

Why in this furnace is my spirit proved  
Like steel in tempering fire? because I loved?  
Because I loved what not to love, and see,  
Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

## IX.

I once was quick in feeling—that is o'er;—  
My scars are callous, or I should have dash'd  
My brain against these bars, as the sun flash'd  
In mockery through them;—If I bear and bore  
The much I have recounted, and the more  
Which hath no words,—'t is that I would not die  
And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie  
Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame  
Stamp Madness deep into my memory,  
And woo Compassion to a blighted name,  
Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.  
No—it shall be immortal!—and I make  
A future temple of my present cell,  
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.<sup>1</sup>  
While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell  
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,  
And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearthless halls,

A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown,—  
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,  
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled wall's!<sup>2</sup>  
And thou, Leonora!—thou—who wert ashamed  
That such as I could love—who blush'd to hear  
To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,  
Go! tell thy brother, that my heart, untamed  
By grief, years, weariness—and it may be  
A taint of that he would impute to me—  
From long infection of a den like this,  
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,  
Adores thee still;—and add—that when the towers  
And battlements which guard his joyous hours  
Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,  
Or left untended in a dull repose,  
This—this—shall be a consecrated spot!  
But thou—when all that Birth and Beauty throws  
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have  
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.<sup>3</sup>  
No power in death can tear our names apart,  
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.  
Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate  
To be entwined for ever—but too late!<sup>4</sup>

Ode on Venice.<sup>5</sup>

## I.

OH Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls  
Are level with the waters, there shall be  
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,  
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!  
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,  
What should thy sons do?—any thing but weep:  
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.  
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,  
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,  
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,  
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,  
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,  
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.  
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap  
No mellow harvest! Thirteen hundred years  
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;

<sup>1</sup> ["Which {nations yet} shall visit for my sake."—MS.]

<sup>2</sup> [Those who indulge in the dreams of earthly retribution will observe, that the cruelty of Alfonso was not left without its recompense, even in his own person. He survived the affection of his subjects and of his dependants, who deserted him at his death; and suffered his body to be interred without princely or decent honours. His last wishes were neglected; his testament cancelled. His kinsman, Don Caesar, shrank from the excommunication of the Vatican, and, after a short struggle, or rather suspense, Ferrara passed away for ever from the dominion of the house of Este.—HOBHOUSE.]

<sup>3</sup> [In July, 1586, after a confinement of more than seven years, Tasso was released from his dungeon. In the hope of receiving his mother's dowry, and of again beholding his sister Cornelia, he shortly after visited Naples, where his presence was welcomed with every demonstration of esteem and admiration. Being on a visit at Mola di Gaeta, he received the following remarkable tribute of respect. Marco di Sciarra, the notorious captain of a numerous troop of banditti, hearing where the great poet was, sent to compliment him, and offered him not only a free passage, but protection by the way, and assured him that he and his followers would be proud to execute his orders. See *Manso, Vita del Tasso*, p. 219.]

<sup>4</sup> [The "pleasures of imagination" have been explained

And every monument the stranger meets,  
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;  
And even the Lion all subdued appears,  
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,  
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats  
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along  
The soft waves, once all musical to song,  
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng  
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum  
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds  
Were but the overbeating of the heart,  
And flow of too much happiness, which needs  
The aid of age to turn its course apart  
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood  
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.  
But these are better than the gloomy errors,  
The weeds of nations in their last decay,

and justified by Addison in prose, and by Akenside in verse: but there are moments of real life when its miseries and its necessities seem to overpower and destroy them. The history of mankind, however, furnishes proofs that no bodily suffering, no adverse circumstances, operating on our material nature, will extinguish the spirit of imagination. Perhaps there is no instance of this so very affecting and so very sublime as the case of Tasso. They who have seen the dark, horror-striking dungeon-hole at Ferrara, in which he was confined seven years under the imputation of madness, will have had this truth impressed upon their hearts in a manner never to be erased. In this vault, of which the sight makes the hardest heart shudder, the poet employed himself in finishing and correcting his immortal epic poem. Lord Byron's "Lament" on this subject is as sublime and profound a lesson in morality, and in the pictures of the recesses of the human soul, as it is a production most eloquent, most pathetic, most vigorous, and most elevating among the gifts of the Muse. The bosom which is not touched with it—the fancy which is not warmed,—the understanding which is not enlightened and exalted by it, is not fit for human intercourse. If Lord Byron had written nothing but this, to deny him the praise of a grand poet would have been flagrant injustice or gross stupidity.—BRYDGES.]

