

ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS

Of the writers mentioned in this, the most famous poem Byron wrote before *he* became famous, Byron challenged – or almost challenged – three to duels. None of the challenges were about the poor quality of his proposed adversaries' verses – Byron was no Cyrano de Bergerac – and none of the duels were fought: but the statistic shows what “a good hater” he was.

Byron started a poem called *British Bards* in October 1807 (he'd published *Hours of Idleness* in June). By December it had reached a length of four hundred lines. Then he read, in the *Edinburgh Review* of February 1808, a notice of his book *Hours of Idleness*, which caused him to widen the scope of his attack to include Scots critics – principally Francis Jeffrey, whom he supposed to be the author of the article (in fact it was by Henry Brougham, a fact undiscovered until much later). By now the poem was over five hundred lines long. It was first published in March 1809, and three more editions followed, of increasing length, in 1809 and 1810. Byron had gone abroad, and, on his return in 1811, was preparing a fifth edition, when, upon the extension of his social life, he found it an embarrassment, for his natural political circle in London was the Holland House Whig group, led by Lord and Lady Holland, both of whom it attacks. He therefore, early in 1812, withdrew the fifth edition and tried to suppress the poem completely, though without success. Cawthorne, its publisher, was always trying to bring it out, and there were numerous piracies.

On July 14th 1816 he came across a copy of the fourth edition – belonging, perhaps, to Shelley – at the Villa Diodati in Switzerland, and read it. His marginalia are recorded below in *red italics*. They show a Byron divided; on the one hand he is full of embarrassment for the poor judgement the poem shows, but on the other he is moved in reading it to insert lines from the fifth edition,¹ and to write a minor but funny further flight of satirical versifying.

What strikes us now is the number of targets who – whatever Byron thought in 1811 and 1816 – became targets again in his later years. I have recorded all the jokes and references which show that when he wrote *Beppo*, *Don Juan*, and *The Vision of Judgement*, he still felt the same about many modern poets as he had in 1808. First among these is of course Robert Southey, his detestation of whom became superhuman and “prismatic” (Thomas Medwin's word)² in its intensity. Byron was a determined anti-romantic in 1808; he became one again – it is possible to argue – when he read Thomas Moore's *Lalla Rookh* in 1817 (see BLJ V 265).

The least consistent of people, Byron valued consistency – above all when and where he could find it in himself. “I still retain my ‘buff and blue’” he boasted at stanza 17, line 4 of the *Don Juan* Dedication; it is an echo of lines 523-4 in *English Bards and Scots Reviewers*.

Fully to annotate the poem would take several months and many pages. I have restricted myself to one-line notes in the cases of minor poets, and longer ones in the cases of more important topics and of poets whom Byron attacked or praised in his mature work.

For my text I have consulted the fourth edition, and CPW I; and have placed Byron's prose notes at the foot, not of the page, but of the relevant section of the poem. This, I think, if both are read, creates an interesting dialogue.

1: I have not included all of these insertions.

2: See Medwin, *Conversations of Lord Byron*, ed. Lovell, pp. 150 - 151.

ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS A SATIRE

The binding of this volume is considerably too valuable for the Contents. B --- N.B. Nothing but the consideration of it's being the property of another prevents me from consigning this miserable record of misplace anger – and indiscriminate acrimony to the flames. -- [1816]

“I had rather be a kitten, and cry mew!
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers.” – SHAKESPEARE.³

“Such shameless *Bards* we have; and yet 'tis true,
There are as read, abandon'd *Criticks* too.” – POPE.⁴

PREFACE

This Preface was written for the Second Edition, and printed with it. The noble author had left this country previous to the publication of that Edition, and is not yet returned. *He is & gone again. – 1816 [1816]*

All my friends, learned and unlearned, have urged me not to publish this Satire with my name. If I were to be “turned from the career of my humour by quibbles quick, and paper bullets of the brain,”⁵ I should have complied with their counsel. But I am not to be terrified by abuse, or bullied by reviewers, with or without arms. I can safely say that I have attacked none *personally*, who did not commence on the offensive. An Author's works are public property: he who purchases may judge, and publish his opinion if he pleases; and the Authors I have endeavoured to commemorate may do by me as I have done by them. I dare say they will succeed better in condemning my scribblings, than in mending their own. But my object is not to prove that I can write well, but, if *possible*, to make others write better.

As the Poem has met with far more success than I expected, I have endeavoured in this Edition to make some additions and alterations, to render it more worthy of public perusal.

In the First Edition of this Satire, published anonymously, fourteen lines on the subject of Bowles's Pope were written by, and inserted at the request of, an ingenious friend of mine, who has now in the press a volume of Poetry.⁶ In the present Edition they are erased, and some of my own substituted in their stead; my only reason for this being that which I conceive would operate with any other person in the same manner, – a determination not to publish with my name any production which was not entirely and exclusively my own composition.

With regard to the real talents of many of the poetical persons whose performances are mentioned or alluded to in the following pages, it is presumed by the Author that there can be little difference of opinion in the public at large; though, like other sectaries, each has his separate tabernacle of proselytes, by whom his abilities are over-rated, his faults overlooked, and his metrical canons received without scruple and without consideration. But the unquestionable possession of considerable genius⁷ by several of the writers here censured renders their mental prostitution more to be regretted. Imbecility may be pitied, or, at worst, laughed at and forgotten: perverted powers demand the most decided reprehension. No one can wish more than the author that some known and able writer had undertaken their exposure; but Mr. GIFFORD⁸ has devoted himself to MASSINGER,⁹ and, in the absence of the regular physician, a country practitioner may, in cases of absolute necessity, be allowed to prescribe his nostrum to prevent the extension of so deplorable an epidemic provided there be no quackery in his treatment of the malady. A caustic is here offered; as it is to be feared nothing short of actual cautery can recover the numerous

3: William Shakespeare (1564-1616). The quotation is from Hotspur at *Henry IV I*, iii i, 130.

4: Alexander Pope (1688-1744) was the English poet whom, consciously, B. admired most. See *Don Juan*, I, 205, 1. The quotation here is from the *Essay on Criticism*, 610-11.

5: *Much Ado About Nothing* II iii 220 app: ... *these paper bullets of the brain* ...

6: Hobhouse's *Imitations and Translations from the Ancient and Modern Classics* ... (1809).

7: “Genius” was a less strong word then than it is now. We would use the word “talent”.

8: William Gifford (1756-1826) styled by B. “my literary father” (BLJ XI 117, 123). B. never lost the respect for him shown in *EBSR*, even though he was a narrow-minded Tory pedant, and his two satirical poems *The Baviad* and *Mæviad* are very poor.

9: Phillip Massinger (1583-1640) author of *A New Way to pay Old Debts*, quoted at *TVOJ* 105, 8.

patients afflicted with the present prevalent and distressing rabies for rhyming. – As to the *Edinburgh Reviewers*, it would indeed require an Hercules to crush the Hydra; but if the Author succeeds in merely “bruising one of the heads of the serpent,” though his own hand should suffer in the encounter, he will be amply satisfied.

Still must I hear? – shall hoarse FITZGERALD¹⁰ * bawl *Right enough – but why*
 His creaking couplets in a tavern hall, *notice such a Mounbank?* [1816]
 And I not sing, lest, haply, Scotch Reviews
 Should dub me scribbler, and denounce my Muse?
 Prepare for rhyme – I’ll publish, right or wrong: 5
 Fools are my theme, let Satire be my song.

* IMITATION.

“Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam
 Vexatus toties rauci Theseide Cordi?” – JUVENAL, SATIRE 1.¹¹

Mr. Fitzgerald, facetiously termed by COBBETT¹² the “Small Beer Poet,” inflicts his annual tribute of verse on the “Literary Fund;” not content with writing, he spouts in person after the company have imbibed a reasonable quantity of bad port, to enable them to sustain the operation.

Oh! Nature’s noblest gift – my grey goose-quill!
 Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,
 Torn from thy parent bird to form a pen
 That mighty instrument of little men! 10
 The pen! foredoomed to aid the mental throes
 Of brains that labour, big with Verse or Prose,
 Though Nymphs forsake, and Critics may deride,
 The Lover’s solace, and the Author’s pride.
 What Wits! what Poets dost thou daily raise! 15
 How frequent is thy use, how small thy praise!
 Condemned at length to be forgotten quite,
 With all the pages which ’twas thine to write
 But thou, at least, mine own especial pen!
 Once laid aside, but now assumed again, 20
 Our task complete, like HAMET’S *¹³ shall be free;
 Tho’ spurned by others, yet beloved by me:
 Then let us soar to-day; no common theme,
 No Eastern vision, no distempered dream *This must have been written in the*
 Inspires – our path, though full of thorns, is plain; *Spirit of 25 prophecy.*
 Smooth be the verse, and easy be the strain.

* CID HAMET BENGELI promises repose to his pen in the last chapter of Don Quixote. Oh! that our voluminous gentry would follow the example of CID HAMET BENGELI.

