

XIX.

And though, as you remember, in a fit
Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly,
I rail'd at Scots to show my wrath and wit,
Which must be own'd was sensitive and surly,
Yet 'tis in vain such sallies to permit,
They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early:
I "scotch'd not kill'd" the Scotchman in my blood,
And love the land of "mountain and of flood."¹

XX.

Don Juan, who was real, or ideal,—
For both are much the same, since what men think
Exists when the once thinkers are less real
Than what they thought, for mind can never sink,
And 'gainst the body makes a strong appeal;
And yet 'tis very puzzling on the brink
Of what is call'd eternity, to stare,
And know no more of what is here, than there;—

XXI.

Don Juan grew a very polish'd Russian—
How we won't mention, why we need not say:
Few youthful minds can stand the strong concussion
Of any slight temptation in their way;
But his just now were spread as is a cushion
Smooth'd for a monarch's seat of honour: gay
Damsels, and dances, revels, ready money,
Made ice seem paradise, and winter sunny.

XXII.

The favour of the empress was agreeable;
And though the duty wax'd a little hard,
Young people at his time of life should be able
To come off handsomely in that regard.
He was now growing up like a green tree, able
For love, war, or ambition, which reward
Their luckier votaries, till old age's tedium
Make some prefer the circulating medium.

XXIII.

About this time, as might have been anticipated,
Seduced by youth and dangerous examples,
Don Juan grew, I fear, a little dissipated;
Which is a sad thing, and not only tramples
On our fresh feelings, but—as being participated
With all kinds of incorrigible samples
Of frail humanity—must make us selfish,
And shut our souls up in us like a shell-fish.

XXIV.

This we pass over. We will also pass
The usual progress of intrigues between
Unequal matches, such as are, alas!
A young lieutenant's with a *not old* queen,
But one who is not so youthful as she was
In all the royalty of sweet seventeen.
Sovereigns may sway materials, but not matter,
And wrinkles, the d—d democrats, won't flatter.

XXV.

And Death, the sovereign's sovereign, though the great
Gracchus of all mortality, who levels,
With his *Agrarian* laws², the high estate
Of him who feasts, and fights, and roars, and revels,

¹ Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood," &c.
Lay of the Last Minstrel.

² Tiberius Gracchus, being tribune of the people, demanded in their name the execution of the Agrarian law; by

To one small grass-grown patch (which must await
Corruption for its crop) with the poor devils
Who never had a foot of land till now,—
Death's a reformer, all men must allow.

XXVI.

He lived (not Death, but Juan) in a hurry
Of waste, and haste, and glare, and gloss, and glitter,
In this gay clime of bear-skins black and furry—
Which (though I hate to say a thing that's bitter)
Peep out sometimes, when things are in a flurry,
Through all the "purple and fine linen," fitter
For Babylon's than Russia's royal harlot—
And neutralise her outward show of scarlet.

XXVII.

And this same state we won't describe: we would
Perhaps from hearsay, or from recollection;
But getting nigh grim Dante's "obscure wood,"³
That horrid equinox, that hateful section
Of human years, that half-way house, that rude
Hut, whence wise travellers drive with circum-
spection

Life's sad post-horses o'er the dreary frontier
Of age, and looking back to youth, give *one* tear;—

XXVIII.

I won't describe,—that is, if I can help
Description; and I won't reflect,—that is,
If I can stave off thought, which—as a whelp
Clings to its teat—sticks to me through the abyss
Of this odd labyrinth; or as the kelp
Holds by the rock; or as a lover's kiss
Drains its first draught of lips:—but, as I said,
I *won't* philosophise, and *will* be read.

XXIX.

Juan, instead of courting courts, was courted,—
A thing which happens rarely: this he owed
Much to his youth, and much to his reported
Valour; much also to the blood he show'd,
Like a race-horse; much to each dress he sported,
Which set the beauty off in which he glow'd,
As purple clouds befringe the sun; but most
He owed to an old woman and his post.

XXX.

He wrote to Spain:—and all his near relations,
Perceiving he was in a handsome way
Of getting on himself, and finding stations
For cousins also, answer'd the same day.
Several prepared themselves for emigrations;
And eating ices, were o'erheard to say,
That with the addition of a slight pelisse,
Madrid's and Moscow's climes were of a piece.

XXXI.

His mother, Donna Inez, finding, too,
That in the lieu of drawing on his banker,
Where his assets were waxing rather few, [anchor,—
He had brought his spending to a handsome
Replied, "that she was glad to see him through
Those pleasures after which wild youth will hanker;
As the sole sign of man's being in his senses
Is, learning to reduce his past expenses.

which all persons possessing above a certain number of
acres were to be deprived of the surplus for the benefit of the
poor citizens.

³ "Mi retrovai per un selva oscura."—*Inferno*, Canto 1.

XXXII.

"She also recommended him to God,
And no less to God's Son, as well as Mother,
Warn'd him against Greek worship, which looks odd
In Catholic eyes; but told him, too, to smother
Outward dislike, which don't look well abroad;
Inform'd him that he had a little brother
Born in a second wedlock; and above
All, praised the empress's *maternal* love.

XXXIII.

