

CXXII.

We'll talk of that anon.—'Tis sweet to hear
At midnight on the blue and moonlit deep
The song and oar of Adria's gondolier,
By distance mellow'd, o'er the waters sweep;
'Tis sweet to see the evening star appear;
'Tis sweet to listen as the night-winds creep
From leaf to leaf; 'tis sweet to view on high
The rainbow, based on ocean, span the sky.

CXXIII.

'Tis sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home;
'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
Our coming, and look brighter when we come;¹
'Tis sweet to be awaken'd by the lark,
Or lull'd by falling waters; sweet the hum
Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
The lip of children, and their earliest words.

CXXIV.

Sweet is the vintage, when the showering grapes
In Bacchanal profusion reel to earth,
Purple and gushing: sweet are our escapes
From civic revelry to rural mirth;
Sweet to the miser are his glittering heaps,
Sweet to the father is his first-born's birth,
Sweet is revenge—especially to women,
Pillage to soldiers, prize-money to seamen.

CXXV.

Sweet is a legacy, and passing sweet?²
The unexpected death of some old lady,
Or gentlemen of seventy years complete,
Who've made "us youth" wait too—too long
already,
For an estate, or cash, or country seat,
Still breaking, but with stamina so steady,
That all the Israelites are fit to mob its
Next owner for their double-damn'd post-obits.³

CXXVI.

'Tis sweet to win, no matter how, one's laurels,
By blood or ink; 'tis sweet to put an end
To strife; 'tis sometimes sweet to have our quarrels,
Particularly with a tiresome friend:
Sweet is old wine in bottles, ale in barrels;
Dear is the helpless creature we defend
Against the world; and dear the schoolboy spot
We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot.

CXXVII.

But sweeter still than this, than these, than all,
Is first and passionate love—it stands alone,
Like Adam's recollection of his fall;
The tree of knowledge has been pluck'd—all's
known—
And life yields nothing further to recall
Worthy of this ambrosial sin, so shown,
No doubt in fable, as the unforgiven
Fire which Prometheus filch'd for us from heaven.

¹ ["Our coming, nor look brightly till we come."—MS.]

² ["Sweet is a lawsuit to the attorney—sweet," &c.—MS.]

³ ["Who've made us wait—God knows how long already,
For an entail'd estate, or country-seat,
Wishing them not exactly damn'd, but dead—he
Knows nought of grief, who has not so been worried—
'Tis strange old people don't like to be buried."—MS.]

⁴ [The "Safety Lamp," after long researches and innumerable experiments, was at length invented by the late Sir

CXXVIII.

Man's a strange animal, and makes strange use
Of his own nature, and the various arts,
And likes particularly to produce
Some new experiment to show his parts;
This is the age of oddities let loose,
Where different talents find their different marts;
You'd best begin with truth, and when you've lost
your
Labour, there's a sure market for imposture.

CXXIX.

What opposite discoveries we have seen!
(Signs of true genius, and of empty pockets.)
One makes new noses, one a guillotine, [sockets;
One breaks your bones, one sets them in their
But vaccination certainly has been
A kind antithesis to Congreve's rockets,
With which the Doctor paid off an old pox,
By borrowing a new one from an ox.

CXXX.

Bread has been made (indifferent) from potatoes;
And galvanism has set some corpses grinning,
But has not answer'd like the apparatus
Of the Humane Society's beginning,
By which men are unsuffocated gratis:
What wondrous new machines have late been spinning!

I said the small-pox has gone out of late;
Perhaps it may be follow'd by the great.

CXXXI.

'Tis said the great came from America;
Perhaps it may set out on its return,—
The population there so spreads, they say
'Tis grown high time to thin it in its turn,
With war, or plague, or famine, any way,
So that civilisation they may learn;
And which in ravage the more loathsome evil is—
Their real lues, or our pseudo-syphilis?

CXXXII.

This is the patent age of new inventions
For killing bodies, and for saving souls,
All propagated with the best intentions;
Sir Humphry Davy's lantern⁴, by which coals
Are safely mined for in the mode he mentions,
Tombuctoo travels, voyages to the Poles⁵
Are ways to benefit mankind, as true,
Perhaps, as shooting them at Waterloo.

CXXXIII.

Man's a phenomenon, one knows not what,
And wonderful beyond all wondrous measure;
'Tis pity though, in this sublime world, that
Pleasure's a sin, and sometimes sin's a pleasure;⁶
Few mortals know what end they would be at,
But whether glory, power, or love, or treasure,
The path is through perplexing ways, and when
The goal is gain'd, we die, you know—and then——

Humphry Davy, P.R.S., in 1815, and has, no doubt, already preserved thousands of miners from the dangers of the fire-damp.]

⁵ [Jackson's Account of Tombuctoo, the great Emporium of Central Africa.—Narrative of Robert Adams, a Sailor.—Dr. Leyden's Discoveries in Africa, &c. &c.—Sir Edward Parry's three expeditions.—Captain Ross's Voyage of Discovery, &c. &c.]

⁶ ["Not only pleasure's sin, but sin's a pleasure."—MS.]

CXXXIV.

What then?—I do not know, no more do you—
And so good night.—Return we to our story:
'T was in November, when fine days are few,
And the far mountains wax a little hoary,
And clap a white cape on their mantles blue:¹
And the sea dashes round the promontory,
And the loud breaker boils against the rock,
And sober suns must set at five o'clock.