When Vice triumphant holds her sov’ reign sway,
 And men through life her willing slaves obey;
 When Folly, frequent harbinger of crime,
 Bedecks her cap with bells of every Clime, 30
 When Knaves and Fools combined o’er all prevail,
 When Justice halts, and Right begins to fail,
 E’en then the boldest start from public sneers,

10: William Thomas Fitzgerald (c.1759-1829) minor poet.

11: Opening of Juvenal’s first Satire: “Must I *always* be stuck in the audience, never get my own back for all the times I’ve been bored by that ranting Theseid of Cordus?” – tr. Peter Green (Penguin 1998).

12: William Cobbett (1763-1835), radical, much despised by B.

13: “Cid Hamet Benegeli” is the imagined source for and narrator of Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*.

Afraid of Shame, unknown to other fears,
More darkly sin, by Satire kept in awe, 35
And shrink from Ridicule, though not from Law.

Such is the force of Wit! but not belong
To me the arrows of satiric song;
The royal vices of our age demand
A keener weapon, and a mightier hand. 40

Still there are follies, e'en for me to chace,
And yield at least amusement in the race:
Laugh when I laugh, I seek no other fame;
The cry is up, and scribblers are my game:
Speed, Pegasus! – ye strains of great and small, 45
Ode! Epic! Elegy! – have at you all!

I, too, can scrawl, and once upon a time
I poured along the town a flood of rhyme,
A school-boy freak, unworthy praise or blame;
I printed – older children do the same. 50

'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print;
A Book's a Book, although there's nothing in't.
Not that a Title's sounding charm can save
Or scrawl or scribbler from an equal grave:
This LAMB¹⁴ must own, since his Patrician name *He is a very good* 55
Failed to preserve the spurious Farce from shame. * *fellow and (except for his*
No matter, GEORGE continues still to write, † *Mother & Sister) the Best of the*
Though now the name is veiled from public sight. *Set – to my mind. – – –*
Moved by the great example, I pursue [1816]
The self-same road, but make my own review: 60
Not seek great JEFFREY'S,¹⁵ yet, like him, will be
Self-constituted Judge of Poesy.

* This ingenious youth is mentioned more particularly, with his production, in another case.

† In the EDINBURGH REVIEW.

A man must serve his time to every trade
Save Censure, Critics all are ready-made.
Take hackneyed jokes from MILLER,¹⁶ got by rote, 65
With just enough of learning to misquote;

A mind well skilled to find or forge a fault;
A turn for punning, call it Attic salt;
To JEFFREY go, be silent and discreet,
His pay is just ten sterling pounds per sheet: 70
Fear not to lie, 'twill seem a sharper hit,
Shrink not from blasphemy, 'twill pass for wit;
Care not for feeling – pass your proper jest,
And stand a Critic, hated yet caressed.

And shall we own such judgement? no – as soon 75
Seek roses in December – ice in June;

14: George Lamb (1784-1834) son of Lady Melbourne and (probably) the Prince Regent. Later a friend of B.'s on the Drury Lane Committee, and electioneering opponent of Hobhouse.

15: Francis Jeffrey (1773-1850) editor of the *Edinburgh Review*. Suspected by B. of writing the *Edinburgh Review* critique of *Hours of Idleness* which widened the scope of, and changed the title of, this poem. For B.'s later, more respectful opinion, see *Don Juan*, X, 11, 6-8 and stanza 16; and XVI, 7.

16: Joe Miller (1684-1738) comedian and writer of a famous joke book.

Hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff,
 Believe a woman, or an epitaph,
 Or any other thing that's false, before
 You trust in Critics, who themselves are sore; 80
 Or yield one single thought to be misled
 By JEFFREY'S heart, or LAMB'S Boetian head. *

* Messrs. Jeffrey and Lamb are the Alpha and Omega, the first and last of the Edinburgh Review; the others are mentioned hereafter. *Neither the heart nor the head of these gentlemen are at all what they are here represented. – at the time this was written (1808) I was personally unacquainted with either. – This was not just. 1816. [1816]*

To these young tyrants, * by themselves misplaced
 Combined usurpers on the Throne of Taste;
 To these, when Authors bend in humble awe, 85
 And hail their voice as Truth, their word as Law;
 While these are Censors, 'twould be sin to spare:
 While such are Critics, why should I forbear?
 But yet, so near all modern worthies run,
 'Tis doubtful whom to seek, or whom to shun; 90
 Nor know we when to spare, or where to strike,
 Our Bards and Censors are so much alike.

* IMITATION.

“Stulta est clementia, cum tot ubique
 —occurras perituræ parcere chartæ.” – JUVENAL, SAT.1.¹⁷

Then should you ask me, why I venture o'er *
 The path which POPE and GIFFORD trod before?
 If not yet sickened, you can still proceed; 95
 Go on; my rhyme will tell you as you read.

* IMITATION.

* “Cur tamen hoc potius libeat decurrere campo
 per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus,
 si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam.” – JUVENAL, SAT.1.¹⁸

“But hold!” exclaims a friend, “Here's some neglect:
 This – that – and t'other line seem incorrect.”
 What then? the self-same blunder POPE has got,
 And careless DRYDEN¹⁹ – “Ay, but PYE²⁰ has not:” – 100
 Indeed! 'tis granted, faith! – but what care I?
 Better to err with POPE, than shine with PYE.

Time was, ere yet in these degenerate days
 Ignoble themes obtained mistaken praise,
 When Sense and Wit with Poesy allied, 105
 No fabled Graces, flourished side by side;
 From the same fount their inspiration drew,

17: Lines 17-18: “When you find such hordes of scribblers all over, it's misplaced kindness *not* to write” (tr. Peter Green).

18: Lines 19-21: “Yet why drive my team down the track which the great Auruncan [*Gaius Lucilius, second century B.C.*] blazed? If you have the leisure to listen and reason calmly, I will enlighten you” (tr. Peter Green).

19: John Dryden (1631-1700), English satirical poet, in the tradition admired by B. See *Don Juan*, 205, 1.

20: Henry James Pye (1745-1813) was Poet Laureate before Southey. See *Don Juan*, Dedication, 1, 8-2, 1; and *TVOJ*, 92, 7-8. A very minor figure indeed.

And, reared by Taste, bloomed fairer as they grew.
 Then, in this happy Isle, a POPE'S pure strain
 Sought the rapt soul to charm, nor sought in vain; 110
 A polished nation's praise aspired to claim,
 And raised the people's, as the poet's fame.
 Like him great DRYDEN poured the tide of song,
 In stream less smooth, indeed, yet doubly strong.
 Then CONGREVE'S²¹ scenes could cheer, or OTWAY'S²² melt – 115
 For nature then an English audience felt –
 But why these names, or greater still, retrace,
 When all to feebler Bards resign their place?
 Yet to such times our lingering looks are cast,
 When taste and reason with those times are past. 120
 Now look around, and turn each trifling page,
 Survey the precious works that please the age;
 This truth at least let Satire's self allow,
 No dearth of Bards can be complained of now:
 The loaded Press beneath her labour groans, 125
 And printers' devils shake their weary bones,
 While SOUTHEY'S²³ Epics cram the creaking shelves,
 And LITTLE'S²⁴ Lyrics shine in hot-pressed twelves.

Thus saith the Preacher;* “Nought beneath the sun
 Is new,” yet still from change to change we run: 130
 What varied wonders tempt us as they pass!
 The Cow-pox, Tractors, Galvanism, and Gas
 In turns appear, to make the vulgar stare,
 Till the swoln bubble bursts – and all is air!²⁵
 Nor loss new schools of Poetry arise, 135
 Where dull pretenders grapple for the prize:
 O'er Taste awhile these Pseudo-bards prevail;
 Each country Book-club bows the knee to Baal,
 And, hurling lawful Genius from the throne,
 Erects a shrine and idol of its own; 140
 Some leaden calf – but whom it matters not,
 From soaring SOUTHEY down to grovelling STOTT.²⁶ †

* Ecclesiastes, Cap.1.

† STOTT, better known in the “Morning Post” by the name of HAFIZ. This person is at the moment the most profound explorer of the bathos. I remember, when the reigning family left Portugal, a special ode of Master STOTT'S beginning thus:

(Stott loquitur quoad Hibernia.)
 “Princely offspring of Braganza,
 Erin greets thee with a Stanza,” &c. &c.

21: William Congreve (1670-1729) Restoration playwright, author of *Love for Love* and *The Way of the World*.

22: Thomas Otway (1652-85) Restoration playwright, famous only for *Venice Preserved*.

23: Robert Southey (1774-1843) became Poet Laureate, and the person B. hated most on earth. By 1811 he had written all his important works except *The Curse of Kehama*, *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo* and *A Vision of Judgment*. B. went on attacking him for ever: see *Don Juan*, Dedication, stanzas 1-3; I, 205, 2; III, stanza 93; III, 97, 4; X, 13, 1-4; X, 37, 3-4; and XI, 56, 8: plus *TVOJ*, *passim*. B. challenges him to a duel at BLJ IX 102. Poems to which B. refers here are *Joan of Arc* (1795) *Madoc* (1801) and *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1805).

