

Long as *he* can; he has ceased to merit death;
The guilty saved hath damned his hundred
judges,

And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.

Ang. Oh! had this false and flippant libeller
Shed his young blood for his absurd lampoon,
Ne'er from that moment could this breast
have known 242

A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.

Doge. Does not the law of Heaven say
blood for blood?

And he who *taints* kills more than he who
sheds it.

Is it the *pain* of blows, or *shame* of blows,
That makes such deadly to the sense of man?
Do not the laws of man say blood for honour,—
And, less than honour, for a little gold? 249
Say not the laws of nations blood for treason?
Is't nothing to have filled these veins with poison
For their once healthful current!—is it nothing
To have stained your name and mine—the
noblest names?

Is't nothing to have brought into contempt
A Prince before his people? to have failed
In the respect accorded by Mankind
To youth in woman, and old age in man?
To virtue in your sex, and dignity
In ours?—But let them look to it who have
saved him. 259

Ang. Heaven bids us to forgive our enemies.

Doge. Doth Heaven forgive her own? Is
there not Hell

For wrath eternal?

Ang. Do not speak thus wildly—
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.

Doge. Amen! May Heaven forgive them!

Ang. And will you?

Doge. Yes, when they are in Heaven!

Ang. And not till then?

Doge. What matters my forgiveness? an
old man's,

Worn out, scorned, spurned, abused; what
matters then

My pardon more than my resentment, both
Being weak and worthless? I have lived too
long.

But let us change the argument.—My child! 270
My injured wife, the child of Loredano,
The brave, the chivalrous, how little deemed
Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,
That he was linking thee to shame!—Alas!
Shame without sin, for thou art faultless.

Hadst thou

But had a different husband, *any* husband
In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this brand,

This blasphemy had never fallen upon thee.
So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,
To suffer this, and yet be unavenged! 280

Ang. I am too well avenged, for you still
love me,

And trust, and honour me; and all men know
That you are just, and I am true: what more
Could I require, or you command?

Doge. 'Tis well,

And may be better; but whate'er betide,
Be thou at least kind to my memory.

Ang. Why speak you thus?

Doge. It is no matter why;
But I would still, whatever others think,
Have your respect both now and in my grave.

Ang. Why should you doubt it? has it ever
failed? 290

Doge. Come hither, child! I would a word
with you.

Your father was my friend; unequal Fortune
Made him my debtor for some courtesies
Which bind the good more firmly: when,
oppressed

With his last malady, he willed our union,
It was not to repay me, long repaid
Before by his great loyalty in friendship;
His object was to place your orphan beauty
In honourable safety from the perils,
Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail 300
A lonely and undowered maid. I did not
Think with him, but would not oppose the
thought

Which soothed his death-bed.

Ang. I have not forgotten
The nobleness with which you bade me speak
If my young heart held any preference
Which would have made me happier; nor your
offer

To make my dowry equal to the rank
Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim
My father's last injunction gave you.

Doge. Thus,
'Twas not a foolish dotard's vile caprice, 310
Nor the false edge of aged appetite,
Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
And a young bride: for in my fieriest youth
I swayed such passions; nor was this my age
Infected with that leprosy of lust
Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,
Making them ransack to the very last
The dregs of pleasure for their vanished joys;
Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,
Too helpless to refuse a state that's honest, 320
Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.
Our wedlock was not of this sort; you had

Freedom from me to choose, and urged in
answer

Your father's choice.

Ang. I did so; I would do so
In face of earth and Heaven; for I have never
Repented for my sake; sometimes for yours,
In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.

Doge. I knew my heart would never treat
you harshly;

I knew my days could not disturb you long;
And then the daughter of my earliest friend, 330
His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
Of womanhood, more skilful to select
By passing these probationary years,
Inheriting a Prince's name and riches,
Secured, by the short penance of enduring
An old man for some summers, against all
That law's chicane or envious kinsmen might
Have urged against her right; my best friend's
child 339

Would choose more fitly in respect of years,
And not less truly in a faithful heart.

Ang. My Lord, I looked but to my father's
wishes,

Hallowed by his last words, and to my heart
For doing all its duties, and replying
With faith to him with whom I was affianced.
Ambitious hopes ne'er crossed my dreams;
and should

The hour you speak of come, it will be seen so.

Doge. I do believe you; and I know you true:
For Love—romantic Love—which in my youth
I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw 350
Lasting, but often fatal, it had been

No lure for me, in my most passionate days,
And could not be so now, did such exist.
But such respect, and mildly paid regard
As a true feeling for your welfare, and
A free compliance with all honest wishes,—
A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little
failings

As Youth is apt in, so as not to check
Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew 360
You had been won, but thought the change
your choice;

A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct;
A trust in you; a patriarchal love,
And not a doting homage; friendship, faith,—
Such estimation in your eyes as these
Might claim, I hoped for.

Ang. And have ever had.

Doge. I think so. For the difference in our
years

You knew it choosing me, and chose; I trusted
Not to my qualities, nor would have faith
In such, nor outward ornaments of nature, 370
Were I still in my five and twentieth spring;
I trusted to the blood of Loredano
Pure in your veins; I trusted to the soul
God gave you—to the truths your father taught
you—

To your belief in Heaven—to your mild
virtues—

To your own faith and honour, for my own.

Ang. You have done well.—I thank you
for that trust,

Which I have never for one moment ceased
To honour you the more for.

Doge. Where is Honour,
Innate and precept-strengthened, 'tis the
rock 380

Of faith connubial: where it is not—where
Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know
'Twere hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,
Although 'twere wed to him it covets most:
An incarnation of the poet's God
In all his marble-chiselled beauty, or
The demi-deity, Alcides, in 390
His majesty of superhuman Manhood,
Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not;
It is consistency which forms and proves it:
Vice cannot fix, and Virtue cannot change.
The once fall'n woman must for ever fall;
For Vice must have variety, while Virtue
Stands like the Sun, and all which rolls
around

Drinks life, and light, and glory from her
aspect.

Ang. And seeing, feeling thus this truth
in others,

(I pray you pardon me;) but wherefore yield
you 400

To the most fierce of fatal passions, and
Disquiet your great thoughts with restless
hate

Of such a thing as Steno?

Doge. You mistake me.

It is not Steno who could move me thus;
Had it been so, he should—but let that
pass.

Ang. What is't you feel so deeply, then,
even now?

Doge. The violated majesty of Venice,
At once insulted in her Lord and laws.

Ang. Alas! why will you thus consider it?

Doge. I have thought on't till—but let
me lead you back 410
To what I urged; all these things being
noted,

I wedded you; the world then did me justice
Upon the motive, and my conduct proved
They did me right, while yours was all to
praise:

You had all freedom—all respect—all trust
From me and mine; and, born of those who
made

Princes at home, and swept Kings from their
thrones

On foreign shores, in all things you appeared
Worthy to be our first of native dames.

Ang. To what does this conduct?

Doge. To thus much—that
A miscreant's angry breath may blast it
all— 421

A villain, whom for his unbridled bearing,
Even in the midst of our great festival,
I caused to be conducted forth, and taught
How to demean himself in ducal chambers;
A wretch like this may leave upon the wall
The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,
And this shall spread itself in general poison;
And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass
Into a by-word; and the doubly felon 430
(Who first insulted virgin modesty

By a gross affront to your attendant damsels
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)
Requite himself for his most just expulsion
By blackening publicly his Sovereign's
consort,

And be absolved by his upright compeers.

Ang. But he has been condemned into
captivity.

Doge. For such as him a dungeon were
acquittal;

And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass
Within a palace. But I've done with him; 440
The rest must be with you.

Ang. With me, my Lord?

Doge. Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel; I
Have let this prey upon me till I feel
My life cannot be long; and fain would have
you

Regard the injunctions you will find within
This scroll (*giving her a paper*)—Fear not;
they are for your advantage:

Read them hereafter at the fitting hour.

Ang. My Lord, in life, and after life, you
shall

Be honoured still by me: but may your days
Be many yet — and happier than the
present! 450

This passion will give way, and you will be
Serene, and what you should be—what you
were.

Doge. I will be what I should be, or be
nothing;

But never more—oh! never, never more,
O'er the few days or hours which yet await
The blighted old age of Faliero, shall
Sweet Quiet shed her sunset! Never more
Those summer shadows rising from the past
Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,
Mellowing the last hours as the night
approaches, 460

Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.
I had but little more to ask, or hope,
Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,
And the soul's labour through which I had
toiled

To make my country honoured. As her
servant—

Her servant, though her chief—I would have
gone

Down to my fathers with a name serene
And pure as theirs; but this has been denied
me.

Would I had died at Zara!

Ang. There you saved
The state; then live to save her still. A
day, 470

Another day like that would be the best
Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.

Doge. But one such day occurs within an
age;

My life is little less than one, and 'tis
Enough for Fortune to have granted *once*,
That which scarce one more favoured citizen
May win in many states and years. But why
Thus speak I? Venice has forgot that day—
Then why should I remember it?—Farewell,
Sweet Angiolina! I must to my cabinet; 480
There's much for me to do—and the hour
hastens.

Ang. Remember what you were.

Doge. It were in vain!

Joy's recollection is no longer joy,
While Sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.

Ang. At least, what'er may urge, let me
implore

That you will take some little pause of rest:
Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,
That it had been relief to have awaked you,
Had I not hoped that Nature would o'er-
power

At length the thoughts which shook your
slumbers thus.

An hour of rest will give you to your toils 491
With fitter thoughts and freshened strength.

Doge. I cannot—
I must not, if I could; for never was
Such reason to be watchful: yet a few—
Yet a few days and dream-perturbéd nights,
And I shall slumber well—but where?—no
matter.

Adieu, my Angiolina.

Ang. Let me be
An instant—yet an instant your companion!
I cannot bear to leave you thus.

Doge. Come then,
My gentle child—forgive me: thou wert
made 500
For better fortunes than to share in mine,
Now darkling in their close toward the deep
vale

Where Death sits robed in his all-sweeping
shadow.

When I am gone—it may be sooner than
Even these years warrant, for there is that
stirring

Within—above—around, that in this city
Will make the cemeteries populous
As e'er they were by pestilence or war,—
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was*
Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet
lips, 510

A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing
Which would not have thee mourn it, but
remember.

Let us begone, my child — the time is
pressing. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A retired spot near the Arsenal.*

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP
CALENDARO.

Cal. How sped you, Israel, in your late
complaint?

I. Ber. Why, well.

Cal. Is't possible! will he be punished?

I. Ber. Yes.

Cal. With what? a mulct or an arrest?

I. Ber. With death!

Cal. Now you rave, or must intend
revenge,
Such as I counselled you, with your own
hand.

I. Ber. Yes; and for one sole draught of
hate, forego

The great redress we meditate for Venice,
And change a life of hope for one of exile;
Leaving one scorpion crushed, and thousands
stinging

My friends, my family, my countrymen! 10
No, Calendaro; these same drops of blood,
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of
his

For their requital—But not only his;
We will not strike for private wrongs alone:
Such are for selfish passions and rash men,
But are unworthy a Tyrannicide.

Cal. You have more patience than I care
to boast.

Had I been present when you bore this
insult,

I must have slain him, or expired myself
In the vain effort to repress my wrath. 20

I. Ber. Thank Heaven you were not—all
had else been marred:

As 'tis, our cause looks prosperous still.

Cal. You saw
The Doge—what answer gave he?

I. Ber. That there was
No punishment for such as Barbaro.

Cal. I told you so before, and that 'twas
idle

To think of justice from such hands.

I. Ber. At least,
It lulled suspicion, showing confidence.

Had I been silent, not a Sbirro¹ but
Had kept me in his eye, as meditating
A silent, solitary deep revenge. 30

Cal. But wherefore not address you to the
Council?

The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce
Obtain right for himself. Why speak to
him?

I. Ber. You shall know that hereafter.

Cal. Why not now?

I. Ber. Be patient but till midnight. Get
your musters,

And bid our friends prepare their companies:
Set all in readiness to strike the blow,
Perhaps in a few hours: we have long
waited

For a fit time—that hour is on the dial,
It may be, of to-morrow's sun: delay 40

Beyond may breed us double danger. See
That all be punctual at our place of meeting,
And armed, excepting those of the Sixteen,
Who will remain among the troops to wait
The signal.

Cal. These brave words have breathed
new life

¹ [The *sbirri* were constables, officers of the police magistrates, the *signori di notte*. The Italians have a saying, *Dir le sue ragioni agli sbirri*, that is, to argue with a policeman.]

Into my veins ; I am sick of these protracted
And hesitating councils : day on day
Crawled on, and added but another link
To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong
Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves, 50
Helping to swell our tyrants' bloated
strength.

Let us but deal upon them, and I care not
For the result, which must be Death or
Freedom !

I'm weary to the heart of finding neither.

I. Ber. We will be free in Life or Death !
the grave

Is chainless. Have you all the musters
ready ?

And are the sixteen companies completed
To sixty ?

Cal. All save two, in which there are
Twenty-five wanting to make up the number.

I. Ber. No matter ; we can do without.
Whose are they ? 60

Cal. Bertram's and old Soranzo's, both of
whom

Appear less forward in the cause than we are.

I. Ber. Your fiery nature makes you deem
all those

Who are not restless cold ; but there exists
Oft in concentrated spirits not less daring
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt
them.

Cal. I do not doubt the elder ; but in
Bertram

There is a hesitating softness, fatal
To enterprise like ours : I've seen that man
Weep like an infant o'er the misery 70
Of others, heedless of his own, though
greater ;

And in a recent quarrel I beheld him
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a
villain's.

I. Ber. The truly brave are soft of heart
and eyes,

And feel for what their duty bids them do.
I have known Bertram long ; there doth not
breathe

A soul more full of honour.

Cal. It may be so :

I apprehend less treachery than weakness ;
Yet as he has no mistress, and no wife
To work upon his milkiness of spirit, 80

He may go through the ordeal ; it is well
He is an orphan, friendless save in us :

A woman or a child had made him less
Than either in resolve.

I. Ber. Such ties are not

For those who are called to the high destinies
Which purify corrupted commonwealths ;
We must forget all feelings save the *one*,
We must resign all passions save our
purpose,

We must behold no object save our country—
And only look on Death as beautiful, 90
So that the sacrifice ascend to Heaven,
And draw down Freedom on her evermore.

Cal. But if we fail——

I. Ber. They never fail who die
In a great cause : the block may soak their
gore :

Their heads may sodden in the sun ; their
limbs

Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
But still their Spirit walks abroad. Though
years

Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping
thoughts

Which overpower all others, and conduct too
The world at last to Freedom. What were
we,

If Brutus had not lived ? He died in giving
Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson—
A name which is a virtue, and a Soul
Which multiplies itself throughout all time,
When wicked men wax mighty, and a state
Turns servile. He and his high friend were
styled

“The last of Romans !”¹ Let us be the
first

Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman sires.

Cal. Our fathers did not fly from Attila²
Into these isles, where palaces have sprung
On banks redeemed from the rude ocean's
ooze, 112

To own a thousand despots in his place.
Better bow down before the Hun, and call
A Tartar lord, than these swoln silkworms³
masters !

The first at least was man, and used his sword
As sceptre : these unmanly creeping things
Command our swords, and rule us with a word
As with a spell.

¹ [At the battle of Philippi, B.C. 42, Brutus lamented over the body of Cassius, and called him the “Last of the Romans.”]

² [The citizens of Aquileia and Padua fled before the invasion of Attila, and retired to the Isle of Gradus, and Rivus Altus, or Rialto.]

³ [*Mal bigatto*, “vile silkworm,” is a term of contempt and reproach=“uomo de maligna intenzione,” a knave.]

I. Ber. It shall be broken soon.
You say that all things are in readiness; 120
To-day I have not been the usual round,
And why thou knowest; but thy vigilance
Will better have supplied my care: these
orders

In recent council to redouble now
Our efforts to repair the galleys, have
Lent a fair colour to the introduction
Of many of our cause into the arsenal,
As new artificers for their equipment,
Or fresh recruits obtained in haste to man
The hoped-for fleet.—Are all supplied with
arms? 130

Cal. All who were deemed trust-worthy:
there are some

Whom it were well to keep in ignorance
Till it be time to strike, and then supply them;
When in the heat and hurry of the hour
They have no opportunity to pause,
But needs must on with those who will
surround them.

I. Ber. You have said well. Have you
remarked all such?

Cal. I've noted most; and caused the other
chiefs

To use like caution in their companies.
As far as I have seen, we are enough 140
To make the enterprise secure, if 'tis
Commenced to-morrow; but, till 'tis begun,
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.

I. Ber. Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted
hour,

Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their
watch

Within the arsenal, and hold all ready,
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.

Cal. We will not fail.

I. Ber. Let all the rest be there;
I have a stranger to present to them. 150

Cal. A stranger! doth he know the secret?

I. Ber. Yes.

Cal. And have you dared to peril your
friends' lives

On a rash confidence in one we know not?

I. Ber. I have risked no man's life except
my own—

Of that be certain: he is one who may
Make our assurance doubly sure, according
His aid; and if reluctant, he no less
Is in our power: he comes alone with me,
And cannot 'scape us; but he will not swerve.

Cal. I cannot judge of this until I know him:
Is he one of our order?

I. Ber. Aye, in spirit, 161
Although a child of Greatness; he is one
Who would become a throne, or overthrow
one—

One who has done great deeds, and seen
great changes;

No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny;
Valiant in war, and sage in council; noble
In nature, although haughty; quick, yet wary:

Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,
That if once stirred and baffled, as he has been
Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury

In Grecian story like to that which wrings 171

His vitals with her burning hands, till he

Grows capable of all things for revenge;

And add to, that his mind is liberal,

He sees and feels the people are oppressed,

And shares their sufferings. Take him all
in all,

We have need of such, and such have need
of us.

Cal. And what part would you have him
take with us?

I. Ber. It may be, that of Chief.

Cal. What! and resign
Your own command as leader?

I. Ber. Even so. 180

My object is to make your cause end well,
And not to push myself to power. Experience,
Some skill, and your own choice, had marked
me out

To act in trust as your commander, till
Some worthier should appear: if I have found
such

As you yourselves shall own more worthy,
think you

That I would hesitate from selfishness,

And, covetous of brief authority,

Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,
Rather than yield to one above me in 190

All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,

Know your friend better; but you all shall
judge.

