

## LORD BYRON: *HOURS OF IDLENESS*

*Edited by Peter Cochran*

See end of document for two appendices:

**APPENDIX 1: The five poems added in *Poems Original and Translated*.**

**APPENDIX 2: Henry Brougham's review of *Hours of Idleness*.**

In this, his first public volume of poetry, Byron is already creating his own myth, and the different styles, some deceptive, some still more deceptive because so seemingly honest, in which he will write his myth for the rest of his life. The game starts with the first poem, *On Leaving Newstead Abbey*: we are to believe that the Byrons were crusaders, and that four brothers of the family fell at Marston Moor. Later, in the *Elegy on Newstead Abbey*, he goes further and says the place was besieged by parliamentarians during the Civil War. Evidence is missing for all three assertions, but poetry is one thing, and evidence another. In *Lachin Y. Gair* Byron toys with the idea that some of his ancestors may have died at Culloden, while his prose note concedes that he doesn't know; both verse and prose cover the fact – readily ascertainable – that no matter how many *Gordons* died in the '45, the *Byrons* were, by then, comfortably going to seed in rural Nottinghamshire.

Having said this, *Hours of Idleness* is, despite the condescension of Brougham (see Appendix 2 below), vigorous, varied, and without a dull line: an astonishing achievement for a nineteen-year-old, and in fact far more interesting than the juvenile works of Pope and Cowley by which Brougham measure it. Our sense is, here as later, that Byron could go on forever, whether it's with the satire on Cambridge in *Granta, A Medley* – which only stops because "The reader's tired, and so am I", or because the poet's lexicon really has run out of rhymes, as in *The Tear*.

As a self-portrait, the book is worth all the letters that surround it. Byron's sexual prejudices are well-indicated by the fact that all the poems to women (except the generalized, teenage-admonitory *To Woman*), are in ballad-stanza or song-lyric form, while most of the lines to men are in heroic couplets. *Childish Recollections* – the most important of the latter – gives, in its nostalgia for what it asserts to be an time of lost innocence (though Elizabeth Pigot suspected otherwise, especially in the case of Edward Noel Long), the clue to much of Byron's later gloom and dissatisfaction.

It's clear that Byron was more than usually insecure and self-conscious as an adolescent, and publishing such a self-revelatory sequence of poems must have been an act of bravado agonizing in its riskiness: see Elizabeth Pigot's second note to the poem *To Marion*. He meant what he wrote, but was at the same time terrified at what the impulse to self-revelation was making him do. A good impression of his pretended attitude to the self-portrait contained in all the "juvenile" books may be seen in his letter to John Pigot of January 13th 1807 (he is writing of *Poems on Various Occasions*):

*Southwell, Jany. 13th. 1807*

My dear Pigot, – I ought to begin with *sundry* Apologies, for my own negligence, but the variety of my Avocations, in *prose & verse* must plead my Excuse – With this Epistle you will receive a volume of all my *Juvenilia*, published since your Departure, it is of considerably greater size, than the *Copy* in your possession which I beg you will destroy, as the present is much more complete; that *unlucky* poem to my poor Mary,<sup>1</sup> has been the Cause of some Animadversion from *Ladies in years*. I have not printed it in this Collection in Consequence of my being pronounced, a *most profligate Sinner*, in short a "*young Moore*" by Mrs. S your Oxon<sup>2</sup> friend. – I believe in general they have been favourably received, & surely the Age of their Author, will preclude *severe* Criticism. – The Adventures of my Life from 16 to 19 & the dissipation into which I have been thrown when in London, have given a *voluptuous Tint* to my Ideas, but the occasions which called forth my *Muse*, would hardly admit any other *Colouring*;

1: B. refers to the Mary of *To Mary* and *To Mary, on receiving her Picture*, in FP.

2: Probably "Oxton", a village near Southwell.

this volume however is *vastly* correct, & miraculously *chaste*, – *Apropos*, talking of *Love*, your adorable “*Caroline*” is a complete “*Jilt*” She has *entangled* S. Becher, in her *golden Net*, I suppose for the next 6 Months the north wind, will be impregnated with your *Sighs*, curse her, she is not worth *regretting*, no more of her. – I am in love, also with a Lady of your Acquaintance, & all the *ancient* Gentlewomen of *Southwell*, shake *their heads*, at the *flirtation* of the *fair Anne*<sup>3</sup> with your *humble Servant*. – The other evening at a public *Supper*, the Tongues of *Beldams* were *all* in motion, as the *nymph* & I conversed with rather too much *Vivacity*, moreover she completely *cut* an unlucky *Admirer*, of hers, a *Nottingham Cavalier*, who looked with *wonderful Complacency* & *Astonishment*, at my *Impudence* in placing myself next his *Dulcinea* to his great *detriment*, & the *Amusement* of the Company. – She is a *beautiful Girl*, & I *love* her, nor do I *despair*, unless some *damned* accident intervenes, *secrecy* on this subject, my dear P. is requested, you will hear more Anon. – If you can find leisure to answer this *farrago* of unconnected Nonsense, you need not doubt, what gratification will accrue from your Reply, to

yours &c &c  
BYRON<sup>4</sup>

The frankness, the facetiousness, the confusion, the fake moral earnestness, the genuine moral earnestness, and above all the sheer energetic delight in describing an abundance of social and amatory chaos, foreshadow – as do Byron’s four early books poetry – everything we value in his later work.

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3: Ann Houson. See *To A*— and *As the author was discharging his pistols in a garden ...* in FP.

4: BLJ I 103-4.

**HOURS OF IDLENESS,**  
A  
*SERIES OF POEMS,*  
ORIGINAL  
AND  
*TRANSLATED,*  
BY GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON,  
A MINOR.

Μητ' αρ με μαλ' αινεε μητε τι νεικει.  
HOMER. Iliad, 10.<sup>5</sup>  
Virginibus puerisque Canto.  
Horace.<sup>6</sup>  
He whistled as he went for want of thought.  
Dryden.<sup>7</sup>

**NEWARK:**

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1807.

PREFACE

In submitting to the public eye the following collection, I have not only to combat the difficulties that writers of verse generally encounter, but may incur the charge of presumption for obtruding myself on the world, when, without doubt, I might be, at my age, more usefully employed. These productions are the fruits of the lighter hours of a young man, who has lately completed his nineteenth year. As they bear the internal evidence of a boyish mind, this is, perhaps, unnecessary information. Some few were written during the disadvantages of illness, and depression of spirits: under the former influence, "CHILDISH RECOLLECTIONS," in particular, were composed. This consideration, though it cannot excite the voice of Praise, may at least arrest the arm of censure. A considerable portion of these poems has been privately printed, at the request and for the perusal of my friends. I am sensible that the partial, and, frequently, injudicious admiration of a social circle, is not the criterion by which poetical genius is to be estimated, yet, "to do greatly;" we must "dare greatly;" and I have hazarded my reputation and feelings in publishing this volume. "I have passed the Rubicon," and must stand or fall by the "cast of the die." In the latter event, I shall submit without a murmur, for, though not without solicitude for the fate of these effusions, my expectations are by no means sanguine. It is probable that I may have dared much and done little; for, in the words of COWPER, "It is one thing to write what may please our friends, who, because they are such, are apt to be a little biassed in our favour, and another, to write what may please every body, because they who have no connection, or even knowledge of the author, will be sure to find fault if they can." To the truth of this, however, I do not wholly subscribe, on the contrary, I feel convinced that these trifles will not be treated with injustice. Their merit, if they possess any, will be liberally allowed; their numerous faults, on the other hand, cannot expect that favour, which has been denied to others of maturer years, decided character, and far greater ability. I have not aimed at exclusive originality, still less have I studied any particular model for imitation; some translations are given, of which many are paraphrastic. In

<sup>5</sup>: Hom. Il. X 249: "... do not praise me so, nor yet blame me."

<sup>6</sup>: Hor. Od. III 1, 4: "I sing of girls and boys".

<sup>7</sup>: Dryden, *Cymon and Iphigenia*, 85: *He trudg'd along unknowing what he sought, / And whistled as he went, for want of Thought.*

the original pieces, there may appear a casual coincidence with authors whose works I have been accustomed to read, but I have not been guilty of intentional plagiarism. To produce any thing entirely new, in an age so fertile in rhyme, would be a Herculean task, as every subject has already been treated to its utmost extent. – Poetry, however, is not my primary vocation; to divert the dull moments of indisposition, or the monotony of a vacant hour, urged me “to this sin;” little can be expected from so unpromising a muse. My wreath, scanty as it must be, is all I shall derive from these productions; and I shall never attempt to replace its fading leaves, or pluck a single additional sprig from groves, where I am, at best, an intruder. Though accustomed, in my younger days, to rove a careless mountaineer on the Highlands of Scotland, I have not, of late years, had the benefit of such pure air, or so elevated a residence, as might enable me to enter the lists with genuine bards, who have enjoyed both these advantages.<sup>8</sup> But they derive considerable fame, and a few not less profit,<sup>9</sup> from their productions, while I shall expiate my rashness, as an interloper, certainly without the latter, and in all probability, with a very slight share of the former. I leave to others “*Virum volitare per ora.*”<sup>10</sup> I look to the few who will hear with patience “*dulce est desipere in loco.*”<sup>11</sup> – To the former worthies, I resign, without repining, the hope of immortality, and content myself with the not very magnificent prospect, of ranking amongst “the mob of gentlemen who write”, my readers must determine whether I dare say “with ease,” or the honour of a posthumous page in “The Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors,” a work to which the Peerage is under infinite obligations, inasmuch as many names of considerable length, sound, and antiquity, are thereby rescued from the obscurity, which unluckily overshadows several voluminous production of their illustrious bearers.

With slight hopes, and some fears, I publish this first, and last attempt. To the dictates of young ambition, may be ascribed many actions more criminal, and equally absurd. To a few of my own age, the contents may afford amusement, I trust they will, at least, be found harmless. It is highly improbable, from my situation, and pursuits hereafter, that I should ever obtrude myself a second time on the Public; nor even, in the very doubtful event of present indulgence, shall I be tempted to commit a future trespass of the same nature. The opinion of Dr. Johnson on the Poems of a noble relation of mine,\* “That when a man of rank appeared in the character of an author, his merit should be handsomely acknowledged,” can have little weight with verbal, and still less with periodical, censors, but were it otherwise, I should be loth to avail myself of the privilege, and would rather incur this bitterest censure of anonymous criticism, than triumph in honours granted solely to a title.

\* The Earl of Carlisle, whose works have long received the meed of public applause; to which, by their intrinsic worth, they are well entitled.<sup>12</sup>

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**8:** B. alludes to Scott, and perhaps to Ossian.

**9:** Anticipates B.’s criticism of Scott at EBSR 165-84.

**10:** Vir. Geo. III 8: ... *fly victorious on the lips of men.*

**11:** Hor. Od. IV xii 28: *’Tis sweet at the fitting time to cast serious thoughts aside.*

**12:** Frederick Howard, fifth Earl of Carlisle, was B.’s guardian. He obtained £300 p.a. for B. from the Civil List. At EBSR 726, B. refers to *the paralytic puling of Carlisle*; but later editions of HOI have the following dedication: TO / THE RIGHT HONOURABLE FREDERICK, EARL OF CARLISLE, / KNIGHT OF THE GARTER, &c., &c., / THE SECOND EDITION OF THESE POEMS IS INSCRIBED, / BY HIS OBLIGED WARD AND AFFECTIONATE KINSMAN, / THE AUTHOR.

**ON LEAVING NEWSTEAD ABBEY.<sup>13</sup>**

WHY dost thou build the hall, Son of the winged days! Thou lookest from thy tower to-day;  
yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court.

OSSIAN.

1.

THROUGH thy battlements, Newstead, the hollow winds whistle;  
Thou, the hall of my fathers, art gone to decay;  
In thy once smiling garden, the hemlock and thistle  
Have choked up the rose which late bloomed in the way.

2.

Of the mail-covered Barons, who proudly to battle 5  
Led their vassals from Europe to Palestine's plain,  
The escutcheon and shield, which with every blast rattle,  
Are the only sad vestiges now that remain.

3.

No more doth old Robert, with harp-stringing numbers, 10  
Raise a flame in the breast for the war-laurelled wreath;  
Near Askalon's Towers, John of Horistan<sup>14</sup> slumbers;  
Unnerved is the hand of his minstrel by death.

4.

Paul and Hubert, too, sleep in the valley of Cressey,  
For the safety of Edward and England they fell,  
My fathers! the tears of your country redress ye; 15  
How you fought! how you died! still her annals can tell.

5.

On Marston,<sup>15</sup> with Rupert,<sup>16</sup> 'gainst traitors contending,  
Four brothers enriched with their blood the bleak field;  
For the rights of a monarch their country defending, 20  
Till death their attachment to royalty sealed.

6.

Shades of heroes, farewell! your descendant, departing  
From the seat of his ancestors, bids you adieu!  
Abroad, or at home, your remembrance imparting  
New courage, he'll think upon glory and you.

7.

Though a tear dim his eye at this sad separation, 25  
'Tis nature, not fear, that excites his regret;  
Far distant he goes, with the same emulation;  
The fame of his fathers he ne'er can forget.

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**13:** FP pp.1-3; POVO pp.1-3; HOI pp.1-3; POAT pp.1-4. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**14: BYRON'S NOTE:** Horistan Castle, in Derbyshire, an ancient seat of the Byron family.

**15: BYRON'S NOTE:** The battle of Marston Moor, where the adherents of Charles I. were defeated.

**16: BYRON'S NOTE:** Son of the Elector Palatine, and related to Charles I. He afterwards commanded the fleet in the reign of Charles II.

8.

That fame, and that memory, still will he cherish;  
He vows that he ne'er will disgrace your renown;  
Like you will he live, or like you will he perish;  
When decayed, may he mingle his dust with your own.  
1803.

30

**ON A DISTANT VIEW OF THE VILLAGE AND SCHOOL OF HARROW ON THE HILL.**<sup>17</sup>

Oh! mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos.<sup>18</sup>

YE scenes of my childhood, whose loved recollection  
 Embitters the present, compared with the past;  
 Where science first dawned on the powers of reflection,  
 And friendships were formed, too romantic to last;

Where fancy yet joys to retrace the resemblance                    5  
 Of comrades in friendship, and mischief allied,  
 How welcome to me your ne'er fading remembrance,  
 Which rests in the bosom, though hope is denied.

Again I revisit the hills where we sported,  
 The streams where we swam, and the fields where we fought;  
 The school where, loud warned by the bell, we resorted            11  
 To pore o'er the precepts by Pedagogues taught.

Again I behold where for hours I have pondered,  
 As, reclining at eve, on yon tombstone I lay;  
 Or round the steep brow of the churchyard I wandered,            15  
 To catch the last gleam of the sun's setting ray.

I once more view the room, with spectators surrounded,  
 Where as Zanga I trod on Alonzo o'erthrown;  
 While, to swell my young pride, such applauses resounded,  
 I fancied that MOSSOP<sup>19</sup> himself was outshone.            20

Or, as Lear, I poured forth the deep imprecation,  
 By my daughters of kingdom and reason deprived;  
 Till, fired by loud plaudits and self-adulation,  
 I regarded myself as a Garrick revived.

Ye dreams of my boyhood, how much I regret you;                25  
 Unfaded your memory dwells in my breast;  
 Though sad and deserted, I ne'er can forget you,  
 Your pleasures may still be in fancy possessed.

To Ida, full oft may remembrance restore me,  
 While Fate shall the shades of the future unroll,                30  
 Since Darkness o'er shadows the prospect before me,  
 More dear is the beam of the past to my soul.

But if, through the course of the years which await me,  
 Some new scene of pleasure should open to view,  
 I will say, while with rapture the thought shall elate me,        35  
 "Oh! Such were the days which my infancy knew."  
 1806.

<sup>17</sup>: FP pp.23-5; POVO pp.4-6; HOI pp.4-6. Not in POAT. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

<sup>18</sup>: VIRG. AEN. VIII 560: *Oh, if Jupiter would bring me back the years that are sped*. FP has no epigraph.

<sup>19</sup> BYRON'S NOTE: Mossop, a contemporary of Garrick, famous for his performance of Zanga, in Young's tragedy of the Revenge.

**EPITAPH ON A FRIEND.<sup>20</sup>**

Ἀστηρ πρὶν μὲν ἐλαμπεὶ ἐνὶ ζῳοῖσιν ἕως.

LAERTIUS.<sup>21</sup>

OH! Friend! for ever loved, for ever dear!  
 What fruitless tears have bathed thy honoured bier!  
 What sighs re-echoed to thy parting breath,  
 Whilst thou wast struggling in the pangs of death!  
 Could tears retard the tyrant in his course;                     5  
 Could sighs avert his dart's relentless force;  
 Could youth and virtue claim a short delay,  
 Or beauty charm the spectre from his prey,  
 Thou still had'st lived, to bless my aching sight,  
 Thy comrade's honour, and thy friend's delight;                     10  
 If yet thy gentle spirit hover nigh  
 The spot, where now thy mouldering ashes lie,  
 Here wilt thou read, recorded on my heart,  
 A grief too deep to trust the sculptor's art.  
 No marble marks thy couch of lowly sleep,                     15  
 But living statues there are seen to weep;  
 Affliction's semblance bends not o'er thy tomb,  
 Affliction's self deploras thy youthful doom.  
 What though thy sire laments his failing line?  
 A father's sorrows cannot equal mine!                     20  
 Though none like me his dying hour will cheer,  
 Yet other offspring soothe his anguish here.  
 But who with me shall hold thy former place?  
 Thine image, what new friendship can efface?  
 Ah! none! a father's tears will cease to flow;                     25  
 Time will assuage an infant brother's woe;  
 To all, save one, is consolation known,  
 While solitary Friendship sighs alone.

1803.

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**20:** FP (as "Epitaph on a Beloved Friend"), pp.15-16; POVO pp.8-9; HOI pp.7-8 (a completely new text); POAT pp.5-6. The "Friend's" identity has never been established.

**21:** A version of one of the epitaphs on Plato quoted by Diogenes Laertius: *ἢ τινοσ, εἰπέ, ἀστερόεντα θεῶν οἶκον ἀποσκοπέεις;* (*Say, is your gaze fixed upon the starry house of one of the immortals?*) – Diogenes Laertius I, tr. R.D.Hicks, Harvard / Heinemann 1966, p.316-17.



**A FRAGMENT.**<sup>22</sup>

WHEN, to their airy hall, my fathers' voice  
 Shall call my spirit, joyful in their choice;  
 When, poised upon the gale, my form shall ride,  
 Or, dark in mist, descend the mountain's side;                         5  
 Oh! may my shade behold no sculptured urns  
 To mark the spot, where earth to earth returns;  
 No lengthened scroll, no praise-encumbered stone:  
 My epitaph shall be my name alone.  
 If that with honour fail to crown my clay,   10  
 Oh! may no other fame my deeds repay;  
 That, only that, shall single out the spot,  
 By that remembered, or with that forgot.  
1803.

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**22:** FP pp.19-20 (untitled); POVO (entitled "A FRAGMENT"), p.10; HOI p.9; POAT p.7.

**THE TEAR.**<sup>23</sup>

O lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros  
 Ducentium ortus ex animo; quater  
 Felix! in imo qui scatentem  
 Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.<sup>24</sup>  
 GRAY.

WHEN Friendship or Love  
 Our sympathies move;  
 When Truth, in a glance, should appear,  
 The lips may beguile,  
 With a dimple or smile, 5  
 But the test of affection's a Tear.

Too oft is a smile  
 But the hypocrite's wile,  
 To mask detestation, or fear;  
 Give me the soft sigh,  
 Whilst the soul-telling eye 10  
 Is dimmed for a time, with a Tear.

Mild Charity's glow,  
 To us mortals below,  
 Shows the soul from barbarity clear; 15  
 Compassion will melt  
 Where this virtue is felt,  
 And its dew is diffused in a Tear.

The man doomed to sail  
 With the blast of the gale, 20  
 Through billows Atlantic to steer;  
 As he bends o'er the wave,  
 Which may soon be his grave,  
 The green sparkles bright with a Tear.

The Soldier braves Death 25  
 For a fanciful wreath,  
 In Glory's romantic career;  
 But he raises the foe  
 When in battle laid low,  
 And bathes every wound with a Tear. 30

If, with high-bounding pride,  
 He return to his bride,  
 Renouncing the gore-crimsoned spear:  
 All his toils are repaid,  
 When, embracing the maid, 35  
 From her eyelid he kisses the tear.

**23:** FP pp.43-6; POVO pp.21-5; HOI pp.10-14; POAT pp.8-12. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**24:** "Oh fountain of tears which have their sacred / sources in the sensitive soul! Four times / fortunate is he who has felt / thee bubbling up, holy nymph, / from the depths of his heart!" FP has no epigraph.

Sweet scene of my youth!  
 Seat of Friendship and Truth,  
 Where Love chased each fast-fleeting year,  
 Loth to leave thee, I mourned, 40  
 For a last look I turned,  
 But thy spire was scarce seen through a Tear.

Though my vows I can pour  
 To my Mary no more,  
 My Mary to Love once so dear; 45  
 In the shade of her bower,  
 I remember the hour  
 She rewarded those vows with a Tear.

By another possessed,  
 May she live ever blest! 50  
 Her name still my heart must revere;  
 With a sigh I resign  
 What I once thought was mine,  
 And forgive her deceit with a Tear.

Ye friends of my heart, 55  
 Ere from you I depart,  
 This hope to my breast is most near;  
 If again we shall meet  
 In this rural retreat,  
 May we meet, as we part, with a Tear. 60

When my soul wings her flight  
 To the regions of night,  
 And my corse shall recline on its bier;  
 As ye pass by the tomb  
 Where my ashes consume, 65  
 Oh! moisten their dust with a Tear.

May no marble bestow  
 The splendour of woe,  
 Which the children of Vanity rear;  
 No fiction of fame 70  
 Shall blazon my name,  
 All I ask, all I wish, is a Tear.

AN  
**OCCASIONAL PROLOGUE**<sup>25</sup>  
 DELIVERED PREVIOUS TO THE  
**PERFORMANCE OF “THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE,”**  
 AT A PRIVATE THEATRE.

SINCE the refinement of this polished age  
 Has swept immoral raillery from the stage;  
 Since taste has now expunged licentious wit,  
 Which stamped disgrace on all an author writ;  
 Since now, to please with purer scenes we seek, 5  
 Nor dare to call the blush from Beauty’s cheek;  
 Oh! let the modest Muse some pity claim,  
 And meet indulgence, though she find not fame.  
 Still, not for her alone, we wish respect;  
 Others appear more conscious of defect; 10  
 To night, no vet’ran Roscii you behold,  
 In all the arts of scenic action old;  
 No COOKE, no KEMBLE, can salute you here,  
 No SIDDONS draw the sympathetic tear;  
 Tonight, you throng to witness the debut 15  
 Of embryo actors, to the drama new.  
 Here then, our almost unfledged wings we try;  
 Clip not our pinions ere the birds can fly;  
 Failing in this our first attempt to soar,  
 Drooping, alas! we fall, to rise no more. 20  
 Not one poor trembler only fear betrays,  
 Who hopes, yet almost dreads, to meet your praise;  
 But all our Dramatis Personæ wait,  
 In fond suspense, this crisis of their fate.  
 No venal views our progress can retard, 25  
 Your generous plaudits are our sole reward;  
 For these, each Hero all his power displays,  
 Each timid Heroine shrinks before your gaze;  
 Surely these last will some protection find?  
 None to the softer sex can prove unkind; 30  
 While Youth and Beauty form the female shield,  
 The sternest Censor to the fair must yield.  
 Yet, should our feeble efforts nought avail,  
 Should, after all, our best endeavours fail,  
 Still, let some mercy in your bosoms live, 35  
 And if you can’t applaud, at least forgive.

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25: FP pp.39-40; POVO pp.95-6; HOI pp. 15-16; POAT pp.13-14. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**ON THE DEATH OF MR. FOX,<sup>26</sup>**  
**THE FOLLOWING ILLIBERAL IMPROMPTU APPEARED IN A MORNING PAPER.**

“OUR Nation’s foes lament on FOX’S death,  
 “But bless the hour, when PITT resigned his breath;  
 “These feelings wide, let Sense and Truth unclue,  
 “We give the palm where Justice points its due.”

TO WHICH THE AUTHOR OF THESE PIECES SENT THE FOLLOWING REPLY.

OH! factious viper! whose envenomed tooth  
 Would mangle still the dead, perverting truth;  
 What though our “nation’s foes” lament the fate,  
 With generous feeling, of the good and great;  
 Shall dastard tongues essay to blast the name                   5  
 Of him, whose virtues claim eternal fame?  
 When PITT expired in plenitude of power,  
 Though ill success obscured his dying hour,  
 Pity her dewy wings before him spread,  
 For noble spirits “war not with the dead;”                   10  
 His friends, in tears, a last sad requiem gave,  
 As all his errors slumbered in the grave;  
 He sunk, an Atlas, bending ’neath the weight  
 Of cares o’erwhelming our conflicted state;  
 When lo! a Hercules in Fox appeared,                   15  
 Who for a time the ruined fabric reared;  
 He, too, is fall’n, who Britain’s loss supplied;  
 With him, our fast reviving hopes have died;  
 Not one great people, only, raise his urn –  
 All Europe’s far-extended regions mourn.                   20  
 “These feelings wide, let Sense and Truth unclue,  
 “And give the palm where Justice points its due;”  
 Yet let not cankered Calumny assail,  
 And round our statesman wind her gloomy veil.  
 FOX! o’er whose corse a mourning world must weep,   25  
 Whose dear remains in honoured marble sleep;  
 For whom, at last, e’en hostile nations groan,  
 While friends and foes, alike, his talents own.  
 FOX shall in Britain’s future annals shine,  
 Nor e’en to PITT, the patriot’s palm resign;                   40  
 Which Envy, wearing Candour’s sacred mask,  
 For PITT, and PITT alone, has dared to ask.

