

## LXXXIII.

I've seen some balls and revels in my time,  
And stay'd them over for some silly reason,  
And then I look'd (I hope it was no crime)  
To see what lady best stood out the season;  
And though I've seen some thousands in their prime,  
Lovely and pleasing, and who still may please on,  
I never saw but one (the stars withdrawn)  
Whose bloom could after dancing dare the dawn.

## LXXXIV.

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

## LXXXV.

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

## LXXXVI.

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

## LXXXVII.

The Count and Laura found their boat at last,  
And homeward floated o'er the silent tide,  
Discussing all the dances gone and past;  
The dancers and their dresses, too, beside;  
Some little scandals eke: but all aghast  
(As to their palace stairs the rowers glide)  
Sate Laura by the side of her Adorer,<sup>1</sup>  
When lo! the Mussulman was there before her.

## LXXXVIII.

"Sir," said the Count, with brow exceeding grave,  
"Your unexpected presence here will make  
It necessary for myself to crave  
Its import? But perhaps 'tis a mistake;  
I hope it is so; and, at once to wave  
All compliment, I hope so for *your* sake:  
You understand my meaning, or you *shall*."  
"Sir," (quoth the Turk) "'tis no mistake at all.

## LXXXIX.

"That lady is *my wife!*" Much wonder paints  
The lady's changing cheek, as well it might;  
But where an Englishwoman sometimes faints,  
Italian females don't do so outright;  
They only call a little on their saints,  
And then come to themselves, almost or quite;  
Which saves much hartshorn, salts, and sprinkling faces,  
And cutting stays, as usual in such cases.

<sup>1</sup> ["Sate Laura with a kind of comic horror."—MS.]

## XC.

She said,—what could she say? Why, not a word:  
But the Count courteously invited in  
The stranger, much appeas'd by what he heard:  
"Such things, perhaps, we'd best discuss within,"  
Said he; "don't let us make ourselves absurd  
In public, by a scene, nor raise a din,  
For then the chief and only satisfaction  
Will be much quizzing on the whole transaction."

## XCII.

They enter'd, and for coffee call'd—it came,  
A beverage for Turks and Christians both,  
Although the way they make it's not the same.  
Now Laura, much recover'd, or less loth  
To speak, cries "Beppo! what's your pagan name?  
Bless me! your beard is of amazing growth!  
And how came you to keep away so long?  
Are you not sensible 't was very wrong?"

## XCIII.

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

## XCIV.

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

## XCV.

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

## XCVI.

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

## XCVII.

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

## XCVII.

They reach'd the island, he transferr'd his lading,  
And self and live stock, to another bottom,  
And pass'd for a true Turkey-merchant, trading  
With goods of various names, but I forgot 'em.  
However, he got off by this evading,  
Or else the people would perhaps have shot him;  
And thus at Venice<sup>1</sup> landed to reclaim  
His wife, religion, house, and Christian name.

## XCVIII.

His wife received, the patriarch re-baptized him,  
(He made the church a present, by the way);  
He then threw off the garments which disguised him,  
And borrow'd the Count's smallclothes for a day:

His friends the more for his long absence prized him,  
Finding he'd wherewithal to make them gay,  
With dinners, where he oft became the laugh of  
them,  
For stories—but I don't believe the half of them.

## XCIX.

Whate'er his youth had suffer'd, his old age  
With wealth and talking make him some amends;  
Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,  
I've heard the Count and he were always friends.  
My pen is at the bottom of a page,  
Which being finish'd, here the story ends;  
'Tis to be wish'd it had been sooner done,  
But stories somehow lengthen when begun.<sup>2</sup>

Mazeppa.<sup>3</sup>

## ADVERTISEMENT.

"CELUI qui remplissait alors cette place était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le

