

Cal. Whoe'er
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?
Ben. Without doubt, he will be brought up to trial.
Cal. And on this testimony would he perish?
Ben. So your confession be detail'd and full,
He will stand here in peril of his life.
Cal. Then look well to thy proud self, President!
For by the eternity which yawns before me,
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,
If I be stretch'd there for the second time.

One of the Giunta. Lord President, 't were best
proceed to judgment;

There is no more to be drawn from these men.
Ben. Unhappy men! prepare for instant death.
The nature of your crime — our law — and peril
The state now stands in, leave not an hour's respite —
Guards! lead them forth, and upon the balcony
Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday,¹
The Doge stands to behold the chase of bulls,
Let them be justified: and leave exposed
Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,
To the full view of the assembled people! —
And Heaven have mercy on their souls!

The Giunta. Amen!
I. Ber. Signors, farewell! we shall not all again
Meet in one place.

Ben. And lest they should essay
To stir up the distracted multitude —
Guards! let their mouths be gag'd², even in the act
Of execution. — Lead them hence!

Cal. What! must we
Not even say farewell to some fond friend,
Nor leave a last word with our confessor?

Ben. A priest is waiting in the antechamber;
But, for your friends, such interviews would be
Painful to them, and useless all to you.

Cal. I knew that we were gag'd in life; at least
All those who had not heart to risk their lives
Upon their open thoughts; but still I deem'd
That in the last few moments, the same idle
Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,
Would not now be denied to us; but since —

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

What matter a few syllables? let's die
Without the slightest show of favour from them;
So shall our blood more readily arise
To Heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume
Spoken or written of our dying words!
They tremble at our voices — nay, they dread
Our very silence — let them live in fear! —
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us now
Address our own above! — Lead on; we are ready.

¹ "Giovèdi grasso" — "fat or greasy Thursday," — which I cannot literally translate in the text, was the day.
² Historical fact. See Sanuto, APPENDIX: Marino Faliero, Note A.

³ "I know what Foscolo means, about Calendaro's *spitting* at Bertram; *that's* national — the objection, I mean. The Italians and French, with those 'flags of abomination' their pocket handkerchiefs, spit there, and here, and every where else — in your face almost, and therefore *object* to it on the stage as *too familiar*. But we who spit nowhere — but in a man's face when we grow savage — are not likely to feel this. Remember Massinger, and Kean's Sir Giles Overreach —

'Lord! thus I spit at thee and at thy counsel!' Besides, Calendaro does not spit in Bertram's face; he spits at him, as I have seen the Mussulmans do upon the ground when

Cal. Israel, hadst thou but hearken'd unto me
It had not now been thus; and yon pale villain,
The coward Bertram, would —

I. Ber. Peace, Calendaro!
What brooks it now to ponder upon this.

Bert. Alas! I fain you died in peace with me;
I did not seek this task; 't was forced upon me:

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

I. Ber. I die and pardon thee!

Cal. (*spitting at him*).³ I die and scorn thee!
[*Exeunt ISRAEL BERTUCCIO and PHILIP
CALENDARO, Guards, &c.*]

Ben. Now that these criminals have been disposed of,
'T is time that we proceed to pass our sentence
Upon the greatest traitor upon record
In any annals, the Doge Faliero!

The proofs and process are complete; the time
And crime require a quick procedure: shall
He now be call'd in to receive the award?

The Giunta. Ay, ay.

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

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

Ben. When all the chiefs
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza;
But there are thousands in pursuit of them,
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,
As well as in the islands, that we hope
None will escape to utter in strange lands
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the senate.

Enter the DOGE as Prisoner, with Guards, &c. &c.

Ben. Doge — for such still you are, and by the law
Must be consider'd, till the hour shall come
When you must doff the ducal bonnet from
That head, which could not wear a crown more noble
Than empire can confer, in quiet honour,
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,
Who made you what you are, and quench in blood
A city's glory — we have laid already
Before you in your chamber at full length,
By the Avogadori, all the proofs
Which have appear'd against you; and more ample
Ne'er rear'd their sanguinary shadows to
Confront a traitor. What have you to say
In your defence?

Doge. What shall I say to ye,
Since my defence must be your condemnation?
You are at once offenders and accusers,
Judges and executioners! — Proceed
Upon your power.

