion of the house of Faliero?  
The nephew of a Doge? and of that blood  
Which hath already given three dukes to  
Venice? 131

But thou say'st well—we must be humble  
now.

*Ber. F.* My princely Uncle! you are too  
much moved;—

I grant it was a gross offence, and grossly  
Left without fitting punishment: but still  
This fury doth exceed the provocation,  
Or any provocation: if we are wronged,  
We will ask justice; if it be denied,  
We'll take it; but may do all this in calm-  
ness—

Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep  
Silence. 140

I have yet scarce a third part of your years,  
I love our house, I honour you, its Chief,  
The guardian of my youth, and its  
instructor—

But though I understand your grief, and enter  
In part of your disdain, it doth appal me  
To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,  
O'ersweep all bounds, and foam itself to air.

*Doge.* I tell thee—*must* I tell thee—what  
thy father

Would have required no words to com-  
prehend?

Hast thou no feeling save the external sense  
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no  
soul— 151

No pride—no passion—no deep sense of  
honour?

*Ber. F.* 'Tis the first time that honour has  
been doubted,

And were the last, from any other sceptic.

*Doge.* You know the full offence of this  
born villain,

This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted felon,  
Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,  
And on the honour of—Oh God! my wife,  
The nearest, dearest part of all men's  
honour,

Left a base slur to pass from mouth to  
mouth 160

Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul  
comments,

And villainous jests, and blasphemies  
obscene;

While sneering nobles, in more polished  
guise,

Whispered the tale, and smiled upon the lie  
Which made me look like them—a courteous  
wittol,

Patient—aye, proud, it may be, of dis-  
honour.

*Ber. F.* But still it was a lie—you knew it  
false,

And so did all men.

*Doge.* Nephew, the high Roman  
Said, "Cæsar's wife must not even be  
suspected,"

And put her from him.

*Ber. F.* True—but in those  
days— 170

*Doge.* What is it that a Roman would not  
suffer,

That a Venetian Prince must bear? old  
Dandolo

Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,  
And wore the ducal cap I trample on—  
Because 'tis now degraded.

*Ber. F.* 'Tis even so.

*Doge.* It is—it is;—I did not visit on  
The innocent creature thus most vilely  
slandered

Because she took an old man for her lord,  
For that he had been long her father's friend  
And patron of her house, as if there were 180

No love in woman's heart but lust of youth  
And beardless faces;—I did not for this  
Visit the villain's infamy on her,

But craved my country's justice on his head,  
The justice due unto the humblest being

Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to him,  
Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to  
him—

Who hath a name whose honour's all to him,

When these are tainted by the accursing  
breath

Of Calumny and Scorn.

*Ber. F.* And what redress 190

Did you expect as his fit punishment?

*Doge.* Death! Was I not the Sovereign of  
the state—

Insulted on his very throne, and made  
A mockery to the men who should obey me?

Was I not injured as a husband? scorned

As man? reviled, degraded, as a Prince?

Was not offence like his a complication

Of insult and of treason?—and he lives!

Had he instead of on the Doge's throne

Stamped the same brand upon a peasant's  
stool, 200

His blood had gilt the threshold; for the  
carle

Had stabbed him on the instant.

*Ber. F.* Do not doubt it,

He shall not live till sunset—leave to me

The means, and calm yourself.

*Doge.* Hold, nephew: this

Would have sufficed but yesterday; at  
present

I have no further wrath against this man.

*Ber. F.* What mean you? is not the offence  
redoubled

By this most rank—I will not say—acquittal;  
For it is worse, being full acknowledgment

Of the offence, and leaving it unpunished? 210

*Doge.* It is redoubled, but not now by him:

The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest—

We must obey the Forty.

*Ber. F.* Obey them!

Who have forgot their duty to the Sovereign?

*Doge.* Why, yes;—boy, you perceive it  
then at last:

Whether as fellow citizen who sues

For Justice, or as Sovereign who commands  
it,

They have defrauded me of both my rights

(For here the Sovereign is a citizen); 219

But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair

Of Steno's head—he shall not wear it long.

*Ber. F.* Not twelve hours longer, had you  
left to me

The mode and means; if you had calmly  
heard me,

I never meant this miscreant should escape,

But wished you to suppress such gusts of  
passion,

That we more surely might devise together  
His taking off.

