LIFE

OF

LORD BYRON:

WITH HIS LETTERS AND JOURNALS.

VOL. II.

Freeditorial

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LETTERS AND JOURNALS OF LORD BYRON, WITH NOTICES OF HIS LIFE, from the Period of his Return from the Continent, July, 1811, to January, 1814.

NOTICES

OF THE

LIFE OF LORD BYRON.

Having landed the young pilgrim once more in England, it may be worth while, before we accompany him into the scenes that awaited him at home, to consider how far the general character of his mind and disposition may have been affected by the course of travel and adventure, in which he had been, for the last two years, engaged. A life less savouring of poetry and romance than that which he had pursued previously to his departure on his travels, it would be difficult to imagine. In his childhood,

it is true, he had been a dweller and wanderer among scenes well calculated, according to the ordinary notion, to implant the first rudiments of poetic feeling. But, though the poet may afterwards feed on the recollection of such scenes, it is more than questionable, as has been already observed, whether he ever has been formed by them. If a childhood, indeed, passed among mountainous scenery were so favourable to the awakening of the imaginative power, both the Welsh, among ourselves, and the Swiss, abroad, ought to rank much higher on the scale of poetic excellence than they do at present. But, even allowing the picturesqueness of his early haunts to have had some share in giving a direction to the fancy of Byron, the actual operation of this influence, whatever it may have been, ceased with his childhood; and the life which he led afterwards during his school-days at Harrow, was,—as naturally the life of so idle and daring a schoolboy must be,—the very reverse of poetical. For a soldier or an adventurer, the course of training through which he then passed would have been perfect;—his athletic sports, his battles, his love of dangerous enterprise, gave every promise of a spirit fit for the most stormy career. But to the meditative pursuits of poesy, these dispositions seemed, of all others, the least friendly; and, however they might promise to render him, at some future time, a subject for bards, gave, assuredly, but little hope of his shining first among bards himself.

The habits of his life at the university were even still less intellectual and literary. While a schoolboy, he had read abundantly and eagerly, though desultorily; but even this discipline of his mind, irregular and undirected as it was, he had, in a great measure, given up, after leaving Harrow; and among the pursuits that occupied his academic hours, those of playing at hazard, sparring, and keeping a bear and bull-dogs, were, if not the most favourite, at least, perhaps, the most innocent. His time in London passed equally unmarked either by mental cultivation or refined amusement. Having no resources in private society, from his total want of friends and connections, he was left to live loosely about town among the loungers in coffee-houses; and to those who remember what his two favourite haunts, Limmer's and Stevens's, were at that period, it is needless to say that, whatever else may have been the merits of these establishments, they were anything but fit schools for the formation of poetic character.

But however incompatible such a life must have been with those habits of contemplation, by which, and which only, the faculties he had already displayed could be ripened, or those that were still latent could be

unfolded, yet, in another point of view, the time now apparently squandered by him, was, in after-days, turned most invaluably to account. By thus initiating him into a knowledge of the varieties of human character,—by giving him an insight into the details of society, in their least artificial form,—in short, by mixing him up, thus early, with the world, its business and its pleasures, his London life but contributed its share in forming that wonderful combination which his mind afterwards exhibited, of the imaginative and the practical—the heroic and the humorous—of the keenest and most dissecting views of real life, with the grandest and most spiritualised conceptions of ideal grandeur.

To the same period, perhaps, another predominant characteristic of his maturer mind and writings may be traced. In this anticipated experience of the world which his early mixture with its crowd gave him, it is but little probable that many of the more favourable specimens of human kind should have fallen under his notice. On the contrary, it is but too likely that some of the lightest and least estimable of both sexes may have been among the models, on which, at an age when impressions sink deepest, his earliest judgments of human nature were formed. Hence, probably, those contemptuous and debasing views of humanity with which he was so often led to alloy his noblest tributes to the loveliness and majesty of general nature. Hence the contrast that appeared between the fruits of his imagination and of his experience,—between those dreams, full of beauty and kindliness, with which the one teemed at his bidding, and the dark, desolating bitterness that overflowed when he drew from the other.

Unpromising, however, as was his youth of the high destiny that awaited him, there was one unfailing characteristic of the imaginative order of minds—his love of solitude—which very early gave signs of those habits of self-study and introspection by which alone the "diamond quarries" of genius are worked and brought to light. When but a boy, at Harrow, he had shown this disposition strongly,—being often known, as I have already mentioned, to withdraw himself from his playmates, and sitting alone upon a tomb in the churchyard, give himself up, for hours, to thought. As his mind began to disclose its resources, this feeling grew upon him; and, had his foreign travel done no more than, by detaching him from the distractions of society, to enable him, solitarily and freely, to commune with his own spirit, it would have been an all-important step gained towards the full expansion of his faculties. It was only then, indeed, that he began to feel himself capable of the abstraction which self-study requires, or to enjoy that freedom from the intrusion of others' thoughts,

which alone leaves the contemplative mind master of its own. In the solitude of his nights at sea, in his lone wanderings through Greece, he had sufficient leisure and seclusion to look within himself, and there catch the first "glimpses of his glorious mind." One of his chief delights, as he mentioned in his "Memoranda," was, when bathing in some retired spot, to seat himself on a high rock above the sea, and there remain for hours, gazing upon the sky and the waters[1], and lost in that sort of vague reverie, which, however formless and indistinct at the moment, settled afterwards on his pages, into those clear, bright pictures which will endure for ever.

Were it not for the doubt and diffidence that hang round the first steps of genius, this growing consciousness of his own power, these openings into a new domain of intellect, where he was to reign supreme, must have made the solitary hours of the young traveller one dream of happiness. But it will be seen that, even yet, he distrusted his own strength, nor was at all aware of the height to which the spirit he was now calling up would grow. So enamoured, nevertheless, had he become of these lonely musings, that even the society of his fellow-traveller, though with pursuits so congenial to his own, grew at last to be a chain and a burden on him; and it was not till he stood, companionless, on the shore of the little island in the Aegean, that he found his spirit breathe freely. If any stronger proof were wanting of his deep passion for solitude, we shall find it, not many years after, in his own written avowal, that, even when in the company of the woman he most loved, he not unfrequently found himself sighing to be alone.

It was not only, however, by affording him the concentration necessary for this silent drawing out of his feelings and powers, that travel conduced so essentially to the formation of his poetical character. To the East he had looked, with the eyes of romance, from his very childhood. Before he was ten years of age, the perusal of Rycaut's History of the Turks had taken a strong hold of his imagination, and he read eagerly, in consequence, every book concerning the East he could find. In visiting, therefore, those countries, he was but realising the dreams of his childhood; and this return of his thoughts to that innocent time, gave a freshness and purity to their current which they had long wanted. Under the spell of such recollections, the attraction of novelty was among the least that the scenes, through which he wandered, presented. Fond traces of the past—and few have ever retained them so vividly—mingled themselves with the impressions of the objects before him; and as, among the Highlands, he

had often traversed, in fancy, the land of the Moslem, so memory, from the wild hills of Albania, now "carried him back to Morven."

While such sources of poetic feeling were stirred at every step, there was also in his quick change of place and scene—in the diversity of men and manners surveyed by him—in the perpetual hope of adventure and thirst of enterprise, such a succession and variety of ever fresh excitement as not only brought into play, but invigorated, all the energies of his character: as he, himself, describes his mode of living, it was "To-day in a palace, to-morrow in a cow-house—this day with the Pacha, the next with a shepherd." Thus were his powers of observation quickened, and the impressions on his imagination multiplied. Thus schooled, too, in some of the roughnesses and privations of life, and, so far, made acquainted with the flavour of adversity, he learned to enlarge, more than is common in his high station, the circle of his sympathies, and became inured to that manly and vigorous cast of thought which is so impressed on all his writings. Nor must we forget, among these strengthening and animating effects of travel, the ennobling excitement of danger, which he more than once experienced,—having been placed in situations, both on land and sea, well calculated to call forth that pleasurable sense of energy, which perils, calmly confronted, never fail to inspire.

The strong interest which—in spite of his assumed philosophy on this subject in Childe Harold—he took in every thing connected with a life of warfare, found frequent opportunities of gratification, not only on board the English ships of war in which he sailed, but in his occasional intercourse with the soldiers of the country. At Salora, a solitary place on the Gulf of Arta, he once passed two or three days, lodged in a small miserable barrack. Here, he lived the whole time, familiarly, among the soldiers; and a picture of the singular scene which their evenings presented—of those wild, half-bandit warriors, seated round the young poet, and examining with savage admiration his fine Manton gun and English sword—might be contrasted, but too touchingly, with another and a later picture of the same poet, dying, as a chieftain, on the same land, with Suliotes for his guards, and all Greece for his mourners.

It is true, amidst all this stimulating variety of objects, the melancholy which he had brought from home still lingered around his mind. To Mr. Adair and Mr. Bruce, as I have before mentioned, he gave the idea of a person labouring under deep dejection; and Colonel Leake, who was, at that time, resident at Ioannina, conceived very much the same impression of the state of his mind. But, assuredly, even this melancholy, habitually as

it still clung to him, must, under the stirring and healthful influences of his roving life, have become a far more elevated and abstract feeling than it ever could have expanded to within reach of those annoyances, whose tendency was to keep it wholly concentrated round self. Had he remained idly at home, he would have sunk, perhaps, into a querulous satirist. But, as his views opened on a freer and wider horizon, every feeling of his nature kept pace with their enlargement; and this inborn sadness, mingling itself with the effusions of his genius, became one of the chief constituent charms not only of their pathos, but their grandeur. For, when did ever a sublime thought spring up in the soul, that melancholy was not to be found, however latent, in its neighbourhood?

We have seen, from the letters written by him on his passage homeward, how far from cheerful or happy was the state of mind in which he returned. In truth, even for a disposition of the most sanguine cast, there was quite enough in the discomforts that now awaited him in England, to sadden its hopes, and check its buoyancy. "To be happy at home," says Johnson, "is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends." But Lord Byron had no home,—at least none that deserved this endearing name. A fond family circle, to accompany him with its prayers, while away, and draw round him, with listening eagerness, on his return, was what, unluckily, he never knew, though with a heart, as we have seen, by nature formed for it. In the absence, too, of all that might cheer and sustain, he had every thing to encounter that could distress and humiliate. To the dreariness of a home without affection, was added the burden of an establishment without means; and he had thus all the embarrassments of domestic life, without its charms. His affairs had, during his absence, been suffered to fall into confusion, even greater than their inherent tendency to such a state warranted. There had been, the preceding year, an execution on Newstead, for a debt of 1500*l.* owing to the Messrs. Brothers, upholsterers; and a circumstance told of the veteran, Joe Murray, on this occasion, well deserves to be mentioned. To this faithful old servant, jealous of the ancient honour of the Byrons, the sight of the notice of sale, pasted up on the abbey-door, could not be otherwise than an unsightly and intolerable nuisance. Having enough, however, of the fear of the law before his eyes, not to tear the writing down, he was at last forced, as his only consolatory expedient, to paste a large piece of brown paper over it.

Notwithstanding the resolution, so recently expressed by Lord Byron, to abandon for ever the vocation of authorship, and leave "the whole

Castalian state" to others, he was hardly landed in England when we find him busily engaged in preparations for the publication of some of the poems which he had produced abroad. So eager was he, indeed, to print, that he had already, in a letter written at sea, announced himself to Mr. Dallas, as ready for the press. Of this letter, which, from its date, ought to have preceded some of the others that have been given, I shall here lay before the reader the most material parts.

LETTER 54. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Volage Frigate, at sea, June 28. 1811.

"After two years' absence, (to a day, on the 2d of July, before which we shall not arrive at Portsmouth,) I am retracing my way to England.

"I am coming back with little prospect of pleasure at home, and with a body a little shaken by one or two smart fevers, but a spirit I hope yet unbroken. My affairs, it seems, are considerably involved, and much business must be done with lawyers, colliers, farmers, and creditors. Now this, to a man who hates bustle as he hates a bishop, is a serious concern. But enough of my home department.

"My Satire, it seems, is in a fourth edition, a success rather above the middling run, but not much for a production which, from its topics, must be temporary, and of course be successful at first, or not at all. At this period, when I can think and act more coolly, I regret that I have written it, though I shall probably find it forgotten by all except those whom it has offended.

"Yours and Pratt's *protégé*, Blackett, the cobbler, is dead, in spite of his rhymes, and is probably one of the instances where death has saved a man from damnation. You were the ruin of that poor fellow amongst you: had it not been for his patrons, he might now have been in very good plight, shoe-(not verse-) making: but you have made him immortal with a vengeance. I write this, supposing poetry, patronage, and strong waters, to have been the death of him. If you are in town in or about the beginning of July, you will find me at Dorant's, in Albemarle Street, glad to see you. I have an imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry ready for Cawthorn, but don't let that deter you, for I sha'n't inflict it upon you. You know I

never read my rhymes to visitors. I shall quit town in a few days for Notts., and thence to Rochdale.

"Yours, &c."

Immediately, on Lord Byron's arrival in London, Mr. Dallas called upon him. "On the 15th of July," says this gentleman, "I had the pleasure of shaking hands with him at Reddish's Hotel in St. James's Street. I thought his looks belied the report he had given me of his bodily health, and his countenance did not betoken melancholy, or displeasure at his return. He was very animated in the account of his travels, but assured me he had never had the least idea of writing them. He said he believed satire to be his *forte*, and to that he had adhered, having written, during his stay at different places abroad, a Paraphrase of Horace's Art of Poetry, which would be a good finish to English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. He seemed to promise himself additional fame from it, and I undertook to superintend its publication, as I had done that of the Satire. I had chosen the time ill for my visit, and we had hardly any time to converse uninterruptedly, he therefore engaged me to breakfast with him next morning."

In the interval Mr. Dallas looked over this Paraphrase, which he had been permitted by Lord Byron to take home with him for the purpose, and his disappointment was, as he himself describes it, "grievous," on finding, that a pilgrimage of two years to the inspiring lands of the East had been attended with no richer poetical result. On their meeting again next morning, though unwilling to speak disparagingly of the work, he could not refrain, as he informs us, from expressing some surprise that his noble friend should have produced nothing else during his absence.—"Upon this," he continues, "Lord Byron told me that he had occasionally written short poems, besides a great many stanzas in Spenser's measure, relative to the countries he had visited. 'They are not worth troubling you with, but you shall have them all with you if you like.' So came I by Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. He took it from a small trunk, with a number of verses. He said they had been read but by one person, who had found very little to commend and much to condemn: that he himself was of that opinion, and he was sure I should be so too. Such as it was, however, it was at my service; but he was urgent that 'The Hints from Horace' should be immediately put in train, which I promised to have done."

The value of the treasure thus presented to him, Mr. Dallas was not slow in discovering. That very evening he despatched a letter to his noble friend, saying—"You have written one of the most delightful poems I ever read. If I wrote this in flattery, I should deserve your contempt rather than your friendship. I have been so fascinated with Childe Harold that I have not been able to lay it down. I would almost pledge my life on its advancing the reputation of your poetical powers, and on its gaining you great honour and regard, if you will do me the credit and favour of attending to my suggestions respecting," &c.&c.&c.

Notwithstanding this just praise, and the secret echo it must have found in a heart so awake to the slightest whisper of fame, it was some time before Lord Byron's obstinate repugnance to the idea of publishing Childe Harold could be removed.

"Attentive," says Mr. Dallas, "as he had hitherto been to my opinions and suggestions, and natural as it was that he should be swayed by such decided praise, I was surprised to find that I could not at first obtain credit with him for my judgment on Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. 'It was any thing but poetry—it had been condemned by a good critic—had I not myself seen the sentences on the margins of the manuscripts?' He dwelt upon the Paraphrase of the Art of Poetry with pleasure, and the manuscript of that was given to Cawthorn, the publisher of the Satire, to be brought forth without delay. I did not, however, leave him so: before I quitted him I returned to the charge, and told him that I was so convinced of the merit of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, that, as he had given it to me, I should certainly publish it, if he would have the kindness to attend to some corrections and alterations."

Among the many instances, recorded in literary history, of the false judgments of authors respecting their own productions, the preference given by Lord Byron to a work so little worthy of his genius, over a poem of such rare and original beauty as the first Cantos of Childe Harold, may be accounted, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary and inexplicable.

"It is in men as in soils," says Swift, "where sometimes there is a vein of gold which the owner knows not of." But Lord Byron had made the discovery of the vein, without, as it would seem, being aware of its value. I have already had occasion to observe that, even while occupied with the composition of Childe Harold, it is questionable whether he himself was yet fully conscious of the new powers, both of thought and feeling, that had been awakened in him; and the strange estimate we now find him

forming of his own production appears to warrant the remark. It would seem, indeed, as if, while the imaginative powers of his mind had received such an impulse forward, the faculty of judgment, slower in its developement, was still immature, and that of *self*-judgment, the most difficult of all, still unattained.

On the other hand, from the deference which, particularly at this period of his life, he was inclined to pay to the opinions of those with whom he associated, it would be fairer, perhaps, to conclude that this erroneous valuation arose rather from a diffidence in his own judgment than from any deficiency of it. To his college companions, almost all of whom were his superiors in scholarship, and some of them even, at this time, his competitors in poetry, he looked up with a degree of fond and admiring deference, for which his ignorance of his own intellectual strength alone could account; and the example, as well as tastes, of these young writers being mostly on the side of established models, their authority, as long as it influenced him, would, to a certain degree, interfere with his striking confidently into any new or original path. That some remains of this bias, with a little leaning, perhaps, towards school recollections, may have had a share in prompting his preference of the Horatian Paraphrase, is by no means improbable;—at least, that it was enough to lead him, untried as he had yet been in the new path, to content himself, for the present, with following up his success in the old. We have seen, indeed, that the manuscript of the two Cantos of Childe Harold had, previously to its being placed in the hands of Mr. Dallas, been submitted by the noble author to the perusal of some friend—the first and only one, it appears, who at that time had seen them. Who this fastidious critic was, Mr. Dallas has not mentioned; but the sweeping tone of censure in which he conveyed his remarks was such as, at any period of his career, would have disconcerted the judgment of one, who, years after, in all the plenitude of his fame, confessed, that "the depreciation of the lowest of mankind was more painful to him than the applause of the highest was pleasing."

Though on every thing that, after his arrival at the age of manhood, he produced, some mark or other of the master-hand may be traced; yet, to print the whole of his Paraphrase of Horace, which extends to nearly 800 lines, would be, at the best, but a questionable compliment to his memory. That the reader, however, may be enabled to form some opinion of a performance, which—by an error or caprice of judgment, unexampled, perhaps, in the annals of literature—its author, for a time, preferred to the sublime musings of Childe Harold, I shall here select a few

such passages from the Paraphrase as may seem calculated to give an idea as well of its merits as its defects.

The opening of the poem is, with reference to the original, ingenious:—

"Who would not laugh, if Lawrence, hired to graceHis costly canvass with each flatter'd face,Abused his art, till Nature, with a blush,Saw cits grow centaurs underneath his brush?Or should some limner join, for show or sale,A maid of honour to a mermaid's tail?Or low Dubost (as once the world has seen)Degrade God's creatures in his graphic spleen?
Not all that forced politeness, which defendsFools in their faults, could gag his grinning friends.Believe me, Moschus, like that picture seemsThe book, which, sillier than a sick man's dreams,Displays a crowd of figures incomplete,Poetic nightmares, without head or feet."

The following is pointed, and felicitously expressed:—

"Then glide down Grub Street, fasting and forgot,Laugh'd into Lethe by some quaint Review,Whose wit is never troublesome till—true."

Of the graver parts, the annexed is a favourable specimen:—

"New words find credit in these latter days,If neatly grafted on a Gallic phrase:What Chaucer, Spenser, did, we scarce refuseTo Dryden's or to Pope's maturer muse.If you can add a little, say why not,As well as William Pitt and Walter Scott,Since they, by force of rhyme, and force of lungs,Enrich'd our island's ill-united tongues?'Tis then, and shall be, lawful to presentReforms in writing as in parliament.

"As forests shed their foliage by degrees,So fade expressions which in season please;And we and ours, alas! are due to fate,And works and words but dwindle to a date.Though, as a monarch nods and commerce calls,Impetuous rivers stagnate in canals;Though swamps subdued, and marshes drain'd sustainThe heavy ploughshare and the yellow grain;And rising ports along the busy shoreProtect the vessel from old Ocean's roar—
All, all must perish. But, surviving last,The love of letters half preserves the past:True,—some decay, yet not a few survive,Though those shall sink which now appear to thrive,As custom arbitrates, whose shifting swayOur life and language must alike obey."

I quote what follows chiefly for the sake of the note attached to it:—

"Satiric rhyme first sprang from selfish spleen.You doubt?—See Dryden, Pope, St. Patrick's Dean.

"Blank verse is now with one consent alliedTo Tragedy, and rarely quits her side;Though mad Almanzor rhymed in Dryden's days,No sing-song hero rants in modern plays;—While modest Comedy her verse foregoesFor jest and pun in very middling prose.Not that our Bens or Beaumonts show the worse,Or lose one point because they wrote in verse;But so Thalia pleases to appear,—Poor virgin!—damn'd some twenty times a year!"

There is more of poetry in the following verses upon Milton than in any other passage throughout the Paraphrase:—

"'Awake a louder and a loftier strain,'And, pray, what follows from his boiling brain?He sinks to S * *'s level in a trice,Whose epic mountains never fail in mice!

Not so of yore awoke your mighty sireThe tempered warblings of his master lyre;Soft as the gentler breathing of the lute,'Of man's first disobedience and the fruit'He speaks; but, as his subject swells along,Earth, Heaven, and Hades, echo with the song."

The annexed sketch contains some lively touches:—

"Behold him, Freshman!—forced no more to groanO'er Virgil's devilish verses, and—his own;Prayers are too tedious, lectures too abstruse,He flies from T——ll's frown to 'Fordham's Mews;'(Unlucky T——ll, doom'd to daily caresBy pugilistic pupils and by bears!)Fines, tutors, tasks, conventions, threat in vain,Before hounds, hunters, and Newmarket plain:Rough with his elders; with his equals rash;Civil to sharpers; prodigal of cash.Fool'd, pillaged, dunn'd, he wastes his terms away;And, unexpell'd perhaps, retires M.A.:—Master of Arts!—as Hells and Clubs proclaim,Where scarce a black-leg bears a brighter name.

"Launch'd into life, extinct his early fire,He apes the selfish prudence of his sire;Marries for money; chooses friends for rank;Buys land, and shrewdly trusts not to the Bank;Sits in the senate; gets a son and heir;Sends him to Harrow—for himself was there;Mute though he votes, unless when call'd to cheer,His son's so sharp—he'll see the dog a peer!

"Manhood declines; age palsies every limb;He quits the scene, or else the scene quits him;Scrapes wealth, o'er each departing penny grieves,And

Avarice seizes all Ambition leaves;Counts cent. per cent., and smiles, or vainly fretsO'er hoards diminish'd by young Hopeful's debts;Weighs well and wisely what to sell or buy,Complete in all life's lessons—but to die;Peevish and spiteful, doting, hard to please,Commending every time save times like these;Crazed, querulous, forsaken, half forgot,Expires unwept, is buried—let him rot!"

In speaking of the opera, he says:—

"Hence the pert shopkeeper, whose throbbing earAches with orchestras which he pays to hear,Whom shame, not sympathy, forbids to snore,His anguish doubled by his own 'encore!'Squeezed in 'Fop's Alley,' jostled by the beaux,Teased with his hat, and trembling for his toes,Scarce wrestles through the night, nor tastes of easeTill the dropp'd curtain gives a glad release:Why this and more he suffers, can ye guess?—Because it costs him dear, and makes him dress!"

The concluding couplet of the following lines is amusingly characteristic of that mixture of fun and bitterness with which their author sometimes spoke in conversation;—so much so, that those who knew him might almost fancy they hear him utter the words:—

"But every thing has faults, nor is't unknownThat harps and fiddles often lose their tone,And wayward voices at their owner's call,With all his best endeavours, only squall;Dogs blink their covey, flints withhold the spark,And double barrels (damn them) miss their mark!"

One more passage, with the humorous note appended to it, will complete the whole amount of my favourable specimens:—

"And that's enough—then write and print so fast,—If Satan take the hindmost, who'd be last?They storm the types, they publish one and all,They leap the counter, and they leave the stall:—Provincial maidens, men of high command,Yea, baronets, have ink'd the bloody hand!Cash cannot quell them—Pollio play'd this prank:(Then Phoebus first found credit in a bank;)Not all the living only, but the deadFool on, as fluent as an Orpheus' head!Damn'd all their days, they posthumously thrive,Dug up from dust, though buried when alive!Reviews record this epidemic crime,Those books of martyrs to the rage for rhyme

Alas! woe worth the scribbler, often seenIn Morning Post or Monthly Magazine!There lurk his earlier lays, but soon, hot-press'd,Behold a quarto!—tarts must tell the rest!Then leave, ye wise, the lyre's precarious

chordsTo muse-mad baronets or madder lords,Or country Crispins, now grown somewhat stale,Twin Doric minstrels, drunk with Doric ale!Hark to those notes, narcotically soft,The cobbler-laureates sing to Capel Lofft!"

From these select specimens, which comprise, altogether, little more than an eighth of the whole poem, the reader may be enabled to form some notion of the remainder, which is, for the most part, of a very inferior quality, and, in some parts, descending to the depths of doggerel. Who, for instance, could trace the hand of Byron in such "prose, fringed with rhyme," as the following?—

"Peace to Swift's faults! his wit hath made them passUnmatch'd by all, save matchless Hudibras,Whose author is perhaps the first we meetWho from our couplet lopp'd two final feet;Nor less in merit than the longer lineThis measure moves, a favourite of the Nine.

"Though at first view, eight feet may seem in vainForm'd, save in odes, to bear a serious strain,Yet Scott has shown our wondering isle of lateThis measure shrinks not from a theme of weight, And, varied skilfully, surpasses farHeroic rhyme, but most in love or war,Whose fluctuations, tender or sublime,Are curb'd too much by long recurring rhyme.
"In sooth, I do not know, or greatly careTo learn who our first English strollers were,Or if—till roofs received the vagrant art—Our Muse—like that of Thespis—kept a cart.But this is certain, since our Shakspeare's days,There's pomp enough, if little else, in plays;Nor will Melpomene ascend her throneWithout high heels, white plume, and Bristol stone.

"Where is that living language which could claimPoetic more, as philosophic fame,If all our bards, more patient of delay,Would stop like Pope to polish by the way?"

In tracing the fortunes of men, it is not a little curious to observe, how often the course of a whole life has depended on one single step. Had Lord Byron now persisted in his original purpose of giving this poem to the press, instead of Childe Harold, it is more than probable that he would have been lost, as a great poet, to the world. Inferior as the Paraphrase is, in every respect, to his former Satire, and, in some places, even descending below the level of under-graduate versifiers, its failure, there can be little doubt, would have been certain and signal;—his former assailants would have resumed their advantage over him, and either, in the bitterness of his mortification, he would have flung Childe Harold into the fire; or, had he summoned up sufficient confidence to publish that poem, its reception, even if sufficient to retrieve him in the eyes of the

public and his own, could never have, at all, resembled that explosion of success,—that instantaneous and universal acclaim of admiration into which, coming, as it were, fresh from the land of song, he now surprised the world, and in the midst of which he was borne, buoyant and self-assured, along, through a succession of new triumphs, each more splendid than the last.

Happily, the better judgment of his friends averted such a risk; and he at length consented to the immediate publication of Childe Harold,—still, however, to the last, expressing his doubts of its merits, and his alarm at the sort of reception it might meet with in the world.

"I did all I could," says his adviser, "to raise his opinion of this composition, and I succeeded; but he varied much in his feelings about it, nor was he, as will appear, at his ease until the world decided on its merit. He said again and again that I was going to get him into a scrape with his old enemies, and that none of them would rejoice more than the Edinburgh Reviewers at an opportunity to humble him. He said I must not put his namePg 29 to it. I entreated him to leave it to me, and that I would answer for this poem silencing all his enemies."

The publication being now determined upon, there arose some doubts and difficulty as to a publisher. Though Lord Byron had intrusted Cawthorn with what he considered to be his surer card, the "Hints from Horace," he did not, it seems, think him of sufficient station in the trade to give a sanction or fashion to his more hazardous experiment. The former refusal of the Messrs. Longman to publish his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" was not forgotten; and he expressly stipulated with Mr. Dallas that the manuscript should not be offered to that house. An application was, at first, made to Mr. Miller, of Albemarle Street; but, in consequence of the severity with which Lord Elgin was treated in the poem, Mr. Miller (already the publisher and bookseller of this latter nobleman) declined the work. Even this circumstance,—so apprehensive was the poet for his fame,—began to re-awaken all the qualms and terrors he had, at first, felt; and, had any further difficulties or objections arisen, it is more than probable he might have relapsed into his original intention. It was not long, however, before a person was found willing and proud to undertake the publication. Mr. Murray, who, at this period, resided in Fleet Street, having, some time before, expressed a desire to be allowed to publish some work of Lord Byron, it was in his hands that Mr. Dallas now placed the manuscript of Childe Harold;—and thus was laid the first foundation of that connection between this gentleman and the noble poet, which

continued, with but a temporary interruption, throughout the lifetime of the one, and has proved an abundant source of honour, as well as emolument, to the other.

While thus busily engaged in his literary projects, and having, besides, some law affairs to transact with his agent, he was called suddenly away to Newstead by the intelligence of an event which seems to have affected his mind far more deeply than, considering all the circumstances of the case, could have been expected. Mrs. Byron, whose excessive corpulence rendered her, at all times, rather a perilous subject for illness, had been of late indisposed, but not to any alarming degree; nor does it appear that, when the following note was written, there existed any grounds for apprehension as to her state.

"Reddish's Hotel, St. James's Street, London, July 23. 1811.

"My dear Madam,

"I am only detained by Mr. H * * to sign some copyhold papers, and will give you timely notice of my approach. It is with great reluctance I remain in town. I shall pay a short visit as we go on to Lancashire on Rochdale business. I shall attend to your directions, of course, and am,

"With great respect, yours ever,"

"BYRON.

"P.S.—You will consider Newstead as your house, not mine; and me only as a visitor."

On his going abroad, she had conceived a sort of superstitious fancy that she should never see him again; and when he returned, safe and well, and wrote to inform her that he should soon see her at Newstead, she said to her waiting-woman, "If I should be dead before Byron comes down, what a strange thing it would be!"—and so, in fact, it happened. At the end of July, her illness took a new and fatal turn; and, so sadly characteristic was the close of the poor lady's life, that a fit of rage, brought on, it is said, by reading over the upholsterer's bills, was the ultimate cause of her death.

Lord Byron had, of course, prompt intelligence of the attack. But, though he started instantly from town, he was too late,—she had breathed her last.

The following letter, it will be perceived, was written on his way to Newstead.

LETTER 55. TO DR. PIGOT.

"Newport Pagnell, August 2. 1811.

"My dear Doctor,

"My poor mother died yesterday! and I am on my way from town to attend her to the family vault. I heard *one* day of her illness, the *next* of her death. Thank God her last moments were most tranquil. I am told she was in little pain, and not aware of her situation. I now feel the truth of Mr. Gray's observation, 'That we can only have *one* mother.' Peace be with her! I have to thank you for your expressions of regard; and as in six weeks I shall be in Lancashire on business, I may extend to Liverpool and Chester,—at least I shall endeavour.

"If it will be any satisfaction, I have to inform you that in November next the Editor of the Scourge will be tried for two different libels on the late Mrs. B. and myself (the decease of Mrs. B. makes no difference in the proceedings); and as he is guilty, by his very foolish and unfounded assertion, of a breach of privilege, he will be prosecuted with the utmost rigour.

"I inform you of this as you seem interested in the affair, which is now in the hands of the Attorney-general.

"I shall remain at Newstead the greater part of this month, where I shall be happy to hear from you, after my two years' absence in the East.

"I am, dear Pigot, yours very truly,

"BYRON."

It can hardly have escaped the observation of the reader, that the general tone of the noble poet's correspondence with his mother is that of a son, performing, strictly and conscientiously, what he deems to be his duty,

without the intermixture of any sentiment of cordiality to sweeten the task. The very title of "Madam," by which he addresses her,—and which he but seldom exchanges for the endearing name of "mother,"—is, of itself, a sufficient proof of the sentiments he entertained for her. That such should have been his dispositions towards such a parent, can be matter neither of surprise or blame,—but that, notwithstanding this alienation, which her own unfortunate temper produced, he should have continued to consult her wishes, and minister to her comforts, with such unfailing thoughtfulness as is evinced not only in the frequency of his letters, but in the almost exclusive appropriation of Newstead to her use, redounds, assuredly, in no ordinary degree, to his honour; and was even the more strikingly meritorious from the absence of that affection which renders kindnesses to a beloved object little more than an indulgence of self.

But, however estranged from her his feelings must be allowed to have been while she lived, her death seems to have restored them into their natural channel. Whether from a return of early fondness and the all-atoning power of the grave, or from the prospect of that void in his future life which this loss of his only link with the past would leave, it is certain that he felt the death of his mother acutely, if not deeply. On the night after his arrival at Newstead, the waiting-woman of Mrs. Byron, in passing the door of the room where the deceased lady lay, heard a sound as of some one sighing heavily from within; and, on entering the chamber, found, to her surprise, Lord Byron, sitting in the dark, beside the bed. On her representing to him the weakness of thus giving way to grief, he burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Oh, Mrs. By, I had but one friend in the world, and she is gone!"

While his real thoughts were thus confided to silence and darkness, there was, in other parts of his conduct more open to observation, a degree of eccentricity and indecorum which, with superficial observers, might well bring the sensibility of his nature into question. On the morning of the funeral, having declined following the remains himself, he stood looking, from the abbey door, at the procession, till the whole had moved off;—then, turning to young Rushton, who was the only person left besides himself, he desired him to fetch the sparring-gloves, and proceeded to his usual exercise with the boy. He was silent and abstracted all the time, and, as if from an effort to get the better of his feelings, threw more violence, Rushton thought, into his blows than was his habit; but, at last,—the

struggle seeming too much for him,—he flung away the gloves, and retired to his room.

Of Mrs. Byron, sufficient, perhaps, has been related in these pages to enable the reader to form fully his own opinion, as well with respect to the character of this lady herself, as to the degree of influence her temper and conduct may have exercised on those of her son. It was said by one of the most extraordinary of men,—who was himself, as he avowed, principally indebted to maternal culture for the unexampled elevation to which he subsequently rose,—that "the future good or bad conduct of a child depends entirely on the mother." How far the leaven that sometimes mixed itself with the better nature of Byron,—his uncertain and wayward impulses,—his defiance of restraint,—the occasional bitterness of his hate, and the precipitance of his resentments,—may have had their origin in his early collisions with maternal caprice and violence, is an enquiry for which sufficient materials have been, perhaps, furnished in these pages, but which every one will decide upon, according to the more or less weight he may attribute to the influence of such causes on the formation of character.

That, notwithstanding her injudicious and coarse treatment of him, Mrs. Byron loved her son, with that sort of fitful fondness of which alone such a nature is capable, there can be little doubt,—and still less, that she was ambitiously proud of him. Her anxiety for the success of his first literary essays may be collected from the pains which he so considerately took to tranquillise her on the appearance of the hostile article in the Review. As his fame began to brighten, that notion of his future greatness and glory, which, by a singular forecast of superstition, she had entertained from his very childhood, became proportionably confirmed. Every mention of him in print was watched by her with eagerness; and she had got bound together in a volume, which a friend of mine once saw, a collection of all the literary notices, that had then appeared, of his early Poems and Satire,—written over on the margin, with observations of her own, which to my informant appeared indicative of much more sense and ability than, from her general character, we should be inclined to attribute to her.

Among those lesser traits of his conduct through which an observer can trace a filial wish to uphold, and throw respect around, the station of his mother, may be mentioned his insisting, while a boy, on being called "George Byron Gordon"—giving thereby precedence to the maternal name,—and his continuing, to the last, to address her as "the Honourable Mrs. Byron,"—a mark of rank to which, he must have been aware, she had

no claim whatever. Neither does it appear that, in his habitual manner towards her, there was any thing denoting a want of either affection or deference,—with the exception, perhaps, occasionally, of a somewhat greater degree of familiarity than comports with the ordinary notions of filial respect. Thus, the usual name he called her by, when they were on good-humoured terms together, was "Kitty Gordon;" and I have heard an eye-witness of the scene describe the look of arch, dramatic humour, with which, one day, at Southwell, when they were in the height of their theatrical rage, he threw open the door of the drawing-room, to admit his mother, saying, at the same time, "Enter the Honourable Kitty."

The pride of birth was a feeling common alike to mother and son, and, at times, even became a point of rivalry between them, from their respective claims, English and Scotch, to high lineage. In a letter written by him from Italy, referring to some anecdote which his mother had told him, he says,—"My mother, who was as haughty as Lucifer with her descent from the Stuarts, and her right line from the *old Gordons*,—*not* the *Seyton Gordons*, as she disdainfully termed the ducal branch,—told me the story, always reminding me how superior *her* Gordons were to the southern Byrons, notwithstanding our Norman, and always masculine, descent, which has never lapsed into a female, as my mother's Gordons had done in her own person."

If, to be able to depict powerfully the painful emotions, it is necessary first to have experienced them, or, in other words, if, for the poet to be great, the man must suffer, Lord Byron, it must be owned, paid early this dear price of mastery. Few as were the ties by which his affections held, whether within or without the circle of relationship, he was now doomed, within a short space, to see the most of them swept away by death. Besides the loss of his mother, he had to mourn over, in quick succession, the untimely fatalities that carried off, within a few weeks of each other, two or three of his most loved and valued friends. "In the short space of one month," he says, in a note on Childe Harold, "I have lost *her* who gave me being, and most of those who made that being tolerable." Of these young Wingfield, whom we have seen high on the list of his Harrow favourites, died of a fever at Coimbra; and Matthews, the idol of his admiration at college, was drowned while bathing in the waters of the Cam.

The following letter, written immediately after the latter event, bears the impress of strong and even agonised feeling, to such a degree as renders it almost painful to read it:—

LETTER 56. TO MR. SCROPE DAVIES.

"Newstead Abbey, August 7. 1811.

"My dearest Davies,

"Some curse hangs over me and mine. My mother lies a corpse in this house; one of my best friends is drowned in a ditch. What can I say, or think, or do? I received a letter from him the day before yesterday. My dear Scrope, if you can spare a moment, do come down to me—I want a friend. Matthews's last letter was written on *Friday*,—on Saturday he was not. In ability, who was like Matthews? How did we all shrink before him? You do me but justice in saying, I would have risked my paltry existence to have preserved his. This very evening did I mean to write, inviting him, as I invite you, my very dear friend, to visit me. God forgive * * * for his apathy! What will our poor Hobhouse feel? His letters breathe but or Matthews. Come to me, Scrope, I am almost desolate—left almost alone in the world—I had but you, and H., and M., and let me enjoy the survivors whilst I can. Poor M., in his letter of Friday, speaks of his intended contest for Cambridge, and a speedy journey to London. Write or come, but come if you can, or one or both.

"Yours ever."

Of this remarkable young man, Charles Skinner Matthews, I have already had occasion to speak; but the high station which he held in Lord Byron's affection and admiration may justify a somewhat ampler tribute to his memory.

There have seldom, perhaps, started together in life so many youths of high promise and hope as were to be found among the society of which Lord Byron formed a part at Cambridge. Of some of these, the names have since eminently distinguished themselves in the world, as the mere mention of Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. William Bankes is sufficient to testify; while in the instance of another of this lively circle, Mr. Scrope Davies, the only regret of his friends is, that the social wit of which he is such a master should in the memories of his hearers alone be like to leave any record of its brilliancy. Among all these young men of learning and talent, (including Byron himself, whose genius was, however, as yet, "an undiscovered

world,") the superiority, in almost every department of intellect, seems to have been, by the ready consent of all, awarded to Matthews;—a concurrence of homage which, considering the persons from whom it came, gives such a high notion of the powers of his mind at that period, as renders the thought of what he might have been, if spared, a matter of interesting, though vain and mournful, speculation. To mere mental pre-eminence, unaccompanied by the kindlier qualities of the heart, such a tribute, however deserved, might not, perhaps, have been so uncontestedly paid. But young Matthews appears,—in spite of some little asperities of temper and manner, which he was already beginning to soften down when snatched away,—to have been one of those rare individuals who, while they command deference, can, at the same time, win regard, and who, as it were, relieve the intense feeling of admiration which they excite by blending it with love.

To his religious opinions, and their unfortunate coincidence with those of Lord Byron, I have before adverted. Like his noble friend, ardent in the pursuit of Truth, he, like him too, unluckily lost his way in seeking her,—"the light that led astray" being by both friends mistaken for hers. That in his scepticism he proceeded any farther than Lord Byron, or ever suffered his doubting, but still ingenuous, mind to persuade itself into the "incredible creed" of atheism, is, I find (notwithstanding an assertion in a letter of the noble poet to this effect), disproved by the testimony of those among his relations and friends, who are the most ready to admit and, of course, lament his other heresies;—nor should I have felt that I had any right to allude thus to the religious opinions of one who had never, by promulgating his heterodoxy, brought himself within the jurisdiction of the public, had not the wrong impression, as it appears, given of those opinions, on the authority of Lord Byron, rendered it an act of justice to both friends to remove the imputation.

In the letters to Mrs. Byron, written previously to the departure of her son on his travels, there occurs, it will be recollected, some mention of a Will, which it was his intention to leave behind him in the hands of his trustees. Whatever may have been the contents of this former instrument, we find that, in about a fortnight after his mother's death, he thought it right to have a new form of will drawn up; and the following letter, enclosing his instructions for that purpose, was addressed to the late Mr. Bolton, a solicitor of Nottingham. Of the existence, in any serious or formal shape, of the strange directions here given, respecting his own interment, I was, for some time, I confess, much inclined to doubt; but the curious

documents here annexed put this remarkable instance of his eccentricity beyond all question.

TO —— BOLTON, ESQ.

"Newstead Abbey, August 12. 1811.

"Sir,

"I enclose a rough draught of my intended will, which I beg to have drawn up as soon as possible, in the firmest manner. The alterations are principally made in consequence of the death of Mrs. Byron. I have only to request that it may be got ready in a short time, and have the honour, to be,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"BYRON."

"Newstead Abbey, August 12. 1811.

"DIRECTIONS FOR, THE CONTENTS OF A WILL TO BE DRAWN UP IMMEDIATELY.

"The estate of Newstead to be entailed (subject to certain deductions) on George Anson Byron, heir-at-law, or whoever may be the heir-at-law on the death of Lord B. The Rochdale property to be sold in part or the whole, according to the debts and legacies of the present Lord B.

"To Nicolo Giraud of Athens, subject of France, but born in Greece, the sum of seven thousand pounds sterling, to be paid from the sale of such parts of Rochdale, Newstead, or elsewhere, as may enable the said Nicolo Giraud (resident at Athens and Malta in the year 1810) to receive the above sum on his attaining the age of twenty-one years.

"To William Fletcher, Joseph Murray, and Demetrius Zograffo (native of Greece), servants, the sum of fifty pounds p^{r}. ann. each, for their natural lives. To W^{m}. Fletcher, the Mill at Newstead, on condition that he payeth rent, but not subject to the caprice of the landlord. To R^{t}. Rushton the sum

of fifty pounds per ann. for life, and a further sum of one thousand pounds on attaining the age of twenty-five years.

"To J^{n}. Hanson, Esq. the sum of two thousand pounds sterling.

"The claims of S.B. Davies, Esq. to be satisfied on proving the amount of the same.

"The body of Lord B. to be buried in the vault of the garden of Newstead, without any ceremony or burial-service whatever, or any inscription, savePg 45 his name and age. His dog not to be removed from the said vault.

"My library and furniture of every description to my friends J^{n}. Cam Hobhouse, Esq., and S.B. Davies, Esq. my executors. In case of their decease, the Rev. J. Becher, of Southwell, Notts., and R.C. Dallas, Esq., of Mortlake, Surrey, to be executors.

"The produce of the sale of Wymondham in Norfolk, and the late Mrs. B.'s Scotch property, to be appropriated in aid of the payment of debts and legacies."

In sending a copy of the Will, framed on these instructions, to Lord Byron, the solicitor accompanied some of the clauses with marginal queries, calling the attention of his noble client to points which he considered inexpedient or questionable; and as the short pithy answers to these suggestions are strongly characteristic of their writer, I shall here give one or two of the clauses in full, with the respective queries and answers annexed.

"This is the last will and testament of me, the Rt. Hon^{ble} George Gordon Lord Byron, Baron Byron of Rochdale, in the county of Lancaster.—I desire that my body may be buried in the vault of the garden of Newstead, without any ceremony or burial-service whatever, and that no inscription, save my name and age, be written on the tomb or tablet; and it is my will that my faithful dog may not be removed from the said vault. To the performance of this my particular desire, I rely on the attention of my executors hereinafter named."

"It is submitted to Lord Byron whether this clause relative to the funeral had not better be omitted. The substance of it can be given in a letter from

his Lordship to the executors, and accompany the will; and the will may state that the funeral shall be performed in such manner as his Lordship may by letter direct, and, in default of any such letter, then at the discretion of his executors."

"It must stand. B."

"I do hereby specifically order and direct that all the claims of the said S.B. Davies upon me shall be fully paid and satisfied as soon as conveniently may be after my decease, on his proving [by vouchers, or otherwise, to the satisfaction of my executors hereinafter named] the amount thereof, and the correctness of the same."

"If Mr. Davies has any unsettled claims upon Lord Byron, that circumstance is a reason for his not being appointed executor; each executor having an opportunity of paying himself his own debt without consulting his co-executors."