"She could not too much give her approbation
Unto an empress, who prefer'd young men
Whose age, and what was better still, whose nation
And climate, stopp'd all scandal (now and then):—
At home it might have given her some vexation;
But where thermometers sunk down to ten,
Or five, or one, or zero, she could never
Believe that virtue thaw'd before the river."

XXXIV.

Oh for a *forty-parson power*¹ to chant
Thy praise, Hypocrisy! Oh for a hymn
Loud as the virtues thou dost loudly vaunt,
Not practise! Oh for trumps of cherubim!
Or the ear-trumpet of my good old aunt,
Who, though her spectacles at last grew dim,
Drew quiet consolation through its hint,
When she no more could read the pious print.

XXXV.

She was no hypocrite at least, poor soul,
But went to heaven in as sincere a way
As any body on the elected roll,
Which portions out upon the judgment day
Heaven's freeholds, in a sort of doomsday scroll,
Such as the conqueror William did repay
His knights with, lotting others' properties
Into some sixty thousand new knights' fees.

XXXVI.

I can't complain, whose ancestors are there,
Erneis, Radulphus—eight-and-forty manors
(If that my memory doth not greatly err)
Were their reward for following Billy's banners;²
And though I can't help thinking 'twas scarce fair
To strip the Saxons of their *hydes*³, like tanners;
Yet as they founded churches with the produce,
You'll deem, no doubt, they put it to a good use.

XXXVII.

The gentle Juan flourish'd, though at times
He felt like other plants call'd sensitive,
Which shrink from touch, as monarchs do from rhymes,
Save such as Southey can afford to give.
Perhaps he long'd in bitter frosts for climes
In which the Neva's ice would cease to live
Before May-day: perhaps, despite his duty,
In royalty's vast arms he sigh'd for beauty:

XXXVIII.

Perhaps—but, sans perhaps, we need not seek
For causes young or old: the canker-worm
Will feed upon the fairest, freshest cheek,
As well as further drain the wither'd form:

¹ A metaphor taken from the "forty-horse power" of a
steam-engine. That mad wag, the Reverend Sydney Smith,
sitting by a brother clergyman at dinner, observed afterwards
that his dull neighbour had a "twelve-parson power" of con-
versation.

² [See Collins's *Peerage*, vol. vii. p. 71.]

Care, like a housekeeper, brings every week
His bills in, and however we may storm,
They must be paid: though six days smoothly run,
The seventh will bring blue devils or a dun.

XXXIX.

I don't know how it was, but he grew sick:
The empress was alarm'd, and her physician
(The same who physick'd Peter) found the tick
Of his fierce pulse betoken a condition
Which augur'd of the dead, however *quick*
Itself, and show'd a feverish disposition;
At which the whole court was extremely troubled,
The sovereign shock'd, and all his medicines doubled.

XL.

Low were the whispers, manifold the rumours:
Some said he had been poison'd by Potemkin;
Others talk'd learnedly of certain tumours,
Exhaustion, or disorders of the same kin;
Some said 'twas a concoction of the humours,
Which with the blood too readily will claim kin;
Others again were ready to maintain,
" 'Twas only the fatigue of last campaign."

XLI.

But here is one prescription out of many:
"Sodæ sulphat. ʒvj. ʒss. Mannæ optim. [him]
Aq. fervent. f. ʒiij. ʒij. tinct. Sennæ
Haustus" (And here the surgeon came and cupp'd
"R Pulv. Com. gr. iij. Ipecacuanhæ"
(With more beside if Juan had not stopp'd 'em).
"Bolus Potassæ Sulphuret. sumendus,
Et haustus ter in die capiendus."

XLII.

This is the way physicians mend or end us,
Secundum artem: but although we sneer
In health—when ill, we call them to attend us,
Without the least propensity to jeer:
While that "hiatus maxime defendendus"
To be fill'd up by spade or mattock's near,
Instead of gliding graciously down Lethe,
We tease mild Baillie⁴, or soft Abernethy.⁵

XLIII.

Juan demurr'd at this first notice to
Quit; and though death had threaten'd an ejection,
His youth and constitution bore him through,
And sent the doctors in a new direction.
But still his state was delicate: the hue
Of health but flicker'd with a faint reflection
Along his wasted cheek, and seem'd to gravel
The faculty—who said that he must travel.

XLIV.

The climate was too cold, they said, for him,
Meridian-born, to bloom in. This opinion
Made the chaste Catherine look a little grim,
Who did not like at first to lose her minion:
But when she saw his dazzling eye wax dim,
And drooping like an eagle's with clipt pinion,
She then resolved to send him on a mission,
But in a style becoming his condition.

³ "Hyde."—I believe a hyde of land to be a legitimate
word, and, as such, subject to the tax of a quibble.

⁴ [For an account of Dr. Baillie's visit to Lord Byron, see
anté, p. 593.]

⁵ [Both Dr. Baillie and John Abernethy, the great surgeon,
were remarkable for *plainness* of speech.]

XLV.

There was just then a kind of a discussion,
A sort of treaty or negotiation
Between the British cabinet and Russian,
Maintain'd with all the due prevarication
With which great states such things are apt to
push on;
Something about the Baltic's navigation,
Hides, train-oil, tallow, and the rights of Thetis,
Which Britons deem their "uti possidetis."

XLVI.