24: “Little” is Thomas Moore (1779-1852) Irish poet who influenced B. even in poems written before *EBSR*, and who became one of B.'s best friends. See *Beppo*, 76, 3; *Don Juan*, Dedication, 7, 7, I, 104, 5, I, 205, 8; and 11, 57, 1.

25: This joke is repeated eleven years later, at *Don Juan* I stanza 129.

26: Robert Stott (“Hafiz”) wrote for the *Morning Post*; he seems undocumented outside *EBSR*.

Also a sonnets to Rats, commencing as follows:

“Oh! for a Lay! Loud as the surge
That lashes Lapland’s sounding shore,”

Lord have mercy on us! The “Lay of the Last Minstrel” was nothing to this.

Behold! in various throngs the scribbling crew,
For notice eager, pass in long review: 145
Each spurs his jaded Pegasus apace,
And Rhyme and Blank maintain an equal race;
Sonnets on sonnets crowd, and ode on ode;
And Tales of Terror jostle on the road;
Immeasurable measures move along;
For simpering Folly loves a varied song, 150
To strange mysterious Dullness still the friend,
Admires the strain she cannot comprehend.
Thus Lays of Minstrels * – may they be the last! –
On half-strung harps whine mournful to the blast.
While mountain spirits prate to river sprites, 155
That dames may listen to the sound at nights;
And goblin brats, of Gilpin Horner’s brood,
Decoy young border-nobles through the wood,
And skip at every step, Lord knows how high,
And frighten foolish babes, the Lord knows why; 160
While high-born ladies in their magic cell,
Forbidding Knights to read who cannot spell,
Despatch a courier to a wizard’s grave,
And fight with honest men to shield a knave.

* See the “Lay of the Last Minstrel,” *passim*. Never was any plan so incongruous and absurd as the ground-work of this production. The entrance of Thunder and Lightning prologuising to Bayes’ Tragedy, unfortunately takes away the merit of originality from the dialogue between Messieurs the Spirits of Flood and Fell in the first canto. There we have the amiable William of Deloraine, “a stark moss-trooper,” videlicet, a happy compound of poacher, sheep-stealer, and highwayman. The propriety of his magical lady’s injunction not to read can only be equalled by the candid acknowledgement of his independence of the trammels of spelling, although, to use his own elegant phrase, “’twas his neck-verse at hairibee,” i.e. the gallows.

The biography of Gilpin Horner, and the marvellous pedestrian page, who travelled twice as fast as his master’s horse, without the aid of seven-leagued boots, are *chef-dæuvres* in the improvement of taste. For incidents we have the invisible, but by no means sparing, box on the ear, bestowed on the page, and the entrance of a Knight and Charger into the castle, under the very natural disguise of a wain of hay. Marmion, the hero of the later romance, is exactly what William of Deloraine would have been, had he been able to read and write. The poem was manufactured for Messrs. CONSTABLE, MURRAY, and MILLER, worshipful Booksellers, in consideration of the receipt of a sum of money, and truly, considering the inspiration, it is a very creditable production. If Mr. SCOTT will write for hire, let him do his best for his paymasters, but not disgrace his genius, which is undoubtedly great, by a repetition of black letter Ballad imitations.

Next view in state, proud prancing on his roan, 165
The golden-crested haughty Marmion,
Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight,
Not quite a Felon, yet but half a Knight,
The gibbet or the field prepared to grace;
A mighty mixture of the great and base. 170

And think'st thou, SCOTT!²⁷ by vain conceit perchance,
 On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
 Though MURRAY²⁸ with his MILLER may combine
 To yield thy muse just half-a-crown per line?
 No! when the sons of song descend to trade, 175
 Their bays are sear, their former laurels fade.
 Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
 Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame:
 Still for stern Mammon may they toil in vain!
 And sadly gaze on Gold they cannot gain! 180
 Such be their meed, such still the just reward
 Of prostituted Muse and hireling bard!
 For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
 And bid a long "Good night to Marmion." *

* "Good night to Marmion" – the pathetic and also prophetic exclamation of HENRY BLOUNT, Esquire, on the death of honest Marmion.

These are the themes that claim our plaudits now; 185
 These are the Bards to whom the Muse must bow;
 While MILTON,²⁹ DRYDEN, POPE, alike forgot,
 Resign their hallowed Bays to WALTER SCOTT.

The time has been, when yet the Muse was young,
 When HOMER³⁰ swept the lyre, and MARO³¹ sung, 190
 An Epic scarce ten centuries could claim,
 While awe-struck nations hailed the magic name:
 The work of each immortal Bard appears
 The single wonder of a thousand years. *
 Empires have mouldered from the face of earth, 195
 Tongues have expired with those who gave them birth
 Without the glory such a strain can give,
 As even in ruin bids the language live.
 Not so with us, though minor Bards, content
 On one great work a life of labour spent: 200
 With eagle pinion soaring to the skies,
 Behold the Ballad-monger SOUTHEY rise!
 To him let CAMOENS,³² MILTON, TASSO³³ yield,
 Whose annual strains, like armies, take the field.
 First in the ranks see Joan of Arc advance, 205
 The scourge of England, and the boast of France!
 Though burnt by wicked BEDFORD for a witch,
 Behold her statue placed in glory's niche;
 Her fetters burst, and just released from prison,
 A virgin Phoenix from her ashes risen. 210
 Next see tremendous Thalaba come on, †

27: Walter Scott (1771-1832), published *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (featuring Gilpin Horner) in 1805 and *Marmion* in 1808. When he changed from poet to novelist, he became B.'s favourite contemporary author. See laudatory references at *Don Juan*, I, 7, 7; X, 17, 4; XII, 16, 5; and XV, 59.

28: John Murray (1778-1843) became B.'s publisher.

29: John Milton (1608-74) admired by B. as a type of poetic integrity. See *Don Juan*, Dedication, and I, 205, 1.

30: Homer, fountainhead of European poetry (unknown dates, perhaps ninth century B.C.)

31: Virgil (70-19 B.C.) Latin author of the *Georgics*, the *Eclogues*, and the epic *Aeneid*. See *Don Juan*, I, 42, 7-8.

32: Luis de Camoens (1524-80) national poet of Portugal, author of the *Lusiads*.

33: Torquato Tasso (1544-95) Italian poet. Author of the crusading epic *Gerusalemme Liberata*; B. wrote *The Lament of Tasso* about his imprisonment.

Arabia's monstrous, wild, and wondrous son:
 Domdaniel's dread destroyer, who o'erthrew
 More mad magicians than the world e'er knew.

Immortal Hero! all thy foes o'ercome, 215
 For ever reign – the rival of Tom Thumb!³⁴
 Since startled metre fled before thy face,
 Well wert thou doomed the last of all thy race!
 Well might triumphant Genii bear thee hence,

Illustrious conqueror of common sense! 220
 Now, last and greatest, Madoc spreads his sails,
 Cacique in Mexico, and Prince in Wales;
 Tells us strange tales, as other travellers do,
 More old than Mandeville's, and not so true.
 Oh! SOUTHEY! SOUTHEY! cease thy varied song! 225
 A Bard may chant too often and too long:
 As thou art strong in verse, in mercy, spare!
 A fourth, alas! were more than we could bear.
 But if, in spite of all the world can say,
 Thou still wilt verseward plod thy weary way; 230
 If still in Berkley Ballads most uncivil,
 Thou wilt devote old women to the devil, §
 The babe unborn thy dread intent may rue:
 "God help thee," SOUTHEY, and thy readers too. ||

* As the Odyssey is so closely connected with the story of the Iliad, they may almost be classed as one grand historical poem. In alluding to MILTON and TASSO, we consider the "Paradise Lost," and "Gierusalemme Liberata," as their standard efforts, since neither the "Jerusalem conquered" of the Italian, nor the "Paradise regained" of the English Bard, obtained a proportionate celebrity to their former poems. Query: which of Mr. SOUTHEY'S will survive?

† Thalaba, Mr. SOUTHEY'S second poem, is written in open defiance of precedent and poetry. Mr. S. wished to produce something novel and succeeded to a miracle. Joan of Arc was marvellous enough, but Thalaba was one of those poems "which," in the words of PORSON, "will be read when HOMER and VIRGIL are forgotten, but – *not till then.*"

‡ We beg Mr SOUTHEY'S pardon: "Madoc disdains the degraded title of Epic." See his preface. Why is Epic degraded? and by whom? Certainly the late Romaunts of Masters COTTLE, Laureate PYE, OGILVY, HOLE, and gentle Mistress COWLEY, have not exalted the Epic Muse; but as Mr. SOUTHEY'S poem "disdains the appellation," allow us to ask – has he substituted anything better in its stead? or must he be content to rival Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE, in the quantity as well as quality of his verse?

§ See, The Old Woman of Berkeley, a Ballad by Mr. SOUTHEY, wherein an aged gentlewoman is carried away by Beelzebub, on a "high trotting horse."

|| The last line, "God help thee," is an evident plagiarism from the Anti-jacobin to Mr. SOUTHEY, on his Dactyls: "God help thee silly one." – Poetry of the Anti-jacobin, page 23.

