

Thou, who in wisdom placed me here,  
Who, when thou wilt, can take me hence,  
Ah! whilst I tread this earthly sphere,  
Extend to me thy wide defence.

To Thee, my God, to Thee I call!  
Whatever weal or woe betide,  
By thy command I rise or fall,  
In thy protection I confide.

If, when this dust to dust's restored,  
My soul shall float on airy wing,  
How shall thy glorious name adored  
Inspire her feeble voice to sing!

But, if this fleeting spirit share  
With clay the grave's eternal bed,  
While life yet throbs, I raise my prayer,  
Though doom'd no more to quit the dead.

To Thee I breathe my humble strain,  
Grateful for all thy mercies past,  
And hope, my God, to thee again  
This erring life may fly at last.

December 29. 1806.

[First published, 1830.]

TO EDWARD NOEL LONG, ESQ.<sup>1</sup>

Nil ego contulerim jocundo sanus amico. — Hor.

DEAR LONG, in this sequester'd scene,  
While all around in slumber lie,  
The joyous days which ours have been  
Come rolling fresh on Fancy's eye;  
Thus if amidst the gathering storm,  
While clouds the darken'd noon deform,  
Yon heaven assumes a varied glow,  
I hail the sky's celestial bow,  
Which spreads the sign of future peace,  
And bids the war of tempests cease.  
Ah! though the present brings but pain,  
I think those days may come again;  
Or if, in melancholy mood,  
Some lurking envious fear intrude,  
To check my bosom's fondest thought,  
And interrupt the golden dream,  
I crush the fiend with malice fraught,  
And still indulge my wonted theme.  
Although we ne'er again can trace,  
In Granta's vale, the pedant's lore;  
Nor through the groves of Ida chase,  
Our raptur'd visions as before,  
Though Youth has flown on rosy pinion,  
And Manhood claims his stern dominion —  
Age will not every hope destroy,  
But yield some hours of sober joy.

Yes, I will hope that Time's broad wing  
Will shed around some dews of spring:  
But if his scythe must sweep the flowers  
Which bloom among the fairy bowers,

<sup>1</sup> [This young gentleman, who was with Lord Byron both at Harrow and Cambridge, afterwards entered the Guards, and served with distinction in the expedition to Copenhagen. He was drowned early in 1809, when on his way to join the army in the Peninsula; the transport in which he sailed being run foul of in the night by another of the convoy. "Long's

Where smiling Youth delights to dwell,  
And hearts with early rapture swell;  
If frowning Age, with cold control,  
Confines the current of the soul,  
Congeals the tear of Pity's eye,  
Or checks the sympathetic sigh,  
Or hears unmoved misfortune's groan,  
And bids me feel for self alone;  
Oh may my bosom never learn  
To soothe its wonted heedless flow;  
Still, still despise the censor stern,  
But ne'er forget another's woe.  
Yes, as you knew me in the days  
O'er which Remembrance yet delays,  
Still may I rove, untutor'd, wild,  
And even in age at heart a child.

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

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

But now, dear LONG, 't is midnight's noon,  
And clouds obscure the watery moon,  
Whose beauties I shall not rehearse,  
Described in every stripling's verse;

father," says Lord Byron, "wrote to me to write his son's epitaph. I promised — but I had not the heart to complete it. He was such a good, amiable being as rarely remains long in this world; with talent and accomplishments, too, to make him the more regretted." *Byron Diary*, 1821.]

For why should I the path go o'er,  
Which every hard has trod before?  
Yet ere yon silver lamp of night  
Has thrice perform'd her stated round,  
Has thrice retraced her path of light,  
And chased away the gloom profound,  
I trust that we, my gentle friend,  
Shall see her rolling orbit wend  
Above the dear-loved peaceful seat  
Which once contain'd our youth's retreat;<sup>1</sup>  
And then with those our childhood knew,  
We'll mingle in the festive crew;  
While many a tale of former day  
Shall wing the laughing hours away;  
And all the flow of souls shall pour  
The sacred intellectual shower,  
Nor cease till Luna's waning horn  
Scarce glimmers through the mist of morn.