"So much the better—if possible, let him be an executor. B."

The two following letters contain further instructions on the same subject:—

LETTER 57. TO MR. BOLTON.

"Newstead Abbey, August 16. 1811.

"Sir,

"I have answered the queries on the margin. I wish Mr. Davies's claims to be most fully allowed, and, further, that he be one of my executors. I wish the will to be made in a manner to prevent all discussion, if possible, after my decease; and this I leave to you as a professional gentleman.

"With regard to the few and simple directions for the disposal of my *carcass*, I must have them implicitly fulfilled, as they will, at least, prevent trouble and expense;—and (what would be of little consequence to me, but may quiet the conscience of the survivors) the garden is *consecrated* ground. These directions are copied verbatim from my former will; the

alterations in other parts have arisen from the death of Mrs. B. I have the honour to be

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"BYRON."

LETTER 58 TO MR. BOLTON.

"Newstead Abbey, August 20. 1811.

"Sir,

"The witnesses shall be provided from amongst my tenants, and I shall be happy to see you on any day most convenient to yourself. I forgot to mention, that it must be specified by codicil, or otherwise, that my body is on no account to be removed from the vault where I have directed it to be placed; and in case any of my successors within the entail (from bigotry, or otherwise) might think proper to remove the carcass, such proceeding shall be attended by forfeiture of the estate, which in such case shall go to my sister, the Honble Augusta Leigh and her heirs on similar conditions. I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your very obedient, humble servant,

"BYRON."

In consequence of this last letter, a proviso and declaration, in conformity with its instructions, were inserted in the will. He also executed, on the 28th of this month, a codicil, by which he revoked the bequest of his "household goods and furniture, library, pictures, sabres, watches, plate, linen, trinkets, and other personal estate (except money and securities) situate within the walls of the mansion-house and premises at his decease—and bequeathed the same (except his wine and spirituous liquors) to his friends, the said J.C. Hobhouse, S.B. Davies, and Francis Hodgson, their executors, &c., to be equally divided between them for their own use;—and he bequeathed his wine and spirituous liquors, which should be in the cellars and premises at Newstead, unto his friend, the

said J. Becher, for his own use, and requested the said J.C. Hobhouse, S.B. Davies, F. Hodgson, and J. Becher, respectively, to accept the bequest therein contained, to them respectively, as a token of his friendship."

The following letters, written while his late losses were fresh in his mind, will be read with painful interest:—

LETTER 59. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead Abbey, Notts., August 12. 1811.

"Peace be with the dead! Regret cannot wake them. With a sigh to the departed, let us resume the dull business of life, in the certainty that we also shall have our repose. Besides her who gave me being, I have lost more than one who made that being tolerable—The best friend of my friend Hobhouse, Matthews, a man of the first talents, and also not the worst of my narrow circle, has perished miserably in the muddy waves of the Cam, always fatal to genius:—my poor school-fellow, Wingfield, at Coimbra—within a month; and whilst I had heard from *all three*, but not seen *one*. Matthews wrote to me the very day before his death; and though I feel for his fate, I am still more anxious for Hobhouse, who, I very much fear, will hardly retain his senses: his letters to me since the event have been most incoherent. But let this pass; we shall all one day pass along with the rest—the world is too full of such things, and our very sorrow is selfish.

"I received a letter from you, which my late occupations prevented me from duly noticing.—I hope your friends and family will long hold together. I shall be glad to hear from you, on business, on common-place, or any thing, or nothing—but death—I am already too familiar with the dead. It is strange that I look on the skulls which stand beside me (I have always had *four* in my study) without emotion, but I cannot strip the features of those I have known of their fleshy covering, even in idea, without a hideous sensation; but the worms are less ceremonious.—Surely, the Romans did well when they burned the dead.—I shall be happy to hear from you, and am yours," &c.

LETTER 60. TO MR. HODGSON.

"Newstead Abbey, August 22. 1811.

"You may have heard of the sudden death of my mother, and poor Matthews, which, with that of Wingfield, (of which I was not fully aware till just before I left town, and indeed hardly believed it,) has made a sad chasm in my connections. Indeed the blows followed each other so rapidly that I am yet stupid from the shock; and though I do eat, and drink, and talk, and even laugh, at times, yet I can hardly persuade myself that I am awake, did not every morning convince me mournfully to the contrary.—I shall now wave the subject,—the dead are at rest, and none but the dead can be so.

"You will feel for poor Hobhouse,—Matthews was the 'god of his idolatry;' and if intellect could exalt a man above his fellows, no one could refuse him pre-eminence. I knew him most intimately, and valued him proportionably; but I am recurring—so let us talk of life and the living.

"If you should feel a disposition to come here, you will find 'beef and a sea-coal fire,' and not ungenerous wine. Whether Otway's two other requisites for an Englishman or not, I cannot tell, but probably one of them.—Let me know when I may expect you, that I may tell you when I go and when return. I have not yet been to Lanes. Davies has been here, and has invited me to Cambridge for a week in October, so that, peradventure, we may encounter glass to glass. His gaiety (death cannot mar it) has done me service; but, after all, ours was a hollow laughter.

"You will write to me? I am solitary, and I never felt solitude irksome before. Your anxiety about the critique on * *'s book is amusing; as it was anonymous, certes it was of little consequence: I wish it had produced a little more confusion, being a lover of literary malice. Are you doing nothing? writing nothing? printing nothing? why not your Satire on Methodism? the subject (supposing the public to be blind to merit) would do wonders. Besides, it would be as well for a destined deacon to prove his orthodoxy.—It really would give me pleasure to see you properly appreciated. I say *really*, as, being an author, my humanity might be suspected. Believe me, dear H., yours always."

LETTER 61. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead, August 21. 1811.

"Your letter gives me credit for more acute feelings than I possess; for though I feel tolerably miserable, yet I am at the same time subject to a kind of hysterical merriment, or rather laughter without merriment, which I can neither account for nor conquer, and yet I do not feel relieved by it; but an indifferent person would think me in excellent spirits. 'We must forget these things,' and have recourse to our old selfish comforts, or rather comfortable selfishness. I do not think I shall return to London immediately, and shall therefore accept freely what is offered courteously—your mediation between me and Murray. I don't think my name will answer the purpose, and you must be aware that my plaguy Satire will bring the north and south Grub Streets down upon the 'Pilgrimage;'—but, nevertheless, if Murray makes a point of it, and you coincide with him, I will do it daringly; so let it be entitled 'By the Author of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.' My remarks on the Romaic, &c., once intended to accompany the 'Hints from Horace,' shall go along with the other, as being indeed more appropriate; also the smaller poems now in my possession, with a few selected from those published in * *'s Miscellany. I have found amongst my poor mother's papers all my letters from the East, and one in particular of some length from Albania. From this, if necessary, I can work up a note or two on that subject. As I kept no journal, the letters written on the spot are the best. But of this anon, when we have definitively arranged.

"Has Murray shown the work to any one? He may—but I will have no traps for applause. Of course there are little things I would wish to alter, and perhaps the two stanzas of a buffooning cast on London's Sunday are as well left out. I much wish to avoid identifying Childe Harold's character with mine, and that, in sooth, is my second objection to my name appearing in the title-page. When you have made arrangements as to time, size, type, &c. favour me with a reply. I am giving you an universe of trouble, which thanks cannot atone for. I made a kind of prose apology for my scepticism at the head of the MS., which, on recollection, is so much more like an attack than a defence, that, haply, it might better be omitted:—perpend, pronounce. After all, I fear Murray will be in a scrape with the orthodox; but I cannot help it, though I wish him well through it. As for me, 'I have supped full of criticism,' and I don't think that the 'most dismal treatise' will stir and rouse my fell of hair' till 'Birnam wood do come to Dunsinane.'

"I shall continue to write at intervals, and hope you will pay me in kind. How does Pratt get on, or rather get off, Joe Blackett's posthumous stock?

You killed that poor man amongst you, in spite of your Ionian friend and myself, who would have saved him from Pratt, poetry, present poverty, and posthumous oblivion. Cruel patronage! to ruin a man at his calling; but then he is a divine subject for subscription and biography; and Pratt, who makes the most of his dedications, has inscribed the volume to no less than five families of distinction.

"I am sorry you don't like Harry White: with a great deal of cant, which in him was sincere (indeed it killed him as you killed Joe Blackett), certes there is poesy and genius. I don't say this on account of my simile and rhymes; but surely he was beyond all the Bloomfields and Blacketts, and their collateral cobblers, whom Lofft and Pratt have or may kidnap from their calling into the service of the trade. You must excuse my flippancy, for I am writing I know not what, to escape from myself. Hobhouse is gone to Ireland. Mr. Davies has been here on his way to Harrowgate.

"You did not know M.: he was a man of the most astonishing powers, as he sufficiently proved at Cambridge, by carrying off more prizes and fellow-ships, against the ablest candidates, than any other graduate on record; but a most decided atheist, indeed noxiously so, for he proclaimed his principles in all societies. I knew him well, and feel a loss not easily to be supplied to myself—to Hobhouse never. Let me hear from you, and believe me," &c.

The progress towards publication of his two forthcoming works will be best traced in his letters to Mr. Murray and Mr. Dallas.

LETTER 62. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, Notts., August 23. 1811.

"Sir,

"A domestic calamity in the death of a near relation has hitherto prevented my addressing you on the subject of this letter.—My friend, Mr. Dallas, has placed in your hands a manuscript poem written by me in Greece, which he tells me you do not object to publishing. But he also informed me in London that you wished to send the MS. to Mr. Gifford. Now, though no one would feel more gratified by the chance of obtaining his observations on a work than myself, there is in such a proceeding a kind of petition for praise, that neither my pride—or whatever you please

to call it—will admit. Mr. G. is not only the first satirist of the day, but editor of one of the principal reviews. As such, he is the last man whose censure (however eager to avoid it) I would deprecate by clandestine means. You will therefore retain the manuscript in your own care, or, if it must needs be shown, send it to another. Though not very patient of censure, I would fain obtain fairly any little praise my rhymes might deserve, at all events not by extortion, and the humble solicitations of a bandied about MS. I am sure a little consideration will convince you it would be wrong.

"If you determine on publication, I have some smaller poems (never published), a few notes, and a short dissertation on the literature of the modern Greeks (written at Athens), which will come in at the end of the volume.—And, if the present poem should succeed, it is my intention, at some subsequent period, to publish some selections from my first work,—my Satire,—another nearly the same length, and a few other things, with the MS. now in your hands, in two volumes.—But of these hereafter. You will apprize me of your determination. I am, Sir, your very obedient," &c.

LETTER 63. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead Abbey, August 25. 1811.

"Being fortunately enabled to frank, I do not spare scribbling, having sent you packets within the last ten days. I am passing solitary, and do not expect my agent to accompany me to Rochdale before the second week in September; a delay which perplexes me, as I wish the business over, and should at present welcome employment. I sent you exordiums, annotations, &c. for the forthcoming quarto, if quarto it is to be: and I also have written to Mr. Murray my objection to sending the MS. to Juvenal, but allowing him to show it to any others of the calling. Hobhouse is amongst the types already: so, between his prose and my verse, the world will be decently drawn upon for its paper-money and patience. Besides all this, my 'Imitation of Horace' is gasping for the press at Cawthorn's, but I am hesitating as to the *how* and the *when*, the single or the double, the present or the future. You must excuse all this, for I have nothing to say in this lone mansion but of myself, and yet I would willingly talk or think of aught else.

"What are you about to do? Do you think of perching in Cumberland, as you opined when I was in the metropolis? If you mean to retire, why not occupy Miss * * *'s 'Cottage of Friendship,' late the seat of Cobbler Joe, for whose death you and others are answerable? His 'Orphan Daughter' (pathetic Pratt!) will, certes, turn out a shoemaking Sappho. Have you no remorse? I think that elegant address to Miss Dallas should be inscribed on the cenotaph which Miss * * * means to stitch to his memory.

"The newspapers seem much disappointed at his Majesty's not dying, or doing something better. I presume it is almost over. If parliament meets in October, I shall be in town to attend. I am also invited to Cambridge for the beginning of that month, but am first to jaunt to Rochdale. Now Matthews is gone, and Hobhouse in Ireland, I have hardly one left there to bid me welcome, except my inviter. At three-and-twenty I am left alone, and what more can we be at seventy? It is true I am young enough to begin again, but with whom can I retrace the laughing part of life? It is odd how few of my friends have died a quiet death,—I mean, in their beds. But a quiet life is of more consequence. Yet one loves squabbling and jostling better than yawning. This *last word* admonishes me to relieve you from yours very truly," &c.

LETTER 64. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead Abbey, August 27. 1811.

"I was so sincere in my note on the late Charles Matthews, and do feel myself so totally unable to do justice to his talents, that the passage must stand for the very reason you bring against it. To him all the men I ever knew were pigmies. He was an intellectual giant. It is true I loved W. better; he was the earliest and the dearest, and one of the few one could never repent of having loved: but in ability—ah! you did not know Matthews!

"'Childe Harold' may wait and welcome—books are never the worse for delay in the publication. So you have got our heir, George Anson Byron, and his sister, with you.

"You may say what you please, but you are one of the *murderers* of Blackett, and yet you won't allow Harry White's genius. Setting aside his bigotry, he surely ranks next Chatterton. It is astonishing how little he was known; and at Cambridge no one thought or heard of such a man till his death rendered all notice useless. For my own part, I should have been most proud of such an acquaintance: his very prejudices were respectable. There is a sucking epic poet at Granta, a Mr. Townsend, *protégé* of the late Cumberland. Did you ever hear of him and his 'Armageddon?' I think his plan (the man I don't know) borders on the sublime: though, perhaps, the anticipation of the 'Last Day' (according to you Nazarenes) is a little too daring: at least, it looks like telling the Lord what he is to do, and might remind an ill-natured person of the line,

'And fools rush in where angels fear to tread.'

But I don't mean to cavil, only other folks will, and he may bring all the lambs of Jacob Behmen about his ears. However, I hope he will bring it to a conclusion, though Milton is in his way.

"Write to me—I dote on gossip—and make a bow to Ju—, and shake George by the hand for me; but, take care, for he has a sad sea paw.

"P.S. I would ask George here, but I don't know how to amuse him—all my horses were sold when I left England, and I have not had time to replace them. Nevertheless, if he will come down and shoot in September, he will be very welcome: but he must bring a gun, for I gave away all mine to Ali Pacha, and other Turks. Dogs, a keeper, and plenty of game, with a very large manor, I have—a lake, a boat, house-room, and *neat wines*."

LETTER 65. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, Notts., Sept. 5. 1811.

"Sir,

"The time seems to be past when (as Dr. Johnson said) a man was certain to 'hear the truth from his bookseller,' for you have paid me so many compliments, that, if I was not the veriest scribbler on earth, I should feel affronted. As I accept your compliments, it is but fair I should give equal or greater credit to your objections, the more so, as I believe them to be well founded. With regard to the political and metaphysical parts, I am afraid I

can alter nothing; but I have high authority for my errors in that point, for even the *Æneid* was a *political* poem, and written for a *political* purpose; and as to my unlucky opinions on subjects of more importance, I am too sincere in them for recantation. On Spanish affairs I have said what I saw, and every day confirms me in that notion of the result formed on the spot; and I rather think honest John Bull is beginning to come round again to that sobriety which Massena's retreat had begun to reel from its centre—the usual consequence of *un*usual success. So you perceive I cannot alter the sentiments; but if there are any alterations in the structure of the versification you would wish to be made, I will tag rhymes and turn stanzas as much as you please. As for the '*orthodox*,' let us hope they will buy, on purpose to abuse—you will forgive the one, if they will do the other. You are aware that any thing from my pen must expect no quarter, on many accounts; and as the present publication is of a nature very different from the former, we must not be sanguine.

"You have given me no answer to my question—tell me fairly, did you show the MS. to some of your corps?—I sent an introductory stanza to Mr. Dallas, to be forwarded to you; the poem else will open too abruptly. The stanzas had better be numbered in Roman characters. There is a disquisition on the literature of the modern Greeks and some smaller poems to come in at the close. These are now at Newstead, but will be sent in time. If Mr. D. has lost the stanza and note annexed to it, write, and I will send it myself.—You tell me to add two Cantos, but I am about to visit my *collieries* in Lancashire on the 15th instant, which is so unpoetical an employment that I need say no more. I am, sir, your most obedient," &c.

The manuscripts of both his poems having been shown, much against his own will, to Mr. Gifford, the opinion of that gentleman was thus reported to him by Mr. Dallas:—"Of your Satire he spoke highly; but this poem (Childe Harold) he pronounced not only the best you have written, but equal to any of the present age."

LETTER 66. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead Abbey, September 7. 1811.

"As Gifford has been ever my 'Magnus Apollo.' any approbation, such as you mention, would, of course, be more welcome than 'all Bokara's vaunted gold, than all the gems of Samarkand.' But I am sorry the MS. was shown to him in such a manner, and I had written to Murray to say as much, before I was aware that it was too late.

"Your objection to the expression 'central line' I can only meet by saying that, before Childe Harold left England, it was his full intention to traverse Persia, and return by India, which he could not have done without passing the equinoctial.

"The other errors you mention, I must correct in the progress through the press. I feel honoured by the wish of such men that the poem should be continued, but to do that, I must return to Greece and Asia; I must have a warm sun and a blue sky; I cannot describe scenes so dear to me by a sea-coal fire. I had projected an additional Canto when I was in the Troad and Constantinople, and if I saw them again, it would go on; but under existing circumstances and *sensations*, I have neither harp, 'heart, nor voice' to proceed. I feel that *you are all right* as to the metaphysical part; but I also feel that I am sincere, and that if I am only to write '*ad captandum vulgus*,' I might as well edit a magazine at once, or spin canzonettas for Vauxhall. * * *

"My work must make its way as well as it can; I know I have every thing against me, angry poets and prejudices; but if the poem is a *poem*, it will surmount these obstacles, and if *not*, it deserves its fate. Your friend's Ode I have read—it is no great compliment to pronounce it far superior to S * *'s on the same subject, or to the merits of the new Chancellor. It is evidently the production of a man of taste, and a poet, though I should not be willing to say it was fully equal to what might be expected from the author of '*Horæ Ionicæ*.' I thank you for it, and that is more than I would do for any other Ode of the present day.

"I am very sensible of your good wishes, and, indeed, I have need of them. My whole life has been at variance with propriety, not to say decency; my circumstances are become involved; my friends are dead or estranged, and my existence a dreary void. In Matthews I have lost my 'guide, philosopher, and friend;' in Wingfield a friend only, but one whom I could have wished to have preceded in his long journey.

"Matthews was indeed an extraordinary man; it has not entered into the heart of a stranger to conceive such a man: there was the stamp of immortality in all he said or did;—and now what is he? When we see such men pass away and be no more—men, who seem created to display what the Creator *could make* his creatures, gathered into corruption, before the maturity of minds that might have been the pride of posterity, what are we to conclude? For my own part, I am bewildered. To me he was much, to Hobhouse every thing.—My poor Hobhouse doted on Matthews. For

me, I did not love quite so much as I honoured him; I was indeed so sensible of his infinite superiority, that though I did not envy, I stood in awe of it. He, Hobhouse, Davies, and myself, formed a coterie of our own at Cambridge and elsewhere. Davies is a wit and man of the world, and feels as much as such a character can do; but not as Hobhouse has been affected. Davies, who is not a scribbler, has always beaten us all in the war of words, and by his colloquial powers at once delighted and kept us in order. H. and myself always had the worst of it with the other two; and even M. yielded to the dashing vivacity of S.D. But I am talking to you of men, or boys, as if you cared about such beings.

"I expect mine agent down on the 14th to proceed to Lancashire, where I hear from all quarters that I have a very valuable property in coals, &c. I then intend to accept an invitation to Cambridge in October, and shall, perhaps, run up to town. I have four invitations—to Wales, Dorset, Cambridge, and Chester; but I must be a man of business. I am quite alone, as these long letters sadly testify. I perceive, by referring to your letter, that the Ode is from the author; make my thanks acceptable to him. His muse is worthy a nobler theme. You will write as usual, I hope. I wish you good evening, and am," &c.

LETTER 67. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, Notts., Sept. 14. 1811.

"Sir,

"Since your former letter, Mr. Dallas informs me that the MS. has been submitted to the perusal of Mr. Gifford, most contrary to my wishes, as Mr. D. could have explained, and as my own letter to you did, in fact, explain, with my motives for objecting to such a proceeding. Some late domestic events, of which you are probably aware, prevented my letter from being sent before; indeed, I hardly conceived you would so hastily thrust my productions into the hands of a stranger, who could be as little pleased by receiving them, as their author is at their being offered, in such a manner, and to such a man.

"My address, when I leave Newstead, will be to 'Rochdale, Lancashire;' but I have not yet fixed the day of departure, and I will apprise you when ready to set off.

"You have placed me in a very ridiculous situation, but it is past, and nothing more is to be said on the subject. You hinted to me that you wished some alterations to be made; if they have nothing to do with politics or religion, I will make them with great readiness. I am, Sir," &c.&c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, Sept. 16. 1811.

"I return the proof, which I should wish to be shown to Mr. Dallas, who understands typographical arrangements much better than I can pretend to do. The printer may place the notes in his *own way*, orPg 66 any *way* so that they are out of *my way*; I care nothing about types or margins.

"If you have any communication to make, I shall be here at least a week or ten days longer.

"I am, Sir," &c. &c.

LETTER 68. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead Abbey, Sept. 17. 1811.

"I can easily excuse your not writing, as you have, I hope, something better to do, and you must pardon my frequent invasions on your attention, because I have at this moment nothing to interpose between you and my epistles.

"I cannot settle to any thing, and my days pass, with the exception of bodily exercise to some extent, with uniform indolence, and idle insipidity. I have been expecting, and still expect, my agent, when I shall have enough to occupy my reflections in business of no very pleasant aspect. Before my journey to Rochdale, you shall have due notice where to address me—I believe at the post-office of that township. From Murray I received a second proof of the same pages, which I requested him to show you, that any thing which may have escaped my observation may be detected before the printer lays the corner-stone of an *errata* column.

"I am now not quite alone, having an old acquaintance and school-fellow with me, so *old*, indeed, that we have nothing *new* to say on any subject, and yawn at each other in a sort of *quiet inquietude*. I hear nothing from Cawthorn, or Captain Hobhouse; and *their quarto*—Lord have mercy on mankind! We come on like Cerberus with our triple publications. As for *myself*, by *myself*, I must be satisfied with a comparison to *Janus*.

"I am not at all pleased with Murray for showing the MS.; and I am certain Gifford must see it in the same light that I do. His praise is nothing to the purpose: what could he say? He could not spit in the face of one who had praised him in every possible way. I must own that I wish to have the impression removed from his mind, that I had any concern in such a paltry transaction. The more I think, the more it disquiets me; so I will say no more about it. It is bad enough to be a scribbler, without having recourse to such shifts to extort praise, or deprecate censure. It is anticipating, it is begging, kneeling, adulating,—the devil! the devil! the devil! and all without my wish, and contrary to my express desire. I wish Murray had been tied to *Payne*'s neck when he jumped into the Paddington Canal, and so tell him,—*that* is the proper receptacle for publishers. You have thoughts of settling in the country, why not try Notts.? I think there are places which would suit you in all points, and then you are nearer the metropolis. But of this anon. I am, yours," &c.

LETTER 69. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead Abbey, Sept. 21. 1811.

"I have shown my respect for your suggestions by adopting them; but I have made many alterations in the first proof, over and above; as, for example:

"Oh Thou, in *Hellas* deem'd of heavenly birth,&c. &c.

"Since *shamed full oft* by *later lyres* on earth,Mine, &c.

"Yet there *I've wander'd* by the vaunted rill;

and so on. So I have got rid of Dr. Lowth and 'drunk' to boot, and very glad I am to say so. I have also sullenised the line as heretofore, and in short have been quite conformable.

"Pray write; you shall hear when I remove to Lancs. I have brought you and my friend Juvenal Hodgson upon my back, on the score of revelation. You are fervent, but he is quite *glowing*; and if he take half the pains to save his own soul, which he volunteers to redeem mine, great will be his reward hereafter. I honour and thank you both, but am convinced by neither. Now for notes. Besides those I have sent, I shall send the observations on the Edinburgh Reviewer's remarks on the modern Greek, an Albanian song in the Albanian (*not Greek*) language, specimens of modern Greek from their New Testament, a comedy of Goldoni's translated, *one scene*, a prospectus of a friend's book, and perhaps a song or two, *all* in Romaic, besides their Pater Noster; so there will be enough, if not too much, with what I have already sent. Have you received the 'Noetes Atticæ?' I sent also an annotation on Portugal. Hobhouse is also forthcoming."

LETTER 70. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead Abbey, Sept. 23. 1811.

"*Lisboa* is the Portuguese word, consequently the very best. Ulissipont is pedantic; and as I have *Hellas* and *Eros* not long before, there would be something like an affectation of Greek terms, which I wish to avoid, since I shall have a perilous quantity of *modern* Greek in my notes, as specimens of the tongue; therefore Lisboa may keep its place. You are right about the 'Hints;' they must not precede the 'Romaunt;' but Cawthorn will be savage if they don't; however, keep *them* back, and *him* in *good humour*, if we can, but do not let him publish.

"I have adopted, I believe, most of your suggestions, but 'Lisboa' will be an exception to prove the rule. I have sent a quantity of notes, and shall continue; but pray let them be copied; no devil can read my hand. By the by, I do not mean to exchange the ninth verse of the 'Good Night.' I have no reason to suppose my dog better than his brother brutes, mankind; and *Argus* we know to be a fable. The 'Cosmopolite' was an acquisition abroad. I do not believe it is to be found in England. It is an amusing little volume, and full of French flippancy. I read, though I do not speak the language.

"I *will* be angry with Murray. It was a book-selling, back shop, Paternoster-row, paltry proceeding, and if the experiment had turned out as it

deserved, I would have raised all Fleet Street, and borrowed the giant's staff from St. Dunstan's church, to immolate the betrayer of trust. I have written to him as he never was written to before by an author, I'll be sworn, and I hope you will amplify my wrath, till it has an effect upon him. You tell me always you have much to write about. Write it, but let us drop metaphysics;—on that point we shall never agree. I am dull and drowsy, as usual. I do nothing, and even that nothing fatigues me. Adieu."

LETTER 71. TO MR. DALLAS.

"Newstead Abbey, Oct. 11. 1811.

"I have returned from Lancs., and ascertained that my property there may be made very valuable, but various circumstances very much circumscribe my exertions at present. I shall be in town on business in the beginning of November, and perhaps at Cambridge before the end of this month; but of my movements you shall be regularly apprised. Your objections I have in part done away by alterations, which I hope will suffice; and I have sent two or three additional stanzas for both '*Fyttas*' I have been again shocked with a death, and have lost one very dear to me in happier times; but 'I have almost forgot the taste of grief,' and 'supped full of horrors' till I have become callous, nor have I a tear left for an event which, five years ago, would have bowed down my head to the earth. It seems as though I were to experience in my youth the greatest misery of age. My friends fall around me, and I shall be left a lonely tree before I am withered. Other men can always take refuge in their families; I have no resource but my own reflections, and they present no prospect here or hereafter, except the selfish satisfaction of surviving my betters. I am indeed very wretched, and you will excuse my saying so, as you know I am not apt to cant of sensibility.

"Instead of tiring yourself with *my* concerns, I should be glad to hear *your* plans of retirement. I suppose you would not like to be wholly shut out of society? Now I know a large village, or small town, about twelve miles off, where your family would have the advantage of very genteel society, without the hazard of being annoyed by mercantile affluence; where *you* would meet with men of information and independence; and where I have friends to whom I should be proud to introduce you. There are, besides, a coffee-room, assemblies, &c. &c., which bring people together. My

mother had a house there some years, and I am well acquainted with the economy of Southwell, the name of this little commonwealth. Lastly, you will not be very remote from me; and though I am the very worst companion for young people in the world, this objection would not apply to *you*, whom I could see frequently. Your expenses, too, would be such as best suit your inclinations, more or less, as you thought proper; but very little would be requisite to enable you to enter into all the gaieties of a country life. You could be as quiet or bustling as you liked, and certainly as well situated as on the lakes of Cumberland, unless you have a particular wish to be *picturesque*.

"Pray, is your Ionian friend in town? You have promised me an introduction.—You mention having consulted some friend on the MSS.—Is not this contrary to our usual way? Instruct Mr. Murray not to allow his shopman to call the work 'Child of Harrow's Pilgrimage!!!!!' as he has done to some of my astonished friends, who wrote to enquire after my sanity on the occasion, as well they might. I have heard nothing of Murray, whom I scolded heartily. Must I write more notes?—Are there not enough?—Cawthorn must be kept back with the 'Hints.'—I hope he is getting on with Hobhouse's quarto. Good evening. Yours ever," &c.

Of the same date with this melancholy letter are the following verses, never before printed, which he wrote in answer to some lines received from a friend, exhorting him to be cheerful, and to "banish care." They will show with what gloomy fidelity, even while under the pressure of recent sorrow, he reverted to the disappointment of his early affection, as the chief source of all his sufferings and errors, present and to come.

"Newstead Abbey, October 11. 1811.

"'Oh! banish care'—such ever beThe motto of *thy* revelry!Perchance of *mine*, when wassail nightsRenew those riotous delights,Wherewith the children of DespairLull the lone heart, and 'banish care.'But not in morn's reflecting hour,When present, past, and future lower,When all I loved is changed or gone,Mock with such taunts the woes of one,Whose every thought—but let them pass—Thou know'st I am not what I was.But, above all, if thou wouldst holdPlace in a heart that ne'er was cold, By all the powers that men revere,By all unto thy bosom dear,Thy joys below, thy hopes above,Speak—speak of any thing but love.

"'Twere long to tell, and vain to hearThe tale of one who scorns a tear;And there is little in that taleWhich better bosoms would bewail.But mine has suffer'd more than well'Twould suit Philosophy to tell.I've seen my bride another's bride,—Have seen her seated by his side,—Have seen the infant which she bore,Wear the sweet smile the mother wore,When she and I in youth have smiledAs fond and faultless as her child;—Have seen her eyes, in cold disdain,Ask if I felt no secret pain.And I have acted well my part,And made my cheek belie my heart,Return'd the freezing glance she gave,Yet felt the while *that* woman's slave;—Have kiss'd, as if without design,The babe which ought to have been mine,And show'd, alas! in each caressTime had not made me love the less.

"But let this pass—I'll whine no more.Nor seek again an eastern shore;The world befits a busy brain,—I'll hie me to its haunts again.But if, in some succeeding year,When Britain's 'May is in the sere,'Thou hear'st of one, whose deepening crimesSuit with the sablest of the times, Of one, whom Love nor Pity sways,Nor hope of fame, nor good men's praise,One, who in stern Ambition's pride,Perchance not Blood shall turn aside,One rank'd in some recording pageWith the worst anarchs of the age,Him wilt thou *know*—and, *knowing*, pause,Nor with the *effect* forget the cause."

The anticipations of his own future career in these concluding lines are of a nature, it must be owned, to awaken more of horror than of interest, were we not prepared, by so many instances of his exaggeration in this respect, not to be startled at any lengths to which the spirit of self-libelling would carry him. It seemed as if, with the power of painting fierce and gloomy personages, he had also the ambition to be, himself, the dark "sublime he drew," and that, in his fondness for the delineation of heroic crime, he endeavoured to fancy, where he could not find, in his own character, fit subjects for his pencil.

It was about the time when he was thus bitterly feeling and expressing the blight which his heart had suffered from a *real* object of affection, that his poems on the death of an *imaginary* one, "Thyrza," were written;—nor is it any wonder, when we consider the peculiar circumstances under which these beautiful effusions flowed from his fancy, that of all his strains of pathos, they should be the most touching and most pure. They were, indeed, the essence, the abstract spirit, as it were, of many griefs;—a confluence of sad thoughts from many sources of sorrow, refined and

warmed in their passage through his fancy, and forming thus one deep reservoir of mournful feeling. In retracing the happy hours he had known with the friends now lost, all the ardent tenderness of his youth came back upon him. His school-sports with the favourites of his boyhood, Wingfield and Tattersall,—his summer days with Long, and those evenings of music and romance which he had dreamed away in the society of his adopted brother, Eddlestone,—all these recollections of the young and dead now came to mingle themselves in his mind with the image of her who, though living, was, for him, as much lost as they, and diffused that general feeling of sadness and fondness through his soul, which found a vent in these poems. No friendship, however warm, could have inspired sorrow so passionate; as no love, however pure, could have kept passion so chastened. It was the blending of the two affections, in his memory and imagination, that thus gave birth to an ideal object combining the best features of both, and drew from him these saddest and tenderest of love-poems, in which we find all the depth and intensity of real feeling touched over with such a light as no reality ever wore.

The following letter gives some further account of the course of his thoughts and pursuits at this period:—

LETTER 72. TO MR. HODGSON.

"Newstead Abbey, Oct. 13. 1811.

"You will begin to deem me a most liberal correspondent; but as my letters are free, you will overlook their frequency. I have sent you answers in prose and verse to all your late communications, and though I am invading your ease again, I don't know why, or what to put down that you are not acquainted with already. I am growing nervous (how you will laugh!)—but it is true,—really, wretchedly, ridiculously, fine-ladically *nervous*. Your climate kills me; I can neither read, write, nor amuse myself, or any one else. My days are listless, and my nights restless; I have very seldom any society, and when I have, I run out of it. At 'this present writing,' there are in the next room three ladies, and I have stolen away to write this grumbling letter.—I don't know that I sha'n't end with insanity, for I find a want of method in arranging my thoughts that perplexes me strangely; but this looks more like silliness than madness, as Scrope Davies would facetiously remark in his consoling manner. I must try the hartshorn of your company; and a session of Parliament would suit me well,—any thing to cure me of conjugating the accursed verb '*ennuyer*.'

"When shall you be at Cambridge? You have hinted, I think, that your friend Bland is returned from Holland. I have always had a great respectPg 78 for his talents, and for all that I have heard of his character; but of me, I believe he knows nothing, except that he heard my sixth form repetitions ten months together, at the average of two lines a morning, and those never perfect. I remembered him and his 'Slaves' as I passed between Capes Matapan, St. Angelo, and his Isle of Ceriga, and I always bewailed the absence of the Anthology. I suppose he will now translate Vondel, the Dutch Shakspeare, and 'Gysbert van Amstel' will easily be accommodated to our stage in its present state; and I presume he saw the Dutch poem, where the love of Pyramus and Thisbe is compared to the *passion* of *Christ*; also the love of *Lucifer* for Eve, and other varieties of Low Country literature. No doubt you will think me crazed to talk of such things, but they are all in black and white and good repute on the banks of every canal from Amsterdam to Alkmaar.

"Yours ever, B."

"My poesy is in the hands of its various publishers; but the 'Hints from Horace,' (to which I have subjoined some savage lines on Methodism, and ferocious notes on the vanity of the triple Editory of the Edin. Annual Register,) my '*Hints*,' I say, stand still, and why?—I have not a friend in the world (but you and Drury) who can construe Horace's Latin or my English well enough to adjust them for the press, or to correct the proofs in a grammatical way. So that, unless you have bowels when you return to town (I am too far off to do it for myself), this ineffable work will be lost to the world for—I don't know how many *weeks.*

"'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' must wait till *Murray's* is finished. He is making a tour in Middlesex, and is to return soon, when high matter may be expected. He wants to have it in quarto, which is a cursed unsaleable size; but it is pestilent long, and one must obey one's bookseller. I trust Murray will pass the Paddington Canal without being seduced by Payne and Mackinlay's example,—I say Payne and Mackinlay, supposing that the partnership held good. Drury, the villain, has not written to me; 'I am never (as Mrs. Lumpkin says to Tony) to be gratified with the monster's dear wild notes.'

"So you are going (going indeed!) into orders. You must make your peace with the Eclectic Reviewers—they accuse you of impiety, I fear, with injustice. Demetrius, the 'Sieger of Cities,' is here, with 'Gilpin Homer.' The painter is not necessary, as the portraits he already painted are (by anticipation) very like the new animals.—Write, and send me your 'Love Song'—but I want 'paulo majora' from you. Make a dash before you are a deacon, and try a *dry* publisher.

"Yours always, B."

It was at this period that I first had the happiness of seeing and becoming acquainted with Lord Byron. The correspondence in which our acquaintance originated is, in a high degree, illustrative of the frank manliness of his character; and as it was begun on my side, some egotism must be tolerated in the detail which I have to give of the circumstances that led to it. So far back as the year 1806, on the occasion of a meeting which took place at Chalk Farm between Mr. Jeffrey and myself, a good deal of ridicule and raillery, founded on a false representation of what occurred before the magistrates at Bow Street, appeared in almost all the public prints. In consequence of this, I was induced to address a letter to the Editor of one of the Journals, contradicting the falsehood that had been circulated, and stating briefly the real circumstances of the case. For some time my letter seemed to produce the intended effect,—but, unluckily, the original story was too tempting a theme for humour and sarcasm to be so easily superseded by mere matter of fact. Accordingly, after a little time, whenever the subject was publicly alluded to,—more especially by those who were at all "willing to wound,"—the old falsehood was, for the sake of its ready sting, revived.

In the year 1809, on the first appearance of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," I found the author, who was then generally understood to be Lord Byron, not only jesting on the subject—and with sufficiently provoking pleasantry and cleverness—in his verse, but giving also, in the more responsible form of a note, an outline of the transaction in accordance with the original misreport, and, therefore, in direct contradiction to my published statement. Still, as the Satire was anonymous and unacknowledged, I did not feel that I was, in any way, called upon to notice it, and therefore dismissed the matter entirely from my mind. In the summer of the same year appeared the Second Edition of

the work, with Lord Byron's name prefixed to it. I was, at the time, in Ireland, and but little in the way of literary society; and it so happened that some months passed away before the appearance of this new edition was known to me. Immediately on being apprised of it,—the offence now assuming a different form,—I addressed the following letter to Lord Byron, and, transmitting it to a friend in London, requested that he would have it delivered into his Lordship's hands.

"Dublin, January 1. 1810.

"My Lord,

"Having just seen the name of 'Lord Byron' prefixed to a work entitled 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,' in which, as it appears to me, *the lie is given* to a public statement of mine, respecting an affair with Mr. Jeffrey some years since, I beg you will have the goodness to inform me whether I may consider your Lordship as the author of this publication.

"I shall not, I fear, be able to return to London for a week or two; but, in the mean time, I trust your Lordship will not deny me the satisfaction of knowing whether you avow the insult contained in the passages alluded to.

"It is needless to suggest to your Lordship the propriety of keeping our correspondence secret.

"I have the honour to be

"Your Lordship's very humble servant,

"THOMAS MOORE.

"22. Molesworth Street."

In the course of a week, the friend to whom I intrusted this letter wrote to inform me that Lord Byron had, as he learned on enquiring of his publisher, gone abroad immediately on the publication of his Second Edition; but that my letter had been placed in the hands of a gentleman, named Hodgson, who had undertaken to forward it carefully to his Lordship. Though the latter step was not exactly what I could have wished, I thought it as well, on the whole, to let my letter take its chance, and again postponed all consideration of the matter.

During the interval of a year and a half which elapsed before Lord Byron's return, I had taken upon myself obligations, both as husband and father, which make most men,—and especially those who have nothing to bequeath,—less willing to expose themselves unnecessarily to danger. On hearing, therefore, of the arrival of the noble traveller from Greece, though still thinking it due to myself to follow up my first request of an explanation, I resolved, in prosecuting that object, to adopt such a tone of conciliation as should not only prove my sincere desire of a pacific result, but show the entire freedom from any angry or resentful feeling with which I took the step. The death of Mrs. Byron, for some time, delayed my purpose. But as soon after that event as was consistent with decorum, I addressed a letter to Lord Byron, in which, referring to my former communication, and expressing some doubts as to its having ever reached him, I re-stated, in pretty nearly the same words, the nature of the insult, which, as it appeared to me, the passage in his note was calculated to convey. "It is now useless," I continued, "to speak of the steps with which it was my intention to follow up that letter. The time which has elapsed since then, though it has done away neither the injury nor the feeling of it, has, in many respects, materially altered my situation; and the only object which I have now in writing to your Lordship is to preserve some consistency with that former letter, and to prove to you that the injured feeling still exists, however circumstances may compel me to be deaf to its dictates, at present. When I say 'injured feeling,' let me assure your Lordship, that there is not a single vindictive sentiment in my mind towards you. I mean but to express thatPg 84 uneasiness, under (what I consider to be) a charge of falsehood, which must haunt a man of any feeling to his grave, unless the insult be retracted or atoned for; and which, if I did *not* feel, I should, indeed, deserve far worse than your Lordship's satire could inflict upon me." In conclusion I added, that so far from being influenced by any angry or resentful feeling towards him, it would give me sincere pleasure if, by any satisfactory explanation, he would enable me to seek the honour of being henceforward ranked among his acquaintance.

To this letter, Lord Byron returned the following answer:—

LETTER 73. TO MR. MOORE.

"Cambridge, October 27. 1811.

"Sir,

"Your letter followed me from Notts, to this place, which will account for the delay of my reply. Your former letter I never had the honour to receive;—be assured, in whatever part of the world it had found me, I should have deemed it my duty to return and answer it in person.

"The advertisement you mention, I know nothing of.—At the time of your meeting with Mr. Jeffrey, I had recently entered College, and remember to have heard and read a number of squibs on the occasion; and from the recollection of these I derived all my knowledge on the subject, without the slightest idea of 'giving the lie' to an address which I never beheld. When I put my name to the production, which has occasioned this correspondence, I became responsible to all whom it might concern,—to explain where it requires explanation, and, where insufficiently, or too sufficiently explicit, at all events to satisfy. My situation leaves me no choice; it rests with the injured and the angry to obtain reparation in their own way.

"With regard to the passage in question, *you* were certainly *not* the person towards whom I felt personally hostile. On the contrary, my whole thoughts were engrossed by one, whom I had reason to consider as my worst literary enemy, nor could I foresee that his former antagonist was about to become his champion. You do not specify what you would wish to have done: I can neither retract nor apologise for a charge of falsehood which I never advanced.

"In the beginning of the week, I shall be at No. 8. St. James's Street.—Neither the letter nor the friend to whom you stated your intention ever made their appearance.

"Your friend, Mr. Rogers, or any other gentleman delegated by you, will find me most ready to adopt any conciliatory proposition which shall not compromise my own honour,—or, failing in that, to make the atonement you deem it necessary to require.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"BYRON."

In my reply to this, I commenced by saying that his Lordship's letter was, upon the whole, as satisfactory as I could expect. It contained all that, in the strict *diplomatique* of explanation, could be required, namely,—that he had never seen the statement which I supposed him wilfully to have contradicted,—that he had no intention of bringing against me any charge of falsehood, and that the objectionable passage of his work was not levelled personally at *me*. This, I added, was all the explanation I had a right to expect, and I was, of course, satisfied with it.

I then entered into some detail relative to the transmission of my first letter from Dublin,—giving, as my reason for descending to these minute particulars, that I did not, I must confess, feel quite easy under the manner in which his Lordship had noticed the miscarriage of that first application to him.

My reply concluded thus:—"As your Lordship does not show any wish to proceed beyond the rigid formulary of explanation, it is not for me to make any further advances. We Irishmen, in businesses of this kind, seldom know any medium between decided hostility and decided friendship;—but, as any approaches towards the latter alternative must now depend entirely on your Lordship, I have only to repeat that I am satisfied with your letter, and that I have the honour to be," &c. &c.

On the following day I received the annexed rejoinder from Lord Byron:—

LETTER 74. TO MR. MOORE.

"8. St. James's Street, October 29. 1811.

"Sir,

"Soon after my return to England, my friend, Mr. Hodgson, apprised me that a letter for me was in his possession; but a domestic event hurrying me from London, immediately after, the letter (which may most probably be your own) is still *unopened in his keeping*. If, on examination of the address, the similarity of the handwriting should lead to such a conclusion, it shall be opened in your presence, for the satisfaction of all parties. Mr. H. is at present out of town;—on Friday I shall see him, and request him to forward it to my address.

"With regard to the latter part of both your letters, until the principal point was discussed between us, I felt myself at a loss in what manner to reply. Was I to anticipate friendship from one, who conceived me to have charged him with falsehood? Were not *advances*, under such

circumstances, to be misconstrued,—not, perhaps, by the person to whom they were addressed, but by others? In *my* case, such a step was impracticable. If you, who conceived yourself to be the offended person, are satisfied that you had no cause for offence, it will not be difficult to convince me of it. My situation, as I have before stated, leaves me no choice. I should have felt proud of your acquaintance, had it commenced under other circumstances; but it must rest with you to determine how far it may proceed after so *auspicious* a beginning. I have the honour to be," &c.

Somewhat piqued, I own, at the manner in which my efforts towards a more friendly understanding,—ill-timed as I confess them to have been,—were received, I hastened to close our correspondence by a short note, saying, that his Lordship had made me feel the imprudence I was guilty of, in wandering from the point immediately in discussion between us; and I should now, therefore, only add, that if, in my last letter, I had correctly stated the substance of his explanation, our correspondence might, from this moment, cease for ever, as with that explanation I declared myself satisfied.

This brief note drew immediately from Lord Byron the following frank and open-hearted reply:—

LETTER 75. TO MR. MOORE.

"8. St. James's Street, October 30. 1811.

"Sir,

"You must excuse my troubling you once more upon this very unpleasant subject. It would be a satisfaction to me, and I should think, to yourself, that the unopened letter in Mr. Hodgson's possession (supposing it to prove your own) should be returned 'in statu quo' to the writer; particularly as you expressed yourself 'not quite easy under the manner in which I had dwelt on its miscarriage.'