Away! and let us meet at the fixed hour.

Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.

Cal. Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you
ever

Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan
What I have still been prompt to execute.

For my own part, I seek no other Chief;

What the rest will decide, I know not, but

I am with YOU, as I have ever been, 200

In all our undertakings. Now farewell,

Until the hour of midnight sees us meet.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it.—A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.*

Enter the DOGE alone, disguised.

Doge (solus). I am before the hour, the
hour whose voice,
Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
These palaces with ominous tottering,
And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,
Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
Of indistinct but awful augury
Of that which will befall them. Yes, proud
city!
Thou must be cleansed of the black blood
which makes thee
A lazar-house of tyranny: the task
Is forced upon me, I have sought it not; 10
And therefore was I punished, seeing this
Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
And I am tainted, and must wash away
The plague spots in the healing wave. Tall
fane!
Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues
shadow
The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold
blood,
Mouldered into a mite of ashes, hold
In one shrunk heap what once made many
heroes, 20
When what is now a handful shook the earth—
Fane of the tutelar saints who guard our house!
Vault where two Doges rest—my sires! who
died
The one of toil, the other in the field,
With a long race of other lineal chiefs
And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and
state
I have inherited,—let the graves gape,
Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
I call them up, and them and thee to witness 30
What it hath been which put me to this task—
Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of
glories,
Their mighty name dishonoured all *in* me,
Not *by* me, but by the ungrateful nobles
We fought to make our equals, not our lords:

And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,
Who perished in the field, where I since
conquered,
Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs
Of thine and Venice' foes, there offered up 39
By thy descendant, merit such acquaintance?
Spirits! smile down upon me! for my cause
Is yours, in all life now can be of yours,—
Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,
And in the future fortunes of our race!
Let me but prosper, and I make this city
Free and immortal, and our House's name
Worthier of what you were—now and here-
after!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I. Ber. Who goes there?

Doge. A friend to Venice.

I. Ber. 'Tis he.

Welcome, my Lord,—you are before the
time.

Doge. I am ready to proceed to your
assembly. 50

I. Ber. Have with you.—I am proud and
pleased to see

Such confident alacrity. Your doubts
Since our last meeting, then, are all dis-
pelled?

Doge. Not so—but I have set my little left
Of life upon this cast: the die was thrown
When I first listened to your treason.—Start
not!

That is the word; I cannot shape my tongue
To syllable black deeds into smooth names,
Though I be wrought on to commit them.

When
I heard you tempt your Sovereign, and
forbore 60

To have you dragged to prison, I became
Your guiltiest accomplice: now you may,
If it so please you, do as much by me.

I. Ber. Strange words, my Lord, and most
unmerited;

I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.

Doge. *We—We!*—no matter—you have
earned the right

To talk of *us*.—But to the point.—If this
Attempt succeeds, and Venice, rendered free
And flourishing, when we are in our graves,
Conducts her generations to our tombs, 70
And makes her children with their little
hands

Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then
The consequence will sanctify the deed,
And we shall be like the two Bruti in

The annals of hereafter ; but if not,
If we should fail, employing bloody means
And secret plot, although to a good end,
Still we are traitors, honest Israel ;—thou
No less than he who was thy Sovereign
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel. 80

I. Ber. 'Tis not the moment to consider
thus,

Else I could answer.—Let us to the meeting,
Or we may be observed in lingering here.

Doge. We are observed, and have been.

I. Ber. We observed !
Let me discover—and this steel—

Doge. Put up ;
Here are no human witnesses : look there—
What see you ?

I. Ber. Only a tall warrior's statue¹
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light
Of the dull moon.

Doge. That Warrior was the sire
Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was 90
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city :—
Think you that he looks down on us or no ?

I. Ber. My Lord, these are mere fantasies ;
there are
No eyes in marble.

Doge. But there are in Death.
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in
Such things that acts and sees, unseen,
though felt ;

And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,
Tis in such deeds as we are now upon.
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as
mine

Can rest, when he, their last descendant
Chief, 100
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure
graves

With stung plebeians ?

I. Ber. It had been as well
To have pondered this before,—ere you
embarked

In our great enterprise.—Do you repent ?

Doge. No—but I *feel*, and shall do to the
last.

I cannot quench a glorious life at once,
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,
And take men's lives by stealth, without
some pause :

Yet doubt me not ; it is this very feeling,
And knowing *what* has wrung me to be thus,

¹ [The equestrian statue in front of the Church facing the Rio dei Mendicanti does not commemorate a Faliero.]

Which is your best security. There's not
A roused mechanic in your busy plot 112
So wronged as I, so fall'n, so loudly called
To his redress : the very means I am forced
By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,
That I abhor them doubly for the deeds
Which I must do to pay them back for
theirs.

I. Ber. Let us away—hark—the Hour
strikes.

Doge. On—on—
It is our knell, or that of Venice.—On.

I. Ber. Say rather, 'tis her Freedom's rising
peal 120
Of Triumph. This way—we are near the
place.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The House where the
Conspirators meet.*

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE
TREVISANO, CALENDARO, ANTONIO
DELLE BENDE, ETC., ETC.

Cal. (*entering*). Are all here ?

Dag. All with you ; except
the three

On duty and our leader Israel,
Who is expected momentarily.

Cal. Where's Bertram ?

Ber. Here !

Cal. Have you not been able to
complete

The number wanting in your company ?

Ber. I had marked out some : but I have
not dared

To trust them with the secret, till assured
That they were worthy faith.

Cal. There is no need
Of trusting to their faith ; *who*, save our-
selves

And our more chosen comrades, is aware 10
Fully of our intent ? they think themselves
Engaged in secret to the Signory,¹

To punish some more dissolute young nobles
Who have defied the law in their excesses ;
But once drawn up, and their new swords
well fleshed

In the rank hearts of the more odious
Senators,

They will not hesitate to follow up
Their blow upon the others, when they see
The example of their chiefs, and I for one
Will set them such, that they for very shame

¹ An historical fact.

And safety will not pause till all have
perished. 21

Ber. How say you? *all!*

Cal. Whom would'st thou spare?

Ber. *I spare?*

I have no power to spare. I only questioned,
Thinking that even amongst these wicked
men

There might be some, whose age and
qualities

Might mark them out for pity.

Cal. Yes, such pity
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,
The separate fragments quivering in the sun,
In the last energy of venomous life,
Deserve and have. Why, I should think as
soon 30

Of pitying some particular fang which made
One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as
Of saving one of these: they form but links
Of one long chain; one mass, one breath,
one body;

They eat, and drink, and live, and breed
together,

Revel, and lie, oppress, and kill in concert,—
So let them die as *one!*

Dag. Should *one* survive,
He would be dangerous as the whole; it is
not

Their number, be it tens or thousands, but
The spirit of this Aristocracy 40
Which must be rooted out; and if there were
A single shoot of the old tree in life,
'Twould fasten in the soil, and spring again
To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.
Bertram, we must be firm!

Cal. Look to it well
Bertram! I have an eye upon thee.

Ber. Who
Distrusts me?

Cal. Not I; for if I did so,
Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust:
It is thy softness, not thy want of faith,
Which makes thee to be doubted.

Ber. You should know 50
Who hear me, who and what I am; a man
Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppres-
sion;

A kind man, I am apt to think, as some
Of you have found me; and if brave or no,
You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have
seen me

Put to the proof; or, if you should have doubts,
I'll clear them on your person!

Cal. You are welcome,

When once our enterprise is o'er, which must
not

Be interrupted by a private brawl.

Ber. I am no brawler; but can bear myself 60
As far among the foe as any he
Who hears me; else why have I been selected
To be of your chief comrades? but no less
I own my natural weakness; I have not
Yet learned to think of indiscriminate murder
Without some sense of shuddering; and the
sight

Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps
is not

To me a thing of triumph, nor the death
Of man surprised a glory. Well—too well
I know that we must do such things on those 70
Whose acts have raised up such avengers; but
If there were some of these who could be saved
From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes
And for our honour, to take off some stain
Of massacre, which else pollutes it wholly,
I had been glad; and see no cause in this
For sneer, nor for suspicion!

Dag. Calm thee, Bertram,
For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.
It is the cause, and not our will, which asks
Such actions from our hands: we'll wash away
All stains in Freedom's fountain!

*Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, and the DOGE,
disguised.*

Dag. Welcome, Israel. 81
Consp. Most welcome.—Brave Bertuccio,
thou art late—

Who is this stranger?

Cal. It is time to name him.
Our comrades are even now prepared to greet
him

In brotherhood, as I have made it known
That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,
Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,
Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now
Let him unfold himself.

I. Ber. Stranger, step forth!
[*The Doge discovers himself.*]

Consp. To arms!—we are betrayed—it is
the Doge! 90

Down with them both! our traitorous captain,
and

The tyrant he hath sold us to.

Cal. (*drawing his sword*). Hold! hold!
Who moves a step against them dies. Hold!
hear

Bertuccio—What! are you appalled to see
A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man

Amongst you?—Israel, speak! what means
this mystery?

I. Ber. Let them advance and strike at
their own bosoms,
Ungrateful suicides! for on our lives
Depend their own, their fortunes, and their
hopes.

Doge. Strike!—If I dreaded death, a death
more fearful 100
Than any your rash weapons can inflict,
I should not now be here: Oh, noble Courage!
The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave
Against this solitary hoary head!
See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state
And shake down senates, mad with wrath and
dread

At sight of one patrician! Butcher me!
You can, I care not.—Israel, are these men
The mighty hearts you spoke of? look upon
them!

Cal. Faith! he hath shamed us, and
deservedly. 110
Was this your trust in your true Chief Bertuccio,
To turn your swords against him and his guest?
Sheathe them, and hear him.

I. Ber. I disdain to speak.
They might and must have known a heart like
mine

Incapable of treachery; and the power
They gave me to adopt all fitting means
To further their design was ne'er abused.
They might be certain that who e'er was
brought

By me into this Council had been led
To take his choice—as brother, or as victim.

Doge. And which am I to be? your actions
leave 121
Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.

I. Ber. My Lord, we would have perished
here together,
Had these rash men proceeded; but, behold,
They are ashamed of that mad moment's
impulse,

And droop their heads; believe me, they are
such

As I described them.—Speak to them.
Cal. Aye, speak;

We are all listening in wonder.
I. Ber. (*addressing the conspirators*). You
are safe,

Nay, more, almost triumphant—listen then,
And know my words for truth.

Doge. You see me here, 130
As one of you hath said, an old, unarmed,
Defenceless man; and yesterday you saw me

Presiding in the hall of ducal state,
Apparent Sovereign of our hundred isles,
Robed in official purple, dealing out
The edicts of a power which is not mine,
Nor yours, but of our masters—the patricians.
Why I was there you know, or think you know;
Why I am *here*, he who hath been most
wronged,

He who among you hath been most insulted, 140
Outraged and trodden on, until he doubt
If he be worm or no, may answer for me,
Asking of his own heart what brought him here?
You know my recent story, all men know it,
And judge of it far differently from those
Who sate in judgment to heap scorn on scorn.
But spare me the recital—it is here,
Here at my heart the outrage—but my words,
Already spent in unavailing plaints,
Would only show my feebleness the more, 150
And I come here to strengthen even the strong,
And urge them on to deeds, and not to war
With woman's weapons; but I need not urge
you.

Our private wrongs have sprung from public
vices,
In this—I cannot call it commonwealth,
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince nor
people,

But all the sins of the old Spartan state
Without its virtues—temperance and valour.
The Lords of Lacedæmon were true soldiers,
But ours are Sybarites, while we are Helots, 160
Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved;
Although dressed out to head a pageant; as
The Greeks of yore made drunk their slaves
to form

A pastime for their children. You are met
To overthrow this monster of a State,
This mockery of a Government, this spectre,
Which must be exorcised with blood,—and
then

We will renew the times of Truth and Justice,
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality but equal rights, 170
Proportioned like the columns to the temple
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,
And making firm the whole with grace and
beauty,

So that no part could be removed without
Infringement of the general symmetry.
In operating this great change, I claim
To be one of you—if you trust in me;
If not, strike home,—my life is compromised,
And I would rather fall by freemen's hands
Than live another day to act the tyrant 180

As delegate of tyrants : such I am not,
 And never have been—read it in our annals ;
 I can appeal to my past government
 In many lands and cities ; they can tell you
 If I were an oppressor, or a man
 Feeling and thinking for my fellow men.
 Haply had I been what the Senate sought,
 A thing of robes and trinkets, dized out
 To sit in state as for a Sovereign's picture ;
 A popular scourge, — a ready sentence-
 signer,

A stickler for the Senate and "the Forty,"
 A sceptic of all measures which had not
 The sanction of "the Ten,"¹ a council-fawner,
 A tool—a fool—a puppet,—they had ne'er
 Fostered the wretch who stung me. What I
 suffer

Has reached me through my pity for the
 people ;

That many know, and they who know not yet
 Will one day learn : meantime I do devote,
 Whate'er the issue, my last days of life—

My present power such as it is, not that ²⁰⁰
 Of Doge, but of a man who has been great
 Before he was degraded to a Doge,
 And still has individual means and mind ;
 I stake my fame (and I had fame) — my
 breath—

(The least of all, for its last hours are nigh)
 My heart—my hope—my soul—upon this
 cast !

Such as I am, I offer me to you
 And to your chiefs ; accept me or reject me,—
 A Prince who fain would be a Citizen
 Or nothing, and who has left his throne to be

so. ²¹⁰
Cal. Long live Faliero !—Venice shall be
 free !

Consp. Long live Faliero !

I. Ber. Comrades ! did I well ?
 Is not this man a host in such a cause ?

¹ ["The members of the Ten (*Il Consiglio de' Dieci*) were elected in the Great Council for one year only, and were not re-eligible for the year after they had held office. Every month the Ten elected three of their own number as chiefs, or *Capi* of the Council. . . . The court consisted, besides the Ten, of the Doge and his six councillors, seventeen members in all, of whom twelve were necessary to make a *quorum*. One of the *Avogadori di Comun*, or State advocates, was always present, without the power to vote, but to act as clerk to the court, informing it of the law, and correcting it where its procedure seemed informal.—*Venice, an Historical Sketch*, by Horatio F. Brown, 1893, pp. 177, 178.]

Doge. This is no time for eulogies, nor
 place

For exultation. Am I one of you ?

Cal. Aye, and the first among us, as thou
 hast been

Of Venice—be our General and Chief.

Doge. Chief !—General !—I was General
 at Zara,
 And Chief in Rhodes and Cyprus, Prince in
 Venice :

I cannot stoop — that is, I am not fit ²²⁰
 To lead a band of — patriots : when I lay
 Aside the dignities which I have borne,
 'Tis not to put on others, but to be
 Mate to my fellows—but now to the point :
 Israel has stated to me your whole plan—
 'Tis bold, but feasible if I assist it,
 And must be set in motion instantly.

Cal. E'en when thou wilt. Is it not so,
 my friends ?

I have disposed all for a sudden blow ;
 When shall it be then ?

Doge. At sunrise.

Ber. So soon ? ²³⁰

Doge. So soon ? — so late — each hour
 accumulates

Peril on peril, and the more so now
 Since I have mingled with you ;—know you
 not

The Council, and "the Ten" ? the spies, the
 eyes

Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,
 And now more dubious of the Prince they
 have made one ?

I tell you, you must strike, and suddenly,
 Full to the Hydra's heart — its heads will
 follow.

Cal. With all my soul and sword, I yield
 assent ;

Our companies are ready, sixty each, ²⁴⁰
 And all now under arms by Israel's order ;

Each at their different place of rendezvous,
 And vigilant, expectant of some blow ;

Let each repair for action to his post !
 And now, my Lord, the signal ?

Doge. When you hear
 The great bell of Saint Mark's, which may
 not be

Struck without special order of the Doge
 (The last poor privilege they leave their
 Prince),

March on Saint Mark's !

I. Ber. And there ?—

Doge. By different routes
 Let your march be directed, every sixty ²⁵⁰

Entering a separate avenue, and still
Upon the way let your cry be of War
And of the Genoese Fleet, by the first dawn
Discerned before the port; form round the
palace,

Within whose court will be drawn out in arms
My nephew and the clients of our house,
Many and martial; while the bell tolls on,
Shout ye, "Saint Mark!—the foe is on our
waters!"

Cal. I see it now—but on, my noble Lord.

Doge. All the patricians flocking to the
Council, 260
(Which they dare not refuse, at the dread
signal

Pealing from out their Patron Saint's proud
tower,)

Will then be gathered in unto the harvest,
And we will reap them with the sword for
sickle.

If some few should be tardy or absent them,
'Twill be but to be taken faint and single,
When the majority are put to rest.

Cal. Would that the hour were come! we
will not scotch,

But kill.

Ber. Once more, sir, with your pardon, I
Would now repeat the question which I
asked 270

Before Bertuccio added to our cause
This great ally who renders it more sure,
And therefore safer, and as such admits
Some dawn of mercy to a portion of
Our victims—must all perish in this slaughter?

Cal. All who encounter me and mine—be
sure,

The mercy they have shown, I show.

Consp. All! all!

Is this a time to talk of pity? when
Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feigned it?

I. Ber. Bertram,

This false compassion is a folly, and 280
Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause!
Dost thou not see, that if we single out
Some for escape, they live but to avenge
The fallen? and how distinguish now the
innocent

From out the guilty? all their acts are one—

A single emanation from one body,
Together knit for our oppression! 'Tis
Much that we let their children live; I doubt
If all of these even should be set apart:

The hunter may reserve some single cub 290
From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er
Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,

Unless to perish by their fangs? however,
I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel:
Let him decide if any should be saved.

Doge. Ask me not—tempt me not with
such a question—

Decide yourselves.

I. Ber. You know their private virtues
Far better than we can, to whom alone
Their public vices, and most foul oppression,
Have made them deadly; if there be amongst
them 300

One who deserves to be repealed, pronounce.

Doge. Dolfino's father was my friend, and
Lando

Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro shared
My Genoese embassy: I saved the life
Of Veniero—shall I save it twice?

Would that I could save them and Venice also!
All these men, or their fathers, were my friends
Till they became my subjects; then fell from me
As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown
flower,

And left me a lone blighted thorny stalk, 310
Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing;
So, as they let me wither, let them perish!