TO A LADY.<sup>2</sup>

Oh! had my fate been join'd with thine,  
As once this pledge appear'd a token,  
These follies had not then been mine,  
For then my peace had not been broken.<sup>3</sup>

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

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

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

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

Then fare thee well, deceitful maid!  
'T were vain and fruitless to regret thee;  
Nor Hope, nor Memory yield their aid,  
But Pride may teach me to forget thee.

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

<sup>1</sup> [The two friends were both passionately attached to Harrow; and sometimes made excursions thither together, to revive the school-boy recollections.]

<sup>2</sup> [Mrs. Musters. See *antb.*, p. 384.]

<sup>3</sup> ["Our union would have healed feuds in which blood had been shed by our fathers — it would have joined lands broad and rich — it would have joined at least one heart, and two persons not ill matched in years (she is two years my elder), and — and — what has been the result?" — *Byron Diary*, 1821.]

<sup>4</sup> ["Our meetings," says Lord Byron, in 1822, "were stolen ones, and a gate leading from Mr. Chaworth's grounds to those of my mother was the place of our interviews. But the

If thou wert mine, had all been hush'd: —  
This cheek now pale from early riot,  
With passion's hectic ne'er had flush'd,  
But bloom'd in calm domestic quiet.

Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,  
For Nature seem'd to smile before thee;<sup>4</sup>  
And once my breast abhor'd deceit, —  
For then it beat but to adore thee.

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

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

I WOULD I WERE A CARELESS CHILD.

I WOULD I were a careless child,  
Still dwelling in my Highland cave,  
Or roaming through the dusky wild,  
Or bounding o'er the dark blue wave;  
The cumbrous pomp of Saxon<sup>5</sup> pride  
Accords not with the freeborn soul,  
Which loves the mountain's craggy side,  
And seeks the rocks where billows roll.

Fortune! take back these cultured lands,  
Take back this name of splendid sound!  
I hate the touch of servile hands,  
I hate the slaves that cringe around.  
Place me along the rocks I love,  
Which sound to Ocean's wildest roar;  
I ask but this — again to rove  
Through scenes my youth hath known before.

Few are my years, and yet I feel  
The world was ne'er design'd for me:  
Ah! why do dark'ning shades conceal  
The hour when man must cease to be?  
Once I beheld a splendid dream,  
A visionary scene of bliss:  
Truth! — wherefore did thy hated beam  
Awake me to a world like this?

I loved — but those I loved are gone;  
Had friends — my early friends are fled:  
How cheerless feels the heart alone  
When all its former hopes are dead!  
Though gay companions o'er the bowl  
Dispel awhile the sense of ill;  
Though pleasure stirs the maddening soul,  
The heart — the heart — is lonely still.<sup>6</sup>

ardour was all on my side. I was serious; she was volatile: she liked me as a younger brother, and treated and laughed at me as a boy; she, however, gave me her picture, and that was something to make verses upon. Had I married her, perhaps the whole tenour of my life would have been different."

<sup>5</sup> Sassenach, or Saxon, a Gaelic word, signifying either Lowland or English.

<sup>6</sup> [The "imagination all compact" which the greatest poet who ever lived has assigned as the distinguishing badge of his brethren, is in every case a dangerous gift. It exaggerates, indeed, our expectations, and can often bid its possessor hope, where hope is lost to reason: but the delusive pleasure arising from these visions of imagination resembles that of a child,



How dull ! to hear the voice of those  
Whom rank or chance, whom wealth or power,  
Have made, though neither friends nor foes,  
Associates of the festive hour.  
Give me again a faithful few,  
In years and feelings still the same,  
And I will fly the midnight crew,  
Where boist'rous joy is but a name.

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

Fain would I fly the haunts of men —  
I seek to shun, not hate mankind ;  
My breast requires the sullen glen,  
Whose gloom may suit a darken'd mind.  
Oh ! that to me the wings were given  
Which bear the turtle to her nest !  
Then would I cleave the vault of heaven,  
To flee away, and be at rest. <sup>1</sup>

#### WHEN I ROVED A YOUNG HIGHLANDER.

WHEN I roved a young Highlander o'er the dark  
heath,  
And climb'd thy steep summit, oh Morven of snow !<sup>2</sup>  
To gaze on the torrent that thunder'd beneath,  
Or the mist of the tempest that gather'd below,<sup>3</sup>  
Untutor'd by science, a stranger to fear,  
And rude as the rocks where my infancy grew,  
No feeling, save one, to my bosom was dear ;  
Need I say, my sweet Mary <sup>4</sup>, 'twas center'd in you ?