CXXXV.

'T was, as the watchmen say, a cloudy night;²
No moon, no stars, the wind was low or loud
By gusts, and many a sparkling hearth was bright
With the piled wood, round which the family crowd;
There's something cheerful in that sort of light,
Even as a summer sky's without a cloud:
I'm fond of fire, and crickets, and all that,³
A lobster salad, and champagne, and chat.⁴

CXXXVI.

'T was midnight—Donna Julia was in bed,
Sleeping, most probably,—when at her door
Arose a clatter might awake the dead,
If they had never been awake before,
And that they have been so we all have read,
And are to be so, at the least, once more;—
The door was fasten'd, but with voice and fist
First knocks were heard, then "Madam—Madam
—hist!

CXXXVII.

"For God's sake, Madam—Madam—here's my mas-
With more than half the city at his back— [ter,⁵
Was ever heard of such a curst disaster!
'T is not my fault—I kept good watch—Alack!
Do pray undo the bolt a little faster—
They're on the stair just now, and in a crack
Will all be here; perhaps he yet may fly—
Surely the window's not so *very* high!"

CXXXVIII.

By this time Don Alfonso was arrived,
With torches, friends, and servants in great number;
The major part of them had long been wived,
And therefore paused not to disturb the slumber
Of any wicked woman, who contrived
By stealth her husband's temples to encumber:
Examples of this kind are so contagious,
Were *one* not punish'd, *all* would be outrageous.

CXXXIX.

I can't tell how, or why, or what suspicion
Could enter into Don Alfonso's head;
But for a cavalier of his condition
It surely was exceedingly ill-bred,
Without a word of previous admonition,
To hold a levee round his lady's bed,
And summon lackeys, arm'd with fire and sword,
To prove himself the thing he most abhor'd.

¹ [And lose in shining snow their summits blue."—MS.]

² ["'T was midnight—dark and sombre was the night," &c.—MS.]

³ ["And supper, punch, ghost-stories, and such chat."—MS.]

⁴ ["Lady Mary W. Montague was an extraordinary woman: she could translate Epictetus, and yet write a song worthy of Aristippus—the lines.

⁵ And when the long hours of the public are past,
And we meet, with champagne and a chicken, at last,
May every fond pleasure that moment endear!
Be banish'd afar both discretion and fear!" &c. &c.

⁶ [There, Mr. Bowles!—what say you to such a supper with such a woman? and her own description too? It appears to

CXL.

Poor Donna Julia! starting as from sleep,
(Mind—that I do not say—she had not slept)
Began at once to scream, and yawn, and weep;
Her maid Antonia, who was an adept,
Contrived to fling the bed-clothes in a heap,
As if she had just now from out them crept:
I can't tell why she should take all this trouble
To prove her mistress had been sleeping double.

CXXI.

But Julia mistress, and Antonia maid,
Appear'd like two poor harmless women, who
Of goblins, but still more of men afraid,
Had thought one man might be deterr'd by two,
And therefore side by side were gently laid,
Until the hours of absence should run through,
And truant husband should return, and say,
"My dear, I was the first who came away."

CXLII.

Now Julia found at length a voice, and cried,
"In heaven's name, Don Alfonso, what d'ye mean?
Has madness seized you? would that I had died
Ere such a monster's victim I had been!⁶
What may this midnight violence betide,
A sudden fit of drunkenness or spleen?
Dare you suspect me, whom the thought would kill?
Search, then, the room!"—Alfonso said, "I will."

CXLIII.

He search'd, *they* search'd, and rummaged everywhere,
Closet and clothes' press, chest and window-seat,
And found much linen, lace, and several pair
Of stockings, slippers, brushes, combs, complete,
With other articles of ladies fair,
To keep them beautiful, or leave them neat:
Arras they prick'd and curtains with their swords,
And wounded several shutters, and some boards.

CXLIV.

Under the bed they search'd, and there they found—
No matter what—it was not that they sought;
They open'd windows, gazing if the ground
Had signs or footmarks, but the earth said nought;
And then they stared each others' faces round:
'Tis odd, not one of all these seekers thought,
And seems to me almost a sort of blunder,
Of looking *in* the bed as well as under.

CXLV.

During this inquisition, Julia's tongue⁷ [cried,
Was not asleep—"Yes, search and search," she
"Insult on insult heap, and wrong on wrong!
It was for this that I became a bride!
For this in silence I have suffer'd long
A husband like Alfonso at my side;
But now I'll bear no more, nor here remain,
If there be law or lawyers, in all Spain.

me that this stanza contains the *purée* of the whole philosophy of Epicurus."—Lord Byron to Mr. Bowles.]

⁵ ["To-night, as Countess Guiccioli observed me poring over Don Juan, she stumbled by mere chance on the 137th stanza of the First Canto, and asked me what it meant. I told her, 'Nothing,—but your husband is coming.' As I said this in Italian with some emphasis, she started up in a fright, and said, 'Oh, my God, is he coming?' thinking it was her own. You may suppose we laughed when she found out the mistake. You will be amused, as I was;—it happened not three hours ago."—Byron Letters, Nov. 8. 1819.]

⁶ ["Ere I the wife of such a man had been!"—MS.]

⁷ ["But while this search was making, Julia's tongue."—MS.]

CXLVI.