<sup>5</sup> [This Ode was transmitted from Venice, in 1819, along with "Mazeppa."]

Cities and generations—fair, when free—  
For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

## III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers  
With Freedom—godlike Triad! how ye sate!  
The league of mightiest nations, in those hours  
When Venice was an envy, might abate,  
But did not quench, her spirit—in her fate  
All were enwrapp'd: the feasted monarchs knew  
And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,  
Although they humbled—with the kingly few  
The many felt, for from all days and climes  
She was the voyager's worship;—even her crimes  
Were of the softer order—born of Love,  
She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,  
But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;  
For these restored the Cross, that from above  
Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant  
Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,  
Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank  
The city it has clothed in chains, which clank  
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe  
The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;  
Yet she but shares with them a common foe,  
And call'd the "kingdom" of a conquering woe,  
But knows what all—and, most of all, we know—  
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

## IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone  
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;  
Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own  
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;  
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone  
His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time,  
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,  
And in its own good season tramples down  
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,  
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean  
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion  
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and  
Bequeath'd—a heritage of heart and hand,  
And proud distinction from each other land,  
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,  
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand  
Full of the magic of exploded science—  
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,  
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,  
Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught  
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,  
The floating fence of Albion's feeble crag,  
May strike to those whose red right hands have bought  
Rights cheaply earn'd with blood.—Still, still, for ever  
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,  
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep  
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,  
Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,  
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,  
Three paces, and then faltering:—better be  
Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,  
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,  
Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep  
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,  
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,  
One freeman more, America, to thee!

When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,  
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;  
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,  
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,  
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,  
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning  
Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,  
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;  
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,  
To him appears renewal of his breath,  
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;—  
And then he talks of life, and how again  
He feels his spirits soaring—albeit weak,  
And of the fresher air, which he would seek;  
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,  
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,  
And so the film comes o'er him—and the dizzy  
Chamber swims round and round—and shadows busy,  
At which he vainly catches, fit and gleam,  
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,  
And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth  
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

## II.

There is no hope for nations!—Search the page  
Of many thousand years—the daily scene,  
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,  
The everlasting to be which hath been,  
Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean  
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear  
Our strength away in wrestling with the air;  
For 'tis our nature strikes us down: the beasts  
Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts  
Are of as high an order—they must go [slaughter.  
Even where their driver goads them, though to  
Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,  
What have they given your children in return?  
A heritage of servitude and woes,  
A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.  
What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,  
O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,  
And deem this proof of loyalty the real;  
Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,  
And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?  
All that your sires have left you, all that Time  
Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,  
Spring from a different theme!—Ye see and read,  
Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!  
Save the few spirits, who, despite of all,  
And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd  
By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,  
And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,  
Gushing from Freedom's fountains—when the crowd,  
Madden'd with centuries of drought, are loud,  
And trample on each other to obtain  
The cup which brings oblivion of a chain  
Heavy and sore,—in which long yoked they plough'd  
The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,  
'T was not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,  
And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain:—  
Yes! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds  
Which they abhor, confound not with the cause  
Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,  
Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite  
But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth  
With all her seasons to repair the blight  
With a few summers, and again put forth



## El Morgante Maggiore.

## CANTO PRIMO.

## I.

IN principio era il Verbo appresso a Dio ;  
Ed era Iddio il Verbo, e 'l Verbo lui :  
Questo era nel principio, al parer mio ;  
E nulla si può far senza costui :  
Però, giusto Signor benigno e pio,  
Mandami solo un de gli angeli tui,  
Che m'accompagni, e rechimi a memoria  
Una famosa antica e degna storia.

## II.

E tu Vergine, figlia, e madre, e sposa  
Di quel Signor, che ti dette le chiave  
Del cielo e dell' abisso, e d' ogni cosa,  
Quel di che Gabriel tuo ti disse Ave !  
Perchè tu se' de' tuo' servi pietosa,  
Con dolce rime, e stil grato e soave,  
Ajuta i versi miei benignamente,  
E'nfino al fine allumina la mente.