whose notice is attracted by a fragment of glass to which a sun-beam has given momentary splendour. He hastens to the spot with breathless impatience, and finds the object of his curiosity and expectation is equally vulgar and worthless. Such is the man of quick and exalted powers of imagination. His fancy over-estimates the object of his wishes, and pleasure, fame, distinction, are alternately pursued, attained, and despised when in his power. Like the enchanted fruit in the palace of a sorcerer, the objects of his admiration lose their attraction and value as soon as they are grasped by the adventurer's hand, and all that remains is regret for the time lost in the chase, and astonishment at the hallucination under which it was undertaken. The disproportion between hope and possession, which is felt by all men, is thus doubled to those whom nature has endowed with the power of gilding a distant prospect by the rays of imagination. These reflections, though trite and obvious, are in a manner forced from us by the poetry of Lord Byron, — by the sentiments of weariness of life and enmity with the world which they so frequently express. — and by the singular analogy which such sentiments hold with well-known incidents of his life. — *SIR W. SCOTT.*]

<sup>1</sup> "And I said, Oh ! that I had wings like a dove ; for then would I fly away, and be at rest." — *Psalm* lv. 6. This verse also constitutes a part of the most beautiful anthem in our language.

<sup>2</sup> Morven, a lofty mountain in Aberdeenshire. "Gormal of snow," is an expression frequently to be found in Ossian.

<sup>3</sup> This will not appear extraordinary to those who have been accustomed to the mountains. It is by no means uncommon, on attaining the top of Ben-e-vis, Ben-y-bourd, &c. to perceive, between the summit and the valley, clouds pouring down rain, and occasionally accompanied by lightning, while the spectator literally looks down upon the storm, perfectly secure from its effects.

<sup>4</sup> [In Lord Byron's Diary for 1813, he says, — "I have been thinking lately a good deal of Mary Duff. How very odd that I should have been so utterly, devotedly fond of that girl, at

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

I arose with the dawn ; with my dog as my guide,  
From mountain to mountain I bounded along ;  
I breasted the billows of Dee's <sup>5</sup> rushing tide,  
And heard at a distance the Highlander's song :  
At eve, on my heath-cover'd couch of repose,  
No dreams, save of Mary, were spread to my view ;  
And warm to the skies my devotions arose,  
For the first of my prayers was a blessing on you.

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

When I see some dark hill point its crest to the sky,  
I think of the rocks that o'ershadow Colbleen ;<sup>6</sup>  
When I see the soft blue of a love-speaking eye,  
I think of those eyes that endear'd the rude scene ;  
When, haply, some light-waving locks I behold,  
That faintly resemble my Mary's in hue,  
I think on the long flowing ringlets of gold,  
The locks that were sacred to beauty, and you.

Yet the day may arrive when the mountains once more  
Shall rise to my sight in their mantles of snow :<sup>7</sup>

an age when I could neither feel passion, nor know the meaning of the word. And the effect ! My mother used always to rally me about this childish amour ; and, at last, many years after, when I was sixteen, she told me one day ; "Oh, Byron, I have had a letter from Edinburgh, from Miss Abercromby, and your old sweetheart, Mary Duff, is married to a Mr. Cockburn." [Robert Cockburn, Esq. of Edinburgh.] And what was my answer ? I really cannot explain or account for my feelings at that moment ; but they nearly threw me into convulsions — to the horror of my mother, and the astonishment of every body. And it is a phenomenon in my existence (for I was not eight years old), which has puzzled, and will puzzle me to the latest hour of it." — Again, in January, 1815, a few days after his marriage, in a letter to his friend Captain Hay, the poet thus speaks of his childish attachment : — "Pray tell me more — or as much as you like, of your cousin Mary. I believe I told you our story some years ago. I was twenty-seven a few days ago, and I have never seen her since we were children, and young children too ; but I never forget her, nor ever can. You will oblige me with presenting her with my best respects, and all good wishes. It may seem ridiculous — but it is at any rate, I hope, not offensive to her, nor hers — in me to pretend to recollect anything about her, at so early a period of both our lives, almost, if not quite, in our nurseries ; — but it was a pleasant dream, which she must pardon me for remembering. Is she pretty still ? I have the most perfect idea of her person, as a child ; but T'ne, I suppose, has played the devil with us both."]