"A few words more, and I shall not trouble you further. I felt, and still feel, very much flattered by those parts of your correspondence, which held out the prospect of our becoming acquainted. If I did not meet them in the first instance as perhaps I ought, let the situation I was placed in be my defence. You have *now* declared yourself *satisfied*, and on that point we

are no longer at issue. If, therefore, you still retain any wish to do me the honour you hinted at, I shall be most happy to meet you, when, where, and how you please, and I presume you will not attribute my saying thus much to any unworthy motive. I have the honour to remain," &c.

On receiving this letter, I went instantly to my friend, Mr. Rogers, who was, at that time, on a visit at Holland House, and, for the first time, informed him of the correspondence in which I had been engaged. With his usual readiness to oblige and serve, he proposed that the meeting between Lord Byron and myself should take place at his table, and requested of me to convey to the noble Lord his wish, that he would do him the honour of naming some day for that purpose. The following is Lord Byron's answer to the note which I then wrote:—

LETTER 76. TO MR. MOORE.

"8. St. James's Street, November 1, 1811.

"Sir,

"As I should be very sorry to interrupt your Sunday's engagement, if Monday, or any other day of the ensuing week, would be equally convenient to yourself and friend, I will then have the honour of accepting his invitation. Of the professions of esteem with which Mr. Rogers has honoured me, I cannot but feel proud, though undeserving. I should be wanting to myself, if insensible to the praise of such a man; and, should my approaching interview with him and his friend lead to any degree of intimacy with both or either, I shall regard our past correspondence as one of the happiest events of my life. I have the honour to be,

"Your very sincere and obedient servant,

"BYRON."

It can hardly, I think, be necessary to call the reader's attention to the good sense, self-possession, and frankness, of these letters of Lord Byron.

I had placed him,—by the somewhat national confusion which I had made of the boundaries of peace and war, of hostility and friendship,—in a position which, ignorant as he was of the character of the person who addressed him, it required all the watchfulness of his sense of honour to guard from surprise or snare. Hence, the judicious reserve with which he abstained from noticing my advances towards acquaintance, till he should have ascertained exactly whether the explanation which he was willing to give would be such as his correspondent would be satisfied to receive. The moment he was set at rest on this point, the frankness of his nature displayed itself; and the disregard of all further mediation or etiquette with which he at once professed himself ready to meet me, "when, where, and how" I pleased, showed that he could be as pliant and confiding *after* such an understanding, as he had been judiciously reserved and punctilious *before* it.

Such did I find Lord Byron, on my first experience of him; and such,—so open and manly-minded,—did I find him to the last.

It was, at first, intended by Mr. Rogers that his company at dinner should not extend beyond Lord Byron and myself; but Mr. Thomas Campbell, having called upon our host that morning, was invited to join the party, and consented. Such a meeting could not be otherwise than interesting to us all. It was the first time that Lord Byron was ever seen by any of his three companions; while he, on his side, for the first time, found himself in the society of persons, whose names had been associated with his first literary dreams, and to *two* of whom he looked up with that tributary admiration which youthful genius is ever ready to pay its precursors.

Among the impressions which this meeting left upon me, what I chiefly remember to have remarked was the nobleness of his air, his beauty, the gentleness of his voice and manners, and—what was, naturally, not the least attraction—his marked kindness to myself. Being in mourning for his mother, the colour, as well of his dress, as of his glossy, curling, and picturesque hair, gave more effect to the pure, spiritual paleness of his features, in the expression of which, when he spoke, there was a perpetual play of lively thought, though melancholy was their habitual character when in repose.

As we had none of us been apprised of his peculiarities with respect to food, the embarrassment of our host was not a little, on discovering that there was nothing upon the table which his noble guest could eat or drink. Neither meat, fish, nor wine, would Lord Byron touch; and of biscuits and

soda-water, which he asked for, there had been, unluckily, no provision. He professed, however, to be equally well pleased with potatoes and vinegar; and of these meagre materials contrived to make rather a hearty dinner.

I shall now resume the series of his correspondence with other friends.

LETTER 77. TO MR. HARNESS.

"8. St. James's Street, Dec. 6. 1811.

"My dear Harness,

"I write again, but don't suppose I mean to lay such a tax on your pen and patience as to expect regular replies. When you are inclined, write; when silent, I shall have the consolation of knowing that you are much better employed. Yesterday, Bland and I called on Mr. Miller, who, being then out, will call on Bland to-day or to-morrow. I shall certainly endeavour to bring them together.—You are censorious, child; when you are a little older, you will learn to dislike every body, but abuse nobody.

"With regard to the person of whom you speak, your own good sense must direct you. I never pretend to advise, being an implicit believer in the old proverb. This present frost is detestable. It is the first I have felt for these three years, though I longed for one in the oriental summer, when no such thing is to be had, unless I had gone to the top of Hymettus for it.

"I thank you most truly for the concluding part of your letter. I have been of late not much accustomed to kindness from any quarter, and am not the less pleased to meet with it again from one where I had known it earliest. I have not changed in all my ramblings,—Harrow, and, of course, yourself never left me, and the

"'Dulces reminiscitur Argos'

attended me to the very spot to which that sentence alludes in the mind of the fallen Argive—Our intimacy began before we began to date at all, and it rests with you to continue it till the hour which must number it and me with the things that *were*.

"Do read mathematics.—I should think *X plus Y* at least as amusing as the Curse of Kehama, and much more intelligible. Master S.'s poems *are*, in

fact, what parallel lines might be—viz. prolonged *ad infinitum* without meeting any thing half so absurd as themselves.

"What news, what news? Queen Oreaca,What news of scribblers five?S——, W——, C——e, L——d, and L——e?—All damn'd, though yet alive.

C——e is lecturing. 'Many an old fool,' said Hannibal to some such lecturer, 'but such as this, never.'

"Ever yours, &c."

LETTER 78. TO MR. HARNESS.

"St. James's Street, Dec. 8. 1811.

"Behold a most formidable sheet, without gilt or black edging, and consequently very vulgar and indecorous, particularly to one of your precision; but this being Sunday, I can procure no better, and will atone for its length by not filling it. Bland I have not seen since my last letter; but on Tuesday he dines with me, and will meet M * * e, the epitome of all that is exquisite in poetical or personal accomplishments. How Bland has settled with Miller, I know not. I have very little interest with either, and they must arrange their concerns according to their own gusto. I have done my endeavours, *at your request*, to bring them together, and hope they may agree to their mutual advantage.

"Coleridge has been lecturing against Campbell. Rogers was present, and from him I derive the information. We are going to make a party to hear this Manichean of poesy. Pole is to marry Miss Long, and will be a very miserable dog for all that. The present ministers are to continue, and his Majesty *does* continue in the same state; so there's folly and madness for you, both in a breath.

"I never heard but of one man truly fortunate, and he was Beaumarchais, the author of Figaro, who buried two wives and gained three law-suits before he was thirty.

"And now, child, what art thou doing? *Reading, I trust.* I want to see you take a degree. Remember, this is the most important period of your life; and don't disappoint your papa and your aunt, and all your kin—besides myself. Don't you know that all male children are begotten for the express

purpose of being graduates? and that even I am an A.M., though how I became so, the Public Orator only can resolve. Besides, you are to be a priest: and to confute Sir William Drummond's late book about the Bible, (printed, but not published,) and all other infidels whatever. Now leave Master H.'s gig, and Master S.'s Sapphics, and become as immortal as Cambridge can make you.

"You see, Mio Carissimo, what a pestilent correspondent I am likely to become; but then you shall be as quiet at Newstead as you please, and I won't disturb your studies as I do now. When do you fix the day, that I may take you up according to contract? Hodgson talks of making a third in our journey; but we can't stow him, inside at least. Positively you shall go with me as was agreed, and don't let me have any of your *politesse* to H. on the occasion. I shall manage to arrange for both with a little contrivance. I wish H. was not quite so fat, and we should pack better. You will want to know what I am doing—chewing tobacco.

"You see nothing of my allies, Scrope Davies and Matthews—they don't suit you; and how does it happen that I—who am a pipkin of the same pottery—continue in your good graces? Good night,—I will go on in the morning.

"Dec. 9th. In a morning, I'm always sullen, and to-day is as sombre as myself. Rain and mist are worse than a sirocco, particularly in a beef-eating and beer-drinking country. My bookseller, Cawthorne, has just left me, and tells me, with a most important face, that he is in treaty for a novel of Madame D'Arblay's, for which 1000 guineas are asked! He wants me to read the MS. (if he obtains it), which I shall do with pleasure; but I should be very cautious in venturing an opinion on her whose Cecilia Dr. Johnson superintended. If he lends it to me, I shall put it into the hands of Rogers and M * * e, who are truly men of taste. I have filled the sheet, and beg your pardon; I will not do it again. I shall, perhaps, write again, but if not, believe, silent or scribbling, that I am, my dearest William, ever," &c.

LETTER 79. TO MR. HODGSON.

"London, Dec. 8. 1811.

"I sent you a sad Tale of Three Friars the other day, and now take a dose in another style. I wrote it a day or two ago, on hearing a song of former days.

"Away, away, ye notes of woe, &c. &c.

"I have gotten a book by Sir W. Drummond, (printed, but not published,) entitled Oedipus Judaicus, in which he attempts to prove the greater part of the Old Testament an allegory, particularly Genesis and Joshua. He professes himself a theist in the preface, and handles the literal interpretation very roughly. I wish you could see it. Mr. W * * has lent it me, and I confess, to me it is worth fifty Watsons.

"You and Harness must fix on the time for your visit to Newstead; I can command mine at your wish, unless any thing particular occurs in the interim. Bland dines with me on Tuesday to meet Moore. Coleridge has attacked the 'Pleasures of Hope,' and all other pleasures whatsoever. Mr. Rogers was present, and heard himself indirectly *rowed* by the lecturer. We are going in a party to hear the new Art of Poetry by this reformed schismatic; and were I one of these poetical luminaries, or of sufficient consequence to be noticed by the man of lectures, I should not hear him without an answer. For you know, 'an' a man will be beaten with brains, he shall never keep a clean doublet.' C * * will be desperately annoyed. I never saw a man (and of him I have seen very little) so sensitive;—what a happy temperament! I am sorry for it; what can *he* fear from criticism? I don't know if Bland has seen Miller, who was to call on him yesterday.

"To-day is the Sabbath,—a day I never pass pleasantly, but at Cambridge; and, even there, the organ is a sad remembrancer. Things are stagnant enough in town,—as long as they don't retrograde, 'tis all very well. H * * writes and writes and writes, and is an author. I do nothing but eschew tobacco. I wish parliament were assembled, that I may hear, and perhaps some day be heard;—but on this point I am not very sanguine. I have many plans;—sometimes I think of the East again, and dearly beloved Greece. I am well, but weakly.—Yesterday Kinnaird told me I looked very ill, and sent me home happy.

* * * * * "Is Scrope still interesting and invalid? And how does Hinde with his cursed chemistry? To Harness I have written, and he has written, and we have all written, and have nothing now to do but write again, till death splits up the pen and the scribbler.

"The Alfred has three hundred and fifty-four candidates for six vacancies. The cook has run away and left us liable, which makes our committee very plaintive. Master Brook, our head serving-man, has the gout, and our new cook is none of the best. I speak from report,—for what is cookery to a leguminous-eating ascetic? So now you know as much of the matter as I do. Books and quiet are still there, and they may dress their dishes in their own way for me. Let me know your determination as to Newstead, and believe me,

"Yours ever, Μπαιρῶν."

LETTER 80. TO MR. HODGSON.

"8. St. James's Street, Dec. 12. 1811.

"Why, Hodgson! I fear you have left off wine and me at the same time,—I have written and written and written, and no answer! My dear Sir Edgar, water disagrees with you,—drink sack and write. Bland did not come to his appointment, being unwell, but M * * e supplied all other vacancies most delectably. I have hopes of his joining us at Newstead. I am sure you would like him more and more as he developes,—at least I do.

"How Miller and Bland go on, I don't know. Cawthorne talks of being in treaty for a novel of M^{e}. D'Arblay's, and if he obtains it (at 1500 gs.!!) wishes me to see the MS. This I should read with pleasure,—not that I should ever dare to venture a criticism on her whose writings Dr. Johnson once revised, but for the pleasure of the thing. If my worthy publisher wanted a sound opinion, I should send the MS. to Rogers and M * * e, as men most alive to true taste. I have had frequent letters from Wm. Harness, and *you* are silent; certes, you are not a schoolboy. However, I have the consolation of knowing that you are better employed, viz. reviewing. You don't deserve that I should add another syllable, and I won't. Yours, &c.

"P.S.—I only wait for your answer to fix our meeting."

LETTER 81. TO MR. HARNESS.

"8. St. James's Street, Dec. 15. 1811.

"I wrote you an answer to your last, which, on reflection, pleases me as little as it probably has pleased yourself. I will not wait for your rejoinder; but proceed to tell you, that I had just then been greeted with an epistle of * *'s, full of his petty grievances, and this at the moment when (from circumstances it is not necessary to enter upon) I was bearing up against recollections to which *his* imaginary sufferings are as a scratch to a cancer. These things combined, put me out of humour with him and all mankind. The latter part of my life has been a perpetual struggle against affections which embittered the earliest portion; and though I flatter myself I have in a great measure conquered them, yet there are moments (and this was one) when I am as foolish as formerly. I never said so much before, nor had I said this now, if I did not suspect myself of having been rather savage in my letter, and wish to inform you thus much of the cause. You know I am not one of your dolorous gentlemen: so now let us laugh again.

"Yesterday I went with Moore to Sydenham to visit Campbell. He was not visible, so we jogged homeward, merrily enough. To-morrow I dine with Rogers, and am to hear Coleridge, who is a kind of rage at present. Last night I saw Kemble in Coriolanus;—he *was glorious*, and exerted himself wonderfully. By good luck I got an excellent place in the best part of the house, which was more than overflowing. Clare and Delawarre, who were there on the same speculation, were less fortunate. I saw them by accident,—we were not together. I wished for you, to gratify your love of Shakspeare and of fine acting to its fullest extent. Last week I saw an exhibition of a different kind in a Mr. Coates, at the Haymarket, who performed Lothario in a *damned* and damnable manner.

"I told you the fate of B. and H. in my last. So much for these sentimentalists, who console themselves in their stews for the loss—the never to be recovered loss—the despair of the refined attachment of a couple of drabs! You censure *my* life, Harness,—when I compare myself with these men, my elders and my betters, I really begin to conceive myself a monument of prudence—a walking statue—without feeling or failing; and yet the world in general hath given me a proud pre-eminence over them in profligacy. Yet I like the men, and, God knows, ought not to condemn their aberrations. But I own I feel provoked when they dignify all this by the name of *love*—romantic attachments for things marketable for a dollar!

"Dec. 16th.—I have just received your letter;—I feel your kindness very deeply. The foregoing part of my letter, written yesterday, will, I hope, account for the tone of the former, though it cannot excuse it. I do *like* to hear from you—more than *like*. Next to seeing you, I have no greater satisfaction. But you have other duties, and greater pleasures, and I should regret to take a moment from either. H * * was to call to-day, but I have not seen him. The circumstances you mention at the close of your letter is another proof in favour of my opinion of mankind. Such you will always find them—selfish and distrustful. I except none. The cause of this is the state of society. In the world, every one is to stir for himself—it is useless, perhaps selfish, to expect any thing from his neighbour. But I do not think we are born of this disposition; for you find *friendship* as a schoolboy, and *love* enough before twenty.

"I went to see * *; he keeps me in town, where I don't wish to be at present. He is a good man, but totally without conduct. And now, my dearest William, I must wish you good morrow, and remain ever, most sincerely and affectionately yours," &c.

From the time of our first meeting, there seldom elapsed a day that Lord Byron and I did not see each other; and our acquaintance ripened into intimacy and friendship with a rapidity of which I have seldom known an example. I was, indeed, lucky in all the circumstances that attended my first introduction to him. In a generous nature like his, the pleasure of repairing an injustice would naturally give a zest to any partiality I might have inspired in his mind; while the manner in which I had sought this reparation, free as it was from resentment or defiance, left nothing painful to remember in the transaction between us,—no compromise or concession that could wound self-love, or take away from the grace of that frank friendship to which he at once, so cordially and so unhesitatingly, admitted me. I was also not a little fortunate in forming my acquaintance with him, before his success had yet reached its meridian burst,—before the triumphs that were in store for him had brought the world all in homage at his feet, and, among the splendid crowds that courted his society, even claims less humble than mine had but a feeble chance of fixing his regard. As it was, the new scene of life that opened upon him with his success, instead of detaching us from each other, only multiplied our opportunities of meeting, and increased our intimacy. In

that society where his birth entitled him to move, circumstances had already placed me, notwithstanding mine; and when, after the appearance of "Childe Harold," he began to mingle with the world, the same persons, who had long been *my* intimates and friends, became his; our visits were mostly to the same places, and, in the gay and giddy round of a London spring, we were generally (as in one of his own letters he expresses it) "embarked in the same Ship of Fools together."

But, at the time when we first met, his position in the world was most solitary. Even those coffee-house companions who, before his departure from England, had served him as a sort of substitute for more worthy society, were either relinquished or had dispersed; and, with the exception of three or four associates of his college days (to whom he appeared strongly attached), Mr. Dallas and his solicitor seemed to be the only persons whom, even in their very questionable degree, he could boast of as friends. Though too proud to complain of this loneliness, it was evident that he felt it; and that the state of cheerless isolation, "unguided and unfriended," to which, on entering into manhood, he had found himself abandoned, was one of the chief sources of that resentful disdain of mankind, which even their subsequent worship of him came too late to remove. The effect, indeed, which his subsequent commerce with society had, for the short period it lasted, in softening and exhilarating his temper, showed how fit a soil his heart would have been for the growth of all the kindlier feelings, had but a portion of this sunshine of the world's smiles shone on him earlier.

At the same time, in all such speculations and conjectures as to what *might* have been, under more favourable circumstances, his character, it is invariably to be borne in mind, that his very defects were among the elements of his greatness, and that it was out of the struggle between the good and evil principles of his nature that his mighty genius drew its strength. A more genial and fostering introduction into life, while it would doubtless have softened and disciplined his mind, might have impaired its vigour; and the same influences that would have diffused smoothness and happiness over his life might have been fatal to its glory. In a short poem of his, which appears to have been produced at Athens, (as I find it written on a leaf of the original MS. of Childe Harold, and dated "Athens, 1811,") there are two lines which, though hardly intelligible as connected with the rest of the poem, may, taken separately, be interpreted as implying a sort of prophetic consciousness that it was out of the wreck and ruin of all his hopes the immortality of his name was to arise.

"Dear object of defeated care,Though now of love and thee bereft,To reconcile me with despair,Thine image and my tears are left.'Tis said with sorrow Time can cope,But this, I feel, can ne'er be true;For, *by the death-blow of my hope,My Memory immortal grew!*"

We frequently, during the first months of our acquaintance, dined together alone; and as we had no club, in common, to resort to,—the Alfred being the only one to which he, at that period, belonged, and I being then a member of none but Watier's,—our dinners used to be either at the St. Alban's, or at his old haunt, Stevens's. Though at times he would drink freely enough of claret, he still adhered to his system of abstinence in food. He appeared, indeed, to have conceived a notion that animal food has some peculiar influence on the character; and I remember, one day, as I sat opposite to him, employed, I suppose, rather earnestly over a beef-steak, after watching me for a few seconds, he said, in a grave tone of enquiry,—"Moore, don't you find eating beef-steak makes you ferocious?"

Understanding me to have expressed a wish to become a member of the Alfred, he very good-naturedly lost no time in proposing me as a candidate; but as the resolution which I had then nearly formed of betaking myself to a country life rendered an additional club in London superfluous, I wrote to beg that he would, for the present, at least, withdraw my name: and his answer, though containing little, being the first familiar note he ever honoured me with, I may be excused for feeling a peculiar pleasure in inserting it.

LETTER 82. TO MR. MOORE.

"December 11. 1811.

"My dear Moore,

"If you please, we will drop our former monosyllables, and adhere to the appellations sanctioned by our godfathers and godmothers. If you make it a point, I will withdraw your name; at the same time there is no occasion, as I have this day postponed your election 'sine die,' till it shall suit your wishes to be amongst us. I do not say this from any awkwardness the erasure of your proposal would occasion to *me*, but simply such is the

state of the case; and, indeed, the longer your name is up, the stronger will become the probability of success, and your voters more numerous. Of course you will decide—your wish shall be my law. If my zeal has already outrun discretion, pardon me, and attribute my officiousness to an excusable motive.

"I wish you would go down with me to Newstead. Hodgson will be there, and a young friend, named Harness, the earliest and dearest I ever had from the third form at Harrow to this hour. I can promise you good wine, and, if you like shooting, a manor of 4000 acres, fires, books, your own free will, and my own very indifferent company. 'Balnea, vina * *.'

"Hodgson will plague you, I fear, with verse;—for my own part I will conclude, with Martial, 'nil recitabo tibi;' and surely the last inducement is not the least. Ponder on my proposition, and believe me, my dear Moore, yours ever,

"BYRON."

Among those acts of generosity and friendship by which every year of Lord Byron's life was signalised, there is none, perhaps, that, for its own peculiar seasonableness and delicacy, as well as for the perfect worthiness of the person who was the object of it, deserves more honourable mention than that which I am now about to record, and which took place nearly at the period of which I am speaking. The friend, whose good fortune it was to inspire the feeling thus testified, was Mr. Hodgson, the gentleman to whom so many of the preceding letters are addressed; and as it would be unjust to rob him of the grace and honour of being, himself, the testimony of obligations so signal, I shall here lay before my readers an extract from the letter with which, in reference to a passage in one of his noble friend's Journals, he has favoured me.

"I feel it incumbent upon me to explain the circumstances to which this passage alludes, however private their nature. They are, indeed, calculated to do honour to the memory of my lamented friend. Having become involved, unfortunately, in difficulties and embarrassments, I received from Lord Byron (besides former pecuniary obligations) assistance, at the time in question, to the amount of a thousand pounds. Aid of such magnitude was equally unsolicited and unexpected on my part; but it was a long-cherished, though secret, purpose of my friend to

afford that aid; and he only waited for the period when he thought it would be of most service. His own words were, on the occasion of conferring this overwhelming favour, '*I always intended to do it*.'"

During all this time, and through the months of January and February, his poem of "Childe Harold" was in its progress through the press; and to the changes and additions which he made in the course of printing, some of the most beautiful passages of the work owe their existence. On comparing, indeed, his rough draft of the two Cantos with the finished form in which they exist at present, we are made sensible of the power which the man of genius possesses, not only of surpassing others, but of improving on himself. Originally, the "little Page" and "Yeoman" of the Childe were introduced to the reader's notice in the following tame stanzas, by expanding the substance of which into their present light, lyric shape, it is almost needless to remark how much the poet has gained in variety and dramatic effect:—

"And of his train there was a henchman page,A peasant boy, who serv'd his master well;

And often would his pranksome prate engageChilde Burun's ear, when his proud heart did swellWith sullen thoughts that he disdain'd to tell.Then would he smile on him, and Alwin smiled,When aught that from his young lips archly fell,The gloomy film from Harold's eye beguiled....

"Him and one yeoman only did he takeTo travel eastward to a far countrie;And, though the boy was grieved to leave the lake,On whose fair banks he grew from infancy,Eftsoons his little heart beat merrily,With hope of foreign nations to behold,And many things right marvellous to see,Of which our vaunting travellers oft have told,From Mandeville.... "

In place of that mournful song "To Ines," in the first Canto, which contains some of the dreariest touches of sadness that even his pen ever let fall, he had, in the original construction of the poem, been so little fastidious as to content himself with such ordinary sing-song as the following:—

"Oh never tell again to meOf Northern climes and British ladies,

It has not been your lot to see,Like me, the lovely girl of Cadiz,Although her eye be not of blue,Nor fair her locks, like English lasses," &c. &c.

There were also, originally, several stanzas full of direct personality, and some that degenerated into a style still more familiar and ludicrous than that of the description of a London Sunday, which still disfigures the poem. In thus mixing up the light with the solemn, it was the intention of the poet to imitate Ariosto. But it is far easier to rise, with grace, from the level of a strain generally familiar, into an occasional short burst of pathos or splendour, than to interrupt thus a prolonged tone of solemnity by any descent into the ludicrous or burlesque. In the former case, the transition may have the effect of softening or elevating, while, in the latter, it almost invariably shocks;—for the same reason, perhaps, that a trait of pathos or high feeling, in comedy, has a peculiar charm; while the intrusion of comic scenes into tragedy, however sanctioned among us by habit and authority, rarely fails to offend. The noble poet was, himself, convinced of the failure of the experiment, and in none of the succeeding Cantos of Childe Harold repeated it.

Of the satiric parts, some verses on the well-known traveller, Sir John Carr, may supply us with, at least, a harmless specimen:—

"Ye, who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,Sights, saints, antiques, arts, anecdotes, and war,Go, hie ye hence to Paternoster Row,—Are they not written in the boke of Carr?Green Erin's Knight, and Europe's wandering star.Then listen, readers, to the Man of Ink,Hear what he did, and sought, and wrote afar:All these are coop'd within one Quarto's brink,This borrow, steal (don't buy), and tell us what you think."

Among those passages which, in the course of revisal, he introduced, like pieces of "rich inlay," into the poem, was that fine stanza—

"Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd, there beA land of souls beyond that sable shore," &c.

through which lines, though, it must be confessed, a tone of scepticism breathes, (as well as in those tender verses—

"Yes,—I will dream that we may meet again,")

it is a scepticism whose sadness calls far more for pity than blame; there being discoverable, even through its very doubts, an innate warmth of piety, which they had been able to obscure, but not to chill. To use the words of the poet himself, in a note which it was once his intention to affix to these stanzas, "Let it be remembered that the spirit they breathe is desponding, not sneering, scepticism,"—a distinction never to be lost sight

of; as, however hopeless may be the conversion of the scoffing infidel, he who feels pain in doubting has still alive within him the seeds of belief.

At the same time with Childe Harold, he had three other works in the press,—his "Hints from Horace," "The Curse of Minerva," and a fifth edition of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." The note upon the latter poem, which had been the lucky origin of our acquaintance, was withdrawn in this edition, and a few words of explanation, which he had the kindness to submit to my perusal, substituted in its place.

In the month of January, the whole of the two Cantos being printed off, some of the poet's friends, and, among others, Mr. Rogers and myself, were so far favoured as to be indulged with a perusal of the sheets. In adverting to this period in his "Memoranda," Lord Byron, I remember, mentioned,—as one of the ill omens which preceded the publication of the poem,—that some of the literary friends to whom it was shown expressed doubts of its success, and that one among them had told him "it was too good for the age." Whoever may have pronounced this opinion,—and I have some suspicion that I am myself the guilty person,—the age has, it must be owned, most triumphantly refuted the calumny upon its taste which the remark implied.

It was in the hands of Mr. Rogers I first saw the sheets of the poem, and glanced hastily over a few of the stanzas which he pointed out to me as beautiful. Having occasion, the same morning, to write a note to Lord Byron, I expressed strongly the admiration which this foretaste of his work had excited in me; and the following is—as far as relates to literary matters—the answer I received from him.

LETTER 83. TO MR. MOORE.

"January 29. 1812.

"My dear Moore,

"I wish very much I could have seen you; I am in a state of ludicrous tribulation. * * *

"Why do you say that I dislike your poesy? I have expressed no such opinion, either in *print* or elsewhere. In scribbling myself, it was necessary for me to find fault, and I fixed upon the trite charge of immorality,

because I could discover no other, and was so perfectly qualified in the innocence of my heart, to 'pluck that mote from my neighbour's eye.'

"I feel very, very much obliged by your approbation; but, at *this moment*, praise, even *your* praise, passes by me like 'the idle wind.' I meant and mean to send you a copy the moment of publication; but now I can think of nothing but damned, deceitful,—delightful woman, as Mr. Liston says in the Knight of Snowdon. Believe me, my dear Moore,

"Ever yours, most affectionately,

"BYRON."

The passages here omitted contain rather *too* amusing an account of a disturbance that had just occurred in the establishment at Newstead, in consequence of the detected misconduct of one of the maid-servants, who had been supposed to stand rather too high in the favour of her master, and, by the airs of authority which she thereupon assumed, had disposed all the rest of the household to regard her with no very charitable eyes. The chief actors in the strife were this sultana and young Rushton; and the first point in dispute that came to Lord Byron's knowledge (though circumstances, far from creditable to the damsel, afterwards transpired) was, whether Rushton was bound to carry letters to "the Hut" at the bidding of this female. To an episode of such a nature I should not have thought of alluding, were it not for the two rather curious letters that follow, which show how gravely and coolly the young lord could arbitrate on such an occasion, and with what considerate leaning towards the servant whose fidelity he had proved, in preference to any new liking or fancy by which it might be suspected he was actuated towards the other.

LETTER 84. TO ROBERT RUSHTON.

"8. St. James's Street, Jan. 21. 1812.

"Though I have no objection to your refusal to carry *letters* to Mealey's, you will take care that the letters are taken by *Spero* at the proper time. I

have also to observe, that Susan is to be treated with civility, and not *insulted* by any person over whom I have the smallest control, or, indeed, by any one whatever, while I have the power to protect her. I am truly sorry to have any subject of complaint against *you*; I have too good an opinion of you to think I shall have occasion to repeat it, after the care I have taken of you, and my favourable intentions in your behalf. I see no occasion for any communication whatever between *you* and the *women*, and wish you to occupy yourself in preparing for the situation in which you will be placed. If a common sense of decency cannot prevent you from conducting yourself towards them with rudeness, I should at least hope that your *own interest*, and regard for a master who has *never* treated you with unkindness, will have some weight. Yours, &c.

"BYRON.

"P.S.—I wish you to attend to your arithmetic, to occupy yourself in surveying, measuring, and making yourself acquainted with every particular relative to the *land* of Newstead, and you will *write* to me *one letter every week*, that I may know how you go on."

LETTER 85. TO ROBERT RUSHTON.

"8. St. James's Street, January 25. 1812.

"Your refusal to carry the letter was not a subject of remonstrance; it was not a part of your business; but the language you used to the girl was (as *she* stated it) highly improper.

"You say that you also have something to complain of; then state it to me immediately; it would be very unfair, and very contrary to my disposition, not to hear both sides of the question.

"If any thing has passed between you *before* or since my last visit to Newstead, do not be afraid to mention it. I am sure *you* would not deceive me, though *she* would. Whatever it is, *you* shall be forgiven. I have not been without some suspicions on the subject, and am certain that, at your time of life, the blame could not attach to you. You will not *consult* any one as to your answer, but write to me immediately. I shall be more ready to hear what you have to advance, as I do not remember ever to have

heard a word from you before *against* any human being, which convinces me you would not maliciously assert an untruth. There is not any one who can do the least injury to you while you conduct yourself properly. I shall expect your answer immediately. Yours, &c.

"BYRON."

It was after writing these letters that he came to the knowledge of some improper levities on the part of the girl, in consequence of which he dismissed her and another female servant from Newstead; and how strongly he allowed this discovery to affect his mind, will be seen in a subsequent letter to Mr. Hodgson.

LETTER 86. TO MR. HODGSON.

"8. St. James's Street, February 16. 1812.

"Dear Hodgson,

"I send you a proof. Last week I was very ill and confined to bed with stone in the kidney, but I am now quite recovered. If the stone had got into my heart instead of my kidneys, it would have been all the better. The women are gone to their relatives, after many attempts to explain what was already too clear. However, I have quite recovered *that* also, and only wonder at my folly in excepting my own strumpets from the general corruption,—albeit a two months' weakness is better than ten years. I have one request to make, which is, never mention a woman again in any letter to me, or even allude to the existence of the sex. I won't even read a word of the feminine gender;—it must all be 'propria quæ maribus.'

"In the spring of 1813 I shall leave England for ever. Every thing in my affairs tends to this, and my inclinations and health do not discourage it. Neither my habits nor constitution are improved by your customs or your climate. I shall find employment in making myself a good Oriental scholar. I shall retain a mansion in one of the fairest islands, and retrace, at intervals, the most interesting portions of the East. In the mean time, I am adjusting my concerns, which will (when arranged) leave me with wealth sufficient even for home, but enough for a principality in Turkey. At present they are involved, but I hope, by taking some necessary but

unpleasant steps, to clear every thing. Hobhouse is expected daily in London; we shall be very glad to see him; and, perhaps, you will come up and 'drink deep ere he depart,' if not, 'Mahomet must go to the mountain;'—but Cambridge will bring sad recollections to him, and worse to me, though for very different reasons. I believe the only human being that ever loved me in truth and entirely was of, or belonging to, Cambridge, and, in that, no change can now take place. There is one consolation in death—where he sets his seal, the impression can neither be melted nor broken, but endureth for ever.

"Yours always, B."

Among those lesser memorials of his good nature and mindfulness, which, while they are precious to those who possess them, are not unworthy of admiration from others, may be reckoned such letters as the following, to a youth at Eton, recommending another, who was about to be entered at that school, to his care.

LETTER 87. TO MASTER JOHN COWELL.

"8. St. James's Street, February 12. 1812.

"My dear John,

"You have probably long ago forgotten the writer of these lines, who would, perhaps, be unable to recognise *yourself*, from the difference which must naturally have taken place in your stature and appearance since he saw you last. I have beenPg 120 rambling through Portugal, Spain, Greece, &c. &c. for some years, and have found so many changes on my return, that it would be very unfair not to expect that you should have had your share of alteration and improvement with the rest. I write to request a favour of you: a little boy of eleven years, the son of Mr. * *, my particular friend, is about to become an Etonian, and I should esteem any act of protection or kindness to him as an obligation to myself; let me beg of you then to take some little notice of him at first, till he is able to shift for himself.

"I was happy to hear a very favourable account of you from a schoolfellow a few weeks ago, and should be glad to learn that your family are as well as I wish them to be. I presume you are in the upper school;—as an *Etonian*, you will look down upon a *Harrow* man; but I never, even in my

boyish days, disputed your superiority, which I once experienced in a cricket match, where I had the honour of making one of eleven, who were beaten to their hearts' content by your college in *one innings*.

"Believe me to be, with great truth," &c. &c.

On the 27th of February, a day or two before the appearance of Childe Harold, he made the first trial of his eloquence in the House of Lords; and it was on this occasion he had the good fortune to become acquainted with Lord Holland,—an acquaintance no less honourable than gratifying to both, as having originated in feelings the most generous, perhaps, of our nature, a ready forgiveness of injuries, on the one side, and a frank and unqualified atonement for them, on the other. The subject of debate was the Nottingham Frame-breaking Bill, and, Lord Byron having mentioned to Mr. Rogers his intention to take a part in the discussion, a communication was, by the intervention of that gentleman, opened between the noble poet and Lord Holland, who, with his usual courtesy, professed himself ready to afford all the information and advice in his power. The following letters, however, will best explain their first advances towards acquaintance.

LETTER 88. TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 4. 1812.

"My dear Sir,

"With my best acknowledgments to Lord Holland, I have to offer my perfect concurrence in the propriety of the question previously to be put to ministers. If their answer is in the negative, I shall, with his Lordship's approbation, give notice of a motion for a Committee of Enquiry. I would also gladly avail myself of his most able advice, and any information or documents with which he might be pleased to intrust me, to bear me out in the statement of facts it may be necessary to submit to the House.

"From all that fell under my own observation during my Christmas visit to Newstead, I feel convinced that, if *conciliatory* measures are not very soon adopted, the most unhappy consequences may be apprehended. Nightly outrage and daily depredation are already at their height, and not only the masters of frames, who are obnoxious on account of their occupation, but

persons in no degree connected with the malecontents or their oppressors, are liable to insult and pillage.

"I am very much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken on my account, and beg you to believe me ever your obliged and sincere," &c.

LETTER 89. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"8. St. James's Street, February 25. 1812.

"My Lord,

"With my best thanks, I have the honour to return the Notts, letter to your Lordship. I have read it with attention, but do not think I shall venture to avail myself of its contents, as my view of the question differs in some measure from Mr. Coldham's. I hope I do not wrong him, but *his* objections to the bill appear to me to be founded on certain apprehensions that he and his coadjutors might be mistaken for the '*original advisers*' (to quote him) of the measure. For my own part, I consider the manufacturers as a much injured body of men, sacrificed to the views of certain individuals who have enriched themselves by those practices which have deprived the frame-workers of employment. For instance;—by the adoption of a certain kind of frame, one man performs the work of seven—six are thus thrown out of business. But it is to be observed that the work thus done is far inferior in quality, hardly marketable at home, and hurried over with a view to exportation. Surely, my Lord, however we may rejoice in any improvement in the arts which may be beneficial to mankind, we must not allow mankind to be sacrificed to improvements in mechanism. The maintenance and well-doing of the industrious poor is an object of greater consequence to the community than the enrichment of a few monopolists by any improvement in the implements of trade, which deprives the workman of his bread, and renders the, labourer "unworthy of his hire." My own motive for opposing the bill is founded on its palpable injustice, and its certain inefficacy. I have seen the state of these miserable men, and it is a disgrace to a civilised country. Their excesses may be condemned, but cannot be subject of wonder. The effect of the present bill would be to drive them into actual rebellion. The few words I shall venture to offer on Thursday will be founded upon these opinions formed from my own observations on the spot. By previous enquiry, I am convinced these men would have been

restored to employment, and the county to tranquillity. It is, perhaps, not yet too late, and is surely worth the trial. It can never be too late to employ force in such circumstances. I believe your Lordship does not coincide with me entirely on this subject, and most cheerfully and sincerely shall I submit to your superior judgment and experience, and take some other line of argument against the bill, or be silent altogether, should you deem it more advisable. Condemning, as every one must condemn, the conduct of these wretches, I believe in the existence of grievances which call rather for pity than punishment. I have the honour to be, with great respect, my Lord, your Lordship's

"Most obedient and obliged servant,

"BYRON.

"P.S. I am a little apprehensive that your Lordship will think me too lenient towards these men, and half a *framebreaker myself*."

It would have been, no doubt, the ambition of Lord Byron to acquire distinction as well in oratory as in poesy; but Nature seems to set herself against pluralities in fame. He had prepared himself for this debate,—as most of the best orators have done, in their first essays,—not only by composing, but writing down, the whole of his speech beforehand. The reception he met with was flattering; some of the noble speakers on his own side complimented him very warmly; and that he was himself highly pleased with his success, appears from the annexed account of Mr. Dallas, which gives a lively notion of his boyish elation on the occasion.

"When he left the great chamber, I went and met him in the passage; he was glowing with success, and much agitated. I had an umbrella in my right hand, not expecting that he would put out his hand to me;—in my haste to take it when offered, I had advanced my left hand—'What!' said he, 'give your friend your left hand upon such an occasion?' I showed the cause, and immediately changing the umbrella to the other hand, I gave him my right hand, which he shook and pressed warmly. He was greatly elated, and repeated some of the compliments which had been paid him, and mentioned one or two of the peers who had desired to be introduced to him. He concluded with saying, that he had, by his speech, given me the best advertisement for Childe Harold's Pilgrimage."

The speech itself, as given by Mr. Dallas from the noble speaker's own manuscript, is pointed and vigorous; and the same sort of interest that is felt in reading the poetry of a Burke, may be gratified, perhaps, by a few specimens of the oratory of a Byron. In the very opening of his speech, he thus introduces himself by the melancholy avowal, that in that assembly of his brother nobles he stood almost a stranger.

"As a person in some degree connected with the suffering county, though a stranger not only to this House in general, but to almost every individual whose attention I presume to solicit, I must claim some portion of your Lordships' indulgence."

The following extracts comprise, I think, the passages of most spirit:—

"When we are told that these men are leagued together, not only for the destruction of their own comfort, but of their very means of subsistence, can we forget that it is the bitter policy, the destructive warfare, of the last eighteen years which has destroyed their comfort, your comfort, all men's comfort;—that policy which, originating with 'great statesmen now no more,' has survived the dead to become a curse on the living, unto the third and fourth generation! These men never destroyed their looms till they were become useless,—worse than useless; till they were become actual impediments to their exertions in obtaining their daily bread. Can you then wonder that, in times like these, when bankruptcy, convicted fraud, and imputed felony, are found in a station not far beneath that of your Lordships, the lowest, though once most useful, portion of the people should forget their duty in their distresses, and become only less guilty than one of their representatives? But while the exalted offender can find means to baffle the law, new capital punishments must be devised, new snares of death must be spread for the wretched mechanic who is famished into guilt. These men were willing to dig, but the spade was in other hands: they were not ashamed to beg, but there was none to relieve them. Their own means of subsistence were cut off; all other employments pre-occupied; and their excesses, however to be deplored or condemned, can hardly be the subject of surprise.

"I have traversed the seat of war in the Peninsula I have been in some of the most oppressed provinces of Turkey; but never, under the most despotic of infidel governments, did I behold such squalid wretchedness as I have seen since my return, in the very heart of a Christian country. And what are your remedies? After months of inaction, and months of action worse than inactivity, at length comes forth the grand specific, the

never-failing nostrum of all state physicians from the days of Draco to the present time. After feeling the pulse, and shaking the head over the patient, prescribing the usual course of warm water and bleeding—the warm water of your mawkish police, and the lancets of your military—these convulsions must terminate in death, the sure consummation of the prescriptions of all political Sangrados. Setting aside the palpable injustice and the certain inefficiency of the bill, are there not capital punishments sufficient on your statutes? Is there not blood enough upon your penal code, that more must be poured forth to ascend to heaven and testify against you? How will you carry this bill into effect? Can you commit a whole county to their own prisons? Will you erect a gibbet in every field, and hang up men like scare-crows? or will you proceed (as you must, to bring this measure into effect,) by decimation; place the country under martial law; depopulate and lay waste all around you, and restore Sherwood Forest as an acceptable gift to the crown in its former condition of a royal chase, and an asylum for outlaws? Are these the remedies for a starving and desperate populace? Will the famished wretch who has braved your bayonets be appalled by your gibbets? When death is a relief, and the only relief it appears that you will afford him, will he be dragooned into tranquillity? Will that which could not be effected by your grenadiers, be accomplished by your executioners? If you proceed by the forms of law, where is your evidence? Those who refused to impeach their accomplices, when transportation only was the punishment, will hardly be tempted to witness against them when death is the penalty. With all due deference to the noble lords opposite, I think a little investigation, some previous enquiry, would induce even them to change their purpose. That most favourite state measure, so marvellously efficacious in many and recent instances, *temporising*, would not be without its advantage in this. When a proposal is made to emancipate or relieve, you hesitate, you deliberate for years, you temporise and tamper with the minds of men; but a death-bill must be passed off hand, without a thought of the consequences."

In reference to his own parliamentary displays, and to this maiden speech in particular, I find the following remarks in one of his Journals:—

"Sheridan's liking for me (whether he was not mystifying me, I do not know, but Lady Caroline Lamb and others told me that he said the same both before and after he knew me,) was founded upon 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.' He told me that he did not care about poetry, (or about mine—at least, any but that poem of mine,) but he was sure, from that

and other symptoms, I should make an orator, if I would but take to speaking, and grow a parliament man. He never ceased harping upon this to me to the last; and I remember my old tutor, Dr. Drury, had the same notion when I was a *boy*; but it never was my turn of inclination to try. I spoke once or twice, as all young peers do, as a kind of introduction into public life; but dissipation, shyness, haughty and reserved opinions, together with the short time I lived in England after my majority (only about five years in all), prevented me from resuming the experiment. As far as it went, it was not discouraging, particularly my *first* speech (I spoke three or four times in all); but just after it, my poem of Childe Harold was published, and nobody ever thought about my *prose* afterwards, nor indeed did I; it became to me a secondary and neglected object, though I sometimes wonder to myself if I should have succeeded."

His immediate impressions with respect to the success of his first speech may be collected from a letter addressed soon after to Mr. Hodgson.

LETTER 90. TO MR. HODGSON.

"8. St. James's Street, March 5. 1812.

"My dear Hodgson,

"*We* are not answerable for reports of speeches in the papers; they are always given incorrectly, and on this occasion more so than usual, from the debate in the Commons on the same night. The Morning Post should have said *eighteen years*. However, you will find the speech, as spoken, in the Parliamentary Register, when it comes out. Lords Holland and Grenville, particularly the latter, paid me some high compliments in the course of their speeches, as you may have seen in the papers, and Lords Eldon and Harrowby answered me. I have had many marvellous eulogies repeated to me since, in person and by proxy, from divers persons *ministerial*—yea, *ministerial!*—as well as oppositionists; of them I shall only mention Sir F. Burdett. *He* says it is the best speech by a *lord* since the '*Lord* knows when,' probably from a fellow-feeling in the sentiments. Lord H. tells me I shall beat them all if I persevere; and Lord G. remarked that the construction of some of my periods are very like *Burke's*! And so much for vanity. I spoke very violent sentences with a sort of modest impudence, abused every thing and every body, and put the Lord Chancellor very much out of humour; and if I may believe what I hear,

have not lost any character by the experiment. As to my delivery, loud and fluent enough, perhaps a little theatrical. I could not recognise myself or any one else in the newspapers.

"My poesy comes out on Saturday. Hobhouse is here; I shall tell him to write. My stone is gone for the present, but I fear is part of my habit. We *all* talk of a visit to Cambridge.

"Yours ever, B."

Of the same date as the above is the following letter to Lord Holland, accompanying a copy of his new publication, and written in a tone that cannot fail to give a high idea of his good feeling and candour.

LETTER 91. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"St. James's Street, March 5. 1812.