"Yes, Don Alfonso! husband now no more,
If ever you indeed deserved the name,
Is't worthy of your years?—you have threescore—
Fifty, or sixty, it is all the same—
Is't wise or fitting, causeless to explore
For facts against a virtuous woman's fame?
Ungrateful, perjured, barbarous Don Alfonso,
How dare you think your lady would go on so?"

CXLVII.

"Is it for this I have disdain'd to hold
The common privileges of my sex?
That I have chosen a confessor so old
And deaf, that any other it would vex,
And never once he has had cause to scold,
But found my very innocence perplex
So much, he always doubted I was married—
How sorry you will be when I've miscarried!"

CXLVIII.

"Was it for this that no Cortejo¹ e'er
I yet have chosen from out the youth of Seville?
Is it for this I scarce went any where,
Except to bull-fights, mass, play, rout, and revel?
Is it for this, whate'er my suitors were,
I favour'd none—nay, was almost uncivil?
Is it for this that General Count O'Reilly,
Who took Algiers², declares I used him vilely?"

CXLIX.

"Did not the Italian Musico Cazzani
Sing at my heart six months at least in vain?
Did not his countryman, Count Corniani,
Call me the only virtuous wife in Spain?
Were there not also Russians, English, many?
The Count Strongstroganoff I put in pain,
And Lord Mount Coffeehouse, the Irish peer,
Who kill'd himself for love (with wine) last year.

CL.

"Have I not had two bishops at my feet?
The Duke of Ichar, and Don Fernan Nunez;
And is it thus a faithful wife you treat?
I wonder in what quarter now the moon is:
I praise your vast forbearance not to beat
Me also, since the time so opportune is—
Oh, valiant man! with sword drawn and cock'd trigger,
Now, tell me, don't you cut a pretty figure?"

CLII.

"Was it for this you took your sudden journey,
Under pretence of business indispensable
With that sublime of rascals your attorney,
Whom I see standing there, and looking sensible
Of having play'd the fool? though both I spurn, he
Deserves the worst, his conduct's less defensible,
Because, no doubt, 't was for his dirty fee,
And not from any love to you nor me.

CLIII.

"If he comes here to take a deposition,
By all means let the gentleman proceed;
You've made the apartment in a fit condition:—
There's pen and ink for you, sir, when you need—
Let every thing be noted with precision,
I would not you for nothing should be fee'd—
But, as my maid's undrest, pray turn your spies out."
"Oh!" sobb'd Antonia, "I could tear their eyes out."

¹ The Spanish "Cortejo" is much the same as the Italian "Cavalier Servente."

² Donna Julia here made a mistake. Count O'Reilly did not take Algiers—but Algiers very nearly took him: he

CLIII.

"There is the closet, there the toilet, there
The antechamber—search them under, over;
There is the sofa, there the great arm-chair,
The chimney—which would really hold a lover.³
I wish to sleep, and beg you will take care
And make no further noise, till you discover
The secret cavern of this lurking treasure—
And when 'tis found, let me, too, have that pleasure.

CLIV.

"And now, Hidalgo! now that you have thrown
Doubt upon me, confusion over all,
Pray have the courtesy to make it known
Who is the man you search for? how d'ye call
Him? what's his lineage? let him but be shown—
I hope he's young and handsome—is he tall?
Tell me—and be assured, that since you stain
My honour thus, it shall not be in vain.

CLV.

"At least, perhaps, he has not sixty years,
At that age he would be too old for slaughter,
Or for so young a husband's jealous fears—
(Antonia! let me have a glass of water.)
I am ashamed of having shed these tears,
They are unworthy of my father's daughter;
My mother dream'd not in my natal hour,
That I should fall into a monster's power.

CLVI.

"Perhaps 'tis of Antonia you are jealous,
You saw that she was sleeping by my side,
When you broke in upon us with your fellows:
Look where you please—we've nothing, sir, to hide;
Only another time, I trust, you'll tell us,
Or for the sake of decency abide
A moment at the door, that we may be
Drest to receive so much good company.

CLVII.

"And now, sir, I have done, and say no more;
The little I have said may serve to show
The guileless heart in silence may grieve o'er
The wrongs to whose exposure it is slow:—
I leave you to your conscience as before,
'T will one day ask you why you used me so?
God grant you feel not then the bitterest grief!—
Antonia! where's my pocket-handkerchief?"

CLVIII.

She ceased, and turn'd upon her pillow; pale
She lay, her dark eyes flashing through their tears,
Like skies that rain and lighten; as a veil,
Waved and o'er shading her wan cheek, appears
Her streaming hair; the black curls strive, but fall,
To hide the glossy shoulder, which uprears
Its snow through all;—her soft lips lie apart,
And louder than her breathing beats her heart.

CLIX.

The Senhor Don Alfonso stood confused;
Antonia bustled round the ransack'd room,
And, turning up her nose, with looks abused
Her master, and his myrmidons, of whom
Not one, except the attorney, was amused;
He, like Achates, faithful to the tomb,
So there were quarrels, cared not for the cause,
Knowing they must be settled by the laws.

and his army and fleet retreated with great loss, and not much credit, from before that city, in the year 1775.

³ ["The chimney—fit retreat for any lover!"—MS.]

CLX.

With prying snub-nose, and small eyes, he stood,
Following Antonia's motions here and there,
With much suspicion in his attitude;
For reputations he had little care;
So that a suit or action were made good,
Small pity had he for the young and fair,
And ne'er believed in negatives, till these
Were proved by competent false witnesses.

CLXI.