## III.

Era nel tempo, quando Filomena  
Con la sorella si lamenta e plora,  
Che si ricorda di sua antica pena,  
E pe' boschetti le ninfe innamora  
E Febo il carro temperato mena,  
Che 'l suo Fetonte l'ammaestra ancora ;  
Ed appariva appunto all' orizzonte,  
Tal che Titon si graffiava la fronte.

## IV.

Quand'io varai la mia barchetta, prima  
Per ubbidir chi sempre ubbidir debbe  
La mente, e faticarsi in prosa e in rima,  
E del mio Carlo Imperador m' increbbe ;  
Che so quanti la penna ha posto in cima,  
Che tutti la sua gloria prevarrebbe :  
E stata quella istoria, a quel ch' i' veggio,  
Di Carlo male intesa, e scritta peggio.

## V.

Diceva già Leonardo Aretino,  
Che s'egli avesse avuto scrittore degno,  
Com'egli ebbe un Ormanno il suo Pipino  
Ch'avesse diligenza avuto e ingegno ;  
Sarebbe Carlo Magno un uom divino ;  
Però ch'egli ebbe gran vittorie e regno,  
E fece per la chiesa e per la fede  
Certo assai più, che non si dice o crede.

had been subjected to private judgment, notwithstanding the popes had prohibited the reading of it. His ardour did not allow him to stop and examine whether this prohibition might not be posterior to the death of Pulci. Milton had studied Pulci to advantage. The knowledge which he ascribes to his devils, their despairing repentance, the lofty sentiments which he bestows upon some of them, and, above all, the principle that, notwithstanding their crime and its punishment, they retain the grandeur and perfection of angelic nature, are all to be found in the Morgante as well as in Paradise Lost. Ariosto and Tasso have imitated other passages. When great poets borrow from their inferiors in genius, they turn their acquisitions to such advantage that it is difficult to detect their thefts, and still more difficult to blame them.

"The poem is filled with kings, knights, giants, and devils. There are many battles and many duels. Wars rise out of wars, and empires are conquered in a day. Pulci treats us with plenty of magic and enchantment. His love adventures are not peculiarly interesting; and, with the exception of four or five leading personages, his characters are of no moment. The fable turns wholly upon the hatred which Ganelon, the felon knight of Maganza, bears towards Orlando and the rest of the Christian Paladins. Charlemagne is easily practised upon by Ganelon, his prime confidant and man of business. So he treats Orlando and his friends in the most scurvy manner imaginable, and sends them out to hard service in the wars against France. Ganelon is despatched to Spain to treat with King Marsilius, but being also instructed to obtain the cession of a kingdom for Orlando; but he conceals a treacherous device with the Spaniards, and Orlando is killed

The Morgante Maggiore. <sup>1</sup>

## CANTO THE FIRST.

## I.

IN the beginning was the Word next God ;  
God was the Word, the Word no less was he :  
This was in the beginning, to my mode  
Of thinking, and without him nought could be :  
Therefore, just Lord ! from out thy high abode,  
Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,  
One only, to be my companion, who  
Shall help my famous, worthy, old song through.

## II.

And thou, oh Virgin ! daughter, mother, bride  
Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key  
Of heaven, and hell, and every thing beside,  
The day thy Gabriel said " All hail ! " to thee,  
Since to thy servants pity's ne'er denied,  
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and free,  
Be to my verses then benignly kind,  
And to the end illuminate my mind.

## III.

'Twas in the season when sad Philomel  
Weeps with her sister, who remembers and  
Deplores the ancient woes which both befel,  
And makes the nymphs enamour'd, to the hand  
Of Phaeton by Phœbus loved so well  
His car (but temper'd by his sire's command)  
Was given, and on the horizon's verge just now  
Appear'd, so that Tithonus scratch'd his brow :

## IV.

When I prepared my bark first to obey,  
As it should still obey, the helm, my mind,  
And carry prose or rhyme, and this my lay  
Of Charles the Emperor, whom you will find  
By several pens already praised ; but they  
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined,  
For all that I can see in prose or verse,  
Have understood Charles badly, and wrote worse.