<sup>5</sup> "Breasting the lofty surge." — SHAKESPEARE. The Dee is a beautiful river, which rises near Mar Lodge, and falls into the sea at New Aberdeen.

<sup>6</sup> Colbleen is a mountain near the verge of the Highlands, not far from the ruins of Dee Castle.

<sup>7</sup> [In the spring of 1807, on recovering from a severe illness Lord Byron had projected a visit to Scotland. The plan was not put into execution ; but he thus adverts to it, in a letter dated in August, and addressed to his fair correspondent

#### TO THE EARL OF CLARE.

"Tu semper amoris  
Sis memor, et cari comitis ne abscedat imago." VAL. FLAG.

FRIEND of my youth ! when young we roved,  
Like striplings, mutually beloved,  
With friendship's purest glow,  
The bliss which wing'd those rosy hours  
Was such as pleasure seldom showers  
On mortals here below.

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

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

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

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

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

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

POOR LITTLE ! sweet, melodious bard !  
Of late esteem'd it monstrous hard  
That he, who sang before all, —  
He who the lore of love expanded, —  
By dire reviewers should be branded,  
As void of wit and moral. <sup>2</sup>

&c., and translate, or expand the subject to fill a volume, which may appear next spring, under the denomination of 'The Highland Harp,' or some title equally picturesque. What would you say to some stanzas on Mount Hecla ? They would be written at least with fire."]

<sup>1</sup> [See *anti*, p. 408.]

<sup>2</sup> These stanzas were written soon after the appearance of a severe critique, in a northern review, on a new publication of the British Anacreon. — [See Edinburgh Review, July, 1807, E e

But while these soar above me, unchanged as before,  
Will Mary be there to receive me ? — ah, no !  
Adieu, then, ye hills, where my childhood was bred !  
Thou sweet flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu !  
No home in the forest shall shelter my head, —  
Ah ! Mary, what home could be mine but with  
you ?

#### TO GEORGE, EARL DELAWARR. <sup>1</sup>

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

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

Full off have we wander'd through Ida together,  
And blest were the scenes of our youth, I allow :  
In the spring of our life, how serene is the weather !  
But winter's rude tempests are gathering now.

No more with affection shall memory blending,  
The wonted delights of our childhood retrace :  
When pride steels the bosom, the heart is unbending,  
And what would be justice appears a disgrace.

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

I will not complain, and though chill'd is affection,  
With me no corroding resentment shall live :  
My bosom is calm'd by the simple reflection,  
That both may be wrong, and that both should  
forgive.

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

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

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

Southwell — "On Sunday I set off for the Highlands. A friend of mine accompanies me in my carriage to Edinburgh. There we shall leave it, and proceed in a tandem through the western parts to Inverary, where we shall purchase shelties, to enable us to view places inaccessible to vehicular conveyances. On the coast we shall hire a vessel, and visit the most remarkable of the Hebrides, and, if we have time and favourable weather, mean to sail as far as Iceland, only three hundred miles from the northern extremity of Caledonia, to peep at Hecla. I mean to collect all the Èrse traditions, poems, &c.



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

Still I must yield those worthies merit,  
Who chasten, with unsparing spirit,  
Bad rhymes, and those who write them;  
And though myself may be the next,  
By critic sarcasm to be vexed,  
I really will not fight them.<sup>1</sup>

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

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

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

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

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

Oh! if you wish that happiness  
Your coming days and years may bless,  
And virtues crown your brow;  
Be still as you were wont to be,  
Spotless as you've been known to me,—  
Be still as you are now.<sup>2</sup>

article on "Epistles, Odes, and other Poems, by Thomas Little, Esq."]

<sup>1</sup> A bard (horresco referens) defied his reviewer to mortal combat. If this example becomes prevalent, our periodical censors must be dipped in the river Styx: for what else can secure them from the numerous host of their enraged assailants?