"My Lord,

"May I request your Lordship to accept a copy of the thing which accompanies this note? You have already so fully proved the truth of the first line of Pope's couplet,

"'*Forgiveness to the injured doth belong,*'

that I long for an opportunity to give the lie to the verse that follows. If I were not perfectly convinced that any thing I may have formerly uttered in the boyish rashness of my misplaced resentment had made as little impression as it deserved to make, I should hardly have the confidence—perhaps your Lordship may give it a stronger and more appropriate appellation—to send you a quarto of the same scribbler. But your Lordship, I am sorry to observe to-day, is troubled with the gout; if my book can produce a *laugh* against itself or the author, it will be of some service. If it can set you to *sleep*, the benefit will be yet greater; and as some facetious personage observed half a century ago, that 'poetry is a mere drug,' I offer you mine as a humble assistant to the 'eau médicinale.' I trust you will forgive this and all my other buffooneries, and believe me to be, with great respect,

"Your Lordship's obliged and

"Sincere servant,

"BYRON."

It was within two days after his speech in the House of Lords that Childe Harold appeared;and the impression which it produced upon the public was as instantaneous as it has proved deep and lasting. The permanence of such success genius alone could secure, but to its instant and enthusiastic burst, other causes, besides the merit of the work, concurred.

There are those who trace in the peculiar character of Lord Byron's genius strong features of relationship to the times in which he lived; who think that the great events which marked the close of the last century, by giving a new impulse to men's minds, by habituating them to the daring and the free, and allowing full vent to "the flash and outbreak of fiery spirits," had led naturally to the production of such a poet as Byron; and that he was, in short, as much the child and representative of the Revolution, in poesy, as another great man of the age, Napoleon, was in statesmanship and warfare. Without going the full length of this notion, it will, at least, be conceded, that the free loose which had been given to all the passions and energies of the human mind, in the great struggle of that period, together with the constant spectacle of such astounding vicissitudes as were passing, almost daily, on the theatre of the world, had created, in all minds, and in every walk of intellect, a taste for strong excitement, which the stimulants supplied from ordinary sources were insufficient to gratify;—that a tame deference to established authorities had fallen into disrepute, no less in literature than in politics, and that the poet who should breathe into his songs the fierce and passionate spirit of the age, and assert, untrammelled and unawed, the high dominion of genius, would be the most sure of an audience toned in sympathy with his strains.

It is true that, to the licence on religious subjects, which revelled through the first acts of that tremendous drama, a disposition of an opposite tendency had, for some time, succeeded. Against the wit of the scoffer, not only piety, but a better taste, revolted; and had Lord Byron, in touching on such themes in Childe Harold, adopted a tone of levity or derision, (such as, unluckily, he sometimes afterwards descended to,) not all the originality and beauty of his work would have secured for it a prompt or uncontested triumph. As it was, however, the few dashes of

scepticism with which he darkened his strain, far from checking his popularity, were among those attractions which, as I have said, independent of all the charms of the poetry, accelerated and heightened its success. The religious feeling that has sprung up through Europe since the French revolution—like the political principles that have emerged out of the same event—in rejecting all the licentiousness of that period, have preserved much of its spirit of freedom and enquiry; and, among the best fruits of this enlarged and enlightened piety is the liberty which it disposes men to accord to the opinions, and even heresies, of others. To persons thus sincerely, and, at the same time, tolerantly, devout, the spectacle of a great mind, like that of Byron, labouring in the eclipse of scepticism, could not be otherwise than an object of deep and solemn interest. If they had already known what it was to doubt, themselves, they would enter into his fate with mournful sympathy; while, if safe in the tranquil haven of faith, they would look with pity on one who was still a wanderer. Besides, erring and dark as might be his views at that moment, there were circumstances in his character and fate that gave a hope of better thoughts yet dawning upon him. From his temperament and youth, there could be little fear that he was yet hardened in his heresies, and as, for a heart wounded like his, there was, they knew, but one true source of consolation, so it was hoped that the love of truth, so apparent in all he wrote, would, one day, enable him to find it.

Another, and not the least of those causes which concurred with the intrinsic claims of his genius to give an impulse to the tide of success that now flowed upon him, was, unquestionably, the peculiarity of his personal history and character. There had been, in his very first introduction of himself to the public, a sufficient portion of singularity to excite strong attention and interest. While all other youths of talent, in his high station, are heralded into life by the applauses and anticipations of a host of friends, young Byron stood forth alone, unannounced by either praise or promise,—the representative of an ancient house, whose name, long lost in the gloomy solitudes of Newstead, seemed to have just awakened from the sleep of half a century in his person. The circumstances that, in succession, followed,—the prompt vigour of his reprisals upon the assailants of his fame,—his disappearance, after this achievement, from the scene of his triumph, without deigning even to wait for the laurels which he had earned, and his departure on a far pilgrimage, whose limits he left to chance and fancy,—all these successive incidents had thrown an air of adventure round the character of the young poet, which prepared his readers to meet half-way the impressions of his genius. Instead of

finding him, on a nearer view, fall short of their imaginations, the new features of his disposition now disclosed to them far outwent, in peculiarity and interest, whatever they might have preconceived; while the curiosity and sympathy, awakened by what he suffered to transpire of his history, were still more heightened by the mystery of his allusions to much that yet remained untold. The late losses by death which he had sustained, and which, it was manifest, he most deeply mourned, gave a reality to the notion formed of him by his admirers which seemed to authorise them in imagining still more; and what has been said of the poet Young, that he found out the art of "making the public a party to his private sorrows," may be, with infinitely more force and truth, applied to Lord Byron.

On that circle of society with whom he came immediately in contact, these personal influences acted with increased force, from being assisted by others, which, to female imaginations especially, would have presented a sufficiency of attraction, even without the great qualities joined with them. His youth,—the noble beauty of his countenance, and its constant play of lights and shadows,—the gentleness of his voice and manner to women, and his occasional haughtiness to men,—the alleged singularities of his mode of life, which kept curiosity alive and inquisitive,—all these lesser traits and habitudes concurred towards the quick spread of his fame; nor can it be denied that, among many purer sources of interest in his poem, the allusions which he makes to instances of "*successful* passion" in his career were not without their influence on the fancies of that sex, whose weakness it is to be most easily won by those who come recommended by the greatest number of triumphs over others.

That his rank was also to be numbered among these extrinsic advantages appears to have been—partly, perhaps, from a feeling of modesty at the time—his own persuasion. "I may place a great deal of it," said he to Mr. Dallas, "to my being a lord." It might be supposed that it is only on a rank inferior to his own such a charm could operate; but this very speech is, in itself, a proof, that in no class whatever is the advantage of being noble more felt and appreciated than among nobles themselves. It was, also, natural that, in that circle, the admiration of the new poet should be, at least, quickened by the consideration that he had sprung up among themselves, and that their order had, at length, produced a man of genius, by whom the arrears of contribution, long due from them to the treasury of English literature, would be at once fully and splendidly discharged.

Altogether, taking into consideration the various points I have here enumerated, it may be asserted, that never did there exist before, and it is most probable never will exist again, a combination of such vast mental power and surpassing genius, with so many other of those advantages and attractions, by which the world is, in general, dazzled and captivated. The effect was, accordingly, electric;—his fame had not to wait for any of the ordinary gradations, but seemed to spring up, like the palace of a fairy tale, in a night. As he himself briefly described it in his memoranda,—"I awoke one morning and found myself famous." The first edition of his work was disposed of instantly; and, as the echoes of its reputation multiplied on all sides, "Childe Harold" and "Lord Byron" became the theme of every tongue. At his door, most of the leading names of the day presented themselves,—some of them persons whom he had much wronged in his Satire, but who now forgot their resentment in generous admiration. From morning till night the most flattering testimonies of his success crowded his table,—from the grave tributes of the statesman and the philosopher down to (what flattered him still more) the romantic billet of some *incognita,* or the pressing note of invitation from some fair leader of fashion; and, in place of the desert which London had been to him but a few weeks before, he now not only saw the whole splendid interior of High Life thrown open to receive him, but found himself, among its illustrious crowds, the most distinguished object.

The copyright of the poem, which was purchased by Mr. Murray for 600*l.*, he presented, in the most delicate and unostentatious manner, to Mr. Dallas, saying, at the same time, that he "never would receive money for his writings;"—a resolution, the mixed result of generosity and pride, which he afterwards wisely abandoned, though borne out by the example of Swift and Voltaire, the latter of whom gave away most of his copyrights to Prault and other booksellers, and received books, not money, for those he disposed of otherwise. To his young friend, Mr. Harness, it had been his intention, at first, to dedicate the work, but, on further consideration, he relinquished his design; and in a letter to that gentleman (which, with some others, is unfortunately lost) alleged, as his reason for this change, the prejudice which, he foresaw, some parts of the poem would raise against himself, and his fear lest, by any possibility, a share of the odium might so far extend itself to his friend, as to injure him in the profession to which he was about to devote himself.

Not long after the publication of Childe Harold, the noble author paid me a visit, one morning, and, putting a letter into my hands, which he had just

received, requested that I would undertake to manage for him whatever proceedings it might render necessary. This letter, I found, had been delivered to him by Mr. Leckie (a gentleman well known by a work on Sicilian affairs), and came from a once active and popular member of the fashionable world, Colonel Greville,—its purport being to require of his Lordship, as author of "English Bards," &c., such reparation as it was in his power to make for the injury which, as Colonel Greville conceived, certain passages in that satire, reflecting upon his conduct as manager of the Argyle Institution, were calculated to inflict upon his character. In the appeal of the gallant Colonel, there were some expressions of rather an angry cast, which Lord Byron, though fully conscious of the length to which he himself had gone, was but little inclined to brook, and, on my returning the letter into his hands, he said, "To such a letter as that there can be but one sort of answer." He agreed, however, to trust the matter entirely to my discretion, and I had, shortly after, an interview with the friend of Colonel Greville. By this gentleman, who was then an utter stranger to me, I was received with much courtesy, and with every disposition to bring the affair intrusted to us to an amicable issue. On my premising that the tone of his friend's letter stood in the way of negotiation, and that some obnoxious expressions which it contained must be removed before I could proceed a single step towards explanation, he most readily consented to remove this obstacle. At his request I drew a pen across the parts I considered objectionable, and he undertook to send me the letter re-written, next morning. In the mean time I received from Lord Byron the following paper for my guidance:—

"With regard to the passage on Mr. Way's loss, no unfair play was hinted at, as may be seen by referring to the book; and it is expressly added that the *managers were ignorant* of that transaction. As to the prevalence of play at the Argyle, it cannot be denied that there were *billiards* and *dice*;—Lord B. has been a witness to the use of both at the Argyle Rooms. These, it is presumed, come under the denomination of play. If play be allowed, the President of the Institution can hardly complain of being termed the 'Arbiter of Play,'—or what becomes of his authority?

"Lord B. has no personal animosity to Colonel Greville. A public institution, to which he himself was a subscriber, he considered himself to have a right to notice *publicly*. Of that institution Colonel Greville was the avowed director;—it is too late to enter into the discussion of its merits or demerits.

"Lord B. must leave the discussion of the reparation, for the real or supposed injury, to Colonel G.'s friend, and Mr. Moore, the friend of Lord B.—begging them to recollect that, while they consider Colonel G.'s honour, Lord B. must also maintain his own. If the business can be settled amicably, Lord B. will do as much as can and ought to be done by a man of honour towards conciliation;—if not, he must satisfy Colonel G. in the manner most conducive to his further wishes."

In the morning I received the letter, in its new form, from Mr. Leckie, with the annexed note.

"My dear Sir,

"I found my friend very ill in bed; he has, however, managed to copy the enclosed, with the alterations proposed. Perhaps you may wish to see me in the morning; I shall therefore be glad to see you any time till twelve o'clock. If you rather wish me to call on you, tell me, and I shall obey your summons. Yours, very truly,

"G.T. LECKIE."

With such facilities towards pacification, it is almost needless to add that there was but little delay in settling the matter amicably.

While upon this subject, I shall avail myself of the opportunity which it affords of extracting an amusing account given by Lord Byron himself of some affairs of this description, in which he was, at different times, employed as mediator.

"I have been called in as mediator, or second, at least twenty times, in violent quarrels, and have always contrived to settle the business without compromising the honour of the parties, or leading them to mortal consequences, and this, too, sometimes in very difficult and delicate circumstances, and having to deal with very hot and haughty spirits,—Irishmen, gamesters, guardsmen, captains, and cornets of horse, and the like. This was, of course, in my youth, when I lived in hot-headed company. I have had to carry challenges from gentlemen to noblemen, from captains to captains, from lawyers to counsellors, and once from a clergyman to an officer in the Life Guards; but I found the latter by far the most difficult,—

"'to composeThe bloody duel without blows,'—

the business being about a woman: I must add, too, that I never saw a *woman* behave so ill, like a cold-blooded, heartless b—— as she was,—but very handsome for all that. A certain Susan C * * was she called. I never saw her but once; and that was to induce her but to say two words (which in no degree compromised herself), and which would have had the effect of saving a priest or a lieutenant of cavalry. She would not say them, and neither N * * nor myself (the son of Sir E. N * *, and a friend to one of the parties,) could prevail upon her to say them, though both of us used to deal in some sort with womankind. At last I managed to quiet the combatants without her talisman, and, I believe, to her great disappointment: she was the damnedest b—— that I ever saw, and I have seen a great many. Though my clergyman was sure to lose either his life or his living, he was as warlike as the Bishop of Beauvais, and would hardly be pacified; but then he was in love, and that is a martial passion."

However disagreeable it was to find the consequences of his Satire thus rising up against him in a hostile shape, he was far more embarrassed in those cases where the retribution took a friendly form. Being now daily in the habit of meeting and receiving kindnesses from persons who, either in themselves, or through their relatives, had been wounded by his pen, he felt every fresh instance of courtesy from such quarters to be, (as he sometimes, in the strong language of Scripture, expressed it,) like "heaping coals of fire upon his head." He was, indeed, in a remarkable degree, sensitive to the kindness or displeasure of those he lived with; and had he passed a life subject to the immediate influence of society, it may be doubted whether he ever would have ventured upon those unbridled bursts of energy in which he at once demonstrated and abused his power. At the period when he ran riot in his Satire, society had not yet caught him within its pale; and in the time of his Cains and Don Juans, he had again broken loose from it. Hence, his instinct towards a life of solitude and independence, as the true element of his strength. In his own domain of imagination he could defy the whole world; while, in real life, a frown or smile could rule him. The facility with which he sacrificed his first volume, at the mere suggestion of his friend, Mr. Becher, is a strong proof of this pliableness; and in the instance of Childe Harold, such influence had the opinions of Mr. Gifford and Mr. Dallas on his mind, that he not only shrunk from his original design of identifying himself with his hero, but surrendered to them one of his most favourite stanzas, whose heterodoxy they had objected to; nor is it too much, perhaps, to conclude, that had a

more extended force of such influence then acted upon him, he would have consented to omit the sceptical parts of his poem altogether. Certain it is that, during the remainder of his stay in England, no such doctrines were ever again obtruded on his readers; and in all those beautiful creations of his fancy, with which he brightened that whole period, keeping the public eye in one prolonged gaze of admiration, both the bitterness and the licence of his impetuous spirit were kept effectually under control. The world, indeed, had yet to witness what he was capable of, when emancipated from this restraint. For, graceful and powerful as were his flights while society had still a hold of him, it was not till let loose from the leash that he rose into the true region of his strength; and though almost in proportion to that strength was, too frequently, his abuse of it, yet so magnificent are the very excesses of such energy, that it is impossible, even while we condemn, not to admire.

The occasion by which I have been led into these remarks,—namely, his sensitiveness on the subject of his Satire,—is one of those instances that show how easily his gigantic spirit could be, if not held down, at least entangled, by the small ties of society. The aggression of which he had been guilty was not only past, but, by many of those most injured, forgiven; and yet,—highly, it must be allowed, to the credit of his social feelings,—the idea of living familiarly and friendlily with persons, respecting whose character or talents there were such opinions of his on record, became, at length, insupportable to him; and, though far advanced in a fifth edition of "English Bards," &c., he came to the resolution of suppressing the Satire altogether; and orders were sent to Cawthorn, the publisher, to commit the whole impression to the flames. At the same time, and from similar motives,—aided, I rather think, by a friendly remonstrance from Lord Elgin, or some of his connections,—the "Curse of Minerva," a poem levelled against that nobleman, and already in progress towards publication, was also sacrificed; while the "Hints from Horace," though containing far less personal satire than either of the others, shared their fate.

To exemplify what I have said of his extreme sensibility, to the passing sunshine or clouds of the society in which he lived, I need but cite the following notes, addressed by him to his friend Mr. William Bankes, under the apprehension that this gentleman was, for some reason or other, displeased with him.

LETTER 92. TO MR. WILLIAM BANKES.

"April 20. 1812.

"My dear Bankes,

"I feel rather hurt (not savagely) at the speech you made to me last night, and my hope is, that it was only one of your *profane* jests. I should be very sorry that any part of my behaviour should give you cause to suppose that I think higher of myself, or otherwise of you than I have always done. I can assure you that I am as much the humblest of your servants as at Trin. Coll.; and if I have not been at home when you favoured me with a call, the loss was more mine than yours. In the bustle of buzzing parties, there is, there can be, no rational conversation; but when I can enjoy it, there is nobody's I can prefer to your own. Believe me ever faithfully and most affectionately yours,

"BYRON."

LETTER 93. TO MR. WILLIAM BANKES.

"My dear Bankes,

"My eagerness to come to an explanation has, I trust, convinced you that whatever my unlucky manner might inadvertently be, the change was as unintentional as (if intended) it would have been ungrateful. I really was not aware that, while we were together, I had evinced such caprices; that we were not so much in each other's company as I could have wished, I well know, but I think so *acute* an *observer* as yourself must have perceived enough to *explain this*, without supposing any slight to one in whose society I have pride and pleasure. Recollect that I do not allude here to 'extended' or 'extending' acquaintances, but to circumstances you will understand, I think, on a little reflection.

"And now, my dear Bankes, do not distress me by supposing that I can think of you, or you of me, otherwise than I trust we have long thought. You told me not long ago that my temper was improved, and I should be sorry that opinion should be revoked. Believe me, your friendship is of more account to me than all those absurd vanities in which, I fear, you conceive me to take too much interest. I have never disputed your superiority, or doubted (seriously) your good will, and no one shall ever

'make mischief between us' without the sincere regret on the part of your ever affectionate, &c.

"P.S. I shall see you, I hope, at Lady Jersey's. Hobhouse goes also."

In the month of April he was again tempted to try his success in the House of Lords; and, on the motion of Lord Donoughmore for taking into consideration the claims of the Irish catholics, delivered his sentiments strongly in favour of the proposition. His display, on this occasion, seems to have been less promising than in his first essay. His delivery was thought mouthing and theatrical, being infected, I take for granted (having never heard him speak in Parliament), with the same chanting tone that disfigured his recitation of poetry,—a tone contracted at most of the public schools, but more particularly, perhaps, at Harrow, and encroaching just enough on the boundaries of song to offend those ears most by which song is best enjoyed and understood.

On the subject of the negotiations for a change of ministry which took place during this session, I find the following anecdotes recorded in his notebook:—

"At the opposition meeting of the peers in 1812, at Lord Grenville's, when Lord Grey and he read to us the correspondence upon Moira's negotiation, I sate next to the present Duke of Grafton, and said, 'What is to be done next?'—'Wake the Duke of Norfolk' (who was snoring away near us), replied he: 'I don't think the negotiators have left any thing else for us to do this turn.'

"In the debate, or rather discussion, afterwards in the House of Lords upon that very question, I sate immediately behind Lord Moira, who was extremely annoyed at Grey's speech upon the subject; and, while Grey was speaking, turned round to me repeatedly, and asked me whether I agreed with him. It was an awkward question to me who had not heard both sides. Moira kept repeating to me, 'It was *not so*, it was so and so,' &c. I did not know very well what to think, but I sympathised with the acuteness of his feelings upon the subject."

The subject of the Catholic claims was, it is well known, brought forward a second time this session by Lord Wellesley, whose motion for a future consideration of the question was carried by a majority of one. In

reference to this division, another rather amusing anecdote is thus related.

"Lord * * affects an imitation of two very different Chancellors, Thurlow and Loughborough, and can indulge in an oath now and then. On one of the debates on the Catholic question, when we were either equal or within one (I forget which), I had been sent for in great haste to a ball, which I quitted, I confess, somewhat reluctantly, to emancipate five millions of people. I came in late, and did not go immediately into the body of the House, but stood just behind the woolsack. * * turned round, and, catching my eye, immediately said to a peer, (who had come to him for a few minutes on the woolsack, as is the custom of his friends,) 'Damn them! they'll have it now,—by G——d! the vote that is just come in will give it them.'"

During all this time, the impression which he had produced in society, both as a poet and a man, went on daily increasing; and the facility with which he gave himself up to the current of fashionable life, and mingled in all the gay scenes through which it led, showed that the novelty, at least, of this mode of existence had charms for him, however he might estimate its pleasures. That sort of vanity which is almost inseparable from genius, and which consists in an extreme sensitiveness on the subject of self, Lord Byron, I need not say, possessed in no ordinary degree; and never was there a career in which this sensibility to the opinions of others was exposed to more constant and various excitement than that on which he was now entered. I find in a note of my own to him, written at this period, some jesting allusions to the "circle of star-gazers" whom I had left around him at some party on the preceding night;—and such, in fact, was the flattering ordeal he had to undergo wherever he went. On these occasions,—particularly before the range of his acquaintance had become sufficiently extended to set him wholly at his ease,—his air and port were those of one whose better thoughts were elsewhere, and who looked with melancholy abstraction on the gay crowd around him. This deportment, so rare in such scenes, and so accordant with the romantic notions entertained of him, was the result partly of shyness, and partly, perhaps, of that love of effect and impression to which the poetical character of his mind naturally led. Nothing, indeed, could be more amusing and delightful than the contrast which his manners afterwards, when we were alone, presented to his proud reserve in the brilliant circle we had just left. It was like the bursting gaiety of a boy let loose from school, and seemed as if there was no extent of fun or tricks of which he was not capable. Finding

him invariably thus lively when we were together, I often rallied him on the gloomy tone of his poetry, as assumed; but his constant answer was (and I soon ceased to doubt of its truth), that, though thus merry and full of laughter with those he liked, he was, at heart, one of the most melancholy wretches in existence.

Among the numerous notes which I received from him at this time,—some of them relating to our joint engagements in society, and others to matters now better forgotten,—I shall select a few that (as showing his haunts and habits) may not, perhaps, be uninteresting.

"March 25. 1812.

"Know all men by these presents, that you, Thomas Moore, stand indicted—no—invited, by special and particular solicitation, to Lady C. L * *'s to-morrow evening, at half-past nine o'clock, where you will meet with a civil reception and decent entertainment. Pray, come—I was so examined after you this morning, that I entreat you to answer in person.

"Believe me," &c.

"Friday noon.

"I should have answered your note yesterday, but I hoped to have seen you this morning. I must consult with you about the day we dine with Sir Francis. I suppose we shall meet at Lady Spencer's to-night. I did not know that you were at Miss Berry's the other night, or I should have certainly gone there.

"As usual, I am in all sorts of scrapes, though none, at present, of a martial description.

"Believe me," &c.

"May 8. 1812.

"I am too proud of being your friend to care with whom I am linked in your estimation, and, God knows, I want friends more at this time than at any other. I am 'taking care of myself' to no great purpose. If you knew my

situation in every point of view you would excuse apparent and unintentional neglect. I shall leave town, I think; but do not you leave it without seeing me. I wish you, from my soul, every happiness you can wish yourself; and I think you have taken the road to secure it. Peace be with you! I fear she has abandoned me.

"Ever," &c.

"May 20. 1812.

"On Monday, after sitting up all night, I saw Bellingham launched into eternity, and at three the same day I saw * * * launched into the country.

"I believe, in the beginning of June, I shall be down for a few days in Notts. If so, I shall beat you up 'en passant' with Hobhouse, who is endeavouring, like you and every body else, to keep me out of scrapes.

"I meant to have written you a long letter, but I find I cannot. If any thing remarkable occurs, you will hear it from me—if good; if *bad*, there are plenty to tell it. In the mean time, do you be happy.

"Ever yours, &c.

"P.S.—My best wishes and respects to Mrs. * *;—she is beautiful. I may say so even to you, for I never was more struck with a countenance."

Among the tributes to his fame, this spring, it should have been mentioned that, at some evening party, he had the honour of being presented, at that royal personage's own desire, to the Prince Regent. "The Regent," says Mr. Dallas, "expressed his admiration of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, and continued a conversation, which so fascinated the poet, that had it not been for an accidental deferring of the next levee, he bade fair to become a visiter at Carlton House, if not a complete courtier."

After this wise prognostic, the writer adds,—"I called on him on the morning for which the levee had been appointed, and found him in a full

dress court suit of clothes, with his fine black hair in powder, which by no means suited his countenance. I was surprised, as he had not told me that he should go to court; and it seemed to me as if he thought it necessary to apologise for his intention, by his observing that he could not in decency but do it, as the Regent had done him the honour to say that he hoped to see him soon at Carlton House."

In the two letters that follow we find his own account of the introduction.

LETTER 94. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"June 25. 1812.

"My dear Lord,

"I must appear very ungrateful, and have, indeed, been very negligent, but till last night I was not apprised of Lady Holland's restoration, and I shall call to-morrow to have the satisfaction, I trust, of hearing that she is well—I hope that neither politics nor gout have assailed your Lordship since I last saw you, and that you also are 'as well as could be expected.'

"The other night, at a ball, I was presented by order to our gracious Regent, who honoured me with some conversation, and professed a predilection for poetry.—I confess it was a most unexpected honour, and I thought of poor B——-s's adventure, with some apprehension of a similar blunder, I have now great hope, in the event of Mr. Pye's decease, of 'warbling truth at court,' like Mr. Mallet of indifferent memory.—Consider, one hundred marks a year! besides the wine and the disgrace; but then remorse would make me drown myself in my own butt before the year's end, or the finishing of my first dithyrambic.—So that, after all, I shall not meditate our laureate's death by pen or poison.

"Will you present my best respects to Lady Holland? and believe me hers and yours very sincerely."

The second letter, entering much more fully into the particulars of this interview with Royalty, was in answer, it will be perceived, to some enquiries which Sir Walter Scott (then Mr. Scott) had addressed to him on the subject; and the whole account reflects even still more honour on the Sovereign himself than on the two poets.

LETTER 95. TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

"St. James's Street, July 6. 1812.

"Sir,

"I have just been honoured with your letter.—I feel sorry that you should have thought it worth while to notice the 'evil works of my nonage,' as the thing is suppressed voluntarily, and your explanation is too kind not to give me pain. The Satire was written when I was very young and very angry, and fully bent on displaying my wrath and my wit, and now I am haunted by the ghosts of my wholesale assertions. I cannot sufficiently thank you for your praise; and now, waving myself, let me talk to you of the Prince Regent. He ordered me to be presented to him at a ball; and after some sayings peculiarly pleasing from royal lips, as to my own attempts, he talked to me of you and your immortalities: he preferred you to every bard past and present, and asked which of your works pleased me most. It was a difficult question. I answered, I thought the "Lay." He said his own opinion was nearly similar. In speaking of the others, I told him that I thought you more particularly the poet of *Princes*, as *they* never appeared more fascinating than in 'Marmion' and the 'Lady of the Lake.' He was pleased to coincide, and to dwell on the description of your Jameses as no less royal than poetical. He spoke alternately of Homer and yourself, and seemed well acquainted with both; so that (with the exception of the Turks and your humble servant) you were in very good company. I defy Murray to have exaggerated his Royal Highness's opinion of your powers, nor can I pretend to enumerate all he said on the subject; but it may give you pleasure to hear that it was conveyed in language which would only suffer by my attempting to transcribe it, and with a tone and taste which gave me a very high idea of his abilities and accomplishments, which I had hitherto considered as confined to *manners*, certainly superior to those of any living *gentleman*.

"This interview was accidental. I never went to the levee; for having seen the courts of Mussulman and Catholic sovereigns, my curiosity was sufficiently allayed; and my politics being as perverse as my rhymes, I had, in fact, 'no business there.' To be thus praised by your Sovereign must be gratifying to you; and if that gratification is not alloyed by the communication being made through me, the bearer of it will consider himself very fortunately and sincerely,

"Your obliged and obedient servant,

"BYRON.

"P.S.—Excuse this scrawl, scratched in a great hurry, and just after a journey."

During the summer of this year, he paid visits to some of his noble friends, and, among others, to the Earl of Jersey and the Marquis of Lansdowne. "In 1812," he says, "at Middleton (Lord Jersey's), amongst a goodly company of lords, ladies, and wits, &c., there was (* * *.)

"Erskine, too! Erskine was there; good, but intolerable. He jested, he talked, he did every thing admirably, but then he would be applauded for the same thing twice over. He would read his own verses, his own paragraph, and tell his own story again and again; and then the 'Trial by Jury!!!' I almost wished it abolished, for I sat next him at dinner. As I had read his published speeches, there was no occasion to repeat them to me.

"C * * (the fox-hunter), nicknamed '*Cheek* C * *,' and I, sweated the claret, being the only two who did so. C * *, who loves his bottle, and had no notion of meeting with a 'bon-vivant' in a scribbler, in making my eulogy to somebody one evening, summed it up in—'By G——d he drinks like a man.'

"Nobody drank, however, but C * * and I. To be sure, there was little occasion, for we swept off what was on the table (a most splendid board, as may be supposed, at Jersey's) very sufficiently. However, we carried our liquor discreetly, like the Baron of Bradwardine."

In the month of August this year, on the completion of the new Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, the Committee of Management, desirous of procuring an Address for the opening of the theatre, took the rather novel mode of inviting, by an advertisement in the newspapers, the competition of all the poets of the day towards this object. Though the contributions that ensued were sufficiently numerous, it did not appear to the Committee that there was any one among the number worthy of selection. In this difficulty it occurred to Lord Holland that they could not do better than have recourse to Lord Byron, whose popularity would give additional

vogue to the solemnity of their opening, and to whose transcendant claims, as a poet, it was taken for granted, (though without sufficient allowance, as it proved, for the irritability of the brotherhood,) even the rejected candidates themselves would bow without a murmur. The first result of this application to the noble poet will be learned from what follows.

LETTER 96. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"Cheltenham, September 10. 1812.

"My dear Lord,

"The lines which I sketched off on your hint are still, or rather *were*, in an unfinished state, for I have just committed them to a flame more decisive than that of Drury. Under all the circumstances, I should hardly wish a contest with Philo-drama—Philo-Drury—Asbestos, H * *, and all the anonymes and synonymes of Committee candidates. Seriously, I think you have a chance of something much better; for prologuising is not my forte, and, at all events, either my pride or my modesty won't let me incur the hazard of having my rhymes buried in next month's Magazine, under 'Essays on the Murder of Mr. Perceval,' and 'Cures for the Bite of a Mad Dog,' as poor Goldsmith complained of the fate of far superior performances.

"I am still sufficiently interested to wish to know the successful candidate; and, amongst so many, I have no doubt some will be excellent, particularly in an age when writing verse is the easiest of all attainments.

"I cannot answer your intelligence with the 'like comfort,' unless, as you are deeply theatrical, you may wish to hear of Mr. * *, whose acting is, I fear, utterly inadequate to the London engagement into which the managers of Covent Garden have lately entered. His figure is fat, his features flat, his voice unmanageable, his action ungraceful, and, as Diggory says, 'I defy him to *ex*tort that d——d muffin face of his into madness.' I was very sorry to see him in the character of the 'Elephant on the slack rope;' for, when I last saw him, I was in raptures with his performance. But then I was sixteen—an age to which all London condescended to subside. After all, much better judges have admired, and may again; but I venture to 'prognosticate a prophecy' (see the Courier) that he will not succeed.

"So, poor dear Rogers has stuck fast on 'the brow of the mighty Helvellyn'—I hope not for ever. My best respects to Lady H.:—her

departure, with that of my other friends, was a sad event for me, now reduced to a state of the most cynical solitude. 'By the waters of Cheltenham I sat down and *drank*, when I remembered thee, oh Georgiana Cottage! As for our *harps*, we hanged them up upon the willows that grew thereby. Then they said, Sing us a song of Drury Lane,' &c.;—but I am dumb and dreary as the Israelites. The waters have disordered me to my heart's content—you *were* right, as you always are. Believe me ever your obliged and affectionate servant,

"BYRON."

The request of the Committee for his aid having been, still more urgently, repeated, he, at length, notwithstanding the difficulty and invidiousness of the task, from his strong wish to oblige Lord Holland, consented to undertake it; and the quick succeeding notes and letters, which he addressed, during the completion of the Address, to his noble friend, afford a proof (in conjunction with others of still more interest, yet to be cited) of the pains he, at this time, took in improving and polishing his first conceptions, and the importance he wisely attached to a judicious choice of epithets as a means of enriching both the music and the meaning of his verse. They also show,—what, as an illustration of his character, is even still more valuable,—the exceeding pliancy and good humour with which he could yield to friendly suggestions and criticisms; nor can it be questioned, I think, but that the docility thus invariably exhibited by him, on points where most poets are found to be tenacious and irritable, was a quality natural to his disposition, and such as might have been turned to account in far more important matters, had he been fortunate enough to meet with persons capable of understanding and guiding him.

The following are a few of those hasty notes, on the subject of the Address, which I allude to:—

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 22. 1812.

"My dear Lord,

"In a day or two I will send you something which you will still have the liberty to reject if you dislike it. I should like to have had more time, but will do my best,—but too happy if I can oblige *you*, though I may offend a hundred scribblers and the discerning public. Ever yours.

"Keep *my name* a *secret*; or I shall be beset by all the rejected, and, perhaps, damned by a party."

LETTER 97. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"Cheltenham, September 23. 1812.

"Ecco!—I have marked some passages with *double* readings—choose between them—*cut*—*add*—*reject*—or *destroy*—do with them as you will—I leave it to you and the Committee—you cannot say so called 'a *non committendo*.' What will *they* do (and I do) with the hundred and one rejected Troubadours? 'With trumpets, yea, and with shawms,' will you be assailed in the most diabolical doggerel. I wish my name not to transpire till the day is decided. I shall not be in town, so it won't much matter; but let us have a good *deliverer*. I think Elliston should be the man, or Pope; *not* Raymond, I implore you, by the love of Rhythmus!

"The passages marked thus ==, above and below, are for you to choose between epithets, and such like poetical furniture. Pray write me a line, and believe me ever, &c.

"My best remembrances to Lady H. Will you be good enough to decide between the various readings marked, and erase the other; or our deliverer may be as puzzled as a commentator, and belike repeat both. If these *versicles* won't do, I will hammer out some more endecasyllables.

"P.S.—Tell Lady H. I have had sad work to keep out the Phoenix—I mean the Fire Office of that name. It has insured the theatre, and why not the Address?"

TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 24.

"I send a recast of the four first lines of the concluding paragraph.

"This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obey'd,The drama's homage by her Herald paid,Receive *our welcome too*, whose every toneSprings from our hearts, and fain would win your own.The curtain rises, &c. &c.

And do forgive all this trouble. See what it is to have to do even with the *genteelest* of us. Ever," &c.

LETTER 99. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 26. 1812.

"You will think there is no end to my villanous emendations. The fifth and sixth lines I think to alter thus:—

"Ye who beheld—oh sight admired and mourn'd,Whose radiance mock'd the ruin it adorn'd;

because 'night' is repeated the next line but one; and, as it now stands, the conclusion of the paragraph, 'worthy him (Shakspeare) and *you*,' appears to apply the '*you*' to those only who were out of bed and in Covent Garden Market on the night of conflagration, instead of the audience or the discerning public at large, all of whom are intended to be comprised in that comprehensive and, I hope, comprehensible pronoun.

"By the by, one of my corrections in the fair copy sent yesterday has dived into the bathos some sixty fathom—

"When Garrick died, and Brinsley ceased to write.

Ceasing to *live* is a much more serious concern, and ought not to be first; therefore I will let the old couplet stand, with its half rhymes 'sought' and 'wrote.' Second thoughts in every thing are best, but, in rhyme, third and fourth don't come amiss. I am very anxious on this business, and I do hope that the very trouble I occasion you will plead its own excuse, and that it will tend to show my endeavour to make the most of the time allotted. I wish I had known it months ago, for in that case I had not left one line standing on another. I always scrawl in this way, and smooth as much as I can, but never sufficiently; and, latterly, I can weave a nine-line stanza

faster than a couplet, for which measure I have not the cunning. When I began 'Childe Harold,' I had never tried Spenser's measure, and now I cannot scribble in any other.

"After all, my dear Lord, if you can get a decent Address elsewhere, don't hesitate to put this aside. Why did you not trust your own Muse? I am very sure she would have been triumphant, and saved the Committee their trouble—''tis a joyful one' to me, but I fear I shall not satisfy even myself. After the account you sent me, 'tis no compliment to say you would have beaten your candidates; but I mean that, in *that* case, there would have been no occasion for their being beaten at all.

"There are but two decent prologues in our tongue—Pope's to Cato—Johnson's to Drury Lane. These, with the epilogue to the 'Distrest Mother,' and, I think, one of Goldsmith's, and a prologue of old Colman's to Beaumont and Fletcher's Philaster, are the best things of the kind we have.

"P.S.—I am diluted to the throat with medicine for the stone; and Boisragon wants me to try a warm climate for the winter—but I won't."

LETTER 100. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 27. 1812.

"I have just received your very kind letter, and hope you have met with a second copy corrected and addressed to Holland House, with some omissions and this new couplet,

"As glared each rising flash, and ghastly shoneThe skies with lightnings awful as their own.

As to remarks, I can only say I will alter and acquiesce in any thing. With regard to the part which Whitbread wishes to omit, I believe the Address will go off *quicker* without it, though, like the agility of the Hottentot, at the expense of its vigour. I leave to your choice entirely the different specimens of stucco-work; and a *brick* of your own will also much improve my Babylonish turret. I should like Elliston to have it, with your leave. 'Adorn' and 'mourn' are lawful rhymes in Pope's Death of the unfortunate Lady.—Gray has 'forlorn' and 'mourn;'—and 'torn' and 'mourn' are in Smollet's famous Tears of Scotland.

"As there will probably be an outcry amongst the rejected, I hope the committee will testify (if it be needful) that I sent in nothing to the congress whatever, with or without a name, as your Lordship well knows. All I have to do with it is with and through you; and though I, of course, wish to satisfy the audience, I do assure you my first object is to comply with your request, and in so doing to show the sense I have of the many obligations you have conferred upon me. Yours ever, B."

LETTER 103. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"September 29. 1812.

"Shakspeare certainly ceased to reign in *one* of his kingdoms, as George III. did in America, and George IV. may in Ireland. Now, we have nothing to do out of our own realms, and when the monarchy was gone, his majesty had but a barren sceptre. I have *cut away*, you will see, and altered, but make it what you please; only I do implore, for my *own* gratification, one lash on those accursed quadrupeds—'a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.' I have altered 'wave,' &c., and the 'fire,' and so forth for the timid.

"Let me hear from you when convenient, and believe me, &c.

"P.S.—Do let *that* stand, and cut out elsewhere. I shall choke, if we must overlook their d——d menagerie."

LETTER 105. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"Far be from him that hour which asks in vainTears such as flow for
Garrick in his strain;

or,

"Far be that hour that vainly asks in turn{*crown'd his*}Such verse for him as {wept o'er} Garrick's urn.

"September 30. 1812.

"Will you choose between these added to the lines on Sheridan? I think they will wind up the panegyric, and agree with the train of thought preceding them.

"Now, one word as to the Committee—how could they resolve on a rough copy of an Address never sent in, unless you had been good enough to retain in memory, or on paper, the thing they have been good enough to adopt? By the by, the circumstances of the case should make the Committee less 'avidus glorias,' for all praise of them would look plaguy suspicious. If necessary to be stated at all, the simple facts bear them out. They surely had a right to act as they pleased. My sole object is one which, I trust, my whole conduct has shown; viz. that I did nothing insidious—sent in no Address *whatever*—but, when applied to, did my best for them and myself; but, above all, that there was no undue partiality, which will be what the rejected will endeavour to make out. Fortunately—most fortunately—I sent in no lines on the occasion. For I am sure that had they, in that case, been preferred, it would have been asserted that *I* was known, and owed the preference to private friendship. This is what we shall probably have to encounter; but, if once spoken and approved, we sha'n't be much embarrassed by their brilliant conjectures; and, as to criticism, an *old* author, like an old bull, grows cooler (or ought) at every baiting.

"The only thing would be to avoid a party on the night of delivery—afterwards, the more the better, and the whole transaction inevitably tends to a good deal of discussion. Murray tells me there are myriads of ironical Addresses ready—*some*, in imitation of what is called *my style*. If they are as good as the Probationary Odes, or Hawkins's Pipe of Tobacco, it will not be bad fun for the imitated.

"Ever," &c.

The time comprised in the series of letters to Lord Holland, of which the above are specimens, Lord Byron passed, for the most part, at Cheltenham; and during the same period, the following letters to other correspondents were written.

LETTER 107. TO MR. MURRAY.

"High Street, Cheltenham, Sept. 5. 1812.

"Pray have the goodness to send those despatches, and a No. of the Edinburgh Review with the rest. I hope you have written to Mr. Thompson, thanked him in my name for his present, and told him that I shall be truly happy to comply with his request.—How do you go on? and when is the graven image, 'with *bays and wicked rhyme upon 't,'* to grace, or disgrace, some of our tardy editions?

"Send me '*Rokeby*.' Who the devil is he?—no matter, he has good connections, and will be well introduced. I thank you for your enquiries: I am so so, but my thermometer is sadly below the poetical point. What will you give *me* or *mine* for a poem of six cantos, (*when complete—no* rhyme, *no* recompense,) as like the last two as I can make them? I have some ideas that one day may be embodied, and till winter I shall have much leisure.

"P.S.—My last question is in the true style of Grub Street; but, like Jeremy Diddler, I only 'ask for information.'—Send me Adair on Diet and Regimen, just republished by Ridgway."

LETTER 108. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Cheltenham, Sept. 14. 1812.

"The parcels contained some letters and verses, all but one anonymous and complimentary, and very anxious for my conversion from certain infidelities into which my good-natured correspondents conceive me to have fallen. The books were presents of a *convertible* kind. Also, 'Christian Knowledge' and the 'Bioscope,' a religious Dial of Life explained;—and to the author of the former (Cadell, publisher,) I beg you will forward my best thanks for his letter, his present, and, above all, his good intentions. The 'Bioscope' contained a MS. copy of very excellent verses, from whom I know not, but evidently the composition of some one in the habit of writing, and of writing well. I do not know if he be the author of the 'Bioscope' which accompanied them; but whoever he is, if you can discover him, thank him from me most heartily. The other letters were from ladies, who are welcome to convert me when they please; and if I can discover them, and they be young, as they say they are, I could convince them perhaps of my devotion. I had also a letter from Mr. Walpole on matters of this world, which I have answered.

"So you are Lucien's publisher? I am promised an interview with him, and think I shall ask *you* for a letter of introduction, as 'the gods have made him poetical.' From whom could it come with a better grace than from *his* publisher and mine? Is it not somewhat treasonable in you to have to do with a relative of the 'direful foe,' as the Morning Post calls his brother?

"But my book on 'Diet and Regimen,' where is it? I thirst for Scott's Rokeby; let me have your first-begotten copy. The Anti-jacobin Review is all very well, and not a bit worse than the Quarterly, and at least less harmless. By the by, have you secured my books? I want all the Reviews, at least the critiques, quarterly, monthly, &c., Portuguese and English, extracted, and bound up in one volume for my *old age*; and pray, sort my Romaic books, and get the volumes lent to Mr. Hobhouse—he has had them now a long time. If any thing occurs, you will favour me with a line, and in winter we shall be nearer neighbours.

"P.S.—I was applied to, to write the Address for Drury Lane, but the moment I heard of the contest, I gave up the idea of contending against all Grub Street, and threw a few thoughts on the subject into the fire. I did this out of respect to you, being sure you would have turned off any of your authors who had entered the lists with such scurvy competitors. To triumph would have been no glory; and to have been defeated—'sdeath!—I would have choked myself, like Otway, with a quartern loaf; so, remember I had, and have, nothing to do with it, upon *my honour*."

LETTER 109. TO MR. WILLIAM BANKES.

"Cheltenham, September 28. 1812.

"My dear Bankes,

"When you point out to one how people can be intimate at the distance of some seventy leagues, I will plead guilty to your charge, and accept your farewell, but not *wittingly*, till you give me some better reason than my silence, which merely proceeded from a notion founded on your own declaration of *old*, that you hated writing and receiving letters. Besides, how was I to find out a man of many residences? If I had addressed you *now*, it had been to your borough, where I must have conjectured you were amongst your constituents. So now, in despite of Mr. N. and Lady W., you shall be as 'much better' as the Hexham post-office will allow me

to make you. I do assure you I am much indebted to you for thinking of me at all, and can't spare you even from amongst the superabundance of friends with whom you suppose me surrounded.

"You heard that Newstead is sold—the sum 140,000*l.*; sixty to remain in mortgage on the estate for three years, paying interest, of course. Rochdale is also likely to do well—so my worldly matters are mending. I have been here some time drinking the waters, simply because there are waters to drink, and they are very medicinal, and sufficiently disgusting. In a few days I set out for Lord Jersey's, but return here, where I am quite alone, go out very little, and enjoy in its fullest extent the 'dolce far niente.' What you are about, I cannot guess, even from your date;—not dauncing to the sound of the gitourney in the Halls of the Lowthers? one of whom is here, ill, poor thing, with a phthisic. I heard that you passed through here (at the sordid inn where I first alighted) the very day before I arrived in these parts. We had a very pleasant set here; at first the Jerseys, Melbournes, Cowpers, and Hollands, but all gone; and the only persons I know are the Rawdons and Oxfords, with some later acquaintances of less brilliant descent.