But Don Alfonso stood with downcast looks,
And, truth to say, he made a foolish figure;
When, after searching in five hundred nooks,
And treating a young wife with so much rigour,
He gain'd no point, except some self-rebukes,
Added to those his lady with such vigour
Had pour'd upon him for the last half-hour,
Quick, thick, and heavy—as a thunder-shower.

CLXII.

At first he tried to hammer an excuse,
To which the sole reply was tears, and sobs,
And indications of hysterics, whose
Prologue is always certain throes, and throbs,
Gasps, and whatever else the owners choose:
Alfonso saw his wife, and thought of Job's;
He saw too, in perspective, her relations,
And then he tried to muster all his patience.

CLXIII.

He stood in act to speak, or rather stammer,
But sage Antonia cut him short before
The anvil of his speech received the hammer,
With "Pray, sir, leave the room, and say no more,
Or madam dies."—Alfonso mutter'd, "D—n her,"
But nothing else, the time of words was o'er;
He cast a rueful look or two, and did,
He knew not wherefore, that which he was bid.

CLXIV.

With him retired his "*posse comitatus*,"
The attorney last, who linger'd near the door
Reluctantly, still tarrying there as late as
Antonia let him—not a little sore
At this most strange and unexplain'd "*hiatus*"
In Don Alfonso's facts, which just now wore
An awkward look; as he revolved the case,
The door was fasten'd in his legal face.

CLXV.

No sooner was it bolted, than—Oh shame!
Oh sin! Oh sorrow! and Oh womankind!
How can you do such things and keep your fame,
Unless this world, and t' other too, be blind?
Nothing so dear as an unfilch'd good name!
But to proceed—for there is more behind:
With much heartfelt reluctance be it said,
Young Juan slipp'd, half-smother'd, from the bed.

CLXVI.

He had been hid—I don't pretend to say
How, nor can I indeed describe the where—
Young, slender, and pack'd easily, he lay,
No doubt, in little compass, round or square;
But pity him I neither must nor may
His suffocation by that pretty pair;
'T were better, sure, to die so, than be shut
With maudlin Clarence in his Malmsey butt.¹

¹ ["—than be put
To drown with Clarence in his Malmsey butt."—MS.]

CLXVII.

And, secondly, I pity not, because
He had no business to commit a sin,
Forbid by heavenly, fined by human laws,
At least 't was rather early to begin;
But at sixteen the conscience rarely gnaws
So much as when we call our old debts in
At sixty years, and draw the accounts of evil,
And find a deuced balance with the devil.²

CLXVIII.

Of his position I can give no notion:
'T is written in the Hebrew Chronicle,
How the physicians, leaving pill and potion,
Prescribed, by way of blister, a young belle,
When old King David's blood grew dull in motion,
And that the medicine answer'd very well;
Perhaps 't was in a different way applied,
For David lived, but Juan nearly died.

CLXIX.

What's to be done? Alfonso will be back
The moment he has sent his fools away.
Antonia's skill was put upon the rack,
But no device could be brought into play—
And how to parry the renew'd attack?
Besides, it wanted but few hours of day:
Antonia puzzled; Julia did not speak,
But press'd her bloodless lip to Juan's cheek.

CLXX.

He turn'd his lip to hers, and with his hand
Call'd back the tangles of her wandering hair;
Even then their love they could not all command,
And half forgot their danger and despair:
Antonia's patience now was at a stand—
"Come, come, 't is no time now for fooling there,"
She whisper'd, in great wrath—"I must deposit
This pretty gentleman within the closet:

CLXXI.

"Pray, keep your nonsense for some luckier night—
Who can have put my master in this mood?
What will become on 't—I'm in such a fright,
The devil's in the urchin, and no good—
Is this a time for giggling? this a plight?
Why, don't you know that it may end in blood?
You'll lose your life, and I shall lose my place,
My mistress all, for that half-girlish face.

CLXXII.

"Had it but been for a stout cavalier
Of twenty-five or thirty—(come, make haste)
But for a child, what piece of work is here!
I really, madam, wonder at your taste—
(Come, sir, get in)—my master must be near:
There, for the present, at the least, he's fast,
And if we can but till the morning keep
Our counsel—(Juan, mind, you must not sleep.)"

CLXXIII.

Now, Don Alfonso entering, but alone,
Closed the oration of the trusty maid:
She loiter'd, and he told her to be gone,
An order somewhat sullenly obey'd;
However, present remedy was none,
And no great good seem'd answer'd if she staid:
Regarding both with slow and sidelong view,
She snuff'd the candle, curtsied, and withdrew.

² ["And reckon up our balance with the devil."—MS.]

CLXXIV.
Alfonso paused a minute — then begun
Some strange excuses for his late proceeding;
He would not justify what he had done,
To say the best, it was extreme ill-breeding;
But there were ample reasons for it, none
Of which he specified in this his pleading:
His speech was a fine sample, on the whole,
Of rhetoric, which the learn'd call "*rigmarole*."

CLXXV.
Julia said nought; though all the while there rose
A ready answer, which at once enables
A matron, who her husband's foible knows,
By a few timely words to turn the tables,
Which, if it does not silence, still must pose, —
Even if it should comprise a pack of fables;
'T is to retort with firmness, and when he
Suspects with *one*, do you reproach with *three*.