Next comes the dull disciple of thy school, 235
 That mild apostate from poetic rule,
 The simple WORDSWORTH,³⁵ framer of a lay
 As soft as evening in his favourite May,

34: Tom Thumb is hero of Henry Fielding's mock-tragedy which carries his name.

35: William Wordsworth (1770-1850) had by 1811 published *Lyrical Ballads* and *Poems of 1807* including the *Immortality Ode*, but not *The Excursion* (1814) and not *The Prelude* (1850). See further, later attacks at *Don Juan*, Dedication, stanza 4; I, 205, 2; and III, 93, 3. B. never changed his estimate; though the ambition behind *The Excursion* may have prompted the equally ambitious *Don Juan*.

Who warns his friend “To shake off toil and trouble,
 And quit his books, for fear of growing double;” * 240
 Who, both by precept and example, shows
 That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose;
 Convincing all, by demonstration plain,
 Poetic souls delight in prose insane;
 And Christmas stories tortured into rhyme, 245
 Contain the essence of the true sublime:
 Thus, when he tells the tale of Betty Foy,
 The idiot mother of “an idiot Boy;”
 A moon-struck, silly lad, who lost his way,
 And, like his bard, confounded night with day; † 250
 So close on each pathetic part he dwells,
 And each adventure so sublimely tells,
 That all who view the “idiot in his glory”
 Conceive the Bard the hero of the story. *Unjust. [1816]*

* Lyrical Ballads, page 4. ——— “The tables turned,” Stanza 1.
 “Up, up my friend, and clear your looks,
 Why all this toil and trouble?
 Up, up my friend, and quit your books,
 Or surely you’ll grown double.”

† Mr. W. in his preface labours hard to prove, that prose and verse are much the same, and certainly his precepts and practice are strictly conformable.

“And thus to Betty’s question he
 Made answer, like a traveller bold,
 The cock did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,
 And the sun did shine so cold,” &c. &c.

Lyrical Ballads, page 120.

Shall gentle COLERIDGE³⁶ pass unnoticed here, 255
 To turgid ode and tumid stanza dear?
 Though themes of innocence amuse him best,
 Yet still obscurity’s a welcome guest. *Unjust. [1816]*
 If inspiration should her aid refuse
 To him who takes a Pixy for a Muse, * 260
 Yet none in lofty numbers can surpass
 The Bard who soars to elegise an ass.
 So well the subject suits his noble mind,
 <“A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind.”>
 He brays – the Laureat of the long=eared kind.

* COLERIDGE’S Poems, page 11. Songs of the Pixies, i.e. Devonshire Fairies: page 42, we have, “Lines to a Young Lady;” and page 52, “Lines to a Young Ass.”

Oh! wonder-working LEWIS!³⁷ Monk, or Bard, 265
 Who fain wouldst make Parnassus a church-yard!
 Lo! wreaths of yew, not laurel, bind thy brow,
 Thy Muse a Sprite, Apollo’s sexton thou!
 Whether on ancient tombs thou tak’st thy stand,

36: Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) had by 1811 published *Lyrical Ballads*, including *The Ancient Mariner*, but neither *Kubla Khan* nor *Christabel* (both 1816). See satire at *Don Juan*, Dedication, stanza 2; I, 205, 2; and III, 93, 5. B. admired some of his work, and encouraged the publication of *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*.

37: Matthew G. Lewis (1775-1818) author of *The Monk*. Later a friend of B., for whom he translated scenes from Goethe’s *Faust*.

By gibb'ring spectres hailed, thy kindred band: 270
 Or tracest chaste descriptions on thy page,
 To please the females of our modest age;
 All hail, M.P.! * from whose infernal brain
 Thin-sheeted phantoms glide, a grisly train;
 At whose command "grim women" throng in crouds, 275
 And kings of fire, of water and of clouds,
 With "small gray men," "wild yagers", and what-not,
 To crown with honour thee and WALTER SCOTT:
 Again all hail! if tales like thine may please,
 St. Luke alone can vanquish the disease; 280
 Even Satan's self with thee might dread to dwell,
 And in thy skull discern a deeper hell.

* "For every one knows little Matt's an M.P." — See a Poem written to Mr. Lewis, in THE STATESMAN, supposed to be written by MR. JEKYLL.

Who in soft guise, surrounded by a choir
 Of virgins melting, not to Vesta's fire,
 With sparkling eyes, and cheek by passion flushed, 285
 Strikes his wild Lyre, whilst listening dames are hushed?
 'Tis LITTLE! young Catullus³⁸ of his day,
 As sweet, but as immoral, in his lay!
 Grieved to condemn, the Muse must still be just,
 Nor spare melodious advocates of lust. 290
 Pure is the flame which o'er her altar burns;
 From grosser incense with disgust she turns:
 Yet kind to youth, this expiation o'er,
 She bids thee "mend thy line and sin no more."³⁹

For thee, translator of the tinsel song, 295
 To whom such glittering ornaments belong,
 Hibernian STRANGFORD!⁴⁰ with thine eyes of blue, *
 And boasted locks of red, or auburn hue,
 Whose plaintive strain each love-sick Miss admires,
 And o'er harmonious fustian half expires, 300
 Learn, if thou canst, to yield thine author's sense,
 Nor vend thy sonnets on a false pretence.
 Think'st thou to gain thy verse a higher place
 By dressing CAMOENS in a suit of lace?
 Mend, STRANGFORD! mend thy morals and thy taste; 305
 Be warm, but pure; be amorous, but be chaste;
 Cease to deceive; thy pilfered harp restore,
 Nor teach the Lusian Bard to copy MOORE.

* The reader who may wish for an explanation of this, may refer to "STRANGFORD'S CAMOENS," page 121, note to page 56, or to the last page of the Edinburgh Review of STRANGFORD'S CAMOENS.

It is also to be remarked, that the things given to the public as Poems of CAMOENS, are no more to be found in the original Portuguese, than in the Song of Solomon.

Behold – Ye Tarts! One moment spare his text! –⁴¹

38: Catullus (c.84-c.54 B.C.) writer of erotic and amatory verses. See *Don Juan* I, 42, 3.

39: John 8, 11.

40: Viscount Strangford (1780-1855). His translations of Camoens appeared in 1806.

41: The joke is that unsuccessful poetry books ended up as wrapping in pastry-cooks.

<In many marble-covered volumes view>
 's last work & worst – until his next;
 <HAYLEY, in vain attempting something next.> 310
 s poor couplets into plays
 Whether he spin <his comedies in rhyme,>
 Or <scrawl, as WOOD and BARCLAY walk, 'gainst time,>
 Damns the dead with purgatorial praise,
 His style in youth or age is still the same,
 For ever feeble and for ever tame.
 Triumphant first see "Temper's Triumphs" shine! 315
 At least I'm sure they triumphed over mine.
 Of "Music's Triumphs," all who read may swear
 That luckless Music never triumphed there. *

* HAYLEY'S two most notorious verse productions, are "Triumphs of Temper," and "Triumphs of Music." He has also written much Comedy in rhyme, Epistles, &c. &c. As he is rather an elegant writer of notes and biography,⁴² let us recommend POPE'S advice to WYCHERLEY, to Mr. H.'s consideration, viz. "to convert his poetry into prose," which may easily be done by taking away the final syllable of each couplet.

Moravians, rise! bestow some meet reward
 On dull Devotion! – lo! the Sabbath Bard, 320
 Sepulchral GRAHAME,⁴³ pours his notes sublime,
 In mangled prose, nor e'en aspires to rhyme;
 Breaks into blank the Gospel of St. Luke,
 And boldly pilfers from the Pentateuch;
 And, undisturbed by conscientious qualms, 325
 Perverts the Prophets, and purloins the Psalms. *

* Mr. GRAHAME has poured forth two volumes of Cant, under the name of "Sabbath Walks," and "Biblical Pictures."

Hail, Sympathy! thy soft idea brings
 A thousand visions of a thousand things,
 And shows, dissolved in thine own melting tears,
 The maudlin Prince of mournful sonneteers. 330
 And art thou not their Prince, harmonious BOWLES!⁴⁴
 Thou first, great oracle of tender souls?
 Whether in sighing winds thou seek'st relief,
 Or consolation in a yellow leaf;
 Whether thy muse most lamentably tells 335
 What merry sounds proceed from Oxford bells, *
 Or, still in bells delighting, finds a friend
 In every chime that jingled from Ostend?
 Ah! how much juster were thy Muse's hap,
 If to thy bells thou wouldst but add a cap! 340
 Delightful BOWLES! still blessing and still blest,
 All love thy strain, but children like it best.
 'Tis thine, with gentle LITTLE'S moral song,
 To soothe the mania of the amorous throng!
 With thee our nursery damsels shed their tears, 345
 Ere Miss, as yet completes her infant years:

42: B. quotes Hayley's Life of Milton in his own note to *Don Juan*, Dedication, stanza 11.

43: James Grahame (1765-1811) minor poet.