*Doge.* No, nephew, he must live ;  
At least, just now—a life so vile as his  
Were nothing at this hour ; in th' olden time  
Some sacrifices asked a single victim, 230  
Great expiations had a hecatomb.

*Ber. F.* Your wishes are my law : and yet  
I fain  
Would prove to you how near unto my  
heart  
The honour of our house must ever be.

*Doge.* Fear not ; you shall have time and  
place of proof :  
But be not thou too rash, as I have been.  
I am ashamed of my own anger now ;  
I pray you, pardon me.

*Ber. F.* Why, that's my uncle !  
The leader, and the statesman, and the  
chief  
Of commonwealths, and sovereign of him-  
self ! 240

I wondered to perceive you so forget  
All prudence in your fury, at these years,  
Although the cause——

*Doge.* Aye—think upon the cause—  
Forget it not :—When you lie down to rest,  
Let it be black among your dreams ; and  
when

The morn returns, so let it stand between  
The Sun and you, as an ill-omened cloud  
Upon a summer-day of festival :  
So will it stand to me ;—but speak not, stir  
not,— 249

Leave all to me ;—we shall have much to do,  
And you shall have a part.—But now retire,  
'Tis fit I were alone.

*Ber. F.* (*taking up and placing the ducal  
bonnet on the table*). Ere I depart,  
I pray you to resume what you have spurned,  
Till you can change it—haply, for a crown !  
And now I take my leave, imploring you  
In all things to rely upon my duty,  
As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,  
And not less loyal citizen and subject.

[*Exit BERTUCCIO FALIERO.*]

*Doge (solus).* Adieu, my worthy nephew.—  
Hollow bauble !

[*Taking up the ducal cap.*]

Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,  
Without investing the insulted brow 261  
With the all-swaying majesty of Kings ;  
Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,  
Let me resume thee as I would a vizor.

[*Puts it on.*]

How my brain aches beneath thee ! and my  
temples

Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.  
Could I not turn thee to a diadem ?  
Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre  
Which in this hundred-handed Senate rules,  
Making the people nothing, and the Prince  
A pageant ? In my life I have achieved 271  
Tasks not less difficult—achieved for them,  
Who thus repay me ! Can I not requite them ?  
Oh for one year ! Oh ! but for even a day  
Of my full youth, while yet my body served  
My soul as serves the generous steed his lord,  
I would have dashed amongst them, asking few  
In aid to overthrow these sworn patricians ;  
But now I must look round for other hands  
To serve this hoary head ;—but it shall plan  
In such a sort as will not leave the task 281  
Herculean, though as yet 'tis but a chaos  
Of darkly brooding thoughts : my fancy is  
In her first work, more nearly to the light  
Holding the sleeping images of things  
For the selection of the pausing judgment—  
The troops are few in——

*Enter VINCENZO.*

*Vin.* There is one without  
Craves audience of your Highness.

*Doge.* I'm unwell—  
I can see no one, not even a patrician— 289  
Let him refer his business to the Council.

*Vin.* My Lord, I will deliver your reply ;  
It cannot much import—he's a plebeian,  
The master of a galley, I believe.

*Doge.* How ! did you say the patron of a  
galley ?  
That is—I mean—a servant of the state :  
Admit him, he may be on public service.

[*Exit VINCENZO.*]

*Doge (solus).* This patron may be sounded ;  
I will try him.  
I know the people to be discontented :  
They have cause, since Sapienza's<sup>1</sup> adverse day,  
When Genoa conquered : they have further  
cause, 300

Since they are nothing in the state, and in  
The city worse than nothing—mere machines,  
To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.  
The troops have long arrears of pay, oft  
promised,  
And murmur deeply—any hope of change  
Will draw them forward : they shall pay  
themselves

<sup>1</sup> [The island of Sapienza lies about nine miles to the north-west of Capo Gallo, in the Morea. The battle in which the Venetians under Nicolò Pisani were defeated by the Genoese under Paganino Doria was fought November 4, 1354.]

With plunder:—but the priests—I doubt  
the priesthood

Will not be with us; they have hated me  
Since that rash hour, when, maddened with  
the drone,

I smote the tardy Bishop at Treviso,<sup>1</sup> 310  
Quickening his holy march; yet, ne'ertheless,  
They may be won, at least their Chief at Rome,  
By some well-timed concessions; but, above  
All things, I must be speedy: at my hour  
Of twilight little light of life remains.

Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,  
I had lived too long, and willingly would sleep  
Next moment with my sires; and, wanting this,  
Better that sixty of my fourscore years  
Had been already where—how soon, I care  
not— 320

The whole must be extinguished;—better that  
They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be  
The thing these arch-oppressors fain would  
make me.

Let me consider—of efficient troops  
There are three thousand posted at—

*Enter VINCENZO and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.*

*Vin.* May it please  
Your Highness, the same patron whom I  
spake of  
Is here to crave your patience.

*Doge.* Leave the chamber,  
*Vincenzo.*— [*Exit VINCENZO.*]

Sir, you may advance—what would you?

*I. Ber.* Redress.

*Doge.* Of whom?

*I. Ber.* Of God and of the Doge.

*Doge.* Alas! my friend, you seek it of the  
twain 330

Of least respect and interest in Venice.

You must address the Council.

*I. Ber.* 'Twere in vain;

For he who injured me is one of them.

*Doge.* There's blood upon thy face—how  
came it there?

*I. Ber.* 'Tis mine, and not the first I've  
shed for Venice,

But the first shed by a Venetian hand:

A noble smote me.

*Doge.* Doth he live?

*I. Ber.* Not long—

But for the hope I had and have, that you,  
My Prince, yourself a soldier, will redress

Him, whom the laws of discipline and Venice  
Permit not to protect himself:—if not— 341

I say no more.

<sup>1</sup> An historical fact. See Marin Sanuto's *Lives of the Doges.*

*Doge.* But something you would do—  
Is it not so?

*I. Ber.* I am a man, my Lord.

*Doge.* Why so is he who smote you.

*I. Ber.* He is called so;

Nay, more, a noble one—at least, in Venice:  
But since he hath forgotten that I am one,  
And treats me like a brute, the brute may  
turn—

'Tis said the worm will.

*Doge.* Say—his name and lineage?

*I. Ber.* Barbaro.

*Doge.* What was the cause? or the pretext?

*I. Ber.* I am the chief of the arsenal, employed  
At present in repairing certain galleys 351  
But roughly used by the Genoese last year.

This morning comes the noble Barbaro  
Full of reproof, because our artisans  
Had left some frivolous order of his house,  
To execute the state's decree: I dared  
To justify the men—he raised his hand;—  
Behold my blood! the first time it e'er flowed  
Dishonourably.

*Doge.* Have you long time served?

*I. Ber.* So long as to remember Zara's  
siege, 360  
And fight beneath the Chief who beat the  
Huns there,

Sometime my general, now the Doge Faliero.—

*Doge.* How! are we comrades?—the  
State's ducal robes

Sit newly on me, and you were appointed  
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome;  
So that I recognised you not. Who placed  
you?

*I. Ber.* The late Doge; keeping still my  
old command

As patron of a galley: my new office  
Was given as the reward of certain scars  
(So was your predecessor pleased to say): 370  
I little thought his bounty would conduct me  
To his successor as a helpless plaintiff;  
At least, in such a cause.

*Doge.* Are you much hurt?

*I. Ber.* Irreparably in my self-esteem.

*Doge.* Speak out; fear nothing: being  
stung at heart,

What would you do to be revenged on this  
man?

*I. Ber.* That which I dare not name, and  
yet will do.

*Doge.* Then wherefore came you here?

*I. Ber.* I come for justice,  
Because my general is Doge, and will not  
See his old soldier trampled on. Had any, 380



Save Faliero, filled the ducal throne,  
This blood had been washed out in other  
blood.

*Doge.* You come to me for justice—unto *me!*  
The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;  
I cannot even obtain it—'twas denied  
To me most solemnly an hour ago!

*I. Ber.* How says your Highness?

*Doge.* Steno is condemned  
To a month's confinement.

*I. Ber.* What! the same who dared  
To stain the ducal throne with those foul  
words,  
That have cried shame to every ear in  
Venice? 390

*Doge.* Aye, doubtless they have echoed o'er  
the arsenal,  
Keeping due time with every hammer's clink,  
As a good jest to jolly artisans;  
Or making chorus to the creaking oar,  
In the vile tune of every galley-slave,  
Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted  
*He* was not a shamed dotard like the Doge.