Ben. Your chief accomplices
Having confess'd, there is no hope for you.

they are in a rage. Again, he does not in fact despise Bertram, though he affects it, — as we all do, when angry with one we think our inferior. He is angry at not being allowed to die in his own way (although not afraid of death); and recollect that he suspected and hated Bertram from the first. Israel Bertuccio, on the other hand, is a cooler and more concentrated fellow: he acts upon *principle* and impulse; Calendaro upon *impulse* and example. So there's argument for you. — 'The Doge repeats;' — true, but it is from engrossing passion, and because he sees *different* persons, and is always obliged to recur to the *cause* uppermost in his mind. 'His speeches are long;' — true, but I wrote for the *closet*, and on the French and Italian model rather than yours, which I think not very highly of, for all your *old* dramatists, who are long enough too, God knows: look into any of them. — *Byron Letters.*]

Doge. And who be they?

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

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

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

Doge. And where are they?

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

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

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

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

Ben. On great emergencies,
The law must be remodel'd or amended:
Our fathers had not fix'd the punishment
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables
The sentence against parricide was left
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render
That penal, which had neither name nor thought
In their great bosoms: who would have foreseen
That nature could be filed to such a crime
As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their realms?
Your sin hath made us make a law which will
Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,
As would with treason mount to tyranny;
Not even contented with a sceptre, till
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!

Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye?
What's nobler than the signory of Venice?

Doge. The signory of Venice! You betray'd me —
You — you, who sit there, traitors as ye are!

From my equality with you in birth,
And my superiority in action,
You drew me from my honourable toils
In distant lands — on flood — in field — in cities —
You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crown'd, but bound and helpless, at the altar
Where you alone could minister. I knew not —
I sought not — wish'd not — dream'd not the election
Which reach'd me first at Rome, and I obey'd;
But found on my arrival, that, besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your sovereign's best intents,
You had, even in the interregnum of¹
My journey to the capital, curtail'd
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the duke: all this I bore, and would
Have borne, until my very hearth was stain'd
By the pollution of your ribaldry,
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you —
Fit judge in such tribunal! —

Ben. (*interrupting him*). Michel Steno
Is here in virtue of his office, as

¹ [One source of feebleness in this passage, and it is one of frequent occurrence in all Lord Byron's plays, is his practice of ending his lines with insignificant monosyllables. "Of," "to," "and," "till," "but," "from," all concur in the course of a very few pages, in situations where, had the harmony or vigour of the line been consulted, the voice would have been allowed to pause, and the energy of the sentiment would have been carried to its highest tone of elevation. This we should have set down to the account of carelessness, had it not been

One of the Forty; "the Ten" having craved
A Giunta of patricians from the senate
To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
And novel as the present: he was set
Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,
Because the Doge, who should protect the law,
Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim
No punishment of others by the statutes
Which he himself denies and violates!

Doge. His PUNISHMENT! I rather see him *there*,
Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,
Than in the mockery of castigation,
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of justice
Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,
'T was purity compared with your protection.

Ben. And can it be, that the great Doge of Venice,
With three parts of a century of years
And honours on his head, could thus allow
His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
All feeling, wisdom, faith, and fear, on such
A provocation as a young man's petulance?

Doge. A spark creates the flame — 't is the last drop
Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was full
Already: you oppress'd the prince and people;
I would have freed both, and have fail'd in both:
The price of such success would have been glory,
Vengeance, and victory, and such a name
As would have made Venetian history
Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse

When they were freed, and flourish'd ages after,
And mine to Gelon and to Thrasylbulus: —
Falling, I know the penalty of failure
Is present infamy and death — the future
Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;
Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not;
I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;
My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,
And being lost, take what I would have taken!
I would have stood alone amidst your tombs:
Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,
As you have done upon my heart while living.

Ben. You do confess then, and admit the justice
Of our tribunal?

Doge. I confess to have fail'd;
Fortune is female: from my youth her favours
Were not withheld, the fault was mine to hope
Her former smiles again at this late hour.

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

Doge. Noble Venetians! stir me not with questions.
I am resign'd to the worst; but in me still
Have something of the blood of brighter days,
And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me
Further interrogation, which boots nothing,
Except to turn a trial to debate.
I shall but answer that which will offend you,
And please your enemies — a host already;
'T is true, these sullen walls should yield no echo:
But walls have ears — nay, more, they have tongues;
and if

There were no other way for truth to o'erleap them,²

so frequent, and had not the stiffness and labour of the author's general style almost tempted us to believe it systematic. A more inharmonious system of versification, or one more necessarily tending to weight and feebleness, could hardly have been invented. But with all these defects, there is much to praise in the Doge of Venice. — HEBER.]