CLXXVI.
Julia, in fact, had tolerable grounds, —
Alfonso's loves with Inez were well known;
But whether 't was that one's own guilt confounds —
But that can't be, as has been often shown,
A lady with apologies abounds; —
It might be that her silence sprang alone
From delicacy to Don Juan's ear,
To whom she knew his mother's fame was dear.

CLXXVII.
There might be one more motive, which makes two;
Alfonso ne'er to Juan had alluded, —
Mention'd his jealousy, but never who
Had been the happy lover, he concluded,
Conceal'd amongst his premises; 't is true,
His mind the more o'er this its mystery brooded;
To speak of Inez now were, one may say,
Like throwing Juan in Alfonso's way.

CLXXVIII.
A hint, in tender cases, is enough;
Silence is best, besides there is a *tact* —
(That modern phrase appears to me sad stuff,
But it will serve to keep my verse compact) —
Which keeps, when push'd by questions rather rough,
A lady always distant from the fact:
The charming creatures lie with such a grace,
There's nothing so becoming to the face.

CLXXIX.
They blush, and we believe them; at least I
Have always done so; 't is of no great use,
In any case, attempting a reply,
For then their eloquence grows quite profuse;
And when at length they're out of breath, they sigh,
And cast their languid eyes down, and let loose
A tear or two, and then we make it up;
And then — and then — and then — sit down and sup.

CLXXX.
Alfonso closed his speech, and begg'd her pardon,
Which Julia half withheld, and then half granted,
And laid conditions he thought very hard on,
Denying several little things he wanted:

¹ ["With base suspicion now no longer haunted." — MS.]

² [For the incident of the shoes, Lord Byron was probably indebted to the Scottish ballad, —

"Our Goodman came hame at e'en, and hame came he,
He spy'd a pair of jack-boots where nae boots should be,

He stood like Adam lingering near his garden,
With useless penitence perplex'd and haunted,¹
Beseeching she no further would refuse,
When, lo! he stumbled o'er a pair of shoes.

CLXXXI.
A pair of shoes? — what then? not much, if they
Are such as fit with ladies' feet, but these
(No one can tell how much I grieve to say)
Were masculine; to see them, and to seize,
Was but a moment's act. — Ah! well-a-day!
My teeth begin to chatter, my veins freeze!
Alfonso first examined well their fashion,
And then flew out into another passion.

CLXXXII.
He left the room for his relinquish'd sword,
And Julia instant to the closet flew.
"Fly, Juan, fly! for heaven's sake — not a word —
The door is open — you may yet slip through
The passage you so often have explored —
Here is the garden-key — Fly — fly — Adieu!
Haste — haste! I hear Alfonso's hurrying feet —
Day has not broke — there's no one in the street."

CLXXXIII.
None can say that this was not good advice,
The only mischief was, it came too late;
Of all experience 't is the usual price,
A sort of income-tax laid on by fate:
Juan had reach'd the room-door in a trice,
And might have done so by the garden-gate,
But met Alfonso in his dressing-gown,
Who threaten'd death — so Juan knock'd him down.

CLXXXIV.
Dire was the scuffle, and out went the light;
Antonia cried out "Rape!" and Julia "Fire!"
But not a servant stirr'd to aid the fight.
Alfonso, pommell'd to his heart's desire,
Swore lustily he'd be revenged this night;
And Juan, too, blasphemed an octave higher;
His blood was up: though young, he was a Tartar,
And not at all disposed to prove a martyr.

CLXXXV.
Alfonso's sword had dropp'd ere he could draw it,
And they continued battling hand to hand,
For Juan very luckily ne'er saw it;
His temper not being under great command,
If at that moment he had chanced to claw it,
Alfonso's days had not been in the land
Much longer. — Think of husbands', lovers' lives!
And how ye may be doubly widows — wives!

CLXXXVI.
Alfonso grappled to detain the foe,
And Juan throttled him to get away,
And blood ('t was from the nose) began to flow;
At last, as they more faintly wrestling lay,
Juan contrived to give an awkward blow,
And then his only garment quite gave way:
He fled, like Joseph, leaving it; but there,
I doubt, all likeness ends between the pair.

What's this now, goodwife? What's this I see?
How came these boots there, without the leave o' me!
Boots! quo' she:
Ay, boots, quo' he.
Shame fa' your cuckold face, and ill mat ye see,
It's but a pair of water stoups the cooper sent to me," &c.
— See JOHNSON'S *Musical Museum*, vol. v. p. 466.]

CLXXXVII.
Lights came at length, and men, and maids, who found
An awkward spectacle their eyes before;
Antonia in hysterics, Julia swoon'd,
Alfonso leaning, breathless, by the door;
Some half-torn drapery scatter'd on the ground,
Some blood, and several footsteps, but no more:
Juan the gate gain'd, turn'd the key about,
And liking not the inside, lock'd the out.

CLXXXVIII.
Here ends this canto. — Need I sing, or say,
How Juan, naked, favour'd by the night,
Who favours what she should not, found his way,¹
And reach'd his home in an unseemly plight?
The pleasant scandal which arose next day,
The nine days' wonder which was brought to light,
And how Alfonso sued for a divorce,
Were in the English newspapers, of course.

CLXXXIX.
If you would like to see the whole proceedings,
The depositions, and the cause at full,
The names of all the witnesses, the pleadings
Of counsel to nonsuit, or to annul,
There's more than one edition, and the readings
Are various, but they none of them are dull:
The best is that in short-hand ta'en by Gurney,²
Who to Madrid on purpose made a journey.