So Catherine, who had a handsome way
Of fitting out her favourites, conferr'd
This secret charge on Juan, to display
At once her royal splendour, and reward
His services. He kiss'd hands the next day,
Received instructions how to play his card,
Was laden with all kinds of gifts and honours,
Which show'd what great discernment was the donor's.

XLVII.

But she was lucky, and luck's all. Your queens
Are generally prosperous in reigning;
Which puzzles us to know what Fortune means.
But to continue: though her years were waning,
Her climacteric teased her like her teens;
And though her dignity brook'd no complaining,
So much did Juan's setting off distress her,
She could not find at first a fit successor.

XLVIII.

But time, the comforter, will come at last;
And four-and-twenty hours, and twice that number
Of candidates requesting to be placed,
Made Catherine taste next night a quiet slumber:—
Not that she meant to fix again in haste,
Nor did she find the quantity encumber,
But always choosing with deliberation,
Kept the place open for their emulation.

XLIX.

While this high post of honour's in abeyance,
For one or two days, reader, we request
You'll mount with our young hero the conveyance
Which wafted him from Petersburg: the best
Barouche, which had the glory to display once
The fair czarina's autocratic crest,
When, a new Iphigene, she went to Tauris,
Was given to her favourite¹, and now bore his.

L.

A bull-dog, and a bullfinch, and an ermine,
All private favourites of Don Juan;—for
(Let deeper sages the true cause determine)
He had a kind of inclination, or
Weakness, for what most people deem mere vermin,
Live animals: an old maid of threescore
For cats and birds more penchant ne'er display'd,
Although he was not old, nor even a maid;—

¹ The empress went to the Crimea, accompanied by the Emperor Joseph, in the year—I forget which.—[The Prince de Ligné, who accompanied Catherine in her progress through her southern provinces, in 1787, gives the following particulars:—"We have been traversing, during several days, an immense tract of deserts formerly inhabited by hostile Tartar hordes, but recovered by the arms of her Majesty, and at present ornamented from stage to stage with magnificent tents, where we are supplied with breakfast, collation, dinner, supper, and lodging; and our encampments, decorated with

LI.

The animals aforesaid occupied
Their station: there were valets, secretaries,
In other vehicles; but at his side
Sat little Leila, who survived the parries
He made 'gainst Cossacque sabres, in the wide
Slaughter of Ismail. Though my wild Muse varies
Her note, she don't forget the infant girl
Whom he preserved, a pure and living pearl.

LII.

Poor little thing! She was as fair as docile,
And with that gentle, serious character,
As rare in living beings as a fossile
Man, 'midst thy mouldy mammoths, "grand
Cuvier!"
Ill fitted was her ignorance to jostle
With this o'erwhelming world, where all must err:
But she was yet but ten years old, and therefore
Was tranquil, though she knew not why or wherefore.

LIII.

Don Juan loved her, and she loved him, as
Nor brother, father, sister, daughter love.
I cannot tell exactly what it was;
He was not yet quite old enough to prove
Parental feelings, and the other class,
Call'd brotherly affection, could not move
His bosom,—for he never had a sister:
Ah! if he had, how much he would have miss'd her!

LIV.

And still less was it sensual; for besides
That he was not an ancient debauchee,
(Who like sour fruit, to stir their veins' salt tides,
As acids rouse a dormant alkali,)
Although ('twill happen as our planet guides)
His youth was not the chastest that might be,
There was the purest Platonism at bottom
Of all his feelings—only he forgot 'em.

LV.

Just now there was no peril of temptation;
He loved the infant orphan he had saved,
As patriots (now and then) may love a nation;
His pride, too, felt that she was not enslaved
Owing to him;—as also her salvation
Through his means and the church's might be paved.
But one thing's odd, which here must be inserted,
The little Turk refused to be converted.

LVI.

'T was strange enough she should retain the impression
Through such a scene of change, and dread, and
slaughter;
But though three bishops told her the transgression,
She show'd a great dislike to holy water:
She also had no passion for confession;
Perhaps she had nothing to confess:—no matter
Whate'er the cause, the church made little of it—
She still held out that Mahomet was a prophet.

all the pomp of Asiatic splendour, present a noble military spectacle. The empress has left, in each town, presents to the amount of 100,000 roubles. Each day of rest is marked by the gift of some diamonds, by balls, by fireworks, and by illuminations extending for leagues in every direction. During the last two months I have been daily employed in throwing money out of our carriage windows, and have thus distributed the value of some millions of livres."—*Lettres et Pensées.*]

LVII.

In fact, the only Christian she could bear
Was Juan; whom she seem'd to have selected
In place of what her home and friends once were.
He naturally loved what he protected:
And thus they form'd a rather curious pair,
A guardian green in years, a ward connected
In neither clime, time, blood, with her defender;
And yet this want of ties made theirs more tender.

LVIII.

They journey'd on through Poland and through
Warsaw,
Famous for mines of salt and yokes of iron:
Through Courland also, which that famous farce saw
Which gave her dukes the graceless name of "Biron."¹
'T is the same landscape which the modern Mars saw,
Who march'd to Moscow, led by Fame, the siren!
To lose by one month's frost some twenty years
Of conquest, and his guard of grenadiers.

LIX.