² ["There were no other way for truth to pierce } them." — MS.]

You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,
Yet could not bear in silence to your graves
What you would hear from me of good or evil;
The secret were too mighty for your souls:
Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court
A danger which would double that you escape.
Such my defence would be, had I full scope
To make it famous; for true words are things,
And dying men's are things which long outlive,
And oftentimes avenge them; bury mine,
If ye would fain survive me: take this counsel,
And though too oft ye made me live in wrath,
Let me die calmly; you may grant me this;—
I deny nothing—defend nothing—nothing
I ask of you, but silence for myself,
And sentence from the court!

Ben. This full admission
Spare us the harsh necessity of ordering
The torture to elicit the whole truth.¹

Doge. The torture! you have put me there already,
Daily since I was Doge; but if you will
Add the corporeal rack, you may: these limbs
Will yield with age to crushing iron; but
There's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

Enter an OFFICER.

Officer. Noble Venetians! Duchess Faliero²
Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.

Ben. Say, conscript fathers³, shall she be admitted?
One of the Giunta. She may have revelations of
importance

Unto the state, to justify compliance
With her request.

Ben. Is this the general will?
All. It is.

Doge. Oh, admirable laws of Venice!
Which would admit the wife, in the full hope
That she might testify against the husband.
What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!
But such blasphemers 'gainst all honour, as
Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.
Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,
I'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,
And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

*The DUCHESS enters.*⁴

Ben. Lady! this just tribunal has resolved,
Though the request be strange, to grant it, and
Whatever be its purport, to accord
A patient hearing with the due respect
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and virtues:
But you turn pale—ho! there, look to the lady!
Place a chair instantly.

Ang. A moment's faintness—
'Tis past; I pray you pardon me,—I sit not

¹ ["The torture {for the exposure of the truth,
to elicit the whole truth."—MS.]

² ["Noble Venetians {Doge Faliero's consort
with respect to the Duchess
Duchess Faliero."—MS.]

³ The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of
"conscript fathers."

⁴ [The drama, which has the merit, uncommon in modern
performances, of embodying no episodic deformity whatever,
now hurries in full career to its close. Every thing is dis-
patched with the stern decision of a tyrannical aristocracy.
There is no hope of mercy on any side,—there is no petition
—nay, there is no wish for mercy. Even the plebeian con-
spirators have too much Venetian blood in them to be either

In presence of my prince, and of my husband,
While he is on his feet.

Ben. Your pleasure, lady?
Ang. Strange rumours, but most true, if all I hear
And see be sooth, have reach'd me, and I come
To know the worst, even at the worst; forgive
The abruptness of my entrance and my bearing.
Is it—I cannot speak—I cannot shape
The question—but you answer it ere spoken,
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows—
Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!

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

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

Ang. Yet speak; I cannot—
I cannot—no—even now believe these things.
Is he condemn'd?

Ben. Alas!

Ang. And was he guilty?

Ben. Lady! the natural distraction of
Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the question
Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this
Against a just and paramount tribunal
Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,
And if he can deny the proofs, believe him
Guiltless as thy own bosom.

Ang. Is it so?
My lord—my sovereign—my poor father's friend—
The mighty in the field, the sage in council;
Unsay the words of this man!—Thou art silent!

Ben. He hath already own'd to his own guilt,⁵
Nor, as thou see'st, doth he deny it now.

Ang. Ay, but he must not die! Spare his few years,
Which grief and shame will soon cut down to days!
One day of baffled crime must not efface
Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave acts.

Ben. His doom must be fulfill'd without remission
Of time or penalty—'tis a decree.

Ang. He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.
Ben. Not in this case with justice.

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

Ben. His punishment is safety to the state.
Ang. He was a subject, and hath served the state;
He was your general, and hath saved the state;
He is your sovereign, and hath ruled the state.

One of the Council. He is a traitor, and betray'd
the state.

Ang. And, but for him, there now had been no state
To save or to destroy; and you, who sit
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!

scared by the approach, or shaken in the moment, of death;
and as for the Doge, he bears himself as becomes a warrior of
sixty years, and a deeply insulted prince. At the moment,
however, which immediately precedes the pronouncing of the
sentence, admission is asked and obtained by one from whom
less of the Spartan firmness might have been expected. This
is Angiolina. She indeed hazards one fervent prayer to the
unbending senate; but she sees in a moment that it is in vain,
and she recovers herself on the instant; and turning to her
lord, who stands calm and collected at the foot of the council
table, speaks words worthy of him and of her. Nothing can
be more unexpected, or more beautiful, than the behaviour
of the young patrician who interrupts their conversation.—
LOCKHART.]