"But I do not trouble them much; and as for your rooms and your assemblies, 'they are not dreamed of in our philosophy!!'—Did you read of a sad accident in the Wye t' other day? a dozen drowned, and Mr. Rossoe, a corpulent gentleman, preserved by a boat-hook or an eel-spear, begged, when he heard his wife was saved—no—*lost*—to be thrown in again!!—as if he could not have thrown himself in, had he wished it; but this passes for a trait of sensibility. What strange beings men are, in and out of the Wye!

"I have to ask you a thousand pardons for not fulfilling some orders before I left town; but if you knew all the cursed entanglements I *had* to wade through, it would be unnecessary to beg your forgiveness.—When will Parliament (the new one) meet?—in sixty days, on account of Ireland, I presume: the Irish election will demand a longer period for completion than the constitutional allotment. Yours, of course, is safe, and all your side of the question. Salamanca is the ministerial watchword, and all will go well with you. I hope you will speak more frequently, I am sure at least you *ought*, and it will be expected. I see Portman means to stand again. Good night.

"Ever yours most affectionately,

"Μπαίρων."

LETTER 110. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Cheltenham, September 27. 1812.

"I sent in no Address whatever to the Committee; but out of nearly one hundred (this is *confidential*), none have been deemed worth acceptance; and in consequence of their *subsequent* application to *me*, I have written a prologue, which *has* been received, and will be spoken. The MS. is now in the hands of Lord Holland.

"I write this merely to say, that (however it is received by the audience) you will publish it in the next edition of Childe Harold; and I only beg you at present to keep my name secret till you hear further from me, and as soon as possible I wish you to have a correct copy, to do with as you think proper.

"P.S.—I should wish a few copies printed off *before*, that the newspaper copies may be correct *after* the *delivery*."

LETTER 111. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Cheltenham, Oct. 12. 1812.

"I have a very *strong* objection to the engraving of the portrait, and request that it may, on no account, be prefixed; but let *all* the proofs be burnt, and the plate broken. I will be at the expense which has been incurred; it is but fair that *I* should, since I cannot permit the publication. I beg, as a particular favour, that you will lose no time in having this done, for which I have reasons that I will state when I see you. Forgive all the trouble I have occasioned you.

"I have received no account of the reception of the Address, but see it is vituperated in the papers, which does not much embarrass an *old author*. I leave it to your own judgment to add it, or not, to your next edition when required. Pray comply *strictly* with my wishes as to the engraving, and believe me, &c.

"P.S.—Favour me with an answer, as I shall not be easy till I hear that the proofs, &c. are destroyed. I hear that the *Satirist* has reviewed Childe

Harold, in what manner I need not ask; but I wish to know if the old personalities are revived? I have a better reason for asking this than any that merely concerns myself; but in publications of that kind, others, particularly female names, are sometimes introduced."

LETTER 112. TO LORD HOLLAND.

"Cheltenham, Oct. 14. 1812.

"My dear Lord,

"I perceive that the papers, yea, even Perry's, are somewhat ruffled at the injudicious preference of the Committee. My friend Perry has, indeed, 'et tu Brute'-d me rather scurvily, for which I will send him, for the M.C., the next epigram I scribble, as a token of my full forgiveness.

"Do the Committee mean to enter into no explanation of their proceedings? You must see there is a leaning towards a charge of partiality. You will, at least, acquit me of any great anxiety to push myself before so many elder and better anonymous, to whom the twenty guineas (which I take to be about two thousand pounds *Bank* currency) and the honour would have been equally welcome. 'Honour,' I see, 'hath no skill in paragraph-writing.'

"I wish to know how it went off at the second reading, and whether any one has had the grace to give it a glance of approbation. I have seen no paper but Perry's and two Sunday ones. Perry is severe, and the others silent. If, however, you and your Committee are not now dissatisfied with your own judgments, I shall not much embarrass myself about the brilliant remarks of the journals. My own opinion upon it is what it always was, perhaps pretty near that of the public.

"Believe me, my dear Lord, &c. &c.

"P.S.—My best respects to Lady H., whose smiles will be very consolatory, even at this distance."

LETTER 113. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Cheltenham, Oct. 18. 1812.

"Will you have the goodness to get this Parody of a peculiar kind (for all the first lines are *Busby*'s entire) inserted in several of the papers (*correctly*—and copied *correctly*; *my hand* is difficult)—particularly the Morning Chronicle? Tell Mr. Perry I forgive him all he has said, and may say against *my address*, but he will allow me to deal with the Doctor—(*audi alteram partem*)—and not *betray* me. I cannot think what has befallen Mr. Perry, for of yore we were very good friends;—but no matter, only get this inserted.

"I have a poem on Waltzing for *you*, of which I make *you* a present; but it must be anonymous. It is in the old style of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.

"P.S.—With the next edition of Childe Harold you may print the first fifty or a hundred opening lines of the 'Curse of Minerva' down to the couplet beginning

"Mortal ('twas thus she spake), &c.

Of course, the moment the *Satire* begins, there you will stop, and the opening is the best part."

LETTER 114. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Oct. 19. 1812.

"Many thanks, but I *must* pay the *damage*, and will thank you to tell me the amount for the engraving. I think the 'Rejected Addresses' by far the best thing of the kind since the Rolliad, and wish *you* had published them. Tell the author 'I forgive him, were he twenty times over a satirist;' and think his imitations not at all inferior to the famous ones of Hawkins Browne. He must be a man of very lively wit, and less scurrilous than wits often are: altogether, I very much admire the performance, and wish it all success. The *Satirist* has taken a new tone, as you will see: we have now, I think, finished with Childe Harold's critics. I have in *hand* a *Satire* on *Waltzing,* which you must publish anonymously: it is not long, not quite two hundred lines, but will make a very small boarded pamphlet. In a few days you shall have it.

"P.S.—The editor of the *Satirist* ought to be thanked for his revocation; it is done handsomely, after five years' warfare."

LETTER 115. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Oct. 23. 1812.

"Thanks, as usual. You go on boldly; but have a care of *glutting* the public, who have by this time had enough of Childe Harold. 'Waltzing' shall be prepared. It is rather above two hundred lines, with an introductory Letter to the Publisher. I think of publishing, with Childe Harold, the opening lines of the 'Curse of Minerva,' as far as the first speech of Pallas,—because some of the readers like that part better than any I have ever written, and as it contains nothing to affect the subject of the subsequent portion, it will find a place as a *Descriptive Fragment*.

"The *plate* is *broken*? between ourselves, it was unlike the picture; and besides, upon the whole, the frontispiece of an author's visage is but a paltry exhibition. At all events, *this* would have been no recommendation to the book. I am sure Sanders would not have *survived* the engraving. By the by, the *picture* may remain with *you* or *him* (which you please), till my return. The *one* of two remaining copies is at your service till I can give you a *better*; the other must be *burned peremptorily*. Again, do not forget that I have an account with you, and *that* this is *included*. I give you too much trouble to allow you to incur *expense* also.

"You best know how far this 'Address Riot' will affect the future sale of Childe Harold. I like the volume of 'Rejected Addresses' better and better. The other parody which Perry has received is mine also (I believe). It is Dr. Busby's speech versified. You are removing to Albemarle Street, I find, and I rejoice that we shall be nearer neighbours. I am going to Lord Oxford's, but letters here will be forwarded. When at leisure, all communications from you will be willingly received by the humblest of your scribes. Did Mr. Ward write the review of Horne Tooke's Life in the Quarterly? it is excellent."

LETTER 116. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Cheltenham, November 22. 1812.

"On my return here from Lord Oxford's, I found your obliging note, and will thank you to retain the letters, and any other subsequent ones to the same address, till I arrive in town to claim them, which will probably be in a few days. I have in charge a curious and very long MS. poem, written by Lord Brooke (the *friend* of Sir *Philip Sidney*), which I wish to submit to the inspection of Mr. Gifford, with the following queries:—first, whether it has ever been published, and, secondly (if not), whether it is worth publication? It is from Lord Oxford's library, and must have escaped or been overlooked amongst the MSS. of the Harleian Miscellany. The writing is Lord Brooke's, except a different hand towards the close. It is very long, and in the six-line stanza. It is not for me to hazard an opinion upon its merits; but I would take the liberty, if not too troublesome, to submit it to Mr. Gifford's judgment, which, from his excellent edition of Massinger, I should conceive to be as decisive on the writings of that age as on those of our own.

"Now for a less agreeable and important topic.—How came Mr. *Mac-Somebody*, without consulting you or me, to prefix the Address to his volume of '*Dejected* Addresses?' Is not this somewhat larcenous? I think the ceremony of leave might have been asked, though I have no objection to the thing itself; and leave the 'hundred and eleven' to tire themselves with 'base comparisons.' I should think the ingenuous public tolerably sick of the subject, and, except the Parodies, I have not interfered, nor shall; indeed I did not know that Dr. Busby had published his Apologetical Letter and Postscript, or I should have recalled them. But, I confess, I looked upon his conduct in a different light before its appearance. I see some mountebank has taken Alderman Birch's name to vituperate Dr. Busby; he had much better have pilfered his pastry, which I should imagine the more valuable ingredient—at least for a puff.—Pray secure me a copy of Woodfall's new Junius, and believe me," &c.

LETTER 117. TO MR. WILLIAM BANKES.

"December 26.

"The multitude of your recommendations has already superseded my humble endeavours to be of use to you; and, indeed, most of my principal friends are returned. Leake from Joannina, Canning and Adair from the city of the Faithful, and at Smyrna no letter is necessary, as the consuls are always willing to do every thing for personages of respectability. I have sent you *three*, one to Gibraltar, which, though of no great necessity, will, perhaps, put you on a more intimate footing with a very pleasant family there. You will very soon find out that a man of any consequence has very little occasion for any letters but to ministers and bankers, and of them we have already plenty, I will be sworn.

"It is by no means improbable that I shall go in the spring, and if you will fix any place of rendezvous about August, I will *write* or *join* you.—When in Albania, I wish you would enquire after Dervise Tahiri and Vascillie (or Bazil), and make my respects to the viziers, both there and in the Morea. If you mention my name to Suleyman of Thebes, I think it will not hurt you; if I had my dragoman, or wrote Turkish, I could have given you letters of *real service*; but to the English they are hardly requisite, and the Greeks themselves can be of little advantage. Liston you know already, and I do not, as he was not then minister. Mind you visit Ephesus and the Troad, and let me hear from you when you please. I believe G. Forresti is now at Yanina, but if not, whoever is there will be too happy to assist you. Be particular about *firmauns*; never allow yourself to be bullied, for you are better protected in Turkey than any where; trust not the Greeks; and take some *knicknackeries* for *presents—watches*, *pistols*, &c. &c. to the Beys and Pachas. If you find one Demetrius, at Athens or elsewhere, I can recommend him as a good dragoman. I hope to join you, however; but you will find swarms of English now in the Levant.

"Believe me," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 20. 1813.

"In 'Horace in London' I perceive some stanzas on Lord Elgin in which (waving the kind compliment to myself) I heartily concur. I wish I had the

pleasure of Mr. Smith's acquaintance, as I could communicate the curious anecdote you read in Mr. T.'s letter. If he would like it, he can have the *substance* for his second edition; if not, I shall add it to our next, though I think we already have enough of Lord Elgin.

"What I have read of this work seems admirably done. My praise, however, is not much worth the author's having; but you may thank him in my name for *his*. The idea is new—we have excellent imitations of the Satires, &c. by Pope; but I remember but one imitative Ode in his works, and *none* any where else. I can hardly suppose that *they* have lost any fame by the fate of the *farce*; but even should this be the case, the present publication will again place them on their pinnacle.

"Yours," &c.

It has already been stated that the pecuniary supplies, which he found it necessary to raise on arriving at majority, were procured for him on ruinously usurious terms. To some transactions connected with this subject, the following characteristic letter refers.

TO MR. ROGERS.

"March 25, 1813.

"I enclose you a draft for the usurious interest due to Lord * *'s *protégé*;—I also could wish you would state thus much for me to his Lordship. Though the transaction speaks plainly in itself for the borrower's folly and the lender's usury, it never was my intention to *quash* the demand, as I *legally* might, nor to withhold payment of principal, or, perhaps, even *unlawful* interest. You know what my situation has been, and what it is. I have parted with an estate (which has been in my family for nearly three hundred years, and was never disgraced by being in possession of a *lawyer*, a *churchman*, or a *woman*, during that period,) to liquidate this and similar demands; and the payment of the purchase is still withheld, and may be, perhaps, for years. If, therefore, I am under the necessity of making those persons *wait* for their money, (which, considering the terms, they can afford to suffer,) it is my misfortune.

"When I arrived at majority in 1809, I offered my own security on *legal* interest, and it was refused. *Now*, I will not accede to this. This man I may have seen, but I have no recollection of the names of any parties but the

agents and the securities. The moment I can it is assuredly my intention to pay my debts. This person's case may be a hard one; but, under all circumstances, what is mine? I could not foresee that the purchaser of my estate was to demur in paying for it.

"I am glad it happens to be in my power so far to accommodate my Israelite, and only wish I could do as much for the rest of the Twelve Tribes.

"Ever yours, dear R., BN."

At the beginning of this year, Mr. Murray having it in contemplation to publish an edition of the two Cantos of Childe Harold with engravings, the noble author entered with much zeal into his plan; and, in a note on the subject to Mr. Murray, says,—"Westall has, I believe, agreed to illustrate your book, and I fancy one of the engravings will be from the pretty little girl you saw the other day, though without her name, and merely as a model for some sketch connected with the subject. I would also have the portrait (which you saw to-day) of the friend who is mentioned in the text at the close of Canto 1st, and in the notes,—which are subjects sufficient to authorise that addition."

Early in the spring he brought out, anonymously, his poem on Waltzing, which, though full of very lively satire, fell so far short of what was now expected from him by the public, that the disavowal of it, which, as we see by the following letter, he thought right to put forth, found ready credence:—

LETTER 120. TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 21. 1813.

"I shall be in town by Sunday next, and will call and have some conversation on the subject of Westall's designs. I am to sit to him for a picture at the request of a friend of mine, and as Sanders's is not a good one, you will probably prefer the other. I wish you to have Sanders's taken down and sent to my lodgings immediately—before my arrival. I hear that a certain malicious publication on Waltzing is attributed to me. This report, I suppose, you will take care to contradict, as the author, I am sure, will not like that I should wear his cap and bells. Mr. Hobhouse's quarto

will be out immediately; pray send to the author for an early copy, which I wish to take abroad with me.

"P.S.—I see the Examiner threatens some observations upon you next week. What can you have done to share the wrath which has heretofore been principally expended upon the Prince? I presume all your Scribleri will be drawn up in battle array in defence of the modern Tonson—Mr. Bucke, for instance.

"Send in my account to Bennet Street, as I wish to settle it before sailing."

In the month of May appeared his wild and beautiful "Fragment," *The Giaour*;—and though, in its first flight from his hands, some of the fairest feathers of its wing were yet wanting, the public hailed this new offspring of his genius with wonder and delight. The idea of writing a poem in fragments had been suggested to him by the *Columbus* of Mr. Rogers; and, whatever objections may lie against such a plan in general, it must be allowed to have been well suited to the impatient temperament of Byron, as enabling him to overleap those mechanical difficulties, which, in a regular narrative, embarrass, if not chill, the poet,—leaving it to the imagination of his readers to fill up the intervals between those abrupt bursts of passion in which his chief power lay. The story, too, of the poem possessed that stimulating charm for him, almost indispensable to his fancy, of being in some degree connected with himself,—an event in which he had been personally concerned, while on his travels, having supplied the groundwork on which the fiction was founded. After the appearance of The Giaour, some incorrect statement of this romantic incident having got into circulation, the noble author requested of his friend, the Marquis of Sligo, who had visited Athens soon after it happened, to furnish him with his recollections on the subject; and the following is the answer which Lord Sligo returned:—

"Albany, Monday, August 31. 1813.

"My dear Byron,

"You have requested me to tell you all that I heard at Athens about the affair of that girl who was so near being put an end to while you were there; you have asked me to mention every circumstance, in the remotest degree relating to it, which I heard. In compliance with your wishes, I write

to you all I heard, and I cannot imagine it to be very far from the fact, as the circumstance happened only a day or two before I arrived at Athens, and, consequently, was a matter of common conversation at the time.

"The new governor, unaccustomed to have the same intercourse with the Christians as his predecessor, had of course the barbarous Turkish ideas with regard to women. In consequence, and in compliance with the strict letter of the Mahommedan law, he ordered this girl to be sewed up in a sack, and thrown into the sea,—as is, indeed, quite customary at Constantinople. As you were returning from bathing in the Piraeus, you met the procession going down to execute the sentence of the Waywode on this unfortunate girl. Report continues to say, that on finding out what the object of their journey was, and who was the miserable sufferer, you immediately interfered; and on some delay in obeying your orders, you were obliged to inform the leader of the escort, that force should make him comply;—that, on farther hesitation, you drew a pistol, and told him, that if he did not immediately obey your orders, and come back with you to the Aga's house, you would shoot him dead. On this, the man turned about and went with you to the governor's house; here you succeeded, partly by personal threats, and partly by bribery and entreaty, to procure her pardon on condition of her leaving Athens. I was told that you then conveyed her in safety to the convent, and despatched her off at night to Thebes, where she found a safe asylum. Such is the story I heard, as nearly as I can recollect it at present. Should you wish to ask me any further questions about it, I shall be very ready and willing to answer them. I remain, my dear Byron,

"Yours, very sincerely,

"SLIGO.

"I am afraid you will hardly be able to read this scrawl; but I am so hurried with the preparations for my journey, that you must excuse it."

Of the prodigal flow of his fancy, when its sources were once opened on any subject, The Giaour affords one of the most remarkable instances,—this poem having accumulated under his hand, both in printing and through successive editions, till from four hundred lines, of which it consisted in his first copy, it at present amounts to nearly fourteen hundred. The plan, indeed, which he had adopted, of a series of

fragments,—a set of "orient pearls at random strung,"—left him free to introduce, without reference to more than the general complexion of his story, whatever sentiments or images his fancy, in its excursions, could collect; and how little fettered he was by any regard to connection in these additions, appears from a note which accompanied his own copy of the paragraph commencing "Fair clime, where every season smiles,"—in which he says, "I have not yet fixed the place of insertion for the following lines, but will, when I see you—as I have no copy."

Even into this new passage, rich as it was at first, his fancy afterwards poured a fresh infusion,—the whole of its most picturesque portion, from the line "For there, the Rose o'er crag or vale," down to "And turn to groans his roundelay," having been suggested to him during revision. In order to show, however, that though so rapid in the first heat of composition, he formed no exception to that law which imposes labour as the price of perfection, I shall here extract a few verses from his original draft of this paragraph, by comparing which with the form they wear at present we may learn to appreciate the value of these after-touches of the master.

"Fair clime! where *ceaseless summer* smilesBenignant o'er those blessed isles,Which, seen from far Colonna's height,Make glad the heart that hails the sight,And *give* to loneliness delight.There *shine the bright abodes ye seek,Like dimples upon Ocean's cheek,—So smiling round the waters laveThese Edens of the eastern wave.Or if, at times, the transient breeze*Break the *smooth* crystal of the seas,Or *brush* one blossom from the trees,How *grateful* is the gentle airThat wakes and wafts the *fragrance* there."

Among the other passages added to this edition (which was either the third or fourth, and between which and the first there intervened but about six weeks) was that most beautiful and melancholy illustration of the lifeless aspect of Greece, beginning "He who hath bent him o'er the dead,"—of which the most gifted critic of our day has justly pronounced, that "it contains an image more true, more mournful, and more exquisitely finished, than any we can recollect in the whole compass of poetry." To the same edition also were added, among other accessions of wealth, those lines, "The cygnet proudly walks the water," and the impassioned verses, "My memory now is but the tomb."

On my rejoining him in town this spring, I found the enthusiasm about his writings and himself, which I left so prevalent, both in the world of

literature and in society, grown, if any thing, still more general and intense. In the immediate circle, perhaps, around him, familiarity of intercourse might have begun to produce its usual disenchanting effects. His own liveliness and unreserve, on a more intimate acquaintance, would not be long in dispelling that charm of poetic sadness, which to the eyes of distant observers hung about him; while the romantic notions, connected by some of his fair readers with those past and nameless loves alluded to in his poems, ran some risk of abatement from too near an acquaintance with the supposed objects of his fancy and fondness at present. A poet's mistress should remain, if possible, as imaginary a being to others, as, in most of the attributes he clothes her with, she has been to himself;—the reality, however fair, being always sure to fall short of the picture which a too lavish fancy has drawn of it. Could we call up in array before us all the beauties whom the love of poets has immortalised, from the high-born dame to the plebeian damsel,—from the Lauras and Sacharissas down to the Cloes and Jeannies,—we should, it is to be feared, sadly unpeople our imaginations of many a bright tenant that poesy has lodged there, and find, in more than one instance, our admiration of the faith and fancy of the worshipper increased by our discovery of the worthlessness of the idol.

But, whatever of its first romantic impression the personal character of the poet may, from such causes, have lost in the circle he most frequented, this disappointment of the imagination was far more than compensated by the frank, social, and engaging qualities, both of disposition and manner, which, on a nearer intercourse, he disclosed, as well as by that entire absence of any literary assumption or pedantry, which entitled him fully to the praise bestowed by Sprat upon Cowley, that few could "ever discover he was a great poet by his discourse." While thus, by his intimates, and those who had got, as it were, behind the scenes of his fame, he was seen in his true colours, as well of weakness as of amiableness, on strangers and such as were out of this immediate circle, the spell of his poetical character still continued to operate; and the fierce gloom and sternness of his imaginary personages were, by the greater number of them, supposed to belong, not only as regarded mind, but manners, to himself. So prevalent and persevering has been this notion, that, in some disquisitions on his character published since his death, and containing otherwise many just and striking views, we find, in the professed portrait drawn of him, such features as the following:—"Lord Byron had a stern, direct, severe mind: a sarcastic, disdainful, gloomy temper. He had no light sympathy with heartless cheerfulness;—

upon the surface was sourness, discontent, displeasure, ill will. Beneath all this weight of clouds and darkness," &c. &c.

Of the sort of double aspect which he thus presented, as viewed by the world and by his friends, he was himself fully aware; and it not only amused him, but, as a proof of the versatility of his powers, flattered his pride. He was, indeed, as I have already remarked, by no means insensible or inattentive to the effect he produced personally on society; and though the brilliant station he had attained, since the commencement of my acquaintance with him, made not the slightest alteration in the unaffectedness of his private intercourse, I could perceive, I thought, with reference to the external world, some slight changes in his conduct, which seemed indicative of the effects of his celebrity upon him. Among other circumstances, I observed that, whether from shyness of the general gaze, or from a notion, like Livy's, that men of eminence should not too much familiarise the public to their persons, he avoided showing himself in the mornings, and in crowded places, much more than was his custom when we first became acquainted. The preceding year, before his name had grown "so rife and celebrated," we had gone together to the exhibition at Somerset House, and other such places; and the true reason, no doubt, of his present reserve, in abstaining from all such miscellaneous haunts, was the sensitiveness, so often referred to, on the subject of his lameness,—a feeling which the curiosity of the public eye, now attracted to this infirmity by his fame, could not fail, he knew, to put rather painfully to the proof.

Among the many gay hours we passed together this spring, I remember particularly the wild flow of his spirits one evening, when we had accompanied Mr. Rogers home from some early assembly, and when Lord Byron, who, according to his frequent custom, had not dined for the last two days, found his hunger no longer governable, and called aloud for "something to eat." Our repast,—of his own choosing,—was simple bread and cheese; and seldom have I partaken of so joyous a supper. It happened that our host had just received a presentation copy of a volume of poems, written professedly in imitation of the old English writers, and containing, like many of these models, a good deal that was striking and beautiful, mixed up with much that was trifling, fantastic, and absurd. In our mood, at the moment, it was only with these latter qualities that either Lord Byron or I felt disposed to indulge ourselves; and, in turning over the pages, we found, it must be owned, abundant matter for mirth. In vain did Mr. Rogers, in justice to the author, endeavour to direct our

attention to some of the beauties of the work:—it suited better our purpose (as is too often the case with more deliberate critics) to pounce only on such passages as ministered to the laughing humour that possessed us. In this sort of hunt through the volume, we at length lighted on the discovery that our host, in addition to his sincere approbation of some of its contents, had also the motive of gratitude for standing by its author, as one of the poems was a warm and, I need not add, well-deserved panegyric on himself. We were, however, too far gone in nonsense for even this eulogy, in which we both so heartily agreed, to stop us. The opening line of the poem was, as well as I can recollect, "When Rogers o'er this labour bent;" and Lord Byron undertook to read it aloud;—but he found it impossible to get beyond the first two words. Our laughter had now increased to such a pitch that nothing could restrain it. Two or three times he began; but no sooner had the words "When Rogers" passed his lips, than our fit burst forth afresh,—till even Mr. Rogers himself, with all his feeling of our injustice, found it impossible not to join us; and we were, at last, all three, in such a state of inextinguishable laughter, that, had the author himself been of the party, I question much whether he could have resisted the infection.

A day or two after, Lord Byron sent me the following:—

"My dear Moore,

"'When Rogers' must not see the enclosed, which I send for your perusal. I am ready to fix any day you like for our visit. Was not Sheridan good upon the whole? The 'Poulterer' was the first and best.

"Ever yours," &c.

1.

"When T * * this damn'd nonsense sent,(I hope I am not violent),Nor men nor gods knew what he meant.

2.

"And since not ev'n our Rogers' praiseTo common sense his thoughts could raise—Why *would* they let him print his lays?

3.

* * * *

4.

* * * *

5.

"To me, divine Apollo, grant—O!Hermilda's first and second canto,I'm fitting up a new portmanteau;

6.

"And thus to furnish decent lining,My own and others' bays I'm twining—So gentle T * *, throw me thine in."

On the same day I received from him the following additional scraps. The lines in italics are from the eulogy that provoked his waggish comments.

"**TO ——**

1.

"'*I lay my branch of laurel down.*'

"Thou 'lay thy branch of laurel down!"Why, what thou'st stole is not enow;And, were it lawfully thine own,Does Rogers want it most, or thou?Keep to thyself thy wither'd bough,Or send it back to Dr. Donne—Were justice done to both, I trow,He'd have but little, and thou—none.

2.

"'*Then thus to form Apollo's crown*.

"A crown! why, twist it how you will,Thy chaplet must be foolscap still.When next you visit Delphi's town,Enquire amongst your fellow-lodgers,They'll tell you Phoebus gave his crown,Some years before your birth, to Rogers.

3.

"'*Let every other bring his own*.'

"When coals to Newcastle are carried,And owls sent to Athens as wonders,From his spouse when the * *'s unmarried,Or Liverpool weeps o'er his blunders;When Tories and Whigs cease to quarrel,When C * *'s wife has an heir,Then Rogers shall ask us for laurel,And thou shalt have plenty to spare."

The mention which he makes of Sheridan in the note just cited affords a fit opportunity of producing, from one of his Journals, some particulars which he has noted down respecting this extraordinary man, for whose talents he entertained the most unbounded admiration,—rating him, in natural powers, far above all his great political contemporaries.

"In society I have met Sheridan frequently: he was superb! He had a sort of liking for me, and never attacked me, at least to my face, and he did every body else—high names, and wits, and orators, some of them poets also. I have seen him cut up Whitbread, quiz Madame de Staël, annihilate Colman, and do little less by some others (whose names, as friends, I set not down) of good fame and ability.

"The last time I met him was, I think, at Sir Gilbert Heathcote's, where he was as quick as ever—no, it was not the last time; the last time was at Douglas Kinnaird's.

"I have met him in all places and parties,—at Whitehall with the Melbournes, at the Marquis of Tavistock's, at Robins's the auctioneer's, at Sir Humphrey Davy's, at Sam Rogers's,—in short, in most kinds of company, and always found him very convivial and delightful.

"I have seen Sheridan weep two or three times. It may be that he was maudlin; but this only renders it more impressive, for who would see

"From Marlborough's eyes the tears of dotage flow,And Swift expire a driveller and a show?

Once I saw him cry at Robins's the auctioneer's, after a splendid dinner, full of great names and high spirits. I had the honour of sitting next to Sheridan. The occasion of his tears was some observation or other upon the subject of the sturdiness of the Whigs in resisting office and keeping to their principles: Sheridan turned round:—'Sir, it is easy for my Lord G. or Earl G. or Marquis B. or Lord H. with thousands upon thousands a year, some of it either *presently* derived, or *inherited* in sinecure or acquisitions from the public money, to boast of their patriotism and keep aloof from temptation; but they do not know from what temptation those have kept aloof who had equal pride, at least equal talents, and not unequal

passions, and nevertheless knew not in the course of their lives what it was to have a shilling of their own.' And in saying this he wept.

"I have more than once heard him say, 'that he never had a shilling of his own.' To be sure, he contrived to extract a good many of other people's.

"In 1815, I had occasion to visit my lawyer in Chancery Lane, he was with Sheridan. After mutual greetings, &c., Sheridan retired first. Before recurring to my own business, I could not help enquiring *that* of Sheridan. 'Oh,' replied the attorney, 'the usual thing! to stave off an action from his wine-merchant, my client.'—'Well,' said I, 'and what do you mean to do?'—'Nothing at all for the present,' said he: 'would you have us proceed against old Sherry? what would be the use of it?' and here he began laughing, and going over Sheridan's good gifts of conversation.

"Now, from personal experience, I can vouch that my attorney is by no means the tenderest of men, or particularly accessible to any kind of impression out of the statute or record; and yet Sheridan, in half an hour, had found the way to soften and seduce him in such a manner, that I almost think he would have thrown his client (an honest man, with all the laws, and some justice, on his side) out of the window, had he come in at the moment.

"Such was Sheridan! he could soften an attorney! There has been nothing like it since the days of Orpheus.

"One day I saw him take up his own 'Monody on Garrick.' He lighted upon the Dedication to the Dowager Lady * *. On seeing it, he flew into a rage, and exclaimed, 'that it must be a forgery, that he had never dedicated any thing of his to such a d——d canting,' &c. &c. &c—and so went on for half an hour abusing his own dedication, or at least the object of it. If all writers were equally sincere, it would be ludicrous.

"He told me that, on the night of the grand success of his School for Scandal, he was knocked down and put into the watch-house for making a row in the street, and being found intoxicated by the watchmen.

"When dying, he was requested to undergo 'an operation.' He replied, that he had already submitted to two, which were enough for one man's lifetime. Being asked what they were, he answered, 'having his hair cut, and sitting for his picture.'

"I have met George Colman occasionally, and thought him extremely pleasant and convivial. Sheridan's humour, or rather wit, was

always saturnine, and sometimes savage; he never laughed, (at least that *I* saw, and I watched him,) but Colman did. If I had to *choose*, and could not have both at a time, I should say, 'Let me begin the evening with Sheridan, and finish it with Colman.' Sheridan for dinner, Colman for supper; Sheridan for claret or port, but Colman for every thing, from the madeira and champagne at dinner, the claret with a *layer* of *port* between the glasses, up to the punch of the night, and down to the grog, or gin and water, of daybreak;—all these I have threaded with both the same. Sheridan was a grenadier company of life-guards, but Colman a whole regiment—of *light infantry*, to be sure, but still a regiment."

It was at this time that Lord Byron became acquainted (and, I regret to have to add, partly through my means) with Mr. Leigh Hunt, the editor of a well-known weekly journal, the Examiner. This gentleman I had myself formed an acquaintance with in the year 1811, and, in common with a large portion of the public, entertained a sincere admiration of his talents and courage as a journalist. The interest I took in him personally had been recently much increased by the manly spirit, which he had displayed throughout a prosecution instituted against himself and his brother, for a libel that had appeared in their paper on the Prince Regent, and in consequence of which they were both sentenced to imprisonment for two years. It will be recollected that there existed among the Whig party, at this period, a strong feeling of indignation at the late defection from themselves and their principles of the illustrious personage who had been so long looked up to as the friend and patron of both. Being myself, at the time, warmly—perhaps intemperately—under the influence of this feeling, I regarded the fate of Mr. Hunt with more than common interest, and, immediately on my arrival in town, paid him a visit in his prison. On mentioning the circumstance, soon after, to Lord Byron, and describing my surprise at the sort of luxurious comforts with which I had found the "wit in the dungeon" surrounded,—his trellised flower-garden without, and his books, busts, pictures, and piano-forte within,—the noble poet, whose political view of the case coincided entirely with my own, expressed a strong wish to pay a similar tribute of respect to Mr. Hunt, and accordingly, a day or two after, we proceeded for that purpose to the prison. The introduction which then took place was soon followed by a request from Mr. Hunt that we would dine with him; and the noble poet having good-naturedly accepted the invitation, Horsemonger Lane gaol had, in the month of June, 1813, the honour of receiving Lord Byron, as a guest, within its walls.

On the morning of our first visit to the journalist, I received from Lord Byron the following lines written, it will be perceived, the night before:—

"May 19. 1813.

"Oh you, who in all names can tickle the town,Anacreon, Tom Little, Tom Moore, or Tom Brown,—For hang me if I know of which you may most brag,Your Quarto two-pounds, or your Twopenny Post Bag;

* * * *

But now to my letter—to yours 'tis an answer—To-morrow be with me, as soon as you can, sir,All ready and dress'd for proceeding to spunge on(According to compact) the wit in the dungeon—Pray Phoebus at length our political maliceMay not get us lodgings within the same palace!I suppose that to-night you're engaged with some codgers,And for Sotheby's Blues have deserted Sam Rogers;And I, though with cold I have nearly my death got,Must put on my breeches, and wait on the Heathcote.But to-morrow at four, we will both play the Scurra,And you'll be Catullus, the R——t Mamurra.

"Dear M.—having got thus far, I am interrupted by .

10 o'clock.

"Half-past 11. is gone. I must dress for Lady Heathcote's.—Addio."

Our day in the prison was, if not agreeable, at least novel and odd. I had, for Lord Byron's sake, stipulated with our host beforehand, that the party should be, as much as possible, confined to ourselves; and, as far as regarded dinner, my wishes had been attended to;—there being present, besides a member or two of Mr. Hunt's own family, no other stranger, that I can recollect, but Mr. Mitchell, the ingenious translator of Aristophanes. Soon after dinner, however, there dropped in some of our host's literary friends, who, being utter strangers to Lord Byron and myself, rather disturbed the ease into which we were all settling. Among these, I remember, was Mr. John Scott,—the writer, afterwards, of some severe attacks on Lord Byron; and it is painful to think that, among the persons then assembled round the poet, there should have been *one* so

soon to step forth the assailant of his living fame, while *another*, less manful, was to reserve the cool venom for his grave.

On the 2d of June, in presenting a petition to the House of Lords, he made his third and last appearance as an orator, in that assembly. In his way home from the House that day, he called, I remember, at my lodgings, and found me dressing in a very great hurry for dinner. He was, I recollect, in a state of most humorous exaltation after his display, and, while I hastily went on with my task in the dressing-room, continued to walk up and down the adjoining chamber, spouting forth for me, in a sort of mock heroic voice, detached sentences of the speech he had just been delivering. "I told them," he said, "that it was a most flagrant violation of the Constitution—that, if such things were permitted, there was an end of English freedom, and that ——"—"But what was this dreadful grievance?" I asked, interrupting him in his eloquence.—"The grievance?" he repeated, pausing as if to consider—"Oh, that I forget." It is impossible, of course, to convey an idea of the dramatic humour with which he gave effect to these words; but his look and manner on such occasions were irresistibly comic; and it was, indeed, rather in such turns of fun and oddity, than in any more elaborate exhibition of wit, that the pleasantry of his conversation consisted.

Though it is evident that, after the brilliant success of Childe Harold, he had ceased to think of Parliament as an arena of ambition, yet, as a field for observation, we may take for granted it was not unstudied by him. To a mind of such quick and various views, every place and pursuit presented some aspect of interest; and whether in the ball-room, the boxing-school, or the senate, all must have been, by genius like his, turned to profit. The following are a few of the recollections and impressions which I find recorded by himself of his short parliamentary career:—

"I have never heard any one who fulfilled my ideal of an orator. Grattan would have been near it, but for his harlequin delivery. Pitt I never heard. Fox but once, and then he struck me as a debater, which to me seems as different from an orator as an improvisatore, or a versifier, from a poet. Grey is great, but it is not oratory. Canning is sometimes very like one. Windham I did not admire, though all the world did; it seemed sad sophistry. Whitbread was the Demosthenes of bad taste and vulgar vehemence, but strong, and English. Holland is impressive from sense and sincerity. Lord Lansdowne good, but still a debater only. Grenville I like vastly, if he would prune his speeches down to an hour's delivery. Burdett is sweet and silvery as Belial himself, and I think the greatest favourite in

Pandemonium; at least I always heard the country gentlemen and the ministerial devilry praise his speeches *up* stairs, and run down from Bellamy's when he was upon his legs. I heard Bob Milnes make his *second* speech; it made no impression. I like Ward—studied, but keen, and sometimes eloquent. Peel, my school and form fellow (we sat within two of each other), strange to say, I have never heard, though I often wished to do so; but from what I remember of him at Harrow, he *is*, or *should* be, among the best of them. Now I do *not* admire Mr. Wilberforce's speaking; it is nothing but a flow of words—'words, words, alone.'

"I doubt greatly if the English have any eloquence, properly so called; and am inclined to think that the Irish *had* a great deal, and that the French *will* have, and have had in Mirabeau. Lord Chatham and Burke are the nearest approaches to orators in England. I don't know what Erskine may have been at the bar, but in the House I wish him at the bar once more. Lauderdale is shrill, and Scotch, and acute.

"But amongst all these, good, bad, and indifferent, I never heard the speech which was not too long for the auditors, and not very intelligible, except here and there. The whole thing is a grand deception, and as tedious and tiresome as may be to those who must be often present. I heard Sheridan only once, and that briefly, but I liked his voice, his manner, and his wit: and he is the only one of them I ever wished to hear at greater length.

"The impression of Parliament upon me was, that its members are not formidable as *speakers*, but very much so as an *audience*; because in so numerous a body there may be little eloquence, (after all, there were but *two* thorough orators in all antiquity, and I suspect still *fewer* in modern times,) but there must be a leaven of thought and good sense sufficient to make them *know* what is right, though they can't express it nobly.

"Horne Tooke and Roscoe both are said to have declared that they left Parliament with a higher opinion of its aggregate integrity and abilities than that with which they entered it. The general amount of both in most Parliaments is probably about the same, as also the number of *speakers* and their talent. I except *orators*, of course, because they are things of ages, and not of septennial or triennial re-unions. Neither House ever struck me with more awe or respect than the same number of Turks in a divan, or of Methodists in a barn, would have done. Whatever diffidence or nervousness I felt (and I felt both, in a great degree) arose from the number rather than the quality of the assemblage, and the thought rather

of the *public without* than the persons within,—knowing (as all know) that Cicero himself, and probably the Messiah, could never have altered the vote of a single lord of the bedchamber, or bishop. I thought *our* House dull, but the other animating enough upon great days.

"I have heard that when Grattan made his first speech in the English Commons, it was for some minutes doubtful whether to laugh at or cheer him. The *débût* of his predecessor, Flood, had been a complete failure, under nearly similar circumstances. But when the ministerial part of our senators had watched Pitt (their thermometer) for the cue, and saw him nod repeatedly his stately nod of approbation, they took the hint from their huntsman, and broke out into the most rapturous cheers. Grattan's speech, indeed, deserved them; it was a *chef-d'oeuvre*. I did not hear *that* speech of his (being then at Harrow), but heard most of his others on the same question—also that on the war of 1815. I differed from his opinions on the latter question, but coincided in the general admiration of his eloquence.

"When I met old Courtenay, the orator, at Rogers's, the poet's, in 1811-12, I was much taken with the portly remains of his fine figure, and the still acute quickness of his conversation. It was *he* who silenced Flood in the English House by a crushing reply to a hasty *débût* of the rival of Grattan in Ireland. I asked Courtenay (for I like to trace motives) if he had not some personal provocation; for the acrimony of his answer seemed to me, as I had read it, to involve it. Courtenay said 'he had; that, when in Ireland (being an Irishman), at the bar of the Irish House of Commons, Flood had made a personal and unfair attack upon *himself*, who, not being a member of that House, could not defend himself, and that some years afterwards the opportunity of retort offering in the English Parliament, he could not resist it.' He certainly repaid Flood with interest, for Flood never made any figure, and only a speech or two afterwards, in the English House of Commons. I must except, however, his speech on Reform in 1790, which Fox called 'the best he ever heard upon that subject.'"

For some time he had entertained thoughts of going again abroad; and it appeared, indeed, to be a sort of relief to him, whenever he felt melancholy or harassed, to turn to the freedom and solitude of a life of travel as his resource. During the depression of spirits which he laboured under, while printing Childe Harold, "he would frequently," says Mr. Dallas, "talk of selling Newstead, and of going to reside at Naxos, in the Grecian Archipelago,—to adopt the eastern costume and customs, and to pass his time in studying the Oriental languages and literature." The

excitement of the triumph that soon after ensued, and the success which, in other pursuits besides those of literature, attended him, again diverted his thoughts from these migratory projects. But the roving fit soon returned; and we have seen, from one of his letters to Mr. William Bankes, that he looked forward to finding himself, in the course of this spring, among the mountains of his beloved Greece once more. For a time, this plan was exchanged for the more social project of accompanying his friends, the family of Lord Oxford, to Sicily; and it was while engaged in his preparatives for this expedition that the annexed letters were written.

LETTER 121. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Maidenhead, June 13. 1813.

"* * * I have read the 'Strictures,' which are just enough, and not grossly abusive, in very fair couplets. There is a note against Massinger near the end, and one cannot quarrel with one's company, at any rate. The author detects some incongruous figures in a passage of English Bards, page 23., but which edition I do not know. In the *sole* copy in your possession—I mean the *fifth* edition—you may make these alterations, that I may profit (though a little too late) by his remarks:—For '*hellish* instinct,' substitute '*brutal* instinct;' '*harpies*' alter to '*felons*;' and for 'blood-hounds' write 'hell-hounds.' These be 'very bitter words, by my troth,' and the alterations not much sweeter; but as I shall not publish the thing, they can do no harm, but are a satisfaction to me in the way of amendment. The passage is only twelve lines.

"You do not answer me about H.'s book; I want to write to him, and not to say any thing unpleasing. If you direct to Post Office, Portsmouth, till *called* for, I will send and receive your letter. You never told me of the forthcoming critique on Columbus, which is not *too* fair; and I do not think justice quite done to the 'Pleasures,' which surely entitle the author to a higher rank than that assigned him in the Quarterly. But I must not cavil at the decisions of the *invisible infallibles*; and the article is very well written. The general horror of '*fragments*' makes me tremulous for 'The Giaour;' but you would publish it—I presume, by this time, to your repentance. But as I consented, whatever be its fate, I won't now quarrel with you, even though I detect it in my pastry; but I shall not open a pie without apprehension for some weeks.

"The books which may be marked G.O. I will carry out. Do you know Clarke's Naufragia? I am told that he asserts the *first* volume of Robinson Crusoe was written by the first Lord Oxford, when in the Tower, and given by him to Defoe; if true, it is a curious anecdote. Have you got back Lord Brooke's MS.? and what does Heber say of it? Write to me at Portsmouth. Ever yours, &c.

"N."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"June 18. 1813.

"Dear Sir,

"Will you forward the

LETTER 122. TO W. GIFFORD, ESQ.

"June 18. 1813.

"My dear Sir,

"I feel greatly at a loss how to write to you at all—still more to thank you as I ought. If you knew the veneration with which I have ever regarded you, long before I had the most distant prospect of becoming your acquaintance, literary or personal, my embarrassment would not surprise you.

"Any suggestion of yours, even were it conveyed in the less tender shape of the text of the Baviad, or a Monk Mason note in Massinger, would have been obeyed; I should have endeavoured to improve myself by your censure: judge then if I should be less willing to profit by your kindness. It is not for me to bandy compliments with my elders and my betters: I receive your approbation with gratitude, and will not return my brass for your gold by expressing more fully those sentiments of admiration, which, however sincere, would, I know, be unwelcome.

"To your advice on religious topics, I shall equally attend. Perhaps the best way will be by avoiding them altogether. The already published objectionable passages have been much commented upon, but certainly have been rather strongly interpreted. I am no bigot to infidelity, and did

not expect that, because I doubted the immortality of man, I should be charged with denying the existence of a God. It was the comparative insignificance of ourselves and *our world*, when placed in comparison with the mighty whole, of which it is an atom, that first led me to imagine that our pretensions to eternity might be over-rated.

"This, and being early disgusted with a Calvinistic Scotch school, where I was cudgelled to church for the first ten years of my life, afflicted me with this malady; for, after all, it is, I believe, a disease of the mind as much as other kinds of hypochondria."

LETTER 123. TO MR. MOORE.

"June 22. 1813.

"Yesterday I dined in company with '* *, the Epicene,' whose politics are sadly changed. She is for the Lord of Israel and the Lord of Liverpool—a vile antithesis of a Methodist and a Tory—talks of nothing but devotion and the ministry, and, I presume, expects that God and the government will help her to a pension.