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<sup>26</sup>: FP p.30-1; POVO pp.97-9; HOI pp.17-18; POAT pp.15-17. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**STANZAS TO A LADY,  
WITH THE POEMS OF CAMOENS.<sup>27</sup>**

This votive pledge of fond esteem,  
Perhaps, dear girl! for me thou'lt prize;  
It sings of Love's enchanting dream,  
A theme we never can despise.

Who blames it but the envious fool,                   5  
The old and disappointed maid?  
Or pupil of the prudish school,  
In single sorrow doomed to fade?

Then read, dear girl, with feeling read,  
For thou wilt ne'er be one of those;               10  
To thee, in vain, I shall not plead  
In pity for the poet's woes.

He was in sooth a genuine bard;  
His was no faint, fictitious flame;  
Like his, may Love be thy reward;                   15  
But not thy hapless fate the same.<sup>28</sup>

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**27:** Not in FP. POVO pp.48-9; HOI pp.20-1; POAT pp.18-19. The "Lady" is EP. **In the Newstead POVO she adds *Pigot* to the title.** Luis Vaz de Camões (1524-80) Portugal's greatest poet. The book given by B. is *Poems, from the Portuguese of Luis de Camoens: with remarks on his life and writings. Notes &c &c.* by Lord Viscount Strangford (1803): see EBSR 295-308, and B.'s note. Strangford was a friend of Moore. EP wrote a reply:

Byron! This little book from thee  
In truth is *very* dear to me,  
And the soft lines that in it flow  
Make me deplore the poet's woe.

A feeling heart will never blame  
The constant, pure, and tender flame.  
Then rail not at a single state  
For it implies not *always* hate.

I see the source of lingering pain  
Derived from Love's deluding strain.  
Though I admire the tempting lay  
My motto is L'Amitié.

Thou may'st believe me when I say  
That friendship's bright unchanging ray  
Beams from my heart unchecked and free  
And Byron! It shines full on *thee*. (*Boyes* p.47)

B. wrote a further reply, *Your motto is L'Amitié* ...

**28:** In his opening remarks, Strangford tells how Camoens endured many vicissitudes to obtain the favour of his beloved, only to find her dead when he returned from them. After perilous adventures, he died in poverty.

**THE FIRST KISS OF LOVE.<sup>29</sup>**

Ἄ Βάρβιτος δε χορδαῖς  
Ἐρωτα μούνον ἴχει.

ANACREON.<sup>30</sup>

Away with your fictions of flimsy romance,  
Those tissues of falsehood which Folly has wove;  
Give me the mild beam of the soul-breathing glance,  
Or the rapture, which dwells on the first kiss of Love.

Ye rhymers, whose bosoms with fantasy glow, 5  
Whose pastoral passions are made for the grove;  
From what blest inspiration your sonnets would flow,  
Could you ever have tasted the first kiss of Love.

If Apollo should e'er his assistance refuse,  
Or the Nine<sup>31</sup> be disposed from your service to rove, 10  
Invoke them no more, bid adieu to the Muse,  
And try the effect of the first kiss of Love.

I hate you, ye cold compositions of art,  
Tho' Prudes may condemn me, and Bigots reprove;  
I court the effusions that spring from the heart, 15  
Which throbs with delight to the first kiss of Love.

Your shepherds, your flocks, those fantastical themes,  
Perhaps may amuse, yet they never can move;  
Arcadia displays but a region of dreams;  
What are visions like these, to the first kiss of Love? 20

Oh! cease to affirm that man, since his birth,  
From Adam till now, has with wretchedness strove;  
Some portion of Paradise still is on earth,  
And Eden revives, in the first kiss of Love.

When age chills the blood, when our pleasures are past – 25  
For years fleet away with the wings of the dove –  
The dearest remembrance will still be the last,  
Our sweetest memorial, the first kiss of Love.

<sup>29</sup>: Not in FP. POVO pp.107-9; HOI pp.22-4; not in POAT.

<sup>30</sup>: A version of *Anacreontea* 42, 16-17: ὑπο Βαρβίτω χορευόντων / βίον ἡσυχον φέρουμι (*At merry parties with youthful girls dancing to the lyre, may I take life easy* – Greek Lyric II, pp.216-7).

<sup>31</sup>: The nine Muses.

TO M———. <sup>32</sup>

OH! did those eyes, instead of fire,  
 With bright, but mild affection shine:  
 Though they might kindle less desire,  
 Love, more than mortal, would be thine.

For thou art formed so heavenly fair, 5  
 Howe'er those orbs may wildly beam,  
 We must admire, but still despair;  
 That fatal glance forbids esteem.

When nature stamped thy beauteous birth,  
 So much perfection in thee shone, 10  
 She feared that, too divine for earth,  
 The skies might claim thee for their own.

Therefore, to guard her dearest work,  
 Lest angels might dispute the prize,  
 She bade a secret lightning lurk 15  
 Within those once celestial eyes.

These might the boldest sylph appal,  
 When gleaming with meridian blaze;  
 Thy beauty must enrapture all,  
 But who can dare thine ardent gaze? 20

'Tis said that Berenice's <sup>33</sup> hair,  
 In stars, adorns the vault of heaven;  
 But they would ne'er permit thee there,  
 Thou wouldst so far outshine the seven. <sup>34</sup>

For did those eyes as planets roll, 25  
 Thy sister-lights would scarce appear:  
 E'en suns, which systems now control,  
 Would twinkle dimly through their sphere.

1806.

---

**32:** Not in FP. POVO pp.57-8; HOI pp.25-6; POAT pp.20-1.

**33:** The hair of Berenice, third-century BC Queen of Egypt, was said to have been changed at death into a constellation. She gives her name to a 1737 opera by Handel.

**34:** The Seven Stars: the Pleiades.



**TO WOMAN.**<sup>35</sup>

WOMAN, experience might have told me,  
 That all must love thee, who behold thee;  
 Surely experience might have taught  
 Thy firmest promises are naught,  
 But, placed in all thy charms before me,           5  
 All I forget, but to adore thee.  
 Oh, Memory! thou choicest blessing,  
 When joined with hope, when still possessing;<sup>36</sup>  
 But how much cursed by every lover,  
 When hope is fled, and passion's over.           10  
 Woman, that fair and fond deceiver,  
 How prompt are striplings to believe her!  
 How throbs the pulse, when first we view  
 The eye that rolls in glossy blue;  
 Or sparkles black, or mildly throws           15  
 A beam from under hazel brows;  
 How quick we credit every oath,  
 And hear her plight the willing troth;  
 Fondly we hope 'twill last for aye,  
 When, lo! she changes in a day.           20  
 This record will forever stand:  
 "Woman, thy vows are traced in sand."<sup>37</sup>

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**35:** FP pp.38-9; POVO pp.55-6; HOI pp.27-8; POAT pp.22-3. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**36:** For HOI, B. cuts the FP lines, *Thou whisperest, as our hearts are beating, / "What oft we've done, we're still repeating."*

**37: BYRON'S NOTE:** The last line is almost a literal translation from a Spanish proverb.

**To M.S.G.**<sup>38</sup>

When I dream that you love me, you'll surely forgive –  
     Extend not your anger to sleep;  
 For in visions alone, your affection can live;  
     I rise, and it leaves me to weep.

Then, Morpheus! envelop my faculties fast,                     5  
     Shed o'er me your languor benign;  
 Should the dream of tonight but resemble the last,  
     What rapture celestial is mine!

They tell us, that slumber, the sister of Death,  
     Mortality's emblem is given;                                     10  
 To fate how I long to resign my frail breath,  
     If this be a foretaste of Heaven!

Ah! frown not, sweet lady; unbend your soft brow,  
     Nor deem me too happy in this;  
 If I sin in my dream, I atone for it now,                     15  
     Thus doomed, but to gaze upon bliss.

Though in visions, sweet lady, perhaps you may smile,  
     Oh! think not my penance deficient!  
 When dreams of your presence, my slumbers beguile,  
     To awake, will be torture sufficient.                     20

---

38: Not in FP. POVO pp.62-3; HOI pp.29-30; POAT pp.24-5. **EP's note (in the Newstead manuscript) implies "M.S.G." to be herself: G.G.B. to E.P.**

**TO A BEAUTIFUL QUAKER.**<sup>39</sup>

SWEET girl! though only once we met,  
 That meeting I shall ne'er forget;  
 And though we ne'er may meet again,  
 Remembrance will thy form retain;  
 I would not say, "I love," but still                     5  
 My senses struggle with my will;  
 In vain to drive thee from my breast,  
 My thoughts are more and more repressed;  
 In vain I check the rising sighs –  
 Another to the last replies;                             10  
 Perhaps this is not love, but yet  
 Our meeting I can ne'er forget.

What though we never silence broke?  
 Our eyes a sweeter language spoke;  
 The tongue in flattering falsehood deals,             15  
 And tells a tale it never feels;  
 Deceit the guilty lips impart,  
 And hush the mandates of the heart,  
 But soul's interpreters, the eyes,  
 Spurn such restraint, and scorn disguise.             20  
 As thus our glances oft conversed,  
 And all our bosoms felt, rehearsed;  
 No spirit from within reproved us,  
 Say rather, "'twas the spirit moved us."  
 Though what they uttered, I repress,                 25  
 Yet, I conceive, thou'lt partly guess;  
 For as on thee my memory ponders,  
 Perchance to me thine also wanders;  
 This, for myself, at least I'll say,  
 Thy form appears through night, through day;     30  
 Awake, with it my fancy teems,  
 In sleep, it smiles in fleeting dreams;  
 The vision charms the hours away,  
 And bids me curse Aurora's ray  
 For breaking slumbers of delight,                     35  
 Which make me wish for endless night.  
 Since, oh! whate'er my future fate,  
 Shall joy or woe my steps await;  
 Tempted by love, by storms beset,  
 Thine image I can ne'er forget.                     40

Alas! again no more we meet,  
 No more former looks repeat;  
 Then let me breathe this parting prayer,  
 The dictate of my bosom's care:  
 "May Heaven so guard my lovely quaker,             45  
 That anguish never can o'ertake her;  
 That peace and virtue ne'er forsake her,

---

**39:** FP pp.33-6; POVO pp.64-6; HOI pp.31-3. Not in POAT. CPW I 380 has it that B. writes in the margin of the B.L. copy of POVO, *At Harrowgate, Sept. 1806*: but there are no marginalia in the B.L. copy of POVO. **EP writes, in the Newstead FP, *That is, Harrogate*.** For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

But bliss be aye, her heart's partaker:<sup>40</sup>  
 Oh! may the happy mortal fated  
 To be by dearest ties related, 50  
 For her each hour new joy discover,  
 And lose the husband in the lover.  
 May that fair bosom never know  
 What 'tis to feel the restless woe  
 Which stings the soul with vain regret, 55  
 Of him who never can forget."

---

**40:** B. cuts *No jealous passion shall invade,* / "*No envy that pure breast pervade;*" / *For he that revels in such charms,* / *Can never seek another's arms ...* from FP.

**TO GEORGE, EARL DELAWARR.<sup>41</sup>**

Oh! yes, I will own we were dear to each other,  
 The friendships of childhood, though fleeting, are true;  
 The love which you felt was the love of a brother,  
 Nor less the affection I cherished for you.

But Friendship can vary her gentle dominion; 5  
 The attachment of years in a moment expires;  
 Like Love too, she moves on a swift-waving pinion,  
 But glows not, like Love, with unquenchable fires.

Full oft have we wandered through Ida<sup>42</sup> together,  
 And blest were the scenes of our youth, I allow; 10  
 In the spring of our life, how serene is the weather,  
 But winter's rude tempests are gathering now.<sup>43</sup>

No more with Affection shall Memory blending  
 The wonted delights of our childhood retrace;  
 When Pride steels the bosom, the heart is unbending, 15  
 And what would be Justice, appears a disgrace.

However, dear George, for I still must esteem you,  
 The few, whom I love, I can never upbraid,  
 The chance, which has lost, may in future redeem you;  
 Repentance will cancel the vow you have made. 20

I will not complain, and though chilled is affection,  
 With me no corroding resentment shall live;  
 My bosom is calmed by the simple reflection  
 That both may be wrong, and that both should forgive.

You knew that my soul, that my heart, my existence, 25  
 If danger demanded, were wholly your own;  
 You knew me unaltered, by years or by distance,  
 Devoted to love and to friendship alone.

You knew – but away with the vain retrospection!  
 The bond of affection no longer endures; 30  
 Too late you may droop o'er the fond recollection,  
 And sigh for the friend who was formerly yours.

For the present, we part – I will hope, not forever,  
 For time and regret will restore you at last;  
 To forget our dissension we both should endeavour, 35  
 I ask no atonement, but days like the past.

---

**41:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI (as “To —”), pp.34-6; POAT pp.30-2. Addressed to George, fifth Earl Delawarr (1788-1869), a Harrow friend, the exact cause of whose quarrel with B. is nowhere recorded; though see BLJ I 106, 134, and 143&n.

**42:** “Ida” is Harrow School, throughout the book.

**43:** It is about eighteen months since B. left school.

**TO MARY.  
ON RECEIVING HER PICTURE.<sup>44</sup>**

This faint resemblance of thy charms,  
     Though strong as mortal art could give,  
 My constant heart of fear disarms,  
     Revives my hopes, and bids me live.

Here, I can trace the locks of gold                     5  
     Which down thy snowy forehead wave;  
 The cheeks, which sprung from Beauty's mould,  
     The lips, which made me Beauty's slave.

Here I can trace — ah, no! that eye,  
     Whose azure floats in liquid fire,                     10  
 Must all the painter's art defy,  
     And bid him from the task retire.

Here, I behold its beauteous hue;  
     But where's the beam so sweetly straying,  
 Which gave a lustre to its blue,                     15  
     Like Luna o'er the ocean playing?

Sweet copy! far more dear to me,  
     Lifeless, unfeeling as thou art,  
 Than all the living forms could be,  
     Save her who placed thee next my heart.                     20

She placed it, sad, with needless fear,  
     Lest time might shake my wavering soul,  
 Unconscious that her image there  
     Held every sense in fast control.

Through hours, through years, through time, 'twill cheer;  
     My hope, in gloomy moments, raise;                     31  
 In life's last conflict, 'twill appear,  
     And meet my fond expiring gaze.

---

<sup>44</sup>: Not in FP. POVO pp.50-1; HOI pp.37-8; POAT pp.33-5. See EP's note in the FP text identifying "Mary".

**LOVE'S LAST ADIEU!<sup>45</sup>**

Αει δ, αει με Φευγει.

ANACREON.<sup>46</sup>

The roses of Love glad the garden of life,  
 Though nurtured 'mid weeds dropping pestilent dew,  
 Till Time crops the leaves with unmerciful knife,  
 Or prunes them for ever, in Love's last adieu!

In vain with endearments we soothe the sad heart,           5  
 In vain do we vow for an age to be true;  
 The chance of an hour may command us to part,  
 Or Death disunite us, in Love's last adieu!

Still, Hope, breathing peace through the grief-swollen breast,  
 Will whisper, "Our meeting we yet may renew;"       10  
 With this dream of deceit, half our sorrow's repressed,  
 Nor taste we the poison of Love's last adieu!

Oh! mark you yon pair, in the sunshine of youth,  
 Love twined round their childhood his flowers as they grew;  
 They flourish awhile, in the season of truth,           15  
 Till chilled by the winter of Love's last adieu!

Sweet lady! why thus doth a tear steal its way,  
 Down a cheek which outrivals thy bosom in hue?  
 Yet, why do I ask? – to distraction a prey,  
 Thy reason has perished, with Love's last adieu!       20

Oh! who is yon Misanthrope, shunning mankind?<sup>47</sup>  
 From cities to caves of the forest he flew:  
 There, raving, he howls his complaint to the wind;  
 The mountains reverberate Love's last adieu!

Now Hate rules a heart which in Love's easy chains,       25  
 Once Passion's tumultuous blandishments knew;  
 Despair now inflames the dark tide of his veins,  
 He ponders, in frenzy, on Love's last adieu!

How he envies the wretch, with a soul wrapt in steel;  
 His pleasures are scarce, yet his troubles are few,       30  
 Who laughs at the pang that he never can feel,  
 And dreads not the anguish of Love's last adieu!

Youth flies, Life decays, even Hope is o'er cast;  
 No more with Love's former devotion, we sue:  
 He spreads his young wing, he retires with the blast;       35  
 The shroud of affection is Love's last adieu!

---

**45:** Not in FP. POVO pp.125-7; HOI pp.39-42; not in POAT.

**46:** *Anacreontea*, 58, 4: *And he is always fleeing me, always ...* "Anacreon", however, refers to money.

**47:** The next three verses seem inspired by Penruddock, the character B. played in *The Wheel of Fortune*.

In this life of probation, for rapture divine,  
Astrea<sup>48</sup> declares that some penance is due;  
From him, who has worshipped at Love's gentle shrine,  
The atonement is ample, in Love's last adieu! 40

Who kneels to the God, on his altar of light  
Must myrtle and cypress alternately strew:  
His myrtle, an emblem of purest delight,  
His cypress, the garland of Love's last adieu!

---

**48: BYRON'S NOTE: The Goddess of Justice.**



**DAMCETAS.**<sup>49</sup>

In law an infant,<sup>50</sup> and in years a boy,  
 In mind a slave to every vicious joy;  
 From every sense of shame and virtue weaned,  
 In lies an adept, in deceit a fiend;  
 Versed in hypocrisy, while yet a child; 5  
 Fickle as wind, of inclinations wild;  
 Women his dupe, his heedless friend a tool,  
 Old in the world, though scarcely broke from school;  
 Damcetas ran through all the maze of sin,  
 And found the goal when others just begin; 10  
 Ev'n still conflicting passions shake his soul,  
 And bid him drain the dregs of pleasure's bowl;  
 But, palled with vice, he breaks his former chain,  
 And what was once his bliss, appears his bane.

---

**49:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI p.43; POAT p.38. Damcetas (B. has "Damaetas"), is one of two shepherds, the other being Daphnis, who have a singing contest in the Sixth Idyll of Theocritus. Damcetas sings in the character of Polyphemus, whom he depicts as claiming to have overcome his love for Galatæa. B.'s poem is an unflattering self-portrait, presaging Childe Harold.

**50: BYRON'S NOTE: In Law, every person is an infant, who has not attained the age of 21.**

TO MARION.<sup>51</sup>

MARION! why that pensive brow?  
 What disgust to life hast thou?  
 Change that discontented air –  
 Frowns become not one so fair.  
 'Tis not Love disturbs thy rest, 5  
 Love's a stranger to thy breast;  
 He, in dimpling smiles, appears,  
 Or mourns in sweetly timid tears;  
 Or bends the languid eyelid down,  
 But shuns the cold forbidding frown. 10  
 Then resume thy former fire;  
 Some will love, and all admire;  
 While that icy aspect chills us,  
 Naught but cool indifference thrills us.  
 Wouldst thou wandering hearts beguile? 15  
 Smile at least, or seem to smile!  
 Eyes like thine were never meant  
 To hide their orbs in dark restraint;  
 Spite of all thou fain would'st say,  
 Still in truant beams they play. 20  
 Thy lips – but here my modest Muse  
 Her impulse chaste must needs refuse,  
 She blushes, curtsies, frowns – in short, she  
 Dreads lest the subject should transport me;  
 And flying off in search of Reason, 25  
 Brings Prudence back in proper season.  
 All I shall therefore say (whate'er  
 I think, is neither here nor there),  
 Is that such lips, of looks endearing,  
 Were formed for better things than sneering; 30  
 Of soothing compliments divested,  
 Advice at least's disinterested;  
 Such is my artless song to thee,  
 From all the flow of flattery free;  
 Counsel like mine is as a brother's, 35  
 My heart is given to some others –  
 That is to say, unskilled to cozen,  
 It shares itself among a dozen.

Marion! adieu! oh! prithee, slight not  
 This warning, though it may delight not; 40  
 And, lest my precepts be displeasing  
 To those who think remonstrance teasing,  
 At once I'll tell thee our opinion,  
 Concerning woman's soft dominion:  
 Howe'er we gaze with admiration, 45  
 On eyes of blue, or lips carnation,  
 Howe'er the flowing locks attract us,

**51:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.44-6; POAT pp.38-40. Originally entitled *To Harriet*. **EP's note, on a separate sheet bound with the Newstead manuscript, reads, *This was to Harriet Maltby, now M<sup>rs</sup>. Nichols, written upon her meeting him at Mrs Wm Becher's, & being cold, silent, & reserved to him, by the advice of a Lady with whom she was staying; quite foreign to her usual manner, which was gay lively & full of flirtation.***

Howe'er those beauties may distract us;  
 Still fickle, we are prone to rove,  
 These cannot fix our souls to love; 50  
 It is not too severe a stricture,  
 To say they form a pretty picture;  
 But would'st thou see the secret chain  
 Which binds us in your humble train,  
 To hail you queens of all creation, 55  
 Know, in a word, 'tis ANIMATION.<sup>52</sup>

---

**52: Becher wrote a reply:**

Harriet, receive Lord Byron's "Picture,"  
 And profit by his friendly stricture;  
 Then shall we view your coral mouth  
 Diffusing odours like the South,  
 Thoughts that smile, and words that glow,  
 More bliss shall give than now you know –  
 Then cease to frown – from pleasure why run?  
 Apollo calls, "Ah, crede Byron!" (from Newstead manuscript RB C 22/4: edited).

EP's note continues: The 8 lines were by J.T.Becher to her, on Ld. B-'s lines being read to him – / I saw Lord B- was *flattered* by John Becher's lines, as he read, Apollo &c, with a peculiar smile and emphasis, – so, out of *fun*, to vex him a little, I said, "Apollo! He should have said *Apollyon*". "Elizabeth! For heaven's sake don't say so again, I don't mind *you* telling me so, but if anyone *else* got hold of *the word*, I should never hear the end of it. So I laughed at him and dropt it, for he was *red* with agitation – making good the old Aphorism of "Those who cut, are easily wounded" – Newstead manuscript RB C 22/3.

**OSCAR OF ALVA.**<sup>53</sup>  
A TALE.

How sweetly shines, through azure skies,  
The lamp of Heaven on Lora's shore;  
Where Alva's hoary turrets rise,  
And hear the din of arms no more.

2.

But often has yon rolling moon 5  
On Alva's casques of silver played;  
And viewed, at midnight's silent noon,  
Her chiefs in gleaming mail arrayed.

3.

And on the crimsoned rocks beneath, 10  
Which scowl o'er ocean's sullen flow,  
Pale in the scattered ranks of Death,  
She saw the gasping warrior low.

4.

While many an eye, which ne'er again 15  
Could mark the rising orb of day,  
Turned feebly from the gory plain,  
Beheld in Death her fading ray.

5.

Once to those eyes the lamp of Love, 20  
They blessed her dear propitious light;  
But now she glimmered from above,  
A sad, funereal torch of night.

6.

Faded is Alva's noble race,  
And grey her towers are seen afar;  
No more her heroes urge the chase,  
Or roll the crimson tide of war.

7.

But who was last of Alva's clan? 25  
Why grows the moss on Alva's stone?  
Her towers resound no steps of man,  
They echo to the gale alone.<sup>54</sup>

8.

And when that gale is fierce and high, 30  
A sound is heard in yonder hall;  
It rises hoarsely through the sky,  
And vibrates o'er the mouldering wall.

---

**53:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.47-67; POAT pp.41-61. **BYRON'S NOTE:** The Catastrophe of this tale was suggested by the story of "Jeronymo and Lorenzo," in the first volume of the "Armenian, or Ghost-Seer" [by Schiller]. It also bears some resemblance to a scene in the third Act of "Macbeth."

**54:** Compare *The Giaour*, 288-351.

9.

Yes, when the eddying tempest sighs,  
 It shakes the shield of Oscar brave;  
 But there no more his banners rise, 35  
 No more his plumes of sable wave.

10.

Fair shone the sun on Oscar's birth,  
 When Angus hailed his eldest born;  
 The vassals round their chieftain's hearth,  
 Crowd to applaud the happy morn. 40

11.

They feast upon the mountain deer,  
 The pibroch raised its piercing note,<sup>55</sup>  
 To gladden more their Highland cheer,  
 The strains in martial numbers float.

12.

And they who heard the war-notes wild, 45  
 Hoped that one day the pibroch's strain  
 Should play before the hero's child,  
 While he should lead the tartan train.

13.

Another year is quickly past,  
 And Angus hails another son; 50  
 His natal day is like the last,  
 Nor soon the jocund feast was done.

14.

Taught by their sire to bend the bow  
 On Alva's dusky hills of wind,  
 The boys in childhood chased the roe, 55  
 And left their hounds in speed behind.

15.

But ere their years of youth are o'er,  
 They mingle in the ranks of war;  
 They lightly wheel the bright claymore,  
 And send the whistling arrow far. 60

16.

Dark was the flow of Oscar's hair,  
 Wildly it streamed along the gale;  
 But Allan's locks were bright and fair,  
 And pensive seemed his cheek and pale.

17.

But Oscar owned a hero's soul; 65  
 His dark eye shone through beams of truth;  
 Allan had early learned control,

---

**55:** Throughout HOI, B. appears to think that the pibroch is an instrument, rather than a piece of music. Brougham mocks him for such ignorance (see Appendix 2 below).

And smooth his words had been from youth.

18.

Both, both were brave; the Saxon spear  
 Was shivered oft beneath their steel; 70  
 And Oscar's bosom scorned to fear,  
 But Oscar's bosom knew to feel;

19.

While Allan's soul belied his form,  
 Unworthy with such charms to dwell; 75  
 Keen as the lightning of the storm,  
 On foes his deadly vengeance fell.

20.

From high Southannon's distant tower  
 Arrived a young and noble dame;  
 With Kenneth's lands to form her dower,  
 Glenalvon's blue-eyed daughter came. 80

21.

And Oscar claimed the beauteous bride,  
 And Angus on his Oscar smiled;  
 It soothed the father's feudal pride,  
 Thus to obtain Glenalvon's child.

22.

Hark! to the pibroch's pleasing note, 85  
 Hark to the swelling nuptial song!  
 In joyous strains the voices float,  
 And still the choral peal prolong.

23.

See how the heroes' blood-red plumes  
 Assembled wave in Alva's hall; 90  
 Each youth his varied plaid assumes,  
 Attending on their chieftain's call.

24.

It is not war their aid demands;  
 The pibroch plays the song of peace;  
 To Oscar's nuptials throng the bands, 95  
 Nor yet the sounds of pleasure cease.

25.

But where is Oscar? sure 'tis late:  
 Is this a bridegroom's ardent flame?  
 While thronging guests and ladies wait,  
 Nor Oscar nor his brother came. 100

26.

At length young Allan joined the bride;  
 "Why comes not Oscar?" Angus said;  
 "Is he not here?" the youth replied,  
 "With me he roved not o'er the glade."

27.  
 “Perchance, forgetful of the day,  
     ’Tis his to chase the bounding roe;  
 Or Ocean’s waves prolong his stay;  
     Yet Oscar’s bark is seldom slow.” 105

28.  
 “Oh, no,” the anguished sire rejoined,  
     “Nor chase nor wave my Boy delay;  
 Would he to Mora seem unkind?  
     Would aught to her impede his way?” 110

29.  
 “Oh, search, ye chiefs! oh! search around!  
     Allan, with these, through Alva fly;  
 Till Oscar, till my son is found,  
     Haste, haste, nor dare attempt reply.” 115

30.  
 All is confusion – through the vale  
     The name of Oscar hoarsely rings,  
 It rises on the murmuring gale,  
     Till night expands her dusky wings. 120

31.  
 It breaks the stillness of the night,  
     But echoes through her shades in vain;  
 It sounds through morning’s misty light,  
     But Oscar comes not o’er the plain.

32.  
 Three days, three sleepless nights, the chief 125  
     For Oscar searched each mountain cave;  
 Then hope is lost; in boundless grief,  
     His locks in grey-torn ringlets wave.

33.  
 “Oscar! my Son – thou God of Heaven!  
     Restore the prop of sinking age;  
 Or, if that hope no more is given,  
     Yield his assassin to my rage. 130

34.  
 “Yes, on some desert rocky shore,  
     My Oscar’s whitened bones must lie;  
 Then grant thou, God, I ask no more,  
     With him his frantic sire may die. 135

35.  
 “Yet he may live – away, Despair!  
     Be calm, my soul! he yet may live;  
 To arraign my fate, my voice forbear,  
     O God! my impious prayer forgive! 140

36.  
 “What if he live for me no more?  
 I sink forgotten in the dust;  
 The hope of Alva’s age is o’er,  
 Alas! can pangs like these be just?”
37. 145  
 Thus did the hapless parent mourn,  
 Till Time, who soothes severest woe,  
 Had bade serenity return,  
 And made the tear-drop cease to flow.
38. 150  
 For still, some latent hope survived,  
 That Oscar might once more appear;  
 His hope now drooped, and now revived,  
 Till Time had told a tedious year.
39. 155  
 Days rolled along; the orb of light  
 Again had run his destined race;  
 No Oscar blessed his father’s sight,  
 And sorrow left a fainter trace.
40. 160  
 For youthful Allan still remained,  
 And now his father’s only joy:  
 And Mora’s heart was quickly gained,  
 For beauty crowned the fair-haired boy.
41.  
 She thought that Oscar low was laid,  
 And Allan’s<sup>56</sup> face was wondrous fair;  
 If Oscar lived, some other maid  
 Had claimed his faithless bosom’s care.
42. 165  
 And Angus said, if one year more  
 In fruitless hope was passed away;  
 His fondest scruples should be o’er,  
 And he would name their nuptial day.
43. 170  
 Slow rolled the moons, but blest at last  
 Arrived the dearly destined morn;  
 The year of anxious trembling past,  
 What smiles the lovers’ cheeks adorn!
44. 175  
 Hark to the pibroch’s pleasing note!  
 Hark to the swelling nuptial song!  
 In joyous strains the voices float,  
 And still the choral peal prolong.

---

56: “Allen’s” (HOI).



45.  
 Again the clan in festive crowd,  
     Throng through the gate of Alva's hall;  
 The sounds of mirth re-echo loud,  
     And all their former joy recall.                 180

46.  
 But who is he,<sup>57</sup> whose darkened brow  
     Glooms in the midst of general mirth?  
 Before his eyes' far fiercer glow,  
     The blue flames curdle o'er the hearth.

47.  
 Dark is the robe which wraps his form,                 185  
     And tall his plume of gory red;  
 His voice is like the rising storm,  
     But light and trackless is his tread.

48.  
 'Tis noon of night; the pledge goes round,  
     The bridegroom's health is deeply quaffed;     190  
 With shouts the vaulted roofs resound,  
     And all combine to hail the draught.

49.  
 Sudden the stranger chief arose,  
     And all the clamorous<sup>58</sup> crowd are hushed;  
 And Angus' cheek with wonder glows,                 195  
     And Mora's tender bosom blushed.

50.  
 "Old man!" he cried, "this pledge is done,  
     Thou saw'st 'twas duly drunk by me;  
 It hailed the nuptials of thy son;  
     Now will I claim a pledge from thee.                 200

51.  
 "While all around is mirth and joy,  
     To bless thy Allan's happy lot,  
 Say, hadst thou ne'er another boy?  
     Say, why should Oscar be forgot?"

52.  
 "Alas!" the hapless Sire replied,                         205  
     The big tear starting as he spoke,  
 "When Oscar left my hall, or died,  
     This aged heart was almost broke.

53.

---

**57:** The *revenant* figure here is the first of many in B.'s work, traceable back to the figure of the Armenian in Schiller's *Der Geisterseher*, and behind him to Banquo: see Ezzelin in *Lara*, Beppo in his own poem, and the Hungarian in *Werner*. Fraternal rivalry – borrowed from Schiller – gives it added intensity.

**58:** "clamorous" (HOI).

“Thrice has the earth revolved her course  
 Since Oscar’s form has blessed my sight; 210  
 And Allan is my last resource,  
 Since martial Oscar’s death, or flight.”

54.

“‘Tis well,” replied the stranger stern,  
 And fiercely flashed his rolling eye;  
 “Thy Oscar’s fate I fain would learn – 215  
 Perhaps the hero did not die.”

55.

“Perchance, if those whom most he loved  
 Would call, thy Oscar might return;  
 Perchance the chief has only roved;  
 For him thy Beltane<sup>59</sup> yet may burn. 220

56.

“Fill high the bowl the table round!  
 We will not climb the pledge by stealth;  
 With wine let every cup be crowned,  
 Pledge me departed Oscar’s health.”

57.

“With all my soul,” old Angus said, 225  
 And filled his goblet to the brim;  
 “Here’s to my boy! alive or dead,  
 I ne’er shall find a son like him.”

58.

“Bravely, old man, this health has sped –  
 But why does Allan trembling stand? 230  
 Come, drink remembrance of the dead,  
 And raise thy cup with firmer hand.”

59.

The crimson glow of Allan’s face  
 Was turned at once to ghastly hue;  
 The drops of death each other chase 235  
 Adown in agonizing dew.

60.

Thrice did he raise the goblet high,  
 And thrice his lips refused to taste;  
 For thrice he caught the stranger’s eye  
 On his with deadly fury placed. 240

61.

“And is it thus a brother hails  
 A brother’s fond remembrance here?  
 If thus affection’s strength prevails,  
 What might we not expect from fear?”

---

**59 BYRON’S NOTE:** Beltane Tree, a Highland festival in the 1st of May, held near fires lighted for the occasion.

62.  
 Roused by the sneer, he raised the bowl;                   245  
     "Would Oscar now could share our mirth!"<sup>60</sup>  
 Internal fear appalled his soul;  
     He said, and dashed the cup to earth.

63.  
 "'Tis he! I hear my murderer's voice!"  
     Loud shrieks a darkly gleaming form;                   250  
 "A murderer's voice!" the roof replies,  
     And deeply swells the bursting storm.

64.  
 The tapers wink, the chieftains shrink,  
     The stranger's gone – amidst the crew  
 A form was seen in tartan green,                           255  
     And tall the shade terrific grew.

65.  
 His waist was bound with a broad belt round,  
     His plume of sable streamed on high;  
 But his breast was bare, with the red wounds there,  
     And fixed was the glare of his glassy eye.           260

66.  
 And thrice he smiled, with his eyes so wild,  
     On Angus bending low the knee;  
 And thrice he frowned on a chief on the ground,  
     Whom shivering crowds with horror see.

67.  
 The bolts loud roll from pole to pole,                   265  
     The thunders through the welkin ring;  
 And the gleaming form, through the mist of the storm,  
     Was borne on high by the whirlwind's wing.

68.  
 Cold was the feast, the revel ceased;  
     Who lies upon the stony floor?                   270  
 Old Angus prest the earth with his breast,  
     At length his life-pulse throbs once more.

69.  
 "Away, away, let the leech essay  
     To pour the light on Allan's eyes!"  
 His sand is done – his race is run,                       275  
     Oh! never more shall Allan rise!

70.  
 But Oscar's breast is cold as clay,  
     His locks are lifted by the gale;

---

**60:** Compare *Macbeth*, III iv 89-91: *I drink to the general joy of the whole table, / And our good friend Banquo, whom we miss – / Would he were here!*

And Allan's barbed arrow lay  
 With him in dark Glentanar's vale. 280

71.

And whence the dreadful stranger came,  
 Or who, no mortal wight can tell;  
 But no one doubts the form of flame,  
 For Alva's sons knew Oscar well.

72.

Ambition nerved young Allan's hand, 285  
 Exulting demons winged his dart,  
 While Envy waved her burning brand,  
 And poured her venom round his heart.

73.

Swift is the shaft from Allan's bow;  
 Whose streaming life-blood stains his side?<sup>61</sup> 290  
 Dark Oscar's sable crest is low –  
 The dart has drunk his vital tide.

74.

And Mora's eyes could Allan move;  
 She bade his wounded pride rebel:  
 Alas! that eyes, which beamed with love, 295  
 Should urge the soul to deeds of Hell.

75.

Lo! see'st thou not a lonely tomb  
 Which rises o'er a warrior dead?  
 It glimmers through the twilight gloom;  
 Oh! that is Allan's nuptial bed. 300

76.

Far, distant far, the noble grave,  
 Which held his clan's great ashes, stood;  
 And o'er his corse no banners wave,  
 For they were stained with kindred blood.

77.

What minstrel grey, what hoary bard, 305  
 Shall Allan's deeds on harp-strings raise?  
 The song is glory's chief reward,  
 But who can strike a murderer's praise?

78.

Unstrung, untouched, the harp must stand,  
 No minstrel dare the theme awake; 310  
 Guilt would benumb his palsied hand,  
 His harp in shuddering chords would break.

79.

No lyre of fame, no hallowed verse,

---

61: "side," (POAT); "side?" (1832, Coleridge, CPW).

Shall sound his glories high in air:  
A dying father's bitter curse, 315  
A brother's death-groan echoes there.

**TRANSLATIONS  
AND  
IMITATIONS.**

**ADRIAN'S ADDRESS TO HIS SOUL, WHEN DYING.<sup>62</sup>**

ANIMULA! vagula, blandula,  
Hospes, comesque, corporis,  
Quæ nunc abibis in loca?  
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,  
Nec, ut soles dabis jocos.

**TRANSLATION.**

AH! gentle, fleeting, wavering sprite,  
Friend and associate of this clay!  
To what unknown region borne  
Wilt thou now wing thy distant flight?  
No more with wonted humour gay,                   5  
But pallid, cheerless, and forlorn.

---

**62:** FP p.16; POVO pp.73-4; HOI pp.71-2; POAT pp.71-2. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS.**  
**“AD LESBIAM.”<sup>63</sup>**

EQUAL to Jove, that youth must be;  
 Greater than Jove he seems to me,  
 Who, free from Jealousy's alarms,  
 Securely views thy matchless charms:  
 That cheek which ever dimpling glows,                   5  
 That mouth from whence such music flows;  
 To him alike are always known,  
 Reserved for him, and him alone.  
 Ah! Lesbia! though 'tis death to me,  
 I cannot choose but look on thee;                   10  
 But at the sight, my senses fly,  
 I needs must gaze, but gazing die;  
 Whilst trembling with a thousand fears,  
 Parched to the throat, my tongue adheres.  
 My pulse beats quick, my breath heaves short,   15  
 My limbs deny their slight support,  
 Cold dews my pallid face o'erspread,  
 With deadly langour droops my head,  
 My ears with tingling echoes ring,  
 And life itself is on the wing;                   20  
 My eyes refuse the cheering light,  
 Their orbs are veiled in starless night;  
 Such pangs my nature sinks beneath,  
 And feels a temporary death.

---

<sup>63</sup>: FP p.63; POVO pp.75-6; HOI pp.73-4; POAT pp.73-4. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**TRANSLATION  
OF THE  
EPITAPH OF VIRGIL AND TIBULLUS.<sup>64</sup>**

**BY DOMITIUS MARSUS.**

HE, who sublime in epic numbers rolled,  
And he who struck the softer lyre of love,  
By Death's<sup>65</sup> unequal hand alike controlled,  
Fit comrades in Elysian regions move.

---

**64:** FP p.64; POVO p.77; HOI p.75; POAT pp.75-6. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**65 BYRON'S NOTE:** The hand of Death is said to be unjust or unequal, as Virgil was considerably older than Tibullus, at his decease.



TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS.<sup>66</sup>

## “LUCTUS DE MORTE PASSERIS.”

YE Cupids, droop each little head,  
 Nor let your wings with joy be spread:  
 My Lesbia's favourite bird is dead,  
     Whom dearer than her eyes she loved;  
 For he was gentle, and so true,                     5  
 Obedient to her call he flew,  
 No fear, no wild alarm he knew,  
     But lightly o'er her bosom moved:  
  
 And softly fluttering here and there,  
 He never sought to cleave the air,                     10  
 But chirruped oft, and, free from care,  
     Tuned<sup>67</sup> to her ear his grateful strain;  
 Now having passed the gloomy bourn,  
 From whence he never can return,  
 His death, and Lesbia's grief, I mourn,                     15  
     Who sighs, alas! but sighs in vain.  
  
 Oh! curst be thou, devouring grave!  
 Whose jaws eternal victims crave,  
 From whom no earthly power can save,  
     For thou hast ta'en the bird away!                     20  
 From thee my Lesbia's eyes o'erflow,  
 Her swollen cheeks with weeping glow,  
 Thou art the cause of all her woe,  
     Receptacle of Life's decay.

---

<sup>66</sup>: FP p.65; POVO pp.79-80; HOI pp.76-7; POAT pp.76-7. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.  
<sup>67</sup>: “Tune'd” (HOI).

IMITATED FROM CATULLUS.<sup>68</sup>

## TO ELLEN.

OH! might I kiss those eyes of fire,  
 A million scarce would quench desire;  
 Still would I steep my lips in bliss,  
 And dwell an age on every kiss;  
 Nor then my soul should sated be,                   5  
 Still would I kiss and cling to thee;  
 Nought should my kiss from thine dis sever;  
 Still would we kiss, and kiss for ever;  
 E'en though the number did exceed  
 The yellow harvest's countless seed,                   10  
 To part would be a vain endeavour;  
 Could I desist? — ah! never — never.

*November 16, 1806.*

---

**68:** FP p.66 (as "To Anna"); POVO (retitled "To Ellen"), p.81; HOI p.78 ("To Ellen"); POAT p.78 ("To Ellen").  
 For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**TRANSLATION FROM ANACREON.  
TO HIS LYRE.<sup>69</sup>**

I wish to tune my quivering lyre,  
 To deeds of fame, and notes of fire;  
 To echo, from its rising swell,  
 How heroes fought, and nations fell:  
 When Atreus' sons<sup>70</sup> advanced to war, 5  
 Or Tyrian Cadmus<sup>71</sup> roved afar;  
 But still, to martial strains unknown,  
 My lyre recurs to Love alone.  
 Fired with the hope of future fame,  
 I seek some nobler hero's name; 10  
 The dying chords are strung anew,  
 To war, to war, my harp is due;  
 With glowing strings, the epic strain  
 To Jove's great son I raise again –  
 Alcides,<sup>72</sup> and his glorious deeds, 15  
 Beneath whose arm the Hydra bleeds;  
 All, all in vain; my wayward lyre  
 Wakes silver notes of soft desire.  
 Adieu ye chiefs, renowned in arms!  
 Adieu the clang of war's alarms! 20  
 To other deeds my soul is strung,  
 And sweeter notes shall now be sung;  
 My harp shall all its powers reveal,  
 To tell the tale my heart must feel,  
 Love, Love alone, my lyre shall claim, 25  
 In songs of bliss, and sighs of flame.

---

**69:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.79-80; POAT pp.79-80. B. translates and expands the very brief twenty-third item from the tenth-century (A.D.) collection called the *Anacreontea*, believed in the early nineteenth century to be by Anacreon himself (see Moore, *Odes of Anacreon*, 1800, p.18-29). Brougham, in his *Edinburgh Review* article, pointed out how many more lines B.'s version has than the "original", which translates as follows:

I wish to tell of the sons of Atreus, I wish to sing of Cadmus; but my lyre-strings sing only of Love. The other day I changed the strings, indeed the whole lyre, and began singing of the labours of Hercules: but in answer the lyre sang of the Loves. So farewell, heroes: my lyre sings only of the Loves (*Greek Lyric II*, tr. D.A.Campbell, Harvard / Heinemann 1988 pp.193-4).

For a draft of B.'s translation, see Pratt p.32. Moore had translated the same piece, thus:

I OFTEN wish this languid lyre,  
 This warbler of my soul's desire,  
 Could raise the breath of song sublime,  
 To men of fame in former time.  
 But when the soaring theme I try,  
 Along the chords my numbers die,  
 And whisper, with dissolving tone,  
 "Our sighs are given to love alone!"  
 Indignant at the feeble lay,  
 I tore the panting chords away,  
 Attun'd them to a nobler swell,  
 And struck again the breathing shell –

In all the flow of epic fire,  
 To Hercules I wake the lyre!  
 But still it's fainting sighs repeat,  
 "The tale of love alone is sweet!"  
 Then fare thee well, seductive dream,  
 That mad'st me follow Glory's theme;  
 For thou my lyre, and thou my heart,  
 Shall never more in spirit part;  
 And all that one has felt so well  
 The other shall as sweetly tell!  
 (*Odes Of Anacreon*, pp.97-99)

**70:** Agamemnon and Menelaus.

**71:** Cadmus founded Thebes.

**72:** Alcides is Hercules.

[Translation from Anacreon] ODE 3.<sup>73</sup>

'T WAS now the hour when Night had driven  
 Her car half round yon sable heaven;  
 Boötes only seemed to roll<sup>74</sup>  
 His Arctic charge around the pole;  
 While mortals, lost in gentle sleep, 5  
 Forgot to smile, or ceased to weep;  
 At this lone hour, the Paphian boy,  
 Descending from the realms of joy,  
 Quick to my gate directs his course,  
 And knocks with all his little force; 10  
 My visions fled, alarmed I rose:  
 "What stranger breaks my blest repose?"  
 "Alas!" replies the wily child,  
 In faltering accents sweetly mild;  
 "A hapless infant here I roam, 15  
 Far from my dear maternal home;  
 Oh! shield me from the wintry blast –  
 The nightly storm is pouring fast,  
 No prowling robber lingers here;

**73:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.81-3; POAT pp.81-3. The original is not Anacreon's third Ode; it is the thirty-third item in the *Anacreontea*. Here is a prose translation:

Once in the middle of the night, at the hour when the Bear is already turning by the Ploughman's hand and all the tribes of mortals lie overcome by exhaustion, Love stood at my bolted door and began knocking. 'Who's banging at my door?' I said: 'You've shattered my dreams.' Love said, 'Open up! I'm a baby: don't be afraid. I am getting wet, and I have been wandering about in the moonless night.' When I heard this I felt sorry for him and immediately lit a lamp and opened the door and saw a baby with bow, wings and quiver. I made him sit by the hearth, warmed his hands in my palms and squeezed the water from his hair. When the cold had relaxed its grip, he said, 'Come, let's try this bow to see if the string has been at all damaged by the rain.' He drew it and hit me right in the heart, like a stinging gadfly; and he leapt up chuckling and said, 'Stranger, rejoice with me: my bow is undamaged; but your heart will be sore' (*Greek Lyric II*, tr. D.A.Campbell, Harvard / Heinemann 1988 pp.204-5).

Moore's version goes:

'T WAS noon of night, when round the pole  
 The sullen bear is seen to roll;  
 And mortals, wearied with the day,  
 Are slumbering all their cares away.  
 An infant, at that dreary hour,  
 Came weeping to my silent bower,  
 And waked me with a piteous prayer,  
 To shield him from the midnight air!  
 "And who art thou," I waking cry,  
 "That bid'st my blissful visions fly?"  
 "Ah, gentle sire!" the infant said –  
 "In pity take me to thy shed;  
 Nor fear deceit – a wretched child  
 I wander o'er the gloomy wild.  
 Chill drops the rain, and not a ray  
 Illumes the drear and misty way!"  
 I heard the baby's tale of woe –  
 I heard the bitter night-winds blow –  
 And sighing for his piteous fate,  
 I trimm'd my lamp and op'd the gate.  
 'Twas Love! – the little wandering sprite,  
 His pinions sparkled through the night –  
 I knew him by his bow and dart –  
 I knew him by my fluttering heart!

**74:** Boötes is a constellation near Ursa Major.

I take him in, and fondly raise  
 The dying embers' cheering blaze;  
 Press from his dank and clinging hair  
 The chrystals of the freezing air,  
 And in my hand and bosom hold  
 His little fingers thrilling cold.  
 And now the ember's genial ray  
 Had warm'd his anxious fears away;  
 "I pray thee," said the wanton child,  
 (My bosom trembled as he smil'd)  
 "I pray thee let me try my bow,  
 For through the rain I've wander'd so,  
 That much I fear the midnight shower  
 Has injur'd its elastic power."  
 The fatal bow the urchin drew,  
 Swift from the string the arrow flew;  
 As swiftly flew as glancing flame,  
 And to my very soul it came!  
 "Fare thee well," I heard him say,  
 As laughing wild he wing'd away –  
 "Fare thee well, for now I know,  
 The rain has not relax'd my bow;  
 It still can send a madd'ning dart,  
 As thou shalt own with all thy heart!"  
 (*Odes Of Anacreon*, pp.127-30)

A wandering baby, who can fear?" 20  
 I heard his seeming artless tale,  
 I heard his sighs upon the gale;  
 My breast was never pity's foe,  
 But felt for all the baby's woe;  
 I drew the bar, and by the light, 25  
 Young Love, the infant, met my sight,  
 His bow across his shoulders flung,  
 And thence his fatal quiver hung,  
 (Ah! little did I think the dart  
 Would rankle soon within my heart); 30  
 With care I tend my weary guest,  
 His little fingers chill my breast,  
 His glossy curls, his azure wing,  
 Which droop with nightly showers, I wring:  
 His shivering limbs the embers warm; 35  
 And now, reviving from the storm,  
 Scarce had he felt his wonted glow,  
 Than swift he seized his slender bow;  
 "I fain would know, my gentle host,"  
 He cried, "if this its strength has lost; 40  
 I fear, relaxed with midnight dews,  
 The strings their former aid refuse."  
 With poison tipped, his arrow flies –  
 Deep in my tortured heart it lies:  
 Then loud the joyous urchin laughed: 45  
 "My bow can still impel the shaft;  
 'Tis firmly fixed, thy sighs reveal it;  
 Say courteous host, canst thou not feel it?"

**FRAGMENTS OF SCHOOL EXERCISES,  
FROM THE  
PROMETHEUS VINCTUS OF ÆSCHYLUS.<sup>75</sup>**

GREAT Jove! to whose Almighty throne  
 Both Gods and mortals homage pay;  
 Ne'er may my soul thy power disown,  
 Thy dread behests ne'er disobey.  
 Oft shall the sacred victim fall,                      5  
 In sea-girt Ocean's mossy hall;  
 My voice shall raise no impious strain  
 'Gainst him who rules the sky and azure main.

\* \* \* \* \*

How different now thy joyless fate,  
 Since first Hesione thy bride,                      10  
 When, placed aloft in godlike state,  
 The blushing beauty by thy side,  
 Thou sat'st while reverend Ocean smiled,  
 And mirthful strains the hours beguiled;  
 The Nymphs and Tritons danced around,              15  
 Nor yet thy doom was fixed, nor Jove relentless frowned.  
Harrow, Dec. 1, 1804.

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<sup>75</sup>: FP pp.11-12; POVO pp.11-12; HOI pp.84-5; POAT pp.84-5. "Æschylus" (all four volumes). For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

**EPISODE OF NISUS AND EURYALUS.<sup>76</sup>**

A PARAPHRASE FROM THE ÆNEID, LIB. 9.

Nisus, the guardian of the portal, stood,  
 Eager to gild his arms with hostile blood;  
 Well skilled in fight, the quivering lance to wield,  
 Or pour his arrow, through th'embattled field,  
 From Ida torn, he left his native grove, 5  
 Through distant climes, and trackless seas to rove.  
 To watch the movements of the Daunian host.  
 With him Euryalus sustains the post,  
 No lovelier<sup>77</sup> mien adorned the ranks of Troy,  
 And beardless bloom yet graced the gallant boy; 10  
 Though few the seasons of his youthful life,  
 As yet a novice in the martial strife,  
 'Twas his, with beauty, valour's gifts to share,  
 A soul heroic, as his form was fair;  
 These burn with one pure flame of generous Love, 15  
 In peace, in war, united still they move;  
 Friendship and glory form their joint reward,  
 And now combined they hold their nightly guard.

“What God!” exclaimed the first, “instils this fire?  
 Or, in itself a God, what great desire? 20  
 My labouring soul, with anxious thought oppressed,  
 Abhors this station of inglorious rest;  
 The love of fame with this can ill accord,  
 Be't mine, to seek for glory with my sword.  
 See'st thou yon camp, with torches twinkling dim, 25  
 Where drunken slumbers wrap each lazy limb?  
 Where confidence and ease the watch disdain,  
 And drowsy Silence holds her sable reign?  
 Then hear my thought: in deep and sullen grief,  
 Our troops and leaders mourn their absent chief; 30  
 Now, could the gifts and promised prize be thine,  
 (The deed, the danger, and the fame be mine);  
 Were this decreed, beneath yon rising mound,  
 Methinks, an easy path perchance were found;  
 Which past, I speed my way to Pallas' walls, 35  
 And lead Æneas from Evander's halls.”  
 With equal ardour fired, and warlike joy,  
 His glowing friend addressed the Dardan boy.  
 “These deeds, my Nisus, shalt thou dare alone?  
 Must all the fame the peril, be thine own? 40  
 Am I by thee despised, and left afar,  
 As one unfit to share the toils of war?  
 Not thus his son the great Opheltès taught,  
 Not thus my sire in Argive combats fought;  
 Not thus, when Ilion fell by heavenly hate, 45

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**76:** Not in FP. POVO p.85 (16 lines, 1-16); HOI (406 lines), pp.86-105; POAT pp.86-104. B. translates VIRG. AEN. IX 176-459. Nisus and Euryalus are two young Trojans, members of Aeneas' party in Latium. In Aeneas' absence, the Trojans are being besieged by the Latiums under Turnus. The Latiums are all drunk after a party.  
**77:** “lovvlier” (HOI).

I tracked Æneas through the walks of fate;  
 Thou know'st my deeds, my breast devoid of fear,  
 And hostile life-drops dim my gory spear;  
 Here is a soul with hope immortal burns,  
 And *life*, ignoble *life*, for glory spurns. 50  
 Fame, fame is cheaply earned by fleeting breath,  
 The price of honour is the sleep of death."  
 Then Nisus, "Calm thy bosom's fond alarms,  
 Thy heart beats fiercely to the din of arms;  
 More dear thy worth and valour than my own, 55  
 I swear by him who fills Olympus' throne!  
 So may I triumph, as I speak the truth,  
 And clasp again the comrade of my youth:  
 But should I fall, and he who dares advance,  
 Through hostile legions must abide by chance; 60  
 If some Rutulian arm, with adverse blow,  
 Should lay the friend who ever loved thee, low.  
 Live thou; such beauties I would fain preserve,  
 Thy budding years a lengthened term deserve;  
 When humbled in the dust, let someone be, 65  
 Whose gentle eyes will shed one tear for me;  
 Whose manly arm may snatch me back by force,  
 Or wealth redeem from foes my captive corse;  
 Or, if my destiny these last deny,  
 If in the spoiler's power my ashes lie, 70  
 Thy pious care may raise a simple tomb,  
 To mark thy love, and signalize my doom.  
 Why should thy doting wretched mother weep,  
 Her only boy, reclined in endless sleep?  
 Who, for thy sake, the tempest's fury dared, 75  
 Who, for thy sake, war's deadly peril shared;  
 Who braved, what woman never braved before,  
 And left her native for the Latian shore?"  
 "In vain you damp the ardour of my soul,"  
 Replied Euryalus, "it scorns control! 80  
 Hence, let us haste!" – their brother guards arose,  
 Roused by their call, nor court again repose;  
 The pair, buoyed up on Hope's exulting wing,  
 Their stations leave, and speed to seek the king.  
 Now o'er the earth a solemn stillness<sup>78</sup> ran, 85  
 And lulled alike the cares of brute and man;  
 Save where the Dardan leaders nightly hold  
 Alternate converse, and their plans unfold;  
 On one great point the council are agreed,  
 An instant message to their prince decreed; 90  
 Each leaned upon the lance he well could wield,  
 And poised, with easy arm, his ancient shield;  
 When Nisus and his friend their leave request,  
 To offer something to their high behest.  
 With anxious tremors, yet unawed by fear, 95  
 The faithful pair before the throne appear;  
 Iulus greets them; at his kind command,  
 The elder first addressed the hoary band.

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78: Compare Gray's *Elegy*, 6: ... *all the earth a solemn stillness holds* ...



“With patience,” (thus Hyrtacides began),  
 “Attend, nor judge from youth our humble plan; 100  
 Where yonder beacon’s half-expiring beam,  
 Our slumbering foes of future conquest dream,  
 Nor heed that we a secret path have traced,  
 Between the ocean and the portal placed:  
 Beneath the covert of the blackening smoke, 105  
 Whose shade securely our design will cloak!  
 If you, ye chiefs, and fortune, will allow,  
 We’ll bend our course to yonder mountain’s brow,  
 Where Pallas’ walls at distance meet the sight,  
 Seen o’er the glade, when not obscured by night: 110  
 Then shall Æneas in his pride return,  
 When hostile matrons raise their offspring’s urn;  
 And Latian spoils, and purpled heaps of dead  
 Shall mark the havoc of our Hero’s tread;  
 Such is our purpose, not unknown the way, 115  
 Where yonder torrent’s devious waters stray;  
 Oft have we seen, when hunting by the stream,  
 The distant spires above the valleys gleam.”

Mature in years, for sober wisdom famed,  
 Moved by the speech, Alethes here exclaimed: 120  
 “Ye parent Gods! who rule the fate of Troy,  
 Still dwells the Dardan spirit in the boy;  
 When minds like these in striplings thus ye raise,  
 Yours is the god-like act, be yours the praise;  
 In, gallant youth! my fainting hopes revive, 125  
 And Ilion’s wonted glories still survive.”  
 Then in his warm embrace the boys he pressed,  
 And, quivering, strained them to his aged breast;  
 With tears the burning cheek of each bedewed,  
 And, sobbing, thus his first discourse renewed: 130  
 “What gift, my countrymen, what martial prize,  
 Can we bestow, which you may not despise?  
 Our Deities the first, best boon have given;  
 Internal virtues are the gift of Heaven.  
 What poor rewards can bless your deeds on earth, 135  
 Doubtless await such young, exalted worth,  
 Æneas and Ascanius shall combine  
 To yield applause far, far surpassing mine.”  
 Iulus then: “By all the powers above!  
 By those Penates<sup>79</sup> who my country love; 140  
 By hoary Vesta’s sacred Fane, I swear,  
 My hopes are all in you, ye generous pair!  
 Restore my father to my grateful sight,  
 And all my sorrows yield to one delight.  
 Nisus! two silver goblets are thine own, 145  
 Saved from Arisba’s stately domes o’erthrown;  
 My sire secured them on that fatal day,  
 Nor left such bowls an Argive robber’s prey;  
 Two massy tripods also shall be thine,

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79 BYRON’S NOTE: Household Gods.

Two talents polished from the glittering mine; 150  
 An ancient cup, which Tyrian Dido gave,  
 While yet our vessels pressed the Punic wave:  
 But when the hostile chiefs at length bow down,  
 When great Æneas wears Hesperia's crown,  
 The casque, the buckler, and the fiery steed, 155  
 Which Turnus guides with more than mortal speed,  
 Are thine; no envious lot shall then be cast,  
 I pledge my word, irrevocably past;  
 Nay more, twelve slaves, and twice six captive dames,  
 To soothe thy softer hours with amorous flames, 160  
 And all the realms which now the Latins sway,  
 The labours of to-night shall well repay.  
 But thou, my generous youth, whose tender years  
 Arc near my own, whose worth my heart reveres,  
 Henceforth affection, sweetly thus begun, 165  
 Shall join our bosoms and our souls in one;  
 Without thy aid, no glory shall be mine;  
 Without thy dear advice, no great design;  
 Alike through life esteemed, thou godlike boy,  
 In war my bulwark, and in peace my joy." 170

To him Euryalus: "No day shall shame  
 The rising glories which from this I claim.  
 Fortune may favour, or the skies may frown,  
 But valour, spite of fate, obtains renown. 175  
 Yet, ere from hence our eager steps depart,  
 One boon I beg, the nearest to my heart:  
 My mother, sprung from Priam's royal line,  
 Like thine ennobled, hardly less divine,  
 Nor Troy nor king Acestes' realms restrain  
 Her feeble age from dangers of the main; 180  
 Alone she came, all selfish fears above,  
 A bright example of maternal love.  
 Unknown the secret enterprize I brave,  
 Lest grief should bend my parent to the grave;  
 From this alone no fond adieus I seek, 185  
 No fainting mother's lips have pressed my cheek;  
 By gloomy night and thy right hand I vow,  
 Her parting tears would shake my purpose now:  
 Do thou, my prince, her failing age sustain,  
 In thee her much-loved child may live again; 190  
 Her dying hours with pious conduct bless,  
 Assist her wants, relieve her fond distress:  
 So dear a hope must all my soul Enflame,  
 To rise in glory, or to fall in fame."  
 Struck with a filial care so deeply felt, 195  
 In tears at once the Trojan warriors melt;  
 Faster than all, Iulus<sup>80</sup> eyes o'erflow,  
 Such love was his, and such had been his woe.  
 "All thou hast asked, receive," the Prince replied;  
 "Nor this alone, but many a gift beside; 200  
 To cheer thy mother's years shall be my aim,

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80: The scansion demands a trisyllable.

Creusa's<sup>81</sup> style but wanting to the dame.  
 Fortune an adverse wayward course may run,  
 But blessed thy mother in so dear a son.  
 Now, by my life, my sire's most sacred oath, 205  
 To thee I pledge my full, my firmest troth;  
 All the rewards which once to thee were vowed,  
 If thou should'st fall, on her shall be bestowed."  
 Thus spoke the weeping Prince; then, forth to view,  
 A gleaming falchion from the sheath he drew; 210  
 Lycaon's utmost skill had graced the steel,  
 For friends to envy and for foes to feel.  
 A tawny hide, the Moorish lion's spoil,  
 Slain 'midst the forest, in the hunter's toil,  
 Mnestheus to guard the elder youth bestows, 215  
 And old Alethes' casque defends his brows.  
 Armed, thence they go, while all the assembled train,  
 To aid their cause, implore the gods in vain.  
 More than a boy, in wisdom and in grace,  
 Iulus holds amidst the chiefs his place: 220  
 His prayer he sends; but what can prayers avail,  
 Lost in the murmurs of the sighing gale?

The trench is passed, and, favoured by the night,  
 Through sleeping foes they wheel their wary flight. 225  
 When shall the sleep of many a foe be o'er?  
 Alas! some slumber who shall wake no more!  
 Chariots and bridles, mixed with arms, are seen;  
 And flowing flasks, and scattered troops between:  
 Bacchus and Mars to rule the camp combine; 230  
 A mingled Chaos this, of war and wine.  
 "Now," cries the first; "for deeds of blood prepare,  
 With me the conquest and the labour share;  
 Here lies our path; lest any hand arise,  
 Watch thou, while many a dreaming chieftain dies:  
 I'll carve our passage<sup>82</sup> through the heedless foe, 235  
 And clear thy road with many a deadly blow."  
 His whispering accents then the youth repressed,  
 And pierced proud Rhamnes through his panting breast:  
 Stretched at his ease, th'incautious king reposed;  
 Debauch, and not fatigue, his eyes had closed, 240  
 To Turnus dear, a prophet and a prince,  
 His omens more than augur's skill evince;  
 But he, who thus foretold the fate of all,  
 Could not avert his own untimely fall.  
 Next Remus' armour-bearer, hapless, fell, 245  
 And three unhappy slaves the carnage swell;  
 The charioteer along his courser's sides  
 Expires; the steel his severed neck divides;  
 And, last, his Lord is numbered with the dead:  
 Bounding convulsive, flies the gasping head; 250  
 From the swol'n veins the blackening torrents pour;

**81: BYRON'S NOTE:** The mother of Iulus, lost on the night when Troy was taken. "Creusa" is also trisyllabic.

**82:** Compare *Macbeth*, I ii 19-20: ... *carved out his passage / Till he faced the slave ...*

Stained is the couch and earth with clotting gore.  
 Young Lamyrus and Lamus next expire,  
 And gay Serranus, filled with youthful fire;  
 Half the long night in childish games was passed; 255  
 Lulled by the potent grape, he slept at last:  
 Ah! happier far, had he the morn surveyed,  
 And till Aurora's dawn his skill displayed.

In slaughtered folds, the keepers lost in sleep,  
 His hungry fangs a lion thus may steep; 260  
 'Mid the sad flock, at dead of night he prowls,  
 With murder glutted, and in carnage rolls;  
 Insatiate still, through teeming herds he roams;  
 In seas of gore the lordly tyrant foams.

Nor less the other's deadly vengeance came, 265  
 But falls on feeble crowds without a name;  
 His wound unconscious Fadius scarce can feel,  
 Yet wakeful Rhæsus sees the threat'ning steel;  
 His coward breast behind a jar he hides,  
 And vainly in the weak defence confides; 270  
 Full in his heart, the falchion searched his veins;  
 The reeking weapon bears alternate stains;  
 Through wine and blood, commingling as they flow,  
 One feeble spirit seeks the shades below.  
 Now where Messapus dwelt, they bend their way, 275  
 Whose fires emit a faint and trembling ray;  
 There, unconfined, behold each grazing steed,  
 Unwatched, unheeded, on the herbage feed:  
 Brave Nisus here arrests his comrade's arm,  
 Too flushed with carnage, and with conquest warm: 280  
 "Hence, let us haste, the dangerous path is passed;  
 Full foes enough tonight have breathed their last;  
 Soon will the Day those Eastern clouds adorn,  
 Now let us speed, nor tempt the rising morn."

What silver arms, with various art embossed, 285  
 What bowls and mantles in confusion tossed,  
 They leave regardless! yet, one glittering prize  
 Attracts the younger Hero's wandering eyes;  
 The gilded harness Rhamnes' coursers felt,  
 The gems which stud the monarch's golden belt; 290  
 This from the pallid corse was quickly torn,  
 Once by a line of former chieftains worn.  
 Th'exulting boy the studded girdle wears,  
 Messapus' helm his head, in triumph, bears;  
 Then from the tents their cautious steps they bend, 295  
 To seek the vale where safer paths extend.

Just at this hour, a band of Latian horse  
 To Turnus' camp pursue their destined course;  
 While the slow foot their tardy march delay,  
 The knights, impatient, spur along the way: 300  
 Three hundred mail-clad men, by Volscens led,  
 To Turnus with their master's promise sped;

Now they approach the trench, and view the walls,  
 When, on the left, a light reflection falls;  
 The plundered helmet, through the waning night, 305  
 Sheds forth a silver radiance, glancing bright.  
 Volskens with question loud the pair alarms:  
 "Stand, stragglers! stand! why early thus in arms?  
 From whence! to whom?" – He meets with no reply;  
 Trusting the covert of the night, they fly; 310  
 The thicket's depth with hurried pace they tread,  
 While round the wood the hostile squadron spread.

With brakes entangled, scarce a path between,  
 Dreary and dark appears the sylvan scene;  
 Euryalus his heavy spoils impede, 315  
 The boughs and winding turns his steps mislead;  
 But Nisus scours along the forest's maze,  
 To where Latinus' steeds in safety graze,  
 Then backward o'er the plain his eyes extend,  
 On every side they seek his absent friend, 320  
 "O God! my boy," he cries, "of me bereft,  
 In what impending perils art thou left!"  
 Listening he runs – above the waving trees,  
 Tumultuous voices swell the passing breeze;  
 The war-cry rises, thundering hoofs around 325  
 Wake the dark echoes of the trembling ground.  
 Again he turns – of footsteps hears the noise,  
 The sound elates – the sight his hope destroys;  
 The hapless boy a ruffian train surround,  
 While lengthening shades his weary way confound; 330  
 Him with loud shouts the furious knights pursue,  
 Struggling in vain, a captive to the crew.  
 What can his friend 'gainst thronging numbers dare?  
 Ah! must he rush, his comrade's fate to share?  
 What force, what aid, what stratagem essay, 335  
 Back to redeem the Latian spoiler's prey?  
 His life a votive ransom nobly give,  
 Or die with him for whom he wished to live?  
 Poising with strength his lifted lance on high,  
 On Luna's orb he cast his frenzied eye: 340  
 "Goddess serene, transcending every Star!  
 Queen of the sky, whose beams are seen afar!  
 By night Heaven owns thy sway, by day the grove,  
 When, as chaste Dian, here thou deign'st to rove;  
 If e'er myself, or sire, have sought to grace 345  
 Thine altars with the produce of the chase,  
 Speed, speed my dart to pierce yon vaunting crowd,  
 To free my friend, and scatter far the proud."  
 Thus having said, the hissing dart he flung;  
 Through parted shades the hurtling weapon sung; 350  
 The thirsty point in Sulmo's entrails lay,  
 Transfixed his heart, and stretched him on the clay:  
 He sobs, he dies – the troop in wild amaze,  
 Unconscious whence the death, with horror gaze;  
 While pale they stare, through Tagus' temples riven, 355  
 A second shaft with equal force is driven:

Fierce Volscens rolls around his lowering eyes;  
 Veiled by the night, secure the Trojan lies.  
 Burning with wrath, he viewed his soldiers fall:  
 “Thou youth accurst! thy life shall pay for all!” 360  
 Quick from the sheath his flaming glaive he drew,  
 And, raging, on the boy defenceless flew;  
 Nisus no more the blackening shade conceals,  
 Forth, forth he starts, and all his love reveals;  
 Aghast, confused, his fears to madness rise, 365  
 And pour these accents, shrieking as he flies:  
 “Me, me! your vengeance hurl on me alone,<sup>83</sup>  
 Here sheathe the steel, my blood is all your own;  
 Ye starry Spheres! thou conscious Heaven! attest!  
 He could not – durst not – lo! the guile confessed! 370  
 All, all was mine – his early fate suspend;  
 He only loved, too well, his hapless friend:  
 Spare, spare, ye chiefs! from him your rage remove;  
 His fault was friendship, all his crime was love.”  
 He prayed in vain; the dark assassin’s sword 375  
 Pierced the fair side, the snowy bosom gored;  
 Lowly to earth inclines his plume-clad crest,  
 And sanguine torrents mantle o’er his breast.  
 As some young rose, whose blossom scents the air,  
 Languid in death, expires beneath the share; 380  
 Or crimson poppy, sinking with the shower,  
 Declining gently, falls a fading flower;  
 Thus, sweetly drooping, bends his lovely head,  
 And lingering Beauty hovers round the dead.

But fiery Nisus stems the battle’s tide, 385  
 Revenge his leader, and Despair his guide;  
 Volscens he seeks amidst the gathering host;  
 Volscens must soon appease his comrade’s ghost;  
 Steel, flashing, pours on steel, foe crowds on foe;  
 Rage nerves his arm, Fate gleams in every blow; 390  
 In vain beneath unnumbered wounds he bleeds;  
 Nor wounds, nor death, distracted Nisus heeds;  
 In viewless circles wheeled, his falchion flies,  
 Nor quits the hero’s grasp till Volscens dies;  
 Deep in his throat its end the weapon found, 395  
 The tyrant’s soul fled groaning through the wound.  
 Thus Nisus all his fond affection proved,  
 Dying, revenged the fate of him he loved;  
 Then on his bosom sought his wonted place,  
 And Death was heavenly in his friend’s embrace! 400

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83: Compare Haidee’s words at *Don Juan* IV, 42, 4-5: *On me* – *She cried* – “*let Death / Descend ...*”

Celestial pair! if aught my verse can claim  
Wafted on Time's broad pinion, yours is fame!  
Ages on ages shall your fate admire,  
No future day shall see your names expire,  
While stands the Capitol, immortal dome! 405  
And vanquished millions hail their Empress, Rome!<sup>84</sup>

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**84:** B. omits the next section, in which the young men's severed heads are displayed by the Latiums, to the horror of Euryalus' mother.

**TRANSLATION  
FROM  
THE MEDEA OF EURIPIDES.<sup>85</sup>**

WHEN fierce conflicting passions urge The breast where love is wont to glow, What mind can stem the stormy surge Which rolls the tide of human woe? The hope of praise, the dread of shame,	5
Can rouse the tortured breast no more; The wild desire, the guilty flame, Absorbs each wish it felt before.	
But, if affection gently thrills The soul, by purer dreams possessed,	10
The pleasing balm of mortal ills In love can soothe the aching breast; If thus thou com'st in gentle guise, Fair Venus! from thy native heaven,	15
What heart unfeeling would despise The sweetest boon the Gods have given?	
But never from thy golden bow May I beneath the shaft expire, Whose creeping venom, sure and slow, Awakes an all-consuming fire;	20
Ye racking doubts! ye jealous fears! With others wage internal war; Repentance, source of future tears, From me be ever distant far!	
May no distracting thoughts destroy The holy calm of sacred Love!	25
May all the hours be winged with joy, Which hover faithful hearts above! Fair Venus! on thy myrtle shrine	30
May I with some fair lover sigh, Whose heart may mingle pure with mine, With me to live, with me to die.	

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**85:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.106-9; POAT pp.105-8. Here is a prose translation by Theodore Alois Buckley of the chorus which B. paraphrases and expands:

CHORUS: The loves, when they come too impetuously, have given neither good report nor virtue among men, but if Venus come with moderation, no other Goddess is so benign. Never, O my mistress, mayest thou send forth against me from thy golden bow thy inevitable shaft, having steeped it in desire. But may temperance preserve me, the noblest gift of heaven; never may dreaded Venus, having smitten my mind for another's bed, heap upon me jealous passions and unabated quarrels, but approving the peaceful union, may she quick of perception sit in judgment on the bed of women. O my country, and my house, never may I be an outcast of my city, having a life scarce to be endured through poverty, the most lamentable of all woes. By death, by death, may I before that be subdued, having lived to accomplish that day; but no greater misfortune is there than to be deprived of one's paternal country. We have seen it, nor have we to speak from others' accounts; for thee, neither city nor friend hath pitied, though suffering the most dreadful anguish. Thankless may he perish who desires not to assist his friends, having unlocked the pure treasures of his mind; never shall he be friend to me.



My native soil! beloved before,  
 Now dearer as my peaceful home,  
 Ne'er may I quit thy rocky shore, 35  
 A hapless banished wretch to roam;  
 This very day, this very hour,  
 May I resign this fleeting breath,  
 Nor quit my silent, humble bower;  
 A doom to me far worse than Death. 40

Have I not heard the exile's sigh,  
 And seen the exile's silent tear?  
 Through distant climes condemned to fly,  
 A pensive, weary wanderer here?  
 Ah, hapless dame!<sup>86</sup> no sire bewails, 45  
 No friend thy wretched fate deplores,  
 No kindred voice with rapture hails  
 Thy steps within a stranger's doors.

Perish the fiend whose iron heart,  
 To fair affection's truth unknown, 50  
 Bids her he fondly loved depart,  
 Unpitied, helpless, and alone!  
 Who ne'er unlocks with silver key<sup>87</sup>  
 The milder treasures of his soul;  
 May such a friend be far from me, 55  
 And Ocean's storms between us roll!

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**86 BYRON'S NOTE:** Medea, who accompanied Jason to Corinth, was deserted by him for the daughter of Creon, King of that City. The Chorus, from which this is taken, here addresses Medea; though a considerable liberty is taken with the original, by expanding the idea, as also in some other parts of the translation.

**87: BYRON'S NOTE:** The original is "Καθαραν ανοίξαντι Κληίδα φρενών:" literally "disclosing the bright key of the mind."

## FUGITIVE PIECES

### THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED BY A COLLEGE EXAMINATION.<sup>88</sup>

HIGH in the midst, surrounded by his peers,  
 MAGNUS his ample front sublime uprears:  
 Placed on his chair of state, he seems a God,  
 While Sophs and Freshmen tremble at his nod;  
 As all around sit wrapt in speechless gloom, 5  
 His voice, in thunder, shakes the sounding dome;  
 Denouncing dire reproach to luckless fools  
 Unskilled to plod in mathematic rules.

Happy the youth! in Euclid's axioms tried,  
 Though little versed in any art beside; 10  
 Who, scarcely skilled an English line to pen,  
 Scans Attic metres with a critic's ken.  
 What! though he knows not how his fathers bled,  
 When civil discord piled the fields with dead,  
 When Edward bade his conquering bands advance, 15  
 Or Henry trampled on the crest of France;  
 Though marvelling at the name of Magna Charta,  
 Yet well he recollects the laws of Sparta;  
 Can tell what edicts sage Lycurgus made,  
 While Blackstone's on the shelf neglected laid; 20  
 Of Grecian dramas vaunts the deathless fame,  
 Of Avon's bard remembering scarce the name.

Such is the youth, whose scientific pate,  
 Class honours, medals, fellowships, await;  
 Or even, perhaps, the declamation prize, 25  
 If to such glorious height he lifts his eyes.  
 But, lo! no common orator can hope  
 The envied silver cup within his scope;  
 Not that our heads much eloquence require,  
 Th'ATHENIAN'S glowing style, or TULLY'S fire. 30  
 A manner clear or warm is useless, since  
 We do not try, by speaking, to convince;  
 Be other orators of pleasing proud,  
 We speak to please ourselves, not move the crowd.  
 Our gravity prefers the muttering tone, 35  
 A proper mixture of the squeak and groan;  
 No borrowed grace of action must be seen,  
 The slightest motion would displease the Dean;  
 Whilst every staring graduate would prate,  
 Against what he could never imitate. 40

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<sup>88</sup>: FP pp.25-8; POVO pp.91-4; HOI pp.113-17; POAT pp.111-15. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website. **BYRON'S NOTE (in HOI):** No reflection is here intended against the person mentioned under the name of Magnus. He is merely represented as performing an unavoidable function of his office: indeed, such an attempt could only recoil upon myself: as that gentleman is now as much distinguished by his eloquence, and the dignified propriety with which he fills his situation, as he was in his younger days, for wit and conviviality. Magnus is William Lort Mansel, Master of Trinity.

The man who hopes t' obtain the promised cup,  
 Must in one posture stand, and ne'er look up;  
 Nor stop, but rattle over every word,  
 No matter what, so it can *not* be heard;  
 Thus let him hurry on, nor think to rest; 45  
 Who speaks the fastest's sure to speak the best;  
 Who utters most within the shortest space,  
 May safely hope to win the wordy race.

The sons of Science these, who thus repaid,  
 Linger in ease in Granta's sluggish shade; 50  
 Where on Cam's sedgy banks supine they lie,  
 Unknown, unhonoured, live – unwept for, die:  
 Dull as the pictures which adorn their halls,  
 They think all learning fixed within their walls:  
 In manners rude, in foolish forms precise, 55  
 All modern arts affecting to despise;  
 Yet prizing BENTLEY'S, BRUNCK'S,<sup>89</sup> or PORSON'S<sup>90</sup> note,  
 More than the verse on which the critic wrote;<sup>91</sup>  
 With eager haste, they court the Lord of power,  
 Whether 'tis PITT or PETTY<sup>92</sup> rules the hour, 60  
 To him with suppliant smiles they bend the head,  
 While distant mitres to their eyes are spread.  
 But, should a storm o'erwhelm him with disgrace,  
 They'd fly to seek the next, who filled his place.  
 Such are the men who learning's treasures guard, 65  
 Such is their practice, such is their reward;  
 This much at least we may presume to say,  
 The premium can't exceed the price they pay.  
 1806.

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89: BYRON'S NOTE: Celebrated Critics.

90: BYRON'S NOTE: The present Greek Professor at Trinity College, Cambridge; a man whose powers of mind, and writings, may perhaps justify their preference.

91: From FP, B. cuts *Vain as their honours, heavy as their ale, / Sad as their wit, and tedious as their tale, / To friendship dead, though not untaught to feel, / When Self and Church, demand a bigot zeal.* The lines are restored in POAT: see BLJ I 139.

92: "P-TTY" (HOI). BYRON'S NOTE: Since this was written, Lord H. P.—y has lost his place, and subsequently (I had almost said CONSEQUENTLY), the honour of representing the University; a fact so glaring requires no comment.

**ANSWER TO SOME ELEGANT VERSES,  
SENT BY  
A FRIEND TO THE AUTHOR,  
COMPLAINING THAT ONE OF HIS DESCRIPTIONS WAS  
RATHER TOO WARMLY DRAWN.<sup>93</sup>**

“But, if any old Lady, Knight, Priest, or Physician,  
“Should condemn me for printing a second edition;  
“If good Madam Squintum my work should abuse,  
May I venture to give her a smack of my muse?”  
ANTSEY’S NEW BATH GUIDE, page 169.<sup>94</sup>

CANDOUR compels me, B—H—R! to commend  
The verse, which blends the censor with the friend;  
Your strong, yet just, reproof extorts applause,  
From me, the heedless and imprudent cause; 5  
For this wild error, which pervades my strain,  
I sue for pardon – must I sue in vain?  
The wise, sometimes, from Wisdom’s ways depart;  
Can youth then hush the dictates of the heart?  
Precepts of prudence curb, but can’t controul, 10  
The fierce emotions of the flowing soul.  
When Love’s delirium haunts the glowing mind,  
Limping Decorum lingers far behind;  
Vainly, the dotard mends her prudish pace,  
Oustript and vanquished in the mental chace; 15  
The young, the old, have worn the chains of Love;  
Let those they ne’er confined my lays reprove:  
Let those whose souls condemn the pleasing power,  
Their curses on the hapless victim shower;  
Oh! how I hate the nerveless, frigid song, 20  
The ceaseless echo of the rhyming throng;  
Whose laboured lines in chilling numbers flow,  
To paint the pang the author ne’er can know.  
The artless Helicon<sup>95</sup> I boast, is Youth;  
My Lyre, the Heart – my Muse, the simple Truth:  
Far be’t from me, the “virgin’s mind” to “taint”, 25  
Seduction’s dread is here no slight restraint:  
The maid, whose virgin breast is void of guile,  
Whose wishes dimple in a modest smile,  
Whose downcast eye disdains the wanton leer, 30  
Firm in her virtue’s strength, yet not severe;  
She, whom a conscious grace shall thus refine,  
Will ne’er be “tainted” by a strain of mine.<sup>96</sup>  
But, for the nymph, whose premature desires  
Torment her bosom with unholy fires,  
No net to snare her willing heart is spread, 35  
She would have fallen, though she ne’er had read.

**93:** Not in FP. POVO pp.131-3; HOI (retitled “Answer to some elegant verses ...”) pp.118-20; not in POAT. The Rev. John Becher had objected to the immoral tendency of some poems in FP, and caused B. to destroy almost the entire print-run (Becher’s own copy being saved, along with two-and-a-fragment others). But for evidence that Becher was not a prude, see above, *Marion*, his verse response, and EP’s note.

**94:** Christopher Antsey’s *The New Bath Guide* (1766, many reprints), famous bawdy poem.

**95:** Helicon is the spring from which poets derive inspiration.

**96:** Compare, *No Girl will ever be seduced by reading D[on] J[uan] – no – no – she will go to Little’s poems – & Rousseau’s romans – for that – or even to the immaculate de Stael* (BLJ X 68).

For me, I fain would please the chosen few,  
Whose souls, to feeling, and to nature true,  
Will spare the childish verse, and not destroy  
The light effusions of an heedless<sup>97</sup> boy. 40  
I seek not glory from the senseless crowd,  
Of fancied laurels I shall ne'er be proud;  
Their warmest plaudits would I scarcely prize,  
Their sneers, or censures, I alike despise.  
November 26, 1806.

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**97:** FP has "amorous".

**GRANTA, A MEDLEY.**<sup>98</sup>

Αργυρεαις λογγαισι μαχου και παντα κρατησαις.<sup>99</sup>

OH! could Le SAGE'S<sup>100</sup> demon's gift  
 Be realized at my desire;  
 This night my trembling form he'd lift,  
 And place it on St. Mary's spire.

2.

Then would, unroofed, old Granta's halls      5  
 Pedantic inmates full display;  
 Fellows who dream on lawn, or stalls,  
 The price of venal votes to pay.

3.

Then would I view each rival wight,  
 P—tty and P—lm—s—n survey,      10  
 Who canvass there, with all their might,  
 Against the next elective day.

4.

Lo! candidates and voters lie,  
 All lulled in sleep, a goodly number!  
 A race renowned for piety,      15  
 Whose conscience won't disturb their slumber.

5.

Lord H—— indeed, may not demur –  
 Fellows are sage, reflecting men;  
 They know preferment can occur  
 But very seldom, now and then.      20

6.

They know, the Chancellor has got  
 Some pretty livings in disposal;  
 Each hopes that one may be his lot,  
 And therefore smiles on his proposal.

7.

Now, from the soporific scene      25  
 I'll turn mine eye, as night grows later,  
 To view, unheeded and unseen,  
 The studious sons of Alma Mater.

<sup>98</sup>: FP pp.49-54; POVO pp.100-6; HOI pp.121-8; POAT pp.123-30. For annotation, see *Fugitive Pieces*, on this website.

<sup>99</sup>: *Fight with silver spears (that is, use bribery), and you will overcome everything / rule the world.* The proverb is originally in Latin. FP has no epigraph.

<sup>100</sup> BYRON'S NOTE: **The Diable Boiteux of LE SAGE, where Asmodeus the Demon, places Don Cleofas on an elevated situation, and unroofs the houses for his inspection.**

8.  
 There, in apartments small and damp,  
 The candidate for college prizes 30  
 Sits poring by the midnight lamp,  
 Goes late to bed, yet early rises.

9.  
 He surely well deserves to gain them,  
 With all the honours of his college,  
 Who, striving hardly to obtain them, 35  
 Thus seeks unprofitable knowledge,

10.  
 Who sacrifices hours of rest  
 To scan precisely metres Attic;  
 And agitates his anxious breast  
 In solving problems mathematic; 40

11.  
 Who reads false quantities in Sele,<sup>101</sup>  
 Or puzzles o'er the deep triangle;  
 Deprived of many a wholesome meal,  
 In barbarous Latin<sup>102</sup> doomed to wrangle,

12.  
 Renouncing every pleasing page, 45  
 From authors of historic use,  
 Preferring to the lettered sage,  
 The square of the hypotenuse.<sup>103</sup>

13.  
 Still harmless are these occupations,  
 That hurt none but the hapless student; 50  
 Compared with other recreations,  
 Which bring together the imprudent.

14.  
 Whose daring revels shock the sight,  
 When vice and infamy combine;  
 When drunkenness and dice unite, 55  
 As every sense is steeped in wine.

15.  
 Not so the methodistic crew,  
 Who plans of reformation lay;  
 In humble attitude they sue,  
 And for the sins of others pray. 60

---

**101 BYRON'S NOTE:** Sele's publication on Greek metres, displays considerable talent and ingenuity, but, as might be expected in so difficult a work, is not remarkable for its accuracy.

**102 BYRON'S NOTE:** The Latin of the Schools is of the CANINE SPECIES and not very intelligible.

**103 BYRON'S NOTE:** The discovery of Pythagoras, that the square of the Hypotenuse, is equal to the squares of the other two sides of a right angled triangle.

16.  
 Forgetting that their pride of spirit,  
 And exultation in their trial,  
 Detracts most largely from the merit  
 Of all their boasted self-denial.
17. 65  
 'Tis morn – from these I turn my sight;  
 What scene is this which meets the eye?  
 A numerous crowd, arrayed in white,<sup>104</sup>  
 Across the green in numbers fly.
18. 70  
 Loud rings in air the chapel bell;  
 'Tis hushed: what sounds are these I hear?  
 The organ's soft celestial swell  
 Rolls deeply on the listening ear.
19. 75  
 To this is joined the sacred song,  
 The royal minstrel's hallowed strain;  
 Though he who hears the music long  
 Will never wish to hear again.
20. 80  
 Our choir would scarcely be excused,  
 Even as a band of raw beginners;  
 All mercy now must be refused  
 To such a set of croaking sinners.
21.  
 If David, when his toils were ended,  
 Had heard these blockheads sing before him,  
 To us his psalms had ne'er descended,  
 In furious mood he would have tore 'em.
22. 85  
 The luckless Israelites, when taken  
 By some inhuman tyrant's order,  
 Were asked to sing, by joy forsaken,  
 On Babylonian river's border.
23. 90  
 Oh! had they sung in notes like these,  
 Inspired by stratagem, or fear,  
 They might have set their hearts at ease,  
 The devil a soul had stayed to hear.
24. 95  
 But if I scribble longer now,  
 The deuce a soul will stay to read;  
 My pen is blunt, my ink is low,  
 'Tis almost time to stop, indeed.

---

104 BYRON'S NOTE: On a Saint Day, the Students wear surplices, in Chapel.



25.

Therefore, farewell old GRANTA's spires,

No more like Cleofas I fly;

No more thy theme my Muse inspires,

The reader's tired, and so am I. 100

October 28, 1806.

LACHIN Y. GAIR.<sup>105</sup>

LACHIN Y. GAIR, or, as it is pronounced in the Erse, LOCH NA GAER, towers proudly pre-eminent in the Northern Highlands, near Invercauld. One of our modern tourists mentions it as the highest mountain perhaps in GREAT BRITAIN; be this as it may, it is certainly one of the most sublime, and picturesque, amongst our "Caledonian Alps". Its appearance is of a dusky hue, but the summit is the seat of eternal snows. Near Lachin Y. Gair, I spent some of the early part of my life, the recollection of which, has given birth to the following stanzas.

AWAY, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses!  
 In you let the minions of luxury rove;  
 Restore me the rocks where the snow-flake reposes,  
 Though still they are sacred to freedom and Love;  
 Yet, Caledonia! beloved are thy mountains, 5  
 Round their white summits though elements war;  
 Though cataracts foam, 'stead of smooth-flowing fountains,  
 I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na Garr.

Ah! there my young footsteps in infancy wandered;  
 My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid;<sup>106</sup> 10  
 On chieftains long perished my memory pondered,  
 As daily I strode through the pine-covered glade;  
 I sought not my home till the day's dying glory  
 Gave place to the rays of the bright polar star;  
 For fancy was cheered by traditional story, 15  
 Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch na Garr.

"Shades of the dead! have I not heard your voices  
 Rise on the night-rolling breath of the gale?"  
 Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,  
 And rides on the wind, o'er his own Highland vale: 20  
 Round Loch na Garr, while the stormy mist gathers,  
 Winter presides in his cold icy car;  
 Clouds there encircle the forms of my Fathers,  
 They dwell in the tempests of dark Loch na Garr.

"Ill-starred,<sup>107</sup> though brave, did no visions foreboding 25  
 Tell you that Fate had forsaken your cause?  
 Ah! were you destined to die at Culloden,<sup>108</sup>  
 Victory crowned not your fall with applause;  
 Still were you happy in Death's earthy slumber,  
 You rest with your clan in the caves of Braemar;<sup>109</sup> 30  
 The pibroch<sup>110</sup> resounds, to the piper's loud number,

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**105:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.129-32; POAT pp.131-4. B. to Charles David Gordon, Aug 14 1805: *I suppose you will soon have a view of the eternal Snows that surround the top of Lachin Y. gair, which towers so majestically above the rest of our Northern Alps* (BLJ I 75).

**106 BYRON'S NOTE:** This word is erroneously pronounced PLAD, the proper pronunciation (according to the Scotch) is shewn by the Orthography.

**107 BYRON'S NOTE:** I allude here to my maternal ancestors, the "GORDONS," many of whom fought for the unfortunate Prince Charles, better known by the name of the Pretender. This branch was nearly allied by blood, as well as attachment, to the STEWARTS. George, the 2d. Earl of Huntley, married the Princess Annabella Stewart, daughter of James the 1st of Scotland, by her he left four sons: the 3d, Sir William Gordon, I have the honour to claim as one of my progenitors.

**108 BYRON'S NOTE:** Whether any perished in the Battle of Culloden, I am not certain; but as many fell in the insurrection, I have used the name of the principal action, "pars pro toto".

**109 BYRON'S NOTE:** A Tract of the Highlands so called; there is also a Castle of Braemar.

Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch na Garr.”

Years have rolled on, Loch na Garr, since I left you,  
 Years must elapse ere<sup>111</sup> I tread you again:  
 Nature of verdure and flowers has bereft you, 35  
 Yet still are you dearer than Albion’s plain.  
 England! thy beauties are tame and domestic  
 To one who has roved o’er the mountains afar:  
 Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic,  
 The steep frowning glories of the dark Loch na Garr. 40

---

**110 BYRON’S NOTE: The Bagpipe.** In fact, as Brougham points out (see below), B. confuses the instrument with the music.

**111:** “e’er” (HOI).

**TO ROMANCE.**<sup>112</sup>

PARENT of golden dreams, Romance!  
 Auspicious Queen of childish joys,  
 Who lead'st along, in airy dance,  
 Thy votive train of girls and boys;  
 At length, in spells no longer bound, 5  
 I break the fetters of my youth;  
 No more I tread thy mystic round,  
 But leave thy realms for those of Truth.

And yet 'tis hard to quit the dreams  
 Which haunt the unsuspecting soul, 10  
 Where every nymph a goddess seems,  
 Whose eyes through rays immortal roll;  
 While Fancy holds her boundless reign,  
 And all assume a varied hue;  
 When virgins seem no longer vain, 15  
 And even Woman's smiles are true.

And must we own thee but a name,  
 And from thy hall of clouds descend?  
 Nor find a sylph in every dame,  
 A Pylades<sup>113</sup> in every friend? 20  
 But leave, at once, thy realms of air  
 To mingling bands of fairy elves;  
 Confess that Woman's false as fair,  
 And friends have feeling for – themselves?

With shame, I own, I've felt thy sway; 25  
 Reputant, now thy reign is o'er;  
 No more thy precepts I obey,  
 No more on fancied pinions soar;  
 Fond fool! to Love a sparkling eye,  
 And think that eye to Truth was dear; 30  
 To trust a passing Wanton's sigh,  
 And melt beneath a Wanton's tear!

Romance! disgusted with deceit,  
 Far from thy motley court I fly,  
 Where Affectation holds her seat, 35  
 And sickly Sensibility;  
 Whose silly tears can never flow  
 For any pangs excepting thine;  
 Who turns aside from real woe,  
 To steep in dew thy gaudy shrine. 40

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**112:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.133-6; POAT pp.135-9.

**113 BYRON'S NOTE:** It is hardly necessary to add, that Pylades was the companion of Orestes, and a partner in one of those friendships, which with those of Achilles and Patroclus, Nisus and Euryalus, Damon and Pythias, have been handed down to posterity, as remarkable instances of attachments, which in all probability never existed, beyond the imagination of the Poet, the page of an historian, or modern novelist.

Now join with sable Sympathy,  
 With cypress crowned, arrayed in weeds,  
 Who heaves with thee her simple sigh,  
 Whose breast for every bosom bleeds;  
 And call thy sylvan female quire, 45  
 To mourn a swain for ever gone,  
 Who once could glow with equal fire,  
 But bends not now before thy throne.

Ye genial nymphs! whose ready tears  
 On all occasions swiftly flow; 50  
 Whose bosoms heave with fancied fears,  
 With fancied flames and frenzy glow –  
 Say, will you mourn my absent name,  
 Apostate from your gentle train?  
 An infant Bard, at least, may claim 55  
 From you a sympathetic strain.

Adieu, fond race! a long adieu!  
 The hour of fate is hovering nigh;  
 E'en now the gulf appears in view,  
 Where unlamented you must lie; 60  
 Oblivion's blackening lake is seen,  
 Convulsed by gales you cannot weather,  
 Where you, and eke your gentle queen,  
 Alas! must perish altogether.

**ELEGY ON NEWSTEAD ABBEY.**<sup>114</sup>

IT is the voice of years that are gone! They roll before me with all their deeds. OSSIAN.

NEWSTEAD! fast-falling, once-resplendent dome!  
 Religion's shrine! repentant HENRY's<sup>115</sup> pride!  
 Of Warriors, Monks, and Dames the cloistered tomb,  
 Whose pensive shades around thy ruins glide.

Hail to thy pile! more honoured in thy fall 5  
 Than modern mansions in their pillared state;  
 Proudly majestic frowns thy vaulted hall,  
 Scowling defiance on the blasts of fate.

No mail-clad serfs,<sup>116</sup> obedient to their Lord,  
 In grim array the crimson cross<sup>117</sup> demand; 10  
 Or gay assemble round the festive board,  
 Their chief's retainers, an immortal band.

Else might inspiring Fancy's magic eye  
 Retrace their progress through the lapse of time,  
 Marking each ardent youth, ordained to die, 15  
 A votive pilgrim in Judea's clime.

But not from thee, dark pile! departs the chief;  
 His feudal realm in other regions lay;  
 In thee the wounded conscience courts relief,  
 Retiring from the garish blaze of day. 20

Yes! in thy gloomy cells and shades profound  
 The Monk abjured a world he ne'er could view;  
 Or blood-stained Guilt repenting Solace found,<sup>118</sup>  
 Or Innocence from stern Oppression flew.

A Monarch bade thee from that wild arise, 25  
 Where Sherwood's outlaws once were wont to prowl;  
 And Superstition's crimes, of various dyes,  
 Sought shelter in the Priest's protecting cowl.

Where now the grass exhales a murky dew,  
 The humid pail of life-extinguished clay, 30  
 In sainted fame the sacred Fathers grew,  
 Nor raised their pious voices but to pray.

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**114:** Not in FP. POVO pp.134-44; HOI pp.137-47; POAT pp.140-50. **BYRON'S NOTE:** As one poem, on this subject, is printed in the beginning, the author had, originally, no intention of inserting the following: it is now added at the particular request of some friends.

**115 BYRON'S NOTE:** HENRY II founded Newstead soon after the murder of THOMAS A BECKETT.

**116 BYRON'S NOTE:** This word is used by WALTER SCOTT in his poem "The Wild Huntsman:" synonymous with vassal.

**117 BYRON'S NOTE:** The Red Cross was the badge of the Crusaders.

**118:** Compare *The Giaour*, *passim*.

Where now the bats their wavering wings extend  
 Soon as the gloaming<sup>119</sup> spreads her waning shade,  
 The choir did oft their mingling vespers blend, 35  
 Or matin orisons to Mary<sup>120</sup> paid.

Years roll on years; to ages, ages yield;  
 Abbots to Abbots, in a line, succeed;  
 Religion's charter their protecting shield,  
 Till royal sacrilege their doom decreed. 40

One holy HENRY<sup>121</sup> reared the Gothic walls,  
 And bade the pious inmates rest in peace;  
 Another HENRY the kind gift recalls,  
 And bids Devotion's hallowed echoes cease.

Vain is each threat or supplicating prayer; 45  
 He drives them, exiles from their blest abode,  
 To roam a dreary world in deep despair –  
 No friend, no home, no refuge, but their God.

Hark! how the hall, resounding to the strain,  
 Shakes with the martial music's novel din! 50  
 The heralds of a warrior's haughty reign,  
 High crested banners, wave thy walls within.

Of changing sentinels the distant hum,  
 The mirth of feasts, the clang of burnished arms,  
 The braying trumpet, and the hoarser drum, 55  
 Unite in concert with increased alarms.

An Abbey once, a regal fortress<sup>122</sup> now,  
 Encircled by insulting rebel powers;  
 War's<sup>123</sup> dread machines o'erhang thy threatening brow,  
 And dart destruction in sulphureous showers. 60

Ah! vain defence! the hostile traitor's siege,  
 Though oft repulsed, by guile, o'ercomes the brave;  
 His thronging foes oppress the faithful liege,  
 Rebellion's reeking standards o'er him wave.

Not unavenged, the raging Baron yields; 65  
 The blood of traitors smears the purple plain;  
 Unconquered still, his falchion there he wields,  
 And days of glory yet for him remain.

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**119 BYRON'S NOTE:** As "Gloaming," the Scottish word for Twilight, is much more poetical, and has been recommended by many eminent literary men, particularly by Dr. Moore, in his *Letters to Burns*, I have ventured to use it on account of its harmony.

**120 BYRON'S NOTE:** The Priory was dedicated to the Virgin.

**121 BYRON'S NOTE:** At the dissolution of the Monasteries, Henry VIII bestowed Newstead Abbey on Sir John Byron.

**122 BYRON'S NOTE:** Newstead sustained a considerable siege in the war between Charles I and his Parliament. There was no such siege, for Newstead was not built for that kind of defence: see Violet Walker, *The House of Byron* (Quiller Press 1988), p.76. B. naturally leaves out the ennoblement of his ancestor, the first Lord Byron, after the Civil War, as a reward for his cuckolding by Charles II.

**123:** "Wars" (HOI).

Still in that hour the warrior wished to strew  
     Self-gathered laurels on a self-sought grave;                 70  
 But Charles' protecting genius hither flew,  
     The monarch's friend, the monarch's hope to save.

Trembling, she snatched him<sup>124</sup> from the unequal strife,  
     In other fields the torrent to repel;  
 For nobler combats, here reserved his life,                         75  
     To lead the hand where godlike FALKLAND<sup>125</sup> fell.

From thee, poor pile! to lawless plunder given,  
     While dying groans their painful requiem sound,  
 Far different incense now ascends to heaven,  
     Such victims wallow on the gory ground.                         80

There many a pale and ruthless robber's corse,  
     Noisome and ghast, defiles thy sacred sod;  
 O'er mingling man, and horse commixed with horse,  
     Corruption's heap, the savage spoilers trod.

Graves, long with rank and sighing weeds o'erspread,             85  
     Ransacked, resign perforce their mortal mould;  
 From ruffian fangs escape not e'en the dead,  
     Raked from repose in search of buried gold.

Hushed is the harp, unstrung the warlike lyre,  
     The minstrel's palsied hand reclines in death;                 90  
 No more he strikes the quivering chords with fire,  
     Or sings the glories of the martial wreath.

At length the sated murderers, gorged with prey,  
     Retire: the clamour of the fight is o'er;  
 Silence again resumes her awful sway,  
     And sable Horror guards the massy door.                         95

Here, Desolation holds her dreary court:  
     What satellites declare her dismal reign!  
 Shrieking their dirge, ill-omened birds resort,  
     To flit their vigils in the holy fane.                             100

Soon a new Morn's restoring beams dispel  
     The clouds of Anarchy from Britain's skies;  
 The fierce Usurper<sup>126</sup> seeks his native hell,  
     And Nature triumphs as the Tyrant dies.

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124 BYRON'S NOTE: Lord Byron, and his brother Sir William, held high commands in the Royal army; the former was General in Chief in Ireland, Lieutenant of the Tower, and Governor to James, Duke of York, afterwards the unhappy James II. The latter had a principal share in many Actions. Vide Clarendon, Hume, &c.

125 BYRON'S NOTE: Lucius Cary, Lord Viscount Falkland, the most accomplished man of his age, was killed at the battle of Newbery, charging in the ranks of Lord Byron's Regiment of Cavalry.

126: Cromwell.



- With storms she welcomes his expiring groans; 105  
 Whirlwinds, responsive, greet his labouring breath;  
 Earth shudders as her caves receive his bones,  
 Loathing<sup>127</sup> the offering of so dark a death.
- The legal Ruler<sup>128</sup> now resumes the helm;  
 He guides through gentle seas the prow of state; 110  
 Hope cheers, with wonted smiles, the peaceful realm,  
 And heals the bleeding wounds of wearied hate.
- The gloomy tenants, Newstead! of thy cells,  
 Howling, resign their violated nest;  
 Again the master on his tenure dwells, 115  
 Enjoyed, from absence, with enraptured zest.
- Vassals, within thy hospitable pale,  
 Loudly carousing, bless their Lord's return;  
 Culture again adorns the gladdening vale,  
 And matrons, once lamenting, cease to mourn. 120
- A thousand songs on tuneful echo float,  
 Unwonted foliage mantles o'er the trees;  
 And hark! the horns proclaim a mellow note,  
 The hunter's cry hangs lengthening on the breeze.
- Beneath their coursers' hoofs the valleys shake: 125  
 What fears! what anxious hopes attend the chase!  
 The dying stag seeks refuge in the lake;  
 Exulting shouts announce the finished race.
- Ah! happy days! too happy to endure!  
 Such simple sports our plain forefathers knew; 130  
 No splendid vices glittered to allure;  
 Their joys were many, as their cares were few.
- From these descending, sons to sires succeed;  
 Time steals along, and Death uprears the dart;  
 Another chief impels the foaming steed, 135  
 Another crowd pursue the panting hart.
- Newstead! what saddening change of scene is thine!  
 Thy yawning arch betokens slow decay;  
 The last and youngest of a noble line,  
 Now holds thy mouldering turrets in his<sup>129</sup> sway. 140

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**127 BYRON'S NOTE:** This is an historical fact; a violent tempest occurred immediately subsequent to the death, or interment of Cromwell, which occasioned many disputes between his Partizans and the Cavaliers, both interpreted the circumstance into divine interposition, but whether as approbation or condemnation, we leave to the Casuists of that age to decide; I have made such use of the occurrence as suited the subject of my poem.

**128 BYRON'S NOTE:** Charles II.

**129:** "its" (POAT).

Deserted now, he scans thy grey worn towers;  
 Thy vaults, where dead of feudal ages sleep;  
 Thy cloisters, pervious to the wintry showers;  
 These, these he views, and views them but to weep.

Yet are his tears no emblem of regret; 145  
 Cherished affection only bids them flow;  
 Pride, Hope, and Love forbid him to forget,  
 But warm his bosom with impassioned glow.

Yet he prefers thee to the gilded domes  
 Or gewgaw grottos of the vainly great, 150  
 Yet lingers 'mid thy damp and mossy tombs,  
 Nor breathes a murmur 'gainst the will of fate.

Haply thy sun, emerging, yet may shine,  
 Thee to irradiate with meridian ray;  
 Fortune may smile upon a future line, 155  
 And heaven restore an ever cloudless day.<sup>130</sup>

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**130:** The last two lines replace, *Hours splendid as the past may still be thine, / And bless thy future as thy former day* in FP.

CHILDISH RECOLLECTIONS.<sup>131</sup>

I cannot but remember such things were,  
And were most dear to me.' MACBETH.

WHEN slow Disease, with all her host of Pains,  
Chills the warm tide which flows along the veins,  
When Health affrighted spreads her rosy wing,  
And flies with every changing gale of spring;  
Not to the aching frame alone confined, 5  
Unyielding pangs avail the drooping mind;  
What grisly forms, the spectre train of woe!  
Bid shuddering Nature shrink beneath the blow,  
With Resignation wage relentless strife,  
While Hope retires appalled, and clings to life! 10  
Yet less the pang when, through the tedious hour,  
Remembrance sheds around her genial power,  
Calls back the vanished days to rapture given,  
When Love was bliss, and Beauty formed our heaven;  
Or, dear to youth, portrays each childish scene, 15  
Those fairy bowers, where all in turn have been.<sup>132</sup>  
As when through clouds that pour the summer storm,  
The orb of day unveils his distant form,  
Gilds with faint beams the crystal dews of rain,  
And dimly twinkles o'er the watery plain; 20  
Thus, while the future dark and cheerless gleams  
The Sun of Memory, glowing through my dreams;  
Though sunk the radiance of his former blaze,  
To scenes far distant points his paler rays;  
Still rules my senses with unbounded sway, 25  
The past confounding with the present day.

Oft does my heart indulge the rising thought,  
Which still recurs, unlooked for, and unsought;  
My soul to Fancy's fond suggestion yields,  
And roams romantic o'er her airy fields. 30  
Scenes of my youth, developed, crowd to view,  
To which I long have bade a last adieu!  
Seats of delight, inspiring youthful themes;  
Friends lost to me for aye, except in dreams;  
Some who in marble prematurely sleep, 35  
Whose forms I now remember, but to weep;  
Some who yet urge the same scholastic course  
Of early science, future fame the source;  
Who, still contending in the studious race,  
In quick rotation fill the senior place! 40  
These with a thousand visions now unite,  
To dazzle, though they please, my aching sight.

IDA!<sup>133</sup> blest spot, where Science holds her reign,  
How joyous once I joined thy youthful train!

**131:** Not in FP. POVO (original version) pp.119-20; HOI (revised version) pp.148-68; not in POAT.

**132:** In lines 1-16, B. rewrites *Gray's Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, 51-90.

**133:** Ida is Harrow School, which B. attended from 1801-5.

Bright in idea<sup>134</sup> gleams thy lofty spire, 45  
 Again I mingle with thy playful quire;  
 Our tricks of mischief, every childish game,  
 Unchanged by time or distance, seem the same.  
 Through winding paths along the glade, I trace  
 The social smile of every welcome face; 50  
 My wonted haunts, my scenes of joy and woe,  
 Each early boyish friend, or youthful foe,  
 Our feuds dissolved, but not my friendship past,  
 I bless the former, and forgive the last.  
 Hours of my youth! when, nurtured in my breast, 55  
 To Love a stranger, Friendship made me blest;  
 Friendship, the dear peculiar bond of youth,  
 When every artless bosom throbs with truth;  
 Untaught my worldly wisdom how to feign,  
 And check each impulse with prudential rein; 60  
 When all we feel, our honest souls disclose,  
 In love to friends, in open hate to foes;  
 No varnished tales the lips of youth repeat,  
 No dear-bought knowledge purchased by deceit,  
 Hypocrisy, the gift of lengthened years, 65  
 Matured by age, the garb of Prudence wears.  
 When now the Boy is ripened into Man,  
 His careful Sire chalks forth some wary plan;  
 Instructs his Son from Candour's path to shrink,  
 Smoothly to speak, and cautiously to think; 70  
 Still to assent, and never to deny,  
 A patron's praise can well reward the lie:  
 And who, when Fortune's warning voice is heard,  
 Would lose his opening prospects for a word?  
 Although against that word his heart rebel, 75  
 And Truth indignant all his bosom swell.

Away with themes like this! not mine the task  
 From flattering fiends to tear the hateful mask;  
 Let keener bards delight in Satire's sting;  
 My Fancy soars not on Detraction's wing: 80  
 Once, and but once, she aimed a deadly blow,  
 To hurl Defiance on a secret Foe;  
 But when that Foe, from feeling or from shame,  
 The cause unknown, yet still to me the same,  
 Warned by some friendly hint, perchance, retired, 85  
 With this submission all her rage expired.  
 From dreaded pangs that feeble Foe to save,  
 She hushed her young resentment, and forgave;  
 Or, my Muse a Pedant's portrait drew,  
 Pomposus'<sup>135</sup> virtues are but known to few: 90  
 I never feared the young usurper's nod,  
 And he who wields must sometimes feel the rod.  
 If since, on Granta's failings, known to all  
 Who share the converse of a college hall,

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134: "idea" is trisyllabic.

135: Pomposus is George Butler, who succeeded B.'s admired mentor Joseph Drury as Headmaster of Harrow in 1805.

She sometimes trifled in a lighter strain, 95  
 'Tis past, and thus she will not sin again;<sup>136</sup>  
 Soon must her early song for ever cease,  
 And all may rail when I shall rest in peace.

Here first remembered be the joyous band,  
 Who hailed me chief, obedient to command; 100  
 Who joined with me in every boyish sport,  
 Their first adviser, and their last resort.  
 Nor shrunk beneath the upstart pedant's frown,  
 Or all the sable glories of his gown;  
 Who, thus transplanted from his father's school, 105  
 Unfit to govern, ignorant of rule,  
 Succeeded him, whom all unite to praise,  
 The dear preceptor of my early days!  
 Probus,<sup>137</sup> the pride of science, and the boast,  
 To IDA now, alas! for ever lost, 110  
 With him, for years, we searched the classic page,  
 And feared the Master, though we loved the Sage:  
 Retired at last, his small yet peaceful seat  
 From learning's labour is the blest retreat,  
 Pomposus fills his magisterial chair; 115  
 Pomposus governs – but, my Muse, forbear:  
 Contempt, in silence, be the pedant's lot;  
 His name and precepts be alike forgot;  
 No more his mention shall my verse degrade,  
 To him my tribute is already paid.<sup>138</sup> 120

High through those elms, with hoary branches crowned,  
 Fair IDA's bower adorns the landscape round;  
 There Science, from her favoured seat, surveys  
 The vale where rural Nature claims her praise;  
 To her awhile resigns her youthful train, 125  
 Who move in joy, and dance along the plain.  
 In scattered groups each favoured haunt pursue,  
 Repeat old pastimes, and discover new;  
 Flushed with his rays, beneath the noon-tide Sun,  
 In rival bands, between the wickets run, 130  
 Drive o'er the sward the ball with active force,  
 Or chase with nimble feet its rapid course.<sup>139</sup>

136: B. forswears satire for ever.

137: Probus is Joseph Drury, Headmaster of Harrow for most of B.'s time there. **BYRON'S NOTE: This most able, and excellent man retired from his situation in March 1805, after having resided 35 years at H[arrow], the last 20 as Head Master; an office he held with equal honour to himself, and advantage to the very extensive School, over which he presided; panegyric would here be superfluous, it would be useless to enumerate qualifications which were never doubted; a considerable contest took place between 3 rival candidates for his vacant Chair, of this I can only say**

*Si mea, cum vestris valuisse vota, Pelasgi!*

*Non foret ambiguus tanti certaminis heres.* (OVID, META. XIII, 128-9: *If my prayers and yours had availed, oh Greeks, there would be no question as to the victor in this great strife.*)

138 **BYRON'S NOTE: This alludes to a Character printed in a former private edition for the perusal of some friends, which with many other pieces is withheld from the present volume; to draw the attention of the public to insignificance would be deservedly reprobated, and another reason, though not of equal consequence, may be given in the following couplet: —**

*Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?*

*Who breaks a Butterfly upon the wheel?*

**POPE.** (*Epistle to Arbuthnot*, 307-8.)

But these with slower steps direct their way,  
 Where Brent's cool waves in limpid currents stray;  
 While yonder few search out some green retreat, 135  
 And arbours shade them from the summer heat:  
 Others, again, a pert and lively crew,  
 Some rough and thoughtless stranger placed in view,  
 With frolic quaint their antic jests expose,  
 And tease the grumbl'ing rustic as he goes; 140  
 Nor rest with this, but many a passing fray  
 Tradition treasures for a future day:  
 "'Twas here the gathered swains for vengeance fought,  
 And here we earned the conquest dearly bought;  
 Here have we fled before superior might, 145  
 And here renewed the wild tumultuous fight."  
 While thus our souls with early passions swell,  
 In lingering tones resounds the distant bell;  
 Th' allotted hour of daily sport is o'er,  
 And Learning beckons from her temple's door. 150  
 No splendid tablets grace her simple hall,  
 But ruder records fill the dusky wall;  
 There, deeply carved, behold! each tyro's name  
 Secures its owner's academic fame;  
 Here mingling view the names of Sire and Son, 155  
 The one long grav'd, the other just begun:  
 These shall survive alike when Son and Sire,  
 Beneath one common stroke of fate expire;  
 Perhaps their last memorial these alone,  
 Denied in Death a monumental stone, 160  
 Whilst to the gale in mournful cadence wave  
 The sighing weeds, that hide their nameless grave.  
 And here my name, and many an early friend's,  
 Along the wall in lengthen'd line extends.  
 Though still our deeds amuse the youthful race, 165  
 Who tread our steps, and fill our former place,  
 Who young obeyed their lords in silent awe,  
 Whose nod command'd, and whose voice was law;  
 And now, in turn, possess the reins of power,  
 To rule, the little Tyrants of an hour; 170  
 Though sometimes, with the Tales of ancient day,  
 They pass the dreary Winter's eve away:  
 "And thus our former rulers stemmed the tide,  
 And thus they dealt the combat side by side;  
 Just in this place the mould'ring walls they scaled, 175  
 Nor bolts nor bars against their strength availed;  
 Here Probus came, the rising fray to quell,  
 And here he falter'd forth his last farewell;  
 And here one night abroad they dared to roam,  
 While bold Pomposus bravely stay'd at home." 180  
 While thus they speak, the hour must soon arrive,  
 When names of these, like ours, alone survive:  
 Yet a few years, one general wreck will overwhelm  
 The faint remembrance of our fairy realm.

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139: B. refers to batsmen and fielders in cricket; not to bowlers. With his limp, he could neither bowl nor field, only bat.

Dear honest race! though now we meet no more, 185  
 One last long look on what we were before;  
 Our first kind greetings, and our last adieu,  
 Drew tears from eyes unused to weep with you.  
 Through splendid circles, Fashion's gaudy world,  
 Where Folly's glaring standard waves unfurled, 190  
 I plunged to drown in noise my fond regret,  
 And all I sought or hoped was to forget.  
 Vain wish! if chance some well-remembered face,  
 Some old companion of my early race,  
 Advanced to claim his friend with honest joy, 195  
 My eyes, my heart, proclaimed me still a boy;  
 The glittering scene, the fluttering groups around,  
 Were quite forgotten when my friend was found;  
 The smiles of Beauty (for, alas! I've known  
 What 'tis to bend before Love's mighty throne); 200  
 The smiles of Beauty, though those smiles were dear,  
 Could hardly charm me, when that friend was near;  
 My thoughts bewildered in the fond surprise,  
 The woods of IDA danced before my eyes;  
 I saw the sprightly wanderers pour along, 205  
 I saw and joined again the joyous throng;  
 Panting again, I traced her lofty grove,  
 And Friendship's feelings triumphed over Love.

Yet why should I alone with such delight  
 Retrace the circuit of my former flight? 210  
 Is there no cause beyond the common claim,  
 Endeared to all in childhood's very name?  
 Ah! sure some stronger impulse vibrates here,  
 Which whispers friendship will be doubly dear  
 To one, who thus for kindred hearts must roam, 215  
 And seek abroad the love denied at home.  
 Those hearts, dear IDA, have I found in thee,  
 A home, a world, a paradise to me.  
 Stern Death forbade my orphan youth to share  
 The tender guidance of a father's care.<sup>140</sup> 220  
 Can Rank, or even a Guardian's name, supply  
 The Love which glistens in a Father's eye?  
 For this can Wealth or Title's sound atone,  
 Made, by a Parent's early loss, my own?  
 What Brother springs a Brother's love to seek? 225  
 What Sister's gentle kiss has pressed my cheek?  
 For me how dull the vacant moments rise,  
 To no fond bosom linked by kindred ties!  
 Oft in the progress of some fleeting dream  
 Fraternal smiles collected round me seem; 230  
 While still the visions to my heart are pressed,  
 The voice of Love will murmur in my rest:  
 I hear, I wake, and in the sound rejoice;  
 I hear again – but, ah! no Brother's voice.  
 A Hermit, 'midst of crowds, I fain must stray 235

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140: B.'s father died when B. was three.

Alone, though thousand pilgrims fill the way;  
 While these a thousand kindred wreaths entwine,  
 I cannot call one single blossom mine:  
 What then remains? in solitude to groan,  
 To mix in friendship, or to sigh alone? 240  
 Thus must I cling to some endearing hand,  
 And none more dear than IDA's social band.

ALONZO!<sup>141</sup> best and dearest of my friends,  
 Thy name ennobles him who thus commends;  
 From this fond tribute thou canst gain no praise; 245  
 The praise is his who now that tribute pays.  
 Oh! in the promise of thy early youth,  
 If hope anticipate the words of truth,  
 Some loftier bard shall sing thy glorious name,  
 To build his own upon thy deathless fame. 250  
 Friend of my heart, and foremost of the list  
 Of those with whom I lived supremely blest,  
 Oft have we drained the font of ancient lore;  
 Though drinking deeply, thirsting still the more.  
 Yet, when confinement's lingering hour was done, 255  
 Our sports, our studies, and our souls were one:  
 Together we impelled the flying ball;<sup>142</sup>  
 Together waited in our tutor's hall;  
 Together joined in cricket's manly toil,  
 Or shared the produce of the river's spoil; 260  
 Or, plunging from the green declining shore,  
 Our pliant limbs the buoyant billows bore;<sup>143</sup>  
 In every element, unchanged, the same,  
 All, all that brothers should be, but the name.

Nor yet are you forgot, my jocund Boy! 265  
 DAVUS,<sup>144</sup> the harbinger of childish joy;  
 For ever foremost in the ranks of fun,  
 The laughing herald of the harmless pun;  
 Yet with a breast of such materials made,  
 Anxious to please, of pleasing half afraid; 270  
 Candid and liberal, with a heart of steel  
 In danger's path, though not untaught to feel.  
 Still I remember, in the factious strife,  
 The rustic's musket aimed against my life:  
 High poised in air the massy weapon hung, 275  
 A cry of horror burst from every tongue;  
 Whilst I, in combat with another foe,  
 Fought on, unconscious of th'impending blow;  
 Your arm, brave Boy, arrested his career,  
 Forward you sprung, insensible to fear; 280  
 Disarmed and baffled by your conquering hand,  
 The grovelling Savage rolled upon the sand;

**141: EP writes, in the Texas POVO: *Wingfield*.** John Wingfield's death is recorded at CHP I 91, 1.

**142:** Compare Gray, *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, 30: ... *Or urge the flying ball?*

**143:** Compare Gray, *ibid*, 25-6: ... *cleave with pliant arm thy glassy wave?* B. quotes Gray's Ode again at *Don Juan* I, 94, 2.

**144: EP writes, in the Texas POVO: *Tattersall*.** Davus, or Davos, is a character in Terence's *The Girl from Andros*, a Roman comedy quoted by Byron at *Don Juan* I, 30, 5, and XIII, 12, 8.



An act like this, can simple thanks repay?  
 Or all the labours of a grateful lay?  
 Oh no! whene'er my breast forgets the deed, 285  
 That instant, DAVUS, it deserves to bleed.

LYCUS!<sup>145</sup> on me thy claims are justly great:  
 Thy milder virtues could my Muse relate,  
 To thee alone, unrivalled, would belong. 290  
 The feeble efforts of my lengthened song.  
 Well canst thou boast, to lead in senates fit,  
 A Spartan firmness with Athenian wit:  
 Though yet in embryo these perfections shine,  
 LYCUS! thy father's fame will soon be thine. 295  
 Where Learning nurtures the superior mind,  
 What may we hope from genius thus refined!  
 When Time at length matures thy growing years,  
 How wilt thou tower above thy fellow peers!  
 Prudence and sense, a spirit bold and free,  
 With honour's soul, united beam in thee. 300

Shall fair EURYALUS<sup>146</sup> pass by unsung?  
 From ancient lineage, not unworthy, sprung:  
 What though one sad dissension bade us part?  
 That name is yet embalmed within my heart; 305  
 Yet at the mention does that heart rebound,  
 And palpitate, responsive to the sound.  
 Envy dissolved our ties, and not our will:  
 We once were friends – I'll think we are so still.  
 A form unmatched in Nature's partial mould,  
 A heart untainted, we in thee behold: 310  
 Yet not the Senate's thunder thou shalt wield,  
 Nor seek for glory in the tented field;<sup>147</sup>  
 To minds of ruder texture these be given,  
 Thy soul shall nearer soar its native heaven. 315  
 Haply, in polished courts might be thy seat,  
 But that thy tongue could never forge deceit:  
 The courtier's supple bow and sneering smile,  
 The flow of compliment, the slippery wile,  
 Would make that breast with indignation burn, 320  
 And all the glittering snares to tempt thee spurn.  
 Domestic happiness will stamp thy fate;  
 Sacred to Love, unclouded e'er by hate;  
 The world admire thee, and thy friends adore;  
 Ambition's Slave alone would toil for more.

Now last, but nearest of the social band, 325  
 See honest, open, generous CLEON<sup>148</sup> stand;  
 With scarce one speck to cloud the pleasing scene,  
 No vice degrades that purest soul serene.  
 On the same day our studious race begun,

145: EP writes, in the Texas POVO: *L<sup>d</sup> Clare.*

146: EP writes, in the Texas POVO: *Delawarr.*

147: *Othello*, I iii 85: ... *they have used / Their dearest action in the tented field;*

148: EP writes, in the Texas POVO: *Long.*

On the same day, our studious race was run; 330  
 Thus, side by side, we passed our first career,  
 Thus, side by side, we strove for many a year;  
 At last concluded our scholastic life,  
 We neither conquered in the classic strife:  
 As Speakers,<sup>149</sup> each supports an equal name, 335  
 And crowds allow to both a partial fame:  
 To soothe a youthful Rival's early pride,  
 Though CLEON's candour would the palm divide,  
 Yet Candour's self compels me now to own,  
 Justice awards it to my Friend alone. 340

Oh! Friends regretted, scenes for ever dear,  
 Remembrance hails you with her warmest tear!  
 Drooping, she bends o'er pensive Fancy's urn,  
 To trace the hours which never can return;  
 Yet with the retrospection loves to dwell, 345  
 And soothe the sorrows of her last farewell!  
 Yet greets the triumph of my boyish mind,  
 As infant laurels round my head were twined,  
 When Probus' praise repaid my lyric song,  
 Or placed me higher in the studious throng; 350  
 Or when my first harangue received applause,  
 His sage instruction the primeval cause,  
 What gratitude to him my soul possessed,  
 While hope of dawning honours filled my breast!  
 For all my humble fame, to him alone 355  
 The praise is due, who made that fame my own.  
 Oh! could I soar above these feeble lays,  
 These young effusions of my early days,  
 To him my Muse her noblest strain would give:  
 The song might perish, but the theme must live. 360  
 Yet why for him the needless verse essay?  
 His honoured name requires no vain display:  
 By every son of grateful IDA blest,  
 It finds an echo in each youthful breast;  
 A fame beyond the glories of the proud, 365  
 Or all the plaudits of the venal crowd.

IDA! not yet exhausted is the theme,  
 Nor closed the progress of my youthful dream.  
 How many a friend deserves the grateful strain!  
 What scenes of childhood still unsung remain! 370  
 Yet let me hush this echo of the past,  
 This parting song, the dearest and the last;  
 And brood in secret o'er those hours of joy,  
 To me a silent and a sweet employ,  
 While future hope and fear alike unknown, 375  
 I think with pleasure on the past alone;  
 Yes to the past alone my heart confine,  
 And chase the phantom of what once was mine.

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149: BYRON'S NOTE: This alludes to the public speeches, delivered at the school where the author was educated.

IDA! still o'er thy hills in joy preside,  
 And proudly steer through time's eventful tide; 380  
 Still may thy blooming Sons thy name revere,  
 Smile in thy bower, but quit thee with a tear;  
 That tear, perhaps, the fondest which will flow,  
 O'er their last scene of happiness below.  
 Tell me, ye hoary few, who glide along, 385  
 The feeble veterans of some former throng,  
 Whose friends, like autumn leaves by tempests whirled,  
 Are swept for ever from this busy world;  
 Revolve the fleeting moments of your youth,  
 While Care has yet withheld her venom'd tooth; 390  
 Say if Remembrance days like these endears,  
 Beyond the rapture of succeeding years?  
 Say, can Ambition's fevered dream bestow  
 So sweet a balm to soothe your hours of woe?  
 Can treasures, hoarded for some thankless Son, 395  
 Can royal smiles, or wreaths by slaughter won,  
 Can stars, or ermine, Man's maturer toys,  
 (For glittering baubles are not left to boys),  
 Recall one scene so much beloved to view,  
 As those where Youth her garland twined for you? 400  
 Ah, no! amidst the gloomy calm of age  
 You turn with faltering hand life's varied page;  
 Peruse the record of your days on earth,  
 Unsullied only where it marks your birth;  
 Still lingering pause above each chequered leaf, 405  
 And blot with tears the sable lines of grief;  
 Where Passion o'er the theme her mantle threw,  
 Or weeping Virtue sighed a faint adieu;  
 But bless the scroll which fairer words adorn,  
 Traced by the rosy finger of the morn; 410  
 When Friendship bowed before the shrine of Truth,  
 And Love,<sup>150</sup> without his pinion, smiled on Youth.

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150 BYRON'S NOTE: "L'Amitié est L'Amour sans Ailes," is a French proverb.

## The Death of Calmar and Orla.<sup>151</sup>

### AN IMITATION OF MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN.

DEAR are the days of youth! Age dwells on their remembrance through the mist of time. In the twilight he recalls the sunny hours of morn. He lifts his spear with trembling hand. "Not thus feebly did I raise the steel before my fathers!" Past is the race of heroes. But their fame rises on the harp; their souls ride on the wings of the wind; they hear the sound through the sighs of the storm, and rejoice in their hall of clouds! Such is Calmar. The grey stone marks his narrow house. He looks down from eddying tempests: he rolls his form in the whirlwind, and hovers on the blast of the mountain.

In Morven dwelt the chief; a beam of war to Fingal. His steps in the field were marked in blood. Lochim's sons had fled before his angry spear; but mild was the eye of Calmar; soft was the flow of his yellow locks: they streamed like the meteor of the night. No maid was the sigh of his soul; his thoughts were given to friendship – to dark-haired Orla, destroyer of heroes! Equal were their swords in battle; but fierce was the pride of Orla – gentle alone to Calmar. Together they dwelt in the cave of Oithona.<sup>152</sup>

From Lochlin, Swaran bounded o'er the blue waves. Erin's sons fell beneath his might. Fingal roused his chiefs to combat. Their ships cover the ocean. Their hosts throng on the green hills. They come to the aid of Erin.

Night rose in clouds. Darkness veils the armies: but the blaring oaks gleam through the valley. The sons of Lochlin slept: their dreams were of blood. They lilt the spear in thought, and Fingal flies. Not so the host of Morven. To watch was the post of Orla. Calmar stood by his side. Their spears were in their hands. Fingal called his chiefs: they stood around. The king was in the midst. Grey were his locks, but strong was the arm of the king. Age withered not his powers. "Sons of Morven," said the hero, "tomorrow we meet the foe. But where is Cuthullin, the shield of Erin? He rests in the halls of Tura; he knows not of our coming. Who will speed through Lochlin to the hero, and call the chief to arms? The path is by the swords of foes; but many are my heroes. They are thunderbolts of war. Speak, ye chiefs! Who will arise?"

"Son of Trenmor! mine be the deed," said dark-haired Orla, "and mine alone. What is death to me? I love the sleep of the mighty, but little is the danger. The sons of Lochlin dream. I will seek car-borne Cuthuillin. If I fail, raise the song of bards; and lay me by the stream of Lubar." – "And shalt thou fall alone?" said fair-haired Calmar. "Wilt thou leave thy friend afar? Chief of Oithona! not feeble is my arm in fight. Could I see thee die, and not lift the spear? No, Orla! ours has been the chase of the roebuck, and the feast of shells; ours be the path of danger: ours has been the cave of Oithona; ours be the narrow dwelling on the banks of Lubar." "Calmar," said the chief of Oithona, "why should thy yellow locks be darkened in the dust of Erin? Let me fall alone. My father dwells in his hall of air: he will rejoice in his boy; but the blue-eyed Mora<sup>153</sup> spreads the feast for her son in Morven. She listens to the steps of the hunter on the heath, and thinks it is the tread of Calmar. Let her not say, "Calmar has fallen by the steel of Lochlin: he died with gloomy Orla, the chief of the dark brow." Why should tears dim the azure eye of Mora? Why should her voice curse Orla, the destroyer of Calmar? Live, Calmar! Live to raise my stone of moss; live to revenge me in the blood of Lochlin. Join the song of bards above my grave. Sweet will be the song of death to Orla, from the voice of Calmar. My ghost shall smile on the notes of praise." "Orla," said the son of Mora, "could I raise the song of death to my friend? Could I give his fame to the winds? No, my heart would speak in sighs: faint and broken are the sounds of sorrow. Orla!

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**151:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.169-77; POAT pp.151-59. **BYRON'S NOTE:** It may be necessary to observe that the story, though considerably varied in the *Catastrophe*, is taken from "Nisus and Euryalus," of which Episode, a Translation is already given in the present volume.

**152:** The two Ossianic heroes resemble both Oscar and Allan in *Oscar of Alva*, and Nisus and Euryalus in the *Aeneid*.

**153:** The name of the bride in *Oscar of Alva* is that of the mother in *Calmar and Orla*.

our souls shall hear the song together. One cloud shall be ours on high: the bards will mingle the names of Orla and Calmar.”

They quit the circle of the chiefs. Their steps are to the host of Lochlin. The dying blaze of oak dim-twinkles through the night. The northern star points the path to Tura. Swaran, the king, rests on his lonely hill. Here the troops are mixed: they frown in sleep; their shields beneath their heads. Their swords gleam at distance in heaps. The fires are faint; their embers fail in smoke. All is hushed; but the gale sighs on the rocks above. Lightly wheel the heroes through the slumbering band. Half the journey is past, when Mathon, resting on his shield, meets the eye of Orla. It rolls in flame, and glistens through the shade. His spear is raised on high. “Why dost thou bend thy brow, chief of Oithona?” said fair-haired Calmar: “we are in the midst of foes. Is this a time for delay?” “It is a time for vengeance,” said Orla of the gloomy brow. “Mathon of Lochlin sleeps: seest thou his spear? Its point is dim with the gore of my father. The blood of Mathon shall reek on mine; but shall I slay him sleeping, son of Mora? No! he shall feel his wound: my fame shall not soar on the blood of slumber. Rise, Mathon, rise! The son of Conna calls; thy life is his; rise to combat.” Mathon starts from sleep; but did he rise alone? No: the gathering chiefs bound on the plain. “Fly! Calmar, fly!” said dark-haired Orla. “Mathon is mine. I shall die in joy: but Lochlin crowds around. Fly through the shade of night.” Orla turns, the helm of Mathon is cleft; his shield falls from his arm: he shudders in his blood. He rolls by the side of the blazing oak. Strumon sees him fall: his wrath rises: his weapon glitters on the head of Orla: but a spear pierced his eye. His brain gushes, and foams on the spear of Calmar. As roll the waves of the Ocean on two mighty barks of the north, so pour the men of Lochlin on the chiefs. As, breaking the surge in foam, proudly steer the barks of the north, so rise the chiefs of Morven on the scattered crests of Lochlin. The din of arms came to the ear of Fingal. He strikes his shield; his sons throng around; the people pour along the heath. Ryno bounds in joy. Ossian stalks in his arms. Oscar shakes the spear. The eagle wing of Fillan floats on the wind. Dreadful is the clang of Death! many are the widows of Lochlin! Morven prevails in its strength.

Morn glimmers on the hills: no living foe is seen; but the sleepers are many; grim they lie on Erin. The breeze of ocean lifts their locks; yet they do not awake. The hawks scream above their prey.

Whose yellow locks wave o’er the breast of a chief? Bright as the gold of the stranger, they mingle with the dark hair of his friend. ’Tis Calmar: he lies on the bosom of Orla. Theirs is one stream of blood. Fierce is the look of the gloomy Orla. He breathes not; but his eye is still a flame. It glares in death unclosed. His hand is grasped in Calmar’s; but Calmar lives! he lives, though low. “Rise,” said the king, “rise, son of Mora: ’tis mine to heal the wounds of heroes. Calmar may yet bound on the hills of Morven.”

“Never more shall Calmar chase the deer of Morven with Orla,” said the hero. “What were the chase to me alone? Who should share the spoils of battle with Calmar? Orla is at rest! Rough was thy soul, Orla! yet soft to me as the dew of morn.<sup>154</sup> It glared on others in lightning: to me a silver beam of night. Bear my sword to blue-eyed Mora; let it hang in my empty hall. It is not pure from blood: but it could not save Orla. Lay me with my friend. Raise the song when I am dark!”

They are laid by the stream of Lubar. Four grey stones mark the dwelling of Orla and Calmar.

When Swaran was bound, our sails rose on the blue waves. The winds gave our barks to Morven: – the bards raised the song.

“What form rises on the roar of clouds? Whose dark ghost gleams on the red streams of tempests? His voice rolls on the thunder. ’Tis Orla, the brown chief of Oithona. He was unmatched in war. Peace to thy soul, Orla thy fame will not perish. Nor thine, Calmar! Lovely wast thou, son of blue-eyed Mora; but not harmless was thy sword. It hangs in thy cave. The ghosts of Lochlin shriek around its steel. Hear thy praise, Calmar! It dwells on the voice of

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**154:** Compare 2 Samuel 1, 26: I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love was wonderful, passing the love of women.

the mighty. Thy name shakes on the echoes of Morven. Then raise thy fair locks, son of Mora. Spread them on the arch of the rainbow; and smile through the tears of the storm.”<sup>155</sup>

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**155 BYRON'S NOTE:** I fear, Laing's late Edition of the poem has completely overthrown every hope that Macpherson's Ossian, might prove the Translation of a series of Poems complete in themselves; but, while the Imposture is discovered, the merit of the work remains undisputed, though not without faults, particularly in some parts, turgid and bombastic diction. – The present humble imitation, will be pardoned by the admirers of the original, as an attempt, however inferior, which evinces an attachment to their favourite author.

**To Edward Noel Long Esq.**<sup>156</sup>

Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.

HOR. E.<sup>157</sup>

DEAR LONG! in this sequestered scene,  
 While all around in slumber lie,  
 The joyous days which ours have been  
 Come rolling fresh on fancy's eye;  
 Thus, if amidst the gathering storm, 5  
 While clouds the darkened noon deform,  
 Yon heaven assumes a varied glow;  
 I hail the sky's celestial bow,  
 Which spreads the sign of future peace,  
 And bids the war of tempests cease. 10

Ah! though the present brings but pain,  
 I think those days may come again;  
 Or if, in melancholy mood,  
 Some lurking envious fear intrude,  
 To check my bosom's fondest thought, 15  
 And interrupt the golden dream,  
 I crush the fiend with malice fraught,  
 And still indulge my wonted theme;  
 Although we ne'er again can trace  
 In Granta's vale, the pedant's lore, 20  
 Nor through the groves of IDA chase  
 Our raptured visions, as before;  
 Though Youth has flown on rosy pinion,  
 And Manhood claims his stern dominion,  
 Age will not every hope destroy, 25  
 But yields some hours of sober joy.

Yes, I will hope that Time's broad wing  
 Will shed around some dews of spring:  
 But, if his scythe must sweep the flowers  
 Which bloom among the fairy bowers, 30  
 Where smiling Youth delights to dwell,  
 And hearts with early rapture swell;  
 If frowning Age, with cold control,  
 Confines the current of the soul,  
 Congeals the tear of Pity's eye, 35  
 Or checks the sympathetic sigh,  
 Or hears, unmoved, Misfortune's groan,

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**156:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.178-83; POAT pp.160-4. I have taken some details from B.'s draft, dated "April 19<sup>th</sup> 1807", and transcribed at *Shelley and his Circle* V 1113-17. In a note to the draft, B. writes, *E— is a west Indian married to a Creole, C — is M<sup>s</sup>. Musters Chaworth, a former flame; Caroline is her mother in Law; Mary is a M<sup>s</sup>. Cobourne, & Cora a Notts Girl, her real name is Julia Leacroft, there is a poem addressed to her, under the name of Lesbia (text from *Shelley and his Circle*, VI 1116: for doubts as to B.'s veracity, see BLJ I 116 & n). EP disliked B.'s Cambridge friend Long, even though she never met him: ... *take care of yourself when you get amongst your old Set, That M<sup>r</sup> Long is in a sort of Pickle, I've a notion, for whenever I have enquired, who suggested that bit of mischief? Your answer was in general "Old Long" — "from all evil and mischief, from Sin, from the crafts & assaults of the D - - l" may heaven preserve you.* Long joined the army, and was drowned in a sea accident in 1809.*

**157:** In fact HOR. SAT. I v 44: *Nothing, so long as I am in my senses, would I match with the joy a friend may bring.*

And bids me feel for self alone;  
 Oh! may my bosom never learn  
     To soothe its wonted heedless flow;                   40  
 Still, still, despise the censor stern,  
     But ne'er forget another's woe.  
 Yes, as you knew me in the days  
 O'er which Remembrance yet delays,  
 Still may I rove untutored, wild,                   45  
 And even in age, at heart a child.

Though, now, on airy visions borne,  
     To you my soul is still the same,  
 Oft has it been my fate to mourn,  
     And all my former joys are tame;                   50  
 But, hence! ye hours of sable hue!  
     Your frowns are gone, my sorrows o'er;  
 By every bliss my childhood knew,  
     I'll think upon your shade no more.  
 Thus, when the whirlwind's rage is past,               55  
     And caves their sullen roar enclose,  
 We heed no more the wintry blast,  
     When lulled by zephyr to repose.

Full often has my infant Muse  
     Attuned to Love her languid lyre;                   60  
 But, now, without a theme to choose,  
     The strains in stolen sighs expire.  
 My youthful nymphs, alas! are flown;  
     E—— is a wife, and C—— a mother,  
 And Carolina sighs alone,                           65  
     And Mary's given to another;  
 And Cora's eye, which rolled on me,  
     Can now no more my love recall –  
 In truth, dear LONG, 'twas time to flee,  
     For Cora's eye will shine on all.                   70  
 And though the sun, with genial rays,  
 His beams alike to all displays,  
 And every *lady's eye's* a *sun*,  
 These last should be confined to one.  
 The soul's meridian don't become her,               75  
 Whose *sun* displays a general *summer!*  
 Thus faint is every former flame,  
 And Passion's self is now a name;  
 As when the ebbing flames are low,  
     The aid which once improved their light,           80  
 And bade them burn with fiercer glow,  
     Now quenches all their sparks in night;  
 Thus has it been with Passion's fires,  
     As many a boy and girl remembers,  
 While all the force of Love expires,               85  
     Extinguished with the dying embers.

But now, dear LONG, 'tis midnight's noon,  
 And clouds obscure the watery moon,  
 Whose beauties I shall not rehearse,



Described in every stripling's verse; 90  
 For why should I the path go o'er,  
 Which every bard has trod before?  
 Yet ere yon silver lamp of night  
     Has thrice performed her stated round,  
 Has thrice retraced her path of light, 95  
     And chased away the gloom profound,  
 I trust, that we, my gentle friend,  
 Shall see her rolling orbit wend,  
 Above the dear-loved peaceful seat,  
 Which once contained our youth's retreat; 100  
 And, then, with those our childhood knew,  
 We'll mingle in the festive crew;  
 While many a tale of former day  
 Shall wing the laughing hours away;  
 And all the flow of souls shall pour 105  
 The sacred intellectual shower,  
 Nor cease, till Luna's waning horn  
 Scarce glimmers through the mist of morn.

To ————. <sup>158</sup>

Oh! had my fate been joined with thine,  
 As once this pledge appeared a token,  
 These follies had not then been mine,  
 For then my peace had not been broken,

To thee, these early faults I owe,                   5  
 To thee, the wise and old reproving;  
 They know my sins, but do not know,  
 'Twas thine to break the bonds of loving.

For once, my soul like thine was pure,  
 And all its rising fires could smother,           10  
 But now, thy vows no more endure,  
 Bestowed by thee upon another.

Perhaps his peace I could destroy,  
 And spoil the blisses that await him;  
 Yet let my rival<sup>159</sup> smile in joy,                   15  
 For thy dear sake, I cannot hate him.

Ah! since thy angel form is gone,  
 My heart no more can rest with any;  
 But what it sought in thee alone,  
 Attempts, alas! to find in many.                   20

Then fare thee well, deceitful maid;<sup>160</sup>  
 'Twere vain and fruitless to regret thee,  
 No Hope, no Memory yield their aid,  
 But Pride may teach me to forget thee.

Yet all this giddy waste of years,                   25  
 This tiresome round of palling pleasures,  
 These varied loves, these matron's fears,  
 These thoughtless strains to Passion's measures,

If thou wert mine, had all been hushed,  
 This cheek, now pale from early riot,             30  
 With Passion's hectic ne'er had flushed,  
 But bloomed in calm domestic quiet.

Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,  
 For Nature seemed to smile before thee,  
 And once my breast abhorred deceit,             35  
 For then it beat but to adore thee.

But now I seek for other joys,  
 To think would drive my soul to madness;  
 In thoughtless throngs, and empty noise,  
 I conquer half my bosom's sadness.             40

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**158:** Not in FP or POVO. HOI pp.184-7; POAT pp.165. The poem is to Mary Chaworth.

**159:** B.'s rival, whom Mary Chaworth married, was Jack Musters, squire, hunt leader, and persecutor of Luddites.

**160:** As Mary Chaworth never encouraged B.'s affections it seems hard to accuse her of deceit.

Yet even in these a thought will steal  
    In spite of every vain endeavour;  
And fiends might pity what I feel,  
    To know that thou art lost forever.

**APPENDIX 1: The five poems added in *Poems Original and Translated*.<sup>161</sup>**

**To the Duke of Dorset.<sup>162</sup>**

In looking over my papers, to select a few additional Poems for this second edition, I found the following lines, which I had totally forgotten, composed in the Summer of 1805, a short time previous to my departure from Harrow. They were addressed to a young school-fellow of high rank, who had been my frequent companion in some rambles, through the neighbouring country; however he never saw the lines, and most probably never will. As, on a re-perusal, I found them not worse than some other pieces in the collection, I have now published them for the first time, after a slight revision.

DORSET! whose early steps with mine have strayed,  
 Exploring every path of Ida's glade,  
 Whom still affection taught me to defend,  
 And made me less a tyrant than a friend;  
 Though the harsh custom of our youthful band,       5  
 Bade *thee* obey, and gave *me* to command;<sup>163</sup>  
 Thee, on whose head a few short years will shower  
 The gift of riches, and the pride of power;  
 Even now a name illustrious is thine own,  
 Renowned in rank, nor far beneath the throne.       10  
 Yet, DORSET, let not this seduce thy soul,  
 To shun fair science, or evade control;  
 Though passive tutors,<sup>164</sup> fearful to dispraise  
 The titled child, whose future breath may raise,  
 View ducal errors with indulgent eyes,       15  
 And wink at faults they tremble to chastise.

When youthful parasites, who bend the knee  
 To wealth, their golden idol, not to thee!  
 And, even in simple boyhood's opening dawn,  
 Some slaves are found to flatter and to fawn;       20  
 When these declare, "that pomp alone should wait  
 On one by birth predestined to be great;  
 That books were only meant for drudging fools,  
 That gallant spirits scorn the common rules";  
 Believe them not – they point the path to shame,       25  
 And seek to blast the honours of thy name:  
 Turn to the few, in IDA's early throng,  
 Whose souls disdain not to condemn the wrong;  
 Or, if amidst the comrades of thy youth,  
 None dare to raise the sterner voice of truth,       30  
 Ask thine own heart! 'twill bid thee, boy, forbear,  
 For well I know, that virtue lingers there.

Yes! I have marked thee many a passing day,  
 But, now new scenes invite me far away;

<sup>161</sup>: For the genesis of POAT, see BLJ I 137, 138 and 139.

<sup>162</sup>: POAT pp.62-8.

<sup>163</sup> BYRON'S NOTE: At every public School, the junior boys are completely subservient to the upper forms, till they attain a seat in the higher classes. From this state of probation, very properly, no rank is exempt; but after a certain period, they command in turn those who succeed.

<sup>164</sup> BYRON'S NOTE: Allow me to disclaim any personal allusions, even the most distant; I merely mention generally, what is too often the weakness of preceptors.

Yes! I have marked, within that generous mind, 35  
 A soul, if well matured, to bless mankind;  
 Ah! though myself, by nature haughty, wild,  
 Whom indiscretion hailed her favourite child;  
 Though every error stamps me for her own,  
 And dooms my fall, I fain would fall alone; 40  
 Though thy proud heart no precept now can tame,  
 I love the virtues which I cannot claim.

'Tis not enough, with other sons of power,  
 To gleam the lambent meteor of an hour,<sup>165</sup>  
 To swell some peerage page in feeble pride, 45  
 With long-drawn names, that grace no page beside;  
 Then share with titled crowds the common lot,  
 In life just gazed at, in the grave forgot;  
 While nought divides thee from the vulgar dead,  
 Except the dull cold stone, that hides thy head, 50  
 The mouldering 'scutcheon, or the Herald's roll,  
 That well-emblazoned, but neglected scroll,  
 Where Lords, unhonoured, in the tomb may find  
 One spot to leave a worthless name behind.  
 There sleep, unnoticed as the gloomy vaults, 55  
 That veil their dust, their follies, and their faults;  
 A race, with old armorial lists o'erspread,  
 In records destined never to be read.  
 Fain would I view thee with prophetic eyes,  
 Exalted more among the good and wise; 60  
 A glorious and a long career pursue,  
 As first in rank, the first in talent too;  
 Spurn every vice, each little meanness shun,  
 Not Fortune's minion, but her noblest son.

Turn to the annals of a former day: 65  
 Bright are the deeds thine earlier Sires display;  
 One, though a Courtier, lived a man of worth,  
 And called, proud boast! the British Drama forth.<sup>166</sup>  
 Another view! not less renowned for Wit,  
 Alike for courts, and camps, or senates fit; 70  
 Bold in the field, and favoured by the Nine,  
 In every splendid part ordained to shine;  
 Far, far distinguished from the glittering throng,  
 The pride of Princes, and the boast of Song.<sup>167</sup>  
 Such were thy Fathers, thus preserve their name, 75  
 Not heir to titles only, but to Fame.  
 The hour draws nigh, a few brief days will close

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165: Compare *Churchill's Grave*, 2: *The comet of a season* ...

166 BYRON'S NOTE: "Thomas S—k—lle, Lord B—k—st, created Earl of D— by James the First, was one of the earliest and brightest ornaments to the poetry of his country, and the first who produced a regular drama." – ANDERSON'S BRITISH POETS. Sackville's doubtful reputation rests on the play *Gorboduc* (1561/2): the fact that it is unactably turgid would probably have endeared it to B., though there's no evidence that he read it.

167 BYRON'S NOTE: Charles S—k—lle, Earl of D—, esteemed the most accomplished man of his day, was alike distinguished in the voluptuous court of Charles II, and the gloomy one of William III. He behaved with great gallantry in the sea-fight with the Dutch, in 1665, on the day previous to which he composed his celebrated song. His character has been drawn in the highest colours by Dryden, Pope, and Congreve. VIDE ANDERSON'S BRITISH POETS.

To me, this little scene of joys and woes;  
 Each knell of Time now warns me to resign  
 Shades, where Hope, Peace, and Friendship, all were mine;  
 Hope, that could vary like the rainbow's hue,           81  
 And gild their pinions, as the moments flew;  
 Peace, that reflection never frowned away,  
 By dreams of ill, to cloud some future day;  
 Friendship, whose truth let childhood only tell –       85  
 Alas! they love not long, who love so well.  
 To these, adieu! nor let me linger o'er  
 Scenes hailed, as exiles hail their native shore,  
 Receding, slowly, thro' the dark-blue deep,  
 Beheld by eyes, that mourn, yet cannot weep.       90

DORSET! farewell ! I will not ask part  
 Of remembrance in so young a heart;  
 The coming morrow from thy youthful mind,  
 Will weep my name, nor leave a trace behind.  
 And, yet, perhaps in some maturer year,           95  
 Since Chance has thrown us in the self-same sphere,  
 Since the same senate, nay, the same debate,  
 May one day claim our suffrage for the state,  
 We hence may meet, and pass each other by  
 With faint regard, or cold and distant eye.       100  
 For me, in future, neither friend, nor foe,  
 A stranger to thyself, thy weal or woe;  
 With thee no more again I hope to trace  
 The recollection of our early race;  
 No more, as once, in social hours, rejoice,       105  
 Or hear, unless in crowds, thy well-known voice.  
 Still, if the wishes of a heart untaught  
 To veil those feelings, which, perchance, it ought,  
 If these – but let me cease the lengthened strain,  
 Oh! if these wishes are not breathed in vain,       110  
 The Guardian Seraph, who directs thy fate,  
 Will leave thee glorious, as he found thee great.

**To the Earl of Clare.**<sup>168</sup>

Tu semper amoris  
Sis memor, et cari comitis ne abscedat Imago.  
VALERIUS FLACCUS.<sup>169</sup>

Friend of my youth! when young we roved,  
Like striplings mutually beloved,  
    With Friendship's purest glow;  
The bliss, which winged those rosy hours,  
Was such as Pleasure seldom showers                     5  
    On mortals here below.

The recollection seems, alone,  
Dearer than all the joys I've known,  
    When distant far from you;  
Though pain, 'tis still a pleasing pain,                     10  
To trace those days and hours again,  
    And sigh again, adieu!

My pensive memory lingers o'er  
Those scenes to be enjoyed no more,  
    Those scenes regretted ever;                             15  
The measure of our youth is full,  
Life's evening dream is dark and dull,  
    And we may meet – ah! never!

As when one parent spring supplies  
Two streams, which from one fountain rise,                     20  
    Together joined in vain;  
How soon, diverging from their source,  
Each, murmuring, seeks another course,  
    Till mingled in the main.

Our vital streams of weal or woe,                             25  
Though near, alas! distinctly flow,  
    Nor mingle as before;  
Now swift or slow, now black or clear,  
Till Death's unfathomed gulf appear,  
    And both shall quit the shore.                             30

Our souls, my friend! which once supplied  
One wish, nor breathed a thought beside,  
    Now flow in different channels;  
Disdaining humbler rural sports,  
'Tis yours to mix in polished courts,                     35  
    And shine in Fashion's annals.

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**168:** POAT pp.116-22.

**169:** Valerius Flaccus, *Argonautica*, IV, 36-7: *Be ever mindful of your love, and never let the image of your dead comrade fade.*

'Tis mine to waste on Love my time,  
 Or vent my reveries in rhyme,  
     Without the aid of Reason;  
 For Sense and Reason (critics know it),                     40  
 Have quitted every amorous poet,  
     Nor left a thought to seize on.

Poor LITTLE!<sup>170</sup> sweet, melodious bard!  
 Of late esteemed it monstrous hard,  
     That he, who sang before all;                                     45  
 He who the lore of Love expanded,  
 By dire reviewers should be branded,  
     As void of wit and moral.<sup>171</sup>

And yet, while Beauty's praise is thine,  
 Harmonious favourite of the nine!                             50  
     Repine not at thy lot;  
 Thy soothing lays may still be read,  
 When Persecution's arm is dead,  
     And critics are forgot.

Still, I must yield those worthies merit,                     55  
 Who chasten, with unsparing spirit,  
     Bad rhymes, and those who write them;  
 And though myself may be the next,  
 By critic sarcasm to be vexed,  
     I really will not fight them;<sup>172</sup>                             60

Perhaps, they would do quite as well  
 To break the rudely sounding shell  
     Of such a young beginner;  
 He who offends at pert nineteen,  
 Ere thirty may become, I ween,                             65  
     A very hardened sinner.

Now, CLARE, I must return to you,  
 And, sure, apologies are due,  
     Accept then my concession;  
 In truth, dear CLARE, in fancy's flight,                     70  
 I soar along from left to right,  
     My Muse admires digression.

I think I said, 'twould be your fate  
 To add one star to royal state;  
     May regal smiles attend you;                                     75  
 And should a noble monarch reign,  
 You will not seek his smiles in vain,  
     If worth can recommend you.

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170: Thomas Moore.

171 BYRON'S NOTE: These Stanzas were written soon after the appearance of a severe critique in a Northern Review, on a new publication of the British Anacreon.

172 BYRON'S NOTE: A Bard, (Horresco referens), defied his Reviewer to mortal combat; if this example becomes prevalent, our periodical Censors must be dipped in the River Styx, for what else can secure them from the numerous Host of their enraged assailants? B. refers to Moore challenging Jeffrey.



Yet, since in danger, courts abound,  
 Where specious rivals glitter round, 80  
     From snares may saints preserve you;<sup>173</sup>  
 And grant, your love or friendship ne'er  
 From any claim a kindred care,  
     But those who best deserve you.

Not for a moment may you stray 85  
 From Truth's secure unerring way,  
     May no delights decoy;  
 O'er roses may your footsteps move,  
 Your smiles be ever smiles of love,  
     Your tears be tears of joy. 90

Oh! if you wish, that happiness  
 Your coming days and years may bless,  
     And virtues crown your brow:  
 Be, still, as you were wont to be,  
 Spotless as you've been known to me, 95  
     Be, still, as you are now.

And though some trifling share of praise,  
 To cheer my last declining days,  
     To me were doubly dear;  
 Whilst blessing your beloved name, 100  
 I'd wave at once, a *Poet's* name,  
     To prove a *Prophet here*.

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**173:** Lines 73-82 were revised by B. in December 1807: see BLJ I 140.

**Stanzas.**<sup>174</sup>

I would I were a careless child, Still dwelling in my highland cave, Or roaming through the dusky wild, Or bounding o'er the dark blue wave; The cumbrous pomp of Saxon <sup>175</sup> pride	5
Accords not with the freeborn soul, Which loves the mountain's craggy side, And seeks the rocks where billows roll.	
Fortune! take back these cultured lands, Take back this name of splendid sound!	10
I hate the touch of servile hands, I hate the slaves that cringe around: Place me along the rocks I love, Which sound to Occan's wildest roar,	
I ask but this – again to rove Through scenes my youth hath known before.	15
Few are my years, and yet I feel The world was ne'er designed for me, Ah! why do darkening shades conceal The hour when man must cease to be?	20
Once I beheld a splendid dream, A visionary scene of bliss; Truth! wherefore did thy hated beam Awake me to a world like this?	
I loved – but those I loved are gone, Had friends – my early friends are fled; How cheerless feels the heart alone, When all its former hopes are dead!	25
Though gay companions, o'er the bowl, Dispel awhile the sense of ill;	30
Though Pleasure stirs the maddening soul, The heart – the heart is lonely still.	
How dull! to hear the voice of those Whom Rank, or Chance, whom Wealth, or Power, Have made; though neither Friends or Foes, Associates of the festive hour;	35
Give me again, a faithful few, In years and feelings still the same, And I will fly the midnight crew, Where boisterous joy is but a name.	40

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174: POAT pp.168-71.

175 BYRON'S NOTE: Sassenagh, or Saxon, a Gaelic word, signifying either Lowland or English.

And Woman! lovely Woman, thou!  
 My hope, my comforter, my all!  
 How cold must be my bosom now,  
 When e'en thy smiles begin to pall.  
 Without a sigh would I resign 45  
 This busy scene of splendid Woe;  
 To make that calm Contentment mine,  
 Which Virtue knows, or seems to know.

Fain would I fly the haunts of men; 50  
 I seek to shun, not hate mankind,  
 My breast requires the sullen glen,  
 Whose gloom may suit a darkened mind;  
 Oh! that to me the wings were given  
 Which bear the turtle to her nest! 55  
 Then would I cleave the vault of Heaven,  
 To flee away, and be at rest.<sup>176</sup>

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**176 BYRON'S NOTE: Psalm 55, Verse 6. – “And I said, Oh! that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest.” This verse constitutes a part of the most beautiful anthem in our language.**

**Lines Written Beneath an Elm, in the Churchyard of Harrow on the Hill**  
*September 2d, 1807.*<sup>177</sup>

Spot of my youth! whose hoary branches sigh,  
 Swept by the breeze that fans thy cloudless sky,  
 Where now alone, I muse, who oft have trod,  
 With those I loved, thy soft and verdant sod;  
 With those, who scattered far, perchance, deplore,           5  
 Like me, the happy scenes they knew before;  
 Oh! as I trace again thy winding hill,  
 Mine eyes admire, my heart adores thee still,  
 Thou drooping elm! beneath whose boughs I lay,  
 And frequent mused the twilight hours away,           10  
 Where, as they once were wont, my limbs recline,  
 But, ah! without the thoughts which then were mine;  
 How do thy branches, moaning to the blast,  
 Invite the bosom to recall the past,  
 And seem to whisper, as they gently swell,           15  
 "Take, while thou can'st, a lingering, last farewell!"

When Fate shall chill at length this fevered breast,  
 And calm its cares and passions into rest;  
 Oft have I thought 'twould soothe my dying hour,  
 If aught may soothe, when Life resigns her power,           20  
 To know, some humbler grave, some narrow cell,  
 Would hide my bosom, where it loved to dwell;  
 With this fond dream, methinks 'twere sweet to die,  
 And here it lingered, here my heart might lie.  
 Here might I sleep, where all my hopes arose,           25  
 Scene of my youth, and couch of my repose;  
 Forever stretched beneath this mantling shade,  
 Pressed by the turf where once my childhood played;  
 Wrapped by the soil that veils the spot I loved,  
 Mixed with the earth o'er which my footsteps moved;           30  
 Blest by the tongues that charmed my youthful ear,  
 Mourned by the few, my soul acknowledged here;  
 Deplored by those, in early days allied,  
 And unremembered by the world beside.

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177: POAT pp.172-4.

**Song.**<sup>178</sup>

When I roved, a young Highlander, o'er the dark heath,  
 And climbed thy steep summit, oh Morven of snow!<sup>179</sup>  
 To gaze on the torrent that thundered beneath,  
 Or the mist of the tempest that gathered below;<sup>180</sup>  
 Untutored by science, a stranger to fear, 5  
 And rude as the rocks, where my infancy grew,  
 No feeling, save one, to my bosom was dear;  
 Need I say, my sweet Mary, 'twas centred in you?

Yet it could not be Love, for I knew not the name –  
 What passion can dwell in the heart of a child? 10  
 But, still, I perceive an emotion the same  
 As I felt, when a boy, on the crag-covered wild:  
 One image, alone, on my bosom impressed,  
 I loved my bleak regions, nor panted for new;  
 And few were my wants, for my wishes were blest, 15  
 And pure were my thoughts, for my soul was with you.

I arose with the dawn, with my dog as my guide,  
 From mountain to mountain I bounded along;  
 I breasted<sup>181</sup> the billows of *Dee's*<sup>182</sup> rushing tide,  
 And heard, at a distance, the highlander's song, 20  
 At eve, on my heath-covered couch of repose.  
 No dreams, save of Mary, were spread to my view;  
 And warm to the skies my devotions arose,  
 For the first of my prayers was a blessing on you.

I left my bleak home, and my visions are gone; 25  
 The mountains are vanished, my youth is no more;  
 As the last of my race, I must wither alone,  
 And delight but in days I have witnessed before;  
 Ah! splendour has raised, but embittered my lot;  
 More dear were the scenes which my infancy knew; 30  
 Though my hopes may have failed, yet they are not forgot,  
 Though cold is my heart, still it lingers with you.

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**178:** POAT pp.26-9. The poem is addressed to Mary Duff.

**179 BYRON'S NOTE:** Morven, a lofty Mountain in Aberdeenshire: "Gormal of Snow," is an expression frequently to be found in Ossian.

**180 BYRON'S NOTE:** This will not appear extraordinary to those who have been accustomed to the Mountains. It is by no means uncommon on attaining the top of Ben e vis, Ben y bourd, &c. to perceive, between the Summit and the Valley, clouds pouring down rain, and, occasionally, accompanied by lightning, while the Spectator, literally, looks down upon the Storm, perfectly secure from its effects.

**181 BYRON'S NOTE:** "Breasting the lofty surge." SHAKESPEARE. *Henry V*, III (Chorus), 13.

**182 BYRON'S NOTE:** The Dee is a beautiful river, which rises near Mar Lodge, and falls into the sea, at New Aberdeen.

When I see some dark hill point its crest to the sky,  
    I think of the rocks that o'ershadow Colbleen;<sup>183</sup>  
When I see the soft blue of a love-speaking eye,                 35  
    I think of those eyes that endeared the rude scene;  
When, haply, some light-waving locks I behold,  
    That faintly resemble my Mary's in hue,  
I think on the long flowing ringlets of gold,  
    The locks that were sacred to beauty, and you.                 40

Yet the day may arrive, when the mountains once more  
    Shall rise to my sight in their mantles of snow;  
But while these soar above me, unchanged as before,  
    Will Mary be there to receive me? Ah, no!  
Adieu, then, ye hills, where my childhood was bred!             50  
    Thou sweet flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu!  
No home in the forest shall shelter my head,  
    Ah! Mary, what home could be mine, but with you?

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**183 BYRON'S NOTE:** Colbleen is a mountain near the verge of the Highlands, not far from the ruins of Dee Castle.

## APPENDIX 2: Henry Brougham's review of *Hours of Idleness*.

In social terms, *Hours of Idleness* was a great success. Byron's head swelled, and he wrote to Elizabeth Pigot:

August 2d. 1807

My dear Elizabeth – London begins to disgorge its contents, town is empty, consequently I can scribble at leisure, as my occupations are less numerous, in a fortnight I shall depart to fulfil a country engagement, but expect 2 Epistles from you previous to that period. – Ridge, you tell me, does not proceed rapidly in Notts, very possible, in Town things wear a most promising aspect, & a Man whose works are praised by Reviewers, admired by Duchesses & sold by every Bookseller of the Metropolis, does not dedicate much consideration to rustic Readers. – I have now a Review before me entitled, “Literary Recreations” where my Bardship is applauded far beyond my Deserts. I know nothing of the critic, but think him a very discerning gentleman, & myself a devilish clever fellow, his critique pleases me particularly because it is of great length, & a proper quantum of censure is administered, just to give an agreeable relish to the praise, you know I hate insipid, unqualified common-place compliments, if you would wish to see it, tell Ridge to order the 13th Number of “Literary Recreations” for the last Month. I assure you, I have not the most distant Idea, of the Writer of the article, it is printed in a periodical publication, & though I have written a paper (a Review of Wordsworth ) which appears in the same work, I am ignorant of every other person concerned in it, even the Editor, whose name I have not heard. – My Cousin, Lord Alexander Gordon, who resided in the same Hotel, told me his Mother, her Grace of Gordon, requested he would introduce my poetical Lordship, to her highness, as she had bought my volume, admired it extremely, in common with the Rest of the fashionable world, & wished to claim her relationship with the Author. – I was unluckily engaged on an excursion for some days afterwards, & as the Duchess was on the eve of departing for Scotland, have postponed my Introduction till the Winter, when I shall favour this Lady, whose Taste I shall not dispute, with my most sublime & edifying conversation. She is now in the Highlands, & Alexander, took his departure a few days ago, for the same blessed Seat, of “dark-rolling Winds”. – Crosby my London publisher, has disposed of his second importation, & has sent to Ridge for a third (at least so he says) in every Bookseller's I see my own name, & say nothing, but enjoy my fame in secret. – My last Reviewer, kindly requests me to alter my determination of writing no more, and “as a friend to the cause of Literature” begs, I will gratify the Public, with some new work “at no very distant period”. – Who would not be a Bard? Elizabeth, that is to say, if all critics would be so polite, however the others will pay me off I doubt not, for this gentle encouragement. – If so, have at 'em, By the Bye, I have written at my Intervals of leisure, after 2 in the Morning. 380 lines in blank verse, of “Bosworth Field,” I have luckily procured Hutton's account, & shall extend the Poem to 8 or 10 Books, & shall have finished in a year, whether it will be published or not must depend on circumstances. – So much for Egotism, my Laurels have turned my Brain, but the cooling acids of forthcoming criticisms, will probably restore me to Modesty. — — — Southwell, I agree with your Brother, is a damned place, I have done with it, & shall see it no more, (at least in all probability) excepting yourself, I esteem no one within its precincts, you were my only rational companion, & in plain truth I had more respect for you, than the whole Bevy, with whose foibles I amused myself in compliance with their prevailing propensities, you gave yourself more trouble with me & my manuscripts, than a thousand dolls would have done, believe me, I have not forgotten your good nature, in this Circle of Sin, & one day I trust shall be able to evince my gratitude. – As for the village “Lass'es” of every description, my Gratitude is also unbounded, to be equalled only by my contempt, I saw the designs of all parties, while they imagined me every thing to be wished, Adieu

yours very truly  
BYRON

P.S. – Remembrance to Dr. Pigot.<sup>184</sup>

The expression of gratitude is heartfelt – whether Elizabeth Pigot would rather have been a doll than an amanuensis, we can only guess. He writes two more letters to her, then their relationship stops.

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184: BLJ I 130-1; see also I 132, 147, and 167.

Critically, *Hours of Idleness* wasn't badly received: though not many reviewers showed evidence of having read it. The *Beau Monde* opined:

They [the poems] are evidently the production of a young man of cultivated taste and feeling; and if we do not find in them those glowing sentiments which have recommended the works of Anacreon Moore, and Mr. Scott so strongly to the public favour, the want of them is to be attributed to the years, rather than to any want of genius in our noble author.<sup>185</sup>

The *Anti-Jacobin Review* could hardly dispraise the first creative production of a peer of the realm:

... they [Byron's poems] exhibit strong proofs of genius, accompanied by a lively but chastened imagination, a classical taste, and a benevolent heart.<sup>186</sup>

The *Critical Review* account, written by a Trinity man, John Higgs Hunt, was exhortatory:

We must now advert to that nobility of birth which we disdain to use as an apology for faults or a heightener of beauties, for the purpose of urging the writer (whose superior genius and high sense of honour are equally apparent in his works) to follow that course of virtuous ambition for which nature and inclination may best fit him, with energy and perseverance, and thus to run a career worthy of his characters and talents, and of the genuine pride of an illustrious ancestry.<sup>187</sup>

The undergraduate sneering of *The Satirist* made Byron angry, but was not typical of the slavish politeness most reviews showed, and he could easily see its exhibitionism for what it was:

*Oscar of Alva* is by far the best; some of the stanzas rise almost to mediocrity.<sup>188</sup>

In 1808 he challenged Hewson Clarke, who had written offensively in *The Satirist* about him and his bear, to a duel:<sup>189</sup> but not because he thought Clarke had written the review.

Imagine therefore how he must have felt when, six months after writing the above letter to Elizabeth Pigot, he read the following in the *Edinburgh Review*:

The poesy of this young lord belongs to the class which neither gods nor men are said to permit. Indeed, we do not recollect to have seen a quantity of verse with so few deviations in either direction from that exact standard. His effusions are spread over a dead flat, and can no more get above or below the level, than if they were so much stagnant water. As an extenuation of this offence, the noble author is peculiarly forward in pleading minority. We have it in the title-page, and on the very back of the volume; it follows his name like a favourite part of his *style*. Much stress is laid upon it in the preface, and the poems are connected with this general statement of his case, by particular dates, substantiating the age at which each was written. Now, the law upon the point of minority, we hold to be perfectly clear. It is a plea available only to the defendant; no plaintiff can offer it as a supplementary ground of action. Thus, if any suit could be brought against Lord Byron, for the purpose of compelling him to put into court a certain quantity of poetry; and if judgement were given against him; it is highly probable that an exception would be taken, were he to deliver for poetry, the contents of this volume. To this he might plead minority: but as he now makes voluntary tender of the article, he hath no right to sue, on that ground, for the price in good current praise, should the goods be unmarketable. This is our view of the law on the point, and we dare to say, so will it be ruled. Perhaps however, in reality, all that he tells us about his youth, is rather with a view to increase our wonder, than to soften our censures. He possibly means to say, "See how a minor can write! This poem was actually composed by a young man of eighteen, and

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**185:** *Le Beau Monde*, June 1809, p.38 (RR I p.76).

**186:** *The Anti-Jacobin Review* XXIII, December 1807, p.408 (RR I p.4),

**187:** *The Critical Review*, September 1807, p.53 (RR II p.606).

**188:** *The Satirist*, October 1807, p.80 (RR V p.2104).

**189:** See BLJ I 167.



this by one of only sixteen!" – But, alas, we all remember the poetry of Cowley at ten, and Pope at twelve; and so far from hearing, with any degree of surprise, that very poor verses were written by a youth from his leaving school to his leaving college, inclusive, we really believe this to be the most common of all occurrences; that it happens in the life of nine men in ten who are educated in England; and that the tenth man writes better verse than Lord Byron.

His other plea of privilege, our author rather brings forward in order to waive it. He certainly, however, does allude frequently to his family and ancestors – sometimes in poetry, sometimes in notes; and while giving up his claim on the score of rank, he takes care to remember us of Dr Johnson's saying, that when a nobleman appears as an author, his merit should be handsomely acknowledged. In truth, it is this consideration only, that induces us to give Lord Byron's poems a place in our review, beside our desire to counsel him, that he do forthwith abandon poetry, and turn his talents, which are considerable, and his opportunities, which are great, to better account.

With this view, we must beg leave seriously to assure him, that the mere rhyming of the final syllable, even when accompanied by the presence of a certain number of feet, nay, although (which does not always happen) those feet should scan regularly, and have been all counted accurately upon the fingers, – is not the whole art of poetry. We would entreat him to believe, that a certain portion of liveliness, somewhat of fancy, is necessary to constitute a poem; and that a poem in the present day, to be read, must contain at least one thought, either in a little degree different from the ideas of former writers, or differently expressed.



*Henry Brougham.*

*Byron, so far as can be told, never found out who wrote this review. He thought it had been written by Francis Jeffrey, the editor of the Edinburgh Review. Henry Brougham (1778-1868), was a Scots Whig advocate and an ambitious politician, who was eventually to become Lord Chancellor. Byron, imagining him to have spread rumours about himself and Shelley in Switzerland in 1816 (which Brougham probably did), attacked him in some stanzas at the end of Don Juan Canto I, which were in the section where Julia's letter goes now.*

*Brougham's forte, as can be seen, seems at first to be the social sneer, not the literary critique. Writing from a distaste for the idle aristocracy (he was not himself rich), he has expended 648 of his 1936 words without quoting a single line or referring to a single title. He continues:*

We put it to his candour, whether there is any thing so deserving the name of poetry in verses like the following, written in 1806, and whether, if a youth of eighteen could say any thing so interesting to his ancestors, a youth of nineteen should publish it.

Shades of heroes, farewell! your descendant, departing  
From the seat of his ancestors, bids you, adieu!  
Abroad, or at home, your remembrance imparting  
New courage, he'll think upon glory, and you.

Though a tear dim his eye, at this sad separation,  
'Tis nature, not fear, that excites his regret.  
Far distant he goes, with the same emulation;  
The fame of his fathers he ne'er can forget.

That fame, and that memory, still will he cherish,  
He vows, that he never will disgrace your renown.  
Like you will he live, or like you will he perish;  
When decay'd, may he mingle his dust with your own.

Now we positively do assert, that there is nothing better than these stanzas in the whole compass of the noble minor's volume.

Lord Byron should also have a care of attempting what the greatest poets have done before him, for comparisons (as he must have had occasion to see at his writing-master's) are odious, – Gray's "Ode on Eton College", should really have kept out the ten hobbling stanzas "on a distant view of the village and school of Harrow."

Where fancy, yet, joys to retrace the resemblance,  
Of comrades, in friendship and mischief allied;  
How welcome to me, your ne'er fading remembrance,  
Which rests in the bosom, though hope is deny'd!

[*It's hard to know whether Brougham is being polite and understated here, or impercipient. Gray's "Ode on Eton College" is quoted twice in, and forms a vital subtext to, Childish Recollections, a poem he doesn't mention.*]

In like manner the exquisite lines of Mr Rogers, "On a Tear", might have warned the noble author off those premises, and spared us a whole dozen such stanzas as the following.

Mild Charity's glow,  
To us mortals below,  
Shows the soul from barbarity clear;  
Compassion will melt,  
Where this virtue is felt,  
And its dew is diffus'd in a Tear.

The man doom'd to sail,  
With the blast of the gale,  
Through billows Atlantic to steer,  
As he bends o'er the wave,  
Which may soon be his grave,  
The green sparkles bright with a Tear.

And so of instances in which former poets had failed. Thus, we do not think Lord Byron was made for translating, during his nonage, "Adrian's Address to his Soul", when Pope succeeded so indifferently in the attempt. If our readers, however, are of another opinion, they may look at it.

Ah! gentle, fleeting, wav'ring sprite,  
Friend and associate of this clay!  
To what unknown region borne,  
Wilt thou, flow, wing thy distant flight?  
No more, with wonted humour gay,  
But pallid, cheerless, and forlorn.

However, be this as it may, we fear his translations and imitations are great favourites with Lord Byron. We have them of all kinds, from Anacreon to Ossian; and, viewing them as school exercises they may pass. Only, why print them after they have had their day and served their turn? And why call the thing in p. 79. a translation, where two words (*θελω λεγειν*) of the original are expanded into four lines,<sup>190</sup> and the other thing in p. 81, where *μεσονυκτιοις ποθ' ωραις*, is rendered by means of six hobbling verses?<sup>191</sup> – As to his Ossianic poesy, we are not very good judges, being, in truth, so moderately skilled in that species of composition, that we should, in all probability, be criticizing some bit of the genuine Macpherson itself, were we to express our opinion of Lord Byron's rhapsodies. If, then, the following beginning of a "Song of bards," is by his Lordship, we venture to object to it, as far as we can comprehend it. "What form rises on the roar of clouds, whose dark ghost gleams on the red stream of tempests? His voice rolls on the thunder; 'tis Orla, the brown chief of Otihoa. He was," &c. After detaining this "brown chief"

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**190:** Brougham refers to "Translation from Anacreon. To his Lyre" (Anacreontea 23), where B. does indeed expand considerably.

**191:** See "Anacreon, Ode 3" (Anacreontea 33). Brougham is here inaccurate. B. does not expand the one line he quotes.

some time, the bards conclude by giving him their advice to “raise his fair locks;” then to “spread them on the arch of the rainbow;” and “to smile through the tears of the storm.” Of this kind of thing there are no less than nine pages; and we can so far venture an opinion in their favour, that they look very like Macpherson; and we are positive they are pretty nearly as stupid and tiresome.

It is a sort of privilege of poets to be egotists; but they should “use it as not abusing it;” and particularly one who piques himself (though indeed at the ripe age of nineteen), of being “an infant bard” – (“The artless Helicon I boast is youth”) – should either not know, or should seem not to know, so much about his own ancestry. Besides a poem above cited on the family seat of the Byrons, we have another of eleven pages, on the self-same subject, introduced with an apology, “he certainly had no intention of inserting it;” but really, “the particular request of some friends,” &c, &c. It concludes with five stanzas on himself; “the last and youngest of a noble line.” There is a good deal also about his maternal ancestors in a poem on Lachin-y-gair, a mountain where he spent part of his youth, and might have learnt that “pibroch” is not a bagpipe, any more than duet means a fiddle.

As the author has dedicated so large a part of his volume to immortalize his employments at school and college, we cannot possibly dismiss it without presenting the reader with a specimen of these ingenious effusions. In an ode with a Greek motto, called Granta, we have the following magnificent stanzas.

There, in apartments small and damp,  
The candidate for college prizes  
Sits poring by the midnight lamp,  
Goes late to bed, yet early rises.

Who reads false quantities in Sele,  
Or puzzles o'er the deep triangle;  
Depriv'd of many a wholesome meal,  
In barbarous Latin, doom'd to wrangle.

Renouncing every pleasing page,  
From authors of historic use;  
Preferring to the lettered sage,  
The square of the hypotenuse.

Still harmless are these occupations,  
That hurt none but the hapless student,  
Compar'd with other recreations  
Which bring together the imprudent.

We are sorry to hear so bad an account of the college psalmody as is contained in the following Attic stanzas.

Our choir would scarcely be excus'd,  
Even as a band of raw beginners;  
All mercy, now, must be refus'd  
To such a set of croaking sinners.

If David, when his toils were ended,  
Had heard these blockheads sing before him,  
To us, his psalms had ne'er descended;  
In furious mood he would have tore 'em.

But whatever judgment may be passed on the poems of this noble minor, it seems we must take them as we find them, and be content; – for they are the last we shall ever have from him. He is at best, he says, but an intruder into the groves of Parnassus; he never lived in a garret, like thorough-bred poets; and “though he once roved a careless mountaineer in the highlands of Scotland,” he has not of late enjoyed this advantage. Moreover, he expects no profit from his publication; and whether it succeeds or not, “It is highly improbable, from his situation and pursuits hereafter,” that he should again condescend to become an author. Therefore, let us take what we get and be thankful. What right have we poor devils to be nice? We are well off to have got so much from a man of this Lord's station who does not live in a garret, but “has the sway” of

Newstead Abbey. Again, we say, yet us be thankful; and, with honest Sancho, bid God bless the giver, nor look the gift horse in the mouth.<sup>192</sup>

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**192:** *The Edinburgh Review*, January 1808, XI, pp. 285-9.