⁵ ["He hath already {own'd to} his own guilt."—MS.]

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

Rather than breathe in slavery!

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

Ben. Lady, it cannot be.
Ang. (turning to the Doge). Then die, Faliero!
since it must be so;

But with the spirit of my father's friend.
Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,
Half-cancell'd by the harshness of these men.
I would have sued to them—have pray'd to them—
Have begg'd as famish'd mendicants for bread—
Have wept as they will cry unto their God
For mercy, and be answer'd as they answer—
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes
Had not announced the heartless wrath within.
Then, as a prince, address thee to thy doom!

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

Michel Steno. Doge,
A word with thee, and with this noble lady,
Whom I have grievously offended. Would
Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,
Could cancel the inexorable past!
But since that cannot be, as Christians let us
Say farewell, and in peace: with full contrition
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.

Ang. Sage Benintende, now chief judge of Venice,
I speak to thee in answer to yon signor.
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words
Ne'er weigh'd in mind with Loredano's daughter
Further than to create a moment's pity
For such as he is: would that others had
Despised him as I pity! I prefer
My honour to a thousand lives, could such
Be multiplied in mine, but would not have
A single life of others lost for that
Which nothing human can impugn—the sense
Of virtue, looking not to what is call'd
A good name for reward, but to itself.
To me the scorner's words were as the wind
Unto the rock: but as there are—alas!
Spirits more sensitive, on which such things
Light as the whirlwind on the waters; souls
To whom dishonour's shadow is a substance
More terrible than death, here and hereafter;
Men whose vice is to start at vice's scoffing,
And who, though proof against all blandishments
Of pleasure, and all pangs of pain, are feeble
When the proud name on which they pinnacle'd

¹ [The Duchess is formal and cold, without even that degree
of love for her old husband which a child might have for her
parent, or a pupil for her instructor. Even in this her longest
and best speech, at the most touching moment of the catas-
trophe, she can moralise, in a strain of pedantry less natural
to a woman than to any other person similarly circumstanced,
on lions stung by gnats, Achilles, Helen, Lucretia, the siege
of Clusium, Caligula, Caaba, and Persepolis! The lines are
fine in themselves, indeed; and if they had been spoken by

Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle
Of her high airy; let what we now
Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
To wretches how they tamper in their spleen
With beings of a higher order. Insects
Have made the lion mad ere now; a shaft
I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave;
A wife's dishonour was the bane of Troy;
A wife's dishonour unking'd Rome for ever;
An injured husband brought the Gauls to Clusium,
And thence to Rome, which perish'd for a time;
An obscene gesture cost Caligula
His life, while Earth yet bore his cruelties;
A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish province;
And Steno's lie, couch'd in two worthless lines,
Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
A senate which hath stood eight hundred years,
Discrown'd a prince, cut off his crownless head,
And forged new fetters for a groaning people!
Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan
Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this,
If it so please him—'twere a pride fit for him!
But let him not insult the last hours of
Him, who, whate'er he now is, was a hero,
By the intrusion of his very prayers:
Nothing of good can come from such a source,
Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor ever:
We leave him to himself, that lowest depth
Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,
And not for reptiles—we have none for Steno,
And no resentment: things like him must sting,
And higher beings suffer; 'tis the charter
Of life. The man who dies by the adder's fang
May have the crawler crush'd, but feels no anger:
'Twas the worm's nature; and some men are worms
In soul, more than the living things of tombs.

Doge (to *Ben.*). Signor! complete that which you
deem your duty.

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

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

Ben. Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
And some time General of the Fleet and Army,
Noble Venetian, many times and oft
Intrusted by the state with high employments,
Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.
Convict by many witnesses and proofs,
And by thine own confession, of the guilt
Of treachery and treason, yet unheard of
Until this trial—the decree is death.
Thy goods are confiscate unto the state,
Thy name is razed from out her records, save
Upon a public day of thanksgiving

Benintende as a funeral oration over the Duke's body, or still
more, perhaps, if they had been spoken by the Duke's counsel
on his trial, they would have been perfectly in place and
character. But that is not the highest order of female intellect
which is disposed to be long-winded in distress; nor does any
one, either male or female, who is really and deeply affected,
find time for wise saws and instances ancient and modern.—
HEBER.]