"Murray, the αναξ of publishers, the Anac of stationers, has a design upon you in the paper line. He wants you to become the staple and stipendiary editor of a periodical work. What say you? Will you be bound, like 'Kit Smart, to write for ninety-nine years in the Universal Visiter?' Seriously he talks of hundreds a year, and—though I hate prating of the beggarly elements—his proposal may be to your honour and profit, and, I am very sure, will be to our pleasure.

"I don't know what to say about 'friendship.' I never was in friendship but once, in my nineteenth year, and then it gave me as much trouble as love. I am afraid, as Whitbread's sire said to the king, when he wanted to knight him, that I am 'too old:' but, nevertheless, no one wishes you more friends, fame, and felicity, than Yours," &c.

Having relinquished his design of accompanying the Oxfords to Sicily, he again thought of the East, as will be seen by the following letters, and

proceeded so far in his preparations for the voyage as to purchase of Love, the jeweller, of Old Bond Street, about a dozen snuff-boxes, as presents for some of his old Turkish acquaintances.

LETTER 124. TO MR. MOORE.

"4. Benedictine Street, St. James's, July 8. 1813.

"I presume by your silence that I have blundered into something noxious in my reply to your letter, for the which I beg leave to send beforehand a sweeping apology, which you may apply to any, or all, parts of that unfortunate epistle. If I err in my conjecture, I expect the like from you, in putting our correspondence so long in quarantine. God he knows what I have said; but he also knows (if he is not as indifferent to mortals as the *nonchalant* deities of Lucretius), that you are the last person I want to offend. So, if I have,—why the devil don't you say it at once, and expectorate your spleen?

"Rogers is out of town with Madame de Staël, who hath published an Essay against Suicide, which, I presume, will make somebody shoot himself;—as a sermon by Blinkensop, in *proof* of Christianity, sent a hitherto most orthodox acquaintance of mine out of a chapel of ease a perfect atheist. Have you found or founded a residence yet? and have you begun or finished a poem? If you won't tell me what *I* have done, pray say what you have done, or left undone, yourself. I am still in equipment for voyaging, and anxious to hear from, or of, you *before* I go, which anxiety you should remove more readily, as you think I sha'n't cogitate about you afterwards. I shall give the lie to that calumny by fifty foreign letters, particularly from any place where the plague is rife,—without a drop of vinegar or a whiff of sulphur to save you from infection.

"The Oxfords have sailed almost a fortnight, and my sister is in town, which is a great comfort—for, never having been much together, we are naturally more attached to each other. I presume the illuminations have conflagrated to Derby (or wherever you are) by this time. We are just recovering from tumult and train oil, and transparent fripperies, and all the noise and nonsense of victory. Drury Lane had a large *M.W.*, which some thought was Marshal Wellington; others, that it might be translated into Manager Whitbread; while the ladies of the vicinity of the saloon conceived the last letter to be complimentary to themselves. I leave this to the commentators to illustrate. If you don't answer this, I sha'n't say what *you* deserve, but I think *I* deserve a reply. Do you conceive there is no Post-Bag but the Twopenny? Sunburn me, if you are not too bad."

LETTER 125. TO MR. MOORE.

"July 13. 1813.

"Your letter set me at ease; for I really thought (as I hear of your susceptibility) that I had said—I know not what—but something I should have been very sorry for, had it, or I, offended you;—though I don't see how a man with a beautiful wife—*his own* children,—quiet—fame—competency and friends, (I will vouch for a thousand, which is more than I will for a unit in my own behalf,) can be offended with any thing.

"Do you know, Moore, I am amazingly inclined—remember I say but *inclined*—to be seriously enamoured with Lady A.F.—but this * * has ruined all my prospects. However, you know her; is she *clever*, or sensible, or good-tempered? either *would* do—I scratch out the *will*. I don't ask as to her beauty—that I see; but my circumstances are mending, and were not my other prospects blackening, I would take a wife, and that should be the woman, had I a chance. I do not yet know her much, but better than I did.

"I want to get away, but find difficulty in compassing a passage in a ship of war. They had better let me go; if I cannot, patriotism is the word—'nay, an' they'll mouth, I'll rant as well as they.' Now, what are you doing?—writing, we all hope, for our own sakes. Remember you must edite my posthumous works, with a Life of the Author, for which I will send you Confessions, dated, 'Lazaretto,' Smyrna, Malta, or Palermo—one can die any where.

"There is to be a thing on Tuesday ycleped a national fête. The Regent and * * * are to be there, and every body else, who has shillings enough for what was once a guinea. Vauxhall is the scene—there are six tickets issued for the modest women, and it is supposed there will be three to spare. The passports for the lax are beyond my arithmetic.

"P.S.—The Staël last night attacked me most furiously—said that I had 'no right to make love—that I had used * * barbarously—that I had no feeling, and was totally insensible to *la belle passion*, and *had* been all my life.' I am very glad to hear it, but did not know it before. Let me hear from you anon."

LETTER 126. TO MR. MOORE.

"July 25. 1813.

"I am not well versed enough in the ways of single woman to make much matrimonial progress.

"I have been dining like the dragon of Wantley for this last week. My head aches with the vintage of various cellars, and my brains are muddled as their dregs. I met your friends the D * * s:—she sung one of your best songs so well, that, but for the appearance of affectation, I could have cried; he reminds me of Hunt, but handsomer, and more musical in soul, perhaps. I wish to God he may conquer his horrible anomalous complaint. The upper part of her face is beautiful, and she seems much attached to her husband. He is right, nevertheless, in leaving this nauseous town. The first winter would infallibly destroy her complexion,—and the second, very probably, every thing else.

"I must tell you a story. M * * (of indifferent memory) was dining out the other day, and complaining of the P——e's coldness to his old wassailers. D * * (a learned Jew) bored him with questions—why this? and why that? 'Why did the P——e act thus?'—'Why, sir, on account of Lord * *, who ought to be ashamed of himself.'—'And why ought Lord * * to be ashamed of himself?'—'Because the P——e, sir, * * * * * * * *.'—'And why, sir, did the P——e cut *you*?'—' Because, G——d d——mme, sir, I stuck to my principles.'—'And *why* did you stick to your principles?'

"Is not this last question the best that was ever put, when you consider to whom? It nearly killed M * *. Perhaps you may think it stupid, but, as Goldsmith said about the peas, it was a very good joke when I heard it—as I did from an ear-witness—and is only spoilt in my narration.

"The season has closed with a dandy ball;—but I have dinners with the Harrowbys, Rogers, and Frere and Mackintosh, where I shall drink your health in a silent bumper, and regret your absence till 'too much canaries' wash away my memory, or render it superfluous by a vision of you at the opposite side of the table. Canning has disbanded his party by a speech from his * * * *—the true throne of a Tory. Conceive his turning them off in a formal harangue, and bidding them think for themselves. 'I have led my ragamuffins where they are well peppered. There are but three of the 150 left alive, and they are for the *Towns-end* (*query*, might not Falstaff mean the Bow Street officer? I dare say Malone's posthumous edition will have it so) for life.'

"Since I wrote last, I have been into the country. I journeyed by night—no incident, or accident, but an alarm on the part of my valet on the outside, who, in crossing Epping Forest, actually, I believe, flung down his purse before a mile-stone, with a glow-worm in the second figure of number XIX—mistaking it for a footpad and dark lantern. I can only attribute his fears to a pair of new pistols wherewith I had armed him; and he thought it necessary to display his vigilance by calling out to me whenever we passed any thing—no matter whether moving or stationary. Conceive ten miles, with a tremor every furlong. I have scribbled you a fearfully long letter. This sheet must be blank, and is merely a wrapper, to preclude the tabellarians of the post from peeping. You once complained of my *not* writing;—I will 'heap coals of fire upon your head' by *not* complaining of your *not* reading. Ever, my dear Moore, your'n (isn't that the Staffordshire termination?)

"BYRON."

LETTER 127. TO MR. MOORE.

"July 27. 1813.

"When you next imitate the style of 'Tacitus,' pray add, 'de moribus Germanorum;'—this last was a piece of barbarous silence, and could only be taken from the *Woods*, and, as such, I attribute it entirely to your sylvan sequestration at Mayfield Cottage. You will find, on casting up accounts, that you are my debtor by several sheets and one epistle. I shall bring my action;—if you don't discharge, expect to hear from my attorney. I have forwarded your letter to Ruggiero; but don't make a postman of me again, for fear I should be tempted to violate your sanctity of wax or wafer.

"Believe me ever yours *indignantly*,

"BN."

LETTER 128. TO MR. MOORE.

"July 28. 1813.

"Can't you be satisfied with the pangs of my jealousy of Rogers, without actually making me the pander of your epistolary intrigue? This is the second letter you have enclosed to my address, notwithstanding a miraculous long answer, and a subsequent short one or two of your own. If you do so again, I can't tell to what pitch my fury may soar. I shall send you verse or arsenic, as likely as any thing,—four thousand couplets on sheets beyond the privilege of franking; that privilege, sir, of which you take an undue advantage over a too susceptible senator, by forwarding your lucubrations to every one but himself. I won't frank *from* you, or *for* you, or *to* you—may I be curst if I do, unless you mend your manners. I disown you—I disclaim you—and by all the powers of Eulogy, I will write a panegyric upon you—or dedicate a quarto—if you don't make me ample amends.

"P.S.—I am in training to dine with Sheridan and Rogers this evening. I have a little spite against R., and will shed his 'Clary wines pottle-deep.' This is nearly my ultimate or penultimate letter; for I am quite equipped, and only wait a passage. Perhaps I may wait a few weeks for Sligo, but not if I can help it."

He had, with the intention of going to Greece, applied to Mr. Croker, the Secretary of the Admiralty, to procure him a passage on board a king's ship to the Mediterranean; and, at the request of this gentleman, Captain Carlton, of the Boyne, who was just then ordered to reinforce Sir Edward Pellew, consented to receive Lord Byron into his cabin for the voyage. To the letter announcing this offer, the following is the reply.

LETTER 129. TO MR. CROKER.

"Bt. Str., August 2. 1813.

"Dear Sir,

"I was honoured with your unexpected and very obliging letter, when on the point of leaving London, which prevented me from acknowledging my obligation as quickly as I felt it sincerely. I am endeavouring all in my power to be ready before Saturday—and even if I should not succeed, I can only blame my own tardiness, which will not the less enhance the benefit I have lost. I have only to add my hope of forgiveness for all my trespasses on your time and patience, and with my best wishes for your

public and private welfare, I have the honour to be, most truly, your obliged and most obedient servant,

"BYRON."

So early as the autumn of this year, a fifth edition of The Giaour was required; and again his fancy teemed with fresh materials for its pages. The verses commencing "The browsing camels' bells are tinkling," and the four pages that follow the line, "Yes, love indeed is light from heaven," were all added at this time. Nor had the overflowings of his mind even yet ceased, as I find in the poem, as it exists at present, still further additions,—and, among them, those four brilliant lines,—

"She was a form of life and light,That, seen, became a part of sight,And rose, where'er I turn'd mine eye,The Morning-star of memory!"

The following notes and letters to Mr. Murray, during these outpourings, will show how irresistible was the impulse under which he vented his thoughts.

"If you send more proofs, I shall never finish this infernal story—'Ecce signum'—thirty-three more lines enclosed! to the utter discomfiture of the printer, and, I fear, not to your advantage.

"B."

"Half-past two in the morning, Aug. 10. 1813.

"Dear Sir,

"Pray suspend the *proofs*, for I am *bitten* again, and have *quantities* for other parts of the bravura.

"Yours ever, B.

"P.S.—You shall have them in the course of the day."

LETTER 130. TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 26. 1813.

"I have looked over and corrected one proof, but not so carefully (God knows if you can read it through, but I can't) as to preclude your eye from discovering some *o*mission of mine or *com*mission of your printer. If you have patience, look it over. Do you know any body who can stop—I mean *point*—commas, and so forth? for I am, I hear, a sad hand at your punctuation. I have, but with some difficulty, *not* added any more to this snake of a poem, which has been lengthening its rattles every month. It is now fearfully long, being more than a Canto and a half of Childe Harold, which contains but 882 lines per book, with all late additions inclusive.

"The last lines Hodgson likes. It is not often he does, and when he don't he tells me with great energy, and I fret and alter. I have thrown them in to soften the ferocity of our Infidel, and, for a dying man, have given him a good deal to say for himself.

"I was quite sorry to hear you say you stayed in town on my account, and I hope sincerely you did not mean so superfluous a piece of politeness.

"Our *six* critiques!—they would have made half a Quarterly by themselves; but this is the age of criticism."

The following refer apparently to a still later edition.

LETTER 131. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Stilton, Oct. 3. 1813.

"I have just recollected an alteration you may make in the proof to be sent to Aston.—Among the lines on Hassan's Serai, not far from the beginning, is this—

"Unmeet for Solitude to share.

Now to share implies more than *one*, and Solitude is a single gentleman; it must be thus—

"For many a gilded chamber's there,Which Solitude might well forbear;

and so on.—My address is Aston Hall, Rotherham.

"Will you adopt this correction? and pray accept a Stilton cheese from me for your trouble. Ever yours, B.

"If the old line stands let the other run thus—

"Nor there will weary traveller halt,To bless the sacred bread and salt.

"*Note*.—To partake of food—to break bread and taste salt with your host, ensures the safety of the guest; even though an enemy, his person from that moment becomes sacred.

"There is another additional note sent yesterday—on the Priest in the Confessional.

"P.S.—I leave this to your discretion; if any body thinks the old line a good one or the cheese a bad one, don't accept either. But, in that case, the word *share* is repeated soon after in the line—

"To share the master's bread and salt;

and must be altered to—

"To break the master's bread and salt.

This is not so well, though—confound it!"

LETTER 132. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Oct. 12. 1813.

"You must look The Giaour again over carefully; there are a few lapses, particularly in the last page.—'I *know* 'twas false; she could not die;' it was, and ought to be—'I *knew*.' Pray observe this and similar mistakes.

"I have received and read the British Review. I really think the writer in most points very right. The only mortifying thing is the accusation of imitation. *Crabbe*'s passage I never saw; and Scott I no further meant to follow than in his *lyric* measure, which is Gray's, Milton's, and any one's who likes it. The Giaour is certainly a bad character, but not dangerous;

and I think his fate and his feelings will meet with few proselytes. I shall be very glad to hear from or of you, when you please; but don't put yourself out of your way on my account."

LETTER 133. TO MR. MOORE.

"Bennet Street, August 22. 1813.

"As our late—I might say, deceased—correspondence had too much of the town-life leaven in it, we will now, 'paulo majora,' prattle a little of literature in all its branches; and first of the first—criticism. The Prince is at Brighton, and Jackson, the boxer, gone to Margate, having, I believe, decoyed Yarmouth to see a milling in that polite neighbourhood. Made. de Staël Holstein has lost one of her young barons, who has been carbonadoed by a vile Teutonic adjutant,—kilt and killed in a coffee-house at Scrawsenhawsen. Corinne is, of course, what all mothers must be,—but will, I venture to prophesy, do what few mothers could—write an Essay upon it. She cannot exist without a grievance—and somebody to see, or read, how much grief becomes her. I have not seen her since the event; but merely judge (not very charitably) from prior observation.

"In a 'mail-coach copy' of the Edinburgh, I perceive The Giaour is second article. The numbers are still in the Leith smack—*pray, which way is the wind?* The said article is so very mild and sentimental, that it must be written by Jeffrey *in love*;—you know he is gone to America to marry some fair one, of whom he has been, for several *quarters, éperdument amoureux*. Seriously—as Winifred Jenkins says of Lismahago—Mr. Jeffrey (or his deputy) 'has done the handsome thing by me,' and I say *nothing*. But this I will say, if you and I had knocked one another on the head in this quarrel, how he would have laughed, and what a mighty bad figure we should have cut in our posthumous works. By the by, I was called *in* the other day to mediate between two gentlemen bent upon carnage, and,—after a long struggle between the natural desire of destroying one's fellow-creatures, and the dislike of seeing men play the fool for nothing,—I got one to make an apology, and the other to take it, and left them to live happy ever after. One was a peer, the other a friend untitled, and both fond of high play;—and one, I can swear for, though very mild, 'not fearful,' and so dead a shot, that, though the other is the thinnest of men,

he would have split him like a cane. They both conducted themselves very well, and I put them out of *pain* as soon as I could.

"There is an American Life of G.F. Cooke, *Scurra* deceased, lately published. Such a book!—I believe, since Drunken Barnaby's Journal, nothing like it has drenched the press. All green-room and tap-room—drams and the drama—brandy, whisky-punch, and, *latterly*, toddy, overflow every page. Two things are rather marvellous,—first, that a man should live so long drunk, and, next, that he should have found a sober biographer. There are some very laughable things in it, nevertheless;—but the pints he swallowed, and the parts he performed, are too regularly registered.

"All this time you wonder I am not gone; so do I; but the accounts of the plague are very perplexing—not so much for the thing itself as the quarantine established in all ports, and from all places, even from England. It is true, the forty or sixty days would, in all probability, be as foolishly spent on shore as in the ship; but one like's to have one's choice, nevertheless. Town is awfully empty; but not the worse for that. I am really puzzled with my perfect ignorance of what I mean to do;—not stay, if I can help it, but where to go? Sligo is for the North;—a pleasant place, Petersburgh, in September, with one's ears and nose in a muff, or else tumbling into one's neckcloth or pocket-handkerchief! If the winter treated Buonaparte with so little ceremony, what would it inflict upon your solitary traveller?—Give me a *sun*, I care not how hot, and sherbet, I care not how cool, and my Heaven is as easily made as your Persian's. The Giaour is now a thousand and odd lines. 'Lord Fanny spins a thousand such a day,' eh, Moore?—thou wilt needs be a wag, but I forgive it. Yours ever,

"BN.

"P.S. I perceive I have written a flippant and rather cold-hearted letter! let it go, however. I have said nothing, either, of the brilliant sex; but the fact is, I am at this moment in a far more serious, and entirely new, scrape than any of the last twelve months,—and that is saying a good deal. It is unlucky we can neither live with nor without these women.

"I am now thinking of regretting that, just as I have left Newstead, you reside near it. Did you ever see it? *do*—but don't tell me that you like it. If I had known of such intellectual neighbourhood, I don't think I should have quitted it. You could have come over so often, as a bachelor,—for it was a thorough bachelor's mansion—plenty of wine and such sordid sensualities—with books enough, room enough, and an air of antiquity

about all (except the lasses) that would have suited you, when pensive, and served you to laugh at when in glee. I had built myself a bath and a *vault*—and now I sha'n't even be buried in it. It is odd that we can't even be certain of a *grave*, at least a particular one. I remember, when about fifteen, reading your poems there, which I can repeat almost now,—and asking all kinds of questions about the author, when I heard that he was not dead according to the preface; wondering if I should ever see him—and though, at that time, without the smallest poetical propensity myself, very much taken, as you may imagine, with that volume. Adieu—I commit you to the care of the gods—Hindoo, Scandinavian, and Hellenic!

"P.S. 2d. There is an excellent review of Grimm's Correspondence and Made. de Staël in this No. of the E.R. Jeffrey, himself, was my critic last year; but this is, I believe, by another hand. I hope you are going on with your *grand coup*—pray do—or that damned Lucien Buonaparte will beat us all. I have seen much of his poem in MS., and he really surpasses every thing beneath Tasso. Hodgson is translating him *against* another bard. You and (I believe, Rogers,) Scott, Gifford, and myself, are to be referred to as judges between the twain,—that is, if you accept the office. Conceive our different opinions! I think we, most of us (I am talking very impudently, you will think—*us*, indeed!) have a way of our own,—at least, you and Scott certainly have."

LETTER 134. TO MR. MOORE.

"August 28. 1813.

"Ay, my dear Moore, 'there *was* a time'—I have heard of your tricks, when 'you was campaigning at the King of Bohemy.' I am much mistaken if, some fine London spring, about the year 1815, that time does not come again. After all, we must end in marriage; and I can conceive nothing more delightful than such a state in the country, reading the county newspaper, &c., and kissing one's wife's maid. Seriously, I would incorporate with any woman of decent demeanour to-morrow—that is, I would a month ago, but, at present, * * *

"Why don't you 'parody that Ode?'—Do you think I should be *tetchy?* or have you done it, and won't tell me?—You are quite right about

Giamschid, and I have reduced it to a dissyllable within this half hour. I am glad to hear you talk of Richardson, because it tells me what you won't—that you are going to beat Lucien. At least tell me how far you have proceeded. Do you think me less interested about your works, or less sincere than our friend Ruggiero? I am not—and never was. In that thing of mine, the 'English Bards,' at the time when I was angry with all the world, I never 'disparaged your parts,' although I did not know you personally;—and have always regretted that you don't give us an *entire* work, and not sprinkle yourself in detached pieces—beautiful, I allow, and quite *alone* in our language, but still giving us a right to expect a *Shah Nameh* (is that the name?) as well as gazels. Stick to the East;—the oracle, Staël, told me it was the only poetical policy. The North, South, and West, have all been exhausted; but from the East, we have nothing but S * *'s unsaleables,—and these he has contrived to spoil, by adopting only their most outrageous fictions. His personages don't interest us, and yours will. You will have no competitor; and, if you had, you ought to be glad of it. The little I have done in that way is merely a 'voice in the wilderness' for you; and if it has had any success, that also will prove that the public are orientalising, and pave the path for you.

"I have been thinking of a story, grafted on the amours of a Peri and a mortal—something like, only more *philanthropical* than, Cazotte's Diable Amoureux. It would require a good deal of poesy, and tenderness is not my forte. For that, and other reasons, I have given up the idea, and merely suggest it to you, because, in intervals of your greater work, I think it a subject you might make much of. If you want any more books, there is 'Castellan's Moeurs des Ottomans,' the best compendium of the kind I ever met with, in six small tomes. I am really taking a liberty by talking in this style to my 'elders and my betters;'—pardon it, and don't *Rochefoucault* my motives."

LETTER 135. TO MR. MOORE.

"August—September, I mean—1. 1813.

"I send you, begging your acceptance, Castellan, and three vols. on Turkish Literature, not yet looked into. The *last* I will thank you to read, extract what you want, and return in a week, as they are lent to me by that brightest of Northern constellations, Mackintosh,—amongst many other

kind things into which India has warmed him, for I am sure your *home* Scotsman is of a less genial description.

"Your Peri, my dear M., is sacred and inviolable; I have no idea of touching the hem of her petticoat. Your affectation of a dislike to encounter me is so flattering, that I begin to think myself a very fine fellow. But you are laughing at me—'Stap my vitals, Tarn! thou art a very impudent person;' and, if you are not laughing at me, you deserve to be laughed at. Seriously, what on earth can you, or have you, to dread from any poetical flesh breathing? It really puts me out of humour to hear you talk thus.

"'The Giaour' I have added to a good deal; but still in foolish fragments. It contains about 1200 lines, or rather more—now printing. You will allow me to send you a copy. You delight me much by telling me that I am in your good graces, and more particularly as to temper; for, unluckily, I have the reputation of a very bad one. But they say the devil is amusing when pleased, and I must have been more venomous than the old serpent, to have hissed or stung in your company. It may be, and would appear to a third person, an incredible thing, but I know you will believe me when I say, that I am as anxious for your success as one human being can be for another's,—as much as if I had never scribbled a line. Surely the field of fame is wide enough for all; and if it were not, I would not willingly rob my neighbour of a rood of it. Now you have a pretty property of some thousand acres there, and when you have passed your present Inclosure Bill, your income will be doubled, (there's a metaphor, worthy of a Templar, namely, pert and low,) while my wild common is too remote to incommode you, and quite incapable of such fertility. I send you (which return per post, as the printer would say) a curious letter from a friend of mine, which will let you into the origin of 'The Giaour.' Write soon. Ever, dear Moore, yours most entirely, &c.

"P.S.—This letter was written to me on account of a *different story* circulated by some gentlewomen of our acquaintance, a little too close to the text. The part erased contained merely some Turkish names, and circumstantial evidence of the girl's detection, not very important or decorous."

LETTER 136. TO MR. MOORE.

"Sept. 5. 1813.

"You need not tie yourself down to a day with Toderini, but send him at your leisure, having anatomised him into such annotations as you want; I do not believe that he has ever undergone that process before, which is the best reason for not sparing him now.

"* * has returned to town, but not yet recovered of the Quarterly. What fellows these reviewers are! 'these bugs do fear us all.' They made you fight, and me (the milkiest of men) a satirist, and will end by making * * madder than Ajax. I have been reading Memory again, the other day, and Hope together, and retain all my preference of the former. His elegance is really wonderful—there is no such thing as a vulgar line in his book.

"What say you to Buonaparte? Remember, I back him against the field, barring Catalepsy and the Elements. Nay, I almost wish him success against all countries but this,—were it only to choke the Morning Post, and his undutiful father-in-law, with that rebellious bastard of Scandinavian adoption, Bernadotte. Rogers wants me to go with him on a crusade to the Lakes, and to besiege you on our way. This last is a great temptation, but I fear it will not be in my power, unless you would go on with one of us somewhere—no matter where. It is too late for Matlock, but we might hit upon some scheme, high life or low,—the last would be much the best for amusement. I am so sick of the other, that I quite sigh for a cider-cellar, or a cruise in a smuggler's sloop.

"You cannot wish more than I do that the Fates were a little more accommodating to our parallel lines, which prolong ad infinitum without coming a jot nearer. I almost wish I were married, too—which is saying much. All my friends, seniors and juniors, are in for it, and ask me to be godfather,—the only species of parentage which, I believe, will ever come to my share in a lawful way; and, in an unlawful one, by the blessing of Lucina, we can never be certain,—though the parish may. I suppose I shall hear from you to-morrow. If not, this goes as it is; but I leave room for a P.S., in case any thing requires an answer. Ever, &c.

"No letter—*n'importe*. R. thinks the Quarterly will be at *me* this time: if so, it shall be a war of extermination—no *quarter*. From the youngest devil down to the oldest woman of that review, all shall perish by one fatal lampoon. The ties of nature shall be torn asunder, for I will not even spare my bookseller; nay, if one were to include readers also, all the better."

LETTER 137. TO MR. MOORE.

"September 8. 1813.

"I am sorry to see Tod. again so soon, for fear your scrupulous conscience should have prevented you from fully availing yourself of his spoils. By this coach I send you a copy of that awful pamphlet 'The Giaour,' which has never procured me half so high a compliment as your modest alarm. You will (if inclined in an evening) perceive that I have added much in quantity,—a circumstance which may truly diminish your modesty upon the subject.

"You stand certainly in great need of a 'lift' with Mackintosh. My dear Moore, you strangely under-rate yourself. I should conceive it an affectation in any other; but I think I know you well enough to believe that you don't know your own value. However, 'tis a fault that generally mends; and, in your case, it really ought. I have heard him speak of you as highly as your wife could wish; and enough to give all your friends the jaundice.

"Yesterday I had a letter from *Ali Pacha!* brought by Dr. Holland, who is just returned from Albania. It is in Latin, and begins 'Excellentissime *nec non* Carissime,' and ends about a gun he wants made for him;—it is signed 'Ali Vizir.' What do you think he has been about? H. tells me that, last spring, he took a hostile town, where, forty-two years ago, his mother and sisters were treated as Miss Cunigunde was by the Bulgarian cavalry. He takes the town, selects all the survivors of this exploit—children, grandchildren, &c. to the tune of six hundred, and has them shot before his face. Recollect, he spared the rest of the city, and confined himself to the Tarquin pedigree,—which is more than I would. So much for 'dearest friend.'"

LETTER 138. TO MR. MOORE.

"Sept. 9. 1813.

"I write to you from Mr. Murray's, and I may say, from Murray, who, if you are not predisposed in favour of any other publisher, would be happy to

treat with you, at a fitting time, for your work. I can safely recommend him as fair, liberal, and attentive, and certainly, in point of reputation, he stands among the first of 'the trade.' I am sure he would do you justice. I have written to you so much lately, that you will be glad to see so little now.

"Ever," &c. &c.

LETTER 139. TO MR. MOORE.

"September 27. 1813.

"Thomas Moore,

"(Thou wilt never be called '*true* Thomas,' like he of Ercildoune,) why don't you write to me?—as you won't, I must. I was near you at Aston the other day, and hope I soon shall be again. If so, you must and shall meet me, and go to Matlock and elsewhere, and take what, in *flash* dialect, is poetically termed 'a lark,' with Rogers and me for accomplices. Yesterday, at Holland House, I was introduced to Southey—the best looking bard I have seen for some time. To have that poet's head and shoulders, I would almost have written his Sapphics. He is certainly a prepossessing person to look on, and a man of talent, and all that, and—*there* is his eulogy.

"* * read me part of a letter from you. By the foot of Pharaoh, I believe there was abuse, for he stopped short, so he did, after a fine saying about our correspondence, and *looked*—I wish I could revenge myself by attacking you, or by telling you that I have *had* to defend you—an agreeable way which one's friends have of recommending themselves by saying—'Ay, ay, *I* gave it Mr. Such-a-one for what he said about your being a plagiary, and a rake, and so on.' But do you know that you are one of the very few whom I never have the satisfaction of hearing abused, but the reverse;—and do you suppose I will forgive *that*?

"I have been in the country, and ran away from the Doncaster races. It is odd,—I was a visiter in the same house which came to my sire as a residence with Lady Carmarthen, (with whom he adulterated before his majority—by the by, remember, *she* was not my mamma,)—and they thrust me into an old room, with a nauseous picture over the chimney, which I should suppose my papa regarded with due respect, and which, inheriting the family taste, I looked upon with great satisfaction. I stayed a

week with the family, and behaved very well—though the lady of the house is young, and religious, and pretty, and the master is my particular friend. I felt no wish for any thing but a poodle dog, which they kindly gave me. Now, for a man of my courses not even to have *coveted*, is a sign of great amendment. Pray pardon all this nonsense, and don't 'snub me when I'm in spirits.'

"Ever, yours, BN.

"Here's an impromptu for you by a 'person of quality,' written last week, on being reproached for low spirits.

"When from the heart where Sorrow sits,Her dusky shadow mounts too high,And o'er the changing aspect flits,And clouds the brow, or fills the eye:Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink;My Thoughts their dungeon know too well—Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,And bleed within their silent cell."

LETTER 140. TO MR. MOORE.

"October 2. 1813.

"You have not answered some six letters of mine. This, therefore, is my penultimate. I will write to you once more, but, after that—I swear by all the saints—I am silent and supercilious. I have met Curran at Holland House—he beats every body;—his imagination is beyond human, and his humour (it is difficult to define what is wit) perfect. Then he has fifty faces, and twice as many voices, when he mimics—I never met his equal. Now, were I a woman, and eke a virgin, that is the man I should make my Scamander. He is quite fascinating. Remember, I have met him but once; and you, who have known him long, may probably deduct from my panegyric. I almost fear to meet him again, lest the impression should be lowered. He talked a great deal about you—a theme never tiresome to me, nor any body else that I know. What a variety of expression he conjures into that naturally not very fine countenance of his! He absolutely changes it entirely. I have done—for I can't describe him, and you know him. On Sunday I return to * *, where I shall not be far from you. Perhaps I shall hear from you in the mean time. Good night.

"Saturday morn—Your letter has cancelled all my anxieties. I did *not suspect* you in *earnest*. Modest again! Because I don't do a very shabby

thing, it seems, I 'don't fear your competition.' If it were reduced to an alternative of preference, I *should* dread you, as much as Satan does Michael. But is there not room enough in our respective regions? Go on—it will soon be my turn to forgive. To-day I dine with Mackintosh and Mrs. *Stale*—as John Bull may be pleased to denominate Corinne—whom I saw last night, at Covent Garden, yawning over the humour of Falstaff.

"The reputation of 'gloom,' if one's friends are not included in the *reputants*, is of great service; as it saves one from a legion of impertinents, in the shape of common-place acquaintance. But thou know'st I can be a right merry and conceited fellow, and rarely 'larmoyant.' Murray shall reinstate your line forthwith. I believe the blunder in the motto was mine:—and yet I have, in general, a memory for *you*, and am sure it was rightly printed at first.

"I do 'blush' very often, if I may believe Ladies H. and M.;—but luckily, at present, no one sees me. Adieu."

LETTER 141. TO MR. MOORE.

"November 30. 1813.

"Since I last wrote to you, much has occurred, good, bad, and indifferent,—not to make me forget you, but to prevent me from reminding you of one who, nevertheless, has often thought of you, and to whom *your* thoughts, in many a measure, have frequently been a consolation. We were once very near neighbours this autumn; and a good and bad neighbourhood it has proved to me. Suffice it to say, that your French quotation was confoundedly to the purpose,—though very *unexpectedly* pertinent, as you may imagine by what I *said* before, and my silence since. However, 'Richard's himself again,' and except all night and some part of the morning, I don't think very much about the matter.

"All convulsions end with me in rhyme; and to solace my midnights, I have scribbled another Turkish story—not a Fragment—which you will receive soon after this. It does not trench upon your kingdom in the least, and if it did, you would soon reduce me to my proper boundaries. You will think, and justly, that I run some risk of losing the little I have gained in fame, by this further experiment on public patience; but I have really ceased to care on that head. I have written this, and published it, for the sake of the

employment,—to wring my thoughts from reality, and take refuge in 'imaginings,' however 'horrible;' and, as to success! those who succeed will console me for a failure—excepting yourself and one or two more, whom luckily I love too well to wish one leaf of their laurels a tint yellower. This is the work of a week, and will be the reading of an hour to you, or even less,—and so, let it go * * * *.

"P.S. Ward and I *talk* of going to Holland. I want to see how a Dutch canal looks after the Bosphorus. Pray respond."

LETTER 142. TO MR. MOORE.

"December 8. 1813.

"Your letter, like all the best, and even kindest things in this world, is both painful and pleasing. But, first, to what sits nearest. Do you know I was actually about to dedicate to you,—not in a formal inscription, as to one's *elders*,—but through a short prefatory letter, in which I boasted myself your intimate, and held forth the prospect of *your* poem; when, lo! the recollection of your strict injunctions of secrecy as to the said poem, more than *once* repeated by word and letter, flashed upon me, and marred my intents. I could have no motive for repressing my own desire of alluding to you (and not a day passes that I do not think and talk of you), but an idea that you might, yourself, dislike it. You cannot doubt my sincere admiration, waving personal friendship for the present, which, by the by, is not less sincere and deep rooted. I have you by rote and by heart; of which 'ecce signum!' When I was at * *, on my first visit, I have a habit, in passing my time a good deal alone, of—I won't call it singing, for that I never attempt except to myself—but of uttering, to what I think tunes, your 'Oh breathe not,' 'When the last glimpse,' and 'When he who adores thee,' with others of the same minstrel;—they are my matins and vespers. I assuredly did not intend them to be overheard, but, one morning, in comes, not La Donna, but Il Marito, with a very grave face, saying, 'Byron, I must request you won't sing any more, at least of *those* songs.' I stared, and said, 'Certainly, but why?'—'To tell you the truth,' quoth he, 'they make my wife *cry*, and so melancholy, that I wish her to hear no more of them.'

"Now, my dear M., the effect must have been from your words, and certainly not my music. I merely mention this foolish story to show you

how much I am indebted to you for even your pastimes. A man may praise and praise, but no one recollects but that which pleases—at least, in composition. Though I think no one equal to you in that department, or in satire,—and surely no one was ever so popular in both,—I certainly am of opinion that you have not yet done all *you* can do, though more than enough for any one else. I want, and the world expects, a longer work from you; and I see in you what I never saw in poet before, a strange diffidence of your own powers, which I cannot account for, and which must be unaccountable, when a *Cossac* like me can appal a *cuirassier*. Your story I did not, could not, know,—I thought only of a Peri. I wish you had confided in me, not for your sake, but mine, and to prevent the world from losing a much better poem than my own, but which, I yet hope, this *clashing* will not even now deprive them of. Mine is the work of a week, written, *why* I have partly told you, and partly I cannot tell you by letter—some day I will.

"Go on—I shall really be very unhappy if I at all interfere with you. The success of mine is yet problematical; though the public will probably purchase a certain quantity, on the presumption of their own propensity for 'The Giaour' and such 'horrid mysteries.' The only advantage I have is being on the spot; and that merely amounts to saving me the trouble of turning over books which I had better read again. If *your chamber* was furnished in the same way, you have no need to *go there* to describe—I mean only as to *accuracy*—because I drew it from recollection.

"This last thing of mine *may* have the same fate, and I assure you I have great doubts about it. But, even if not, its little day will be over before you are ready and willing. Come out—'screw your courage to the sticking-place.' Except the Post Bag (and surely you cannot complain of a want of success there), you have not been *regularly* out for some years. No man stands higher,—whatever you may think on a rainy day, in your provincial retreat. 'Aucun homme, dans aucune langue, n'a été, peut-être, plus completèment le poëte du coeur et le poëte des femmes. Les critiques lui reprochent de n'avoir représenté le monde ni tel qu'il est, ni tel qu'il doit être; *mais les femmes répondent qu'il l'a représenté tel qu'elles le désirent*.'—I should have thought Sismondi had written this for you instead of Metastasio.

"Write to me, and tell me of *yourself*. Do you remember what Rousseau said to some one—'Have we quarrelled? you have talked to me often, and never once mentioned yourself.'

"P.S.—The last sentence is an indirect apology for my own egotism,—but I believe in letters it is allowed. I wish it was *mutual*. I have met with an odd reflection in Grimm; it shall not—at least the bad part—be applied to you or me, though *one* of us has certainly an indifferent name—but this it is:—'Many people have the reputation of being wicked, with whom we should be too happy to pass our lives.' I need not add it is a woman's saying—a Mademoiselle de Sommery's."

At this time Lord Byron commenced a Journal, or Diary, from the pages of which I have already selected a few extracts, and of which I shall now lay as much more as is producible before the reader. Employed chiefly,—as such a record, from its nature, must be,—about persons still living, and occurrences still recent, it would be impossible, of course, to submit it to the public eye, without the omission of some portion of its contents, and unluckily, too, of that very portion which, from its reference to the secret pursuits and feelings of the writer, would the most livelily pique and gratify the curiosity of the reader. Enough, however, will, I trust, still remain, even after all this necessary winnowing, to enlarge still further the view we have here opened into the interior of the poet's life and habits, and to indulge harmlessly that taste, as general as it is natural, which leads us to contemplate with pleasure a great mind in its undress, and to rejoice in the discovery, so consoling to human pride, that even the mightiest, in their moments of ease and weakness, resemble ourselves.

"**JOURNAL, BEGUN NOVEMBER 14. 1813.**

"If this had been begun ten years ago, and faithfully kept!!!—heigho! there are too many things I wish never to have remembered, as it is. Well,—have had my share of what are called the pleasures of this life, and have seen more of the European and Asiatic world than I have made a good use of. They say 'Virtue is its own reward,'—it certainly should be paid well for its trouble. At five-and-twenty, when the better part of life is over, one should be *something*;—and what am I? nothing but five-and-twenty—and the odd months. What have I seen? the same man all over the world,—ay, and woman too. Give *me* a Mussulman who never asks questions, and a she of the same race who saves one the trouble of putting them. But for this same plague—yellow fever—and Newstead delay, I should have been by this time a second time close to the Euxine. If I can overcome the last, I don't so much mind your pestilence; and, at any

rate, the spring shall see me there,—provided I neither marry myself, nor unmarry any one else in the interval. I wish one was—I don't know what I wish. It is odd I never set myself seriously to wishing without attaining it—and repenting. I begin to believe with the good old Magi, that one should only pray for the nation, and not for the individual;—but, on my principle, this would not be very patriotic.

"No more reflections—Let me see—last night I finished 'Zuleika,' my second Turkish Tale. I believe the composition of it kept me alive—for it was written to drive my thoughts from the recollection of—

'Dear sacred name, rest ever unreveal'd.'

At least, even here, my hand would tremble to write it. This afternoon I have burnt the scenes of my commenced comedy. I have some idea of expectorating a romance, or rather a tale in prose;—but what romance could equal the events—

'quæque ipse ...vidi,Et quorum pars magna fui.'

"To-day Henry Byron called on me with my little cousin Eliza. She will grow up a beauty and a plague; but, in the mean time, it is the prettiest child! dark eyes and eyelashes, black and long as the wing of a raven. I think she is prettier even than my niece, Georgina,—yet I don't like to think so neither; and though older, she is not so clever.

"Dallas called before I was up, so we did not meet. Lewis, too,—who seems out of humour with every thing. What can be the matter? he is not married—has he lost his own mistress, or any other person's wife? Hodgson, too, came. He is going to be married, and he is the kind of man who will be the happier. He has talent, cheerfulness, every thing that can make him a pleasing companion; and his intended is handsome and young, and all that. But I never see any one much improved by matrimony. All my coupled contemporaries are bald and discontented. W. and S. have both lost their hair and good humour; and the last of the two had a good deal to lose. But it don't much signify what falls *off* a man's temples in that state.

"Mem. I must get a toy to-morrow, for Eliza, and send the device for the seals of myself and * * * * * Mem. too, to call on the Staël and Lady Holland to-morrow, and on * *, who has advised me (without seeing it, by the by) not to publish 'Zuleika;' I believe he is right, but experience might have taught him that not to print is *physically* impossible. No one has seen it but Hodgson and Mr. Gifford. I never in my life *read* a composition, save

to Hodgson, as he pays me in kind. It is a horrible thing to do too frequently;—better print, and they who like may read, and if they don't like, you have the satisfaction of knowing that they have, at least, *purchased* the right of saying so.

"I have declined presenting the Debtors' Petition, being sick of parliamentary mummeries. I have spoken thrice; but I doubt my ever becoming an orator. My first was liked; the second and third—I don't know whether they succeeded or not. I have never yet set to it *con amore*;—one must have some excuse to one's self for laziness, or inability, or both, and this is mine. 'Company, villanous company, hath been the spoil of me;'—and then, I have 'drunk medicines,' not to make me love others, but certainly enough to hate myself.

"Two nights ago I saw the tigers sup at Exeter 'Change. Except Veli Pacha's lion in the Morea,—who followed the Arab keeper like a dog,—the fondness of the hyæna for her keeper amused me most. Such a conversazione!—There was a 'hippopotamus,' like Lord L——l in the face; and the 'Ursine Sloth' hath the very voice and manner of my valet—but the tiger talked too much. The elephant took and gave me my money again—took off my hat—opened a door—*trunked* a whip—and behaved so well, that I wish he was my butler. The handsomest animal on earth is one of the panthers; but the poor antelopes were dead. I should hate to see one *here*:—the sight of the *camel* made me pine again for Asia Minor. 'Oh quando te aspiciam?'

"November 16.

"Went last night with Lewis to see the first of Antony and Cleopatra. It was admirably got up, and well acted—a salad of Shakspeare and Dryden, Cleopatra strikes me as the epitome of her sex—fond, lively, sad, tender, teasing, humble, haughty, beautiful, the devil!—coquettish to the last, as well with the 'asp' as with Antony. After doing all she can to persuade him that—but why do they abuse him for cutting off that poltroon Cicero's head? Did not Tully tell Brutus it was a pity to have spared Antony? and did he not speak the Philippics? and are not '*words things*?' and such '*words*' very pestilent '*things*' too? If he had had a hundred heads, they deserved (from Antony) a rostrum (his was stuck up there) apiece—though, after all, he might as well have pardoned him, for the credit of the thing. But to resume—Cleopatra, after securing him, says, 'yet go—it is

your interest,' &c.—how like the sex! and the questions about Octavia—it is woman all over.

"To-day received Lord Jersey's invitation to Middleton—to travel sixty miles to meet Madame * *! I once travelled three thousand to get among silent people; and this same lady writes octavos, and *talks* folios. I have read her books—like most of them, and delight in the last; so I won't hear it, as well as read.

"Read Burns to-day. What would he have been, if a patrician? We should have had more polish—less force—just as much verse, but no immortality—a divorce and a duel or two, the which had he survived, as his potations must have been less spirituous, he might have lived as long as Sheridan, and outlived as much as poor Brinsley. What a wreck is that man! and all from bad pilotage; for no one had ever better gales, though now and then a little too squally. Poor dear Sherry! I shall never forget the day he and Rogers and Moore and I passed together; when *he* talked, and *we* listened, without one yawn, from six till one in the morning.

"Got my seals * * * * * * Have again forgot a plaything for *ma petite cousine* Eliza; but I must send for it to-morrow. I hope Harry will bring her to me. I sent Lord Holland the proofs of the last 'Giaour,' and 'The Bride of Abydos.' He won't like the latter, and I don't think that I shall long. It was written in four nights to distract my dreams from * *. Were it not thus, it had never been composed; and had I not done something at that time, I must have gone mad, by eating my own heart,—bitter diet!—Hodgson likes it better than 'The Giaour,' but nobody else will,—and he never liked the Fragment. I am sure, had it not been for Murray, *that* would never have been published, though the circumstances which are the groundwork make it * * * heigh-ho!

"To-night I saw both the sisters of * *; my God! the youngest so like! I thought I should have sprung across the house, and am so glad no one was with me in Lady H.'s box. I hate those likenesses—the mock-bird, but not the nightingale—so like as to remind, so different as to be painful.[89] One quarrels equally with the points of resemblance and of distinction.

"Nov. 17.

"No letter from * *; but I must not complain. The respectable Job says, 'Why should a *living man* complain?' I really don't know, except it be that a *dead man* can't; and he, the said patriarch, *did* complain, nevertheless,

till his friends were tired and his wife recommended that pious prologue, 'Curse—and die;' the only time, I suppose, when but little relief is to be found in swearing. I have had a most kind letter from Lord Holland on 'The Bride of Abydos,' which he likes, and so does Lady H. This is very good-natured in both, from whom I don't deserve any quarter. Yet I *did* think, at the time, that my cause of enmity proceeded from Holland House, and am glad I was wrong, and wish I had not been in such a hurry with that confounded satire, of which I would suppress even the memory;—but people, now they can't get it, make a fuss, I verily believe, out of contradiction.