<sup>2</sup> ["Of all I have ever known, Clare has always been the least altered in every thing from the excellent qualities and kind affections which attached me to him so strongly at school. I should hardly have thought it possible for society (or the world, as it is called) to leave a being with so little of

And though some trifling share of praise,  
To cheer my last declining days,  
To me were doubly dear;  
Whilst blessing your beloved name,  
I'd waive at once a poet's fame,  
To prove a prophet here.

#### LINES WRITTEN BENEATH AN ELM IN THE CHURCHYARD OF HARROW.<sup>3</sup>

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

When fate shall chill, at length, this fever'd breast,  
And calm its cares and passions into rest,  
Oft have I thought, 't would soothe my dying hour,—  
If aught may soothe when life resigns her power,—  
To know some humbler grave, some narrow cell,  
Would hide my bosom where it loved to dwell;  
With this fond dream, methinks, 't were sweet to die—

And here it linger'd, here my heart might lie;  
Here might I sleep where all my hopes arose,  
Scene of my youth, and couch of my repose;  
For ever stretch'd beneath this mantling shade,  
Press'd by the turf where once my childhood play'd;  
Wrapt by the soil that veils the spot I loved,  
Mix'd with the earth o'er which my footsteps moved;  
Blest by the tongues that charm'd my youthful ear,  
Mourn'd by the few my soul acknowledged here;  
Deplored by those in early days allied,  
And unremember'd by the world beside.

September 2. 1807.

[The "Lines written beneath an Elm at Harrow," were the last in the little volume printed at Newark in 1807. The reader is referred to Mr. Moore's Notices, for various interesting particulars respecting the impression produced on Lord Byron's mind by the celebrated Critique of his juvenile

the leaven of bad passions. I do not speak from personal experience only, but from all I have ever heard of him from others, during absence and distance."—Byron Diary, 1821.]

<sup>3</sup> [On losing his natural daughter, Allegra, in April, 1822, Lord Byron sent her remains to be buried at Harrow, "where," he says, in a letter to Mr. Murray, "I once hoped to have laid my own." "There is," he adds, "a spot in the church-yard, near the footpath, on the brow of the hill looking towards Windsor, and a tomb under a large tree (bearing the name of Peachie, or Peachey), where I used to sit for hours and hours when a boy. This was my favourite spot; but as I wish to erect a tablet to her memory, the body had better be deposited in the church;"—and it was so accordingly.]

performances, put forth in the Edinburgh Review,—a journal which, at that time, possessed nearly undivided influence and authority. The Poet's diaries and letters afford evidence that, in his latter days, he considered this piece as the work of Mr. (now Lord) Brougham; but on what grounds he had come to that conclusion he nowhere mentions. It forms, however, from whatever pen it may have proceeded, so important a link in Lord Byron's literary history, that we insert it at length.]

#### ARTICLE FROM THE EDINBURGH REVIEW, FOR JANUARY, 1808.

Hours of Idleness; a Series of Poems, original and translated. By George Gordon, Lord Byron, a Minor. 8vo. pp. 200. Newark, 1807.

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

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

With this view, we must beg leave seriously to assure him, that the mere rhyming of the final syllable, even when accompanied by the presence of a certain number of feet,—nay, although (which does not always happen) those feet should scan regularly, and have been all counted accurately upon the fingers,—is not the whole art of poetry. We would entreat him to believe, that a certain portion of liveliness, somewhat of fancy, is necessary to constitute a poem, and that a poem in the present day, to be read, must contain at least one thought, either in a little degree different from the ideas of former writers, or differently expressed. We put it to his candour, whether there is any thing so deserving the name of poetry in verses like the following, written in 1806; and whether, if a youth of eighteen could say any thing so uninteresting to his ancestors, a youth of nineteen should publish it:—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

However, be this as it may, we fear his translations and imitations are great favourites with Lord Byron. We have them of all kinds, from Anacreon to Ossian; and, viewing them as school exercises, they may pass. Only, why print them after they have had their day and served their turn? And why call the thing in p. 79. (see p. 380.) a translation, where two words (*Σελω ληθεν*) of the original are expanded into four lines, and the other thing in p. 81. (see *ibid.*) where *μερονικταυς πολ' ωνεις* is rendered by means of six hobbling verses? As to his Ossianic poetry, we are not very good judges, being in truth, so moderately skilled in that species of composition, that we should, in all probability, be criticising some bit of the genuine Macpherson itself, were we to express our opinion of Lord Byron's rhapsodies. If, then, the following beginning of a "Song of Bards" is by his lordship, we venture to object to it, as far as we can comprehend it. "What form rises on the roar of clouds? whose dark ghost gleams on the red stream of tempests? His voice rolls on the thunder; 'tis Orla, the brown chief of Oithona. He was," &c. After detaining this "brown chief" some time, the bards conclude by giving him their advice to "raise his fair locks;" then to "spread them on the arch of the rainbow;" and "to smile through the tears of the storm." Of this kind of thing there are no less than nine pages; and we can so far venture an opinion in their favour, that they look very like Macpherson; and we are positive they are pretty nearly as stupid and tiresome.

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

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



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

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

"Renouncing every pleasing page,  
From authors of historic use,  
Preferring to the letter'd sage,  
The square of the hypothenuse.

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

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

"Our choir would scarcely be excused  
Even as a band of raw beginners ;  
All mercy now must be refused  
To such a set of croaking sinners.

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

But, whatever judgment may be passed on the poems of this noble minor, it seems we must take them as we find them, and be content ; for they are the last we shall ever have from him. He is, at best, he says, but an intruder into the groves of Parnassus : he never lived in a garret, like thorough-bred

poets ; and "though he once roved a careless mountaineer in the Highlands of Scotland," he has not of late enjoyed this advantage. Moreover, he expects no profit from his publication ; and, whether it succeeds or not, "it is highly improbable, from his situation and pursuits hereafter," that he should again condescend to become an author. Therefore, let us take what we get, and be thankful. What right have we poor devils to be nice ? We are well off to have got so much from a man of this lord's station, who does not live in a garret, but "has the sway" of Newstead Abbey. Again, we say, let us be thankful ; and, with honest Sancho, bid God bless the giver, nor look the gift horse in the mouth. \*

\* [The *Monthly Reviewers*, in those days the next in circulation to the *Edinburgh*, gave a much more favourable notice of the "Hours of Idleness." "These compositions, (said they) are generally of a plaintive or an amatory cast, with an occasional mixture of satire ; and they display both ease and strength—both pathos and fire. It will be expected that marks of juvenility and of haste should be discovered in these productions ; and we seriously advise our young bard to fulfil with submissive perseverance the duties of revision and correction. We discern, in Lord Byron, a degree of mental power, and a turn of mental disposition, which render us solicitous that both should be well cultivated and wisely directed, in his career of life. He has received talents, and is accountable for the use of them. We trust that he will render them beneficial to man, and a source of real gratification to himself in declining age. Then may he properly exclaim with the Roman orator, 'non lubet mihi deplorare vitam, quod multi, et ii docti, sæpe fecerunt ; neque me vixisse pœnitet : quoniam ita vixi, ut non frustra me natum existimem'"]—Lord Byron repaid the *Edinburgh Critique* with a satire—and became himself a *Monthly Reviewer*.]

## English Bards and Scotch Reviewers :

A SATIRE.<sup>1</sup>

"I had rather be a kitten, and cry mew !  
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers." — SHAKESPEARE.

"Such shameless bards we have ; and yet 't is true,  
There are as mad, abandon'd critics too." — POPE.

### PREFACE.<sup>2</sup>

ALL my friends, learned and unlearned, have urged me not to publish this Satire with my name. If I were to be "turned from the career of my humour by quibbles quick, and paper bullets of the brain," I should have complied with their counsel. But I am not to be terrified by abuse, or bullied by reviewers, with or without arms. I can safely say that I have attacked none personally, who did not commence on the offensive. An author's works are public property : he who purchases may judge, and publish his opinion if he pleases ; and the authors I have endeavoured to commemorate may do by me

<sup>1</sup> [The first edition of this satire, which then began with what is now the ninety-seventh line ("Time was, ere yet," &c.), appeared in March, 1809. A second, to which the author prefixed his name, followed in October of that year ; and a third and fourth were called for during his first *pilgrimage*, in 1810 and 1811. On his return to England, a fifth edition was prepared for the press by himself, with considerable care, but suppressed, and, except one copy, destroyed, when on the eve of publication. The text is now printed from the copy that escaped ; on casually meeting with which, in 1816, he re-perused the whole, and wrote on the margin some annotations, which also we shall preserve,—distinguishing them, by the insertion of their date, from those affixed to the prior editions.

as I have done by them. I dare say they will succeed better in condemning my scribbings, than in mending their own. But my object is not to prove that I can write well, but, if possible, to make others write better.