Cal. They cannot co-exist with Venice'
freedom!

Doge. Ye, though you know and feel our
mutual mass

Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant
What fatal poison to the springs of Life,
To human ties, and all that's good and dear,
Lurks in the present institutes of Venice:
All these men were my friends; I loved them,
they

Requited honourably my regards; 320
We served and fought; we smiled and wept
in concert;

We revelled or we sorrowed side by side;
We made alliances of blood and marriage;
We grew in years and honours fairly,—till
Their own desire, not my ambition, made
Them choose me for their Prince, and then
farewell!

Farewell all social memory! all thoughts
In common! and sweet bonds which link old
friendships,

When the survivors of long years and actions,
Which now belong to history, soothe the days
Which yet remain by treasuring each other,
And never meet, but each beholds the mirror
Of half a century on his brother's brow,
And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,
Flit round them whispering of the days
gone by,

And seeming not all dead, as long as two
Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,
Which once were one and many, still retain
A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to speak
Of deeds that else were silent, save on
marble—— 340

Oimé! Oimé!—and must I do this deed?

I. Ber. My Lord, you are much moved: it
is not now

That such things must be dwelt upon.

Doge. Your patience

A moment—I recede not: mark with me

The gloomy vices of this government.

From the hour they made me Doge, the *Doge*

THEY made me—

Farewell the past! I died to all that had been,
Or rather they to me: no friends, no kindness,
No privacy of life—all were cut off:

They came not near me—such approach gave
umbrage; 350

They could not love me—such was not the law;

They thwarted me—'twas the state's policy;

They baffled me—'twas a patrician's duty;

They wronged me, for such was to right the
state;

They could not right me—that would give
suspicion,

So that I was a slave to my own subjects;

So that I was a foe to my own friends;

Begirt with spies for guards, with robes for
power,

With pomp for freedom, gaolers for a council,
Inquisitors for friends, and Hell for life! 360

I had only one fount of quiet left,

And *that* they poisoned! My pure household
gods

Were shivered on my hearth, and o'er their
shrine

Sate grinning Ribaldry, and sneering Scorn.

I. Ber. You have been deeply wronged,
and now shall be

Nobly avenged before another night.

Doge. I had borne all—it hurt me, but I
bore it—

Till this last running over of the cup

Of bitterness—until this last loud insult, 369

Not only unredressed, but sanctioned; then,

And thus, I cast all further feelings from
me—

The feelings which they crushed for me,
long, long

Before, even in their oath of false allegiance!

Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured

Their friend and made a Sovereign, as boys
make

Playthings, to do their pleasure—and be
broken!

I from that hour have seen but Senators

In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,

Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear;

They dreading he should snatch the tyranny

From out their grasp, and he abhorring
tyrants. 381

To me, then, these men have no *private* life,

Nor claim to ties they have cut off from others;

As Senators for arbitrary acts

Amenable, I look on them—as such

Let them be dealt upon.

Cal. And now to action!

Hence, brethren, to our posts, and may this be

The last night of mere words: I'd fain be doing!

Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find me
wakeful!

I. Ber. Disperse then to your posts: be
firm and vigilant; 390

Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights we
claim.

This day and night shall be the last of peril!

Watch for the signal, and then march. I go
To join my band; let each be prompt to

marshal

His separate charge: the Doge will now return

To the palace to prepare all for the blow.

We part to meet in Freedom and in Glory!

Cal. Doge, when I greet you next, my
homage to you

Shall be the head of Steno on this sword!

Doge. No; let him be reserved unto the
last, 400

Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey,

Till nobler game is quarried: his offence

Was a mere ebullition of the vice,

The general corruption generated

By the foul Aristocracy: he could not—

He dared not in more honourable days

Have risked it. I have merged all private
wrath

Against him in the thought of our great purpose.

A slave insults me—I require his punishment

From his proud master's hands; if he refuse it,

The offence grows his, and let him answer it.

Cal. Yet, as the immediate cause of the
alliance 412

Which consecrates our undertaking more,

I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain

I would repay him as he merits; may I?

Doge. You would but lop the hand, and I
the head;

You would but smite the scholar, I the
master;

You would but punish Steno, I the Senate.
I cannot pause on individual hate,
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,
Which, like the sheeted fire from Heaven,
must blast

421

Without distinction, as it fell of yore,
Where the Dead Sea hath quenched two
Cities' ashes.

I. Ber. Away, then, to your posts! I but
remain

A moment to accompany the Doge
To our late place of tryst, to see no spies
Have been upon the scout, and thence I hasten
To where my allotted band is under arms.

Cal. Farewell, then,—until dawn!

I. Ber. Success go with you!

Consp. We will not fail—Away! My Lord,
farewell!

430

[*The Conspirators salute the DOGE and
ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, and retire,
headed by PHILIP CALENDARO.
The DOGE and ISRAEL BERTUCCIO
remain.*

I. Ber. We have them in the toil—it
cannot fail!

Now thou'rt indeed a Sovereign, and wilt
make

A name immortal greater than the greatest:
Free citizens have struck at Kings ere now;
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands
Have crushed dictators, as the popular steel
Has reached patricians: but, until this hour,
What Prince has plotted for his people's
freedom?

Or risked a life to liberate his subjects?
For ever, and for ever, they conspire

440

Against the people, to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!

Now, my Lord, to our enterprise;—'tis great,
And greater the reward; why stand you rapt?
A moment back, and you were all impatience!

Doge. And is it then decided! must they die?

I. Ber. Who?

Doge. My own friends by blood and courtesy,
And many deeds and days—the Senators?

451

I. Ber. You passed their sentence, and it is
a just one.

Doge. Aye, so it seems, and so it is to you;
You are a patriot, a plebeian Gracchus—
The rebel's oracle, the people's tribune—
I blame you not—you act in your vocation;

They smote you, and oppressed you, and
despised you;

So they have *me*: but *you* ne'er spake with them;
You never broke their bread, nor shared their
salt;

You never had their wine-cup at your lips: 460
You grew not up with them, nor laughed, nor
wept,

Nor held a revel in their company;
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claimed
their smile

In social interchange for yours, nor trusted
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have:
These hairs of mine are grey, and so are theirs,
The elders of the Council: I remember

When all our locks were like the raven's wing,
As we went forth to take our prey around
The isles wrung from the false Mahometan; 470

And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood?
Each stab to them will seem my suicide.

I. Ber. Doge! Doge! this vacillation is
unworthy

A child; if you are not in second childhood,
Call back your nerves to your own purpose,
nor

Thus shame yourself and me. By Heavens!
I'd rather

Forego even now, or fail in our intent,
Than see the man I venerate subside
From high resolves into such shallow weakness!
You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both
Your own and that of others; can you shrink
then

481

From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,
Who but give back what they have drained
from millions?

Doge. Bear with me! Step by step, and
blow on blow,

I will divide with you; think not I waver:
Ah! no; it is the *certainty* of all
Which I must do doth make me tremble thus.
But let these last and lingering thoughts have
way,

To which you only and the night are conscious,
And both regardless; when the Hour arrives,
'Tis mine to sound the knell, and strike the
blow,

491

Which shall unpeople many palaces,
And hew the highest genealogic trees
Down to the earth, strewed with their bleed-
ing fruit,

And crush their blossoms into barrenness:
This will I—must I—have I sworn to do,
Nor aught can turn me from my destiny;
But still I quiver to behold what I

Must be, and think what I have been! Bear
with me.

I. Ber. Re-man your breast; I feel no such
remorse, 500
I understand it not: why should you change?
You acted, and you act, on your free will.

Doge. Aye, there it is—you feel not, nor
do I,
Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save
A thousand lives—and, killing, do no murder;
You *feel* not—you go to this butcher-work
As if these high-born men were steers for
shambles:

When all is over, you'll be free and merry,
And calmly wash those hands incarnadine;
But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows 510
In this surpassing massacre, shall be,
Shall see and feel—oh God! oh God! 'tis
true,

And thou dost well to answer that it was
"My own free will and act," and yet you
err,

For I *will* do this! Doubt not—fear not; I
Will be your most unmerciful accomplice!
And yet I act no more on my free will,
Nor my own feelings—both compel me back;
But there is *Hell* within me and around,
And like the Demon who believes and trembles
Must I abhor and do. Away! away! 521

Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me
To gather the retainers of our house.
Doubt not, St. Mark's great bell shall wake
all Venice,

Except her slaughtered Senate: ere the Sun
Be broad upon the Adriatic there
Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall drown
The roar of waters in the cry of blood!
I am resolved—come on.

I. Ber. With all my soul!
Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of passion;
Remember what these men have dealt to thee,
And that this sacrifice will be succeeded, 532
By ages of prosperity and freedom
To this unshackled city: a true tyrant
Would have depopulated empires, nor
Have felt the strange compunction which hath
wrung you

To punish a few traitors to the people.
Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced
Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

Doge. Man, thou hast struck upon the chord
which jars 540
All nature from my heart. Hence to our task!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Palazzo of the Patrician LIONI.*
LIONI laying aside the mask and cloak
which the Venetian Nobles wore in public,
attended by a Domestic.

Lioni. I will to rest, right weary of this revel,
The gayest we have held for many moons,
And yet—I know not why—it cheered me not;
There came a heaviness across my heart,
Which, in the lightest movement of the dance,
Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united
Even with the Lady of my Love, oppressed me,
And through my spirit chilled my blood, until
A damp like Death rose o'er my brow; I strove
To laugh the thought away, but 'twould not be:
Through all the music ringing in my ears 11
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave
Rose o'er the City's murmur in the night,
Dashing against the outward Lido's bulwark:
So that I left the festival before
It reached its zenith, and will woo my pillow
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetfulness.
Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light
The lamp within my chamber.

Ant. Yes, my Lord: 20
Command you no refreshment?

Lioni. Nought, save sleep,
Which will not be commanded. Let me hope it,
[*Exit ANTONIO.*]

Though my breast feels too anxious; I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 'tis
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad Moon hath brightened.
What a stillness!

[*Goes to an open lattice.*]
And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver
lamps'
More pallid gleam along the tapestried
walls, 30
Spread over the reluctant gloom which
haunts

Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries
A dazzling mass of artificial light,
Which showed all things, but nothing as
they were.

There Age essaying to recall the past,
After long striving for the hues of Youth
At the sad labour of the toilet, and
Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,
Pranked forth in all the pride of ornament,

Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood 40
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet
hide,
Believed itself forgotten, and was fooled.
There Youth, which needed not, nor thought
of such
Vain adjuncts, lavished its true bloom, and
health,
And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flushed and crowded wassailers, and
wasted
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was
pleasure,
And so shall waste them till the sunrise
streams
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which
should not 49
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.
The music, and the banquet, and the wine,
The garlands, the rose odours, and the
flowers,
The sparkling eyes, and flashing ornaments,
The white arms and the raven hair, the
braids
And bracelets; swanlike bosoms, and the
necklace,
An India in itself, yet dazzling not
The eye like what it circled; the thin robes,
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and
heaven;
The many-twinkling feet so small and sylph-
like,
Suggesting the more secret symmetry 60
Of the fair forms which terminate so well—
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
Its false and true enchantments—Art and
Nature,
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that
drank
The sight of beauty as the parched pilgrims
On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
Are gone. Around me are the stars and
waters—
Worlds mirrored in the Ocean, goodlier
sight 69
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great Element, which is to space
What Ocean is to Earth, spreads its blue
depths,
Softened with the first breathings of the
spring;
The high Moon sails upon her beauteous
way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls

Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly
fronts,
Fraught with the Orient spoil of many
marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed 80
Reared up from out the waters, scarce less
strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious
giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that
have
No other record. All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement,
showing 90
That he is not unheard; while her young
hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his
heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight; the
dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen answering back with verse for
verse; 100
Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering
spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here
pervade
The ocean-born and earth-commanding
City—
How sweet and soothing is this hour of
calm!
I thank thee, Night! for thou hast chased
away
Those horrid bodements which, amidst the
throng,
I could not dissipate: and with the blessing
Of thy benign and quiet influence,
Now will I to my couch, although to rest 110
Is almost wronging such a night as this.—
[A knocking is heard from without.
Hark! what is that? or who at such a
moment?

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. My Lord, a man without, on urgent business,
Implores to be admitted.

Lioni. Is he a stranger?

Ant. His face is muffled in his cloak, but both
His voice and gestures seem familiar to me;
I craved his name, but this he seemed
reluctant

To trust, save to yourself; most earnestly
He sues to be permitted to approach you.

Lioni. 'Tis a strange hour, and a suspicious bearing! 120

And yet there is slight peril: 'tis not in
Their houses noble men are struck at; still,
Although I know not that I have a foe
In Venice, 'twill be wise to use some caution.
Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly
Some of thy fellows, who may wait with-
out.—

Who can this man be?—

[*Exit ANTONIO, and returns with
BERTRAM muffled.*]

Ber. My good Lord Lioni,
I have no time to lose, nor thou,—dismiss
This menial hence; I would be private with
you.

Lioni. It seems the voice of Bertram—Go,
Antonio. 130

[*Exit ANTONIO.*]

Now, stranger, what would you at such an
hour?

Ber. (*discovering himself*). A boon, my
noble patron; you have granted
Many to your poor client, Bertram; add
This one, and make him happy.

Lioni. Thou hast known me
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee
In all fair objects of advancement, which
Beseem one of thy station; I would promise
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried
mode

Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit 140
Hath some mysterious import—but say on—
What has occurred, some rash and sudden
broil?—

A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab?
Mere things of every day; so that thou hast
not

Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety;
But then thou must withdraw, for angry
friends

And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.

Ber. My Lord, I thank you; but——

Lioni. But what?

You have not
Raised a rash hand against one of our
order? 150

If so—withdraw and fly—and own it not;
I would not slay—but then I must not save
thee!

He who has shed patrician blood——

Ber. I come
To save patrician blood, and not to shed it!
And thereunto I must be speedy, for
Each minute lost may lose a life; since Time
Has changed his slow scythe for the two-
edged sword,

And is about to take, instead of sand,
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-
glass!—

Go not *thou* forth to-morrow!

Lioni. Wherefore not?— 160
What means this menace?

Ber. Do not seek its meaning,
But do as I implore thee;—stir not forth,
Whate'er be stirring; though the roar of
crowds—

The cry of women, and the shrieks of babes—
The groans of men—the clash of arms—the
sound

Of rolling drum, shrill trump, and hollow
bell,

Peal in one wide alarum!—Go not forth,
Until the Tocsin's silent, nor even then
Till I return!

Lioni. Again, what does this mean?

Ber. Again, I tell thee, ask not; but by
all 170

Thou holdest dear on earth or Heaven—by
all

The Souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope
To emulate them, and to leave behind
Descendants worthy both of them and thee—
By all thou hast of blessed in hope or
memory—

By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter—
By all the good deeds thou hast done to me,
Good I would now repay with greater good,
Remain within—trust to thy household
gods,

And to my word for safety, if thou dost, 180
As I now counsel—but if not, thou art lost!

Lioni. I am indeed already lost in wonder;
Surely thou ravest! what have *I* to dread?
Who are my foes? or if there be such, *why*

Art *thou* leagued with them?—*thou*! or, if so
leagued,

Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,
And not before?

Ber. I cannot answer this.
Wilt thou go forth despite of this true
warning?

Lioni. I was not born to shrink from idle
threats,
The cause of which I know not: at the
hour

Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not
Be found among the absent.

Ber. Say not so!
Once more, art thou determined to go
forth?

Lioni. I am. Nor is there aught which
shall impede me!

Ber. Then, Heaven have mercy on thy
soul!—Farewell! [*Going.*]

Lioni. Stay—there is more in this than my
own safety

Which makes me call thee back; we must
not part thus:

Bertram, I have known thee long.

Ber. From childhood, Signor,
You have been my protector: in the days
Of reckless infancy, when rank forgets, 200
Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember
Its cold prerogative, we played together;
Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were
mingled oft;

My father was your father's client, I
His son's scarce less than foster-brother;
years

Saw us together—happy, heart-full hours!
Oh God! the difference 'twixt those hours
and this!

Lioni. Bertram, 'tis thou who hast for-
gotten them.

Ber. Nor now, nor ever; whatso'er betide,
I would have saved you: when to Manhood's
growth

We sprung, and you, devoted to the state,
As suits your station, the more humble
Bertram

Was left unto the labours of the humble,
Still you forsook me not; and if my fortunes
Have not been towering, 'twas no fault of
him

Who oft-times rescued and supported me,
When struggling with the tides of Circum-
stance,

Which bear away the weaker: noble blood
Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine

Has proved to me, the poor plebeian
Bertram.

Would that thy fellow Senators were like thee! 220

Lioni. Why, what hast thou to say against
the Senate?

Ber. Nothing.

Lioni. I know that there are angry spirits
And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason,
Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out
Muffled to whisper curses to the night;
Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,
And desperate libertines who brawl in
taverns;

Thou herdest not with such: 'tis true, of late
I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert
wont

To lead a temperate life, and break thy
bread

With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.
What hath come to thee? in thy hollow eye
And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,
Sorrow and Shame and Conscience seem at
war

To waste thee.

Ber. Rather Shame and Sorrow light
On the accursed tyranny which rides
The very air in Venice, and makes men
Madden as in the last hours of the plague
Which sweeps the soul deliriously from
life!

Lioni. Some villains have been tampering
with thee, Bertram;
This is not thy old language, nor own
thoughts;

Some wretch has made thee drunk with
disaffection:
But thou must not be lost so; thou wert good
And kind, and art not fit for such base acts
As Vice and Villany would put thee to:
Confess—confide in me—thou know'st my
nature.

What is it thou and thine are bound to do,
Which should prevent thy friend, the only
son

Of him who was a friend unto thy father, 250
So that our good-will is a heritage
We should bequeath to our posterity
Such as ourselves received it, or augmented;
I say, what is it thou must do, that I
Should deem thee dangerous, and keep the
house

Like a sick girl?

Ber. Nay, question me no further:
I must be gone.—

Lioni. And I be murdered!—say,

Was it not thus thou said'st, my gentle
Bertram?

Ber. Who talks of murder? what said I of
murder?

'Tis false! I did not utter such a word. 260

Lioni. Thou didst not; but from out thy
wolfish eye,

So changed from what I knew it, there glares
forth

The gladiator. If *my* life's thine object,
Take it—I am unarmed,—and then away!
I would not hold my breath on such a tenure
As the capricious mercy of such things
As thou and those who have set thee to thy
task-work.

Ber. Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril
mine;

Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some 270
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine own.

Lioni. Aye, is it even so? Excuse me,
Bertram;

I am not worthy to be singled out
From such exalted hecatombs—who are they
That *are* in danger, and that *make* the
danger?

Ber. Venice, and all that she inherits, are
Divided like a house against itself,
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight!

Lioni. More mysteries, and awful ones!
But now,

Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are 280
Upon the verge of ruin; speak once out,
And thou art safe and glorious: for 'tis more
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the
dark too—

Fie, Bertram! that was not a craft for thee!
How would it look to see upon a spear
The head of him whose heart was open to thee!
Borne by thy hand before the shuddering
people?

And such may be my doom; for here I swear,
Whate'er the peril or the penalty
Of thy denunciation, I go forth, 290
Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show
The consequence of all which led thee here!

Ber. Is there no way to save thee? minutes fly,
And thou art lost!—*thou!* my sole benefactor,
The only being who was constant to me
Through every change. Yet, make me not a
traitor!

Let me save thee—but spare my honour!

Lioni. Where
Can lie the honour in a league of murder?
And who are traitors save unto the State?

Ber. A league is still a compact, and more
binding 300

In honest hearts when words must stand
for law;

And in my mind, there is no traitor like
He whose domestic treason plants the poniard
Within the breast which trusted to his truth.

Lioni. And *who* will strike the steel to mine?

Ber. Not I;

I could have wound my soul up to all things
Save this. *Thou* must not die! and think
how dear

Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,
Nay, more, the Life of lives, the liberty
Of future generations, *not* to be 310

The assassin thou miscall'st me:—once, once
more

I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy threshold!

Lioni. It is in vain—this moment I go forth.

Ber. Then perish Venice rather than my
friend!

I will disclose—ensnare—betray—destroy—
Oh, what a villain I become for thee!

Lioni. Say, rather thy friend's saviour and
the State's!—

Speak—pause not—all rewards, all pledges for
Thy safety and thy welfare; wealth such as
The State accords her worthiest servants; nay,
Nobility itself I guarantee thee, 321
So that thou art sincere and penitent.

Ber. I have thought again: it must not be—
I love thee—

Thou knowest it—that I stand here is the proof,
Not least though last; but having done my duty
By thee, I now must do it by my country!
Farewell—we meet no more in life!—farewell!

Lioni. What, ho!—Antonio—Pedro—to
the door!

See that none pass—arrest this man!—

*Enter ANTONIO and other armed Domestics,
who seize BERTRAM.*

Lioni (continues). Take care
He hath no harm; bring me my sword and
cloak, 330

And man the gondola with four oars—quick—
[*Exit ANTONIO.*

We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's,
And send for Marc Cornaro:—fear not,
Bertram;

This needful violence is for thy safety,
No less than for the general weal.

Ber. Where wouldst thou
Bear me a prisoner?

Lioni. Firstly to "the Ten";
Next to the Doge.
Ber. To the Doge?
Lioni. Assuredly:
Is he not Chief of the State?
Ber. Perhaps at sunrise—
Lioni. What mean you?—but we'll know anon.
Ber. Art sure?
Lioni. Sure as all gentle means can make;
and if 340
They fail, you know "the Ten" and their tribunal,
And that St. Mark's has dungeons, and the dungeons
A rack.
Ber. Apply it then before the dawn
Now hastening into heaven.—One more such word,
And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death
You think to doom to me.

Re-enter ANTONIO.

Ant. The bark is ready,
My Lord, and all prepared.
Lioni. Look to the prisoner.
Bertram, I'll reason with thee as we go
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Ducal Palace—The Doge's Apartment.*

The DOGE and his Nephew BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Doge. Are all the people of our house in muster?
Ber. F. They are arrayed, and eager for the signal,
Within our palace precincts at San Polo:¹
I come for your last orders.
Doge. It had been
As well had there been time to have got together,
From my own fief, Val di Marino, more
Of our retainers—but it is too late.
Ber. F. Methinks, my Lord, 'tis better as it is:
A sudden swelling of our retinue
Had waked suspicion; and, though fierce
and trusty, 10
The vassals of that district are too rude
And quick in quarrel to have long maintained

¹ The Doge's family palace.

The secret discipline we need for such
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.
Doge. True; but when once the signal has
been given
These are the men for such an enterprise;
These city slaves have all their private bias,
Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare
Where mercy may be madness; the fierce
peasants, 20
Serfs of my county of Val di Marino,
Would do the bidding of their lord without
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes;
Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,
A Gradenigo or a Foscari;
They are not used to start at those vain names,
Nor bow the knee before a civic Senate;
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,
And not a thing in robes.
Ber. F. We are enough;
And for the dispositions of our clients 30
Against the Senate I will answer.
Doge. Well,
The die is thrown; but for a warlike service,
Done in the field, commend me to my peasants:
They made the sun shine through the host of
Huns
When sallow burghers slunk back to their
tents,
And cowered to hear their own victorious
trumpet.
If there be small resistance, you will find
These Citizens all Lions, like their Standard;
But if there's much to do, you'll wish, with me,
A band of iron rustics at our backs. 40
Ber. F. Thus thinking, I must marvel you
resolve
To strike the blow so suddenly.
Doge. Such blows
Must be struck suddenly or never. When
I had o'ermastered the weak false remorse
Which yearned about my heart, too fondly
yielding
A moment to the feelings of old days,
I was most fain to strike; and, firstly, that
I might not yield again to such emotions;
And, secondly, because of all these men,
Save Israel and Philip Calendaro, 50
I know not well the courage or the faith:
To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor to us,
As yesterday a thousand to the Senate;
But once in, with their hilts hot in their hands,
They must *on* for their own sakes; one
stroke struck,
And the mere instinct of the first-born Cain,

Which ever lurks somewhere in human hearts,
 Though Circumstance may keep it in abeyance,
 Will urge the rest on like to wolves; the sight
 Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more, 60
 As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel;
 And you will find a harder task to quell
 Than urge them when they *have* commenced,
 but *till*

That moment, a mere voice, a straw, a shadow,
 Are capable of turning them aside.—
 How goes the night?

Ber. F. Almost upon the dawn.

Doge. Then it is time to strike upon the bell.
 Are the men posted?

Ber. F. By this time they are;
 But they have orders not to strike, until
 They have command from you through me
 in person. 70

Doge. 'Tis well.—Will the morn never put
 to rest

These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the
 heavens?

I am settled and bound up, and being so,
 The very effort which it cost me to
 Resolve to cleanse this Commonwealth with
 fire,

Now leaves my mind more steady. I have wept,
 And trembled at the thought of this dread duty;
 But now I have put down all idle passion,
 And look the growing tempest in the face,
 As doth the pilot of an Admiral Galley: 80
 Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman?) it hath
 been

A greater struggle to me, than when nations
 Beheld their fate merged in the approaching
 fight,

Where I was leader of a phalanx, where
 Thousands were sure to perish—Yes, to spill
 The rank polluted current from the veins
 Of a few bloated despots needed more
 To steel me to a purpose such as made
 Timoleon immortal¹ than to face

The toils and dangers of a life of war. 90

Ber. F. It gladdens me to see your former
 wisdom

Subdue the furies which so wrung you ere
 You were decided.

Doge. It was ever thus
 With me; the hour of agitation came
 In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when
 Passion had too much room to sway; but in

¹ [For Timoleon, who first saved, and afterwards
 slew his brother Timophanes, for aiming at
 sovereignty, see *The Siege of Corinth*, line 59, note
 2.]

The hour of action I have stood as calm
 As were the dead who lay around me: this
 They knew who made me what I am, and
 trusted

To the subduing power which I preserved 100
 Over my mood, when its first burst was spent,
 But they were not aware that there are things
 Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,
 And not an impulse of mere anger; though
 The laws sleep, Justice wakes, and injured
 souls

Oft do a public right with private wrong,
 And justify their deeds unto themselves.—
 Methinks the day breaks—is it not so? look,
 Thine eyes are clear with youth;—the air
 puts on

A morning freshness, and, at least to me, 110
 The sea looks greyer through the lattice.

Ber. F. True,
 The morn is dappling in the sky.

Doge. Away then!
 See that they strike without delay, and with
 The first toll from St. Mark's, march on the
 palace

With all our House's strength; here I will
 meet you;

The Sixteen and their companies will move
 In separate columns at the self-same moment:
 Be sure you post yourself at the great Gate:
 I would not trust "the Ten" except to us—
 The rest, the rabble of patricians, may 120
 Glut the more careless swords of those leagued
 with us.

Remember that the cry is still "Saint Mark!
 The Genoese are come—ho! to the rescue!
 Saint Mark and Liberty!"—Now—now to
 action!

Ber. F. Farewell then, noble Uncle! we
 will meet

In freedom and true sovereignty, or never!

Doge. Come hither, my Bertuccio—one
 embrace;

Speed, for the day grows broader—send me soon
 A messenger to tell me how all goes
 When you rejoin our troops, and then sound
 —sound

The storm-bell from St. Mark's!

[Exit BERTUCCIO FALIERO.]

Doge (solus). He is gone, 131
 And on each footstep moves a life. 'Tis done.
 Now the destroying Angel hovers o'er
 Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,
 Even as the eagle overlooks his prey,
 And for a moment, poised in middle air,
 Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,

Then swoops with his unerring beak. Thou
Day!

That slowly walk'st the waters! march—
march on—

I would not smite i' the dark, but rather see 140
That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea
waves!

I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply too,
With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,
While that of Venice flowed too, but victorious:
Now thou must wear an unmixed crimson; no
Barbaric blood can reconcile us now

Unto that horrible incarnadine,
But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.
And have I lived to fourscore years for this?
I, who was named Preserver of the City? 150
I, at whose name the million's caps were flung
Into the air, and cries from tens of thousands
Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me
blessings,

And fame, and length of days—to see this day?
But this day, black within the calendar,
Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium.

Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers
To vanquish empires, and refuse their crown;
I will resign a crown, and make the State
Renew its freedom—but oh! by what means?
The noble end must justify them. What 161

Are a few drops of human blood? 'tis false,
The blood of tyrants is not human; they,
Like to incarnate Molochs, feed on ours,
Until 'tis time to give them to the tombs
Which they have made so populous. — Oh
World!

Oh Men! what are ye, and our best designs,
That we must work by crime to punish crime?
And slay as if Death had but this one gate,
When a few years would make the sword
superfluous? 170

And I, upon the verge of th' unknown realm,
Yet send so many heralds on before me?—
I must not ponder this. [A pause.

Hark! was there not

A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison?
What phantoms even of sound our wishes raise!

It cannot be—the signal hath not rung—
Why pauses it? My nephew's messenger
Should be upon his way to me, and he
Himself perhaps even now draws grating back
Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower
portal, 181

Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,
Which never knells but for a princely death,
Or for a state in peril, pealing forth

Tremendous bodements; let it do its office,
And be this peal its awfulest and last
Sound till the strong tower rock!—What!
silent still?

I would go forth, but that my post is here,
To be the centre of reunion to
The oft discordant elements which form 190
Leagues of this nature, and to keep compact
The wavering of the weak, in case of conflict;
For if they should do battle, 'twill be here,
Within the palace, that the strife will thicken:
Then here must be my station, as becomes
The master-mover.—Hark! he comes—he
comes,

My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger.—
What tidings? Is he marching? hath he sped?
They here!—all's lost—yet will I make an effort.

*Enter a SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT,¹ with
Guards, etc., etc.*

Sig. Doge, I arrest thee of high treason!

Doge. Me! 200

Thy Prince, of treason?—Who are they that
dare

Cloak their own treason under such an order?

Sig. (*showing his order*). Behold my order
from the assembled Ten.

Doge. And *where* are they, and *why*
assembled? no

Such Council can be lawful, till the Prince
Preside there, and that duty's mine: ² on thine
I charge thee, give me way, or marshal me
To the Council chamber.

Sig. Duke! it may not be:
Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,
But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.

Doge. You dare to disobey me, then?

Sig. I serve
The State, and needs must serve it faithfully;
My warrant is the will of those who rule it.

¹ "I Signori di Notte" held an important charge in the old republic. [The surveillance of the "sestieri" was assigned to the "Collegio dei Signori di notte al criminal." Six in all, they were at once police magistrates and superintendents of police.]

² [The Doge overstates his authority. He could not preside without his Council "in the *Maggior Consiglio*, or in the Senate, or in the College; but four ducal councillors had the power to preside without the Doge. The Doge might not open despatches except in the presence of his Council, but his Council might open despatches in the absence of the Doge."—*Venetian Studies*, by H. F. Brown, 1887, p. 189.]

Doge. And till that warrant has my signature
It is illegal, and, as *now* applied,
Rebellious. Hast thou weighed well thy life's
worth,

That thus you dare assume a lawless function?

Sig. 'Tis not my office to reply, but act—
I am placed here as guard upon thy person,
And not as judge to hear or to decide. 220

Doge (aside). I must gain time. So that
the storm-bell sound,
All may be well yet. Kinsman, speed—
speed—speed!—

Our fate is trembling in the balance, and
Woe to the vanquished! be they Prince and
people,
Or slaves and Senate—

[*The great bell of St. Mark's tolls.*

Lo! it sounds—it tolls!

Doge (aloud). Hark, Signor of the Night!
and you, ye hirelings,
Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,
It is your knell.—Swell on, thou lusty peal!
Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?

Sig. Confusion!
Stand to your arms, and guard the door—
all's lost 230

Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon.
The officer hath missed his path or purpose,
Or met some unforeseen and hideous obstacle.
Anselmo, with thy company proceed
Straight to the tower; the rest remain with me.

[*Exit part of the Guard.*

Doge. Wretch! if thou wouldst have thy
vile life, implore it;
It is not now a lease of sixty seconds.
Aye, send thy miserable ruffians forth;
They never shall return.

Sig. So let it be!
They die then in their duty, as will I. 240

Doge. Fool! the high eagle flies at nobler
game
Than thou and thy base myrmidons,—live on,
So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,
And learn (if souls so much obscured can bear
To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.

Sig. And learn thou to be captive. It
hath ceased, [*The bell ceases to toll.*
The traitorous signal, which was to have set
The bloodhound mob on their patrician prey—
The knell hath rung, but it is not the Senate's!

Doge (after a pause). All's silent, and all's
lost!

Sig. Now, Doge, denounce me
As rebel slave of a revolted Council! 251
Have I not done my duty?

Doge. Peace, thou thing!
Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earned
the price
Of blood, and they who use thee will reward
thee.

But thou wert sent to watch, and not to prate,
As thou said'st even now—then do thine office,
But let it be in silence, as behoves thee,
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy Prince.

Sig. I did not mean to fail in the respect
Due to your rank: in this I shall obey you.

Doge (aside). There now is nothing left me
save to die; 261
And yet how near success! I would have
fallen,

And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but
To miss it thus!—

Enter other SIGNORS OF THE NIGHT, *with*
BERTUCCIO FALIERO *prisoner.*

2nd Sig. We took him in the act
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his order,
As delegated from the Doge, the signal
Had thus begun to sound.

1st Sig. Are all the passes
Which lead up to the palace well secured?

2nd Sig. They are—besides, it matters not;
the Chiefs 269

Are all in chains, and some even now on trial—
Their followers are dispersed, and many taken.

Ber. F. Uncle!

Doge. It is in vain to war with Fortune;
The glory hath departed from our house.

Ber. F. Who would have deemed it?—Ah!
one moment sooner!

Doge. That moment would have changed
the face of ages;

This gives us to Eternity—We'll meet it
As men whose triumph is not in success,
But who can make their own minds all in all,
Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 'tis
But a brief passage—I would go alone, 280
Yet if they send us, as 'tis like, together,
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves.

Ber. F. I shall not shame you, Uncle.

1st Sig. Lords, our orders
Are to keep guard on both in separate
chambers,
Until the Council call ye to your trial.

Doge. Our trial! will they keep their
mockery up

Even to the last? but let them deal upon us,
As we had dealt on them, but with less pomp.
'Tis but a game of mutual homicides,
Who have cast lots for the first death, and
they 290

Have won with false dice.—Who hath been
our Judas?

1st Sig. I am not warranted to answer that.

Ber. F. I'll answer for thee—'tis a certain
Bertram,

Even now deposing to the secret Giunta.

Doge. Bertram, the Bergamask! With
what vile tools¹

We operate to slay or save! This creature,
Black with a double treason, now will earn
Rewards and honours, and be stamped in story
With the geese in the Capitol, which gabbled
Till Rome awoke, and had an annual
triumph,

While Manlius, who hurled down the Gauls,
was cast

From the Tarpeian.

1st Sig. He aspired to treason,
And sought to rule the State.

Doge. He saved the State,
And sought but to reform what he revived—
But this is idle—Come, sirs, do your work.

1st Sig. Noble Bertuccio, we must now
remove you

Into an inner chamber.

Ber. F. Farewell, Uncle!
If we shall meet again in life I know not,
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.

Doge. Yes, and our spirits, which shall yet
go forth,

And do what our frail clay, thus clogged,
hath failed in!

They cannot quench the memory of those
Who would have hurled them from their
guilty thrones,

And such examples will find heirs, though
distant.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of the Council of Ten
assembled with the additional Senators,
who, on the Trials of the Conspirators
for the Treason of MARINO FALIERO,
composed what was called the Giunta,—
Guards, Officers, etc., etc. ISRAEL
BERTUCCIO and PHILIP CALENDARO as
Prisoners. BERTRAM, LIONI, and
Witnesses, etc.*

¹[A translation of *Beltramo Bergamasco*, i.e. a native of the town and province of Bergamo, in the north of Italy.]

*The Chief of the Ten, BENINTENDE.*¹

Ben. There now rests, after such conviction
of

Their manifold and manifest offences,
But to pronounce on these obdurate men
The sentence of the Law:—a grievous task
To those who hear, and those who speak.

Alas!