44: The Rev. William Lisle Bowles (1768-1850) sonneteer, editor of Pope, and, later, polemical foe of B. See *A Letter to **** * (John Murray Esqr) on the Rev. W. L. Bowles' Strictures on the Life and Writings of Pope* (1821). Later still, Southey's brother-in-law.

But in her teens thy whining powers are vain;
 She quits poor BOWLES, for LITTLE'S purer strain.
 Now to soft themes thou scornest to confine
 The lofty numbers of a harp like thine; 350
 "Awake a louder and a loftier strain" †
 Such as none heard before, or will again!
 Where all Discoveries jumbled from the flood,
 Since first the leaky ark reposed in mud,
 By more or less, are sung in every book, 355
 From Captain NOAH down to Captain COOK.
 Nor this alone; but, pausing on the road,
 The Bard sighs forth a gentle episode; ‡
 And gravely tells – attend, each Beauteous miss! –
 When first Madeira trembled to a kiss. 360
 BOWLES! in thy memory, let this precept dwell,
 Stick to thy Sonnets, man! at least they sell.
 But if some new-born whim, or larger bribe,
 Prompt thy crude brain, and claim thee for a scribe;
 If 'chance some bard, though once by dunces feared, 365
 Now, prone in dust, can only be revered;
 If POPE, whose fame and genius from the first
 Have foiled the best of critics, needs the worst,
 Do thou essay; each fault, each failing scan;
 The first of poets was, alas! but man! 370
 Rake from each ancient dunghill every pearl,
 Consult Lord Fanny, and confide in CURLL;⁴⁵ §
 Let all the scandals of a former age
 Perch on thy pen, and flutter o'er thy page;
 Affect a candour which thou canst not feel, 375
 Clothe envy in the garb of honest zeal;
 Write, as if St. John's soul could still inspire,
 And do from hate what MALLETT⁴⁶ did for hire. ||
 Oh! had'st thou lived in that congenial time,
 To rave with DENNIS,⁴⁷ and with RALPH⁴⁸ to rhyme, 380
 Thronged with the rest around his living head,
 Not raised thy hoof against the lion dead;
 A meet reward had crowned thy glorious gains,
 And linked thee to the Dunciad for thy pains.⁴⁹ *Too savage all this on Bowles.*

45: Edmund Curll (1675-1747) bookseller, enemy of Pope, who put him into the *Dunciad*.

46: David Mallet (c.1705-1765) poet and playwright. Wrote the words to *Rule Britannia*.

47: John Dennis (1657-1734) critic and enemy of Pope; see the 1728 *Dunciad*, I 104.

48: James Ralph (c.1705-1762) another victim of Pope.

49: Hobhouse, in the first edition, has at this point the following lines on Bowles:

Stick to thy sonnets, man! – at least they sell.
 Or take the only path that open lies
 For modern worthies who would hope to rise:
 Fix on some well-known name, and, bit by bit,
 Pare off the merits of his worth and wit:
 On each alike employ the critic's knife,
 And when a comment fails, prefix a life;
 Hints certain failings, faults before unknown,
 Review forgotten lies, and add you own;
 Let no disease, let no misfortune 'scape,
 And print, if luckily deformed, his shape:
 Thus shall the world, quite undeceived at last,
 Cleave to their present wits, and quit their past;
 Bards once revered no more with favour view,

* See BOWLES'S Sonnets, &c. — “Sonnet to Oxford,” and “Stanzas on hearing the Bells of Ostend.”

† “Awake a louder, &c., &.” is the first line in BOWLES'S “Spirit of Discovery”; a very spirited and pretty dwarf Epic. Among other exquisite lines we have the following: —

“A kiss
Stole on the list'ning silence, never yet
Here heard; they trembled even as the power, &c., &c.”

That is, the woods of Madeira trembled to a kiss, very much astonished, as well they might be, at such a phenomenon. *Misquoted – and misunderstood by me – but not intentionally. — — It was not the “Woods” but the people in them <that> who trembled – why – Heaven only knows – unless they were overheard, making this prodigious smack. – [1816]*

‡ The Episode above alluded to, is the story of “Robert a Machin,” and “Anna d'Arfel,” a pair of constant lovers, who performed the kiss above-mentioned, that startled the woods of MADEIRA.

§ CURLL is one of the Heroes of the Dunciad, and was a bookseller. Lord Fanny is the poetical name of Lord HERVEY, author of “Lines to the Imitator of Horace.”

|| Lord BOLINGBROKE⁵⁰ hired MALLET to traduce POPE after his decease, because the Poet had retained some copies of a work by Lord BOLINGBROKE, (the Patriot King) which that splendid, but malignant genius, had ordered to be destroyed.

Another Epic! Who inflicts again	385
More books of blank upon the sons of men?	
Bœotian COTTLE, ⁵¹ rich Bristowa's boast,	
Imports old stories from the Cambrian coast, <i>Helicon is a mountain and not a</i>	
And sends his goods to market – all alive! <i>fish=pond – it should have been</i>	
Lines forty thousand, Cantos twenty-five! <i>Hippocrene</i> ⁵²	390
Fresh fish from Hippocrene! who'll buy? who'll buy?	
The precious bargain's cheap – in faith, not I.	
Too much in turtle Bristol's sons delight,	
Too much in bowls of Rack prolong the night;	
If Commerce fills the purse, she clogs the brain,	395
And AMOS COTTLE strikes the Lyre in vain.	
In him an author's luckless lot behold!	
Condemned to make the books which once he sold.	
Oh, AMOS COTTLE! Phœbus! what a name –	<i>All right.</i>
To fill the speaking trump of future fame! –	400
Oh, AMOS COTTLE! for a moment think	
What meagre profits spring from pen and ink!	
When thus devoted to poetic dreams,	
Who will peruse thy prostituted reams?	
Oh! pen perverted! paper misapplied!	405
Had COTTLE still adorned the counter's side, *	
Bent o'er the desk, or, born to useful toils,	
Been taught to make the paper which he soils,	
Ploughed, delved, or plied the oar with lusty limb,	
He had not sung of Wales, nor I of him.	410

But give their modern sonneteers their due;
Thus with the dead may living merit cope,
Thus Bowles may triumph o'er the shape of Pope.

50: “Lord Bolingbroke” is the “St. John” of line 377 (Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke: 1678-1751).

51: Amos Cottle (1768-1800) minor Bristol poet. His brother Joseph was a friend of Southey and Coleridge.

52: B. is commenting on the fourth edition, where the reading for line 391 is “Helicon”.

* Mr. Cottle, Amos, or Joseph, I don't know which, but one or both, once sellers of books they did not write, and now writers of books they do not sell, have published a pair of Epics. "Alfred" (poor Alfred! Pye has been at him too!) "Alfred" and the "Fall of Cambria". *I saw some letters of this fellow (J^h. Cottle) to an unfortunate poetess – whose productions (which the poor woman by no means thought highly of) he attacked so roughly & bitterly that I could hardly regret assailing him – even were it unjust – which it is not – for verily he is an Ass. [1816]*

As Sisyphus against the infernal steep
Rolls the huge rock, whose motions ne'er may sleep,
So up thy hill, ambrosial Richmond! heaves
Dull MAURICE⁵³ * all his granite weight of leaves:
Smooth, solid monuments of mental pain! 415
The petrifications of a plodding brain,
That, ere they reach the top, fall lumbering back again.

* Mr. MAURICE hath manufactured the component parts of a ponderous quarto, upon the beauties of "Richmond Hill," and the like: — it also takes in a charming view of Turnham Green, Hammersmith, Brentford, Old and New, and the parts adjacent.

With broken lyre, and cheek serenely pale,
Lo! sad ALCÆUS wanders down the vale!
Though fair they rose, and might have bloomed at last, 420
His hopes have perished by the Northern blast:
Nipped in the bud by Caledonian gales,
His blossoms wither as the blast prevails!
O'er his lost works let *classic* SHEFFIELD weep;
May no rude hand disturb their early sleep! * 425

* Poor MONTGOMERY!⁵⁴ though praised by every English Review, has been bitterly reviled by the EDINBURGH. After all, the Bard of Sheffield is a man of considerable genius: his "Wanderer of Switzerland" is worth a thousand "Lyrical Ballads," and at least fifty "Degraded Epics."

Yet, say! why should the Bard, at once, resign
His claim to favour from the sacred Nine?
For ever startled by the mingled howl
Of northern wolves, that still in darkness prowl;
A coward brood, which mangle as they prey, 430
By hellish instinct, all that cross their way;
Aged or young, the living or the dead,
No mercy find; these harpies must be fed.
Why do the injured unresisting yield
The calm possession of their native field? 435
Why tamely thus before their fangs retreat,
Nor hunt the bloodhounds back to ARTHUR'S Seat? *

* ARTHUR'S seat; the hill which overhangs Edinburgh.

Health to immortal JEFFREY! once, in name,
England could boast a judge almost the same;
In soul so like, so merciful, yet just, 440
Some think that Satan has resigned his trust
And given the Spirit to the world again,

53: The Rev. Thomas Maurice (1754-1824) historian and minor poet. Assistant Keeper of Mss. At the B.M.