Let this not seem an anti-climax:—"Oh! [clay.
My guard! my old guard!]"² exclaim'd that god of
Think of the Thunderer's falling down below
Carotid-artery-cutting Castlereagh!
Alas! that glory should be chill'd by snow!
But should we wish to warm us on our way
Through Poland, there is Kosciusko's name
Might scatter fire through ice, like Hecla's flame.³

LX.

From Poland they came on through Prussia Proper,
And Königsberg the capital, whose vaunt,
Besides some veins of iron, lead, or copper,
Has lately been the great Professor Kant.⁴
Juan, who cared not a tobacco-stopper
About philosophy, pursued his jaunt
To Germany, whose somewhat tardy millions
Have princes who spur more than their postillions.

LXI.

And thence through Berlin, Dresden, and the like,
Until he reach'd the castellated Rhine:—
Ye glorious Gothic scenes! how much ye strike
All phantasies, not even excepting mine;
A grey wall, a green ruin, rusty pike,
Make my soul pass the equinoctial line
Between the present and past worlds, and hover
Upon their airy confine, half-seas-over.

LXII.

But Juan posted on through Mannheim, Bonn,
Which Drachenfels⁵ frowns over like a spectre

¹ In the Empress Anne's time, Biren, her favourite, assumed the name and arms of the "Birons" of France; which families are yet extant with that of England. There are still the daughters of Courland of that name; one of them I remember seeing in England in the blessed year of the Allies (1814)—the Duchess of S.—to whom the English Duchess of Somerset presented me as a namesake.—[Ernest John Biren, become so famous by his great advancements, and his not less extraordinary reverses of fortune, was born in Courland, of a family of mean extraction. His grandfather had been head groom to James, the third Duke of Courland, and obtained from his master the present of a small estate in land. . . . In 1714, he made his appearance at St. Petersburg, and solicited the place of page to the Princess Charlotte, wife of the Tzarovitch Alexey; but being contemptuously rejected as a person of mean extraction, retired to Mittau, where he chanced to ingratiate himself with Count Bestucheff, master of the household to Anne, widow of Frederic William duke of Courland, who resided at Mittau. Being of a handsome figure and polite address, he soon gained the good-will of the duchess, and became her secretary and

Of the good feudal times for ever gone,
On which I have not time just now to lecture.
From thence he was drawn onwards to Cologne,
A city which presents to the inspector
Eleven thousand maidenheads of bone,
The greatest number flesh hath ever known.⁶

LXIII.

From thence to Holland's Hague and Helvoetsluys,
That water-land of Dutchmen and of ditches,
Where juniper expresses its best juice,
The poor man's sparkling substitute for riches.
Senates and sages have condemn'd its use—
But to deny the mob a cordial, which is
Too often all the clothing, meat, or fuel,
Good government has left them, seems but cruel.

LXIV.

Here he embark'd, and with a flowing sail
Went bounding for the island of the free,
Towards which the impatient wind blew half a gale;
High dash'd the spray, the bows dipp'd in the sea,
And sea-sick passengers turn'd somewhat pale;
But Juan, season'd, as he well might be,
By former voyages, stood to watch the skiffs
Which pass'd, or catch the first glimpse of the cliffs.

LXV.

At length they rose, like a white wall along
The blue sea's border; and Don Juan felt—
What even young strangers feel a little strong
At the first sight of Albion's chalky belt—
A kind of pride that he should be among
Those haughty shopkeepers, who sternly dealt
Their goods and edicts out from pole to pole,
And made the very billows pay them toll.

LXVI.

I've no great cause to love that spot of earth,
Which holds what *might have been* the noblest
But though I owe it little but my birth, [nation;
I feel a mix'd regret and veneration
For its decaying fame and former worth.
Seven years (the usual term of transportation)
Of absence lay one's old resentments level,
When a man's country's going to the devil.

LXVII.

Alas! could she but fully, truly, know
How her great name is now throughout abhorr'd;
How eager all the earth is for the blow
Which shall lay bare her bosom to the sword;
How all the nations deem her their worst foe,
That worse than *worst of foes*, the once adored
False friend, who held out freedom to mankind,
And now would chain them, to the very mind;—

chief favourite. On her being declared sovereign of Russia, Anne called Biren to Petersburg, and the secretary soon became Duke of Courland, and first minister or rather despot of Russia. On the death of Anne, which happened in 1740, Biren, being declared regent, continued daily increasing his vexations and cruelties, till he was arrested, on the 18th of December, only twenty days after he had been appointed to the regency; and at the revolution that ensued he was exiled to the frozen shores of the Oby."—*TOOKE.*
² [Napoleon's exclamation at the Elysée Bourbon, June the 23d, 1815.]

³ ["Hope for a moment bade the world farewell,
And freedom shriek'd when Kosciusko fell."—*CAMPB.*]

⁴ [Immanuel Kant, the celebrated founder of a new philosophical sect, was born at Königsberg. He died in 1804.]

⁵ ["The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine," &c.—
See *ante*, p. 34.]

⁶ St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins were still extant in 1816, and may be so yet, as much as ever.

LXVIII.

Would she be proud, or boast herself the free,
Who is but first of slaves? The nations are
In prison, — but the gaoler, what is he?
No less a victim to the bolt and bar.
Is the poor privilege to turn the key
Upon the captive, freedom? He's as far
From the enjoyment of the earth and air
Who watches o'er the chain, as they who wear.