CXC.
But Donna Inez, to divert the train
Of one of the most circulating scandals
That had for centuries been known in Spain,
At least since the retirement of the Vandals,³
First vow'd (and never had she vow'd in vain)
To Virgin Mary several pounds of candles:
And then, by the advice of some old ladies,
She sent her son to be shipp'd off from Cadiz.

CXCII.
She had resolved that he should travel through
All European climes, by land or sea,
To mend his former morals, and get new,
Especially in France and Italy,
(At least this is the thing most people do.)
Julia was sent into a convent: she
Grieved, but, perhaps, her feelings may be better
Shown in the following copy of her Letter: —

CXCIII.
"They tell me 't is decided; you depart:
'T is wise — 't is well, but not the less a pain;
I have no further claim on your young heart,
Mine is the victim, and would be again;

¹ ["Found — heaven knows how — his solitary way," &c. — MS.]

² [William Brodie Gurney, Esq., the eminent short-hand writer to the houses of parliament.]

³ ["Since Roderick's Goths, or older Genseric's Vandals." — MS.]

⁴ ["Que les hommes sont heureux d'aller à la guerre, d'exposer leur vie, de se livrer à l'enthousiasme de l'honneur et du danger! Mais il n'y a rien au dehors qui soulage les femmes." — *Corinne*.]

⁵ ["To mourn alone the love which has undone." Or,

"To lift our fatal love to God from man." Take that which, of these three, seems the best prescription." — B.]

⁶ [We have an indelicate, but very clever scene, of the young Juan's concealment in the bed of an amorous matron,

To love too much has been the only art
I used; — I write in haste, and if a stain
Be on this sheet, 't is not what it appears;
My eyeballs burn and throb, but have no tears.

CXCIV.
"I loved, I love you, for this love have lost
State, station, heaven, mankind's, my own esteem,
And yet can not regret what it hath cost,
So dear is still the memory of that dream;
Yet, if I name my guilt, 't is not to boast,
None can deem harsher of me than I deem:
I trace this scrawl because I cannot rest —
I've nothing to reproach, or to request.

CXCV.
"Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
'T is woman's whole existence; man may range
The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart,
Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in exchange
Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,
And few there are whom these can not estrange;
Men have all these resources, we but one,⁴
To love again⁵, and be again undone.⁶

CXCVI.
"You will proceed in pleasure, and in pride,
Beloved and loving many; all is o'er
For me on earth, except some years to hide
My shame and sorrow deep in my heart's core!
These I could bear, but cannot cast aside
The passion which still rages as before, —
And so farewell — forgive me, love me — No,
That word is idle now — but let it go.⁷

CXCVII.
"My breast has been all weakness, is so yet;
But still I think I can collect my mind;⁸
My blood still rushes where my spirit's set,
As roll the waves before the settled wind;
My heart is feminine, nor can forget —
To all, except one image, madly blind;
So shakes the needle, and so stands the pole,
As vibrates my fond heart to my fix'd soul.⁹

CXCVIII.
"I have no more to say, but linger still,
And dare not set my seal upon this sheet,
And yet I may as well the task fulfil,
My misery can scarce be more complete;
I had not lived till now, could sorrow kill; [meet,
Death shuns the wretch who fain the blow would
And I must even survive this last adieu,
And bear with life, to love and pray for you!"]

and of the torrent of rattling and audacious eloquence with which she repels the too just suspicions of her jealous lord. All this is merely comic, and a little coarse: — but then the poet chooses to make this shameless and abandoned woman address to her young gallant an epistle breathing the very spirit of warm, devoted, pure, and unalterable love — thus profaning the holiest language of the heart, and indirectly associating it with the most hateful and degrading sensualism. Thus are our notions of right and wrong at once confounded — our confidence in virtue shaken to the foundation — and our reliance on truth and fidelity at an end for ever. Of this it is that we complain. — JEFFREY.]

⁷ [Or, "That word is $\left. \begin{matrix} \text{fatal now} \\ \text{lost for me} \\ \text{deadly now} \end{matrix} \right\}$ — but let it go." — MS.]

⁸ ["I struggle, but can not collect my mind." — MS.]

⁹ ["As turns the needle trembling to the pole
It ne'er can reach — so turns to you my soul." — MS.]

CXCVIII.

This note was written upon gilt-edged paper
With a neat little crow-quill, slight and new;¹
Her small white hand could hardly reach the taper,
It trembled as magnetic needles do,
And yet she did not let one tear escape her;
The seal a sun-flower; "*Elle vous suit partout*,"²
The motto cut upon a white cornelian;
The wax was superfine, its hue vermilion.

CXCIX.

This was Don Juan's earliest scrape; but whether
I shall proceed with his adventures is
Dependent on the public altogether;
We'll see, however, what they say to this,
Their favour in an author's cap's a feather,
And no great mischief's done by their caprice;
And if their approbation we experience,
Perhaps they'll have some more about a year hence.

CC.

My poem's epic, and is meant to be
Divided in twelve books; each book containing,
With love, and war, a heavy gale at sea,³
A list of ships, and captains, and kings reigning,
New characters; the episodes are three:⁴
A panoramic view of hell's in training,
After the style of Virgil and of Homer,
So that my name of Epic's no misnomer.⁵

CCL.