"George Ellis and Murray have been talking something about Scott and me, George pro Scoto,—and very right too. If they want to depose him, I only wish they would not set me up as a competitor. Even if I had my choice, I would rather be the Earl of Warwick than all the *kings* he ever made! Jeffrey and Gifford I take to be the monarch-makers in poetry and prose. The British Critic, in their Rokeby Review, have presupposed a comparison, which I am sure my friends never thought of, and W. Scott's subjects are injudicious in descending to. I like the man—and admire his works to what Mr. Braham calls *Entusymusy*. All such stuff can only vex him, and do me no good. Many hate his politics—(I hate all politics); and, here, a man's politics are like the Greek *soul*—an ειδωλον, besides God knows what *other soul*; but their estimate of the two generally go together.

"Harry has not brought *ma petite cousine*. I want us to go to the play together;—she has been but once. Another short note from Jersey, inviting Rogers and me on the 23d. I must see my agent to-night. I wonder when that Newstead business will be finished. It cost me more than words to part with it—and to *have* parted with it! What matters it what I do? or what becomes of me?—but let me remember Job's saying, and console myself with being 'a living man.'

"I wish I could settle to reading again,—my life is monotonous, and yet desultory. I take up books, and fling them down again. I began a comedy, and burnt it because the scene ran into *reality*;—a novel, for the same reason. In rhyme, I can keep more away from facts; but the thought always runs through, through ... yes, yes, through. I have had a letter from Lady Melbourne—the best friend I ever had in my life, and the cleverest of women.

"Not a word from * *. Have they set out from * *? or has my last precious epistle fallen into the lion's jaws? If so—and this silence looks suspicious, I must clap on my 'musty morion' and 'hold out my iron.' I am out of practice—but I won't begin again at Manton's now. Besides, I would not return his shot. I was once a famous wafer-splitter; but then the bullies of society made it necessary. Ever since I began to feel that I had a bad cause to support, I have left off the exercise.

"What strange tidings from that Anakim of anarchy—Buonaparte! Ever since I defended my bust of him at Harrow against the rascally time-servers, when the war broke out in 1803, he has been a 'Héros de Roman' of mine—on the Continent; I don't want him here. But I don't like those same flights—leaving of armies, &c. &c. I am sure when I fought for his bust at school, I did not think he would run away from himself. But I should not wonder if he banged them yet. To be beat by men would be something; but by three stupid, legitimate-old-dynasty boobies of regular-bred sovereigns—O-hone-a-rie!—O-hone-a-rie! It must be, as Cobbett says, his marriage with the thick-lipped and thick-headed *Autrichienne* brood. He had better have kept to her who was kept by Barras. I never knew any good come of your young wife, and legal espousals, to any but your 'sober-blooded boy' who 'eats fish' and drinketh 'no sack.' Had he not the whole opera? all Paris? all France? But a mistress is just as perplexing—that is, *one*—two or more are manageable by division.

"I have begun, or had begun, a song, and flung it into the fire. It was in remembrance of Mary Duff, my first of flames, before most people begin to burn. I wonder what the devil is the matter with me! I can do nothing, and—fortunately there is nothing to do. It has lately been in my power to make two persons (and their connections) comfortable, *pro tempore*, and one happy, *ex tempore*,—I rejoice in the last particularly, as it is an excellent man. I wish there had been more inconvenience and less gratification to my self-love in it, for then there had been more merit. We are all selfish—and I believe, ye gods of Epicurus! I believe in Rochefoucault about *men*, and in Lucretius (not Busby's translation) about yourselves. Your bard has made you very *nonchalant* and blest; but as he has excused *us* from damnation, I don't envy you your blessedness *much*—a little, to be sure. I remember, last year, * * said to me, at * *, 'Have we not passed our last month like the gods of Lucretius?' And so we had. She is an adept in the text of the original (which I like too); and when that booby Bus. sent his translating prospectus, she subscribed. But, the devil prompting him to add a specimen, she transmitted him a subsequent

answer, saying, that 'after perusing it, her conscience would not permit her to allow her name to remain on the list of subscribblers.' Last night, at Lord H.'s—Mackintosh, the Ossulstones, Puységur, &c. there—I was trying to recollect a quotation (as *I* think) of Staël's, from some Teutonic sophist about architecture. 'Architecture,' says this Macoronico Tedescho, 'reminds me of frozen music.' It is somewhere—but where?—the demon of perplexity must know and won't tell. I asked M., and he said it was not in her: but P——r said it must be *hers*, it was so *like*. H. laughed, as he does at all 'De l'Allemagne,'—in which, however, I think he goes a little too far. B., I hear, condemns it too. But there are fine passages;—and, after all, what is a work—any—or every work—but a desert with fountains, and, perhaps, a grove or two, every day's journey? To be sure, in Madame, what we often mistake, and 'pant for,' as the 'cooling stream,' turns out to be the '*mirage*' (criticè *verbiage*); but we do, at last, get to something like the temple of Jove Ammon, and then the waste we have passed is only remembered to gladden the contrast.

"Called on C * *, to explain * * *. She is very beautiful, to my taste, at least; for on coming home from abroad, I recollect being unable to look at any woman but her—they were so fair, and unmeaning, and *blonde*. The darkness and regularity of her features reminded me of my 'Jannat al Aden.' But this impression wore off; and now I can look at a fair woman, without longing for a Houri. She was very good-tempered, and every thing was explained.

"To-day, great news—'the Dutch have taken Holland,'—which, I suppose, will be succeeded by the actual explosion of the Thames. Five provinces have declared for young Stadt, and there will be inundation, conflagration, constupration, consternation, and every sort of nation and nations, fighting away, up to their knees, in the damnable quags of this will-o'-the-wisp abode of Boors. It is said Bernadotte is amongst them, too; and, as Orange will be there soon, they will have (Crown) Prince Stork and King Log in their Loggery at the same time. Two to one on the new dynasty!

"Mr. Murray has offered me one thousand guineas for 'The Giaour' and 'The Bride of Abydos.' I won't—it is too much, though I am strongly tempted, merely for the *say* of it. No bad price for a fortnight's (a week each) what?—the gods know—it was intended to be called poetry.

"I have dined regularly to-day, for the first time since Sunday last—this being Sabbath, too. All the rest, tea and dry biscuits—six *per diem*, I wish to God I had not dined now!—It kills me with heaviness, stupor, and

horrible dreams;—and yet it was but a pint of bucellas, and fish. Meat I never touch,—nor much vegetable diet. I wish I were in the country, to take exercise,—instead of being obliged to cool by abstinence, in lieu of it. I should not so much mind a little accession of flesh,—my bones can well bear it. But the worst is, the devil always came with it,—till I starved him out,—and I will *not* be the slave of *any* appetite. If I do err, it shall be my heart, at least, that heralds the way. Oh, my head—how it aches?—the horrors of digestion! I wonder how Buonaparte's dinner agrees with him?

"Mem. I must write to-morrow to 'Master Shallow, who owes me a thousand pounds,' and seems, in his letter, afraid I should ask him for it;—as if I would!—I don't want it (just now, at least,) to begin with; and though I have often wanted that sum, I never asked for the repayment of 10*l.* in my life—from a friend. His bond is not due this year, and I told him when it was, I should not enforce it. How often must he make me say the same thing?

"I am wrong—I did once ask * * * to repay me. But it was under circumstances that excused me *to him*, and would to any one. I took no interest, nor required security. He paid me soon,—at least, his *padre*. My head! I believe it was given me to ache with. Good even.

"Nov. 22. 1813.

"'Orange Boven!' So the bees have expelled the bear that broke open their hive. Well,—if we are to have new De Witts and De Ruyters, God speed the little republic! I should like to see the Hague and the village of Brock, where they have such primitive habits. Yet, I don't know,—their canals would cut a poor figure by the memory of the Bosphorus; and the Zuyder Zee look awkwardly after 'Ak-Denizi.' No matter,—the bluff burghers, puffing freedom out of their short tobacco-pipes, might be worth seeing; though I prefer a cigar or a hooka, with the rose-leaf mixed with the milder herb of the Levant. I don't know what liberty means,—never having seen it,—but wealth is power all over the world; and as a shilling performs the duty of a pound (besides sun and sky and beauty for nothing) in the East,—*that* is the country. How I envy Herodes Atticus!—more than Pomponius. And yet a little *tumult*, now and then, is an agreeable quickener of sensation; such as a revolution, a battle, or an *aventure* of any lively description. I think I rather would have been Bonneval, Ripperda, Alberoni, Hayreddin, or Horuc Barbarossa, or even Wortley Montague, than Mahomet himself.

"Rogers will be in town soon?—the 23d is fixed for our Middleton visit. Shall I go? umph!—In this island, where one can't ride out without overtaking the sea, it don't much matter where one goes.

"I remember the effect of the *first* Edinburgh Review on me. I heard of it six weeks before,—read it the day of its denunciation,—dined and drank three bottles of claret, (with S.B. Davies, I think,) neither ate nor slept the less, but, nevertheless, was not easy till I had vented my wrath and my rhyme, in the same pages, against every thing and every body. Like George, in the Vicar of Wakefield, 'the fate of my paradoxes' would allow me to perceive no merit in another. I remembered only the maxim of my boxing-master, which, in my youth, was found useful in all general riots,—'Whoever is not for you is against you—*mill* away right and left,' and so I did;—like Ishmael, my hand was against all men, and all men's anent me. I did wonder, to be sure, at my own success—

"'And marvels so much wit is all his own,'

as Hobhouse sarcastically says of somebody (not unlikely myself, as we are old friends);—but were it to come over again, I would *not*. I have since redde the cause of my couplets, and it is not adequate to the effect. C * * told me that it was believed I alluded to poor Lord Carlisle's nervous disorder in one of the lines. I thank Heaven I did not know it—and would not, could not, if I had. I must naturally be the last person to be pointed on defects or maladies.

"Rogers is silent,—and, it is said, severe. When he does talk, he talks well; and, on all subjects of taste, his delicacy of expression is pure as his poetry. If you enter his house—his drawing-room—his library—you of yourself say, this is not the dwelling of a common mind. There is not a gem, a coin, a book thrown aside on his chimney-piece, his sofa, his table, that does not bespeak an almost fastidious elegance in the possessor. But this very delicacy must be the misery of his existence. Oh the jarrings his disposition must have encountered through life!

"Southey, I have not seen much of. His appearance is *Epic*; and he is the only existing entire man of letters. All the others have some pursuit annexed to their authorship. His manners are mild, but not those of a man of the world, and his talents of the first order. His prose is perfect. Of his poetry there are various opinions: there is, perhaps, too much of it for the present generation;—posterity will probably select. He has passages equal to any thing. At present, he has a party, but no public—except for his prose writings. The life of Nelson is beautiful.

"* * is a *Littérateur*, the Oracle of the Coteries, of the * * s, L * W * (Sydney Smith's 'Tory Virgin'), Mrs. Wilmot, (she, at least, is a swan, and might frequent a purer stream,) Lady B * *, and all the Blues, with Lady C * * at their head—but I say nothing of *her*—'look in her face and you forget them all,' and every thing else. Oh that face!—by 'te, Diva potens Cypri,' I would, to be beloved by that woman, build and burn another Troy.

"M * * e has a peculiarity of talent, or rather talents,—poetry, music, voice, all his own; and an expression in each, which never was, nor will be, possessed by another. But he is capable of still higher flights in poetry. By the by, what humour, what—every thing, in the 'Post-Bag!' There is nothing M * * e may not do, if he will but seriously set about it. In society, he is gentlemanly, gentle, and, altogether, more pleasing than any individual with whom I am acquainted. For his honour, principle, and independence, his conduct to * * * * speaks 'trumpet-tongued.' He has but one fault—and that one I daily regret—he is not *here*.

"Nov. 23.

"Ward—I like Ward. By Mahomet! I begin to think I like every body;—a disposition not to be encouraged;—a sort of social gluttony that swallows every thing set before it. But I like Ward. He is *piquant*; and, in my opinion, will stand *very* high in the House, and every where else, if he applies regularly. By the by, I dine with him to-morrow, which may have some influence on my opinion. It is as well not to trust one's gratitude *after* dinner. I have heard many a host libelled by his guests, with his burgundy yet reeking on their rascally lips.

"I have taken Lord Salisbury's box at Covent Garden for the season; and now I must go and prepare to join Lady Holland and party, in theirs, at Drury Lane, *questa sera*.

"Holland doesn't think the man *is Junius*; but that the yet unpublished journal throws great light on the obscurities of that part of George the Second's reign—What is this to George the Third's? I don't know what to think. Why should Junius be yet dead? If suddenly apoplexed, would he rest in his grave without sending his ειδωλον to shout in the ears of posterity, 'Junius was X.Y.Z., Esq., buried in the parish of * * *. Repair his monument, ye churchwardens! Print a new edition of his Letters, ye

booksellers!' Impossible,—the man must be alive, and will never die without the disclosure. I like him;—he was a good hater.

"Came home unwell and went to bed,—not so sleepy as might be desirable.

"Tuesday morning.

"I awoke from a dream!—well! and have not others dreamed?—Such a dream!—but she did not overtake me. I wish the dead would rest, however. Ugh! how my blood chilled—and I could not wake —and—and—heigho!

"'Shadows to-nightHave struck more terror to the soul of Richard,Than could the substance of ten thousand * * s,Arm'd all in proof, and led by shallow * *.'

I do not like this dream,—I hate its 'foregone conclusion.' And am I to be shaken by shadows? Ay, when they remind us of—no matter—but, if I dream thus again, I will try whether *all* sleep has the like visions. Since I rose, I've been in considerable bodily pain also; but it is gone, and now, like Lord Ogleby, I am wound up for the day.

"A note from Mountnorris—I dine with Ward;—Canning is to be there, Frere and Sharpe,—perhaps Gifford. I am to be one of 'the five' (or rather six), as Lady * * said a little sneeringly yesterday. They are all good to meet, particularly Canning, and—Ward, when he likes. I wish I may be well enough to listen to these intellectuals.

"No letters to-day;—so much the better,—there are no answers. I must not dream again;—it spoils even reality. I will go out of doors, and see what the fog will do for me. Jackson has been here: the boxing world much as usual;—but the club increases. I shall dine at Crib's to-morrow. I like energy—even animal energy—of all kinds; and I have need of both mental and corporeal. I have not dined out, nor, indeed, *at all*, lately; have heard no music—have seen nobody. Now for a *plunge*—high life and low life. 'Amant *alterna* Camoenæ!'

"I have burnt my *Roman*—as I did the first scenes and sketch of my comedy—and, for aught I see, the pleasure of burning is quite as great as that of printing. These two last would not have done. I ran into realities more than ever; and some would have been recognised and others guessed at.

"Redde the Ruminator—a collection of Essays, by a strange, but able, old man (Sir E.B.), and a half-wild young one, author of a poem on the Highlands, called 'Childe Alarique.' The word 'sensibility' (always my aversion) occurs a thousand times in these Essays; and, it seems, is to be an excuse for all kinds of discontent. This young man can know nothing of life; and, if he cherishes the disposition which runs through his papers, will become useless, and, perhaps, not even a poet, after all, which he seems determined to be. God help him! no one should be a rhymer who could be any thing better. And this is what annoys one, to see Scott and Moore, and Campbell and Rogers, who might have all been agents and leaders, now mere spectators. For, though they may have other ostensible avocations, these last are reduced to a secondary consideration. * *, too, frittering away his time among dowagers and unmarried girls. If it advanced any *serious* affair, it were some excuse; but, with the unmarried, that is a hazardous speculation, and tiresome enough, too; and, with the veterans, it is not much worth trying, unless, perhaps, one in a thousand.

"If I had any views in this country, they would probably be parliamentary. But I have no ambition; at least, if any, it would be 'aut Cæsar aut nihil.' My hopes are limited to the arrangement of my affairs, and settling either in Italy or the East (rather the last), and drinking deep of the languages and literature of both. Past events have unnerved me; and all I can now do is to make life an amusement, and look on while others play. After all, even the highest game of crowns and sceptres, what is it? *Vide* Napoleon's last twelve-month. It has completely upset my system of fatalism. I thought, if crushed, he would have fallen, when 'fractus illabitur orbis,' and not have been pared away to gradual insignificance; that all this was not a mere *jeu* of the gods, but a prelude to greater changes and mightier events. But men never advance beyond a certain point; and here we are, retrograding to the dull, stupid old system,—balance of Europe—poising straws upon kings' noses, instead of wringing them off! Give me a republic, or a despotism of one, rather than the mixed government of one, two, three. A republic!—look in the history of the Earth—Rome, Greece, Venice, France, Holland, America, our short (eheu!) Commonwealth, and compare it with what they did under masters. The Asiatics are not qualified to be republicans, but they have the liberty of demolishing despots, which is the next thing to it. To be the first man—not the Dictator—not the Sylla, but the Washington or the Aristides—the leader in talent and truth—is next to the Divinity! Franklin, Penn, and, next to these, either Brutus or Cassius—even Mirabeau—or St. Just. I shall never

be any thing, or rather always be nothing. The most I can hope is, that some will say, 'He might, perhaps, if he would.'

"12, midnight.

"Here are two confounded proofs from the printer. I have looked at the one, but for the soul of me, I can't look over that 'Giaour' again,—at least, just now, and at this hour—and yet there is no moon.

"Ward talks of going to Holland, and we have partly discussed an ensemble expedition. It must be in ten days, if at all, if we wish to be in at the Revolution. And why not? * * is distant, and will be at * *, still more distant, till spring. No one else, except Augusta, cares for me; no ties—no trammels—*andiamo dunque—se torniamo, bene—se non, ch' importa*? Old William of Orange talked of dying in 'the last ditch' of his dingy country. It is lucky I can swim, or I suppose I should not well weather the first. But let us see. I have heard hyænas and jackalls in the ruins of Asia; and bull-frogs in the marshes; besides wolves and angry Mussulmans. Now, I should like to listen to the shout of a free Dutchman.

"Alla! Viva! For ever! Hourra! Huzza!—which is the most rational or musical of these cries? 'Orange Boven,' according to the Morning Post.

"Wednesday, 24.

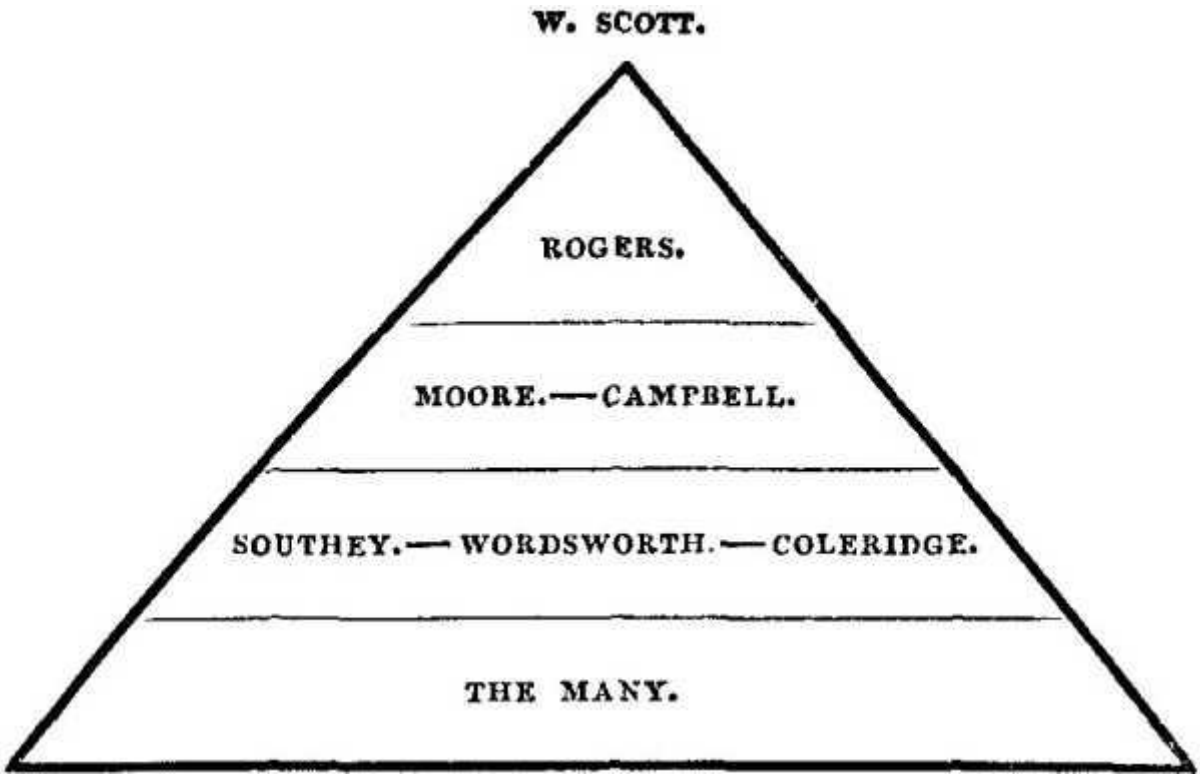
"No dreams last night of the dead nor the living, so—I am 'firm as the marble, founded as the rock,' till the next earthquake.

"Ward's dinner went off well. There was not a disagreeable person there—unless *I* offended any body, which I am sure I could not by contradiction, for I said little, and opposed nothing. Sharpe (a man of elegant mind, and who has lived much with the best—Fox, Horne Tooke, Windham, Fitzpatrick, and all the agitators of other times and tongues,) told us the particulars of his last interview with Windham, a few days before the fatal operation which sent 'that gallant spirit to aspire the skies.' Windham,—the first in one department of oratory and talent, whose only fault was his refinement beyond the intellect of half his hearers,—Windham, half his life an active participator in the events of the earth, and one of those who governed nations,—*he* regretted, and dwelt much on that regret, that 'he had not entirely devoted himself to literature and science!!!' His mind certainly would have carried him to

eminence there, as elsewhere;—but I cannot comprehend what debility of that mind could suggest such a wish. I, who have heard him, cannot regret any thing but that I shall never hear him again. What! would he have been a plodder? a metaphysician?—perhaps a rhymer? a scribbler? Such an exchange must have been suggested by illness. But he is gone, and Time 'shall not look upon his like again.'

"I am tremendously in arrear with my letters,—except to * *, and to her my thoughts overpower me:—my words never compass them. To Lady Melbourne I write with most pleasure—and her answers, so sensible, so *tactique*—I never met with half her talent. If she had been a few years younger, what a fool she would have made of me, had she thought it worth her while,—and I should have lost a valuable and most agreeable friend. Mem. a mistress never is nor can be a friend. While you agree, you are lovers; and, when it is over, any thing but friends.

"I have not answered W. Scott's last letter,—but I will. I regret to hear from others that he has lately been unfortunate in pecuniary involvements. He is undoubtedly the Monarch of Parnassus, and the most *English* of bards. I should place Rogers next in the living list (I value him more as the last of the best school)—Moore and Campbell both *third*—Southey and Wordsworth and Coleridge—the rest, ὀι πολλοι—thus:—



There is a triangular 'Gradus ad Parnassum!'—the names are too numerous for the base of the triangle. Poor Thurlow has gone wild about the poetry of Queen Bess's reign—*c'est dommage*. I have ranked the names upon my triangle more upon what I believe popular opinion, than any decided opinion of my own. For, to me, some of M * * e's last *Erin* sparks—'As a beam o'er the face of the waters'—'When he who adores thee'—'Oh blame not'—and 'Oh breathe not his name'—are worth all the Epics that ever were composed.

"* * thinks the Quarterly will attack me next. Let them. I have been 'peppered so highly' in my time, both ways, that it must be cayenne or aloes to make me taste. I can sincerely say that I am not very much alive *now* to criticism. But—in tracing this—I rather believe, that it proceeds from my not attaching that importance to authorship which many do, and which, when young, I did also. 'One gets tired of every thing, my angel,' says Valmont. The 'angels' are the only things of which I am not a little sick—but I do think the preference of *writers* to *agents*—the mighty stir made about scribbling and scribes, by themselves and others—a sign of effeminacy, degeneracy, and weakness. Who would write, who had any thing better to do? 'Action—action—action'—said Demosthenes: 'Actions—actions,' I say, and not writing,—least of all, rhyme. Look at the querulous and monotonous lives of the 'genus;'—except Cervantes, Tasso, Dante, Ariosto, Kleist (who were brave and active citizens), Aeschylus, Sophocles, and some other of the antiques also—what a worthless, idle brood it is!

"12, Mezza notte.

"Just returned from dinner with Jackson (the Emperor of Pugilism) and another of the select, at Crib's the champion's. I drank more than I like, and have brought away some three bottles of very fair claret—for I have no headach. We had Tom * * up after dinner;—very facetious, though somewhat prolix. He don't like his situation—wants to fight again—pray Pollux (or Castor, if he was the *miller*) he may! Tom has been a sailor—a coal heaver—and some other genteel profession, before he took to the cestus. Tom has been in action at sea, and is now only three-and-thirty. A great man! has a wife and a mistress, and conversations well—bating some sad omissions and misapplications of the aspirate. Tom is an old friend of mine; I have seen some of his best battles in my nonage. He is now a publican, and, I fear, a sinner;—for Mrs. * * is on alimony, and * *'s

daughter lives with the champion. *This* * * told me,—Tom, having an opinion of my morals, passed her off as a legal spouse. Talking of her, he said, 'she was the truest of women'—from which I immediately inferred she could not be his wife, and so it turned out.

"These panegyrics don't belong to matrimony;—for, if 'true,' a man don't think it necessary to say so; and if not, the less he says the better. * * * * is the only man, except * * * *, I ever heard harangue upon his wife's virtue; and I listened to both with great credence and patience, and stuffed my handkerchief into my mouth, when I found yawning irresistible.—By the by, I am yawning now—so, good night to thee.—Νωάιρων.

"Thursday, November 26.

"Awoke a little feverish, but no headach—no dreams neither, thanks to stupor! Two letters; one from * * * *'s, the other from Lady Melbourne—both excellent in their respective styles. * * * *'s contained also a very pretty lyric on 'concealed griefs;' if not her own, yet very like her. Why did she not say that the stanzas were, or were not, of her composition? I do not know whether to wish them hers or not. I have no great esteem for poetical persons, particularly women; they have so much of the 'ideal' in *practics*, as well as *ethics*.

"I have been thinking lately a good deal of Mary Duff, &c. &c. &c. &c.[96]

"Lord Holland invited me to dinner to-day; but three days' dining would destroy me. So, without eating at all since yesterday, I went to my box at Covent Garden.

"Saw * * * * looking very pretty, though quite a different style of beauty from the other two. She has the finest eyes in the world, out of which she pretends *not* to see, and the longest eyelashes I ever saw, since Leila's and Phannio's Moslem curtains of the light. She has much beauty,—just enough,—but is, I think, *méchante*.

"I have been pondering on the miseries of separation, that—oh how seldom we see those we love! yet we live ages in moments, *when met*. The only thing that consoles me during absence is the reflection that no mental or personal estrangement, from ennui or disagreement, can take place; and when people meet hereafter, even though many changes may

have taken place in the mean time, still, unless they are *tired* of each other, they are ready to reunite, and do not blame each other for the circumstances that severed them.

"Saturday 27. (I believe—or rather am in *doubt*, which is the ne plus ultra of mortal faith.)

"I have missed a day; and, as the Irishman said, or Joe Miller says for him, 'have gained a loss,' or *by* the loss. Every thing is settled for Holland, and nothing but a cough, or a caprice of my fellow-traveller's, can stop us. Carriage ordered, funds prepared, and, probably, a gale of wind into the bargain. *N'importe*—I believe, with Clym o' the Clow, or Robin Hood, 'By our Mary, (dear name!) that art both Mother and May, I think it never was a man's lot to die before this day.' Heigh for Helvoetsluys, and so forth!

"To-night I went with young Henry Fox to see 'Nourjahad,' a drama, which the Morning Post hath laid to my charge, but of which I cannot even guess the author. I wonder what they will next inflict upon me. They cannot well sink below a melodrama; but that is better than a Satire, (at least, a personal one,) with which I stand truly arraigned, and in atonement of which I am resolved to bear silently all criticisms, abuses, and even praises, for bad pantomimes never composed by me, without even a contradictory aspect. I suppose the root of this report is my loan to the manager of my Turkish drawings for his dresses, to which he was more welcome than to my name. I suppose the real author will soon own it, as it has succeeded; if not, Job be my model, and Lethe my beverage!

"* * * * has received the portrait safe; and, in answer, the only remark she makes upon it is, 'indeed it is like'—and again, 'indeed it is like.' With her the likeness 'covered a multitude of sins;' for I happen to know that this portrait was not a flatterer, but dark and stern,—even black as the mood in which my mind was scorching last July, when I sat for it. All the others of me, like most portraits whatsoever, are, of course, more agreeable than nature.

"Redde the Ed. Review of Rogers. He is ranked highly; but where he should be. There is a summary view of us all—*Moore* and *me* among the rest; and both (the *first* justly) praised—though, by implication (justly again) placed beneath our memorable friend. Mackintosh is the writer, and also of the critique on the Staël. His grand essay on Burke, I hear, is for the next number. But I know nothing of the Edinburgh, or of any other Review, but

from rumour; and I have long ceased—indeed, I could not, in justice, complain of any, even though I were to rate poetry, in general, and my rhymes in particular, more highly than I really do. To withdraw *myself* from *myself* (oh that cursed selfishness!) has ever been my sole, my entire, my sincere motive in scribbling at all; and publishing is also the continuance of the same object, by the action it affords to the mind, which else recoils upon itself. If I valued fame, I should flatter received opinions, which have gathered strength by time, and will yet wear longer than any living works to the contrary. But, for the soul of me, I cannot and will not give the lie to my own thoughts and doubts, come what may. If I am a fool, it is, at least, a doubting one; and I envy no one the certainty of his self-approved wisdom.

"All are inclined to believe what they covet, from a lottery-ticket up to a passport to Paradise,—in which, from the description, I see nothing very tempting. My restlessness tells me I have something within that 'passeth show.' It is for Him, who made it, to prolong that spark of celestial fire which illuminates, yet burns, this frail tenement; but I see no such horror in a 'dreamless sleep,' and I have no conception of any existence which duration would not render tiresome. How else 'fell the angels,' even according to your creed? They were immortal, heavenly, and happy as their *apostate Abdiel* is now by his treachery. Time must decide; and eternity won't be the less agreeable or more horrible because one did not expect it. In the mean time, I am grateful for some good, and tolerably patient under certain evils—grace à Dieu et mon bon tempérament.

"Sunday, 28th.

"Monday, 29th.

"Tuesday, 30th.

"Two days missed in my log-book;—hiatus *haud* deflendus. They were as little worth recollection as the rest; and, luckily, laziness or society prevented me from *notching* them.

"Sunday, I dined with the Lord Holland in St. James's Square. Large party—among them Sir S. Romilly and Lady R^{y}.—General Sir Somebody Bentham, a man of science and talent, I am told—Horner—*the* Horner, an Edinburgh Reviewer, an excellent speaker in the 'Honourable House,' very pleasing, too, and gentlemanly in company, as far as I have seen—Sharpe—Phillips of Lancashire—Lord John Russell, and others, 'good men and true.' Holland's society is very good; you always see some one or other in it worth knowing. Stuffed myself with sturgeon, and exceeded in champagne and wine in general, but not to confusion of head. When I *do* dine, I gorge like an Arab or a Boa snake, on fish and vegetables, but no meat. I am always better, however, on my tea and biscuit than any other regimen, and even *that* sparingly.

"Why does Lady H. always have that damned screen between the whole room and the fire? I, who bear cold no better than an antelope, and never yet found a sun quite *done* to my taste, was absolutely petrified, and could not even shiver. All the rest, too, looked as if they were just unpacked, like salmon from an ice-basket, and set down to table for that day only. When she retired, I watched their looks as I dismissed the screen, and every cheek thawed, and every nose reddened with the anticipated glow.

"Saturday, I went with Harry Fox to Nourjahad; and, I believe, convinced him, by incessant yawning, that it was not mine. I wish the precious author would own it, and release me from his fame. The dresses are pretty, but not in costume;—Mrs. Horn's, all but the turban, and the want of a small dagger (if she is a sultana), *perfect*. I never saw a Turkish woman with a turban in my life—nor did any one else. The sultanas have a small poniard at the waist. The dialogue is drowsy—the action heavy—the scenery fine—the actors tolerable. I can't say much for their seraglio—Teresa, Phannio, or * * * *, were worth them all.

"Sunday, a very handsome note from Mackintosh, who is a rare instance of the union of very transcendent talent and great good nature. To-day (Tuesday) a very pretty billet from M. la Baronne de Staël Holstein. She is pleased to be much pleased with my mention of her and her last work in my notes. I spoke as I thought. Her works are my delight, and so is she herself, for—half an hour. I don't like her politics—at least, her *having changed* them; had she been *qualis ab incepto*, it were nothing. But she is a woman by herself, and has done more than all the rest of them together, intellectually;—she ought to have been a man. She *flatters* me very prettily in her note;—but I *know* it. The reason that adulation is not displeasing is, that, though untrue, it shows one to be of consequence

enough, in one way or other, to induce people to lie, to make us their friend:—that is their concern.

"* * is, I hear, thriving on the repute of a pun which was mine (at Mackintosh's dinner some time back), on Ward, who was asking 'how much it would take to *re-whig* him?' I answered that, probably, 'he must first, before he was *re-whigged*, be re-*warded*.' This foolish quibble, before the Staël and Mackintosh, and a number of conversationers, has been mouthed about, and at last settled on the head of * *, where long may it remain!

"George is returned from afloat to get a new ship. He looks thin, but better than I expected. I like George much more than most people like their heirs. He is a fine fellow, and every inch a sailor. I would do any thing, *but apostatise*, to get him on in his profession.

"Lewis called. It is a good and good-humoured man, but pestilently prolix and paradoxical and *personal*. If he would but talk half, and reduce his visits to an hour, he would add to his popularity. As an author he is very good, and his vanity is *ouverte*, like Erskine's, and yet not offending.

"Yesterday, a very pretty letter from Annabella, which I answered. What an odd situation and friendship is ours!—without one spark of love on either side, and produced by circumstances which in general lead to coldness on one side, and aversion on the other. She is a very superior woman, and very little spoiled, which is strange in an heiress—girl of twenty—a peeress that is to be, in her own right—an only child, and a *savante*, who has always had her own way. She is a poetess—a mathematician—a metaphysician, and yet, withal, very kind, generous, and gentle, with very little pretension. Any other head would be turned with half her acquisitions, and a tenth of her advantages.

"Wednesday, December 1. 1813.

"To-day responded to La Baronne de Staël Holstein, and sent to Leigh Hunt (an acquisition to my acquaintance—through Moore—of last summer) a copy of the two Turkish tales. Hunt is an extraordinary character, and not exactly of the present age. He reminds me more of the Pym and Hampden times—much talent, great independence of spirit, and an austere, yet not repulsive, aspect. If he goes on *qualis ab incepto*, I

know few men who will deserve more praise or obtain it. I must go and see him again;—the rapid succession of adventure, since last summer, added to some serious uneasiness and business, have interrupted our acquaintance; but he is a man worth knowing; and though, for his own sake, I wish him out of prison, I like to study character in such situations. He has been unshaken, and will continue so. I don't think him deeply versed in life;—he is the bigot of virtue (not religion), and enamoured of the beauty of that 'empty name,' as the last breath of Brutus pronounced, and every day proves it. He is, perhaps, a little opiniated, as all men who are the *centre* of *circles*, wide or narrow—the Sir Oracles, in whose name two or three are gathered together—must be, and as even Johnson was; but, withal, a valuable man, and less vain than success and even the consciousness of preferring 'the right to the expedient' might excuse.

"To-morrow there is a party of *purple* at the 'blue' Miss * * *'s. Shall I go? um!—I don't much affect your blue-bottles;—but one ought to be civil. There will be, 'I guess now' (as the Americans say), the Staëls and Mackintoshes—good—the * * * s and * * * s—not so good—the * * * s, &c. &c.—good for nothing. Perhaps that blue-winged Kashmirian butterfly of book-learning, Lady * * * *, will be there. I hope so; it is a pleasure to look upon that most beautiful of faces.

"Wrote to H.:—he has been telling that I ——. I am sure, at least, *I* did not mention it, and I wish he had not. He is a good fellow, and I obliged myself ten times more by being of use than I did him,—and there's an end on 't.

"Baldwin is boring me to present their King's Bench petition. I presented Cartwright's last year; and Stanhope and I stood against the whole House, and mouthed it valiantly—and had some fun and a little abuse for our opposition. But 'I am not i' th' vein' for this business. Now, had * * been here, she would have *made* me do it. *There* is a woman, who, amid all her fascination, always urged a man to usefulness or glory. Had she remained, she had been my tutelar genius.

"Baldwin is very importunate—but, poor fellow, 'I can't get out, I can't get out—said the starling.' Ah, I am as bad as that dog Sterne, who preferred whining over 'a dead ass to relieving a living mother'—villain—hypocrite—slave—sycophant! but *I* am no better. Here I cannot stimulate myself to a speech for the sake of these unfortunates, and three words and half a smile of * * had she been here to urge it, (and urge it she infallibly would—at least she always pressed me on senatorial duties, and particularly in the cause of weakness,) would have made me an advocate,

if not an orator. Curse on Rochefoucault for being always right! In him a lie were virtue,—or, at least, a comfort to his readers.

"George Byron has not called to-day; I hope he will be an admiral, and, perhaps, Lord Byron into the bargain. If he would but marry, I would engage never to marry myself, or cut him out of the heirship. He would be happier, and I should like nephews better than sons.

"I shall soon be six-and-twenty (January 22d, 1814). Is there any thing in the future that can possibly console us for not being always *twenty-five*?

"Oh Gioventu!Oh Primavera! gioventu dell' anno.Oh Gioventu! primavera della vita.

"Sunday, December 5.

"Dallas's nephew (son to the American Attorney-general) is arrived in this country, and tells Dallas that my rhymes are very popular in the United States. These are the first tidings that have ever sounded like *Fame* to my ears—to be redde on the banks of the Ohio! The greatest pleasure I ever derived, of this kind, was from an extract, in Cooke the actor's life, from his Journal, stating that in the reading-room at Albany, near Washington, he perused English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. To be popular in a rising and far country has a kind of *posthumous feel*, very different from the ephemeral *éclat* and fête-ing, buzzing and party-ing compliments of the well-dressed multitude. I can safely say that, during my *reign* in the spring of 1812, I regretted nothing but its duration of six weeks instead of a fortnight, and was heartily glad to resign.

"Last night I supped with Lewis;—and, as usual, though I neither exceeded in solids nor fluids, have been half dead ever since. My stomach is entirely destroyed by long abstinence, and the rest will probably follow. Let it—I only wish the *pain* over. The 'leap in the dark' is the least to be dreaded.

"The Duke of * * called. I have told them forty times that, except to half-a-dozen old and specified acquaintances, I am invisible. His Grace is a good, noble, ducal person; but I am content to think so at a distance, and so—I was not at home.

"Galt called.—Mem.—to ask some one to speak to Raymond in favour of his play. We are old fellow-travellers, and, with all his eccentricities, he has much strong sense, experience of the world, and is, as far as I have seen, a good-natured philosophical fellow. I showed him Sligo's letter on

the reports of the Turkish girl's *aventure* at Athens soon after it happened. He and Lord Holland, Lewis, and Moore, and Rogers, and Lady Melbourne have seen it. Murray has a copy. I thought it had been *unknown*, and wish it were; but Sligo arrived only some days after, and the *rumours* are the subject of his letter. That I shall preserve,—*it is as well*. Lewis and Galt were both *horrified*; and L. wondered I did not introduce the situation into 'The Giaour.' He *may* wonder;—he might wonder more at that production's being written at all. But to describe the *feelings of that situation* were impossible—it is *icy* even to recollect them.

"The Bride of Abydos was published on Thursday the second of December; but how it is liked or disliked, I know not. Whether it succeeds or not is no fault of the public, against whom I can have no complaint. But I am much more indebted to the tale than I can ever be to the most partial reader; as it wrung my thoughts from reality to imagination—from selfish regrets to vivid recollections—and recalled me to a country replete with the *brightest* and *darkest*, but always most *lively* colours of my memory. Sharpe called, but was not let in—which I regret.

"Saw * * yesterday. I have not kept my appointment at Middleton, which has not pleased him, perhaps; and my projected voyage with * * will, perhaps, please him less. But I wish to keep well with both. They are instruments that don't do, in concert; but, surely, their separate tones are very musical, and I won't give up either.

"It is well if I don't jar between these great discords. At present I stand tolerably well with all, but I cannot adopt their *dislikes*;—so many *sets*. Holland's is the first;—every thing *distingué* is welcome there, and certainly the *ton* of his society is the best. Then there is M^{de}. de Staël's—there I never go, though I might, had I courted it. It is composed of the * *'s and the * * family, with a strange sprinkling,—orators, dandies, and all kinds of *Blue*, from the regular Grub Street uniform, down to the azure jacket of the *Littérateur*. To see * * and * * sitting together, at dinner, always reminds me of the grave, where all distinctions of friend and foe are levelled; and they—the Reviewer and Reviewée—the Rhinoceros and Elephant—the Mammoth and Megalonyx—all will lie quietly together. They now *sit* together, as silent, but not so quiet, as if they were already immured.

"I did not go to the Berrys' the other night. The elder is a woman of much talent, and both are handsome, and must have been beautiful. To-night asked to Lord H.'s—shall I go? um!—perhaps.

"Morning, two o'clock.

"Went to Lord H.'s—party numerous—*mi*lady in perfect good humour, and consequently *perfect*. No one more agreeable, or perhaps so much so, when she will. Asked for Wednesday to dine and meet the Staël—asked particularly, I believe, out of mischief, to see the first interview after the *note*, with which Corinne professes herself to be so much taken. I don't much like it; she always talks of *my*self or *her*self, and I am not (except in soliloquy, as now,) much enamoured of either subject—especially one's works. What the devil shall I say about 'De l'Allemagne?' I like it prodigiously; but unless I can twist my admiration into some fantastical expression, she won't believe me; and I know, by experience, I shall be overwhelmed with fine things about rhyme, &c. &c. The lover, Mr. * *, wasPg 292 there to-night, and C * * said 'it was the only proof *he* had seen of her good taste.' Monsieur L'Amant is remarkably handsome; but *I* don't think more so than her book.

"C * * looks well,—seems pleased, and dressed to *sprucery*. A blue coat becomes him,—so does his new wig. He really looked as if Apollo had sent him a birthday suit, or a wedding-garment, and was witty and lively. He abused Corinne's book, which I regret; because, firstly, he understands German, and is consequently a fair judge; and, secondly, he is *first-rate*, and, consequently, the best of judges. I reverence and admire him; but I won't give up my opinion—why should I? I read *her* again and again, and there can be no affectation in this. I cannot be mistaken (except in taste) in a book I read and lay down, and take up again; and no book can be totally bad which finds *one*, even *one* reader, who can say as much sincerely.

"C. talks of lecturing next spring; his last lectures were eminently successful. Moore thought of it, but gave it up,—I don't know why. * * had been prating *dignity* to him, and such stuff; as if a man disgraced himself by instructing and pleasing at the same time.

"Introduced to Marquis Buckingham—saw Lord Gower—he is going to Holland; Sir J. and Lady Mackintosh and Homer, G. Lamb, with I know not how many (R. Wellesley, one—a clever man) grouped about the room. Little Henry Fox, a very fine boy, and very promising in mind and manner,—he went away to bed, before I had time to talk to him. I am sure I had rather hear him than all the *savans*.

"Monday, Dec. 6.

"Murray tells me that C——r asked him why the thing was called the *Bride* of Abydos? It is a cursed awkward question, being unanswerable. *She* is not a *bride*, only about to be one; but for, &c. &c. &c.

"I don't wonder at his finding out the *Bull*; but the detection * * * is too late to do any good. I was a great fool to make it, and am ashamed of not being an Irishman.

"C——l last night seemed a little nettled at something or other—I know not what. We were standing in the ante-saloon, when Lord H. brought out of the other room a vessel of some composition similar to that which is used in Catholic churches, and, seeing us, he exclaimed, 'Here is some *incense* for you.' C——l answered—'Carry it to Lord Byron, *he is used to it*.'

"Now, this comes of 'bearing no brother near the throne.' I, who have no throne, nor wish to have one *now*, whatever I may have done, am at perfect peace with all the poetical fraternity: or, at least, if I dislike any, it is not *poetically*, but *personally*. Surely the field of thought is infinite; what does it signify who is before or behind in a race where there is no *goal*? The temple of fame is like that of the Persians, the universe; our altar, the tops of mountains. I should be equally content with Mount Caucasus, or Mount Anything; and those who like it, may have Mount Blanc or Chimborazo, without my envy of their elevation.

"I think I may *now* speak thus; for I have just published a poem, and am quite ignorant whether it is *likely* to be *liked* or not. I have hitherto heard little in its commendation, and no one can *downright* abuse it to one's face, except in print. It can't be good, or I should not have stumbled over the threshold, and blundered in my very title. But I began it with my heart full of * * *, and my head of oriental*ities* (I can't call them *isms*), and wrote on rapidly.

"This journal is a relief. When I am tired—as I generally am—out comes this, and down goes every thing. But I can't read it over; and God knows what contradictions it may contain. If I am sincere with myself (but I fear one lies more to one's self than to any one else), every page should confute, refute, and utterly abjure its *predecessor*.