54: James Montgomery (1771-1854) Scots poet and hymn-writer who lived in Sheffield (hence the joke).

To sentence Letters, as he sentenced men.
 With hand less mighty, but with heart as black,
 With voice as willing to decree the rack; 445
 Bred in the Courts betimes, though all that law
 As yet hath taught him is to find a flaw;
 Since well instructed in the patriot school
 To rail at party, though a party tool,
 Who knows? if chance his patrons should restore 450
 Back to the sway they forfeited before,
 His scribbling toils some recompense may meet,
 And raise this DANIEL to the judgement-seat?
 Let JEFFRIES' shade indulge the pious hope,
 And greeting thus, present him with a rope: 455
 "Heir to my virtues! man of equal mind!
 Skilled to condemn as to traduce mankind,
 This cord receive! for thee reserved with care,
 To wield in judgement, and at length to wear." *Too ferocious – this is mere
 insanity. – [1816]*

Health to great JEFFREY! Heaven preserve his life, 460
 To flourish on the fertile shores of Fife,
 And guard it sacred in its future wars,
 Since authors sometimes seek the field of Mars!
 Can none remember that eventful day,
 That ever-glorious, almost fatal fray, 465
 When LITTLE'S leadless pistol met his eye,
 And Bow-street Myrmidons stood laughing by? *
 Oh! day disastrous! on her firm set rock,
 Dunedin's castle felt a secret shock;
 Dark rolled the sympathetic waves of Forth, 470
 Low groaned the startled whirlwinds of the North; *All this is bad – because
 personal. – – [1816]*
 Tweed ruffled half his waves to form a tear,
 The other half pursued its calm career; †
 ARTHUR'S steep Summit nodded to its base,
 The surly Tolbooth⁵⁵ scarcely kept her place; 475
 The Tolbooth felt – for marble sometimes can,
 On such occasions, feel as much as man –
 The Tolbooth felt defrauded of his charms,
 If JEFFREY died, except within her arms: ‡
 Nay last, not least, on that portentous morn, 480
 The sixteenth story, where himself was born,
 His patrimonial garret fell to ground,
 And pale Edina⁵⁶ shuddered at the sound:
 Strewed were the streets around with milk-white reams,
 Flowed all the Canongate with inky streams; 485
 This of his candour seemed the sable dew,
 That of his valour showed the bloodless hue;
 And all with justice deemed the two combined
 The mingled emblems of his mighty mind.
 But Caledonia's Goddess⁵⁷ hovered o'er 490
 The field, and saved him from the wrath of MOORE;
 From either pistol snatched the vengeful lead,

55: The Tolbooth was at the Heart of Midlothian – it was Edinburgh's main prison.

56: "Edina" is the Goddess of Edinburgh, invented by B. for this poem. Compare Heine's "Hammonia".

57: That is, "Edina."

And straight restored it to her favourite's head.
 That head, with greater than magnetic power,
 Caught it, as Danæ caught the golden shower, 495
 And, though the thickening dross will scarce refine,
 Augments its ore, and is itself a mine.
 "My son," she cried, "ne'er thirst for gore again,
 Resign the pistol and resume the pen;
 O'er politics and poesy preside, 500
 Boast of thy country, and Britannia's guide!
 For long as Albion's heedless sons submit,
 Or Scottish taste decides on English wit,
 So long shall last thine unmolested reign,
 Nor any dare to take thy name in vain. 505
 Behold, a chosen band shall aid thy plan,
 And own thee chieftain of the critic clan.
 First in the oat-fed phalanx shall be seen
 The travelled Thane! Athenian Aberdeen. §
 HERBERT⁵⁸ shall wield Thor's hammer, and sometimes, || 510
 In gratitude, thou'lt praise his rugged rhymes.
 Smug SYDNEY⁵⁹ too thy bitter page shall seek, **
 And classic HALLAM,⁶⁰ much renowned for Greek. ††
 SCOTT may perchance his name and influence lend,
 And paltry PILLANS⁶¹ shall traduce his friend; ‡‡ 515
 While gay Thalia's⁶² luckless votary, LAMB,
 As he himself was damned, shall try to damn.
 Known be thy name, unbounded be thy sway! §§
 Thy HOLLAND'S banquets shall each toil repay;
 While grateful Britain yields the praise she owes, 520
 To HOLLAND'S⁶³ hirelings, and to Learning's foes.
 Yet mark one caution, ere thy next Review
 Spread its light wings of Saffron and of Blue,
 Beware lest blundering BROUGHAM⁶⁴ destroy the sale, ||||
 Turn Beef to Bannocks, Cauliflowers to Kail." 525
 Thus having said, the kilted Goddess kissed
 Her son, and vanished in a Scottish mist. ***

* In 1806, Messrs. JEFFREY and MOORE, met at Chalk-Farm. The duel was prevented by the interference of the Magistracy; and, on examination, the balls of the pistols, like the courage of the combatants, were found to have evaporated. This incident gave occasion to much waggery in the Daily Prints.

† The Tweed here behaved with proper decorum; it would have been highly reprehensible in the English half of the River to have shown the smallest symptom of apprehension.

‡ This display of sympathy on the part of the Tollbooth, (the principle prison in Edinburgh) which truly seems to have been most affected on this occasion, is much to be commended. It was to be apprehended, that the many unhappy criminals executed in the front, might have rendered the edifice more callous. She

58: William Herbert (1778-1847) minor poet. Translated from Icelandic and wrote for the *Edinburgh*.

59: The Rev. Sydney Smith (1771-1845) poetaster and wit. See *Don Juan* XVI, 81, 6-8, where he is "Peter Pith".

60: Henry Hallam (1777-1859) historian.

61: James Pillans (1778-1864) later a professor at Edinburgh.

62: Thalia is the Muse of Comedy.

63: Lord Holland (1773-1840) leader of the Whig party. Later, friend of B. It was when he expressed a distaste for *EBSR* that B. suppressed it.

64: Henry Brougham (pronounced "Broom": 1778-1868) later, slanderer and enemy of B. See *Don Juan* I, rejected stanzas. B. challenges him to a duel at BLJ VII 95-6.

is said to be of the softer sex, because her delicacy of feeling on this day was truly feminine, though, like most feminine impulses, perhaps a little selfish.

§ His Lordship has been much abroad, is a Member of the Athenian Society, and Reviewer of “GELL’S Topography of Troy.”

|| Mr. HERBERT is a translator of Icelandic and other poetry. One of the principal pieces is a “Song on the Recovery of THOR’S Hammer;” the translation is a pleasant chaunt in the vulgar tongue, and endeth thus:

—
“Instead of money and rings, I wot,
The hammer’s bruises were her lot,
Thus Odin’s son his hammer got.”

** The Rev. SYDNEY SMITH, the reputed Author of Peter Plymley’s Letters, and sundry criticisms.

†† Mr. HALLAM reviewed PAYNE KNIGHT’S Taste, and was exceedingly severe on some Greek verses therein: it was not discovered that the lines were PINDAR’S till the Press rendered it impossible to cancel the critique, which still stands as an everlasting monument of HALLAM’S ingenuity.

The said HALLAM is incensed, because he is falsely accused, seeing that he dineth at Holland House. – If this be true, I am sorry – not for having said so, but on his account, as I understand his Lordship’s feasts are preferable to his compositions. – If he did not review Lord HOLLAND’S performance,⁶⁵ I am glad, because it must have been painful to read, and irksome to praise it. If Mr. HALLAM will tell me who did review it, the real name shall find a place in the text, provided nevertheless the said name be of two orthodox musical syllables, and will come into the verse, till then, HALLAM must stand for want of a better.

‡‡ PILLANS is a tutor at Eton.

§§ The honourable G. LAMB reviewed “BERESFORD’S Miseries,” and is moreover Author of a Farce enacted with much applause at the Priory, Stanmore; and damned with great expedition at the late Theatre, Covent-Garden. It was entitled “Whistle for It.”

||| Mr. BROUGHAM, in No. XXV. of the Edinburgh Review, throughout the article concerning Don Pedro de Cevallos, had displayed more politics than policy; many of the worthy Burgesses of Edinburgh being so incensed at the infamous principles it evinces, as to have withdrawn their subscriptions.

*** I ought to apologize to the worthy Deities for introducing a new Goddess with short petticoats to their notice: but, alas! what was to be done? I could not say Caledonia’s Genius, it being well known there is no Genius to be found from Clackmannon to Caithness, yet without supernatural agency, how was JEFFREY to be saved? The national “Kelpies,” &c. are too unpoetical, and the “Brownies” and “gude neighbours,” (sprites of a good disposition) refused to extricate him. A Goddess therefore has been called for the purpose, and great ought to be the gratitude of JEFFREY, seeing it is the only communication he ever had, or is likely to hold, with any thing heavenly.