For this our most miraculous deliverance,
When thou art noted in our calendars
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign foes,
And the great enemy of man, as subject
Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in snatching
Our lives and country from thy wickedness.
The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be painted,
With thine illustrious predecessors, is
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
Flung over these dim words engraved beneath,—
"This place is of Marino Faliero,
Decapitated for his crimes."

Doge. "His crimes!"
But let it be so:—it will be in vain.
The veil which blackens o'er this blighted name,
And hides, or seems to hide, these lineaments,
Shall draw more gazers than the thousand portraits
Which glitter round it in their pictured trappings—
Your delegated slaves—the people's tyrants!
"Decapitated for his crimes!"—*What* crimes?
Were it not better to record the facts,
So that the contemplator might approve,
Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes arose?
When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,
Let him be told the cause—it is your history.

Ben. Time must reply to that; our sons will judge
Their fathers' judgment, which I now pronounce.
As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and cap,
Thou shalt be led hence to the Giants' Staircase,
Where thou and all our princes are invested;
And there, the ducal crown being first resumed
Upon the spot where it was first assumed,
Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven have mercy
Upon thy soul!

Doge. Is this the Giunta's sentence?

Ben. It is.

Doge. I can endure it.—And the time?

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

Within an hour thou must be in His presence.

Doge. I am already; and my blood will rise
To Heaven before the souls of those who shed it.—
Are all my lands confiscated?

Ben. They are;
And goods, and jewels, and all kind of treasure,
Except two thousand ducats—these dispose of.

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

Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment
From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,
In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,
To portion them (leaving my city spoil,
My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)
Between my consort and my kinsmen.

Ben. These
Lie under the state's ban; their chief, thy nephew,
In peril of his own life; but the council
Postpones his trial for the present. If
Thou wilt st a state unto thy widow'd princess,
Fear not, for we will do her justice.

Ang. Signors,
I share not in your spoil! From henceforth, know
I am devoted unto God alone,
And take my refuge in the cloister.

Doge. Come!
The hour may be a hard one, but 't will end.
Have I aught else to undergo save death? [die,

Ben. You have nought to do, except confess and

The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without.—But, above all
Think not to speak unto the people; they
Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,
But these are closed: the Ten, the Avogadori,
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,
And they are ready to attend the Doge.

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

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Doge's Apartment.

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

Doge. Now, that the priest is gone, 't were useless
To linger out the miserable minutes; [all
But one pang more, the pang of parting from thee,
And I will leave the few last grains of sand
Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
Still falling—I have done with Time.

Ang. Alas!
And I have been the cause, the unconscious cause;
And for this funeral marriage, this black union,
Which thou, compliant with my father's wish,
Didst promise at his death, thou hast seal'd thine own.

Doge. Not so: there was that in my spirit ever
Which shaped out for itself some great reverse;
The marvel is, it came not until now—
And yet it was foretold me.

Ang. How foretold you?
Doge. Long years ago—so long, they are a doubt
In memory, and yet they live in annals:

When I was in my youth, and served the senate
And signory as podesta and captain
Of the town of Treviso, on a day
Of festival, the sluggish bishop who
Convey'd the Host aroused my rash young anger,
By strange delay, and arrogant reply
To my reproof; I raised my hand and smote him,
Until he reel'd beneath his holy burthen;
And as he rose from earth again, he raised
His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards Heaven.
Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen from
him,

He turn'd to me, and said, "The hour will come
When he thou hast o'erthrown shall overthrow thee:

The glory shall depart from out thy house,
The wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
And in thy best maturity of mind
A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee;¹
Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease
In other men, or mellow into virtues;
And majesty, which decks all other heads,
Shall crown to leave thee headless; honours shall
But prove to thee the heralds of destruction,
And hoary hairs of shame, and both of death,
But not such death as fits an aged man."
Thus saying, he pass'd on.—That hour is come.

Ang. And with this warning couldst thou not have
striven

To avert the fatal moment, and atone,
By penitence for that which thou hadst done?

Doge. I own the words went to my heart, so much
That I remember'd them amid the maze
Of life, as if they form'd a spectral voice,
Which shook me in a supernatural dream;
And I repented; but 't was not for me
To pull in resolution: what must be
I could not change, and would not fear.—Nay more,
Thou canst not have forgot, what all remember,
That on my day of landing here as Doge,
On my return from Rome, a mist of such
Unwonted destiny went on before
The Bucentaur, like the columnar cloud
Which usher'd Israel out of Egypt, till
The pilot was misled, and disembark'd us
Between the pillars of Saint Mark's, where 't is
The custom of the state to put to death
Its criminals, instead of touching at
The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is,—
So that all Venice shudder'd at the omen.