All these things will be specified in time,
With strict regard to Aristotle's rules,
The *Vade Mecum* of the true sublime,
Which makes so many poets, and some fools:
Prose poets like blank-verse, I'm fond of rhyme,
Good workmen never quarrel with their tools;
I've got new mythological machinery,
And very handsome supernatural scenery.⁶

¹ ["With a neat crow-quill, rather hard, but new."—MS.]

² [Lord Byron had himself a seal bearing this motto.]

³ ["For your tempest, take Eurus, Zephyr, Auster, and Boreas, and cast them together in one verse: add to these, of rain, lightning and thunder (the loudest you can), *quantum sufficit*. Mix your clouds and billows well together till they foam, and thicken your description here and there with a quicksand. Brew your tempest well in your head, before you set it a blowing. For a battle: pick a large quantity of images and descriptions from Homer's Iliad, with a spice or two of Virgil, and if there remain any overplus, you may lay them by for a skirmish. Season it well with similes, and it will make an excellent battle."—SWIFT: *Recipe for an Epic*.]

⁴ ["And there are other incidents remaining which shall be specified in fitting time, With good discretion, and in current rhyme."—MS.]

⁵ [Lord Byron can scarcely be said to have written an *epic* poem, if the definition of the Dictionnaire de Trévoux be right:—"ÉPIQUE, qui appartient à la poésie héroïque, ou poème qui décrit quelque action, signalée d'un héros. Le poème épique est un discours inventé avec art pour former les mœurs par des instructions déguisées sous les allégories d'une action importante, racontée d'une manière vraisemblable et merveilleuse. La différence qu'il y a entre le poème épique et la tragédie, c'est que dans le poème épique les personnes n'y sont point introduites aux yeux des spectateurs agissant par elles-mêmes, comme dans la tragédie; mais l'action est racontée par le poète."—BRYDGES.]

⁶ [For your machinery, take of deities, male and female, as many as you can use; separate them into two equal parts, and keep Jupiter in the middle; let Juno put him in a ferment, and Venus mollify him. Remember on all occasions to make use of volatile Mercury. If you have need of devils, draw them out of Milton's Paradise, and extract your spirits from Tasso. The use of these machines is evident; and, since no epic poem can subsist without them, the wisest way is to reserve them for your greatest necessities.—SWIFT.]

CCII.

There's only one slight difference between
Me and my epic brethren gone before,
And here the advantage is my own, I ween;
(Not that I have not several merits more,
But this will more peculiarly be seen);
They so embellish, that 'tis quite a bore
Their labyrinth of fables to thread through,
Whereas this story's actually true.

CCIII.

If any person doubt it, I appeal
To history, tradition, and to facts,
To newspapers, whose truth all know and feel,
To plays in five, and operas in three acts;⁷
All these confirm my statement a good deal,
But that which more completely faith exacts
Is, that myself, and several now in Seville,
Saw Juan's last elopement with the devil.

CCIV.

If ever I should condescend to prose,
I'll write poetical commandments, which
Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those
That went before; in these I shall enrich
My text with many things that no one knows,
And carry precept to the highest pitch:
I'll call the work "*Longinus o'er a Bottle*,"⁸
Or, Every Poet his *own* Aristotle.⁹

CCV.

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope;
Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge,
Southey;
Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,
The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthy;⁹
With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,
And Campbell's Hippocrene is somewhat drouthy:
Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers, nor
Commit—flirtation with the muse of Moore.

⁷ ["To newspapers, to sermons, which the zeal Of pious men have published on his acts."—MS.]

⁸ ["I'll call the work '*Reflections o'er a Bottle*.'"—MS.]

⁹ ["There are the Lakers, my lord; ay, the whole school of Glaramara and Skiddaw and Dunmailraie, who have the vanity to be in the habit of undervaluing your poetical talents. Mr. Southey thinks you would never have thought of going over the sea had it not been for his Thalaba; Mr. Wordsworth is humbly of opinion that no man in the world ever thought a tree beautiful, or a mountain grand, till he announced his own wonderful perceptions. Mr. Charles Lamb thinks you would never have written Beppo had he not joked, nor Lara had he not sighed. Mr. Lloyd half suspects your lordship has read his *Nugæ Canoræ*: now all these fancies are alike ridiculous, and you are well entitled to laugh as much as you please at them. But there is one Laker who praises your lordship,—and why? Because your lordship praised him. This is Coleridge, who, on the strength of a little compliment in one of your notes, [see *ante*, p. 126.] ventured at last to open to the gaze of the day the long secluded loveliness of Christabel,—and with what effect his book-seller doth know. Poor Coleridge, however, although his pamphlet would not sell, still gloated over the puff; and he gave your lordship, in return, a great many reasonable good puffs in prose. You may do very well to quiz Wordsworth for his vanity, and Southey for his pomposness; but what right have you to say any thing about Mr. Coleridge's drinking? Really, my lord, I have no scruple in saying, that I look upon that line of yours—'Coleridge is drunk,' &c. as quite personal—shamefully personal. As Coleridge never saw Don Juan, or, if he did, forgot the whole affair next morning, it is nothing as regards him; but what can be expected from his friends? Has not any one of them (if he has any) a perfect right, after reading that line, to print and publish, if he pleases, all that all the world has heard about your lordship's own life and conversation? And if any one of them should do so, what would you, my Lord Byron, think of it?"—JOHN BULL.]

CCVI.