LXIX.

Don Juan now saw Albion's earliest beauties,
Thy cliffs, dear Dover! harbour, and hotel;
Thy custom-house, with all its delicate duties;
Thy waiters running mucks at every bell;
Thy packets, all whose passengers are booties
To those who upon land or water dwell;
And last, not least, to strangers uninstructed,
Thy long, long bills, whence nothing is deducted.

LXX.

Juan, though careless, young, and magnifique,
And rich in rubles, diamonds, cash, and credit,
Who did not limit much his bills per week,
Yet stared at this a little, though he paid it, —
(His *Maggior Duomo*, a smart, subtle Greek,
Before him summ'd the awful scroll and read it:)
But doubtless as the air, though seldom sunny,
Is free, the respiration's worth the money.

LXXI.

On with the horses! Off to Canterbury! [puddle;
Tramp, tramp o'er pebble, and splash, splash through
Hurrah! how swiftly speeds the post so merry!
Not like slow Germany, wherein they muddle
Along the road, as if they went to bury
Their fare; and also pause besides, to fuddle,
With "schnapps" — sad dogs! whom "Hundsfoot," or
"Verflucter,"
Affect no more than lightning a conductor.

LXXII.

Now there is nothing gives a man such spirits,
Leavening his blood as cayenne doth a curry,
As going at full speed — no matter where its
Direction be, so 'tis but in a hurry,
And merely for the sake of its own merits;
For the less cause there is for all this flurry,
The greater is the pleasure in arriving
At the great end of travel — which is driving.

LXXIII.

They saw at Canterbury the cathedral;
Black Edward's helm, ¹ and Becket's bloody stone,²
Were pointed out as usual by the bedral,
In the same quaint, uninterested tone: —
There's glory again for you, gentle reader! All
Ends in a rusty casque and dubious bone,³
Half-solved into these sodas or magnesias,
Which form that bitter draught, the human species.

¹ [On the tomb of the prince lies a whole-length brass figure of him, his armour with a hood of mail, and a scull cap enriched with a coronet, which had been once studded with jewels, but only the collets now remain.]

² [Becket was assassinated in the cathedral, in 1171.]

³ [The French inscription on the Black Prince's monument is thus translated in the History of Kent: —

"Whoso thou be that passeth by
Where these corps interred lie,
Understand what I shall say,
As at this time speak I may,
Such as thou art, sometime was I.
Such as I am, such shalt thou be.

LXXIV.

The effect on Juan was of course sublime:
He breathed a thousand Cressys, as he saw
That casque, which never stoop'd except to Time.
Even the bold Churchman's tomb excited awe,
Who died in the then great attempt to climb
O'er kings, who now at least *must talk* of law
Before they butcher. Little Leila gazed,
And asked why such a structure had been raised:

LXXV.

And being told it was "God's house," she said
He was well lodged, but only wonder'd how
He suffer'd Infidels in his homestead,
The cruel Nazarenes, who had laid low
His holy temples in the lands which bred
The true Believers; — and her infant brow
Was bent with grief that Mahomet should resign
A mosque so noble, flung like pearls to swine.

LXXVI.

On! on! through meadows, managed like a garden,
A paradise of hops and high production;
For after years of travel by a bard in
Countries of greater heat, but lesser suction,
A green field is a sight which makes him pardon
The absence of that more sublime construction;
Which mixes up vines, olives, precipices,
Glaciers, volcanos, oranges, and ices.

LXXVII.

And when I think upon a pot of beer —
But I won't weep! — and so drive on, postillions!
As the smart boys spurr'd fast in their career,
Juan admired these highways of free millions;
A country in all senses the most dear
To foreigner or native, save some silly ones,
Who "kick against the pricks" just at this juncture,
And for their pains get only a fresh puncture.

LXXVIII.

What a delightful thing's a turnpike road!
So smooth, so level, such a mode of shaving
The earth, as scarce the eagle in the broad
Air can accomplish, with his wide wings waving.
Had such been cut in Phaeton's time, the god
Had told his son to satisfy his craving
With the York mail; — but onward as we roll,
"Surgit amari aliquid" — the toll!

LXXIX.

Alas! how deeply painful is all payment!
Take lives, take wives, take aught except men's
purses.
As Machiavel shows those in purple raiment,
Such is the shortest way to general curses.
They hate a murderer much less than a claimant
On that sweet ore which every body nurses. —
Kill a man's family, and he may brook it,
But keep your hands out of his breeches' pocket:

I little thought on the hour of death
So long as I enjoyed breath.
Great riches here I did possess,
Whereof I made great nobleness;
I had gold, silver, wardrobes, and
Great treasures, horses, houses, land.
But now a catiff poor am I,
Deep in the ground, lo here I lie;
My beauty great is all quite gone,
My flesh is wasted to the bone;
And if you should see me this day,
I do not think but you would say,
That I had never been a man,
So much alter'd now I am."

LXXX.

So said the Florentine: ye monarchs, hearken
To your instructor. Juan now was borne,
Just as the day began to wane and darken,
O'er the high hill, which looks with pride or scorn
Toward the great city. — Ye who have a spark in
Your veins of Cockney spirit, smile or mourn
According as you take things well or ill; —
Bold Britons, we are now on Shooter's Hill!¹

LXXXI.