*I. Ber.* Is't possible? a month's imprison-  
ment!  
No more for Steno?

*Doge.* You have heard the offence,  
And now you know his punishment; and  
then 400

You ask redress of *me!* Go to the Forty,  
Who passed the sentence upon Michel Steno;  
They'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.

*I. Ber.* Ah! dared I speak my feelings!

*Doge.* Give them breath.  
Mine have no further outrage to endure.

*I. Ber.* Then, in a word, it rests but on  
your word

To punish and avenge—I will not say  
*My* petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,  
However vile, to such a thing as I am?—  
But the base insult done your state and  
person. 410

*Doge.* You overrate my power, which is a  
pageant.

This Cap is not the Monarch's crown; these  
robes

Might move compassion, like a beggar's  
rags;

Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these  
But lent to the poor puppet, who must play  
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.

*I. Ber.* Wouldst thou be King?

*Doge.* Yes—of a happy people.

*I. Ber.* Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of  
Venice?

*Doge.* Aye,  
If that the people shared that sovereignty,  
So that nor they nor I were further slaves 420  
To this o'ergrown aristocratic Hydra,  
The poisonous heads of whose envenomed  
body

Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.

*I. Ber.* Yet, thou wast born, and still hast  
lived, patrician.

*Doge.* In evil hour was I so born; my birth  
Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but  
I lived and toiled a soldier and a servant  
Of Venice and her people, not the Senate;  
Their good and my own honour were my  
guerdon.

I have fought and bled; commanded, aye,  
and conquered; 430

Have made and marred peace oft in em-  
bassies,

As it might chance to be our country's  
'vantage;

Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,  
Through almost sixty years, and still for  
Venice,

My father's and my birthplace, whose dear  
spires,

Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,

It was reward enough for me to view

Once more; but not for any knot of men,

Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!

But would you know why I have done all  
this? 440

Ask of the bleeding pelican why she  
Hath ripped her bosom? Had the bird a  
voice,

She'd tell thee 'twas for *all* her little ones.

*I. Ber.* And yet they made thee Duke.

*Doge.* *They made me so;*

I sought it not, the flattering fetters met me

Returning from my Roman embassy,

And never having hitherto refused

Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,

At these late years, decline what was the  
highest

Of all in seeming, but of all most base 450  
In what we have to do and to endure:

Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,  
When I can neither right myself nor thee.

*I. Ber.* You shall do both, if you possess  
the will;

And many thousands more not less oppressed  
Who wait but for a signal—will you give it?

*Doge.* You speak in riddles.

*I. Ber.* Which shall soon be read  
At peril of my life—if you disdain not

To lend a patient ear.

*Doge.* Say on.

*I. Ber.* Not thou,  
Nor I alone, are injured and abused, 460  
Contemned and trampled on; but the whole  
people  
Groan with the strong conception of their  
wrongs:

The foreign soldiers in the Senate's pay  
Are discontented for their long arrears;  
The native mariners, and civic troops,  
Feel with their friends; for who is he amongst  
them

Whose brethren, parents, children, wives, or  
sisters,

Have not partook oppression, or pollution,  
From the patricians? And the hopeless war  
Against the Genoese, which is still main-  
tained 470

With the plebeian blood, and treasure wrung  
From their hard earnings, has inflamed them  
further:

Even now—but, I forget that speaking thus,  
Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death!

*Doge.* And suffering what thou hast done  
—fear'st thou death?

Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten  
By those for whom thou hast bled.

*I. Ber.* No, I will speak  
At every hazard; and if Venice' Doge  
Should turn delator, be the shame on him,  
And sorrow too; for he will lose far more 480  
Than I.

*Doge.* From me fear nothing; out with it!

*I. Ber.* Know then, that there are met and  
sworn in secret

A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true;  
Men who have proved all fortunes, and have  
long

Grieved over that of Venice, and have right  
To do so; having served her in all climes,  
And having rescued her from foreign foes,  
Would do the same from those within her walls.

They are not numerous, nor yet too few  
For their great purpose; they have arms, and  
means, 490

And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and patient  
courage.