"Another scribble from Martin Baldwin the petitioner; I have neither head nor nerves to present it. That confounded supper at Lewis's has spoiled

my digestion and my philanthropy. I have no more charity than a cruet of vinegar. Would I were an ostrich, and dieted on fire-irons,—or any thing that my gizzard could get the better of.

"To-day saw W. His uncle is dying, and W. don't much affect our Dutch determinations. I dine with him on Thursday, provided *l'oncle* is not dined upon, or peremptorily bespoke by the posthumous epicures before that day. I wish he may recover—not for *our* dinner's sake, but to disappoint the undertaker, and the rascally reptiles that may well wait, since they *will* dine at last.

"Gell called—he of Troy—after I was out. Mem.—to return his visit. But my Mems. are the very land-marks of forgetfulness;—something like a light-house, with a ship wrecked under the nose of its lantern. I never look at a Mem. without seeing that I have remembered to forget. Mem.—I have forgotten to pay Pitt's taxes, and suppose I shall be surcharged. 'An I do not turn rebel when thou art king'—oons! I believe my very biscuit is leavened with that impostor's imposts.

"L^{y}. M^{e}. returns from Jersey's to-morrow;—I must call. A Mr. Thomson has sent a song, which I must applaud. I hate annoying them with censure or silence;—and yet I hate *lettering*.

"Saw Lord Glenbervie and his Prospectus, at Murray's, of a new Treatise on Timber. Now here is a man more useful than all the historians and rhymers ever planted. For, by preserving our woods and forests, he furnishes materials for all the history of Britain worth reading, and all the odes worth nothing.

"Redde a good deal, but desultorily. My head is crammed with the most useless lumber. It is odd that when I do read, I can only bear the chicken broth of—*any thing* but Novels. It is many a year since I looked into one, (though they are sometimes ordered, by way of experiment, but never taken,) till I looked yesterday at the worst parts of the Monk. These descriptions ought to have been written by Tiberius at Caprea—they are forced—the *philtred* ideas of a jaded voluptuary. It is to me inconceivable how they could have been composed by a man of only twenty—his age when he wrote them. They have no nature—all the sour cream of cantharides. I should have suspected Buffon of writing them on the death-bed of his detestable dotage. I had never redde this edition, and merely looked at them from curiosity and recollection of the noise they made, and the name they have left to Lewis. But they could do no harm, except * * * *.

"Called this evening on my agent—my business as usual. Our strange adventures are the only inheritances of our family that have not diminished.

"I shall now smoke two cigars, and get me to bed. The cigars don't keep well here. They get as old as a *donna di quaranti anni* in the sun of Africa. The Havannah are the best;—but neither are so pleasant as a hooka or chibouque. The Turkish tobacco is mild, and their horses entire—two things as they should be. I am so far obliged to this Journal, that it preserves me from verse,—at least from keeping it. I have just thrown a poem into the fire (which it has relighted to my great comfort), and have smoked out of my head the plan of another. I wish I could as easily get rid of thinking, or, at least, the confusion of thought.

"Tuesday, December 7.

"Went to bed, and slept dreamlessly, but not refreshingly. Awoke, and up an hour before being called; but dawdled three hours in dressing. When one subtracts from life infancy (which is vegetation),—sleep, eating, and swilling—buttoning and unbuttoning—how much remains of downright existence? The summer of a dormouse.

"Redde the papers and *tea*-ed and soda-watered, and found out that the fire was badly lighted. Ld. Glenbervie wants me to go to Brighton—um!

"This morning, a very pretty billet from the Staël about meeting her at Ld. H.'s to-morrow. She has written, I dare say, twenty such this morning to different people, all equally flattering to each. So much the better for her and those who believe all she wishes them, or they wish to believe. She has been pleased to be pleased with my slight eulogy in the note annexed to 'The Bride.' This is to be accounted for in several ways,—firstly, all women like all, or any, praise; secondly, this was unexpected, because I have never courted her; and, thirdly, as Scrub says, those who have been all their lives regularly praised, by regular critics, like a little variety, and are glad when any one goes out of his way to say a civil thing; and, fourthly, she is a very good-natured creature, which is the best reason, after all, and, perhaps, the only one.

"A knock—knocks single and double. Bland called. He says Dutch society (he has been in Holland) is second-hand French; but the women are like women every where else. This is a bore; I should like to see them a little unlike; but that can't be expected.

"Went out—came home—this, that, and the other—and 'all is vanity, saith the preacher,' and so say I, as part of his congregation. Talking of vanity, whose praise do I prefer? Why, Mrs. Inchbald's, and that of the Americans. The first, because her 'Simple Story' and 'Nature and Art' are, to me, *true* to their *titles;* and, consequently, her short note to Rogers about 'The Giaour' delighted me more than any thing, except the Edinburgh Review. I like the Americans, because *I* happened to be in *Asia*, while the English Bards and Scotch Reviewers were redde in *America*. If I could have had a speech against the *Slave Trade, in Africa*, and an epitaph on a dog in *Europe* (i.e. in the Morning Post), my *vertex sublimis* would certainly have displaced stars enough to overthrow the Newtonian system.

"Friday, December 10. 1813.

"I am *ennuyè* beyond my usual tense of that yawning verb, which I am always conjugating; and I don't find that society much mends the matter. I am too lazy to shoot myself—and it would annoy Augusta, and perhaps * *; but it would be a good thing for George, on the other side, and no bad one for me; but I won't be tempted.

"I have had the kindest letter from M * * e. I *do* think that man is the best-hearted, the only *hearted* being I ever encountered; and, then, his talents are equal to his feelings.

"Dined on Wednesday at Lord H.'s—the Staffords, Staëls, Cowpers, Ossulstones, Melbournes, Mackintoshes, &c. &c.—and was introduced to the Marquis and Marchioness of Stafford,—an unexpected event. My quarrel with Lord Carlisle (their or his brother-in-law) having rendered it improper, I suppose, brought it about. But, if it was to happen at all, I wonder it did not occur before. She is handsome, and must have been beautiful—and her manners are *princessly*.

"The Staël was at the other end of the table, and less loquacious than heretofore. We are now very good friends; though she asked Lady Melbourne whether I had really any *bonhommie*. She might as well have asked that question before she told C.L. 'c'est un démon." True enough, but rather premature, for *she* could not have found it out, and so—she wants me to dine there next Sunday.

"Murray prospers, as far as circulation. For my part, I adhere (in liking) to my Fragment. It is no wonder that I wrote one—my mind is a fragment.

"Saw Lord Gower, Tierney, &c. in the square. Took leave of Lord Gr. who is going to Holland and Germany. He tells me that he carries with him a parcel of 'Harolds' and 'Giaours,' &c. for the readers of Berlin, who, it seems, read English, and have taken a caprice for mine. Um!—have I been *German* all this time, when I thought myself *Oriental*?

"Lent Tierney my box for to-morrow; and received a new comedy sent by Lady C.A.—but *not hers*. I must read it, and endeavour not to displease the author. I hate annoying them with cavil; but a comedy I take to be the most difficult of compositions, more so than tragedy.

"G——t says there is a coincidence between the first part of 'The Bride' and some story of his—whether published or not, I know not, never having seen it. He is almost the last person on whom any one would commit literary larceny, and I am not conscious of any witting thefts on any of the genus. As to originality, all pretensions are ludicrous,—'there is nothing new under the sun.'

"Went last night to the play. Invited out to a party, but did not go;—right. Refused to go to Lady * *'s on Monday;—right again. If I must fritter away my life, I would rather do it alone. I was much tempted;—C * * looked so Turkish with her red Turban, and her regular, dark, and clear features. Not that *she* and *I* ever were, or could be, any thing; but I love any aspect that reminds me of the 'children of the sun.'

"To dine to-day with Rogers and Sharpe, for which I have some appetite, not having tasted food for the preceding forty-eight hours. I wish I could leave off eating altogether.

"Saturday, December 11.

"Sunday, December 12.

"By G——t's answer, I find it is some story in *real life*, and not any work with which my late composition coincides. It is still more singular, for mine is drawn from *existence* also.

"I have sent an excuse to M. de Staël. I do not feel sociable enough for dinner to-day;—and I will not go to Sheridan's on Wednesday. Not that I do not admire and prefer his unequalled conversation; but—that '*but*' must only be intelligible to thoughts I cannot write. Sheridan was in good talk at Rogers's the other night, but I only stayed till *nine*. All the world are to be at the Staël's to-night, and I am not sorry to escape any part of it. I

only go out to get me a fresh appetite for being alone. Went out—did not go to the Staël's but to Ld. Holland's. Party numerous—conversation general. Stayed late—made a blunder—got over it—came home and went to bed, not having eaten. Rather empty, but *fresco*, which is the great point with me.

"Monday, December 13. 1813.

"Called at three places—read, and got ready to leave town to-morrow. Murray has had a letter from his brother bibliopole of Edinburgh, who says, 'he is lucky in having such a *poet*'—something as if one was a pack-horse, or 'ass, or any thing that is his:' or, like Mrs. Packwood, who replied to some enquiry after the Odes on Razors,—'Laws, sir, we keeps a poet.' The same illustrious Edinburgh bookseller once sent an order for books, poesy, and cookery, with this agreeable postscript—'The *Harold* and *Cookery* are much wanted.' Such is fame, and, after all, quite as good as any other 'life in other's breath.' 'Tis much the same to divide purchasers with Hannah Glasse or Hannah More.

"Some editor of some magazine has *announced* to Murray his intention of abusing the thing '*without reading it*.' So much the better; if he redde it first, he would abuse it more.

"Allen (Lord Holland's Allen—the best informed and one of the ablest men I know—a perfect Magliabecchi—a devourer, a Helluo of books, and an observer of men,) has lent me a quantity of Burns's unpublished, and never-to-be published, Letters. They are full of oaths and obscene songs. What an antithetical mind!—tenderness, roughness—delicacy, coarseness—sentiment, sensuality—soaring and grovelling, dirt and deity—all mixed up in that one compound of inspired clay!

"It seems strange; a true voluptuary will never abandon his mind to the grossness of reality. It is by exalting the earthly, the material, the *physique* of our pleasures, by veiling these ideas, by forgetting them altogether, or, at least, never naming them hardly to one's self, that we alone can prevent them from disgusting.

"December 14, 15, 16.

"Much done, but nothing to record. It is quite enough to set down my thoughts,—my actions will rarely bear retrospection.

"December 17, 18.

"Lord Holland told me a curious piece of sentimentality in Sheridan. The other night we were all delivering our respective and various opinions on him and other *hommes marquans*, and mine was this:—'Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been, *par excellence*, always the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy (School for Scandal), the *best* drama, (in my mind, far before that St. Giles's lampoon, the Beggar's Opera,) the best farce (the Critic—it is only too good for a farce), and the best Address (Monologue on Garrick), and, to crown all, delivered the very best Oration (the famous Begum Speech) ever conceived or heard in this country.' Somebody told S. this the next day, and on hearing it, he burst into tears!

"Poor Brinsley! if they were tears of pleasure, I would rather have said these few, but most sincere, words than have written the Iliad or made his own celebrated Philippic. Nay, his own comedy never gratified me more than to hear that he had derived a moment's gratification from any praise of mine, humble as it must appear to 'my elders and my betters.'

"Went to my box at Covent Garden to night; and my delicacy felt a little shocked at seeing S * * *'s mistress (who, to my certain knowledge, was actually educated, from her birth, for her profession) sitting with her mother, 'a three-piled b——d, b——d-Major to the army,' in a private box opposite. I felt rather indignant; but, casting my eyes round the house, in the next box to me, and the next, and the next, were the most distinguished old and young Babylonians of quality;—so I burst out a laughing. It was really odd; Lady * * *divorced*—Lady * * and her daughter, Lady * *, both *divorceable*—Mrs. * *, in the next, the *like*, and still nearer * * * * * *! What an assemblage to *me*, who know all their histories. It was as if the house had been divided between your public and your *understood* courtesans;—but the intriguantes much outnumbered the regular mercenaries. On the other side were only Pauline and *her* mother, and, next box to her, three of inferior note. Now, where lay the difference between *her* and *mamma*, and Lady * * and daughter? except that the two last may enter Carleton and any *other house*, and the two first are limited to the opera and b——house. How I do delight in observing life as it really is!—and myself, after all, the worst of any. But no matter—I must avoid egotism, which, just now, would be no vanity.

"I have lately written a wild, rambling, unfinished rhapsody, called 'The Devil's Drive,' the notion of which I took from Porson's 'Devil's Walk.'

"Redde some Italian, and wrote two Sonnets on * * *. I never wrote but one sonnet before, and that was not in earnest, and many years ago, as an exercise—and I will never write another. They are the most puling, petrifying, stupidly platonic compositions. I detest the Petrarch so much, that I would not be the man even to have obtained his Laura, which the metaphysical, whining dotard never could.

"January 16. 1814.

"To-morrow I leave town for a few days. I saw Lewis to-day, who is just returned from Oatlands, where he has been squabbling with Mad. de Staël about himself, Clarissa Harlowe, Mackintosh, and me. My homage has never been paid in that quarter, or we would have agreed still worse. I don't talk—I can't flatter, and won't listen, except to a pretty or a foolish woman. She bored Lewis with praises of himself till he sickened—found out that Clarissa was perfection, and Mackintosh the first man in England. There I agree, at least *one* of the first—but Lewis did not. As to Clarissa, I leave to those who can read it to judge and dispute. I could not do the one, and am, consequently, not qualified for the other. She told Lewis wisely, he being my friend, that I was affected, in the first place; and that, in the next place, I committed the heinous offence of sitting at dinner with my *eyes* shut, or half shut. I wonder if I really have this trick. I must cure myself of it, if true. One insensibly acquires awkward habits, which should be broken in time. If this is one, I wish I had been told of it before. It would not so much signify if one was always to be checkmated by a plain woman, but one may as well see some of one's neighbours, as well as the plate upon the table.

"I should like, of all things, to have heard the Amabæan eclogue between her and Lewis—both obstinate, clever, odd, garrulous, and shrill. In fact, one could have heard nothing else. But they fell out, alas!—and now they will never quarrel again. Could not one reconcile them for the 'nonce?' Poor Corinne—she will find that some of her fine sayings won't suit our fine ladies and gentlemen.

"I am getting rather into admiration of * *, the youngest sister of * *. A wife would be my salvation. I am sure the wives of my acquaintances have

hitherto done me little good. * * is beautiful, but very young, and, I think, a fool. But I have not seen enough to judge; besides, I hate an *esprit* in petticoats. That she won't love me is very probable, nor shall I love her. But, on my system, and the modern system in general, that don't signify. The business (if it came to business) would probably be arranged between papa and me. She would have her own way; I am good-humoured to women, and docile; and, if I did not fall in love with her, which I should try to prevent, we should be a very comfortable couple. As to conduct, *that* she must look to. But *if* I love, I shall be jealous;—and for that reason I will not be in love. Though, after all, I doubt my temper, and fear I should not be so patient as becomes the *bienséance* of a married man in my station. Divorce ruins the poor *femme*, and damages are a paltry compensation. I do fear my temper would lead me into some of our oriental tricks of vengeance, or, at any rate, into a summary appeal to the court of twelve paces. So 'I'll none on 't,' but e'en remain single and solitary;—though I should like to have somebody now and then to yawn with one.

"W. and, after him, * *, has stolen one of my buffooneries about Mde. de Staël's Metaphysics and the Fog, and passed it, by speech and letter, as their own. As Gibbet says, 'they are the most of a gentleman of any on the road.' W. is in sad enmity with the Whigs about this Review of Fox (if he *did* review him);—all the epigrammatists and essayists are at him. I hate *odds*, and wish he may beat them. As for me, by the blessing of indifference, I have simplified my politics into an utter detestation of all existing governments; and, as it is the shortest and most agreeable and summary feeling imaginable, the first moment of an universal republic would convert me into an advocate for single and uncontradicted despotism. The fact is, riches are power, and poverty is slavery all over the earth, and one sort of establishment is no better nor worse for a *people* than another. I shall adhere to my party, because it would not be honourable to act otherwise; but, as to *opinions*, I don't think politics *worth* an *opinion*. *Conduct* is another thing:—if you begin with a party, go on with them. I have no consistency, except in politics; and *that* probably arises from my indifference on the subject altogether."

I must here be permitted to interrupt, for a while, the progress of this Journal,—which extends through some months of the succeeding year,—for the purpose of noticing, without infringement of chronological order,

such parts of the poet's literary history and correspondence as belong properly to the date of the year 1813.

At the beginning, as we have seen, of the month of December, The Bride of Abydos was published,—having been struck off, like its predecessor, The Giaour, in one of those paroxysms of passion and imagination, which adventures such as the poet was now engaged in were, in a temperament like his, calculated to excite. As the mathematician of old required but a spot to stand upon, to be able, as he boasted, to move the world, so a certain degree of foundation in *fact* seemed necessary to Byron, before that lever which he knew how to apply to the world of the passions could be wielded by him. So small, however, was, in many instances, the connection with reality which satisfied him, that to aim at tracing through his stories these links with his own fate and fortunes, which were, after all, perhaps, visible but to his own fancy, would be a task as uncertain as unsafe;—and this remark applies not only to The Bride of Abydos, but to The Corsair, Lara, and all the other beautiful fictions that followed, in which, though the emotions expressed by the poet may be, in general, regarded as vivid recollections of what had at different times agitated his own bosom, there are but little grounds,—however he might himself, occasionally, encourage such a supposition,—for connecting him personally with the groundwork or incidents of the stories.

While yet uncertain about the fate of his own new poem, the following observations on the work of an ingenious follower in the same track were written.

LETTER 143. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Dec. 4. 1813.

"I have redde through your Persian Tales, and have taken the liberty of making some remarks on the *blank* pages. There are many beautiful passages, and an interesting story; and I cannot give you a stronger proof that such is my opinion, than by the *date* of the *hour—two o'clock*, till which it has kept me awake *without a yawn*. The conclusion is not quite correct in *costume*; there is no *Mussulman suicide* on record—at least for *love*. But this matters not. The tale must have been written by some one who has been on the spot, and I wish him, and he deserves, success. Will you apologise to the author for the liberties I have taken with his MS.? Had I been less awake to, and interested in, his theme, I had been less

obtrusive; but you know *I* always take this in good part, and I hope he will. It is difficult to say what *will* succeed, and still more to pronounce what *will not*. *I* am at this moment in *that uncertainty* (on our *own* score); and it is no small proof of the author's powers to be able to *charm* and *fix* a *mind*'s attention on similar subjects and climates in such a predicament. That he may have the same effect upon all his readers is very sincerely the wish, and hardly the *doubt*, of yours truly, B."

To The Bride of Abydos he made additions, in the course of printing, amounting, altogether, to near two hundred lines; and, as usual, among the passages thus added, were some of the happiest and most brilliant in the whole poem. The opening lines,—"Know ye the land,' &c.—supposed to have been suggested to him by a song of Goëthe's—were among the number of these new insertions, as were also those fine verses,—"Who hath not proved how feebly words essay," &c. Of one of the most popular lines in this latter passage, it is not only curious, but instructive, to trace the progress to its present state of finish. Having at first written—

"Mind on her lip and music in her face,"

he afterwards altered it to—

"The mind of music breathing in her face."

But, this not satisfying him, the next step of correction brought the line to what it is at present—

"The mind, the music breathing from her face."

But the longest, as well as most splendid, of those passages, with which the perusal of his own strains, during revision, inspired him, was that rich flow of eloquent feeling which follows the couplet,—"Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my bark," &c.—a strain of poetry, which, for energy and tenderness of thought, for music of versification, and selectness of diction, has, throughout the greater portion of it, but few rivals in either ancient or modern song. All this passage was sent, in successive scraps, to the printer,—correction following correction, and thought reinforced by thought. We have here, too, another example of that retouching process

by which some of his most exquisite effects were attained. Every reader remembers the four beautiful lines—

"Or, since that hope denied in worlds of strife,Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!"

In the first copy of this passage sent to the publisher, the last line was written thus—

{*an airy*}"And tints to-morrow with a {fancied} ray"—

the following note being annexed:—"Mr. Murray,—Choose which of the two epithets, 'fancied,' or 'airy,' may be the best; or, if neither will do, tell me, and I will dream another." The poet's dream was, it must be owned, lucky,—"prophetic" being the word, of all others, for his purpose.

I shall select but one more example, from the additions to this poem, as a proof that his eagerness and facility in producing, was sometimes almost equalled by his anxious care in correcting. In the long passage just referred to, the six lines beginning "Blest as the Muezzin's strain," &c., having been despatched to the printer too late for insertion, were, by his desire, added in an errata page; the first couplet, in its original form, being as follows:—

"Soft as the Mecca-Muezzin's strains inviteHim who hath journey'd far to join the rite."

In a few hours after, another scrap was sent off, containing the lines thus—

"Blest as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's dome,Which welcomes Faith to view her Prophet's tomb"—

with the following note to Mr. Murray:—

"December 3. 1813.

"Look out in the Encyclopedia, article *Mecca*, whether it is there or at *Medina* the Prophet is entombed. If at Medina, the first lines of my alterration must run—

"Blest as the call which from Medina's domeInvites Devotion to her Prophet's tomb," &c.

If at Mecca, the lines may stand as before. Page 45. canto 2d, Bride of Abydos. Yours, B.

"You will find this out either by article *Mecca*, *Medina*, or *Mohammed*. I have no book of reference by me."

Immediately after succeeded another note:—

"Did you look out? Is it *Medina* or *Mecca* that contains the *Holy* Sepulchre? Don't make me blaspheme by your negligence. I have no book of reference, or I would save you the trouble. I *blush*, as a good Mussulman, to have confused the point.

"Yours, B."

Notwithstanding all these various changes, the couplet in question stands at present thus:—

"Blest as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's wallTo pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call."

In addition to his own watchfulness over the birth of his new poem, he also, as will be seen from the following letter, invoked the veteran taste of Mr. Gifford on the occasion:—

LETTER 144. TO MR. GIFFORD.

"November 12. 1813.

"My dear Sir,

"I hope you will consider, when I venture on any request, that it is the reverse of a certain Dedication, and is addressed, *not* to 'The Editor of the Quarterly Review,' but to Mr. Gifford. You will understand this, and on that point I need trouble you no farther.

"You have been good enough to look at a thing of mine in MS.—a Turkish story, and I should feel gratified if you would do it the same favour in its

probationary state of printing. It was written, I cannot say for amusement, nor 'obliged by hunger and request of friends,' but in a state of mind from circumstances which occasionally occur to 'us youth,' that rendered it necessary for me to apply my mind to something, any thing but reality; and under this not very brilliant inspiration it was composed. Being done, and having at least diverted me from myself, I thought you would not perhaps be offended if Mr. Murray forwarded it to you. He has done so, and to apologise for his doing so a second time is the object of my present letter.

"I beg you will *not* send me any answer. I assure you very sincerely I know your time to be occupied, and it is enough, more than enough, if you read; you are not to be bored with the fatigue of answers.

"A word to Mr. Murray will be sufficient, and send it either to the flames or

"A hundred hawkers' load,On wings of wind to fly or fall abroad.

It deserves no better than the first, as the work of a week, and scribbled 'stans pede in uno' (by the by, the only foot I have to stand on); and I promise never to trouble you again under forty Cantos, and a voyage between each. Believe me ever

"Your obliged and affectionate servant,

"BYRON."

The following letters and notes, addressed to Mr. Murray at this time, cannot fail, I think, to gratify all those to whom the history of the labours of genius is interesting:—

LETTER 145. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 12. 1813.

"Two friends of mine (Mr. Rogers and Mr. Sharpe) have advised me not to risk at present any single publication separately, for various reasons. As they have not seen the one in question, they can have no bias for or against the merits (if it has any) or the faults of the present subject of our

conversation. You say all the last of 'The Giaour' arePg 320 gone—at least out of your hands. Now, if you think of publishing any new edition with the last additions which have not yet been before the reader (I mean distinct from the two-volume publication), we can add 'The Bride of Abydos,' which will thus steal quietly into the world: if liked, we can then throw off some copies for the purchasers of former 'Giaours;' and, if not, I can omit it in any future publication. What think you? I really am no judge of those things, and with all my natural partiality for one's own productions, I would rather follow any one's judgment than my own.

"P.S. Pray let me have the proofs I sent *all* to-night. I have some alterations that I have thought of that I wish to make speedily. I hope the proof will be on separate pages, and not all huddled together on a mile-long ballad-singing sheet, as those of The Giaour sometimes are; for then I can't read them distinctly."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 13. 1813.

"Will you forward the letter to Mr. Gilford with the proof? There is an alteration I may make in Zuleika's speech, in second Canto (the only one of hers in that Canto). It is now thus:

"And curse, if I could curse, the day.

It must be—

"And mourn—I dare not curse—the dayThat saw my solitary birth, &c. &c.

"Ever yours, B.

"In the last MS. lines sent, instead of 'living heart,' convert to 'quivering heart.' It is in line ninth of the MS. passage.

"Ever yours again, B."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Alteration of a line in Canto second.

"Instead of—

"And tints to-morrow with a *fancied* ray,

Print—

"And tints to-morrow with *prophetic* ray.

"The evening beam that smiles the clouds awayAnd tints to-morrow with prophetic ray;

Or,

{*gilds*}"And {tints} the hope of morning with its ray;

Or,

"And gilds to-morrow's hope with heavenly ray.

"I wish you would ask Mr. Gifford which of them is best, or rather *not worst*. Ever, &c.

"You can send the request contained in this at the same time with the *revise*, *after* I have seen the *said revise*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 13. 1813.

"Certainly. Do you suppose that no one but the Galileans are acquainted with *Adam*, and *Eve*, and *Cain*, and *Noah*?—Surely, I might have had Solomon, and Abraham, and David, and even Moses. When you know that *Zuleika* is the *Persian poetical* name for *Potiphar*'s wife, on whom and Joseph there is a long poem, in the Persian, this will not surprise you. If you want authority, look at Jones, D'Herbelot, Vathek, or the notes to the Arabian Nights; and, if you think it necessary, model this into a note.

"Alter, in the inscription, 'the most affectionate respect,' to 'with every sentiment of regard and respect.'"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 14. 1813.

"I send you a note for the *ignorant*, but I really wonder at finding *you* among them. I don't care one lump of sugar for my *poetry*; but for my *costume* and my *correctness* on those points (of which I think the *funeral* was a proof), I will combat lustily.

"Yours," &c.

"Nov. 14. 1813.

"Let the revise which I sent just now (and *not* the proof in Mr. Gifford's possession) be returned to the printer, as there are several additional corrections, and two new lines in it. Yours," &c.

LETTER 146. TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 15. 1813.

"Mr. Hodgson has looked over and *stopped*, or rather *pointed*, this revise, which must be the one to print from. He has also made some suggestions, with most of which I have complied, as he has always, for these ten years, been a very sincere, and by no means (at times) flattering intimate of mine. *He* likes it (you will think *fatteringly*, in this instance) better than The Giaour, but doubts (and so do I) its being so popular; but, contrary to some others, advises a separate publication. On this we can easily decide. I confess I like the *double* form better. Hodgson says, it is *better versified* than any of the others; which is odd, if true, as it has cost me less time (though more hours at a time) than any attempt I ever made.

"P.S. Do attend to the punctuation: I can't, for I don't know a comma—at least where to place one.

"That Tory of a printer has omitted two lines of the opening, and *perhaps more*, which were in the MS. Will you, pray, give him a hint of accuracy? I have reinserted the *two*, but they were in the manuscript, I can swear."

LETTER 147. TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 17. 1813.

"That you and I may distinctly understand each other on a subject, which, like 'the dreadful reckoning when men smile no more,' makes conversation not very pleasant, I think it as well to *write* a few lines on the topic.—Before I left town for Yorkshire, you said that you were ready and willing to give five hundred guineas for the copyright of 'The Giaour;' and my answer was—from which I do not mean to recede—that we would discuss the point at Christmas. The new story may or may not succeed; the probability, under present circumstances, seems to be, that it may at least pay its expenses—but even that remains to be proved, and till it is proved one way or another, we will say nothing about it. Thus then be it: I will postpone all arrangement about it, and The Giaour also, till Easter, 1814; and you shall then, according to your own notions of fairness, make your own offer for the two. At the same time, I do not rate the last in my own estimation at half The Giaour; and according to your own notions of its worth and its success within the time mentioned, be the addition or deduction to or from whatever sum may be your proposal for the first, which has already had its success.

"The pictures of Phillips I consider as *mine*, all three; and the one (not the Arnaout) of the two best is much at *your service*, if you will accept it as a present.

"P.S. The expense of engraving from the miniature send me in my account, as it was destroyed by my desire; and have the goodness to burn that detestable print from it immediately.

"To make you some amends for eternally pestering you with alterations, I send you Cobbett to confirm your orthodoxy.

"One more alteration of *a* into *the* in the MS.; it must be—'The *heart whose softness*,' &c.

"Remember—and in the inscription, 'To the Right Honourable Lord Holland,' *without* the previous names, Henry," &c.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 20. 1813.

"More work for the *Row*. I am doing my best to beat 'The Giaour'—*no* difficult task for any one but the author."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 22. 1813.

"I have no time to *cross*-investigate, but I believe and hope all is right. I care less than you will believe about its success, but I can't survive a single *misprint*: it *chokes* me to see words misused by the printers. Pray look over, in case of some eyesore escaping me.

"P.S. Send the earliest copies to Mr. Frere, Mr. Canning, Mr. Heber, Mr. Gifford, Lord Holland, Lord Melbourne (Whitehall), Lady Caroline Lamb, (Brocket), Mr. Hodgson (Cambridge), Mr. Merivale, Mr. Ward, from the author."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 23. 1813.

"You wanted some reflections, and I send you *per Selim* (see his speech in Canto 2d, page 46.), eighteen lines in decent couplets, of a pensive, if not an *ethical* tendency. One more revise—positively the last, if decently done—at any rate the *pen*ultimate. Mr. Canning's approbation (*if* he did approve) I need not say makes me proud. As to printing, print as you will and how you will—by itself, if you like; but let me have a few copies in *sheets*.

"November 24. 1813.

"You must pardon me once more, as it is all for your good: it must be thus—

"He makes a solitude, and calls it peace.

'*Makes*' is closer to the passage of Tacitus, from which the line is taken, and is, besides, a stronger word than '*leaves*'

"Mark where his carnage and his conquests cease—He makes a solitude, and calls it—peace."

LETTER 148. TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 27. 1813.

"If you look over this carefully by the *last proof* with my corrections, it is probably right; this *you* can do as well or better;—I have not now time. The copies I mentioned to be sent to different friends last night, I should wish to be made up with the new Giaours, if it also is ready. If not, send The Giaour afterwards.

"The Morning Post says *I* am the author of Nourjahad!! This comes of lending the drawings for their dresses; but it is not worth a *formal contradiction*. Besides, the criticisms on the *supposition* will, some of them, be quite amusing and furious. The *Orientalism*—which I hear is very splendid—of the melodrame (whosever it is, and I am sure I don't know) is as good as an advertisement for your Eastern Stories, by filling their heads with glitter.

"P.S. You will of course *say* the truth, that I am *not* the melodramist—if any one charges me in your presence with the performance."

LETTER 149. TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 28. 1813.

"Send another copy (if not too much of a request) to Lady Holland of the *Journal*, in my name, when you receive this; it is for *Earl Grey*—and I will

relinquish my *own*. Also to Mr. Sharpe, and Lady Holland, and Lady Caroline Lamb, copies of 'The Bride' as soon as convenient.

"P.S. Mr. Ward and myself still continue our purpose; but I shall not trouble you on any arrangement on the score of The Giaour and The Bride tillPg 328 our return,—or, at any rate, before *May*, 1814,—that is, six months from hence: and before that time you will be able to ascertain how far your offer may be a losing one; if so, you can deduct proportionably; and if not, I shall not at any rate allow you to go higher than your present proposal, which is very handsome, and more than fair.

"I have had—but this must be *entre nous*—a very kind note, on the subject of 'The Bride,' from Sir James Mackintosh, and an invitation to go there this evening, which it is now too late to accept."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 29. 1813. Sunday—Monday morning—three o'clock—in my doublet and hose,—*swearing*.

"I send you in time an errata page, containing an omission of mine, which must be thus added, as it is too late for insertion in the text. The passage is an imitation altogether from Medea in Ovid, and is incomplete without these two lines. Pray let this be done, and directly; it is necessary, will add one page to your book (*making*), and can do no harm, and is yet in time for the *public*. Answer me, thou oracle, in the affirmative. You can send the loose pages to those who have copies already, if they like; but certainly to all the *critical* copyholders.

"P.S. I have got out of my bed, (in which, however, I could not sleep, whether I had amended this or not,) and so good morning. I am trying whether De l'Allemagne will act as an opiate, but I doubt it."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 29. 1813.

"*You have looked at it!*' to much purpose, to allow so stupid a blunder to stand; it is *not* '*courage*' but '*carnage*;' and if you don't want me to cut my own throat, see it altered.

"I am very sorry to hear of the fall of Dresden."

LETTER 150. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 29. 1813. Monday.

"You will act as you please upon that point; but whether I go or stay, I shall not say another word on the subject till May—nor then, unless quite convenient to yourself. I have many things I wish to leave to your care, principally papers. The *vases* need not be now sent, as Mr. Ward is gone to Scotland. You are right about the errata page; place it at the beginning. Mr. Perry is a little premature in his compliments: these may do harm by exciting expectation, and I think we ought to be above it—though I see the next paragraph is on the *Journal*, which makes me suspect *you* as the author of both.

"Would it not have been as well to have said 'in two Cantos' in the advertisement? they will else think of *fragments*, a species of composition very well for *once*, like *one ruin* in a *view*; but one would not build a town of them. The Bride, such as it is, is my first *entire* composition of any length (except the Satire, and be d——d to it), for The Giaour is but a string of passages, and Childe Harold is, and I rather think always will be, unconcluded. I return Mr. Hay's note, with thanks to him and you.

"There have been some epigrams on Mr. Ward: one I see to-day. The first I did not see, but heard yesterday. The second seems very bad. I only hope that Mr. Ward does not believe that I had any connection with either. I like and value him too well to allow my politics to contract into spleen, or to admire any thing intended to annoy him or his. You need not take the trouble to answer this, as I shall see you in the course of the afternoon.

"P.S. I have said this much about the epigrams, because I lived so much in the *opposite camp*, and, from my post as an engineer, might be suspected as the flinger of these hand-grenadoes; but with a worthy foe, I am all for open war, and not this bushfighting, and have not had, nor will have, any thing to do with it. I do not know the author."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Nov. 30. 1813.

"Print this at the end of *all that is of 'The Bride of Abydos*,' as an errata page. BN.

"Omitted, Canto 2d, page 47., after line 449.,

"So that those arms cling closer round my neck.

Read,

"Then if my lip once murmur, it must beNo sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Tuesday evening, Nov. 30. 1813.

"For the sake of correctness, particularly in an errata page, the alteration of the couplet I have just sent (half an hour ago) must take place, in spite of delay or cancel; let me see the *proof* early to-morrow. I found out *murmur* to be a neuter *verb*, and have been obliged to alter the line so as to make it a substantive, thus—

"The deepest murmur of this lip shall beNo sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!

Don't send the copies to the *country* till this is all right."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Dec. 2. 1813.

"When you can, let the couplet enclosed be inserted either in the page, or in the errata page. I trust it is in time for some of the copies. This alteration is in the same part—the page *but one* before the last correction sent.

"P.S. I am afraid, from all I hear, that people are rather inordinate in their expectations, which is very unlucky, but cannot now be helped. This comes of Mr. Perry and one's wise friends; but do not *you* wind *your* hopes of success to the same pitch, forPg 332 fear of accidents, and I can assure you that my philosophy will stand the test very fairly; and I have done every thing to ensure you, at all events, from positive loss, which will be some satisfaction to both."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Dec. 3. 1813.

"I send you a *scratch* or *two*, the which *heal*. The Christian Observer is very savage, but certainly well written—and quite uncomfortable at the naughtiness of book and author. I rather suspect you won't much like the *present* to be more moral, if it is to share also the usual fate of your virtuous volumes.

"Let me see a proof of the six before incorporation."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Monday evening, Dec. 6. 1813.

"It is all very well, except that the lines are not numbered properly, and a diabolical mistake, page 67., which *must* be corrected with the *pen*, if no other way remains; it is the omission of '*not*' before '*disagreeable*,' in the *note* on the *amber* rosary. This is really horrible, and nearly as bad as the stumble of mine at the threshold—I mean the *misnomer* of Bride. Pray do not let a copy go without the '*not*;' it is nonsense, and worse than nonsense as it now stands. I wish the printer was saddled with a vampire.

"P.S. It is still *hath* instead of *have* in page 20.; never was any one so *misused* as I am by your devils of printers.

"P.S. I hope and trust the '*not*' was inserted in the first edition. We must have something—any thing—to set it right. It is enough to answer for one's own bulls, without other people's."

LETTER 151. TO MR. MURRAY.

"December 27. 1813.

"Lord Holland is laid up with the gout, and would feel very much obliged if you could obtain, and send as soon as possible, Madame d'Arblay's (or even Miss Edgeworth's) new work. I know they are not out; but it is perhaps possible for your *Majesty* to command what we cannot with much suing purchase, as yet. I need not say that when you are able or willing to confer the same favour on me, I shall be obliged. I would almost fall sick myself to get at Madame d'Arblay's writings.

"P.S. You were talking to-day of the American edition of a certain unquenchable memorial of my younger days. As it can't be helped now, I own I have some curiosity to see a copy of trans-Atlantic typography. This you will perhaps obtain, and one for yourself; but I must beg that you will not *import more*, because, *seriously*, I *do wish* to have that thing forgotten as much as it has been forgiven.

"If you send to the Globe editor, say that I want neither excuse nor contradiction, but merely a discontinuance of a most ill-grounded charge. I never was consistent in any thing but my politics; and as my redemption depends on that solitary virtue, it is murder to carry away my last anchor."

Of these hasty and characteristic missives with which he despatched off his "still-breeding thoughts," there yet remain a few more that might be presented to the reader; but enough has here been given to show the fastidiousness of his self-criticism, as well as the restless and unsatisfied ardour with which he pressed on in pursuit of perfection,—still seeing, according to the usual doom of genius, much farther than he could reach.

An appeal was, about this time, made to his generosity, which the reputation of the person from whom it proceeded would, in the minds of most people, have justified him in treating with disregard, but which a more enlarged feeling of humanity led him to view in a very different light; for, when expostulated with by Mr. Murray on his generous intentions towards one "whom nobody else would give a single farthing to," he answered, "it is for that very reason *I* give it, because nobody else will." The person in question was Mr. Thomas Ashe, author of a certain notorious publication called "The Book," which, from the delicate mysteries discussed in its pages, attracted far more notice than its talent, or even mischief, deserved. In a fit, it is to be hoped, of sincere penitence, this man wrote to Lord Byron, alleging poverty as his excuse for the vile uses to which he had hitherto prostituted his pen, and soliciting his Lordship's aid towards enabling him to exist, in future, more reputably. To this application the following answer, marked, in the highest degree, by good sense, humanity, and honourable sentiment, was returned by Lord Byron:—

LETTER 152. TO MR. ASHE.

"4. Bennet Street, St. James's, Dec. 14. 1813.

"Sir,

"I leave town for a few days to-morrow; on my return, I will answer your letter more at length. Whatever may be your situation, I cannot but commend your resolution to abjure and abandon the publication and composition of works such as those to which you have alluded. Depend upon it they amuse *few*, disgrace both *reader* and *writer*, and benefit *none*. It will be my wish to assist you, as far as my limited means will admit, to break such a bondage. In your answer, inform me what sum you think would enable you to extricate yourself from the hands of your employers, and to regain, at least, temporary independence, and I shall be glad to contribute my mite towards it. At present, I must conclude. Your name is not unknown to me, and I regret, for your own sake, that you have ever lent it to the works you mention. In saying this, I merely repeat your *own words* in your letter to me, and have no wish whatever to say a single syllable that may appear to insult your misfortunes. If I have, excuse me; it is unintentional. Yours, &c.

"BYRON."

In answer to this letter, Ashe mentioned, as the sum necessary to extricate him from his difficulties, 150*l*.—to be advanced at the rate of ten pounds per month; and, some short delay having occurred in the reply to this demand, the modest applicant, in renewing his suit, complained, it appears, of neglect: on which Lord Byron, with a good temper which few, in a similar case, could imitate, answered him as follows:—

LETTER 153. TO MR. ASHE.

"January 5. 1814.

"Sir,

"When you accuse a stranger of neglect, you forget that it is possible business or absence from London may have interfered to delay his answer, as has actually occurred in the present instance. But to the point. I am willing to do what I can to extricate you from your situation. Your first scheme I was considering; but your own impatience appears to have rendered it abortive, if not irretrievable. I will deposit in Mr. Murray's hands (with his consent) the sum you mentioned, to be advanced for the time at ten pounds per month.

"P.S.—I write in the greatest hurry, which may make my letter a little abrupt; but, as I said before, I have no wish to distress your feelings."

The service thus humanely proffered was no less punctually performed; and the following is one of the many acknowledgments of payment which I find in Ashe's letters to Mr. Murray:—"I have the honour to enclose you another memorandum for the sum of ten pounds, in compliance with the munificent instructions of Lord Byron."

His friend, Mr. Merivale, one of the translators of those Selections from the Anthology which we have seen he regretted so much not having taken with him on his travels, published a poem about this time, which he thus honours with his praise.

LETTER 154. TO MR. MERIVALE.

"January, 1814.

"My dear Merivale,

"I have redde Roncesvaux with very great pleasure, and (if I were so disposed) see very little room for criticism. There is a choice of two lines in one of the last Cantos,—I think 'Live and protect' better, because 'Oh who?' implies a doubt of Roland's power or inclination. I would allow the—but that point you yourself must determine on—I mean the doubt as to where to place a part of the Poem, whether between the actions or no. Only if you wish to have all the success you deserve, *never listen to friends*, and—as I am not the least troublesome of the number, least of all to me.

"I hope you will be out soon. *March*, sir, *March* is the month for the *trade*, and they must be considered. You have written a very noble Poem, and nothing but the detestable taste of the day can do you harm,—but I think you will beat it. Your measure is uncommonly well chosen and wielded."

In the extracts from his Journal, just given, there is a passage that cannot fail to have been remarked, where, in speaking of his admiration of some lady, whose name he has himself left blank, the noble writer says—"a wife would be the salvation of me." It was under this conviction, which not only himself but some of his friends entertained, of the prudence of his taking timely refuge in matrimony from those perplexities which form the sequel of all less regular ties, that he had been induced, about a year before, to turn his thoughts seriously to marriage,—at least, as seriously as his thoughts were ever capable of being so turned,—and chiefly, I believe, by the advice and intervention of his friend Lady Melbourne, to become a suitor for the hand of a relative of that lady, Miss Milbanke. Though his proposal was not then accepted, every assurance of friendship and regard accompanied the refusal; a wish was even expressed that they should continue to write to each other, and a correspondence, in consequence,—somewhat singular between two young persons of different sexes, inasmuch as love was not the subject of it,—ensued between them. We have seen how highly Lord Byron estimated as well the virtues as the accomplishments of the young lady; but it is evident that on neither side, at this period, was love either felt or professed.

In the mean time, new entanglements, in which his heart was the willing dupe of his fancy and vanity, came to engross the young poet: and still, as the usual penalties of such pursuits followed, he again found himself

sighing for the sober yoke of wedlock, as some security against their recurrence. There were, indeed, in the interval between Miss Milbanke's refusal and acceptance of him, two or three other young women of rank who, at different times, formed the subject of his matrimonial dreams. In the society of one of these, whose family had long honoured me with their friendship, he and I passed much of our time, during this and the preceding spring; and it will be found that, in a subsequent part of his correspondence, he represents me as having entertained an anxious wish that he should so far cultivate my fair friend's favour as to give a chance, at least, of matrimony being the result.

That I, more than once, expressed some such feeling is undoubtedly true. Fully concurring with the opinion, not only of himself, but of others of his friends, that in marriage lay his only chance of salvation from the sort of perplexing attachments into which he was now constantly tempted, I saw in none of those whom he admired with more legitimate views so many requisites for the difficult task of winning him into fidelity and happiness as in the lady in question. Combining beauty of the highest order with a mind intelligent and ingenuous,—having just learning enough to give refinement to her taste, and far too much taste to make pretensions to learning,—with a patrician spirit proud as his own, but showing it only in a delicate generosity of spirit, a feminine high-mindedness, which would have led her to tolerate his defects in consideration of his noble qualities and his glory, and even to sacrifice silently some of her own happiness rather than violate the responsibility in which she stood pledged to the world for his;—such was, from long experience, my impression of the character of this lady; and perceiving Lord Byron to be attracted by her more obvious claims to admiration, I felt a pleasure no less in rendering justice to the still rarer qualities which she possessed, than in endeavouring to raise my noble friend's mind to the contemplation of a higher model of female character than he had, unluckily for himself, been much in the habit of studying.

To this extent do I confess myself to have been influenced by the sort of feeling which he attributes to me. But in taking for granted (as it will appear he did from one of his letters) that I entertained any very decided or definite wishes on the subject, he gave me more credit for seriousness in my suggestions than I deserved. If even the lady herself, the unconscious object of these speculations, by whom he was regarded in no other light than that of a distinguished acquaintance, could have consented to undertake the perilous,—but still possible and glorious,—

achievement of attaching Byron to virtue, I own that, sanguinely as, in theory, I might have looked to the result, I should have seen, not without trembling, the happiness of one whom I had known and valued from her childhood risked in the experiment.

I shall now proceed to resume the thread of the Journal, which I had broken off, and of which, it will be perceived, the noble author himself had, for some weeks, at this time, interrupted the progress.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME