

Purges the eyes and moves the bowels,
And drenches handkerchiefs like towels
With tears, that, in a flux of grief,
Afford hysterical relief
To shatter'd nerves and quicken'd pulses,
Which your catastrophe convulses.

I like your moral and machinery ;
Your plot, too, has such scope for scenery ;
Your dialogue is apt and smart ;
The play's concoction full of art ;
Your hero raves, your heroine cries,
All stab, and every body dies.
In short, your tragedy would be
The very thing to hear and see :
And for a piece of publication,
If I decline on this occasion,
It is not that I am not sensible
To merits in themselves ostensible,
But—and I grieve to speak it—plays
Are drugs—mere drugs, sir—now-a-days.
I had a heavy loss by "Manuel,"—
Too lucky if it prove not annual,—
And Sotheby, with his "Orestes,"
(Which, by the by, the author's best is,)
Has lain so very long on hand,
That I despair of all demand.
I've advertised, but see my books,
Or only watch my shopman's looks ;—
Still Ivan, Ina, and such lumber,
My back-shop glut, my shelves encumber.

There's Byron too, who once did better,
Has sent me, folded in a letter,
A sort of—it's no more a drama
Than Darnley, Ivan, or Kehama ;
So alter'd since last year his pen is,
I think he's lost his wits at Venice.
In short, sir, what with one and t'other,
I dare not venture on another.
I write in haste ; excuse each blunder ;
The coaches through the street so thunder !
My room's so full—we've Gifford here
Reading MS., with Hookham Frere,
Pronouncing on the nouns and particles
Of some of our forthcoming Articles.

The Quarterly—Ah, sir, if you
Had but the genius to review !—
A smart critique upon St. Helena,
Or if you only would but tell in a
Short compass what—but, to resume :
As I was saying, sir, the room—
The room's so full of wits and bards,
Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres, and Wards,
And others, neither bards nor wits :—
My humble tenement admits
All persons in the dress of gent.,
From Mr. Hammond to Dog Dent.

A party dines with me to-day,
All clever men, who make their way ;
Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey,
Are all partakers of my pantry.
They're at this moment in discussion
On poor De Staël's late dissolution.
Her book, they say, was in advance—
Pray Heaven, she tell the truth of France !

¹ [The fourth canto of "Childe Harold."]

Thus run our time and tongues away.—
But, to return, sir, to your play :
Sorry, sir, but I can not deal,
Unless 'twere acted by O'Neill.
My hands so full, my head so busy,
I'm almost dead, and always dizzy ;
And so, with endless truth and hurry,
Dear Doctor, I am yours,

JOHN MURRAY.
August, 1817.

EPISTLE TO MR. MURRAY.

My dear Mr. Murray,
You're in a damn'd hurry
To set up this ultimate Canto ;¹
But (if they don't rob us)
You'll see Mr. Hobbhouse
Will bring it safe in his portmanteau.

For the Journal you hint of,
As ready to print off,
No doubt you do right to commend it ;
But as yet I have writ off
The devil a bit of
Our "Beppo"—when copied, I'll send it.

Then you've * * * * Tour,—
No great things, to be sure,—
You could hardly begin with a less work ;
For the pompous rascalion,
Who don't speak Italian
Nor French, must have scribbled by guesswork.

You can make any loss up
With "Spence" and his gossip,
A work which must surely succeed ;
Then Queen Mary's Epistle-craft,
With the new "Fytte" of "Whistlecraft,"
Must make people purchase and read.

Then you've General Gordon,
Who girded his sword on,
To serve with a Muscovite master,
And help him to polish
A nation so owlish,
They thought shaving their beards a disaster.

For the man, "poor and shrewd,"²
With whom you'd conclude
A compact without more delay,
Perhaps some such pen is
Still extant in Venice ;
But please, sir, to mention *your pay*.

Venice, January 8. 1818.

TO MR. MURRAY.

STRAHAN, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,
The unfledged MS. authors come ;
Thou printest all—and sellest some—
My Murray.

² Vide your letter.

Upon thy table's baize so green
The last new Quarterly is seen,—
But where is thy new Magazine,
My Murray ?

Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine
The works thou deemest most divine—
The "Art of Cookery," and mine,
My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,
And Sermons to thy mill bring grist ;
And then thou hast the "Navy List,"
My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude
Without "the Board of Longitude,"
Although this narrow paper would,
My Murray !
Venice, March 25. 1818.

¹ [On the birth of this child, the son of the British vice-consul at Venice, Lord Byron wrote these lines. They are in no other respect remarkable, than that they were thought worthy of being metrically translated into no less than ten different languages ; namely, Greek, Latin, Italian (also in the Venetian dialect), German, French, Spanish, Illyrian, Hebrew, Armenian, and Samaritan. The original lines, with the different versions above mentioned, were printed, in a small neat volume, in the seminary of Padua ; from which we take the following :—

GREEK.
Φῶν πικρὴ Παιδεία καὶ Μυρίαδες ἀγλαῶν εἰδῶν
Ἀγριῶν ποταμῶν νῦν τε, δὲ μᾶλλον τε βεβήφους
Ὀρεα δὲ παντὶ βίῳ ἡ δόξα, αἰὲν ἕσσαντο
Σχολῶν παῖς Ῥίζου καὶ γάμος, ἡδὲ βίον.

LATIN.
Magnanimos Patris verset sub pectore sensus,
Maternus roseo fulgeat ore decor ;
Neu quid felici desit, quo robore Rizzus
Festivo pollet, polleat iste puer.

ITALIAN.
Del Padre il senno, e il bel materno aspetto
Splendano ognora in Te, fanciul diletto :
Felice appien ! se al tuo corporeo velo
Dona il lieto vigor di Rizzo il cielo.

THE VENETIAN DIALECT.
De graziete el to modelo
Sia la Mama, bel Putelo.
E 'l talento del Papà
In ti cressa co l'età ;
E per salsa, o contentin
Roba a Rizzo el so morbin.

GERMAN.
Aus des Kindes Auge strahlet
Seines Vaters hoher Sinn,
Und der Mutter Schönheit malet
Sich in Wange, Mund, und Kinn.
Glücklich kleiner wirst du seyn,
Kannst du Rizzo's frohen Muthes,
Seines feurigen Blutes,
Seiner Stärke dich erfreu'n.

FRENCH.
Sois en tout fortuné, semillant Jouvenceau,
Porte dans les festins la valeur de Rizzo,
Porte au barreau l'esprit que fait briller ton père,
Et pour vaincre ?—au boudoir sois beau comme ta mère.

SPANISH.
Si á la gracia materna el gusto ayuntas
Y cordura del Padre, o bello Infante,
Serás feliz, y lo serás bastante ;
Mas, si felicidad gueres completa,
Sé, como Rizo, alegre, sé un atleta.

ON THE BIRTH OF JOHN WILLIAM RIZZO HOPPNER.

His father's sense, his mother's grace,
In him, I hope, will always fit so ;
With—still to keep him in good case—
The health and appetite of Rizzo.¹

February, 1818.

STANZAS TO THE PO.²

RIVER, that rollest by the ancient walls,³
Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls
A faint and fleeting memory of me ;

What if thy deep and ample stream should be
A mirror of my heart, where she may read
The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed !

ILLYRIAN.

Ako ti sjagnu—Otcjeve kriposti
Budesc zadrusciti—majcinu ghisdavost,
Prisladki ditichiu—, srichjansi zadosti.

Ako pak narav—ti budesc sliditi
Rizza privesela—, gnegovu i nasladost,
Srichjnia od tebe—nechiesce viditi.

HEBREW.

הַבְּמִתְחַלֵּץ אֶתְךָ הַיְּהוּדִי
יְהוּדִי אֶתְךָ הַיְּהוּדִי
יְהוּדִי אֶתְךָ הַיְּהוּדִי
יְהוּדִי אֶתְךָ הַיְּהוּדִי
יְהוּדִי אֶתְךָ הַיְּהוּדִי

² [About the middle of April, 1819, Lord Byron travelled from Venice to Ravenna, at which last city he expected to find the Countess Guiccioli. The above stanzas, which have been as much admired as any thing of the kind he ever wrote, were composed, according to Madame Guiccioli's statement, during this journey, and while Lord Byron was actually sailing on the Po. In transmitting them to England, in May, 1820, he says,—“They must not be published: pray recollect this, as they are mere verses of society, and written upon private feelings and passions.” They were first printed in 1824.]

³ [Ravenna—a city to which Lord Byron afterwards declared himself more attached than to any other place, except Greece. He resided in it rather more than two years, “and quitted it,” says Madame Guiccioli, “with the deepest regret, and with a presentiment that his departure would be the forerunner of a thousand evils: he was continually performing generous actions: many families owed to him the few prosperous days they ever enjoyed; his arrival was spoken of as a piece of public good fortune, and his departure as a public calamity.” In the third canto of “Don Juan,” Lord Byron has pictured the tranquil life which, at this time, he was leading:—

“Sweet hour of twilight!—in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,
To where the last Caesarean fortress stood,
Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore
And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,
How have I loved the twilight hour and thee !

“The shrill cicadas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine,
And vesper bells that rose the boughs among ;
The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng,
Which learn'd from this example not to fly
From a true lover, shadow'd my mind's eye.”]

What do I say — a mirror of my heart?
Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong?
Such as my feelings were and are, thou art;
And such as thou art were my passions long.

Time may have somewhat tamed them, — not for ever;
Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for aye
Thy bosom overboils, congenial river!
Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away.

But left long wrecks behind, and now again,
Borne in our old unchanged career, we move;
Thou tendest wildly onwards to the main,
And I — to loving *one* I should not love.

The current I behold will sweep beneath
Her native walls, and murmur at her feet;
Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe
The twilight air, unharm'd by summer's heat.

She will look on thee, — I have look'd on thee,
Full of that thought: and, from that moment, ne'er
Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,
Without the inseparable sigh for her!

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream, —
Yes! they will meet the wave I gaze on now:
Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,
That happy wave repass me in its flow!

The wave that bears my tears returns no more:
Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep? —
Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore,
I by thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.

But that which keepeth us apart is not
Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,
But the distraction of a various lot,
As various as the climates of our birth.

A stranger loves the lady of the land,
Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood
Is all meridian, as if never fann'd
By the black wind that chills the polar flood.

My blood is all meridian; were it not,
I had not left my clime, nor should I be,
In spite of tortures, ne'er to be forgot,
A slave again of love, — at least of thee.

'T is vain to struggle — let me perish young —
Live as I lived, and love as I have loved;
To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,
And then, at least, my heart can ne'er be moved.
April, 1819.

SONNET TO GEORGE THE FOURTH,

ON THE REPEAL OF LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD'S FORFEITURE.

To be the father of the fatherless, [raise
To stretch the hand from the throne's height, and
His offspring, who expired in other days
To make thy sire's sway by a kingdom less, —

¹ ["So, the prince has been repealing Lord Fitzgerald's forfeiture? Ecco un sonetto! There, you dogs! there's a sonnet for you: you won't have such as that in a hurry from Fitzgerald. You may publish it with my name, an' ye wool. He deserves all praise, bad and good: it was a very noble piece of principality." — *Lord Byron to Mr. Murray.*]

² ["Would you like an epigram — a translation? It was written on some Frenchwoman, by Rulhières, I believe." — *Lord Byron to Mr. Murray, Aug. 12. 1819.*]

*This is to be a monarch, and repress
Envy into unutterable praise.
Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such traits,
For who would lift a hand, except to bless?
Were it not easy, sir, and is't not sweet
To make thyself beloved? and to be
Omnipotent by mercy's means? for thus
Thy sovereignty would grow but more complete;
A despot thou, and yet thy people free,
And by the heart, not hand, enslaving us.
Bologna, August 12. 1819. ¹*

EPIGRAM.

FROM THE FRENCH OF RULHIÈRES. ²

If, for silver or for gold,
You could melt ten thousand pimples
Into half a dozen dimples,
Then your face we might behold,
Looking, doubtless, much more snugly;
Yet even *then* 't would be d — d ugly.
August 12. 1819.

STANZAS. ³

COULD Love for ever
Run like a river,
And Time's endeavour
Be tried in vain —
No other pleasure
With this could measure;
And like a treasure
We'd hug the chain.
But since our sighing
Ends not in dying,
And, form'd for flying,
Love plumes his wing;
Then for this reason
Let's love a season;
But let that season be only Spring.

When lovers parted
Feel broken-hearted,
And, all hopes thwarted,
Expect to die;
A few years older,
Ah! how much colder
They might behold her
For whom they sigh!
When link'd together,
In every weather,
They pluck Love's feather
From out his wing —
He'll stay for ever,
But sadly shiver
Without his plumage, when past the Spring. ⁴

³ [A friend of Lord Byron's, who was with him at Ravenna when he wrote these Stanzas, says, — "They were composed, like many others, with no view of publication, but merely to relieve himself in a moment of suffering. He had been painfully excited by some circumstances which appeared to make it necessary that he should immediately quit Italy; and in the day and the hour that he wrote the song was labouring under an access of fever."]

⁴ [V. L. — "That sped his Spring."]

Like Chiefs of Faction,
His life is action —
A formal paction
That curbs his reign,
Obscures his glory,
Despot no more, he
Such territory
Quits with disdain.
Still, still advancing,
With banners glancing,
His power enhancing,
He must move on —
Repose but cloy him,
Retreat destroys him,
Love brooks not a degraded throne.

Wait not, fond lover!
Till years are over,
And then recover,
As from a dream.
While each bewailing
The other's failing,
With wrath and railing,
All hideous seem —
While first decreasing,
Yet not quite ceasing,
Wait not till teasing
All passion blight:
If once diminish'd
Love's reign is finish'd —
Then part in friendship, — and bid good-night. ¹

So shall Affection
To recollection
The dear connection
Bring back with joy:
You had not waited
Till, tired or hated,
Your passions sated
Began to cloy.
Your last embraces
Leave no cold traces —
The same fond faces
As through the past:
And eyes, the mirrors
Of your sweet errors
Reflect but rapture — not least though last.

True, separations
Ask more than patience;
What desperations
From such have risen!
But yet remaining,
What is't but chaining
Hearts which, once waning,
Beat 'gainst their prison?
Time can but cloy love,
And use destroy love:
The winged boy, Love,
Is but for boys —
You'll find it torture
Though sharper, shorter,
To wean, and not wear out your joys.
1819.

¹ [V. L. — "One last embrace, then, and bid good-night."]

² [Or,

"You come to him on earth again,
He'll go with you to hell."]

³ ["Pray let not these versiculi go forth with my name,

ON MY WEDDING-DAY.

HERE's a happy new year! but with reason
I beg you'll permit me to say —
Wish me *many* returns of the *season*,
But as *few* as you please of the *day*.
January 2. 1820.

EPIGRAPH FOR WILLIAM PITT.

WITH death doom'd to grapple,
Beneath this cold slab, he
Who lied in the Chapel
Now lies in the Abbey.
January, 1820.

EPIGRAM.

IN digging up your bones, Tom Paine,
Will. Cobbett has done well:
You visit him on earth again,
He'll visit you in hell. ²
January, 1820. ³

STANZAS.

WHEN a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,
Let him combat for that of his neighbours;
Let him think of the glories of Greece and of Rome,
And get knock'd on the head for his labours.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,
And is always as nobly requited;
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,
And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get knighted.
November, 1820.

EPIGRAM.

THE world is a bundle of hay,
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull.

THE CHARITY BALL.

WHAT matter the pangs of a husband and father,
If his sorrows in exile be great or be small,
So the Pharisee's glories around her she gather,
And the saint patronizes her "charity ball!"

What matters — a heart which, though faulty, was
feeling,
Be driven to excesses which once could appal —
That the sinner should suffer is only fair dealing,
As the saint keeps her charity back for "the
ball!" ⁴

except among the initiated, because my friend Hobhouse has foamed into a reformer, and, I greatly fear, will subside into Newgate." — *Lord Byron to Mr. Moore.*]

⁴ These lines were written on reading in the newspapers, that Lady Byron had been patroness of a ball in aid of some charity at Hinckley.

EPIGRAM ON MY WEDDING-DAY.

TO PENELOPE.

THIS day, of all our days, has done
The worst for me and you : —
'Tis just *six* years since we were *one*,
And *five* since we were *two*.

January 2. 1821.

ON MY THIRTY-THIRD BIRTH-DAY.

JANUARY 22. 1821. ¹

THROUGH life's dull road, so dim and dirty,
I have dragg'd to three and thirty.
What have these years left to me?
Nothing — except thirty-three.

EPIGRAM,

ON THE BRAZIER'S COMPANY HAVING RESOLVED TO PRESENT AN ADDRESS TO QUEEN CAROLINE. ²

THE braziers, it seems, are preparing to pass
An address, and present it themselves all in brass ; —
A superfluous pageant — for, by the Lord Harry !
They'll find where they're going much more than
they carry. ³

MARTIAL, LIB. I. EPIG. 1.

"Hic est, quem legis, ille, quem requiris,
Tota notus in orbe Martialis," &c.

HE unto whom thou art so partial,
Oh, reader ! is the well-known Martial,
The Epigrammatist : while living,
Give him the fame thou wouldst be giving ;
So shall he hear, and feel, and know it —
Post-obits rarely reach a poet.

BOWLES AND CAMPBELL.

To the tune of "Why, how now, saucy jade ?"

WHY, how now, saucy Tom ?
If you thus must ramble,
I will publish some
Remarks on Mister Campbell.

¹ [In Lord Byron's MS. Diary of the preceding day, we find the following entry : — "January 21. 1821. Dined — visited — came home — read. Remark'd on an anecdote in Grimm's Correspondence, which says, that 'Regnard et la plupart des poëtes comiques étaient gens bîlleux et mélancoliques ; et que M. de Voltaire, qui est très-gal, n'a jamais fait que des tragédies — et que la comédie gale est le seul genre où il n'ait point réussi. C'est que celui qui rit et celui qui fait rire sont deux hommes fort différens !' At this moment I feel as bilious as the best comic writer of them all (even as Regnard himself, the next to Molière, who has written some of the best comedies in any language, and who is supposed to have committed suicide), and am not in spirits to continue my proposed tragedy. To-morrow is my birthday — that is to say, at twelve o' the clock, midnight ; i. e. in twelve minutes, I shall have completed thirty and three years of age !!! — and I go to my bed with a heaviness of heart at having lived so long, and to so little purpose. *

* * * * * It is three minutes past twelve — 'Tis the middle of night by the castle-clock, and I am now thirty-three ! —

ANSWER.

Why, how now, Billy Bowles ?
Sure the priest is maudlin !
(To the public) How can you, d—n your souls !
Listen to his twaddling ?

February 22. 1821. ⁴

EPIGRAMS.

Oh, Castlereagh ! thou art a patriot now ;
Cato died for his country, so didst thou :
He perish'd rather than see Rome enslaved,
Thou cut'st thy throat that Britain may be saved !

So Castlereagh has cut his throat ! — The worst
Of this is, — that his own was not the first.

So *He* has cut his throat at last ! — He ! Who ?
The man who cut his country's long ago.

EPITAPH.

POSTERITY will ne'er survey
A nobler grave than this :
Here lie the bones of Castlereagh :
Stop, traveller —

JOHN KEATS. ⁵

Who kill'd John Keats ?
"I," says the Quarterly,
So savage and Tartarly ;
"T was one of my feats."

Who shot the arrow ?
"The poet-priest Milman
(So ready to kill man),
Or Southey or Barrow."

July, 1821.

THE CONQUEST.

[This fragment was found amongst Lord Byron's papers, after his departure from Genoa for Greece.]

March 8-9. 1823.

THE Son of Love and Lord of War I sing ;
Him who bade England bow to Normandy,
And left the name of conqueror more than king
To his unconquerable dynasty.

⁴ Eheu, fugaces, Posthume, Posthume,
Labuntur anni ;'

but I don't regret them so much for what I have done, as for what I might have done."

² [The procession of the Braziers to Brandenburgh House was one of the most absurd fooleries of the time of the late Queen's trial.]

³ ["There is an epigram for you, is it not ? — worthy
Of Wordsworth, the grand metaquizzical poet,
A man of vast merit, though few people know it ;
The perusal of whom (as I told you at Mestri)
I owe, in great part, to my passion for pastry."
Byron Letters, January 22. 1821.]

⁴ ["Excuse haste, — I write with my spurs putting on." —
Lord Byron to Mr. Moore, Feb. 22. 1821.]

⁵ ["Are you aware that Shelley has written an elegy on
Keats, and accuses the Quarterly of killing him." — Lord
Byron to Mr. Murray, July 30. 1821.]

Not fann'd alone by Victory's fleeting wing,
He rear'd his bold and brilliant throne on high :
The Bastard kept, like lions, his prey fast,
And Britain's bravest victor was the last.

TO MR. MURRAY.

For Orford ¹ and for Waldegrave ²
You give much more than me you gave ;
Which is not fairly to behave,
My Murray.

Because if a live dog, 'tis said,
Be worth a lion fairly sped,
A *live lord* must be worth *two* dead,
My Murray.

And if, as the opinion goes,
Verse hath a better sale than prose, —
Certes, I should have more than those,
My Murray.

But now this sheet is nearly cramm'd,
So, if *you will*, I shan't be sham'm'd,
And if you *won't*, you may be damn'd,
My Murray. ³

THE IRISH AVATAR. ⁴

"And Ireland, like a bastinadoed elephant, kneeling to receive the paltry rider." — *Curran*.