*Doge.* For what then do they pause?

*I. Ber.* An hour to strike.

*Doge (aside).* Saint Mark's shall strike that  
hour! 1

<sup>1</sup> [The bells of San Marco were never rung but  
by order of the Doge.]

*I. Ber.*

I now have placed  
My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes  
Within thy power, but in the firm belief  
That injuries like ours, sprung from one cause,  
Will generate one vengeance: should it be so,  
Be our Chief now—our Sovereign hereafter.

*Doge.* How many are ye?

*I. Ber.* I'll not answer that  
Till I am answered.

*Doge.* How, sir! do you menace? 500

*I. Ber.* No; I affirm. I have betrayed  
myself;

But there's no torture in the mystic wells  
Which undermine your palace, nor in those  
Not less appalling cells, the "leaden roofs,"  
To force a single name from me of others.  
The Pozzi<sup>1</sup> and the Piombi were in vain;  
They might wring blood from me, but treachery  
never.

And I would pass the fearful "Bridge of Sighs,"  
Joyous that mine must be the last that e'er  
Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which flows  
Between the murderers and the murdered,  
washing 511

The prison and the palace walls: there are  
Those who would live to think on't, and  
avenge me.

*Doge.* If such your power and purpose, why  
come here

To sue for justice, being in the course  
To do yourself due right?

*I. Ber.* Because the man,  
Who claims protection from authority,  
Showing his confidence and his submission  
To that authority, can hardly be  
Suspected of combining to destroy it. 520  
Had I sate down too humbly with this blow,  
A moody brow and muttered threats had made  
me

A marked man to the Forty's inquisition;  
But loud complaint, however angrily  
It shapes its phrase, is little to be feared,  
And less distrusted. But, besides all this,  
I had another reason.

*Doge.* What was that?

*I. Ber.* Some rumours that the Doge was  
greatly moved  
By the reference of the Avogadori  
Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty 530

<sup>1</sup> [The *pozzi* or wells were underground cells in  
the prisons at the foot of the Bridge of Sighs. The  
*Sotti Piombi* or "Under the leads" were strongly-  
barred cells immediately below the roof of the  
prison. The prisons are connected with the Doge's  
Palace of the Bridge of Sighs.]

Had reached me. I had served you, honoured  
you,  
And felt that you were dangerously insulted,  
Being of an order of such spirits, as  
Requite tenfold both good and evil: 'twas  
My wish to prove and urge you to redress.  
Now you know all; and that I speak the truth,  
My peril be the proof.

*Doge.* You have deeply ventured;  
But all must do so who would greatly win:  
Thus far I'll answer you—your secret's safe.

*I. Ber.* And is this all?

*Doge.* Unless with all intrusted, 540  
What would you have me answer?

*I. Ber.* I would have you  
Trust him who leaves his life in trust with you.

*Doge.* But I must know your plan, your  
names, and numbers;  
The last may then be doubled, and the former  
Matured and strengthened.

*I. Ber.* We're enough already;  
You are the sole ally we covet now.

*Doge.* But bring me to the knowledge of your  
chiefs.

*I. Ber.* That shall be done upon your formal  
pledge  
To keep the faith that we will pledge to you.

*Doge.* When? where?

*I. Ber.* This night I'll bring to your apartment  
Two of the principals: a greater number 551  
Were hazardous.

*Doge.* Stay, I must think of this.—  
What if I were to trust myself amongst you,  
And leave the palace?

*I. Ber.* You must come alone.

*Doge.* With but my nephew.

*I. Ber.* Not were he your son!

*Doge.* Wretch! darest thou name my son?  
He died in arms

At Sapienza for this faithless state.

Oh! that he were alive, and I in ashes!

Or that he were alive ere I be ashes! 559  
I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

*I. Ber.* Not one of all those strangers  
whom thou doubtest,

But will regard thee with a filial feeling,  
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

*Doge.* The die is cast. Where is the place  
of meeting?

*I. Ber.* At midnight I will be alone and  
masked

Where'er your Highness pleases to direct me,  
To wait your coming, and conduct you where  
You shall receive our homage, and pronounce  
Upon our project.

*Doge.* At what hour arises  
The moon?

*I. Ber.* Late, but the atmosphere is thick and  
dusky, 570  
'Tis a sirocco.