Thou shalt not covet Mr. Sotheby's Muse,
His Pegasus, nor any thing that's his;
Thou shalt not bear false witness like "the Blues"—
(There's one, at least, is very fond of this);
Thou shalt not write, in short, but what I choose:
This is true criticism, and you may kiss—
Exactly as you please, or not,—the rod;
But if you don't, I'll lay it on, by G—d!

CCVII.

If any person should presume to assert
This story is not moral, first, I pray,
That they will not cry out before they're hurt,
Then that they'll read it o'er again, and say,
(But, doubtless, nobody will be so pert,)
That this is not a moral tale, though gay:
Besides, in Canto Twelfth, I mean to show
The very place where wicked people go.

CCVIII.

If, after all, there should be some so blind
To their own good this warning to despise,
Led by some tortuosity of mind,
Not to believe my verse and their own eyes,
And cry that they "the moral cannot find,"
I tell him, if a clergyman, he lies;
Should captains the remark, or critics, make,
They also lie too—under a mistake.

CCIX.

The public approbation I expect,
And beg they'll take my word about the moral,
Which I with their amusement will connect
(So children cutting teeth receive a coral);
Meantime they'll doubtless please to recollect
My epical pretensions to the laurel:
For fear some prudish readers should grow skittish,
I've bribed my grandmother's review—the British.¹

CCX.

I sent it in a letter to the Editor,
Who thank'd me duly by return of post—
I'm for a handsome article his creditor;
Yet, if my gentle Muse he please to roast,
And break a promise after having made it her,
Denying the receipt of what it cost,
And smear his page with gall instead of honey,
All I can say is—that he had the money.

CCXI.

I think that with this holy new alliance
I may ensure the public, and defy
All other magazines of art or science,
Daily, or monthly, or three monthly; I

¹ [For the strictures of "The British," on this and the following stanza, see "Testimonies," No. XVI., *ante*, p. 581.; and compare Lord Byron's "Letter to the Editor of My Grandmother's Review," (*post*, APPENDIX.)—"I wrote to you by last post," says Lord B., Bologna, Aug. 24. 1819, "enclosing a buffooning letter for publication, addressed to the buffoon Roberts, who has thought proper to tie a canister to his own tail. It was written off-hand, and in the midst of circumstances not very favourable to facetiousness, so that there may, perhaps, be more bitterness than enough for that sort of small acid punch."]

² ["Such treatment Horace would not bear, When warm with youth—when Tullus fill'd the chair."—FRANCIS.]

³ ["I thought of dyeing it the other day."—MS.]

⁴ "Me nec femina, nec puer
Jam, nec spes animi credula mutui,
Nec certare juvat mero;
Nec vincire novis tempora foribus."—HOR.
["For me, alas! these joys are o'er;
For me the vernal garland blooms no more;

Have not essay'd to multiply their clients,
Because they tell me 't were in vain to try,
And that the Edinburgh Review and Quarterly
Treat a dissenting author very martyrly.

CCXII.

"*Non ego hoc ferrem calida juvenâ
Consule Planco*," Horace said, and so
Say I; by which quotation there is meant a
Hint that some six or seven good years ago
(Long ere I dreamt of dating from the Brenta)
I was most ready to return a blow,
And would not brook at all this sort of thing
In my hot youth—when George the Third was King.

CCXIII.

But now at thirty years my hair is grey—
(I wonder what it will be like at forty?
I thought of a peruke the other day³—)
My heart is not much greener; and, in short, I
Have squander'd my whole summer while 't was May,
And feel no more the spirit to retort; I
Have spent my life, both interest and principal,
And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul invincible.

CCXIV.

No more—no more—Oh! never more on me
The freshness of the heart can fall like dew,
Which out of all the lovely things we see
Extracts emotions beautiful and new,
Hived in our bosoms like the bag o' the bee,
Think'st thou the honey with those objects grew?
Alas! 't was not in them, but in thy power
To double even the sweetness of a flower.

CCXV.

No more—no more—Oh! never more, my heart,
Canst thou be my sole world, my universe!
Once all in all, but now a thing apart,
Thou canst not be my blessing or my curse:
The illusion's gone for ever, and thou art
Insensible, I trust, but none the worse,
And in thy stead I've got a deal of judgment,
Though heaven knows how it ever found a lodgment.

CCXVI.

My days of love are over; me no more⁴
The charms of maid, wife, and still less of widow,
Can make the fool of which they made before,—
In short, I must not lead the life I did do;
The credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er,
The copious use of claret is forbid too,
So for a good old-gentlemanly vice,
I think I must take up with avarice.⁵

No more the feats of wine I prove,
Nor the delusive hopes of mutual love."—FRANCIS.]

⁵ [His constant recurrence to the praise of avarice in Don Juan, and the humorous zest with which he delights to dwell on it, show how new-fangled, as well as how far from serious, was his adoption of the "good old-gentlemanly vice." That his parsimony, however, was very far from being of that kind which Bacon condemns as "withholding men from works of liberality," is apparent from all that is known of his munificence at this very period.—MOORE.]

"Charity—purchased a shilling's worth of salvation. If that was to be bought, I have given more to my fellow-creatures in this life—sometimes for vice, but, if not more often, at least more considerably, for virtue—than I now possess. I never in my life gave a mistress so much as I have sometimes given a poor man in honest distress. But, no matter! The scoundrels who have all along persecuted me will triumph—and when justice is done to me, it will be when this hand that writes is as cold as the hearts which have stung it."—Byron Diary, 1821.]