## V.

Leonardo Aretino said already,  
That if, like Pepin, Charles had had a writer  
Of genius quick, and diligently steady,  
No hero would in history look brighter ;  
He in the cabinet being always ready,  
And in the field a most victorious fighter,  
Who for the church and Christian faith had wrought,  
Certes, far more than yet is said or thought.

at the battle of Roncesvalles. The intrigues of Ganelon, his spite, his patience, his obstinacy, his dissimulation, his affected humility, and his inexhaustible powers of intrigue, are admirably depicted; and his character constitutes the chief and most feature in the poem. Charlemagne is a worthy monarch, but easily gulled. Orlando is a real hero, chaste and disinterested, and who fights in good earnest for the propagation of the faith. He baptizes the giant Morgante, who afterwards serves him like a faithful squire. There is another giant, whose name is Margutte. Morgante falls in with Margutte; and they become sworn brothers. Margutte is a very infidel giant, ready to confound his fallings, and full of drolery. He sets all a-laughing, readers, giants, devils, and heroes; and he finishes his career by laughing till he bursts."

<sup>1</sup> ["About the Morgante Maggiore, I won't have a line omitted. It may circulate or it may not, but all the criticism on earth sha'n't touch a line, unless it be because it is badly translated. Now you say, and I say, and others say, that the translation is a good one, and so it shall go to press as it is. Pulci must answer for his own irreligion: I answer for the translation only."—Lord Byron to Mr. Murray, 1820.—"Why don't you publish my Pulci,—the best thing I ever wrote."—*ib.* 1821.]

## VI.

Guardisi ancora a san Liberatore  
Quella badia là presso a Manoppello,  
Giù ne gli Abbruzzi fatta per suo onore,  
Dove fu la battaglia e 'l gran flaggello  
D' un re pagan, che Carlo imperadore  
Uccise, e tanto del suo popol fello :  
E vedesi tante ossa, e tanto il sanno,  
Che tutte in Giusaffà poi si vedranno.

## VII.

Ma il mondo cieco e ignorante non prezza  
Le sue virtù, com'io vorrei vedere :  
E tu, Fiorenza, de la sua grandezza  
Possiedi, e sempre potrai possedere  
Ogni costume ed ogni gentilezza  
Che si potesse acquistare o avere  
Col senno col tesoro o con la lancia  
Dal nobil sangue e venuto di Francia.

## VIII.

Dodici paladini aveva in corte  
Carlo; e 'l più savio a famoso era Orlando :  
Gan traditor lo condusse a la morte  
In Roncesvalle un trattato ordinando ;  
Là dove il corno sonò tanto forte  
Dopo la dolorosa rotta, quando  
Ne la sua commedia Dante qui dice,  
E mettello con Carlo in ciel felice.

## IX.

Era per Pasqua quella di natale :  
Carlo la corte avea tutta in Parigi :  
Orlando, com'io dico, il principale  
Evvi, il Danese, Astolfo, e Ansuigi :  
Fannosi feste e cose trionfale,  
E molto celebravan San Dionigi ;  
Angiolin di Bajona, ed Olivieri  
V'era venuto, e 'l gentil Berlinghieri.

## X.

Eravi Avolio ed Avino ed Ottone,  
Di Normandia, Riccardo Paladino,  
E 'l savio Namò, e 'l vecchio Salamone,  
Gualtier da Monlione, e Baldovino  
Ch'era figliuol del tristo Ganelone.  
Troppo lieto era il figliuol di Pipino ;  
Tanto che spesso d' allegrezza geme  
Veggendo tutti i paladini insieme.

## XI.

Ma la Fortuna attenta sta nascosa,  
Per guastar sempre ciascun nostro effetto :  
Mentre che Carlo così si riposa,  
Orlando governava in fatto e in detto  
La corte e Carlo Magno ed ogni cosa :  
Gan per invidia scoppia il maladetto,  
E cominciava un dì con Carlo a dire :  
Abbiam noi sempre Orlando ad ubbidire ?

## XII.

Io ho creduto mille volte dirti :  
Orlando ha in se troppa presunzione :  
Noi siam qui conti, re, duchi a servirti,  
E Namò, Ottone, Uggieri e Salamone,  
Per onorarti ognun, per ubbidirti :  
Che costui abbi ogni reputazione  
Nol sofferrem ; ma siam deliberati  
Da un fanciullo non esser governati.