Then prosper, JEFFREY! pertest of the train
Whom Scotland pampers with her fiery grain!
Whatever blessing waits a genuine Scot, 530
In double portion swells thy glorious lot;
For thee Edina culls her evening sweets,
And showers their odours on thy candid sheets,
Whose Hue and Fragrance to thy work adhere
This scents its pages, and that gilds its rear, 535
Lo! blushing Itch, coy nymph, enamoured grown,
Forsakes the rest, and cleaves to thee alone;

65: In fact he didn’t; the review was by Lord Holland’s polymath librarian John Allen.

And, too unjust to other Pictish men,
Enjoys thy person, and inspires thy pen!

Illustrious HOLLAND! hard would be his lot, 540
His hirelings mentioned, and himself forgot!
HOLLAND, with HENRY PETTY⁶⁶ at his back,
The whipper-in and huntsman of the pack.
Blest be the banquets spread at Holland House,
Where Scotchmen feed, and Critics may carouse! 545
Long, long beneath that hospitable roof,
Shall Grub-street dine, while duns are kept aloof.
See honest HALLAM lay aside his fork,
Resume his pen, review his Lordship's work,
And, grateful for the founder of the feast, 550
Declare his landlord can translate, at least! *
Dunedin! view thy children with delight,
They write for food and feed because they write:
And lest, when heated with the unusual grape,
Some glowing thoughts should to the press escape, 555
And tinge with red the female reader's cheek,
My lady⁶⁷ skims the cream of each critique;
Breathes o'er the page her purity of soul,
Reforms each error, and refines the whole. † *Bad enough – & on mistaken
grounds besides. [1816]*

* Lord H. has translated some specimens of LOPE DE VEGA, inserted in his life of the Author; both are bepraised by his *disinterested* guests.

† Certain it is, her Ladyship is suspected of having displayed her matchless wit in the Edinburgh Review: however that may be, we know from good authority, that the manuscripts are submitted to her perusal – nor doubt for correction.

Now to the Drama turn – Oh! motley Sight! 560
What precious scenes the wondering eyes invite!
Puns, and a Prince within a barrel pent, *
And DIBDIN'S⁶⁸ nonsense yield complete content.
Though now, thank Heaven! the Rosciomania's o'er,
And full-grown actors are endured once more; 565
Yet what avail their vain attempts to please,
While British critics suffer scenes like these;
While REYNOLDS⁶⁹ vents his “dammes!” “poohs!” and “zounds!” †
And common place and common sense confounds?
While KENNY'S⁷⁰ World? ah! where is Kenny's wit? 570
Tires the sad gallery, lulls the listless Pit;
And BEAUMONT'S pilfered Caratach⁷¹ affords
A tragedy complete in all but words? ‡
Who but must mourn, while these are all the rage,
The degradation of our vaunted stage? 575
Heavens! is all sense of shame and talent gone?
Have we no living bard of merit? – none!

66: Henry Petty (1780-1863) later Marquis of Lansdowne; leading Whig.

67: Lady Holland.

68: Thomas John Dibdin (1771-1841) actor and writer of pantomimes.

69: Frederick Reynolds (1780-1849) playwright who employed a highly conversational style.

70: James Kenny (1780-1849) playwright, friend of Charles and Mary Lamb.

71: Francis Beaumont (c.1584-1616) dramatist; the reference is to his play *Bonduca*, adapted as *Caractacus* (1808).

Awake, GEORGE COLMAN!⁷² CUMBERLAND,⁷³ awake!
 Ring the alarum bell!⁷⁴ let folly quake!
 Oh! SHERIDAN!⁷⁵ if aught can move thy pen, 580
 Let Comedy assume her throne again;
 Abjure the mummery of German schools;
 Leave new Pizarros to translating fools;
 Give, as thy last memorial to the age,
 One classic drama, and reform the stage! 585
 Gods! o'er those boards shall Folly rear her head,
 Where GARRICK⁷⁶ trod, and SIDDONS⁷⁷ lives to tread?
 On those shall Farce display Buffoon'ry's mask,
 And HOOK conceal his heroes in a cask?
 Shall sapient managers new scenes produce 590
 From CHERRY,⁷⁸ SKEFFINGTON,⁷⁹ and Mother GOOSE?
 While SHAKESPEARE, OTWAY, MASSINGER, forgot,
 On stalls must moulder, or in closets rot?
 Lo! with what pomp the daily prints proclaim
 The rival candidates for Attic fame! 595
 In grim array though LEWIS' spectres rise,
 Still SKEFFINGTON and GOOSE divide the prize.
 And sure *great* SKEFFINGTON must claim our praise,
 For skirtless coats, and skeletons of plays
 Renowned alike; whose genius ne'er confines 600
 Her flight to garnish GREENWOOD'S gay designs; §
 Nor sleeps with "Sleeping Beauties," but anon
 In five facetious acts comes thundering on,
 While poor John Bull, bewildered with the scene, ||
 Stares, wondering what the devil it can mean; 605
 But as some hands applaud, a venal few!
 Rather than sleep, why John applauds it too.

* In the melo-drama of Tekeli,⁸⁰ that heroic prince is clapt into a barrel on the stage, a new asylum for distressed heroes.

† All these are favourite expressions of Mr. R. and prominent in his Comedies, living and defunct.

‡ Mr. T. SHERIDAN, the new Manager of Drury-Lane Theatre, stripped the Tragedy of Bonduca of the Dialogue, and exhibited the scenes as the spectacle of Caractacus. – Was this worthy of his sire?⁸¹ Or of himself?

§ Mr. GREENWOOD is, we believe, Scene-Painter to Drury Lane Theatre – as such, Mr. S. is much indebted to him.

72: George Colman the Younger (1762-1836) highly successful playwright.

73: Richard Cumberland (1732-1811) playwright. The original of Sir Fretful Plagiary in Sheridan's *The Critic*.

74: *Macbeth*, V v 51.

75: Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816) Whig politician and playwright much liked and admired by B.

76: David Garrick (1717-1779) friend of Dr Johnson and greatest actor of his generation.

77: Sarah Siddons (1755-1831) actress much admired by B.

78: Andrew Cherry (1762-1812) Irish actor and playwright.

79: Lumley St George Skeffington (1768-1850) fop and playwright. Wrote a play about the *Sleeping Beauty*.

80: *Tékéli, ou le Siège de Montgatz*, mélodrame historique en trois actes, en prose, etc. by René Charles Guilbert de Pixérécourt (Paris, 1804); translated and staged as *Tekeli; or, the siege of Montgatz*, a melodrama in three acts, by Theodore Edward Hook (London, 1806).

81: Thomas Sheridan was the son of R.B.Sheridan.

|| Mr. S. is the illustrious author of the “Sleeping Beauty;” and some Comedies, particularly “Maids and Bachelors:” Baculaurii baculo quam lauro digni.⁸²

Such are we now; ah! wherefore should we turn
To what our fathers were, unless to mourn?
Degenerate Britons! are ye dead to shame, 610
Or, kind to dullness, do you fear to blame?
Well may the nobles of our present race
Watch each distortion of a NALDI'S⁸³ face;
Well may they smile on Italy's buffoons,
And worship CATALANI'S⁸⁴ pantaloons, * 615
Since their own Drama yields no fairer trace
Of wit than puns, of humour than grimace.

* NALDI and CATALANI require little notice – for the visage of the one, and the salary of the other, will enable us long to recollect these amusing vagabonds; besides, we are still black and blue from the squeeze on the first night of the Lady's appearance in trowsers.

Then let AUSONIA,⁸⁵ skilled in every art⁸⁶
To soften manners, but corrupt the heart.
Pour her exotic follies o'er the town, 620
To sanction Vice, and hunt Decorum down:
Let wedded strumpets languish o'er DESHAYES,⁸⁷
And bless the promise which his form displays;
While GAYTON⁸⁸ bounds before th'enraptured looks
Of hoary marquises and stripling Dukes: 625
Let high-born lechers eye the lively PRESLE⁸⁹
Twirl her light limbs, that spurn the needless veil;
Let ANGIOLINI⁹⁰ bare her breast of snow,
Wave the white arm, and point the pliant toe;
COLLINI⁹¹ trill her love-inspiring song, 630
Strain her fair neck, and charm the listening throng!
Whet not your scythe, Suppressors of our vice!⁹²
Reforming Saints! too delicately nice!
By whose decrees, our sinful souls to save,
No Sunday tankards foam, no barbers shave; 635
And beer undrawn, and beards unmown, display
Your holy reverence for the Sabbath-day. *Good.* [1816]

Or, hail at once the patron and the pile
Of vice and folly, GREVILLE⁹³ and ARGYLE! *
Where yon proud palace, Fashion's hallowed fane, 640

82: “More worthy of a wooden prize [*given to losers*] than the laurel of victory.”

83: Giuseppe Naldi (1770-1820) clown.

84: Angelica Catalani (c.1785-1849) may have been expensive; but she was the leading soprano of her time.

85: Ausonia is Italy, birthplace of Angiolini, Collini, Naldi, and Catalani.