As the poem has met with far more success than I expected, I have endeavoured in this edition to make some additions and alterations, to render it more worthy of public perusal.

In the first edition of this satire, published anonymously, fourteen lines on the subject of Bowles's *Pope* were written by, and inserted at the request of, an ingenious friend of mine<sup>3</sup>, who has now in the press a volume of poetry. In the present edition

The first of these MS. notes of 1816 appears on the fly-leaf, and runs thus :—"The binding of this volume is considerably too valuable for the contents ; and nothing but the consideration of its being the property of another, prevents me from consigning this miserable record of misplaced anger and indiscriminate acrimony to the flames."

<sup>2</sup> This preface was written for the second edition, and printed with it. The noble author had left this country previous to the publication of that edition, and is not yet returned.—*Note to the fourth edition*, 1811.—["He is, and gone again."—*Lord B.* 1816.]

<sup>3</sup> [Mr. Hobhouse. See *post*, p. 426. note.]

## English Bards, etc.

STILL must I hear ?<sup>4</sup>—shall hoarse Fitzgerald<sup>5</sup>  
bawl  
His creaking couplets in a tavern hall,<sup>6</sup>  
And I not sing, lest, haply, Scotch reviews  
Should dub me scribbler, and denounce my muse ?  
Prepare for rhyme—I'll publish, right or wrong :  
Fools are my theme, let satire be my song.

Oh ! nature's noblest gift—my gray goose-quill !  
Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,  
Torn from thy parent bird to form a pen,  
That mighty instrument of little men !  
The pen ! foredoom'd to aid the mental throes  
Of brains that labour, big with verse or prose,  
Though nymphs forsake, and critics may deride,  
The lover's solace, and the author's pride.  
What wits ! what poets dost thou daily raise !  
How frequent is thy use, how small thy praise !  
Condemn'd at length to be forgotten quite,  
With all the pages which 't was thine to write.  
But thou, at least, mine own especial pen !  
Once laid aside, but now assumed again,  
Our task complete, like Hamet's<sup>7</sup> shall be free ;  
Though spurn'd by others, yet beloved by me :  
Then let us soar to-day ; no common theme,  
No eastern vision, no distemper'd dream<sup>8</sup>  
Inspires—our path, though full of thorns, is plain ;  
Smooth be the verse, and easy be the strain.

When Vice triumphant holds her sov'reign sway,  
Obey'd by all who nought beside obey ;

the long period of thirty-two years, this harmless poetaster was an attendant at the anniversary dinners of the Literary Fund, and constantly honoured the occasion with an ode, which he himself recited with most comical dignity of emphasis. He was fortunate in having for his patron Viscount Dudley and Ward, on whose death, without a will, his benevolent intentions towards the bard were fulfilled by his son, the late Earl Dudley, who generously sent him a draft for 5000*l.* Fitzgerald died in 1829. Of his numerous loyal effusions *only a single line* has survived its author ; but the characteristics of his style have been so happily hit off in the "REJECTED ADDRESSES"—(a work which Lord Byron has pronounced to be "by far the best thing of the kind since the *Rolliad*,")—that we cannot resist the temptation of an extract :—

"Who burnt (confound his soul ! ) the houses twain,  
Of Covent Garden and of Drury Lane ?  
Who, while the British squadron lay off Cork,  
(God bless the Regent and the Duke of York ! )  
With a foul earthquake ravaged the Caraccas,  
And raised the price of dry goods and tobaccos ?  
Who makes the quarter loaf and Luddites rise ?  
Who fills the butchers' shops with large blue flies ?  
Who thought in flames St. James's court to pinch ?  
Who burnt the wardrobe of poor Lady Finch ?—  
Why he, who forging for this isle a yoke,  
Reminds me of a line I lately spoke—  
'The tree of freedom is the British Oak.'  
Bless every man possess'd of ought to give !  
Long may Long Tilney Wellesley Long Pole live !  
God bless the army, bless their coats of scarlet !  
God bless the navy, bless the Princess Charlotte !  
God bless the Guards, though worsted Gallia scoff !  
God bless their pig-tails, though they're now cut off !  
And oh ! in Downing Street should Old Nick revel,  
England's prime minister, then bless the Devil !"