*Doge.* At the midnight hour, then,  
Near to the church where sleep my sires;<sup>1</sup> the  
same,

Twin-named from the apostles John and Paul;  
A gondola,<sup>2</sup> with one oar only, will  
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.  
Be there.

*I. Ber.* I will not fail.

*Doge.* And now retire—

*I. Ber.* In the full hope your Highness will  
not falter

In your great purpose. Prince, I take my leave.  
[Exit ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.]

*Doge (solus).* At midnight, by the church  
Saints John and Paul,

Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair— 580  
To what? to hold a council in the dark  
With common ruffians leagued to ruin states!  
And will not my great sires leap from the vault,  
Where lie two Doges who preceded me,  
And pluck me down amongst them? Would  
they could!

For I should rest in honour with the honoured.  
Alas! I must not think of them, but those  
Who have made me thus unworthy of a name  
Noble and brave as aught of consular  
On Roman marbles; but I will redeem it  
Back to its antique lustre in our annals, 591  
By sweet revenge on all that's base in Venice,  
And freedom to the rest, or leave it black

<sup>1</sup> ["The Doges were all buried in *St. Mark's* before Faliero: it is singular that when his predecessor, *Andrea Dandolo*, died, the Ten made a law that all the future Doges should be buried with their families in their own churches,—one would think by a kind of presentiment. So that all that is said of his *Ancestral Doges*, as buried at *St. John's* and *Paul's*, is altered from the fact, they being in *St. Mark's*. Make a note of this and put *Editor* as the subscription to it. As I make such pretensions to accuracy, I should not like to be *twitted* even with such trifles on that score. Of the play they may say what they please, but not so of my costume and *dram. pers.*—they having been real existences."—Letter to Murray, October, 12, 1820 *Letters*, 1901, v. 95. Byron's injunction was not carried out till 1832.]

<sup>2</sup> A gondola is not like a common boat, but is as easily rowed with one oar as with two (though, of course, not so swiftly), and often is so from motives of privacy; and, since the decay of Venice, of economy.

To all the growing calumnies of Time,  
Which never spare the fame of him who fails,  
But try the Cæsar, or the Catiline,  
By the true touchstone of desert—Success.

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Ducal  
Palace.*

ANGIOLINA (*wife of the DOGE*) and  
MARIANNA.

*Ang.* What was the Doge's answer?

*Mar.* That he was  
That moment summoned to a conference;  
But 'tis by this time ended. I perceived  
Not long ago the Senators embarking;  
And the last gondola may now be seen  
Gliding into the throng of barks which stud  
The glittering waters.

*Ang.* Would he were returned!  
He has been much disquieted of late;  
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,  
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame, 10  
Which seems to be more nourished by a soul  
So quick and restless that it would consume  
Less hardy clay—Time has but little power  
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike  
To other spirits of his order, who,  
In the first burst of passion, pour away  
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him  
An aspect of Eternity: his thoughts,  
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all  
Have nothing of old age;<sup>1</sup> and his bold brow  
Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of  
years, 21

Not their decrepitude: and he of late  
Has been more agitated than his wont.  
Would he were come! for I alone have power  
Upon his troubled spirit.

*Mar.* It is true,  
His Highness has of late been greatly moved  
By the affront of Steno, and with cause:  
But the offender doubtless even now  
Is doomed to expiate his rash insult with  
Such chastisement as will enforce respect 30  
To female virtue, and to noble blood.

*Ang.* 'Twas a gross insult; but I heed it not  
For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,  
But for the effect, the deadly deep impression

<sup>1</sup> [The exact date of Marin Falier's birth is a matter of conjecture, but there is reason to believe that he was under seventy-five years of age at the time of the conspiracy. The date assigned is 1280-1285 A.D.]

Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,  
The proud, the fiery, the austere—austere  
To all save me: I tremble when I think  
To what it may conduct.

*Mar.* Assuredly  
The Doge cannot suspect you?

*Ang.* Suspect me!  
Why Steno dared not: when he scrawled his lie,  
Groveling by stealth in the moon's glimmer-  
ing light, 41

His own still conscience smote him for the act,  
And every shadow on the walls frowned shame  
Upon his coward calumny.