## VI.

You still may see at Saint Liberatore  
The abbey, no great way from Manoppell,  
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,  
Because of the great battle in which fell  
A pagan king, according to the story,  
And felon people whom Charles sent to hell :  
And there are bones so many, and so many,  
Near them Giusaffa's would seem few, if any.

## VII.

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't prize  
His virtues as I wish to see them : thou,  
Florence, by his great bounty don't arise,  
And hast, and may have, if thou wilt allow,  
All proper customs and true courtesies :  
Whate'er thou hast acquired from them till now  
With knightly courage, treasure, or the lance,  
Is sprung from out the noble blood of France.

## VIII.

Twelve paladins had Charles in court, of whom  
The wisest and most famous was Orlando ;  
Him traitor Gan conducted to the tomb  
In Roncesvalles, as the villain plann'd too,  
While the horn rang so loud, and knell'd the doom  
Of their sad rout, though he did all knight can do ;  
And Dante in his comedy has given  
To him a happy seat with Charles in heaven.

## IX.

'Twas Christmas-day ; in Paris all his court  
Charles held ; the chief, I say, Orlando was,  
The Dane ; Astolfo there too did resort,  
Also Ansuigi, the gay time to pass  
In festival and in triumphal sport,  
The much-renown'd St. Dennis being the cause ;  
Angiolin of Bayonne, and Oliver,  
And gentle Belinghieri too came there :

## X.

Avolio, and Arino, and Othone  
Of Normandy, and Richard Paladin,  
Wise Hamò, and the ancient Salamone,  
Walter of Lion's Mount and Baldovino,  
Who was the son of the sad Ganelone.  
Were there, exciting too much gladness in  
The son of Pepin : — when his knights came hither,  
He groan'd with joy to see them altogether.

## XI.

But watchful Fortune, lurking, takes good heed  
Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to bring :  
While Charles reposed him thus, in word and deed,  
Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every thing ;  
Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such need  
To vent his spite, that thus with Charles the king  
One day he openly began to say,  
" Orlando must we always then obey ?

## XII.

" A thousand times I've been about to say,  
Orlando too presumptuously goes on ;  
Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own thy sway,  
Hamò, and Othò, Ogier, Solomon,  
Each have to honour thee and to obey ;  
But he has too much credit near the throne,  
Which we won't suffer, but are quite decided  
By such a boy to be no longer guided.

## XIII.

Tu cominciasti insino in Aspramonte  
A dargli a intendere che fusse gagliardo,  
E facesse gran cose a quella fonte ;  
Ma se non fusse stato il buon Gherardo,  
Io so che la vittoria era d' Almonte :  
Ma egli ebbe sempre l'occhio a lo stendardo :  
Che si voleva quel di coronarlo :  
Questo è colui ch' ha meritato, Carlo.

## XIV.

Se ti ricorda già sendo in Guascogna,  
Quando e' vi venne la gente di Spagna,  
Il popol de' cristiani avea vergogna,  
Se non mostrava la sua forza magna.  
Il ver convien pur dir, quando e' bisogna :  
Sappi ch' ognuno imperador si lagna :  
Quant' io per me, ripasserò que' monti  
Ch' io passai n' qua con sessantaduo conti.

## XV.

La tua grandezza dispensar si vuole,  
E far che ciascun abbi la sua parte :  
La corte tutta quanta se ne duole :  
Tu credi che costui sia forse Marte ?  
Orlando un giorno udì queste parole,  
Che si sedeva soletto in disparte :  
Dispiacquagli di Gan quel che diceva ;  
Ma molto più che Carlo gli credeva.

## XVI.

E volle con la spada uccider Gano ;  
Ma Olivieri in quel mezzo si mise,  
E Durlindana gli trasse di mano,  
E così il me' che seppe gli divise.  
Orlando si sdegnò con Carlo Mano,  
E poco men che quivi non l'uccise ;  
E dipartissi di Parigi solo,  
E scoppia e 'mpazza di sdegno e di duolo.