<sup>7</sup> Cid Hamet Benengeli promises repose to his pen, in the last chapter of *Don Quixote*. Oh ! that our voluminous gentry would follow the example of Cid Hamet Benengeli.

<sup>8</sup> ["This must have been written in the spirit of prophecy."—*B.* 1816.]

they are erased, and some of my own substituted in their stead ; my only reason for this being that which I conceive would operate with any other person in the same manner,—a determination not to publish with my name any production, which was not entirely and exclusively my own composition.

With<sup>1</sup> regard to the real talents of many of the poetical persons whose performances are mentioned or alluded to in the following pages, it is presumed by the author that there can be little difference of opinion in the public at large ; though, like other sectaries, each has his separate tabernacle of prose-lytes, by whom his abilities are over-rated, his faults overlooked, and his metrical canons received without scruple and without consideration. But the unquestionable possession of considerable genius by several of the writers here censured renders their mental prostitution more to be regretted. Imbecility may be pitied, or, at worst, laughed at and forgotten ; perverted powers demand the most decided reprehension. No one can wish more than the author that some known and able writer had undertaken their exposure ; but Mr. Gifford has devoted himself to Massinger, and, in the absence of the regular physician, a country practitioner may, in cases of absolute necessity, be allowed to prescribe his nostrum to prevent the extension of so deplorable an epidemic, provided there be no quackery in his treatment of the malady. A caustic is here offered ; as it is to be feared nothing short of actual cautery can recover the numerous patients afflicted with the present prevalent and distressing *rabies* for rhyming.—As to the *Edinburgh Reviewers*<sup>2</sup>, it would indeed require an Hercules to crush the Hydra ; but if the author succeeds in merely "bruising one of the heads of the serpent," though his own hand should suffer in the encounter, he will be amply satisfied.<sup>3</sup>

[Here the preface to the first edition commenced.]

<sup>2</sup> ["I well recollect," said Lord Byron, in 1821, "the effect which the critique of the *Edinburgh Reviewers* on my first poem, had upon me—it was rage and resistance, and redress ; but not despondency nor despair. A savage review is hemlock to a sucking author, and the one on me (which produced the *English Bards*, &c.) knocked me down—but I got up again. That critique was a master-piece of low wit, a tissue of scurrilous abuse. I remember there was a great deal of vulgar trash, about people being 'thankful for what they could get,'—'not looking a gift horse in the mouth,' and such stable expressions. But so far from their bullying me, or deterring me from writing, I was bent on falsifying their raven predictions, and determined to show them, croak as they would, that it was not the last time they should hear from me."]

<sup>3</sup> ["The severity of the criticism," as Sir Egerton Brydges has well observed, "touched Lord Byron in the point where his original strength lay : it wounded his pride, and roused his bitter indignation. He published '*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*,' and bowed down those who had hitherto held a despotic victory over the public mind. There was, after all, more in the boldness of the enterprise, in the fearlessness of the attack, than in its intrinsic force. But the moral effect of the gallantry of the assault, and of the justice of the cause, made it victorious and triumphant. This was one of those lucky developments which cannot often occur ; and which fixed Lord Byron's fame. From that day he engaged the public notice as a writer of undoubted talent and energy both of intellect and temper."]

<sup>4</sup> LIMIT.—

"Semper ego auditor tantum ? nunquamne reponam,  
Vexatus toties rauci Theseide Codri ?"—*Juv. Sat. I.*

<sup>5</sup> ["Hoarse Fitzgerald."—"Right enough ; but why notice such a mountebank."—*Byron*, 1816.]

<sup>6</sup> Mr. Fitzgerald, facetiously termed by Colbett the "Small Beer Poet," inflicts his annual tribute of verse on the Literary Fund : not content with writing, he spouts in person, after the company have imbibed a reasonable quantity of bad port, to enable them to sustain the operation.—[For