<sup>1</sup> ["You ask me," says Lord Byron, in a letter written in 1820, "for a volume of Manners, &c. on Italy. Perhaps I am in the case to know more of them than most Englishmen, because I have lived among the natives, and in parts of the country where Englishmen never resided before (I speak of Romagna and this place particularly); but there are many reasons why I do not choose to treat in print on such a subject. Their moral is not your moral; their life is not your life; you would not understand it: it is not English, nor French, nor German, which you would all understand. The conventual education, the cavalier servitude, the habits of thought and living, are so entirely different, and the difference becomes so much more striking the more you live intimately with them, that I know not how to make you comprehend a people who are at once temperate and profligate, serious in their characters and buffoons in their amusements, capable of impressions and passions, which are at once sudden and durable (what you find in no other nation), and who actually have no society (what we would call so), as you may see by their comedies; they have no real comedy, not even in Goldoni, and that is because they have no society to draw it from. Their conversazioni are not society at all. They go to the theatre to talk, and into company to hold their tongues. The women sit in a circle, and the men gather into groups, or they play at dreary faro, or 'lotto reale,' for small sums. Their academie are concerts like our own, with better music and more form. Their best things are the carnival balls and masquerades, when every body runs mad for six weeks. After their dinners and suppers they make extempore verses and buffoon one another; but it is in a humour which you would not enter into, ye of the north.—In their houses it is better. As for the women, from the fisherman's wife up to the nobil dama, their system has its rules, and its fitnesses, and its decourus, so as to be reduced to a kind of discipline or game at hearts, which admits few deviations, unless you wish to lose it. They are extremely tenacious, and jealous as furies, not permitting their lovers even to marry if they can help it, and keeping them always close to them in public as in private, whenever they can. In short, they transfer marriage to adultery, and strike the *not* out of that commandment. The reason is, that they marry for their parents, and love for themselves. They exact fidelity from a lover as a debt of honour, while they pay the husband as a tradesman, that is, not at all. You hear a person's character, male or female, canvassed, not as depending on their conduct to their husbands or wives, but to their mistress or lover. If I wrote a quarto, I don't know that I could do more than amplify what I have here noted."]

<sup>2</sup> [This extremely clever and amusing performance affords a very curious and complete specimen of a kind of diction and composition of which our English literature has hitherto presented very few examples. It is, in itself, absolutely a thing of nothing—without story, characters, sentiments, or

palatinat de Podolie: il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais ayant été

intelligible object;—a mere piece of lively and loquacious prattling, in short, upon all kinds of frivolous subjects,—a sort of ray and desultory babbling about Italy and England, Turks, balls, literature, and fish sauces. But still there is something very engaging in the uniform gaiety, politeness, and good humour of the author, and something still more striking and admirable in the matchless facility with which he has cast into regular, and even difficult, versification the unmingled, unconstrained, and unselected language of the most light, familiar, and ordinary conversation. With great skill and felicity, he has furnished us with an example of about one hundred stanzas of good verse, entirely composed of common words, in their common places; never presenting us with one sprig of what is called poetical diction, or even making use of a single inversion, either to raise the style or assist the rhyme, but running on in an inexhaustible series of good easy colloquial phrases, and finding them fall into verse by some unaccountable and happy fatality. In this great and characteristic quality it is almost invariably excellent. In some other respects, it is more unequal. About one half is as good as possible, in the style to which it belongs; the other half bears, perhaps, too many marks of that haste with which such a work must necessarily be written. Some passages are rather too snappish, and some run too much on the cheap and rather plebeian humour of out-of-the-way rhymes, and strange-sounding words and epithets. But the greater part is extremely pleasant, amiable, and gentlemanlike.—JEFFREY.]

<sup>3</sup> [The following "lively, spirited, and pleasant tale," as Mr. Gifford calls it, on the margin of the MS., was written in the autumn of 1818, at Ravenna. We extract the following from a review of the time:—"MAZEPPA is a very fine and spirited sketch of a very noble story, and is every way worthy of its author. The story is a well-known one; namely, that of the young Pole, who, being bound naked on the back of a wild horse, on account of an intrigue with the lady of a certain great noble of his country, was carried by his steed into the heart of the Ukraine, and being there picked up by some Cossacks, in a state apparently of utter hopelessness and exhaustion, recovered, and lived to be long after the prince and leader of the nation among whom he had arrived in this extraordinary manner. Lord Byron has represented the strange and wild incidents of this adventure, as being related in a half serious, half sportive way, by Mazeppa himself, to no less a person than Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, in some of whose last campaigns the Cossack Hetman took a distinguished part. He tells it during the desolate bivouac of Charles and the few friends who fled with him towards Turkey, after the bloody overthrow of Pultowa. There is not a little of beauty and gracefulness in this way of setting the picture;—the age of Mazeppa—the calm, practised indifference with which he now submits to the worst of fortune's deeds—the heroic, unthinking coldness of the royal

découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secoururent : il resta long-tems parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques : sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine."—VOLTAIRE, *Hist. de Charles XII.* p. 196.

"Le roi fuyant, et poursuivi, eut son cheval tué sous lui ; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans la fuite, ce conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la bataille."—p. 216.

"Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse où il était rompit dans la marche ; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrâce, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois ; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs, qui le cherchaient de tous côtés."—p. 218.<sup>1</sup>

## Mazeppa.

### I.

'T WAS after dread Pultowa's day,  
When fortune left the royal Swede.  
Around a slaughter'd army lay,  
No more to combat and to bleed.  
The power and glory of the war,  
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,  
Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,  
And Moscow's walls were safe again,  
Until a day more dark and drear,  
And a more memorable year,  
Should give to slaughter and to shame  
A mightier host and haughtier name ;  
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,  
A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

### II.

Such was the hazard of the die ;  
The wounded Charles was taught to fly  
By day and night through field and flood,  
Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood ;  
For thousands fell that flight to aid :  
And not a voice was heard t'upbraid  
Ambition in his humbled hour,  
When truth had nought to dread from power.  
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave  
His own—and died the Russians' slave.

madman to whom he speaks—the dreary and perilous accompaniments of the scene around the speaker and the audience,—all contribute to throw a very striking charm both of preparation and of contrast over the wild story of the Hetman. Nothing can be more beautiful, in like manner,

This too sinks after many a league  
Of well sustain'd, but vain fatigue ;  
And in the depth of forests, darkling  
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—  
The beacons of surrounding foes—  
A king must lay his limbs at length.  
Are these the laurels and repose  
For which the nations strain their strength ?  
They laid him by a savage tree,  
In outworn nature's agony ;  
His wounds were stiff—his limbs were stark—  
The heavy hour was chill and dark ;  
The fever in his blood forbade  
A transient slumber's fitful aid :  
And thus it was ; but yet through all,  
Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,  
And made, in this extreme of ill,  
His pangs the vassals of his will :  
All silent and subdued were they,  
As once the nations round him lay.

### III.

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

### IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,  
And laid his lance beneath his oak,  
Felt if his arms in order good  
The long day's march had well withstood—  
If still the powder fill'd the pan,  
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock—

than the account of the love—the guilty love—the fruits of which had been so miraculous."]

<sup>1</sup> [For some authentic and interesting particulars concerning the Hetman Mazeppa, see Barrow's "Memoir of the Life of Peter the Great."]

His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,  
And whether they had chafed his belt—  
And next the venerable man,  
From out his havresack and can,  
Prepared and spread his slender stock ;  
And to the monarch and his men  
The whole or portion offer'd then  
With far less of inquietude  
Than courtiers at a banquet would.  
And Charles of this his slender share  
With smiles partook a moment there,  
To force of cheer a greater show,  
And seem above both wounds and woe ;—  
And then he said—"Of all our band,  
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,  
In skirmish, march, or forage, none  
Can less have said or more have done  
Than thee, Mazeppa ! On the earth  
So fit a pair had never birth,  
Since Alexander's days till now,  
As thy Bucephalus and thou :  
All Scythia's fame to thine should yield  
For pricking on o'er flood and field."  
Mazeppa answer'd—"Ill betide  
The school wherein I learn'd to ride !"  
Quoth Charles—"Old Hetman, wherefore so,  
Since thou hast learn'd the art so well ?"  
Mazeppa said—"T were long to tell ;  
And we have many a league to go,  
With every now and then a blow,  
And ten to one at least the foe,  
Before our steeds may graze at ease,  
Beyond the swift Borysthenes :  
And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,  
And I will be the sentinel  
Of this your troop."—"But I request,"  
Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell  
This tale of thine, and I may reap,  
Perchance, from this the boon of sleep ;  
For at this moment from my eyes  
The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, sire, with such a hope, I'll track  
My seventy years of memory back :  
I think 't was in my twentieth spring,—  
Ay, 't was,—when Casimir was king—  
John Casimir,—I was his page  
Six summers, in my earlier age :  
A learned monarch, faith ! was he,  
And most unlike your majesty :  
He made no wars, and did not gain  
New realms to lose them back again ;  
And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)  
He reign'd in most unseemly quiet ;  
Not that he had no cares to vex,  
He loved the muses and the sex ;  
And sometimes these so froward are,  
They made him wish himself at war ;  
But soon his wrath being o'er, he took  
Another mistress, or new book ;  
And then he gave prodigious fêtes—  
All Warsaw gather'd round his gates  
To gaze upon his splendid court,  
And dames, and chiefs, of princely port :  
He was the Polish Solomon,  
So sung his poets, all but one,  
Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,  
And boasted that he could not flatter.

It was a court of jousts and mimes,  
Where every courtier tried at rhymes ;  
Even I for once produced some verses,  
And sign'd my odes 'Despairing Thyrsis.'  
There was a certain Palatine,  
A count of far and high descent,  
Rich as a salt or silver mine ;<sup>1</sup>  
And he was proud, ye may divine,  
As if from heaven he had been sent :  
He had such wealth in blood and ore  
As few could match beneath the throne ;  
And he would gaze upon his store,  
And o'er his pedigree would pore,  
Until by some confusion led,  
Which almost look'd like want of head,  
He thought their merits were his own.  
His wife was not of his opinion—  
His junior she by thirty years—  
Grew daily tired of his dominion ;  
And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,  
To virtue a few farewell tears,  
A restless dream or two, some glances  
At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,  
Awaited but the usual chances,  
Those happy accidents which render  
The coldest dames so very tender,  
To deck her Count with titles given,  
'T is said, as passports into heaven ;  
But, strange to say, they rarely boast  
Of these, who have deserved them most.