ERE the daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave,
And her ashes still float to their home o'er the tide,
Lo ! George the triumphant speeds over the wave,
To the long-cherish'd isle which he loved like his —
bride.

True, the great of her bright and brief era are gone,
The rainbow-like epoch where Freedom could pause
For the few little years, out of centuries won,
Which betray'd not, or crush'd not, or wept not her
cause.

True, the chains of the Catholic clank o'er his rags,
The castle still stands, and the senate's no more,
And the famine which dwelt on her freedomless crags
Is extending its steps to her desolate shore.

To her desolate shore — where the emigrant stands
For a moment to gaze ere he flies from his hearth ;
Tears fall on his chain, though it drops from his hands,
For the dungeon he quits is the place of his birth.

But he comes ! the Messiah of royalty comes !
Like a goodly Leviathan roll'd from the waves !
Then receive him as best such an advent becomes,
With a legion of cooks, and an army of slaves !

He comes in the promise and bloom of threescore,
To perform in the pageant the sovereign's part —

¹ [Horace Walpole's Memoirs of the last nine Years of the Reign of George II.]

² [Memoirs by James Earl Waldegrave, Governor of George III. when Prince of Wales.]

³ ["Can't accept your courteous offer. These matters must be arranged with Mr. Douglas Kinnaird. He is my trustee, and a man of honour. To him you can state all your mercantile reasons, which you might not like to state to me personally, such as 'heavy season' — 'flat public' — 'don't go off' — 'lordship writes too much' — 'won't take advice' — 'declining popularity' — 'deduction for the trade' — 'make very little' — 'generally lose by him' — 'pirated edition' —

But long live the shamrock which shadows him o'er !
Could the green in his *hat* be transferr'd to his
heart !

Could that long-wither'd spot but be verdant again,
And a new spring of noble affections arise —
Then might freedom forgive thee this dance in thy
chain, [skies.
And this shout of thy slavery which saddens the

Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now ?
Were he God — as he is but the commonest clay,
With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow —
Such servile devotion might shame him away.

Ay, roar in his train ! let thine orators lash
Their fanciful spirits to pamper his pride —
Not thus did thy Grattan indignantly flash
His soul o'er the freedom implored and denied. ⁵

Ever glorious Grattan ! the best of the good !
So simple in heart, so sublime in the rest !
With all which Demosthenes wanted endued,
And his rival or victor in all he possess'd.

Ere Tully arose in the zenith of Rome,
Though unequal'd, preceded, the task was begun —
But Grattan sprung up like a god from the tomb
Of ages, the first, last, the saviour, the *one* !

With the skill of an Orpheus to soften the brute ;
With the fire of Prometheus to kindle mankind ;
Even Tyranny listening sate melted or mute,
And Corruption shrunk scorch'd from the glance
of his mind.

But back to our theme ! Back to despots and slaves !
Feasts furnish'd by Famine ! rejoicings by Pain !
True freedom but *welcomes*, while slavery still *raves*,
When a week's saturnalia hath loosen'd her chain.

Let the poor squalid splendour thy wreck can afford
(As the bankrupt's profusion his ruin would hide)
Gild over the palace, Lo ! Erin, thy lord !
Kiss his foot with thy blessing, his blessings denied !

Or *if* freedom past hope be extorted at last,
If the idol of brass find his feet are of clay,
Must what terror or policy wring forth be class'd
With what monarchs ne'er give, but as wolves yield
their prey ?

Each brute hath its nature, a king's is to *reign*, —
To *reign* ! in that word see, ye ages, comprised
The cause of the curses all annals contain,
From Cæsar the dreaded to George the despised !

Wear, Fingal, thy trapping ! O'Connell, proclaim
His accomplishments ! *His !!!* and thy country
convince
Half an age's contempt was an error of fame,
And that "Hal is the rascaliest, sweetest *young*
prince !"

'foreign edition' — 'severe criticisms,' &c., with other hints and howls for an oration, which I leave Douglas, who is an orator, to answer." — Lord Byron to Mr. Murray, Aug. 23. 1821.]

⁴ ["The enclosed lines, as you will *directly* perceive, are written by the Rev. W. L. B—. Of course it is for *him* to deny them, if they are not." — Lord Byron to Mr. Moore, Sept. 17. 1821.]

⁵ ["After the stanza on Grattan, will it please you to cause insert the following addenda, which I dreamed of during today's siesta." — Lord Byron to Mr. Moore, Sept. 20. 1821.]