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

Doge. And yet I find a comfort in
The thought that these things are the work of Fate;
For I would rather yield to gods than men,
Or cling to any creed of destiny,
Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom
I know to be as worthless as the dust,
And weak as worthless, more than instruments
Of an o'er-ruling power; they in themselves
Were all incapable—they could not be
Victors of him who oft had conquer'd for them!

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

Doge. I am at peace: the peace of certainty
That a sure hour will come, when their sons' sons,
And this proud city, and these azure waters,
And all which makes them eminent and bright,
Shall be a desolation and a curse,
A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean Babel!

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

Doge. I stand within eternity, and see
Into eternity, and I behold—

¹ ["A madness of the heart shall rise within."—MS.]

² ["With unimpair'd but not outrageous grief."—MS.]

³ This was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of Paris, to a
Frenchman who made him the same reproach on his way to
execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in

Ay, palpable as I see thy sweet face
For the last time—the days which I denounce
Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
And they who are indwellers.

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

Doge. Then farewell, Angiolina!—one embrace—
Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
A fond but fatal husband—love my memory—
I would not ask so much for me still living,
But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,
Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.

Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,
Glory, and wealth, and power, and fame, and name,
Which generally leave some flowers to bloom
Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not even
A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
No, not enough to extract an epitaph
From ostentatious kinsmen; in one hour
I have uprooted all my former life,
And outlived every thing, except thy heart,
The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft
With unimpair'd but not a clamorous grief²
Still keep—Thou turn'st so pale!—Alas! she
faints,

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

I cannot leave her thus, and yet 't is better,
Since every lifeless moment spares a pang,
When she shakes off this temporary death,
I shall be with the Eternal.—Call her women—
One look!—how cold her hand!—as cold as mine
Shall be ere she recovers.—Gently tend her,
And take my last thanks—I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of ANGIOLINA enter, and sur-
round their mistress, who has fainted.—Exeunt
the DOGE, Guards, &c. &c.*

SCENE III.

*The Court of the Ducal Palace: the outer gates are
shut against the people.—The DOGE enters in his
ducral robes, in procession with the Council of Ten
and other Patricians, attended by the Guards, till
they arrive at the top of the "Giants' Staircase"
(where the Doges took the oaths); the Executioner
is stationed there with his sword.—On arriving, a
Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from the
Doge's head.*

Doge. So now the Doge is nothing, and at last
I am again Marino Faliero:
'T is well to be so, though but for a moment.
Here was I crown'd, and here, bear witness, Heaven!
With how much more contentment I resign
That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
Than I received the fatal ornament.

One of the Ten. Thou tremblest, Faliero!

Doge. 'T is with age, then.³
Ben. Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,
Compatible with justice, to the senate?

Doge. I would commend my nephew to their mercy,
My consort to their justice; for methinks

reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the
first time these six years. "Venice Preserved," a similar
reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences
arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest
reader, that such coincidences must be accidental, from the
very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a
play on the stage and in the closet as Otway's chef-d'œuvre.

My death, and such a death, might settle all
Between the state and me.

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

Doge. Unheard of! ay, there's not a history
But shows a thousand crown'd conspirators
Against the people; but to set them free
One sovereign only died, and one is dying.

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

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

Agis and Faliero!

Ben. Hast thou more!
To utter or to do?

Doge. May I speak?

Ben. Thou may'st;

But recollect the people are without,
Beyond the compass of the human voice.

Doge. I speak to Time and to Eternity,¹
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.

Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it,
And fill'd my swelling sails as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,
Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but
Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!
Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!
Who kindest and who quenchest suns!²—Attest!
I am not innocent—but are these guiltless?

¹ [Sentence being passed upon the Doge, he is brought with much pomp to the place of execution. His last speech is a grand prophetic rant; something strained and elaborate—but eloquent and terrible.—JEFFREY.]

² [“and Thou!
Who makest and destroyest suns!”—MS.]