## XVII.

Ad Ermellina moglie del Danese  
Tolse Cortana, e poi tolse Rondello ;  
E 'n verso Brara il suo cammin poi prese.  
Alda la bella, come vide quello,  
Per abbracciarlo le braccia distese.  
Orlando, che ismarrito avea il cervello,  
Com' ella disse : ben venga il mio Orlando :  
Gli volle in su la testa dar col brando,

## XVIII.

Come colui che la furia consiglia,  
Egli pareva a Gan dar veramente :  
Alda la bella si fe' meraviglia :  
Orlando si ravvide prestamente :  
E la sua sposa pigliava la briglia,  
E scese dal caval subitamente :  
Ed ogni cosa narrava a costei,  
E riposossi alcun giorno con lei.

## XIX.

Poi si partì portato dal furore,  
E terminò passare in Paganà ;  
E mentre che cavalca, il traditore  
Di Gan sempre ricorda per la via :  
E cavalcando d' uno in altro errore,  
In un deserto truova una badia  
In luoghi oscuri e paesi lontani,  
Ch' era a' confin' tra cristiani e pagani.

## XIII.

" And even at Aspramont thou didst begin  
To let him know he was a gallant knight,  
And by the fount did much the day to win ;  
But I know *who* that day had won the fight  
If it had not for good Gherardo been :  
The victory was Almonte's else ; his sight  
He kept upon the standard, and the laurels  
In fact and fairness are his earning, Charles.

## XIV.

" If thou rememberest being in Gascony,  
When there advanced the nations out of Spain,  
The Christian cause had suffer'd shamefully,  
Had not his valour driven them back again.  
Best speak the truth when there's a reason why :  
Know then, oh emperor ! that all complain :  
As for myself, I shall repossess the mounts  
O'er which I cross'd with two and sixty counts.

## XV.

" 'T is fit thy grandeur should dispense relief,  
So that each here may have his proper part,  
For the whole court is more or less in grief :  
Perhaps thou deem'st this lad a Mars in heart ?"  
Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,  
As by himself it chanced he sate apart :  
Displeas'd he was with Gan because he said it,  
But much more still that Charles should give him credit.

## XVI.

And with the sword he would have murder'd Gan,  
But Oliver thrust in between the pair,  
And from his hand extracted Durlindan,  
And thus at length they separated were.  
Orlando, angry too with Carloman,  
Wanted but little to have slain him there ;  
Then forth alone from Paris went the chief,  
And burst and madden'd with disdain and grief.

## XVII.

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,  
He took Cortana, and then took Rondell,  
And on towards Brara prick'd him o'er the plain ;  
And when she saw him coming, Aldabella  
Stretch'd forth her arms to clasp her lord again :  
Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,  
As " Welcome, my Orlando, home," she said,  
Raised up his sword to smite her on the head,

## XVIII.

Like him a fury counsels ; his revenge  
On Gan in that rash act he seem'd to take,  
Which Aldabella thought extremely strange ;  
But soon Orlando found himself awake ;  
And his spouse took his bridle on this change,  
And he dismounted from his horse, and spake  
Of every thing which pass'd without demur,  
And then reposed himself some days with her.

## XIX.

Then full of wrath departed from the place,  
And far as pagan countries roam'd astray,  
And while he rode, yet still at every pace  
The traitor Gan remember'd by the way ;  
And wandering on in error a long space,  
An abbey which in a lone desert lay,  
Midst glens obscure, and distant lands, he found,  
Which form'd the Christian's and the pagan's bound.

## XX.

L' abate si chiamava Chiamamonte,  
Era del sangue disceso d' Anglante :  
Di sopra a la badia v' era un gran monte,  
Dove abitava alcun fiero gigante,  
De' quali uno avea nome Passamonte,  
L' altro Alabastro, e l' terzo era Morgante :  
Con certe frombe gittavan da alto,  
Ed ogni dì facevan qualche assalto.

## XXI.

I monachetti non potieno uscire  
Del monistero o per legne o per acque :  
Orlando picchia, e non volieno aprire,  
Fin che a l' abate a la fine pur piacque ;  
Entrato drento cominciava a dire,  
Come colui, che di Maria già nacque  
Adora, ed era cristian battezzato,  
E com' egli era a la badia arrivato.

## XXII.

Disse l' abate : il ben venuto sia  
Di quei ch' io ho volentier ti daremo,  
Poi che tu credi al figliuol di Maria ;  
E la cagion, cavalier, ti diremo,  
Acciò che non l' imputi a villania,  
Perchè a l' entrar resistenza facemo,  
E non ti volle aprir quel monachetto :  
Così intervien chi vive con sospetto.

## XXIII.

Quando ci venni al principio abitare  
Queste montagne, benchè sieno oscure  
Come tu vedi ; pur si potea stare  
Sanza sospetto, ch' ell' eran sicure :  
Sol da le fiere t' avevi a guardare ;  
Fernoci spesso di brutte paure ;  
Or ci bisogna, se vogliamo starci,  
Da le bestie domestic guardarci.

## XXIV.

Queste ci fan piuttosto stare a segno  
Sonci appariti tre fieri giganti,  
Non so di quel paese o di qual regno,  
Ma molto son feroci tutti quanti :  
La forza e l' malvoler giunt' a lo' ngegno  
Sai che può l' tutto ; e noi non siam bastanti ;  
Questi perturban sì l' orazion nostra,  
Che non so più che far, s' altri nol mostra.

## XXV.

Gli antichi padri nostri nel deserto,  
Se le lor opre sante erano e giuste,  
Del ben servir da Dio n' avevan buon merto ;  
Nè creder sol vivessin di locuste :  
Piovea dal ciel la manna, questo è certo ;  
Ma qui convien che spesso assaggi e gusti  
Sassi che piovon di sopra quel monte,  
Che gettano Alabastro e Passamonte.

## XXVI.

E l' terzo ch' è Morgante, assai più fiero,  
Isvegli e pini e faggi e cerri e gli oppi,  
E gettagli infin qui : questo è pur vero ;  
Non posso far che d' ira non iscoppi.  
Mentre che parlan così in cimitero,  
Un sasso par che Rondel quasi sgroppi ;  
Che da' giganti giù venne da alto  
Tanto, ch' e' prese sotto il tetto un salto.

## XX.

The abbot was call'd Clermont, and by blood  
Descended from Anglante : under cover  
Of a great mountain's brow the abbey stood,  
But certain savage giants look'd him over ;  
One Passamont was foremost of the brood,  
And Alabaster and Morgante hover  
Second and third, with certain slings, and throw  
In daily jeopardy the place below.

## XXI.

The monks could pass the convent gate no more,  
Nor leave their cells for water or for wood ;  
Orlando knock'd, but none would ope, before  
Unto the prior it at length seem'd good ;  
Enter'd, he said that he was taught to adore  
Him who was born of Mary's holiest blood,  
And was baptized a Christian ; and then show'd  
How to the abbey he had found his road.

## XXII.

Said the abbot, " You are welcome ; what is mine  
We give you freely, since that you believe  
With us in Mary Mother's Son divine ;  
And that you may not, cavalier, conceive  
The cause of our delay to let you in  
To be rusticity, you shall receive  
The reason why our gate was barr'd to you :  
Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

## XXIII.

" When hither to inhabit first we came  
These mountains, albeit that they are obscure,  
As you perceive, yet without fear or blame  
They seem'd to promise an asylum sure :  
From savage brutes alone, too fierce to tame,  
'T was fit our quiet dwelling to secure ;  
But now, if here we'd stay, we needs must guard  
Against domestic beasts with watch and ward.

## XXIV.

" These make us stand, in fact, upon the watch ;  
For late there have appear'd three giants rough ;  
What nation or what kingdom bore the batch  
I know not, but they are all of savage stuff ;  
When force and malice with some genius match,  
You know, they can do all — we are not enough :  
And these so much our orisons derange,  
I know not what to do, till matters change.

## XXV.

" Our ancient fathers living the desert in,  
For just and holy works were duly fed ;  
Think not they lived on locusts sole, 't is certain  
That manna was rain'd down from heaven instead ;  
But here 't is fit we keep on the alert in [bread,  
Our bounds, or taste the stones shower'd down for  
From off yon mountain daily raining faster,  
And flung by Passamont and Alabaster.

## XXVI.

" The third, Morgante, 's savagest by far ; he  
Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees, and oaks,  
And flings them, our community to bury ;  
And all that I can do but more provokes."  
While thus they parley in the cemetery,  
A stone from one of their gigantic strokes,  
Which nearly crush'd Rondell, came tumbling over,  
So that he took a long leap under cover.