### V.

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

<sup>1</sup> This comparison of a "salt mine" may, perhaps, be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

But through it stole a tender light,  
Like the first moonrise of midnight;  
Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,  
Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;  
All love, half langour, and half fire,  
Like saints that at the stake expire,  
And lift their raptured looks on high,  
As though it were a joy to die.<sup>1</sup>

A brow like a midsummer lake,  
Transparent with the sun therein,  
When waves no murmur dare to make,  
And heaven beholds her face within.  
A cheek and lip — but why proceed?  
I loved her then — I love her still;  
And such as I am, love indeed  
In fierce extremes — in good and ill.  
But still we love even in our rage,  
And haunted to our very age  
With the vain shadow of the past,  
As is Mazeppa to the last.

## VI.

"We met — we gazed — I saw, and sigh'd,  
She did not speak, and yet replied;  
There are ten thousand tones and signs  
We hear and see, but none defines —  
Involuntary sparks of thought,  
Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,  
And form a strange intelligence,  
Alike mysterious and intense,  
Which link the burning chain that binds,  
Without their will, young hearts and minds;  
Conveying, as the electric wire,  
We know not how, the absorbing fire. —  
I saw, and sigh'd — in silence wept,  
And still reluctant distance kept,  
Until I was made known to her,  
And we might then and there confer  
Without suspicion — then, even then,  
I long'd, and was resolved to speak;  
But on my lips they died again,  
The accents tremulous and weak,  
Until one hour. — There is a game,  
A frivolous and foolish play,  
Wherewith we while away the day;  
It is — I have forgot the name —  
And we to this, it seems, were set,  
By some strange chance, which I forget:  
I reckon not if I won or lost,

It was enough for me to be  
So near to hear, and oh! to see  
The being whom I loved the most. —  
I watch'd her as a sentinel,  
(May ours this dark night watch as well!)

Until I saw, and thus it was,  
That she was pensive, nor perceived  
Her occupation, nor was grieved  
Nor glad to lose or gain; but still  
Play'd on for hours, as if her will  
Yet bound her to the place, though not  
That hours might be the winning lot.<sup>2</sup>  
Then through my brain the thought did pass  
Even as a flash of lightning there,  
That there was something in her air  
Which would not doom me to despair;

<sup>1</sup> ["Until it proves a joy to die." — MS.]

And on the thought my words broke forth,  
All incoherent as they were —  
Their eloquence was little worth,  
But yet she listen'd — 't is enough —  
Who listens once will listen twice;  
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,  
And one refusal no rebuff.

## VII.

"I loved, and was beloved again —  
They tell me, Sire, you never knew  
Those gentle frailties; if 't is true,  
I shorten all my joy or pain;  
To you 't would seem absurd as vain;  
But all men are not born to reign,  
Or o'er their passions, or as you  
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.  
I am — or rather was — a prince,  
A chief of thousands, and could lead  
Them on where each would foremost bleed;  
But could not o'er myself evince  
The like control — But to resume:

I loved, and was beloved again;  
In sooth, it is a happy doom,  
But yet where happiest ends in pain. —

We met in secret, and the hour  
Which led me to that lady's bower  
Was fiery Expectation's dower.  
My days and nights were nothing — all  
Except that hour which doth recall  
In the long lapse from youth to age  
No other like itself — I'd give  
The Ukraine back again to live  
It o'er once more — and be a page,  
The happy page, who was the lord  
Of one soft heart, and his own sword,  
And had no other gem nor wealth  
Save nature's gift of youth and health. —  
We met in secret — doubly sweet,  
Some say, they find it so to meet;  
I know not that — I would have given  
My life but to have call'd her mine  
In the full view of earth and heaven;  
For I did oft and long repine  
That we could only meet by stealth.

## VIII.

"For lovers there are many eyes,  
And such there were on us; — the devil  
On such occasions should be civil —  
The devil! — I'm loth to do him wrong,  
It might be some untoward saint,  
Who would not be at rest too long,  
But to his pious bile gave vent —  
But one fair night, some lurking spies  
Surprised and seized us both.  
The Count was something more than wroth —  
I was unarm'd; but if in steel,  
All cap-à-pie from head to heel,  
What 'gainst their numbers could I do? —  
'T was near his castle, far away  
From city or from succour near,  
And almost on the break of day;

<sup>2</sup> [ ——— "but not  
For that which we had both forgot." — MS.]

I did not think to see another,  
My moments seem'd reduced to few;  
And with one prayer to Mary Mother,  
And, it may be, a saint or two,  
As I resign'd me to my fate,  
They led me to the castle gate:  
Theresa's doom I never knew,  
Our lot was henceforth separate. —  
An angry man, ye may opine,  
Was he, the proud Count Palatine;  
And he had reason good to be,  
But he was most enraged lest such  
An accident should chance to touch  
Upon his future pedigree;  
Nor less amazed, that such a blot  
His noble 'scutcheon should have got,  
While he was highest of his line;  
Because unto himself he seem'd  
The first of men, nor less he deem'd  
In others' eyes, and most in mine.  
'Sdeath! with a page — perchance a king  
Had reconciled him to the thing;  
But with a stripling of a page —  
I felt — but cannot paint his rage.

## IX.

"Bring forth the horse!" — the horse was brought;  
In truth, he was a noble steed,  
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,  
Who look'd as though the speed of thought  
Were in his limbs; but he was wild,  
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,  
With spur and bridle undefiled —  
'T was but a day he had been caught;  
And snorting, with erected mane,  
And struggling fiercely, but in vain,  
In the full foam of wrath and dread  
To me the desert-born was led:  
They took me on, that menial throng,  
Upon his back with many a thong;  
They loosed him with a sudden lash —  
Away! — away! — and on we dash! —  
Torrents less rapid and less rash.

## X.

"Away! — away! — My breath was gone —  
I saw not where he hurried on:  
'T was scarcely yet the break of day,  
And on he foam'd — away! — away! —  
The last of human sounds which rose,  
As I was darted from my foes,  
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,  
Which on the wind came roaring after  
A moment from that rabble rout:  
With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,  
And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane  
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,  
And writhing half my form about,  
How'd back my curse; but 'midst the tread,  
The thunder of my courser's speed,  
Perchance they did not hear nor heed:  
It vexes me — for I would fain  
Have paid their insult back again.  
I paid it well in after days:  
There is not of that castle gate,  
Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,  
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;

Nor of its fields a blade of grass,  
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,  
Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;  
And many a time ye there might pass,  
Nor dream that e'er that fortress was:  
I saw its turrets in a blaze,  
Their crackling battlements all cleft,  
And the hot lead pour down like rain  
From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,  
Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.  
They little thought that day of pain,  
When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,  
They bade me to destruction dash,  
That one day I should come again,  
With twice five thousand horse, to thank  
The Count for his uncourteous ride.  
They play'd me then a bitter prank,  
When, with the wild horse for my guide,  
They bound me to his foaming flank:  
At length I play'd them one as frank —  
For time at last sets all things even —  
And if we do but watch the hour,  
There never yet was human power  
Which could evade, if unforgiven,  
The patient search and vigil long  
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

## XI.

"Away, away, my steed and I,  
Upon the pinions of the wind,  
All human dwellings left behind;  
We sped like meteors through the sky,  
When with its crackling sound the night  
Is chequer'd with the northern light:  
Town — village — none were on our track,  
But a wild plain of far extent,  
And bounded by a forest black;  
And, save the scarce seen battlement  
On distant heights of some strong hold,  
Against the Tartars built of old,  
No trace of man. The year before  
A Turkish army had march'd o'er;  
And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,  
The verdure flies the bloody sod: —  
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,  
And a low breeze crept moaning by —  
I could have answer'd with a sigh —  
But fast we fled, away, away —  
And I could neither sigh nor pray;  
And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain  
Upon the courser's bristling mane;  
But, snorting still with rage and fear,  
He flew upon his far career:  
At times I almost thought, indeed,  
He must have slacken'd in his speed;  
But no — my bound and slender frame  
Was nothing to his angry might,  
And merely like a spur became:  
Each motion which I made to free  
My swoln limbs from their agony  
Increas'd his fury and afright:  
I tried my voice, — 't was faint and low,  
But yet he swerv'd as from a blow;  
And, starting to each accent, sprang  
As from a sudden trumpet's clang:  
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,  
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;

And in my tongue the thirst became  
A something fierier far than flame.