³ Should the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the historical, of the period prophesied, or rather of the few years preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their “nostre bene merite Meretrici” at 12,000 of regulars, without including volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not; but it is, perhaps, the only part of the population not decreased. Venice once contained two hundred thousand inhabitants: there are now about ninety thousand; and these!! few individuals can conceive, and none could describe, the actual state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has plunged this unhappy city. From the present decay and degeneracy of Venice under the Barbarians, there are some honourable individual exceptions. There is Pasqualigo, the last, and, alas! *posthumous* son of the marriage of the Doges with the Adriatic, who fought his frigate with far greater gallantry than any of his French coadjutors in the memorable action of Lissa. I came home in the squadron with the prizes in 1811, and recollect to have heard Sir William Hoste, and the other officers engaged in that glorious conflict, speak in the highest terms of Pasqualigo's behaviour. There is the Abbate Morelli. There is Alvisè Querini, who, after a long and honourable diplomatic career, finds some consolation for the wrongs of his country, in the pursuits of literature with his nephew, Vittor Benzon, the son of the celebrated beauty, the heroine of “La Biondina in Gondoleta.” There are the patrician poet Morosini, and the poet Lamberti, the author of the “Biondina,” &c. and many other estimable productions; and, not least in an Englishman's estimation, Madame Micheli, the translator of Shakspeare. There are the young Dandolo and the improvisatore Carrer, and Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished mother. There is Aglietti, and, were there nothing else, there is the immortality of Canova. Cicognara, Mustoxithi, Bucati, &c. &c. I do not reckon, because the one is a Greek, and the others were born at least a hundred miles off, which, throughout Italy, constitutes, if not a *foreigner*, at least a *stranger* (*forestiere*).

⁴ [“Beggars for nobles, { lazars }
lepers } for a people!”—MS.]
wretches }

I perish, but not unavenged; far ages
Float up from the abyss of time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud city, and I leave my curse
On her and hers for ever!—Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield
Unto a bastard Attila, without
Shedding so much blood in her last defence
As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice.—She shall be bought
And sold, and be an appanage to those
Who shall despise her!³—She shall stoop to be
A province for an empire, petty town
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles⁴, panders for a people!⁵
Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces,⁶
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his;
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need
Make their nobility a plea for pity;
Then, when the few who still retain a wreck
Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn
Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vice-gerent,
Even in the palace where they sway'd as sovereigns,
Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,
Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung
From an adulteress boastful of her guilt
With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,
Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph
To the third spurious generation;⁷—when

³ [The following sketch of the indigent Venetian noble is by Gritti:—

“Sono un povero ladro aristocratico
Errante per la Veneta palude,
Che i denti per il mio duro panatico
Aguzzo in su la cote e in su l'incude;
Mi slombo in piedi, e a seder' mi snatico,
Ballotando o la fame, o la virtude;
Prego, piango, minaccio, insisto, adulo,
Ed ho me stesso, e la mia patria in culo.”

⁴ I'm a poor peer of Venice loose among her
Marshes! With standing bows I've double grown,
And in my trade of place and pension-monger,
Sate till I've ground my buttocks to the bone;
Balloting now for merit, now for hunger;
Breaking, myself, my teeth, upon a stone,
I crave, cringe, storm, and strive, through life's short
farce,
And vote friends, self, and country all!”—ROSE.]

⁵ The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews; who in the earlier times of the republic were only allowed to inhabit Mestri, and not to enter the city of Venice. The whole commerce is in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and the Huns form the garrison.

⁷ [“It must be owned,” says Bishop Heber, “that the Duke bears his calamities with a patience which would be more heroic if it were less wordy. It is possible that a condemned man might recollect his quarrel with the Bishop of Treviso, and the evil omen which accompanied his solemn landing at Venice. But there are not many condemned men who, during a last and stunted interview with a beloved wife, would have employed so much time in relating anecdotes of themselves; and we should least of all expect it in one whose fiery character would have induced him to hurry forward to his end. The same objection applies to his prophecy of the future miseries of Venice. Its language and imagery are, doubtless, extremely powerful and impressive; but we cannot allow that it is either dramatic or characteristic. A prophecy (which we know to be *ex post facto*) is, under any circumstances, one of the cheapest and least artificial of poetical machines. But, under such circumstances as the present, no audience could have endured so long a speech without disgust and weariness; and Marino Faliero was most likely to have met his death like our own Sydney—

Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the victors,
Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,
And scorn'd even by the vicious for such vices
As in the monstrous grasp of their conception
Defy all codes to image or to name them;
Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom,
All thine inheritance shall be her shame
Entail'd on thy less virtuous daughters, grown
A wider proverb for worse prostitution;—
When all the ills of conquer'd states shall cling thee,
Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er,
But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,¹
Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,
Depraving nature's frailty to an art;—
When these and more are heavy on thee, when
Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,
Youth without honour, age without respect,
Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe
'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not
murmur,²

Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,
Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,
Amidst thy many murders, think of mine!
Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!³
Gehenna of the waters! thou sea Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!

[Here the DOGE turns and addresses the Executioner.

Slave, do thine office!
Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as my curse!
Strike—and but once!

[The DOGE throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.

SCENE IV.

The Piazza and Piazzetta of Saint Mark's.—The
People in crowds gathered round the grated gates
of the Ducal Palace, which are shut.

First Citizen. I have gain'd the gate, and can
discern the Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round the Doge.

‘With no harangue idly proclaim'd aloud
To catch the worthless plaudits of the crowd;
No feeble boast, death's terrors to defy,
Yet still delaying, as afraid to die!’

We are surprised that Bishop Heber did not quote Andrew
Marvel's magnificent lines on Charles I.:—

“While round the armed bands
Did clap their bloody hands,
He nothing common did, or mean,
Upon that memorable scene;
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;
Nor call'd the Gods with vulgar spight
To vindicate his helpless right,
But bow'd his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.”

¹ [See APPENDIX: Marino Faliero, Note C.]

² If the Doge's prophecy seem remarkable, look to the following, made by Alimanni two hundred and seventy years ago:—“There is one very singular prophecy concerning Venice: ‘If thou dost not change,’ it says to that proud republic, ‘thy liberty, which is already on the wing, will not reckon a century more than the thousandth year.’ If we carry back the epocha of Venetian freedom to the establishment of the government under which the republic flourished, we shall find that the date of the election of the first Doge is 697; and if we add one century to a thousand, that is, eleven hundred years, we shall find the sense of the prediction to be literally this: ‘Thy liberty will not last till 1797.’ Recollect that

Second Cit. I cannot reach thee with mine utmost
How is it? let us hear at least, since sight [effort.
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.

First Cit. One has approach'd the Doge, and now
they strip
The ducal bonnet from his head—and now
He raises his keen eyes to Heaven; I see [no,
Them glitter, and his lips move—Hush! hush!—
'Twas but a murmur—Curse upon the distance!
His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like mutter'd thunder; would we could
But gather a sole sentence! [sound.

Second Cit. Hush! we perhaps may catch the
First Cit. 'T is vain,
I cannot hear him.—How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!
Now—now—he kneels—and now they form a circle
Round him, and all is hidden—but I see
The lifted sword in air—Ah! hark! it falls!

[The People murmur.
Third Cit. Then they have murder'd him who
would have freed us.

Fourth Cit. He was a kind man to the commons
ever.

Fifth Cit. Wisely they did to keep their portals
barr'd.

Would we had known the work they were preparing
Ere we were summon'd here—we would have brought
Weapons, and forced them!

Sixth Cit. Are you sure he's dead?
First Cit. I saw the sword fall—Lo! what have
we here?

Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts
Saint Mark's Place a CHIEF OF THE TEN, with
a bloody sword. He waves it thrice before the People,
and exclaims,

“Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor!”

[The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards
the “Giants' Staircase,” where the execution has
taken place. The foremost of them exclaims to
those behind,

The gory head rolls down the Giants' Steps!
[The curtain falls.]

Venice ceased to be free in the year 1796, the fifth year of the
French republic; and you will perceive, that there never was
prediction more pointed, or more exactly followed by the
event. You will, therefore, note as very remarkable the three
lines of Alamanni addressed to Venice; which, however, no
one has pointed out:—

‘Se non cangi pensier, un secol solo
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.’

Many prophecies have passed for such, and many men have
been called prophets for much less.—GINGUENÈ, t. ix. p. 144.

³ Of the first fifty Doges, five abdicated—five were banished
with their eyes put out—five were MASSACRED—and nine
deposed; so that nineteen out of fifty lost the throne by
violence, besides two who fell in battle: this occurred long
previous to the reign of Marino Faliero. One of his more
immediate predecessors, Andrea Dandolo, died of vexation.
Marino Faliero himself perished as related. Amongst his
successors, Foscarini, after seeing his son repeatedly tortured
and banished, was deposed, and died of breaking a blood-
vessel, on hearing the bell of Saint Mark's toll for the election
of his successor. Morosini was impeached for the loss of
Candia; but this was previous to his dukedom, during which
he conquered the Morea, and was styled the Peloponnesian.
Faliero might truly say,

“Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!”

⁴ [As a play, Marino Faliero is deficient in the attractive
passions, in probability, and in depth and variety of interest;