The sun went down, the smoke rose up, as from
A half-unquench'd volcano, o'er a space
Which well beseem'd the "Devil's drawing-room,"
As some have qualified that wondrous place;
But Juan felt, though not approaching *home*,
As one who, though he were not of the race,
Revered the soil, of those true sons the mother,
Who butcher'd half the earth, and bullied t' other.²

LXXXII.

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,
Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye
Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping
In sight, then lost amidst the forestry
Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping
On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy;
A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown
On a fool's head — and there is London Town!

LXXXIII.

But Juan saw not this: each wreath of smoke
Appear'd to him but as the magic vapour
Of some alchymic furnace, from whence broke
The wealth of worlds (a wealth of tax and paper):
The gloomy clouds, which o'er it as a yoke
Are bow'd, and put the sun out like a taper,
Were nothing but the natural atmosphere,
Extremely wholesome, though but rarely clear.

LXXXIV.

He paused — and so will I; as doth a crew
Before they give their broadside. By and by,
My gentle countrymen, we will renew
Our old acquaintance; and at least I'll try
To tell you truths *you* will not take as true,
Because they are so; — a male Mrs. Fry,³
With a soft besom will I sweep your halls,
And brush a web or two from off the walls.

LXXXV.

Oh Mrs. Fry! Why go to Newgate? Why
Preach to poor rogues? And wherefore not begin
With Carlton, or with other houses? Try
Your hand at harden'd and imperial sin.

¹ ["Under his proud survey the city lies,
And like a mist beneath a hill doth rise,
Whose state and wealth, the business and the crowd,
Seem at this distance but a darker cloud,
And is, to him who rightly things esteems,
No other in effect than what it seems;
Where, with like haste, tho' several ways they run,
Some to undo, and some to be undone;
While luxury and wealth, like war and peace,
Are each the other's ruin and increase." — DENHAM.]

² [India; America.]

³ [The Quaker lady, whose benevolent exertions have effected so great a change in the condition of the female prisoners in Newgate.]

⁴ [This worthy alderman died in 1829.]

⁵ ["O for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died." — *Marmion*.]

To mend the people's an absurdity,
A jargon, a mere philanthropic din,
Unless you make their betters better: — Fry!
I thought you had more religion, Mrs. Fry.

LXXXVI.

Teach them the decencies of good threescore;
Cure them of tours, hussar and highland dresses;
Tell them that youth once gone returns no more,
That hired huzzas redeem no land's distresses;
Tell them Sir William Curtis⁴ is a bore,
Too dull even for the dullest of excesses,
The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal,
A fool whose bells have ceased to ring at all.

LXXXVII.

Tell them, though it may be perhaps too late
On life's worn confine, jaded, bloated, sated,
To set up vain pretences of being great,
'Tis not so to be good; and be it stated,
The worthiest kings have ever loved least state:
And tell them — But you won't, and I have prated
Just now enough; but by and by I'll prattle
Like Roland's horn⁵ in Roncesvalles' battle.

Don Juan.

CANTO THE ELEVENTH.

I.

WHEN Bishop Berkeley said "there was no matter,"⁶
And proved it — 'twas no matter what he said:
They say his system 'tis in vain to batter,
Too subtle for the airiest human head:
And yet who can believe it? I would shatter
Gladly all matters down to stone or lead,
Or adamant, to find the world a spirit,
And wear my head, denying that I wear it.

II.

What a sublime discovery 'twas to make the
Universe universal egotism,
That all's ideal — *all ourselves*: I'll stake the
World (be it what you will) that *that's* no schism.
Oh Doubt! — if thou be'st Doubt, for which some
take thee,
But which I doubt extremely — thou sole prism
Of the Truth's rays, spoil not my draught of spirit!
Heaven's brandy, though our brain can hardly bear it.

⁶ [The celebrated and ingenious Bishop of Cloyne, in his "Principles of Human Knowledge," denies, without any ceremony, the existence of every kind of matter whatever; nor does he think this conclusion one that need, in any degree, stagger the incredulous. "Some truths there are," says he, "so near and obvious to the mind, that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be, that all the choir of heaven, and furniture of earth, — in a word, all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, — have not any subsistence without a mind." This deduction, however singular, was readily made from the theory of our perceptions laid down by Descartes and Mr. Locke, and at that time generally received in the world. According to that theory, we perceive nothing but ideas which are present in the mind, and which have no dependence whatever upon external things; so that we have no evidence of the existence of any thing external to our minds. Berkeley appears to have been altogether in earnest, in maintaining his scepticism concerning the existence of matter; and the more so, as he conceived this system to be highly favourable to the doctrines of religion, since it removed matter from the world, which had already been the strong hold of the Atheists. — SIR DAVID BREWSTER.]

III.

For ever and anon comes Indigestion,
(Not the most "dainty Ariel")¹ and perplexes
Our soarings with another sort of question:
And that which after all my spirit vexes,
Is, that I find no spot where man can rest eye on,
Without confusion of the sorts and sexes,
Of beings, stars, and this unriddled wonder,
The world, which at the worst's a glorious blunder—

IV.

If it be chance; or if it be according
To the old text, still better:—lest it should
Turn out so, we'll say nothing 'gainst the wording,
As several people think such hazards rude.
They're right; our days are too brief for affording
Space to dispute what *no one* ever could
Decide, and *every body one day* will
Know very clearly—or at least lie still.

V.

And therefore will I leave off metaphysical
Discussion, which is neither here nor there:
If I agree that what is, is; then this I call
Being quite conspicuous and extremely fair;
The truth is, I've grown lately rather phthisical:
I don't know what the reason is—the air
Perhaps; but as I suffer from the shocks
Of illness, I grow much more orthodox.

VI.

The first attack at once proved the Divinity
(But *that* I never doubted, nor the Devil);
The next, the Virgin's mystical virginity;
The third, the usual Origin of Evil;
The fourth at once established the whole Trinity
On so uncontroversial a level,
That I devoutly wish'd the three were four,
On purpose to believe so much the more.

VII.

To our theme.—The man who has stood on the
Acropolis,
And look'd down over Attica; or he
Who has sail'd where picturesque Constantinople is,
Or seen Timbuctoo, or hath taken tea
In small-eyed China's crockery-ware metropolis,
Or sat amidst the bricks of Nineveh,
May not think much of London's first appearance—
But ask him what he thinks of it a year hence?

VIII.

Don Juan had got out on Shooter's Hill;
Sunset the time, the place the same declivity
Which looks along that vale of good and ill
Where London streets ferment in full activity;
While every thing around was calm and still,
Except the creak of wheels, which on their pivot he
Heard,—and that bee-like, bubbling, busy hum
Of cities, that boil over with their scum:—

IX.

I say, Don Juan, wrapt in contemplation,
Walk'd on behind his carriage, o'er the summit,
And lost in wonder of so great a nation,
Gave way to't, since he could not overcome it.

¹ ["*Prosp.* Why, that's my dainty Ariel: I shall miss thee;
But yet thou shalt have freedom."—*Tempest.*]

² ["*Falstaff.* Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade,

"And here," he cried, "is Freedom's chosen station;
Here peals the people's voice, nor can entomb it
Racks, prisons, inquisitions; resurrection
Awaits it, each new meeting or election.

X.

"Here are chaste wives, pure lives; here people pay
But what they please; and if that things be dear,
'T is only that they love to throw away
Their cash, to show how much they have a-year.
Here laws are all inviolate; none lay
Traps for the traveller; every highway's clear:
Here—" he was interrupted by a knife,
With—"Damn your eyes! your money or your
life!"—

XI.

These freeborn sounds proceeded from four pads
In ambush laid, who had perceived him loiter
Behind his carriage; and, like handy lads,
Had seized the lucky hour to reconnoitre,
In which the heedless gentleman who gads
Upon the road, unless he prove a fighter,
May find himself within that isle of riches
Exposed to lose his life as well as breeches.

XII.

Juan, who did not understand a word
Of English, save their shibboleth, "God damn!"
And even that he had so rarely heard,
He sometimes thought 't was only their "Salām,"
Or "God be with you!"—and 't is not absurd
To think so: for half English as I am
(To my misfortune) never can I say
I heard them wish "God with you," save that way;—

XIII.

Juan yet quickly understood their gesture,
And being somewhat choleric and sudden,
Drew forth a pocket pistol from his vesture,
And fired it into one assailant's pudding—
Who fell, as rolls an ox o'er in his pasture,
And roar'd out, as he writhed his native mud in,
Unto his nearest follower or henchman,
"Oh Jack! I'm floor'd by that 'ere bloody French-
man!"

XIV.

On which Jack and his train set off at speed,
And Juan's suite, late scatter'd at a distance,
Came up, all marvelling at such a deed,
And offering, as usual, late assistance.
Juan, who saw the moon's late minion² bleed
As if his veins would pour out his existence,
Stood calling out for bandages and lint,
And wish'd he had been less hasty with his flint.

XV.

"Perhaps," thought he, "it is the country's wont
To welcome foreigners in this way: now
I recollect some innkeepers who don't
Differ, except in robbing with a bow,
In lieu of a bare blade and brazen front.
But what is to be done? I can't allow
The fellow to lie groaning on the road:
So take him up; I'll help you with the load."

minions of the moon: and let men say, we be men of good
government; being governed, as the sea is, by our noble
and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance we
—steal."—*Henry IV.*]

XVI.

But ere they could perform this pious duty,
The dying man cried, "Hold! I've got my gruel!
Oh! for a glass of *mar!*¹ We've miss'd our booty;
Let me die where I am!" And as the fuel
Of life shrunk in his heart, and thick and sooty
The drops fell from his death-wound, and he drew ill
His breath,—he from his swelling throat untied
A kerchief, crying, "Give Sal that!"—and died.

XVII.

The cravat stain'd with bloody drops fell down
Before Don Juan's feet: he could not tell
Exactly why it was before him thrown,
Nor what the meaning of the man's farewell.
Poor Tom was once a kiddy² upon town,
A thorough varmint, and a *real* swell,³
Full flash⁴, all fancy, until fairly diddled,
His pockets first and then his body riddled.

XVIII.

Don Juan, having done the best he could
In all the circumstances of the case,
As soon as "Crown's quest"⁵ allow'd, pursued
His travels to the capital apace;—
Esteeming it a little hard he should
In twelve hours' time, and very little space,
Have been obliged to slay a freeborn native
In self-defence: this made him meditative.

XIX.

He from the world had cut off a great man,
Who in his time had made heroic bustle.
Who in a row like Tom could lead the van,
Booze in the ken⁶, or at the spellken⁷ hustle?
Who queer a flat?⁸ Who (spite of Bow-street's ban)
On the high toby-spice⁹ so flash the muzzle?
Who on a lark¹⁰, with black-eyed Sal (his blowing),¹¹
So prime, so swell¹², so nutty¹³, and so knowing?¹⁴

XX.

But Tom's no more—and so no more of Tom.
Heroes must die; and by God's blessing 't is
Not long before the most of them go home.
Hail! Themis, hail! Upon thy verge it is

¹ [Gin or Hollands.]

² [A thief of the lower order, who, when he is breeched by
a course of successful depredation, dresses in the extreme of
vulgar gentility, and affects a knowingness in his air and con-
versation, which renders him in reality an object of ridicule.
—VAUX.]

³ [Any well-dressed person is emphatically called a swell,
or a *real* swell. — P. EGAN.]

⁴ [A fellow who affects any particular habit, as swearing,
dressing in a particular manner, taking snuff, &c. merely to
be noticed, is said to do it out of *flash*. — *Ibid.*]

⁵ ["*2d Clown.* But is this law?
1st Clown. Ay marry is 't? crown's quest law." —
Hamlet.]

⁶ [A house that harbours thieves is called a *ken*. — 7 The
playhouse. — 8 To puzzle or confound a gull, or silly fellow.

⁹ Robbery on horseback. — 10 Fun or sport of any kind. —
11 A pick-pocket's trull. — 12 So gentlemanly. See *Slang
Dictionary.*]

¹³ [To be *nutty* upon, is to be very much pleased or gratified
with any thing; thus, a person who conceives a strong inclin-
ation for another of the opposite sex is said to be quite *nutty*
upon him or her. — *Ibid.*]

¹⁴ The advance of science and of language has rendered it
unnecessary to translate the above good and true English,
spoken in its original purity by the select mobility and their
patrons. The following is a stanza of a song which was very
popular, at least in my early days:—

"On the high toby-spice flash the muzzle,
In spite of each gallows old scout;
If you at the spellken can't hustle,
You'll be hobbled in making a Clout."

That Juan's chariot, rolling like a drum
In thunder, holds the way it can't well miss,
Through Kennington and all the other "tons,"
Which make us wish ourselves in town at once;—

XXI.

Through Groves, so call'd as being void of trees,
(Like *lucus* from *no* light); through prospects
named

Mount Pleasant, as containing nought to please,
Nor much to climb; through little boxes framed
Of bricks, to let the dust in at your ease,
With "To be let," upon their doors proclaim'd;
Through "Rows" most modestly call'd "Paradise,"
Which Eve might quit without much sacrifice;—

XXII.

Through coaches, drays, choked turnpikes, and a whirl
Of wheels, and roar of voices, and confusion;
Here taverns wooing to a pint of "purl,"¹⁵
There mails fast flying off like a delusion;
There barbers' blocks with periwigs in curl
In windows; here the lamplighter's infusion
Slowly distill'd into the glimmering glass
(For in those days we had not got to gas—);¹⁶

XXIII.

Through this, and much, and more, is the approach
Of travellers to mighty Babylon:
Whether they come by horse, or chaise, or coach,
With slight exceptions, all the ways seem one.
I could say more, but do not choose to encroach
Upon the Guide-book's privilege. The sun
Had set some time, and night was on the ridge
Of twilight, as the party cross'd the bridge.

XXIV.

That's rather fine, the gentle sound of Themis—
Who vindicates a moment, too, his stream—
Though hardly heard through multifarious "damme's."
The lamps of Westminster's more regular gleam,
The breadth of pavement, and yon shrine where fame
A spectral resident—whose pallid beam [is
In shape of moonshine hovers o'er the pile—
Make this a sacred part of Albion's isle.¹⁷

"Then your Blowing will wax gallows haughty,
When she hears of your scaly mistake,
She'll surely turn snitch for the forty—
That her Jack may be regular weight."

If there be any gemman so ignorant as to require a traduc-
tion, I refer him to my old friend and corporeal pastor and
master, John Jackson, Esq., Professor of Pugilism; who, I
trust, still retains the strength and symmetry of his model of
a form, together with his good humour, and athletic as well
as mental accomplishments.

¹⁵ [A kind of medicated malt liquor, in which wormwood
and aromatics are infused. — Todd.]

¹⁶ [The streets of London were first regularly lighted with
gas in 1812.]

¹⁷ ["I very often," says Addison, "walk by myself in West-
minster Abbey. When I look upon the tombs of the great,
every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs
of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I
meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart
melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents
themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom
we must quickly follow. When I see kings lying by those
who deposed them; when I consider rival wits placed side by
side, or the holy men that divided the world with their con-
tests and disputes; I reflect with sorrow and astonishment
on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind.
When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that
died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider
that great day, when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and
make our appearance together."]