That it should fall to me! and that my days
Of office should be stigmatised through all
The years of coming time, as bearing record
To this most foul and complicated treason
Against a just and free state, known to all
The earth as being the Christian bulwark
'gainst

The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,
The savage Hun, and not less barbarous
Frank;

A City which has opened India's wealth
To Europe; the last Roman refuge from
O'erwhelming Attila; the Ocean's Queen;
Proud Genoa's prouder rival! 'Tis to sap
The throne of such a City, these lost men
Have risked and forfeited their worthless
lives—

So let them die the death.

I. Ber. We are prepared; 20
Your racks have done that for us. Let us
die.

Ben. If ye have that to say which would
obtain

Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta
Will hear you; if you have aught to confess,
Now is your time,—perhaps it may avail ye.

I. Ber. We stand to hear, and not to
speak.

Ben. Your crimes
Are fully proved by your accomplices,
And all which Circumstance can add to aid
them;

Yet we would hear from your own lips
complete

¹["In the notes to *Marino Faliero*, it may be as well to say that '*Benintende*' was not really of the ten, but merely *Grand Chancellor*—a separate office, though an important one: it was an arbitrary alteration of mine."—Letter to Murray, October 12, 1820.

Byron's correction was based on a chronicle cited by Sanudo, which is responsible for the statement that *Beneintendi de Ravignani* presided as *Grand Chancellor* at the Doge's trial, and took down his examination. As a matter of fact, *Beneintendi* was at Milan, not at Venice, when the trial took place.]

Avowal of your treason : on the verge 30
Of that dread gulf which none repass, the
truth

Alone can profit you on earth or Heaven—
Say, then, what was your motive?

I. Ber. Justice!

Ben. What

Your object?

I. Ber. Freedom!

Ben. You are brief, sir.

I. Ber. So my life grows : I
Was bred a soldier, not a senator.

Ben. Perhaps you think by this blunt
brevity

To brave your judges to postpone the
sentence?

I. Ber. Do you be brief as I am, and
believe me,

I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon. 40

Ben. Is this your sole reply to the
Tribunal?

I. Ber. Go, ask your racks what they have
wrung from us,

Or place us there again ; we have still some
blood left,

And some slight sense of pain in these
wrenched limbs :

But this ye dare not do ; for if we die there—
And you have left us little life to spend
Upon your engines, gorged with pangs
already—

Ye lose the public spectacle, with which
You would appal your slaves to further
slavery!

Groans are not words, nor agony assent, 50
Nor affirmation Truth, if Nature's sense
Should overcome the soul into a lie,
For a short respite—must we bear or die?

Ben. Say, who were your accomplices?

I. Ber. The Senate.

Ben. What do you mean?

I. Ber. Ask of the suffering people,
Whom your patrician crimes have driven to
crime.

Ben. You know the Doge?

I. Ber. I served with him at Zara
In the field, when *you* were pleading here
your way

To present office ; we exposed our lives,
While you but hazarded the lives of others,
Alike by accusation or defence ; 61

And for the rest, all Venice knows her Doge,
Through his great actions, and the Senate's
insults.

Ben. You have held conference with him?

I. Ber. I am weary—
Even wearier of your questions than your
tortures :

I pray you pass to judgment.

Ben. It is coming.
And you, too, Philip Calendaro, what
Have you to say why you should not be
doomed?

Cal. I never was a man of many words, 69
And now have few left worth the utterance.

Ben. A further application of yon engine
May change your tone.

Cal. Most true, it *will* do so ;
A former application did so ; but
It will not change my words, or, if it did—

Ben. What then?

Cal. Will my avowal on yon rack
Stand good in law?

Ben. Assuredly.

Cal. Whoe'er
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?

Ben. Without doubt, he will be brought
up to trial.

Cal. And on this testimony would he
perish?

Ben. So your confession be detailed and
full, 80

He will stand here in peril of his life.

Cal. Then look well to thy proud self,
President!

For by the Eternity which yawns before me,
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,
If I be stretched there for the second time.

One of the Giunta. Lord President, 'twere
best proceed to judgment ;
There is no more to be drawn from these
men.

Ben. Unhappy men ! prepare for instant
death.

The nature of your crime—our law—and
peril 90
The State now stands in, leave not an hour's
respite.

Guards ! lead them forth, and upon the
balcony

Of the red columns, where, on festal
Thursday,¹

The Doge stands to behold the chase of
bulls,

Let them be justified : and leave exposed

¹ "Giovedì grasso,"—"fat or greasy Thursday,"
—which I cannot literally translate in the text,
was the day.

Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,

To the full view of the assembled people!
And Heaven have mercy on their souls!

The Giunta.

Amen!

I. Ber. Signors, farewell! we shall not all
again

Meet in one place.

Ben. And lest they should essay 100
To stir up the distracted multitude—

Guards! let their mouths be gagged¹ even in
the act

Of execution. Lead them hence!

Cal. What! must we

Not even say farewell to some fond friend,
Nor leave a last word with our confessor?

Ben. A priest is waiting in the ante-
chamber;

But, for your friends, such interviews would
be

Painful to them, and useless all to you.

Cal. I knew that we were gagged in life;
at least

All those who had not heart to risk their
lives 110

Upon their open thoughts; but still I
deemed

That in the last few moments, the same idle
Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,
Would not now be denied to us; but since—

I. Ber. Even let them have their way,
brave Calendaro!

What matter a few syllables? let's die
Without the slightest show of favour from
them;

So shall our blood more readily arise
To Heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume 120
Spoken or written of our dying words!

They tremble at our voices—nay, they
dread

Our very silence—let them live in fear!
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us
now

Address our own above!—Lead on; we are
ready.

Cal. Israel, hadst thou but hearkened unto
me

It had not now been thus; and yon pale
villain,

The coward Bertram, would—

I. Ber. Peace, Calendaro!

What brooks it now to ponder upon this?

¹ Historical fact.

Bert. Alas! I fain you died in peace with
me:

I did not seek this task; 'twas forced upon
me: 130

Say, you forgive me, though I never can
Retrieve my own forgiveness—frown not thus!

I. Ber. I die and pardon thee!

Cal. (*spitting at him*). I die and scorn thee!
[*Exeunt ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP*

CALENDARO, *Guards, etc.*

Ben. Now that these criminals have been
disposed of,

'Tis time that we proceed to pass our sentence
Upon the greatest traitor upon record

In any annals, the Doge Faliero!

The proofs and process are complete; the
time

And crime require a quick procedure: shall 140
He now be called in to receive the award?

The Giunta. Aye, aye.

Ben. Avogadori, order that the Doge
Be brought before the Council.

One of the Giunta. And the rest,
When shall they be brought up?

Ben. When all the Chiefs
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to
Chiozza;

But there are thousands in pursuit of them,
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,
As well as in the islands, that we hope
None will escape to utter in strange lands
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the
Senate. 150

*Enter the DOGE as Prisoner, with
Guards, etc., etc.*

Ben. Doge—for such still you are, and by
the law

Must be considered, till the hour shall come
When you must doff the Ducal Bonnet from
That head, which could not wear a crown
more noble

Than Empires can confer, in quiet honour,
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,
Who made you what you are, and quench
in blood

A City's glory—we have laid already
Before you in your chamber at full length,
By the Avogadori, all the proofs 160
Which have appeared against you; and
more ample

Ne'er reared their sanguinary shadows to
Confront a traitor. What have you to say
In your defence?

Doge. What shall I say to ye,
Since my defence must be your condemna-
tion?

You are at once offenders and accusers,
Judges and Executioners!—Proceed
Upon your power.

Ben. Your chief accomplices
Having confessed, there is no hope for you.

Doge. And who be they?

Ben. In number many; but 170
The first now stands before you in the court,
Bertram of Bergamo,—would you question
him?

Doge. (*looking at him contemptuously*). No.

Ben. And two others, Israel Bertuccio,
And Philip Calendaro, have admitted
Their fellowship in treason with the Doge!

Doge. And where are they?

Ben. Gone to their place, and now
Answering to Heaven for what they did on
earth.

Doge. Ah! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone?
And the quick Cassius of the arsenal?—
How did they meet their doom?

Ben. Think of your own:
It is approaching. You decline to plead,
then? 181

Doge. I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor
Can recognise your legal power to try me.
Show me the law!

Ben. On great emergencies,
The law must be remodelled or amended:
Our fathers had not fixed the punishment
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables
The sentence against parricide was left
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render
That penal, which had neither name nor
thought 190
In their great bosoms; who would have
foreseen
That Nature could be filed to such a crime
As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their
realms?

Your sin hath made us make a law which
will

Become a precedent 'gainst such haught
traitors,
As would with treason mount to tyranny;
Not even contented with a sceptre, till
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!
Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye?
What's nobler than the signory of Venice? 200

Doge. The signory of Venice! You be-
trayed me—

You—you, who sit there, traitors as ye are!

From my equality with you in birth,
And my superiority in action,
You drew me from my honourable toils
In distant lands—on flood, in field, in cities—
You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crowned, but bound and helpless, at
the altar

Where you alone could minister. I knew not,
I sought not, wished not, dreamed not the
election, 210

Which reached me first at Rome, and I
obeyed;

But found on my arrival, that, besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your Sovereign's best
intent,

You had, even in the interregnum of
My journey to the capital, curtailed
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the Duke: all this I bore, and would
Have borne, until my very hearth was stained
By the pollution of your ribaldry, 220
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you—
Fit judge in such tribunal!—

Ben. (*interrupting him*). Michel Steno
Is here in virtue of his office, as
One of the Forty; "the Ten" having craved
A Giunta of patricians from the Senate
To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
And novel as the present: he was set
Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,
Because the Doge, who should protect the law,
Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim 230
No punishment of others by the statutes
Which he himself denies and violates!

Doge. His PUNISHMENT! I rather see him
there,

Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,
Than in the mockery of castigation,
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of
justice

Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,
'Twas purity compared with your protection.

Ben. And can it be, that the great Doge
of Venice,

With three parts of a century of years 240
And honours on his head, could thus allow
His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
All Feeling, Wisdom, Faith and Fear, on such
A provocation as a young man's petulance?

Doge. A spark creates the flame—'tis the
last drop

Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was
full

Already: you oppressed the Prince and people;

I would have freed both, and have failed in both:

The price of such success would have been glory,

Vengeance, and victory, and such a name 250

As would have made Venetian history

Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse

When they were freed, and flourished ages after,

And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus:¹

Failing, I know the penalty of failure

Is present infamy and death—the future

Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;—

Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not—

I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;

My life was staked upon a mighty hazard, 260

And being lost, take what I would have taken!

I would have stood alone amidst your tombs:

Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,

As you have done upon my heart while living.

Ben. You do confess then, and admit the justice

Of our Tribunal?

Doge. I confess to have failed;

Fortune is female: from my youth her favours

Were not withheld, the fault was mine to hope

Her former smiles again at this late hour.

Ben. You do not then in aught arraign our equity?

270

Doge. Noble Venetians! stir me not with questions.

I am resigned to the worst; but in me still

Have something of the blood of brighter days,

And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me

Further interrogation, which boots nothing,

Except to turn a trial to debate.

I shall but answer that which will offend you,

And please your enemies—a host already;

'Tis true, these sullen walls should yield no echo:

But walls have ears—nay, more, they have tongues; and if

280

There were no other way for Truth to o'er-leap them,

You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,

Yet could not bear in silence to your graves

What you would hear from me of Good or Evil;

The secret were too mighty for your souls:

Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court

A danger which would double that you escape.

Such my defence would be, had I full scope

To make it famous; for true *words* are *things*,

And dying men's are things which long outlive,

290

And oftentimes avenge them; bury mine,

If ye would fain survive me: take this counsel,

And though too oft ye make me live in wrath,

Let me die calmly; you may grant me this;

I deny nothing—defend nothing—nothing

I ask of you, but silence for myself,

And sentence from the Court!

Ben.

This full admission

Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering

The torture to elicit the whole truth.

Doge. The torture! you have put me there already,

300

Daily since I was Doge; but if you will

Add the corporeal rack, you may: these limbs

Will yield with age to crushing iron; but

There's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

Enter an OFFICER.

Officer. Noble Venetians! Duchess Faliero Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.

Ben. Say, Conscript Fathers,¹ shall she be admitted?

One of the Giunta. She may have revelations of importance

Unto the state, to justify compliance

With her request.

Ben.

Is this the general will? 310

All. It is.

Doge. Oh, admirable laws of Venice!

Which would admit the wife, in the full hope

That she might testify against the husband.

What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!

But such blasphemers 'gainst all Honour, as

Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.

Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,

I'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,

And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

The DUCHESS enters.

Ben. Lady! this just Tribunal has resolved, Though the request be strange, to grant it, and

321

¹ [Gelo is quoted as the type of a successful and beneficent tyrant held in honour by all posterity; Thrasybulus as a consistent advocate and successful champion of democracy.]

¹ The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of "conscript fathers." [It was not, however, the Senate, the *Pregadi*, but the *Consiglio dei Dieci*, supplemented by the *Zonta* of Twenty, which tried and condemned the Doge.]

Whatever be its purport, to accord
A patient hearing with the due respect
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and
virtues :

But you turn pale—ho! there, look to the
Lady!

Place a chair instantly.

Ang. A moment's faintness—
'Tis past; I pray you pardon me,—I sit not
In presence of my Prince and of my husband,
While he is on his feet.

Ben. Your pleasure, Lady?

Ang. Strange rumours, but most true, if
all I hear 330
And see be sooth, have reached me, and I
come

To know the worst, even at the worst; forgive
The abruptness of my entrance and my
bearing.

Is it—I cannot speak—I cannot shape
The question—but you answer it ere spoken,
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows—
Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!

Ben. (*after a pause*). Spare us, and spare
thyself the repetition

Of our most awful, but inexorable 339
Duty to Heaven and man!

Ang. Yet speak; I cannot—
I cannot—no—even now believe these things.
Is *he* condemned?

Ben. Alas!

Ang. And was he guilty?

Ben. Lady! the natural distraction of
Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the
question

Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this
Against a just and paramount tribunal
Were deep offence. But question even the
Doge,

And if he can deny the proofs, believe him
Guiltless as thy own bosom.

Ang. Is it so?
My Lord, my Sovereign, my poor father's
friend, 350

The mighty in the field, the sage in Council,
Unsay the words of this man!—thou art silent!

Ben. He hath already owned to his own guilt,
Nor, as thou see'st, doth he deny it now.

Ang. Aye, but he must not die! Spare his
few years,
Which Grief and Shame will soon cut down to
days!

One day of baffled crime must not efface
Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave
acts.

Ben. His doom must be fulfilled without
remission

Of time or penalty—'tis a decree. 360

Ang. He hath been guilty, but there may
be mercy.

Ben. Not in this case with justice.

Ang. Alas! Signor,
He who is only just is cruel; who
Upon the earth would live were all judged
justly?

Ben. His punishment is safety to the State.

Ang. He was a subject, and hath served
the State;

He was your General, and hath saved the State;
He is your Sovereign, and hath ruled the State.

One of the Council. He is a traitor, and
betrayed the State.

Ang. And, but for him, there now had
been no State 370

To save or to destroy; and you, who sit
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!

One of the Council. No, Lady, there are
others who would die

Rather than breathe in slavery!

Ang. If there are so
Within *these* walls, *thou* art not of the number:
The truly brave are generous to the fallen!—
Is there no hope?

Ben. Lady, it cannot be.

Ang. (*turning to the Doge*). Then die,
Faliero! since it must be so; 380
But with the spirit of my father's friend.

Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,
Half cancelled by the harshness of these men.
I would have sued to them, have prayed to them,
Have begged as famished mendicants for
bread,

Have wept as they will cry unto their God
For mercy, and be answered as they answer,
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes 389

Had not announced the heartless wrath within.
Then, as a Prince, address thee to thy doom!

Doge. I have lived too long not to know
how to die!

Thy suing to these men were but the bleating
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry
Of seamen to the surge: I would not take
A life eternal, granted at the hands
Of wretches, from whose monstrous villainies
I sought to free the groaning nations!

Michel Steno. Doge,

A word with thee, and with this noble lady,

Whom I have grievously offended. Would 400
Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,
Could cancel the inexorable past!

But since that cannot be, as Christians let us
Say farewell, and in peace: with full contrition
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.

Ang. Sage Benintende, now chief Judge of
Venice,

I speak to thee in answer to yon Signor.
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words
Ne'er weighed in mind with Loredano's
daughter, 410

Further than to create a moment's pity
For such as he is: would that others had
Despised him as I pity! I prefer
My honour to a thousand lives, could such
Be multiplied in mine, but would not have
A single life of others lost for that
Which nothing human can impugn—the sense
Of Virtue, looking not to what is called
A good name for reward, but to itself.

Tomethescorner's words were as the wind 420
Unto the rock: but as there are—alas!

Spirits more sensitive, on which such things
Light as the Whirlwind on the waters; souls
To whom Dishonour's shadow is a substance
More terrible than Death, here and hereafter;
Men whose vice is to start at Vice's scoffing,
And who, though proof against all blandish-
ments

Of pleasure, and all pangs of Pain, are feeble
When the proud name on which they pinnacled
Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle
Of her high aiery; let what we now 431

Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
To wretches how they tamper in their spleen
With beings of a higher order. Insects
Have made the lion mad ere now; a shaft
I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave;
A wife's Dishonour was the bane of Troy;
A wife's Dishonour unkinged Rome for ever;
An injured husband brought the Gauls to
Clusium, 439

And thence to Rome, which perished for a time;
An obscene gesture cost Caligula¹
His life, while Earth yet bore his cruelties;
A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish
province;

And Steno's lie, couched in two worthless lines,
Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
A Senate which hath stood eight hundred years,

¹ [*Vide* Suetonius, *De XII. Cæsariibus*, lib. iv.
cap. 56.]

Discrowned a Prince, cut off his crownless head,
And forged new fetters for a groaning people!
Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan
Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this, 450
If it so please him—'twere a pride fit for him!
But let him not insult the last hours of
Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a Hero,
By the intrusion of his very prayers;
Nothing of good can come from such a source,
Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor
ever:

We leave him to himself, that lowest depth
Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,
And not for reptiles—we have none for Steno,
And no resentment: things like him must sting,
And higher beings suffer; 'tis the charter 461
Of Life. The man who dies by the adder's fang
May have the crawler crushed, but feels no
anger:

'Twas the worm's nature; and some men are
worms

In soul, more than the living things of tombs,
Doge (to Ben.). Signor! complete that
which you deem your duty.

Ben. Before we can proceed upon that duty,
We would request the Princess to withdraw;
'Twill move her too much to be witness to it.

Ang. I know it will, and yet I must endure it,
For 'tis a part of mine—I will not quit, 471
Except by force, my husband's side—Proceed!
Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear;
Though my heart burst, it shall be silent.—
Speak!

I have that within which shall o'ermaster all.

Ben. Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
And some time General of the Fleet and
Army,

Noble Venetian, many times and oft
Intrusted by the state with high employ-
ments, 480

Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.
Convict by many witnesses and proofs,
And by thine own confession, of the guilt
Of Treachery and Treason, yet unheard of
Until this trial—the decree is Death—
Thy goods are confiscate unto the State,
Thy name is razed from out her records,
save

Upon a public day of thanksgiving
For this our most miraculous deliverance,
When thou art noted in our calendars 490
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign
foes,

And the great Enemy of man, as subject

Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in
snatching

Our lives and country from thy wickedness.
The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be
painted

With thine illustrious predecessors, is
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
Flung over these dim words engraved
beneath,—

"This place is of Marino Faliero,
Decapitated for his crimes."¹

Doge. "His crimes!" 500
But let it be so:—it will be in vain.

The veil which blackens o'er this blighted
name,

And hides, or seems to hide, these lineaments,

Shall draw more gazers than the thousand
portraits

Which glitter round it in their pictured
trappings—

Your delegated slaves—the people's tyrants!
"Decapitated for his crimes!" — *What*
crimes?

Were it not better to record the facts,
So that the contemplator might approve,
Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes
arose? 510

When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,
Let him be told the cause—it is your history.

Ben. Time must reply to that; our sons
will judge

Their fathers' judgment, which I now
pronounce.

As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and Cap,
Thou shalt be led hence to the Giant's
Staircase,

Where thou and all our Princes are invested;
And there, the Ducal Crown being first
resumed

Upon the spot where it was first assumed,
Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven
have mercy 520

¹ ["Hic est locus Marini Falethri, decapitati pro criminibus." Even more impressive is the significant omission of the minutes of the trial from the pages of the State Register. "The fourth volume of the *Misti Consiglio X.* contains its decrees in the year 1355. On Friday, the 17th April in that year, Marin Falier was beheaded. In the usual course, the minutes of the trial should have been entered on the thirty-third page of that volume; but in their stead we find a blank space, and the words 'N̄ S̄CBATUR:' 'Be it not written.'" —*Calendar of State Papers* . . . in Venice, Preface by Rawdon Brown, 1864, i. xvii.]

Upon thy soul!

Doge. Is this the Giunta's sentence?

Ben. It is.

Doge. I can endure it.—And the time?

Ben. Must be immediate. — Make thy
peace with God:

Within an hour thou must be in His presence.

Doge. I am *already*; and my blood will
rise

To Heaven before the souls of those who
shed it.

Are all my lands confiscated?

Ben. They are;
And goods, and jewels, and all kind of
treasure,

Except two thousand ducats—these dispose
of.

Doge. That's harsh.—I would have fain
reserved the lands 530

Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment
From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,

In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,

To portion them (leaving my city spoil,

My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)

Between my consort and my kinsmen.

Ben. These
Lie under the state's ban—their Chief, thy
nephew,

In peril of his own life; but the Council

Postpones his trial for the present. If

Thou will'st a state unto thy widowed
Princess, 540

Fear not, for we will do her justice.

Ang. Signors,
I share not in your spoil! From henceforth,
know

I am devoted unto God alone,
And take my refuge in the cloister.

Doge. Come!

The hour may be a hard one, but 'twill end.

Have I aught else to undergo save Death?

Ben. You have nought to do, except
confess and die.

The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without.—But, above all,

Think not to speak unto the people; they 550

Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,

But these are closed: the Ten, the Avoga-
dori,

The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,

Alone will be beholders of thy doom,

And they are ready to attend the Doge.

Doge. The Doge?

Ben. Yes, Doge, thou hast lived and
thou shalt die

A Sovereign; till the moment which
precedes
The separation of that head and trunk,
That ducal crown and head shall be united.
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning 560
To plot with petty traitors; not so we,
Who in the very punishment acknowledge
The Prince. Thy vile accomplices have died
The dog's death, and the wolf's; but thou
shalt fall
As falls the lion by the hunters, girt
By those who feel a proud compassion for
thee,
And mourn even the inevitable death
Provoked by thy wild wrath, and regal fierce-
ness.
Now we remit thee to thy preparation:
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be 570
Thy guides unto the place where first we
were
United to thee as thy subjects, and
Thy Senate; and must now be parted from
thee
As such for ever, on the self-same spot.
Guards! form the Doge's escort to his
chamber.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Doge's Apartment.*

*The DOGE as Prisoner, and the DUCHESS
attending him.*

Doge. Now, that the priest is gone, 'twere
useless all
To linger out the miserable minutes;
But one pang more, the pang of parting from
thee,
And I will leave the few last grains of sand,
Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
Still falling—I have done with Time.
Ang. Alas!
And I have been the cause, the unconscious
cause;
And for this funeral marriage, this black
union,
Which thou, compliant with my father's
wish,
Didst promise at *his* death, thou hast sealed
thine own. 10
Doge. Not so: there was that in my spirit
ever
Which shaped out for itself some great
reverse;
The marvel is, it came not until now—
And yet it was foretold me.

Ang. How foretold you?
Doge. Long years ago—so long, they are
a doubt

In memory, and yet they live in annals:
When I was in my youth, and served the
Senate
And Signory as Podesta and Captain
Of the town of Treviso, on a day
Of festival, the sluggish Bishop who 20
Conveyed the Host aroused my rash young
anger,
By strange delay, and arrogant reply
To my reproof: I raised my hand and smote
him,
Until he reeled beneath his holy burthen;
And as he rose from earth again, he raised
His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards
Heaven.
Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen
from him,
He turned to me, and said, "The Hour will
come
When he thou hast o'erthrown shall over-
throw thee:
The Glory shall depart from out thy house, 30
The Wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
And in thy best maturity of Mind
A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee;
Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease
In other men, or mellow into virtues;
And Majesty which decks all other heads,
Shall crown to leave thee headless; honours
shall
But prove to thee the heralds of Destruction,
And hoary hairs of Shame, and both of Death,
But not such death as fits an aged man." 40
Thus saying, he passed on.—That Hour is
come.
Ang. And with this warning couldst thou
not have striven
To avert the fatal moment, and atone,
By penitence, for that which thou hast done?
Doge. I own the words went to my heart,
so much
That I remembered them amid the maze
Of Life, as if they formed a spectral voice,
Which shook me in a supernatural dream;
And I repented; but 'twas not for me
To pull in resolution: what must be 50
I could not change, and would not fear.—
Nay more,
Thou can'st not have forgot, what all
remember,
That on my day of landing here as Doge,
On my return from Rome, a mist of such

Unwonted density went on before
 The Bucentaur, like the columnar cloud
 Which ushered Israel out of Egypt, till
 The pilot was misled, and disembarked us
 Between the Pillars of Saint Mark's, where 'tis
 The custom of the state to put to death 60
 Its criminals, instead of touching at
 The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is,—
 So that all Venice shuddered at the omen.

Ang. Ah! little boots it now to recollect
 Such things.

Doge. And yet I find a comfort in
 The thought, that these things are the work
 of Fate;

For I would rather yield to Gods than men,
 Or cling to any creed of destiny,
 Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom
 I know to be as worthless as the dust, 70
 And weak as worthless, more than instruments
 Of an o'er-ruling Power; they in themselves
 Were all incapable—they could not be
 Victors of him who oft had conquered for them.

Ang. Employ the minutes left in aspirations
 Of a more healing nature, and in peace
 Even with these wretches take thy flight to
 Heaven.

Doge. I am at peace: the peace of certainty
 That a sure Hour will come, when their sons'
 sons,

And this proud city, and these azure waters, 80
 And all which makes them eminent and bright,
 Shall be a desolation and a curse,
 A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
 A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean Babel.

Ang. Speak not thus now: the surge of
 Passion still
 Sweeps o'er thee to the last; thou dost deceive
 Thyself, and canst not injure them—be
 calmer.

Doge. I stand within Eternity, and see
 Into Eternity, and I behold—
 Aye, palpable as I see thy sweet face 90
 For the last time—the days which I denounce
 Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
 And they who are indwellers.

Guard (coming forward). Doge of Venice,
 The Ten are in attendance on your Highness.

Doge. Then farewell, Angiolina!—one em-
 brace—

Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
 A fond but fatal husband—love my memory—
 I would not ask so much for me still living,
 But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,
 Seeing my evil feelings are at rest. 100
 Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,

Glory, and Wealth, and Power, and Fame,
 and Name,
 Which generally leave some flowers to bloom
 Ev'n o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not
 even

A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
 No, not enough to extract an epitaph
 From ostentatious kinsmen; in one hour
 I have uprooted all my former life,
 And outlived everything, except thy heart, 109
 The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft
 With unimpaired but not a clamorous grief
 Still keep—Thou turn'st so pale!—Alas!
 she faints,

She has no breath, no pulse!—Guards! lend
 your aid—

I cannot leave her thus, and yet 'tis better,
 Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.
 When she shakes off this temporary death,
 I shall be with the Eternal.—Call her women—
 One look!—how cold her hand!—as cold as
 mine

Shall be ere she recovers.—Gently tend her,
 And take my last thanks—I am ready
 now. 120

[*The Attendants of ANGIOLINA enter,
 and surround their Mistress, who
 has fainted.—Exeunt the DOGE,
 Guards, etc., etc.*

SCENE III.—*The Court of the Ducal Palace;
 the outer gates are shut against the people.
 —The DOGE enters in his ducal robes, in
 procession with the COUNCIL OF TEN
 and other Patricians, attended by the
 Guards, till they arrive at the top of
 the "Giants' Staircase" (where the Doges
 took the oaths); the Executioner is sta-
 tioned there with his sword.—On arriv-
 ing, a CHIEF OF THE TEN takes off the
 ducal cap from the Doge's head.*

Doge. So now the Doge is nothing, and at
 last

I am again Marino Faliero:
 'Tis well to be so, though but for a moment.
 Here was I crowned, and here, bear witness
 Heaven!

With how much more contentment I resign
 That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
 Than I received the fatal ornament.

One of the Ten. Thou tremblest, Faliero!
Doge. 'Tis with age, then.¹

¹ This was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of
 Paris, to a Frenchman who made him the same

Ben. Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,

Compatible with justice, to the Senate? 10

Doge. I would commend my nephew to their mercy,

My consort to their justice; for methinks My death, and such a death, might settle all Between the State and me.

Ben. They shall be cared for; Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.

Doge. Unheard of! aye, there's not a history

But shows a thousand crowned conspirators *Against* the people; but to set them free, One Sovereign only died, and one is dying.

Ben. And who were they who fell in such a cause? 20

Doge. The King of Sparta, and the Doge of Venice—

Agis and Faliero!

Ben. Hast thou more To utter or to do?

Doge. May I speak?

Ben. Thou may'st; But recollect the people are without, Beyond the compass of the human voice.

Doge. I speak to Time and to Eternity, Of which I grow a portion, not to man. Ye Elements! in which to be resolved I hasten, let my voice be as a Spirit Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner, 30

reproach on his way to execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these six years, "Venice Preserved," a similar reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader, that such coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a play on the stage and in the closet as Otway's *chef-d'œuvre*.

["Still crueller was the fate of poor Bailly [Jean Sylvani, born September 17, 1736], First National President, First Mayor of Paris. . . . It is the 10th of November, 1793, a cold bitter drizzling rain, as poor Bailly is led through the streets. . . . Silent, unpitied, sits the innocent old man. . . . The Guillotine is taken down . . . is carried to the riverside; is there set up again, with slow numbness; pulse after pulse still counting itself out in the old man's weary heart. For hours long; amid curses and bitter frost-rain! 'Bailly, thou tremblest,' said one. 'Mon ami, it is for cold,' said Bailly, 'C'est de froid.' Crueller end had no mortal."—Carlyle's *French Revolution*, 1839, iii. 264.]

Ye winds! which fluttered o'er as if you loved it,

And filled my swelling sails as they were wafted

To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth, Which I have bled for! and thou, foreign earth,

Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!

Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!

Thou Sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!

Who kindlest and who quenchest suns!— Attest!

I am not innocent—but are these guiltless? 40 I perish, but not unavenged; far ages Float up from the abyss of Time to be, And show these eyes, before they close, the doom

Of this proud City, and I leave my curse On her and hers for ever!—Yes, the hours Are silently engendering of the day, When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark, Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield, Unto a bastard Attila,¹ without Shedding so much blood in her last defence, 50 As these old veins, oft drained in shielding her,

Shall pour in sacrifice.—She shall be bought And sold, and be an appanage to those Who shall despise her!²—She shall stoop to be

A province for an Empire, petty town In lieu of Capital, with slaves for senates,

¹ [In his reply to the envoys of the Venetian Senate (April, 1797), Buonaparte threatened to "prove an Attila to Venice. If you cannot," he added, "disarm your population, I will do it in your stead—your government is antiquated—it must crumble to pieces."—Scott's *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1828, p. 230.]

² Should the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the historical of the period prophesied, or rather of the few years preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their "nostre bene merite Meretrici" at 12,000 of regulars, without including volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not; but it is, perhaps, the only part of the population not decreased. Venice once contained two hundred thousand inhabitants: there are now about ninety thousand; and THESE!! few individuals can conceive, and none could describe, the actual state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has plunged this unhappy city.

Gehenna of the waters! thou Sea-Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the Infernal Gods! 100
Thee and thy serpent seed!

[Here the DOGE turns and addresses the Executioner.

Slave, do thine office!
Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as
my curse!

Strike—and but once!

[The DOGE throws himself upon his knees,
and as the Executioner raises his
sword the scene closes.

SCENE IV.—The Piazza and Piazzetta of
St. Mark's.—The people in crowds
gathered round the grated gates of
the Ducal Palace, which are shut.

First Citizen. I have gained the Gate, and
can discern the Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round
the Doge.

Second Cit. I cannot reach thee with mine
utmost effort.

How is it? let us hear at least, since sight
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.

First Cit. One has approached the Doge,
and now they strip
The ducal bonnet from his head—and now
He raises his keen eyes to Heaven; I see
Them glitter, and his lips move—Hush!
hush!—no, 10
'Twas but a murmur — Curse upon the
distance!

His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like muttered thunder; would we
could

But gather a sole sentence!

Second Cit. Hush! we perhaps may catch
the sound.

First Cit. 'Tis vain.
I cannot hear him.—How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!
Now—now—he kneels—and now they form a
circle

Round him, and all is hidden—but I see
The lifted sword in air—Ah! hark it falls! 20

[The people murmur.

Third Cit. Then they have murdered him
who would have freed us.

Fourth Cit. He was a kind man to the
commons ever.

Fifth Cit. Wisely they did to keep their
portals barred.

Would we had known the work they were
preparing

Ere we were summoned here—we would have
brought

Weapons, and forced them!

Sixth Cit. Are you sure he's dead?

First Cit. I saw the sword fall—Lo! what
have we here?

Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which
fronts St. Mark's Place a CHIEF OF THE
TEN, with a bloody sword. He waves it
thrice before the People, and exclaims,

“Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor!”

[The gates are opened; the populace rush
in towards the “Giants' Staircase,”
where the execution has taken place.
The foremost of them exclaims to
those behind,

“The gory head rolls down the Giants' Steps!”

[The curtain falls.

APPENDIX.

[The plot of *Marino Faliero* is based on a
passage in Marin Sanudo's *Vite dei Dogi*,
which is contained in Muratori's *Rerum
Italicarum Scriptores*, 1733, xxii. 628-635.
Byron caused a translation to be made by
Mr. Francis Cohen (afterwards known as Sir
Francis Palgrave), and printed Muratori's
Italian together with the translation as
Appendix I., II. to the first editions of
Marino Faliero, 1821. Sanudo's story may
be briefly summarised:—“Marino Faliero,
a Trevisan, was elected Doge, September 11,
1354. Early in the following spring at a State
banquet which followed an annual bull-hunt,
a certain noble youth named Michele Steno,
who was enamoured of one of the ladies of
the Court, behaved himself unseemly, and,
by the Duke's orders, was kicked off the solajo
or dais. Incensed at this contumely he had
his revenge by scrawling on the Ducal chair
a libellous jest, to the effect that the Doge,
who was well-stricken in years was a wittol,
that his fair young duchess played him false.
Inquisition was made, and the culprit dis-
covered. But Steno was of noble birth, and
the Forty unwilling to exact the full penalty
on one of their own order, inflicted a light
punishment, namely imprisonment for two

months, and banishment from Venice for a year. The Doge was furious, but nursed his wrath in silence. Ere long another young spark, a choleric gentleman named Barbaro, insulted and struck the Admiral of the Arsenal, Israel Bertuccio, a man of plebeian origin, but of a great spirit who, without more ado, sought out the Doge and appealed for support and redress. 'What can I do,' said the Doge, 'I who cannot avenge my own ignominy on Michele Steno?' 'Much' replied Bertuccio, 'You can throw in your lot with the people, put the arrogant nobles to the sword, and proclaim yourself Lord of Venice!'

"Faliero caught at the bait, and lent himself to a treacherous conspiracy against the republic. Sixteen or seventeen ring-leaders were to place themselves at the head of gangs of forty men, who without being let into the secret were to make affrays among themselves, and, so, afford the Doge a pretext for ringing the bell of San Marco. The sound of the bell would bring the nobles into the streets, and the conspirators would cut them in pieces. The Doge might have won the day, if a half-hearted conspirator, Beltramo, Bergamasco, had not relented towards his patron Ser Niccolo Lioni, and warned him of impending danger. The plotters were out-plotted and met with a shameful end. On Friday, the 16th of April the 'Ten' passed sentence on the Doge, 'that he should have his head cut off on the landing-place of the stone staircase, where the Dukes take their oath when they first enter the palace.' 'On the following day, the 17th of April, 1355, the doors of the palace being shut, the Duke had his head cut off about the hour of noon.' According to a chronicle he was buried in the Church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, but his body now rests in a coffin of stone in the middle of the little Church of Santa Maria della Pace. . . . 'And they did not paint his portrait in the hall of the Great Council, but in the place where it ought to have been you see these words:—"Hic est locus Marini Faletro, decapitati pro criminibus.""]

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.¹

BY

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAT TYLER."

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."
[*Merchant of Venice*, act iv. sc. 1. lines 218, 336.]

PREFACE.

IT hath been wisely said, that "One fool makes many;" and it hath been poetically observed—

"[That] fools rush in where angels fear to tread."
[POPE'S *Essay on Criticism*, line 625.]

If Mr. Southey² had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegado intolerance, and impious cant, of the poem by the author of "Wat Tyler," are something so stupendous as to form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

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

¹ [The *Vision of Judgment* was begun at Ravenna, May 7, and finished October 4, 1821. It was published in the first number of the *Liberal*, October 15, 1822.]

² [Southey's *Vision of Judgment*, a funeral ode (in hexameter verse) in honour of George III., was published, April 11, 1821.]

to have "talked of *him*; for they laughed consumedly."

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

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

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

3rdly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full parliament, "a rancorous renegado?"²

4thly, Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?³

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

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the *Anti-jacobin*, by his present patrons. Hence all this "skimble scamble stuff" about "Satanic," and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—"qualis ab incepto."

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public

¹ [*Wat Tyler* was written at the age of nineteen, when Southey was a republican, and was entrusted to two booksellers, who agreed to publish it, but never put it to press. The MS. was not returned to the author, and in February, 1817, at the interval of twenty-two years, when his sentiments were widely different, it was printed, to his great annoyance, by W. Benbow and others. It was reported that 60,000 copies were sold.]

² [William Smith, M.P. for Norwich, attacked Southey in the House of Commons on the 14th of March, 1817. The exact words used were, "the determined malignity of a renegade."]

³ [One of Southey's juvenile poems is an "Inscription for the Apartment in Chepstow Castle, where Henry Martin, the Regicide, was imprisoned thirty years."]

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

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

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P.S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this *Vision*. But, for precedents upon such points, I must refer him to Fielding's *Journey from this World to the next*, and to the *Visions of myself*, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated.¹ The reader is also requested to observe, that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not "like a school-divine," but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven; and Chaucer's *Wife of Bath*, Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, and the other works above referred to, are cases in

¹ [The *Sueños* or *Visions* of Francisco Gomez de Quevedo of Villegas are six in number. They were published separately in 1635. An English Translation appeared in 1745.]

point of the freedom with which saints, etc., may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.

Q. R.

* * * Mr. Southey being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the meantime have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously "one Mr. Landor,"¹ who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the poet laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called "*Gebir*." Who could suppose, that in this same *Gebir* the afore-said Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven,—yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign:—

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

"Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch

Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
Listen! him yonder who, bound down supine,
Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-
hung;

He too amongst my ancestors! [I hate
The despot, but the dastard I despise.
Was he our countryman?]

‘Alas,] O king!

Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east.
‘He was a warrior then, nor feared the gods?
‘*Gebir*, he feared the Demons, not the gods,

¹ [Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864) had recently published a volume of Latin poems together with a Latin essay on contemporary poets. In his Preface to the *Vision of Judgment*, Southey illustrates a denunciation of "Men of diseased hearts," etc., by a quotation from the essay to the effect that it is a gross error that great genius and great wickedness are inseparable. Byron scented an allusion to himself, and was, naturally, indignant.]

Though them indeed his daily face adored;
And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
Squandered, as stones to exercise a sling,
And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—

Oh madness of mankind! addressed, adored!"
Gebir [*Works, etc.*, 1876, vii. 17].

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

I.

SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate:

His keys were rusty, and the lock was
dull,

So little trouble had been given of late;

Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight"

The Devils had ta'en a longer, stronger
pull,

And "a pull altogether," as they say
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

II.

The Angels all were singing out of tune,

And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,

Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon

Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

III.

The Guardian Seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;

Terrestrial business filled nought in the sky
Save the Recording Angel's black bureau;

Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,

That he had stripped off both his wings in
quills,

And yet was in arrear of human ills.

IV.

His business so augmented of late years,

That he was forced, against his will, no
doubt,

(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,
For some resource to turn himself about,

And claim the help of his celestial peers,
To aid him ere he should be quite worn
out
By the increased demand for his remarks :
Six Angels and twelve Saints were named
his clerks.

V.

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

VI.

This by the way ; 'tis not mine to record
What Angels shrink from : even the very
Devil
On this occasion his own work abhorred,
So surfeited with the infernal revel :
Though he himself had sharpened every
sword,
It almost quenched his innate thirst of evil.
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves inser-
tion—
'Tis, that he has both Generals in reversion.)¹

VII.

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

¹ [Napoleon died May 5, 1821, two days before
Byron began his *Vision of Judgment*, but, of
course, the news did not reach Europe till long
afterwards.]

VIII.

In the first year of Freedom's second dawn¹
Died George the Third ; although no
tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense with-
drawn
Left him nor mental nor external sun :
A better farmer ne'er brushed dew from lawn,
A worse king never left a realm undone !
He died—but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

IX.

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

X.

Formed a sepulchral melodrame. Of all
The fools who flocked to swell or see the
show,
Who cared about the corpse ? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the woe.
There throbbed not there a thought which
pierced the pall ;
And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,
It seemed the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

XI.

So mix his body with the dust ! It might
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were
The natural compound left alone to fight
Its way back into earth, and fire, and air ;

¹ [George III. died the 29th of January, 1820.
The year 1820 was signalized by an outbreak of
the revolutionary spirit throughout the greater
part of the South of Europe.]

But the unnatural balsams merely blight
 What Nature made him at his birth, as bare
 As the mere million's base unummied clay—
 Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

XII.

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

XIII.

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

XIV.

I know this is unpopular; I know
 'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be
 damned
 For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
 I know my catechism; I know we're
 crammed
 With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
 I know that all save England's Church
 have shammed,
 And that the other twicetwo hundred churches
 And synagogues have made a *damned* bad
 purchase.

XV.

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

XVI.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
 And nodded o'er his keys: when, lo! there
 came
 A wondrous noise he had not heard of late—
 A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and
 flame;

In short, a roar of things extremely great,
 Which would have made aught save a
 Saint exclaim;
 But he, with first a start and then a wink,
 Said, "There's another star gone out, I think!"

XVII.

But ere he could return to his repose,
 A Cherub flapped his right wing o'er his
 eyes—
 At which Saint Peter yawned, and rubbed
 his nose:
 "Saint porter," said the angel, "prithee
 rise!"
 Waving a goodly wing, which glowed, as glows
 An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes:
 To which the saint replied, "Well, what's
 the matter?
 Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?"

XVIII.

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

XIX.

"He was—if I remember—King of France;¹
 That head of his, which could not keep a
 crown
 On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
 A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:
 If I had had my sword, as I had once
 When I cut ears off, I had cut him down;
 But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
 I only knocked his head from out his hand.

XX.

"And then he set up such a headless howl,
 That all the Saints came out and took him in;
 And there he sits by Saint Paul, cheek by jowl;
 That fellow Paul—the parvenu! The skin

¹ [Louis the Sixteenth was guillotined January 21, 1793.]

Of Saint Bartholomew, which makes his cowl
 In heaven, and upon earth redeemed his sin,
 So as to make a martyr, never sped
 Better than did this weak and wooden head.

XXI.

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

XXII.

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

XXIII.

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,
 Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
 Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan
 Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or
 Inde,
 Or Thames, or Tweed), and midst them an
 old man
 With an old soul, and both extremely blind,
 Halted before the gate, and, in his shroud,
 Seated their fellow-traveller on a cloud.¹

XXIV.

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

¹ [“Then I beheld the King. From a cloud which
 covered the pavement
 His reverend form uprose: heavenward his
 face was directed.
 Heavenward his eyes were raised, and heaven-
 ward his arms were directed.”
 —*The Vision, etc.*, by A. R. Southey, iii.]

XXV.

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

XXVI.

The very Cherubs huddled all together,
 Like birds when soars the falcon; and they
 felt
 A tingling to the tip of every feather,
 And formed a circle like Orion’s belt
 Around their poor old charge; who scarce
 knew whither
 His guards had led him, though they gently
 dealt
 With Royal Manes (for by many stories,
 And true, we learn the Angels all are Tories).

XXVII.

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

XXVIII.

And from the gate thrown open issued
 beaming
 A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,
 Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
 Victorious from some world-o’erthrowing
 fight:
 My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
 With earthly likenesses, for here the night
 Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
 Johanna Southcote, or Bob Southey raving.¹

¹ [“Eminent on a hill, there stood the Celestial
 City;
 Beaming afar it shone; its towers and cupolas
 rising
 High in the air serene, with the brightness of
 gold in the furnace,
 Where on their breadth the splendour lay
 intense and quiescent.
 Part with a fierier glow, and a short thick
 tremulous motion
 Like the burning pyropus; and turrets and
 pinnacles sparkled,
 Playing in jets of light, with a diamond-like
 glory coruscant.”

XXIX.

'Twas the Archangel Michael : all men know
The make of Angels and Archangels, since
There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
From the fiends' leader to the Angels'
Prince.

There also are some altar-pieces, though
I really can't say that they much evince
One's inner notions of immortal spirits ;
But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

XXX.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good ;
A goodly work of him from whom all Glory
And Good arise ; the portal past—he stood ;
Before him the young Cherubs and Saints
hoary—

(I say *young*, begging to be understood
By looks, not years ; and should be very
sorry

To state, they were not older than St. Peter,
But merely that they seemed a little sweeter).

XXXI.

The Cherubs and the Saints bowed down
before

That arch-angelic Hierarch, the first
Of Essences angelical who wore
The aspect of a god ; but this ne'er nursed
Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
No thought, save for his Maker's service,
durst

Intrude—however glorified and high,
He knew him but the Viceroy of the sky.

XXXII.

He and the sombre, silent Spirit met—
They knew each other both for good and
ill ;

Such was their power, that neither could
forget

His former friend and future foe ; but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their " Champ Clos "
the spheres.

XXXIII.

But here they were in neutral space : we know
From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a-year or so ;
And that the " Sons of God," like those of
clay,

Must keep him company ; and we might
show

From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

XXXIV.

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

XXXV.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of Heaven ; like eastern thresh-
holds is
The place where Death's grand cause is
argued o'er,
And souls despatched to that world or to
this ;

And therefore Michael and the other wore
A civil aspect : though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his
Brightness
There passed a mutual glance of great
politeness.

XXXVI.

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

XXXVII.

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

XXXVIII.

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

XXXIX.

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

XL.

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

XLI.

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

XLII.

"Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak,
poor worm
Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,
The world and he both wore a different form,

And much of earth and all the watery plain
Of Ocean called him king: through many
a storm
His isles had floated on the abyss of Time;
For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

XLIII.

"He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it
old:
Look to the state in which he found his realm,
And left it; and his annals too behold,
How to a minion first he gave the helm;¹
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but
glance
Thine eye along America and France.

XLIV.

"'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last
(I have the workmen safe); but as a tool
So let him be consumed. From out the past
Of ages, since mankind have known the rule
Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amassed
Of Sin and Slaughter—from the Cæsars'
school,
Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
More drenched with gore, more cumbered
with the slain.

XLV.

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

XLVI.

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

¹ [John Stuart, Earl of Bute (1713-1792), was Secretary of State March 25, 1761, and Prime Minister May 29, 1762—April 1763.]

XLVII.

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

XLVIII.

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

XLIX.

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

L.

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

LI.

Here Michael interposed: “Good Saint! and
Devil!
Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.
Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil:
Satan! excuse this warmth of his expression,

And condescension to the vulgar’s level:
Even Saints sometimes forget themselves in
session.
Have you got more to say?”—“No.”—“If
you please,
I’ll trouble you to call your witnesses.”

LII.

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

LIII.

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

LIV.

They are proud of this—as very well they may,
It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
Stuck in their loins; ¹ or like to an “*entré*”
Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.
I borrow my comparisons from clay,
Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be
Offended with such base low likenesses;
We know their posts are nobler far than these.

LV.

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

¹ [A gold key is part of the insignia of office of the Lord Chamberlain and other court officials.]

LVI.

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute ;
 I know the solar beams take up more time
 Ere, packed up for their journey, they begin it ;
 But then their Telegraph is less sublime,¹
 And if they ran a race, they would not win it
 'Gainst Satan's couriers bound for their
 own clime.

The sun takes up some years for every ray
 To reach its goal—the Devil not half a day.

LVII.

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

LVIII.

But take your choice): and then it grew a cloud ;
 And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.
 But such a cloud ! No land ere saw a crowd
 Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw
 these ;
 They shadowed with their myriads Space ;
 their loud
 And varied cries were like those of wild geese,
 (If nations may be likened to a goose),
 And realised the phrase of "Hell broke loose."

LIX.

Here crashed a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,
 Who damned away his eyes as heretofore:
 There Paddy brogued "By Jasus!"—"What's
 your wull?"
 The temperate Scot exclaimed: the French
 ghost swore
 In certain terms I shan't translate in full,
 As the first coachman will; and 'midst the
 war,
 The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
 "Our President is going to war, I guess."

LX.

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and
 Dane ;
 In short, an universal shoal of shades
 From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,
 Of all climes and professions, years and
 trades,

¹ [The "Telegraph" to which Byron refers was, probably, the semaphore from London to Portsmouth.]

Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
 Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades :
 All summoned by this grand "subpœna," to
 Try if kings mayn't be damned like me or you.

LXI.

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

LXII.

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

LXIII.

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

LXIV.

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

LXV.

Thus spoke the Demon (late called "multi-
faced"¹
By multo-scribbling Southey). "Then we'll
call
One or two persons of the myriads placed
Around our congress, and dispense with all
The rest," quoth Michael: "Who may be so
graced
As to speak first? there's choice enough—
who shall
It be?" Then Satan answered, "There are
many;
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as
any."

LXVI.

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking Sprite²
Upon the instant started from the throng,
Dressed in a fashion now forgotten quite;
For all the fashions of the flesh stick long
By people in the next world; where unite
All the costumes since Adam's, right or
wrong,
From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

LXVII.

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

¹ ["'Caitiffs, are ye dumb?' cried the multifaced
Demon in anger."

—*Vision of Judgment*, v.]

² ["Beholding the foremost,
Him by the cast of his eye oblique, I knew as the
firebrand
Whom the unthinking populace held for their idol
and hero,
Lord of Misrule in his day."

—*Ibid.*, v.

In Hogarth's caricature Wilkes squints *more* than
"a gentleman should squint." Walpole (*Letters*,
1858, vii. 274) describes another portrait (by Zoffani)
as "a delightful piece of Wilkes looking — no,
squinting tenderly at his daughter. It is a
caricature of the Devil acknowledging Miss Sin
in Milton."]

LXVIII.

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

LXIX.

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

LXX.

"Above the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
To urge against him," said the Archangel.
"Why,"
Replied the spirit, "since old scores are past,
Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,¹
With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky
I don't like ripping up old stories, since
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

LXXI.

"Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
But then I blame the man himself much less
Than Bute and Grafton,² and shall be un-
willing

¹ [On his third return to Parliament for Middle-
sex, October 8, 1774, Wilkes took his seat
(December 2) without opposition.]

² [Bute, as leader of the king's party, was an open
enemy; the Duke of Grafton, a half-hearted friend.
"Your gracious Master," wrote Junius, "under-
stands your character; and makes you a persecutor
because you have been a friend" (*Letter xii.*.)]

To see him punished here for their excess,
 Since they were both damned long ago, and
 still in
 Their place below: for me, I have forgiven,
 And vote his *habeas corpus* into Heaven."

LXXII.

"Wilkes," said the Devil, "I understand all
 this;
 You turned to half a courtier¹ ere you died,
 And seem to think it would not be amiss
 To grow a whole one on the other side
 Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*
 Reign is concluded; whatso'er betide,
 He won't be sovereign more: you've lost your
 labour,
 For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

LXXIII.

"However, I knew what to think of it,
 When I beheld you in your jesting way,
 Flitting and whispering round about the spit
 Where Belial, upon duty for the day,
 With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,
 His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
 That fellow even in Hell breeds farther ills;
 I'll have him *gagged*—'twas one of his own
 Bills.²

LXXIV.

"Call Junius!" From the crowd a shadow
 stalked,
 And at the name there was a general squeeze,
 So that the very ghosts no longer walked
 In comfort, at their own aerial ease,
 But were all rammed, and jammed (but to be
 balked,
 As we shall see), and jostled hands and knees,
 Like wind compressed and pent within a
 bladder,
 Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

¹ [In 1774 Wilkes was elected Lord Mayor, and in the following spring it fell to his lot to present to the King a remonstrance from the Livery against the continuance of the war with America. Walpole says that "he used his triumph with moderation—in modern language with good breeding." The King is said to have been agreeably surprised at his demeanour. In his old age (1790) he voted against the Whigs.]

² ["In consequence of Kyd Wake's attack upon the King, two Acts were introduced the 'Treason' and 'Sedition Bills,' November 6, November 10, 1795, for better securing the King's person."]

LXXV.

The shadow came—a tall, thin, grey-haired
 figure,
 That looked as it had been a shade on earth;
 Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,
 But nought to mark its breeding or its birth;
 Now it waxed little, then again grew bigger,
 With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth;
 But as you gazed upon its features, they
 Changed every instant—to *what*, none could
 say,

LXXVI.

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

LXXVII.

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

LXXVIII.

The moment that you had pronounced him
one,
 Presto! his face changed, and he was
 another;
 And when that change was hardly well put
 on,
 It varied, till I don't think his own mother
 (If that he had a mother) would her son
 Have known, he shifted so from one to
 t'other;
 Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
 At this epistolary "Iron Mask."¹

¹ [The "Man in the Iron Mask," or, more correctly, the "Man in the Black Velvet Mask," has been identified with Count Ercole Antonio Mattioli, Secretary of State at the Court of Ferdinando Carlo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua.]

LXXIX.

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

LXXX.

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

LXXXI.

I don’t see wherefore letters should not be
 Written without hands, since we daily view
 Them written without heads; and books, we
 see,
 Are filled as well without the latter too:
 And really till we fix on somebody
 For certain sure to claim them as his due,
 Their author, like the Niger’s mouth,¹ will
 bother
 The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

LXXXII.

“And who and what art thou?” the Arch-
 angel said.
 “For *that* you may consult my title-page,”²
 Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:
 “If I have kept my secret half an age,
 I scarce shall tell it now.”—“Canst thou
 upbraid,”
 Continued Michael, “George Rex, or allege
 Aught further?” Junius answered, “You
 had better
 First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

¹ [The Delta of the Niger is a vast alluvial morass, covered with dense forests of mangrove.]

² [The title-page runs thus: “*Letters of Junius, Stat Nominis Umbra.*”]

LXXXIII.

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

LXXXIV.

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

LXXXV.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
 Of Cherubim appointed to that post,
 The devil Asmodeus¹ to the circle made
 His way, and looked as if his journey cost
 Some trouble. When his burden down he
 laid,
 “What’s this?” cried Michael; “why, ’tis
 not a ghost?”
 “I know it,” quoth the Incubus; “but he
 Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

LXXXVI.

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

¹ [Vide ante, p. 16, note 2.]

LXXXVII.

"The former is the Devil's scripture, and
The latter yours, good Michael: so the
affair

Belongs to all of us, you understand.

I snatched him up just as you see him there,
And brought him off for sentence out of hand:

I've scarcely been ten minutes in the air—
At least a quarter it can hardly be:
I dare say that his wife is still at tea."

LXXXVIII.

Here Satan said, "I know this man of old,
And have expected him for some time here;
A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:
But surely it was not worth while to fold
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus
dear:

We had the poor wretch safe (without being
bored

With carriage) coming of his own accord.

LXXXIX.

"But since he's here, let's see what he has
done."

"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates
The very business you are now upon,
And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.
Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
When such an ass as this, like Balaam's,
prates?"

"Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has
to say:

You know we're bound to that in every way."

XC.

Now the Bard, glad to get an audience, which
By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and
pitch

His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach
Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;
But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

XCI.

But ere the spavined dactyls could be spurred
Into recitative, in great dismay
Both Cherubim and Seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long
array;
And Michael rose ere he could get a word
Of all his foundered verses under way,

And cried, "For God's sake stop, my friend!
'twere best—

'*Non Di, non homines*'—you know the rest."

XCII.

A general bustle spread throughout the
throng,

Which seemed to hold all verse in detesta-
tion;

The Angels had of course enough of song
When upon service; and the generation
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not
long

Before, to profit by a new occasion:
The Monarch, mute till then, exclaimed,
"What! what!
Pye come again? No more—no more of
that!"

XCIII.

The tumult grew; an universal cough
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
When Castlereagh has been up long enough
(Before he was first minister of state,
I mean—the *slaves hear now*); some cried
"Off, off!"

As at a farce; till, grown quite desperate,
The Bard Saint Peter prayed to interpose
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

XCIV.

The varlet was not an ill-favoured knave;
A good deal like a vulture in the face,
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which
gave

A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace
To his whole aspect, which, though rather
grave,

Was by no means so ugly as his case;
But that, indeed, was hopeless as can be,
Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."

XCV.

Then Michael blew his trump, and stilled the
noise

With one still greater, as is yet the mode
On earth besides; except some grumbling
voice,

Which now and then will make a slight
inroad

Upon decorous silence, few will twice
Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrowded;
And now the Bard could plead his own
bad cause,

With all the attitudes of self-applause.

XCVI.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
 He meant no harm in scribbling; 'twas his
 way
 Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,
 Of which he buttered both sides; 'twould
 delay
 Too long the assembly (he was pleased to
 dread),
 And take up rather more time than a day,
 To name his works—he would but cite a
 few—
 "Wat Tyler"—"Rhymes on Blenheim"—
 "Waterloo."¹

XCVII.

He had written praises of a Regicide;
 He had written praises of all kings what-
 ever;
 He had written for republics far and wide,
 And then against them bitterer than ever;
 For pantisocracy he once had cried
 Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas
 clever;
 Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin—
 Had turned his coat—and would have turned
 his skin.

XCVIII.

He had sung against all battles, and again
 In their high praise and glory; he had
 called
 Reviewing "the ungentle craft,"² and then
 Became as base a critic as e'er crawled—
 Fed, paid, and pampered by the very men
 By whom his muse and morals had been
 mauled:
 He had written much blank verse, and
 blanker prose,
 And more of both than any body knows.

¹ [Southey's "Battle of Blenheim" was published in the *Annual Anthology* of 1800, pp. 34-37. The purport and *motif* of these excellent rhymes is non-patriotic if not Jacobinical, but, for some reason, the poem has been considered improving for the young, and is included in many "Poetry Books" for schools. *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo* was published in 1816.]

² *Remains of Henry Kirke White* [1808, i. 23.]

XCIX.

He had written Wesley's¹ life:—here turning
 round
 To Satan, "Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
 In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
 With notes and preface, all that most
 allures
 The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
 For fear, for I can choose my own
 reviewers:
 So let me have the proper documents,
 That I may add you to my other saints."

C.

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

CI.

"But talking about trumpets, here's my
 'Vision'!
 Now you shall judge, all people—yes—you
 shall
 Judge with my judgment! and by my
 decision
 Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall.
 I settle all these things by intuition,
 Times present, past, to come—Heaven—
 Hell—and all,
 Like King Alfonso.² When I thus see
 double,
 I save the Deity some worlds of trouble."

¹ [Southey's *Life of Wesley, and Rise and Progress of Methodism*, was published in 1820.]

² King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said, that "had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities." [Alfonso X., King of Castile (1221-1284), surnamed the Wise and the Astronomer. His strictures on creation are recorded by Le Bovier de Fontenelle, in his *Entretiens sur la Pluralité des Mondes*, 1686, p. 38.]

CII.

He ceased, and drew forth an MS. ; and no
Persuasion on the part of Devils, Saints,
Or Angels, now could stop the torrent ; so
He read the first three lines of the con-
tents ;
But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
Had vanished, with variety of scents,
Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
Like lightning, off from his "melodious
twang."¹

CIII.

Those grand heroics acted as a spell ;
The Angels stopped their ears and plied
their pinions ;
The Devils ran howling, deafened, down to
Hell ;
The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own
dominions—
(For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,
And I leave every man to his opinions) ;
Michael took refuge in his trump—but, lo !
His teeth were set on edge, he could not
blow !

CIV.

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

CV.

He first sank to the bottom—like his works,
But soon rose to the surface—like himself ;
For all corrupted things are buoyed like
corks,²
By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass : he lurks,
It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,
In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or
"Vision,"
As Welborn says — "the Devil turned
precisian."

¹ [See Aubrey's account of the apparition which disappeared "with a curious perfume, and *most melodious twang*"; or see Scott's *Antiquary, The Novels, etc.*, 1851, i. 375.]

² A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten ; it then floats, as most people know.

CVI.

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

R^a Oct. 4, 1821.

POEMS 1816-1823.

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD¹ ON
THE SIEGE AND CONQUEST
OF ALHAMA.²

*Which, in the Arabic language, is to the
following purport.³*

I.

THE Moorish King rides up and down,
Through Granada's royal town :
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama !

2.

Letters to the Monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell :
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama !

¹ [Byron does not give his authority for the Spanish original of his *Romance Muy Doloroso*. As it stands, the "Romance" is a cento of three or more ballads which are included in the *Guerras Civiles de Granada* of Gines Perez de Hita published at Saragossa in 1595.

The ballad as a whole was not known to students of Spanish literature previous to the publication of Byron's translation ; but it may be assumed that the Spanish text as printed in the first edition of *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. (1818), was copied from some printed work.]

² [In A.D. 886, during the reign of Muley Abul Hacen, King of Granada, Alhama was surprised and occupied by the Christians under Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon.]

³ The effect of the original ballad—which existed both in Spanish and Arabic—was such, that it was forbidden to be sung by the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada.

3.

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.

Woe is me, Alhama!

4.

When the Alhambra walls he gained,
On the moment he ordained
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.

Woe is me, Alhama!

5.

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain.

Woe is me, Alhama!

6.

Then the Moors, by this aware,
That bloody Mars recalled them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron grew.

Woe is me, Alhama!

7.

Out then spake an agéd Moor
In these words the king before,
"Wherefore call on us, oh King?
What may mean this gathering?"

Woe is me, Alhama!

8.

"Friends! ye have, alas! to know
Of a most disastrous blow—
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtained Alhama's hold."

Woe is me, Alhama!

9.

Out then spake old Alfaqui,¹
With his beard so white to see,
"Good King! thou art justly served,
Good King! this thou hast deserved.

Woe is me, Alhama!

¹ ["Un viejo Alfaqui" is "an old Alfaqui," *i.e.* a doctor of the Mussulman law, not a proper name.]

10.

"By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
And strangers were received by thee,
Of Cordova the Chivalry.

Woe is me, Alhama!

11.

"And for this, oh King! is sent
On thee a double chastisement;
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck shall overwhelm.

Woe is me, Alhama!

12.

"He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law;
And Granada must be won,
And thyself with her undone."

Woe is me, Alhama!

13.

Fire flashed from out the old Moor's eyes,
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answered, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.¹

Woe is me, Alhama!

14.

"There is no law to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings:—
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doomed him dead.

Woe is me, Alhama!

15.

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui!
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.

Woe is me, Alhama!

16.

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.

Woe is me, Alhama!

¹ ["De leyes tambien hablava" should be rendered "He spake 'also' of the laws," not *tan bien*, "so well," or "exceeding well."]

17.

“ Cavalier, and man of worth !
Let these words of mine go forth ;
Let the Moorish monarch know,
That to him I nothing owe.

Woe is me, Alhama !

18.

“ But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys ;
And if the King his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.

Woe is me, Alhama !

19.

“ Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives !
One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.

Woe is me, Alhama !

20.

“ I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower ;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day.”

Woe is me, Alhama !

21.

And as these things the old Moor said,
They severed from the trunk his head ;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'Twas carried, as the King decreed.

Woe is me, Alhama !

22.

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep ;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.

Woe is me, Alhama !

23.

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls ;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.

Woe is me, Alhama !

[First published, *Childe Harold*, Canto
IV., 1818.]

TRANSLATION FROM
VITTORELLI.¹

ON A NUN.

Sonnet composed in the name of a father, whose
daughter had recently died shortly after her
marriage ; and addressed to the father of her
who had lately taken the veil.

OF two fair virgins, modest, though admired,
Heaven made us happy ; and now,
wretched sires,
Heaven for a nobler doom their worth
desires,
And gazing upon *either*, *both* required.

Mine, while the torch of Hymen newly fired
Becomes extinguished, — soon — too soon
expires ;
But thine within the closing grate retired.
Eternal captive, to her God aspires.

But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,
Which shuts between your never-meeting
eyes,
May'st hear her sweet and pious voice once
more :

I to the marble, where *my* daughter lies,
Rush,—the swoln flood of bitterness I pour,
And knock, and knock, and knock—but
none replies.

[First published, *Childe Harold*, Canto
IV., 1818.]

ON THE BUST OF HELEN BY
CANOVA.

IN this beloved marble view
Above the works and thoughts of Man,
What Nature *could* but *would not* do,
And Beauty and Canova *can* !
Beyond Imagination's power,
Beyond the Bard's defeated art,
With Immortality her dower,
Behold the *Helen* of the heart.

November 25, 1816.

[First published, *Letters and Journals*,
1830, ii. 61.]

¹ [Jacopo Vittorelli (1749-1835) was born at Bassano in Venetian territory. His poetry, which is sweet and musical, but lacking in force and substance, recalls and embodies the style and spirit of the dying literature of the eighteenth century.]

VENICE. A FRAGMENT.

'Tis midnight—but it is not dark
 Within thy spacious place, St. Mark!
 The Lights within, the Lamps without,
 Shine above the revel rout.
 The brazen Steeds are glittering o'er
 The holy building's massy door,
 Glittering with their collars of gold,
 The goodly work of the days of old—
 And the wingèd Lion stern and solemn
 Frowns from the height of his hoary column,
 Facing the palace in which doth lodge
 The ocean-city's dreaded Doge.
 The palace is proud—but near it lies,
 Divided by the "Bridge of Sighs,"
 The dreary dwelling where the State
 Enchains the captives of their hate:
 These—they perish or they pine;
 But which their doom may none divine:
 Many have passed that Arch of pain,
 But none retraced their steps again.

It is a princely colonnade!
 And wrought around a princely place,
 When that vast edifice displayed
 Looks with its venerable face
 Over the far and subject sea,
 Which makes the fearless isles so free!
 And 'tis a strange and noble pile,
 Pillared into many an aisle:
 Every pillar fair to see,
 Marble—jasper—and porphyry—
 The Church of St. Mark—which stands hard
 by
 With fretted pinnacles on high,
 And Cupola and minaret;
 More like the mosque of orient lands,
 Than the fanes wherein we pray,
 And Mary's blessed likeness stands.—

Venice, *December 6, 1816.*

[First published, 1901.]

SO WE'LL GO NO MORE
A-ROVING.

1.

So we'll go no more a-roving
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as loving,
 And the moon be still as bright.

2.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And Love itself have rest.

3.

Though the night was made for loving,
 And the day returns too soon,
 Yet we'll go no more a-roving
 By the light of the moon.

February 28, 1817.

[First published, *Letters and Journals*,
 1830, ii. 79.]

[LORD BYRON'S VERSES ON
SAM ROGERS.]

QUESTION.

NOSE and Chin that make a knocker,
 Wrinkles that would puzzle Cocker;
 Mouth that marks the envious Scorer,
 With a Scorpion in each corner
 Curling up his tail to sting you,
 In the place that most may wring you;
 Eyes of lead-like hue and gummy,
 Carcase stolen from some mummy,
 Bowels—(but they were forgotten,
 Save the Liver, and that's rotten), 10
 Skin all sallow, flesh all sodden,
 Form the Devil would frighten G—d in.
 Is't a Corpse stuck up for show,
 Galvanized at times to go?
 With the Scripture has't connection,
 New proof of the Resurrection?
 Vampire, Ghost, or Goul (*sic*), what is it?
 I would walk ten miles to miss it.

ANSWER.

MANY passengers arrest one,
 To demand the same free question. 20
 Shorter's my reply and franker,—
 That's the Bard, and Beau, and Banker:
 Yet, if you could bring about
 Just to turn him inside out,
 Satan's self would seem less sooty,
 And his present aspect—Beauty.
 Mark that (as he masks the bilious)
 Air so softly supercilious,
 Chastened bow, and mock humility,
 Almost sickened to Servility: 30
 Hear his tone (which is to talking
 That which creeping is to walking—

Now on all fours, now on tiptoe) :
 Hear the tales he lends his lip to—
 Little hints of heavy scandals—
 Every friend by turns he handles :
 All that women or that men do
 Glides forth in an innuendo (*sic*)—
 Clothed in odds and ends of humour,
 Herald of each paltry rumour—
 From divorces down to dresses,
 Woman's frailties, Man's excesses :
 All that life presents of evil
 Make for him a constant revel.
 You're his foe—for that he fears you,
 And in absence blasts and sears you ;
 You're his friend—for that he hates you,
 First obliges, and then baits you,
 Darting on the opportunity
 When to do it with impunity :
 You are neither—then he'll flatter,
 Till he finds some trait for satire ;
 Hunts your weak point out, then shows it,
 Where it injures, to expose it
 In the mode that's most insidious,
 Adding every trait that's hideous—
 From the bile, whose blackening river
 Rushes through his Stygian liver.

Then he thinks himself a lover—
 Why? I really can't discover,
 In his mind, age, face, or figure ;
 Viper broth might give him vigour :
 Let him keep the cauldron steady,
 He the venom has already.

For his faults—he has but *one* ;
 'Tis but Envy, when all's done :
 He but pays the pain he suffers,
 Clipping, like a pair of Snuffers,
 Light that ought to burn the brighter
 For this temporary blighter.
 He's the Cancer of his Species,
 And will eat himself to pieces,—
 Plague personified and Famine,—
 Devil, whose delight is damning.
 For his merits—don't you know 'em ?
 Once he wrote a pretty Poem.

1818.

[First published, *Fraser's Magazine*,
 January, 1833, vol. vii. pp. 82-84.]

THE DUEL.¹

I.

'Tis fifty years, and yet their fray
 To us might seem but yesterday.
 'Tis fifty years, and three to boot,
 Since, hand to hand, and foot to foot,
 And heart to heart, and sword to sword,
 One of our Ancestors was gored.
 I've seen the sword that slew him ;² he,
 The slain, stood in a like degree
 To thee, as he, the Slayer, stood
 (Oh had it been but other blood !)
 In kin and Chieftainship to me.
 Thus came the Heritage to thee.

2.

To me the Lands of him who slew
 Came through a line of yore renowned ;
 For I can boast a race as true
 To Monarchs crowned, and some dis-
 crowned,
 As ever Britain's Annals knew :
 For the first Conqueror gave us Ground,³
 And the last Conquered owned the line
 Which was my mother's, and is mine.

3.

I loved thee—I will not say *how*,
 Since things like these are best forgot :
 Perhaps thou may'st imagine now
 Who loved thee, and who loved thee not.

¹ ["Addressed to Miss Chaworth, in allusion to a duel fought between two of their ancestors, D[ominus] B[yron] and Mr. C., January 26, 1765." Byron and Mary Anne Chaworth were fourth cousins, both being fifth in descent from George, Viscount Chaworth, whose daughter Elizabeth was married to William, third Lord Byron (d. 1695), the poet's great-great-grandfather. The duel between their grand-uncles, William, fifth Lord Byron, and William Chaworth, Esq., of Annesley, was fought between eight and nine o'clock in the evening of Saturday, January 26, 1765, at the Star and Garter Tavern, Pall Mall. Mr. Chaworth was killed, and Lord Byron, who was tried by the House of Lords, was found "not guilty of murder, guilty of manslaughter." The result of this verdict was that Lord Byron claimed the benefit of the statute of Edward VI., and was discharged on paying the fees.]

² [Byron says that his great-uncle, "so far from feeling any remorse for having killed Mr. Chaworth, who was a fire-eater (*spadassin*), . . . he always kept the sword . . . in his bed-chamber, where it still was when he died."]

³ [Ralph de Burun held Horestan Castle and other manors from the Conqueror. Byron's mother was descended from James I. of Scotland.]