## XII.

"We near'd the wild wood — 't was so wide,  
I saw no bounds on either side;  
'T was studded with old sturdy trees,  
That bent not to the roughest breeze  
Which howls down from Siberia's waste,  
And strips the forest in its haste, —  
But these were few, and far between  
Set thick with shrubs more young and green,  
Luxuriant with their annual leaves,  
Ere strown by those autumnal eves  
That nip the forest's foliage dead,  
Discolour'd with a lifeless red,  
Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore  
Upon the slain when battle's o'er,  
And some long winter's night hath shed  
Its frost o'er every tombless head,  
So cold and stark the raven's beak  
May peck unpierced each frozen cheek:  
'T was a wild waste of underwood,  
And here and there a chestnut stood,  
The strong oak, and the hardy pine;  
But far apart — and well it were,  
Or else a different lot were mine —

The boughs gave way, and did not tear  
My limbs; and I found strength to bear  
My wounds, already scarr'd with cold —  
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.  
We rustled through the leaves like wind,  
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;  
By night I heard them on the track,  
Their troop came hard upon our back,  
With their long gallop, which can tire  
The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:  
Where'er we flew they follow'd on,  
Nor left us with the morning sun;  
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,  
At day-break winding through the wood,  
And through the night had heard their feet  
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.  
Oh! how I wish'd for spear or sword,  
At least to die amidst the horde,  
And perish — if it must be so —  
At bay, destroying many a foe.  
When first my courser's race begun,  
I wish'd the goal already won;  
But now I doubted strength and speed.  
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed  
Had nerved him like the mountain-roe;  
Nor faster falls the blinding snow  
Which whelms the peasant near the door  
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,  
Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,  
Than through the forest-paths he past —  
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;  
All furious as a favour'd child  
Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still —  
A woman piqued — who has her will.

## XIII.

"The wood was past; 't was more than noon,  
But chill the air, although in June;

<sup>1</sup> [The reviewer already quoted says, — "As the Hetman proceeds, it strikes us there is a much closer resemblance to the fiery flow of Walter Scott's chivalrous narrative, than in

Or it might be my veins ran cold —  
Prolong'd endurance tames the bold;  
And I was then not what I seem,  
But headlong as a wintry stream,  
And wore my feelings out before  
I well could count their causes o'er:  
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,  
The tortures which beset my path,  
Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,  
Thus bound in nature's nakedness;  
Sprung from a race whose rising blood  
When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,  
And trodden hard upon, is like  
The rattle-snake's, in act to strike,  
What marvel if this worn-out trunk  
Beneath its woes a moment sunk?  
The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,  
I seem'd to sink upon the ground;  
But err'd, for I was fastly bound.  
My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,  
And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more:  
The skies spun like a mighty wheel;  
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,  
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,  
Which saw no farther: he who dies  
Can die no more than then I died.  
O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,  
I felt the blackness come and go,  
And strove to wake; but could not make  
My senses climb up from below:  
I felt as on a plank at sea,  
When all the waves that dash o'er thee,  
At the same time upheave and whelm,  
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.  
My undulating life was as  
The fancied lights that flitting pass  
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when  
Fever begins upon the brain;  
But soon it pass'd, with little pain,  
But a confusion worse than such:  
I own that I should deem it much,  
Dying, to feel the same again;  
And yet I do suppose we must  
Feel far more ere we turn to dust:  
No matter; I have bared my brow  
Full in Death's face — before — and now.<sup>1</sup>

## XIV.

"My thoughts came back; where was I? Cold,  
And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse  
Life reassumed its lingering hold,  
And throbb'd by throbb: till grown a pang  
Which for a moment would convulse,  
My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill;  
My ear with uncouth noises rang,  
My heart began once more to thrill;  
My sight return'd, though dim; alas!  
And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.  
Methought the dash of waves was nigh;  
There was a gleam too of the sky,  
Studded with stars; — it is no dream;  
The wild horse swims the wilder stream!  
The bright broad river's gushing tide  
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,

any of Lord Byron's previous pieces. Nothing can be grander than the sweep and torrent of the horse's speed, and the slow, unwearied, inflexible pursuit of the wolves."<sup>1</sup>

And we are half-way, struggling o'er  
To yon unknown and silent shore.  
The waters broke my hollow trance,  
And with a temporary strength  
My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.  
My courser's broad breast proudly braves,  
And dashes off the ascending waves,  
And onward we advance!  
We reach the slippery shore at length,  
A haven I but little prized,  
For all behind was dark and drear  
And all before was night and fear.  
How many hours of night or day  
In those suspended pangs I lay,  
I could not tell; I scarcely knew  
If this were human breath I drew.

## XV.

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

## XVI.

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

Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,  
And call'd the radiance from their cars,<sup>1</sup>  
And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,  
With lonely lustre, all his own.

## XVII.

"Up rose the sun; the mists were curl'd  
Back from the solitary world  
Which lay around — behind — before;  
What boot'd it to traverse o'er  
Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,  
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,  
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;  
No sign of travel — none of toil;  
The very air was mute;  
And not an insect's shrill small horn,  
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne  
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,  
Panting as if his heart would burst,  
The weary brute still stagger'd on;  
And still we were — or seem'd — alone:  
At length, while reeling on our way,  
Methought I heard a courser neigh,  
From out yon tuft of blackening firs.  
Is it the wind those branches stirs?  
No, no! from out the forest prance  
A trampling troop; I see them come!  
In one vast squadron they advance!  
I strove to cry — my lips were dumb.  
The steeds rush on in plunging pride;  
But where are they the reins to guide?  
A thousand horse — and none to ride!  
With flowing tail, and flying mane,  
Wide nostrils — never stretch'd by pain,  
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,  
And feet that iron never shod,  
And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod,  
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,  
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,  
Came thickly thundering on,  
As if our faint approach to meet;  
The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,  
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,  
A moment, with a faint low neigh,  
He answer'd, and then fell;  
With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,  
And reeking limbs immoveable,  
His first and last career is done!  
On came the troop — they saw him stoop,  
They saw me strangely bound along  
His back with many a bloody thong:  
They stop — they start — they snuff the air,  
Gallop a moment here and there,  
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,  
Then plunging back with sudden bound,  
Headed by one black mighty steed,  
Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,  
Without a single speck or hair  
Of white upon his shaggy hide;  
They snort — they foam — neigh — swerve aside,  
And backward to the forest fly,  
By instinct, from a human eye. —  
They left me there to my despair,  
Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,  
Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,

<sup>1</sup> ["Rose crimson, and forbad the stars  
To sparkle in their radiant cars." — MS.]

Relieved from that unwonted weight,  
From whence I could not extricate  
Nor him nor me — and there we lay  
The dying on the dead !  
I little deem'd another day  
Would see my houseless, helpless head.

“ And there from morn till twilight bound,  
I felt the heavy hours toil round,  
With just enough of life to see  
My last of suns go down on me,  
In hopeless certainty of mind,  
That makes us feel at length resign'd  
To that which our foreboding years  
Presents the worst and last of fears  
Inevitable — even a boon,  
Nor more unkind for coming soon ;  
Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,  
As if it only were a snare

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

## XVIII.

“ The sun was sinking — still I lay  
Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed,  
I thought to mingle there our clay ;  
And my dim eyes of death hath need,  
No hope arose of being freed :  
I cast my last looks up the sky,  
And there between me and the sun  
I saw the expecting raven fly,  
Who scarce would wait till both should die,  
Ere his repast begun ;  
He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,  
And each time nearer than before ;

I saw his wing through twilight flit,  
And once so near me he alit  
I could have smote, but lack'd the strength ;  
But the slight motion of my hand,  
And feeble scratching of the sand,  
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,  
Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,  
Together scared him off at length. —  
I know no more — my latest dream  
Is something of a lovely star  
Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,  
And went and came with wandering beam,  
And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense  
Sensation of recurring sense,  
And then subsiding back to death,  
And then again a little breath,  
A little thrill, a short suspense,  
An icy sickness curdling o'er  
My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain —  
A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,  
A sigh, and nothing more.

## XIX.

“ I woke — Where was I ? — Do I see  
A human face look down on me ?  
And doth a roof above me close ?  
Do these limbs on a couch repose ?  
Is this a chamber where I lie ?  
And is it mortal yon bright eye,  
That watches me with gentle glance ?  
I closed my own again once more,  
As doubtful that the former trance  
Could not as yet be o'er.  
A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,  
Sate watching by the cottage wall ;  
The sparkle of her eye I caught,  
Even with my first return of thought ;  
For ever and anon she threw  
A prying, pitying glance on me  
With her black eyes so wild and free :  
I gazed, and gazed, until I knew  
No vision it could be, —  
But that I lived, and was released  
From adding to the vulture's feast :  
And when the Cossack maid beheld  
My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,  
She smiled — and I essay'd to speak,  
But fail'd — and she approach'd, and made  
With lip and finger signs that said,  
I must not strive as yet to break  
The silence, till my strength should be  
Enough to leave my accents free ;  
And then her hand on mine she laid,  
And smooth'd the pillow for my head,  
And stole along on tiptoe tread,  
And gently oped the door, and spake  
In whispers — ne'er was voice so sweet !  
Even music follow'd her light feet ; —  
But those she call'd were not awake,  
And she went forth ; but, ere she pass'd,  
Another look on me she cast,  
That I had nought to fear, that all  
Were near, at my command or call,  
And she would not delay  
Her due return : — while she was gone,  
Methought I felt too much alone.

## XX.

“ She came with mother and with sire —  
What need of more ? — I will not tire  
With long recital of the rest,  
Since I became the Cossack's guest  
They found me senseless on the plain —  
They bore me to the nearest hut —  
They brought me into life again —  
Me — one day o'er their realm to reign !  
Thus the vain fool who strove to glut  
His rage, refining on my pain,  
Sent me forth to the wilderness,  
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,  
To pass the desert to a throne, —  
What mortal his own doom may guess ? —

Let none despond, let none despair !  
To-morrow the Borysthènes  
May see our coursers graze at ease  
Upon his Turkish bank, — and never  
Had I such welcome for a river  
As I shall yield when safely there.<sup>1</sup>  
Comrades, good night ! — The Hetman threw  
His length beneath the oak-tree shade,  
With leafy couch already made,  
A bed nor comfortless nor new  
To him, who took his rest whene'er  
The hour arrived, no matter where :  
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.  
And if ye marvel Charles forgot  
To thank his tale, he wonder'd not, —  
The king had been an hour asleep.<sup>2</sup>

The Island ;<sup>3</sup>

OR,

CHRISTIAN AND HIS COMRADES.<sup>4</sup>

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE foundation of the following story will be found partly in Lieutenant Bligh's "Narrative of the Mutiny and Seizure of the Bounty, in the South Seas, in 1789;" and partly in "Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands."<sup>5</sup>  
Genoa, 1823.

## The Island.

## CANTO THE FIRST.

## I.

THE morning watch was come ; the vessel lay  
Her course, and gently made her liquid way ;

<sup>1</sup> [Charles, having perceived that the day was lost, and that his only chance of safety was to retire with the utmost precipitation, suffered himself to be mounted on horseback, and with the remains of his army fled to a place called Perelochna, situated in the angle formed by the junction of the Vorskla and the Borysthènes. Here, accompanied by Mazeppa, and a few hundreds of his followers, Charles swam over the latter great river, and proceeding over a desolate country, in danger of perishing with hunger, at length reached the Bog, where he was kindly received by the Turkish pacha. The Russian envoy at the Sublime Porte demanded that Mazeppa should be delivered up to Peter ; but the old Hetman of the Cossacks escaped this fate by taking a disease which hastened his death." — BARROW'S *Peter the Great*, pp. 196—203.]

<sup>2</sup> [It is impossible not to suspect that the Poet had some circumstances of his own personal history in his mind, when he portrayed the fair Polish *Theresa*, her youthful lover, and the jealous rage of the old Count Palatine.]

<sup>3</sup> [“The Island” was written at Genoa, early in the year 1823, and published in the June following.]

<sup>4</sup> [We are taught by The Book of sacred history, that the disobedience of our first parents entailed on our globe of earth

The cloven billow flash'd from off her prow  
In furrows form'd by that majestic plough ;  
The waters with their world were all before ;  
Behind, the South Sea's many an islet shore.  
The quiet night, now dappling, 'gan to wane,  
Dividing darkness from the dawning main ;  
The dolphins, not unconscious of the day,  
Swam high, as eager of the coming ray ;  
The stars from broader beams began to creep,  
And lift their shining eyelids from the deep ;  
The sail resumed its lately shadow'd white,  
And the wind flutter'd with a freshening flight ;  
The purpling ocean owns the coming sun,  
But ere he break — a deed is to be done.

## II.

The gallant chief within his cabin slept,  
Secure in those by whom the watch was kept :

a sinful and a suffering race. In our time there has sprung up from the most abandoned of this sinful family — from pirates, mutineers, and murderers — a little society, which, under the precepts of that sacred volume, is characterised by religion, morality, and innocence. The discovery of this happy people, as unexpected as it was accidental, and all that regards their condition and history, partake so much of the romantic, as to render the story not ill adapted for an epic poem. Lord Byron, indeed, has partially treated the subject ; but, by blending two incongruous stories, and leaving both of them imperfect, and by mixing up fact with fiction, has been less felicitous than usual ; for, beautiful as many passages in his “Island” are, in a region where every tree, and flower, and fountain, breathe poetry, yet, as a whole, the poem is deficient in dramatic effect. — BARROW.]

<sup>5</sup> [The hitherto scattered materials of the “Eventful History of the Mutiny and Piratical Seizure of the Bounty,” with many important and most interesting additions, from the records of the Admiralty, and the family papers of Captain Heywood, R. N., have lately been collected and arranged by Sir John Barrow, in a little volume, to which the reader of this poem is referred, and from which every young officer of the navy may derive valuable instruction.]

M