*Mar.* 'Twere fit  
He should be punished grievously.

*Ang.* He is so.

*Mar.* What! is the sentence passed? is he  
condemned?

*Ang.* I know not that, but he has been  
detected.

*Mar.* And deem you this enough for such  
foul scorn?

*Ang.* I would not be a judge in my own cause,  
Nor do I know what sense of punishment 50  
May reach the soul of ribalds such as Steno;  
But if his insults sink no deeper in  
The minds of the inquisitors than they  
Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquittance,  
Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.

*Mar.* Some sacrifice is due to slandered  
virtue.

*Ang.* Why, what is virtue if it needs a  
victim?

Or if it must depend upon men's words?  
The dying Roman<sup>1</sup> said, "'twas but a name:"  
It were indeed no more, if human breath 60  
Could make or mar it.

*Mar.* Yet full many a dame,  
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong  
Of such a slander; and less rigid ladies,  
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud  
And all-inexorable in their cry  
For justice.

*Ang.* This but proves it is the name  
And not the quality they prize: the first  
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,  
If they require it to be blazoned forth;  
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming  
As they would look out for an ornament 71  
Of which they feel the want, but not because  
They think it so; they live in others' thoughts,  
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.

*Mar.* You have strange thoughts for a  
patrician dame.

<sup>1</sup> [Brutus.]

*Ang.* And yet they were my father's; with  
his name,  
The sole inheritance he left.

*Mar.* You want none;  
Wife to a Prince, the Chief of the Republic.

*Ang.* I should have sought none though a  
peasant's bride,  
But feel not less the love and gratitude. 80

Due to my father, who bestowed my hand  
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,  
The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.

*Mar.* And with that hand did he bestow  
your heart?

*Ang.* He did so, or it had not been bestowed.

*Mar.* Yet this strange disproportion in  
your years,  
And, let me add, disparity of tempers,  
Might make the world doubt whether such an  
union

Could make you wisely, permanently happy.

*Ang.* The world will think with worldlings:  
but my heart 90

Has still been in my duties, which are many,  
But never difficult.

*Mar.* And do you love him?

*Ang.* I love all noble qualities which merit  
Love, and I loved my father, who first taught me  
To single out what we should love in others,  
And to subdue all tendency to lend  
The best and purest feelings of our nature  
To baser passions. He bestowed my hand  
Upon Faliero: he had known him noble,  
Brave, generous; rich in all the qualities 100  
Of soldier, citizen, and friend; in all  
Such have I found him as my father said.  
His faults are those that dwell in the high  
bosoms

Of men who have commanded; too much pride,  
And the deep passions fiercely fostered by  
The uses of patricians, and a life  
Spent in the storms of state and war; and also  
From the quick sense of honour, which becomes  
A duty to a certain sign, a vice  
When overstrained, and this I fear in him.  
And then he has been rash from his youth  
upwards, 111

Yet tempered by redeeming nobleness  
In such sort, that the wariest of republics  
Has lavished all its chief employs upon him,  
From his first fight to his last embassy,  
From which on his return the Dukedom  
met him.

*Mar.* But previous to this marriage, had  
your heart  
Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,

Such as in years had been more meet to match  
Beauty like yours? or, since, have you ne'er  
seen 120

One, who, if your fair hand were still to give,  
Might now pretend to Loredano's daughter?

*Ang.* I answered your first question when  
I said

I married.

*Mar.* And the second?

*Ang.* Needs no answer.

*Mar.* I pray you pardon, if I have offended.

*Ang.* I feel no wrath, but some surprise: I  
knew not

That wedded bosoms could permit themselves  
To ponder upon what they *now* might choose,  
Or aught save their past choice.

*Mar.* 'Tis their past choice  
That far too often makes them deem they  
would 130

Now choose more wisely, could they cancel it.

*Ang.* It may be so. I knew not of such  
thoughts.

*Mar.* Here comes the Doge—shall I retire?

*Ang.* It may  
Be better you should quit me; he seems rapt  
In thought.—How pensively he takes his way!  
[Exit MARIANNA.]