Will thy yard of blue riband, poor Fingal, recall
The fetters from millions of Catholic limbs?
Or, has it not bound thee the fastest of all
The slaves, who now hail their betrayer with
hymns?

Ay! "Build him a dwelling!" let each give his mite!
Till, like Babel, the new royal dome hath arisen!
Let thy beggars and helots their pittance unite—
And a palace bestow for a poor-house and prison!

Spread—spread, for Vitellius, the royal repast,
Till the gluttonous despot be stuff'd to the gorge!
And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last
The Fourth of the fools and oppressors call'd
"George!"

Let the tables be loaded with feasts till they groan!
Till they *groan* like thy people, through ages of woe!
Let the wine flow around the old Bacchanal's throne,
Like their blood which has flow'd, and which yet
has to flow.

But let not *his* name be thine idol alone—
On his right hand behold a Sejanus appears!
Thine own Castlereagh! let him still be thine own!
A wretch never named but with curses and jeers!¹

Till now, when the isle which should blush for his birth,
Deep, deep as the gore which he shed on her soil,
Seems proud of the reptile which crawl'd from her
earth,

And for murder repays him with shouts and a smile.

Without one single ray of her genius, without
The fancy, the manhood, the fire of her race—
The miscreant who well might plunge Erin in doubt
If *she* ever gave birth to a being so base.

If she did—let her long-boasted proverb be hush'd,
Which proclaims that from Erin no reptile can
spring—
See the cold-blooded serpent, with venom full flush'd,
Still warming its folds in the breast of a king!

Shout, drink, feast, and flatter! Oh! Erin, how low
Wert thou sunk by misfortune and tyranny, till
Thy welcome of tyrants hath plunged thee below
The depth of thy deep in a deeper gulf still.

My voice, though but humble, was raised for thy right,
My vote, as a freeman's, still voted thee free,
This hand, though but feeble, would arm in thy fight,
And this heart, though outworn, had a throb still
for thee!

¹ ["The last line—'A name never spoke but with curses or jeers' must run, either 'A name only uttered with curses or jeers,' or, 'A wretch never named but with curses or jeers,' because as *how* 'spoke' is not grammar, except in the House of Commons. So pray put your poetical pen through the MS., and take the least bad of the emendations. Also, if there be any further breaking of Priscian's head, will you apply a plaster?"—*Lord Byron to Mr. Moore*, Sept. 19.]

² ["I composed these stanzas (except the fourth, added now) a few days ago, on the road from Florence to Pisa."—*Byron Diary*, Pisa, 6th Nov. 1821.]

³ [In the same Diary, we find the following painfully interesting passage:—"As far as FAME goes (that is to say, living Fame), I have had my share, perhaps—indeed, certainly—more than my deserts. Some odd instances have occurred to my own experience of the wild and strange places to which a name may penetrate, and where it may impress. Two years ago—(almost three, being in August, or July, 1819)—I received a letter in *English* verse from Drontheim in Norway, written by a Norwegian, and full of the usual compliments, &c. &c. In the same month I received an invitation into *Holstein*, from a Mr. Jacobson, I think, of Hamburg; also (by the same medium) a translation of

Yes, I loved thee and thine, though thou art not my
land, [sons,
I have known noble hearts and great souls in thy
And I wept with the world o'er the patriot band
Who are gone, but I weep them no longer as once.

For happy are they now reposing afar,—
Thy Grattan, thy Curran, thy Sheridan, all
Who, for years, were the chiefs in the eloquent war,
And redeem'd, if they have not retarded, thy fall.

Yes, happy are they in their cold English graves!
Their shades cannot start to thy shouts of to-day—
Nor the steps of enslavers and chain-kissing slaves
Be stamp'd in the turf o'er their fetterless clay.

Till now I had envied thy sons and their shore,
Though their virtues were hunted, their liberties fled;
There was something so warm and sublime in the core
Of an Irishman's heart, that I envy—thy dead.

Or, if aught in my bosom can quench for an hour
My contempt for a nation so servile, though sore,
Which though trod like the worm will not turn upon
power,

'Tis the glory of Grattan, and genius of Moore!
September, 1821.

STANZAS

WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE AND
PISA.²

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is
wrinkled?

'Tis but as a dead-flower with May-dew besprinkled,
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary!
What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give glory?

Oh FAME!³—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'T was less for the sake of thy high sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, there only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my
story,

I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

November, 1821.

Medora's song in the 'Corsair,' by a Westphalian baroness (not 'Thunderten-tronck'), with some original verses of hers (very pretty and Klopstockish), and a prose translation annexed to them, on the subject of my wife. As they concerned her more than me, I sent them to her with Mr. Jacobson's letter. It was odd enough to receive an invitation to pass the summer in Holstein, while in Italy, from people I never knew. The letter was addressed to Venice. Mr. J. talked to me of the 'wild roses growing in the Holstein summer;' why, then, did the Cimbric and the Teutonic emigrate?—What a strange thing is life and man! Were I to present myself at the door of the house where my daughter now is, the door would be shut in my face, unless (as is not impossible) I knocked down the porter; and if I had gone in that year (and perhaps now) to Drontheim (the furthest town in Norway), or into Holstein, I should have been received with open arms into the mansions of strangers and foreigners—attached to me by no tie but that of mind and rumour. As far as *Fame* goes, I have had my share: it has, indeed, been leavened by other human contingencies; and this in a greater degree than has occurred to most literary men of a decent rank in life; but, on the whole, I take it that such equipoise is the condition of humanity."

STANZAS

TO A HINDOO AIR.¹

Oh!—my lonely—lonely—lonely—Pillow!
Where is my lover? where is my lover?
Is it his bark which my dreary dreams discover?
Far—far away! and alone along the billow?

Oh! my lonely—lonely—lonely—Pillow!
Why must my head ache where his gentle brow lay?
How the long night flags lovelessly and slowly,
And my head droops over thee like the willow!

Oh! thou, my sad and solitary Pillow!
Send me kind dreams to keep my heart from breaking,
In return for the tears I shed upon thee waking;
Let me not die till he comes back o'er the billow.

Then if thou wilt—no more my *lonely* Pillow,
In one embrace let these arms again unfold him,
And then expire of the joy—but to behold him!
Oh! my lone bosom!—oh! my lonely Pillow!

IMPROMPTU.²

BENEATH Blessington's eyes
The reclaim'd Paradise
Should be free as the former from evil;
But, if the new Eve
For an Apple should grieve,
What mortal would not play the Devil?³

1823.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

You have ask'd for a verse:—the request
In a rhymers 'twere strange to deny;
But my Hippocrene was but my breast,
And my feelings (its fountain) are dry.

Were I now as I was, I had sung
What Lawrence has painted so well;
But the strain would expire on my tongue,
And the theme is too soft for my shell.

I am ashes where once I was fire,
And the bard in my bosom is dead;
What I loved I now merely admire,
And my heart is as grey as my head.

My life is not dated by years—
There are moments which act as a plough;
And there is not a furrow appears
But is deep in my soul as my brow.

¹ [These verses were written by Lord Byron a little before he left Italy for Greece. They were meant to suit the Hindostanee air—"Alla Malla Punca," which the Countess Guiccioli was fond of singing.]

² [With a view of inducing Lord and Lady Blessington to prolong their stay at Genoa. Lord Byron suggested their taking a pretty villa called "Il Paradiso," in the neighbourhood of his own, and accompanied them to look at it. Upon that occasion it was that, on the lady expressing some intentions of residing there, he produced this impromptu.—MOORE.]

³ [The Genesee wits had already applied this threadbare jest to himself. Taking it into their heads that this villa (which was also, I believe, a Casa Saluzzo) had been the one fixed on for his own residence, they said "Il Diavolo è ancora entrato in Paradiso."—MOORE.]

Let the young and the brilliant aspire
To sing what I gaze on in vain;
For sorrow has torn from my lyre
The string which was worthy the strain.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY
SIXTH YEAR.

Missolonghi, Jan. 22. 1824.⁴

'T is time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she is awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live*?
The land of honourable death
Is here:—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.⁵

⁴ [This morning Lord Byron came from his bedroom into the apartment where Colonel Stanhope and some friends were assembled, and said with a smile—"You were complaining, the other day, that I never wrote any poetry now. This is my birthday, and I have just finished something, which, I think, is better than what I usually write." He then produced these noble and affecting verses.—COUNT GAMBIA.]

⁵ [Taking into consideration every thing connected with these verses,—the last tender aspirations of a loving spirit which they breathe, the self-devotion to a noble cause which they so nobly express, and that consciousness of a near grave glimmering sadly through the whole,—there is perhaps no production within the range of mere human composition, round which the circumstances and feelings under which it was written cast so touching an interest.—MOORE.]