*Enter the DOGE and PIETRO.*

*Doge (musing).* There is a certain Philip  
Calendaro

Now in the Arsenal, who holds command  
Of eighty men, and has great influence  
Besides on all the spirits of his comrades:  
This man, I hear, is bold and popular, 140  
Sudden and daring, and yet secret; 'twould  
Be well that he were won: I needs must hope  
That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,  
But fain would be—

*Pie.* My Lord, pray pardon me  
For breaking in upon your meditation;  
The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,  
Charged me to follow and enquire your  
pleasure

To fix an hour when he may speak with you.

*Doge.* At sunset.—Stay a moment—let me  
see—

Say in the second hour of night.

[Exit PIETRO.]

*Ang.* My Lord! 150

*Doge.* My dearest child, forgive me—why  
delay

So long approaching me?—I saw you not.

*Ang.* You were absorbed in thought, and  
he who now

Has parted from you might have words of weight

To bear you from the Senate.

*Doge.* From the Senate?

*Ang.* I would not interrupt him in his duty  
And theirs.

*Doge.* The Senate's duty! you mistake;  
'Tis we who owe all service to the Senate.

*Ang.* I thought the Duke had held command in Venice.

*Doge.* He shall.—But let that pass.—We  
will be jocund. 160

How fares it with you? have you been abroad?  
The day is overcast, but the calm wave  
Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar;  
Or have you held a levee of your friends?  
Or has your music made you solitary?  
Say—is there aught that you would will within  
The little sway now left the Duke? or aught  
Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,  
Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,  
To compensate for many a dull hour, wasted  
On an old man oft moved with many cares?  
Speak, and 'tis done.

*Ang.* You're ever kind to me.  
I have nothing to desire, or to request,  
Except to see you oftener and calmer.

*Doge.* Calmer?

*Ang.* Aye, calmer, my good Lord.—  
Ah, why

Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,  
And let such strong emotions stamp your brow,  
As not betraying their full import, yet  
Disclose too much?

*Doge.* Disclose too much!—of what?  
What is there to disclose?

*Ang.* A heart so ill 180  
At ease.

*Doge.* 'Tis nothing, child.—But in the state  
You know what daily cares oppress all those  
Who govern this precarious commonwealth,  
Now suffering from the Genoese without,  
And malcontents within—'tis this which  
makes me

More pensive and less tranquil than my wont.

*Ang.* Yet this existed long before, and never  
Till in these late days did I see you thus.  
Forgive me; there is something at your heart  
More than the mere discharge of public duties,  
Which long use and a talent like to yours 191  
Have rendered light, nay, a necessity,

To keep your mind from stagnating. 'Tis not  
In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake you,—  
You, who have stood all storms and never sunk,  
And climbed up to the pinnacle of power

And never fainted by the way, and stand  
Upon it, and can look down steadily  
Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel dizzy.  
Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port, 200  
Were civil fury raging in Saint Mark's,  
You are not to be wrought on, but would fall,  
As you have risen, with an unaltered brow:  
Your feelings now are of a different kind;  
Something has stung your pride, not patriotism.

*Doge.* Pride! Angiolina? Alas! none is  
left me.

*Ang.* Yes—the same sin that overthrew the  
angels,

And of all sins most easily besets  
Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature:  
The vile are only vain; the great are proud.

*Doge.* I had the pride of honour, of your  
honour, 211

Deep at my heart—— But let us change the  
theme.

*Ang.* Ah no!—As I have ever shared your  
kindness

In all things else, let me not be shut out  
From your distress: were it of public import,  
You know I never sought, would never seek  
To win a word from you; but feeling now  
Your grief is private, it belongs to me  
To lighten or divide it. Since the day  
When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected 220  
Unfixed your quiet, you are greatly changed,  
And I would soothe you back to what you were.

*Doge.* To what I was!—have you heard  
Steno's sentence?

*Ang.* No.

*Doge.* A month's arrest.

*Ang.* Is it not enough?

*Doge.* Enough!—yes, for a drunken galley  
slave,

Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his  
master;

But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,  
Who stains a Lady's and a Prince's honour  
Even on the throne of his authority.

*Ang.* There seems to be enough in the con-  
viction 230

Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood:  
All other punishment were light unto  
His loss of honour.

*Doge.* Such men have no honour;  
They have but their vile lives—and these are  
spared.

*Ang.* You would not have him die for this  
offence?

*Doge.* Not now:—being still alive, I'd have  
him live