86: B. to Dallas, February 22nd 1809: “A cut at the opera – Ecce signum! From last night's observation, and innuendoes against the Society for the Suppression of Vice. The lines will come in very well after the couplets concerning Naldi and Catalani” (BLJ I 195: *Ecce signum* is Falstaff at *Henry IV I II iv* 160 app.).

87: André J. J. Deshayes was Master of the Ballet at the King's Theatre.

88: Miss Gayton was a ballerina at the King's Theatre.

89: Mademoiselle Presle was another ballerina at the King's Theatre.

90: Mademoiselle Fortunata Angiolini was another ballerina at the King's Theatre.

91: Collini may have been a soprano at the King's Theatre.

92: Refers to the Society for the Suppression of Vice, founded 1802.

93: Colonel Greville founded the Argyll Rooms (at this time, the Argyll Institution).

Spreads wide her portals for the motley train,
 Behold the new PETRONIUS⁹⁴ of the day, †
 Our Arbiter of pleasure and of play!
 There the hired Eunuch, the Hesperian choir
 The melting lute, the soft lascivious lyre, 645
 The song from Italy, the step from France,
 The midnight orgy, and the mazy dance,
 The smile of beauty, and the flush of wine,
 For fops, fools gamesters, knaves, and Lords combine:
 Each to his humour, – Comus⁹⁵ all allows; 650
 Champaign, dice, music, or your neighbour's spouse.
 Talk not to us, ye starving sons of trade!
 Of piteous ruin, which ourselves have made;
 In Plenty's sunshine Fortune's minions bask,
 Nor think of Poverty, except "en masque," 655
 When for the night some lately titled ass
 Appears the beggar which his grandsire was.
 The curtain dropped, the gay Burletta o'er,
 The audience take their turn upon the floor;
 Now round the room the circling dow'gers sweep, 660
 Now in loose waltz the thin-clad daughters leap:
 The first in lengthened line majestic swim,
 The last display the free, unfettered limb:
 Those for Hibernia's lusty sons repair
 With art the charms which nature could not spare; 665
 These after husbands wing their eager flight,
 Nor leave much mystery for the nuptial night.

* To prevent any blunder, such as mistaking a street for a man, I beg leave to state, that it is the Institution, and not the Duke of that name, which is here alluded to.

A gentleman, with whom I am slightly acquainted, lost in the Argyle Rooms several thousand pounds at Backgammon; it is but justice to the manager in this instance to say, that some degree of disapprobation was manifested, but why are the implements of gaming allowed in a place devoted to the society of both sexes? A pleasant thing for the wives and daughters of those who are blest or curst with such connections, to hear the Billiard-tables rattling in one room, and the dice in another! That this is the case I myself can testify, as a late unworthy member of an Institution which materially affects the morals of the higher orders, while the lower may not even move to the sound of a tabor and fiddle without a chance of indictment for riotous behaviour. *True – it was Billy W–y – who lost the money. I knew him – & was a subscriber to the Argyle at the time of this event. – [1816]*

† PETRONIUS "Arbiter elegantarium" to NERO, "and a very pretty fellow in his day," as Mr. CONGREVE'S Old Bachelor saith.⁹⁶

Oh! blest retreats of infamy and ease!
 Where, all forgotten but the power to please,
 Each maid may give a loose to genial thought, 670
 Each swain may teach new systems, or be taught:
 There the blithe youngster, just returned from Spain,
 Cuts the light pack, or calls the rattling-main;
 The jovial Caster's set, and seven's the nick,
 Or – done! – a thousand on the coming trick!⁹⁷ 675

94: Petronius (first century A.D.) author of *The Satyricon*.

95: Comus is the spirit of revelry in the masque by Milton (1634).

96: "The arbiter of Elegance." Refers to Congreve's play *The Old Bachelor* (II i); but the line is not said by the protagonist, and does not relate to Petronius: BLUFFE: "... faith, Hannibal was a very pretty fellow."

97: These are terms from Hazard, as in, "I've lost my wife." – "At Quinze, or Hazard?"

If, mad with loss, existence 'gins to tire,
 And all your hope or wish is to expire,
 Here's POWELL'S⁹⁸ pistol ready for your life,
 And, kinder still, two PAGETS for your wife;⁹⁹
 Fit consummation of an earthly race 680
 Begun in folly, ended in disgrace;
 While none but menials o'er the bed of death,
 Wash thy red wounds, or watch thy wavering breath:
 Traduced by liars, and forgot by all,
 The mangled victim of a drunken brawl, 685
 To live like CLODIUS,^{100*} and like FALKLAND †¹⁰¹ fall.

* Mutato nomine de te
 Fabula narratur.¹⁰²

† I knew the late Lord FALKLAND well. On Sunday night I beheld him presiding at his own table, in all the honest pride of hospitality; on Wednesday morning, at three o'clock, I saw stretched before me all that remained of courage, feeling, and a host of passions. He was a gallant and successful officer; his faults were the faults of a sailor, as such Britons will forgive them. He died like a brave man in a better cause; for had he fallen in like manner on the deck of the frigate to which he was just appointed, his last moments would have been held up by his countrymen as an example to succeeding heroes.

Truth! rouse some genuine Bard, and guide his hand
 To drive this pestilence from out the land.
 Even I – least thinking of a thoughtless throng,
 Just skilled to know the right and chuse the wrong, 690
 Freed at that age when Reason's shield is lost,
 To fight my course through Passion's countless host,
 Whom every path of pleasure's flowery way *Yea – and a precious chace*
 Has lured in turn, and all have led astray – *they led me. [1816]*
 E'en I must raise my voice, e'en I must feel 695
 Such scenes, such men, destroy the public weal:
 Although some kind, censorious friend will say,
 "What art thou better, meddling fool, than they?" *Fool enough certainly then*
 And every Brother Rake will smile to see *& no wiser since. [1816]*
 That miracle, a Moralist in me! 700
 No matter – when some Bard in virtue strong,
 GIFFORD perchance, shall raise the chastening song,
 Then sleep my pen for ever! and my voice
 Be only heard to hail him, and rejoice;
 Rejoice, and yield my feeble praise, though I 705
 May feel the lash that Virtue must apply.¹⁰³

As for the smaller fry, who swarm in shoals,
 From silly HAFIZ * up to simple BOWLES,
 Why should we call them from their dark abode,
 In broad St. Giles's, or in Tottenham Road? 710
 Or (since some men of fashion nobly dare
 To scrawl in verse) from Bond-street or the Square?

98: Sir Arthur Powell duelled with, and killed Viscount Falkland (see next note but two).

99: There were two Paget brothers, Lord Paget and Sir Arthur Paget; each eloped with another man's wife.

100: Clodius (92-54 B.C.) Roman gangster who witnessed the Bona Dea ceremony, intended for women only.

101: Viscount Falkland (1768-1809) killed by Sir Arthur Powell on February 28th 1809.

102: "Change but the name, and the tale is told of you."

103: B. makes a distinction between Juvenalian satire, written from a position of moral superiority, and Horatian satire, written by one who empathises with the sinners. Gifford's work is in his analysis Juvenalian, his Horatian.

If things of *ton* their harmless lays indite,
 Most wisely doomed to shun the public sight,
 What harm? in spite of every critic elf, 715
 Sir T. may read his stanzas to himself;
 MILES ANDREWS¹⁰⁴ still his strength in couplets try,
 And live in prologues, though his dramas die:
 Lords too are Bards, such things at times befall,
 And 'tis some praise in Peers to write at all. 720
 Yet, did or taste or reason sway the times
 Ah! who would take their titles with their rhymes?
 ROSCOMMON!¹⁰⁵ SHEFFIELD! with your spirits fled,
 No future laurels deck a noble head
 No Muse will cheer, with renovating smile, 725
 The paralytic puling of CARLISLE.¹⁰⁶
 The puny schoolboy and his early lay
 Men pardon, if his follies pass away;
 But who forgives the Senior's ceaseless verse,
 Whose hairs grow hoary as his rhymes grow worse? 730
 What heterogeneous honours deck the Peer!
 Lord, rhymester, petit-maitre, pamphleteer! †
 So dull in youth, so drivelling in his age,
 His scenes alone had damned our sinking stage;
 But Managers for once cried, "Hold, enough!"¹⁰⁷ 735
 Nor drugged their audience with the tragic stuff.
 Yet at their judgement let his Lordship laugh,
 And case his volumes in congenial calf;
 Yes! doff that covering, where Morocco shines,
 And hang a calf-skin ‡ on those recreant lines.¹⁰⁸ 740

Wrong also: – the provocation was not sufficient to justify such acerbity. – [1816]

* What would be the sentiments of the Persian ANACREON, HAFIZ, could he rise from his splendid sepulchre at Sheeraz, where he reposes with FERDOUSI and SADI,¹⁰⁹ the Oriental HOMER and CATULLUS, and behold his name assumed by one STOTT of DROMORE, the most impudent and execrable of literary poachers for the Daily Prints?

† The Earl of CARLISLE has lately published an eighteen-penny pamphlet on the state of the Stage, and offers his plan for building new theatre: is to be hoped his Lordship will be permitted to bring forward any thing for the Stage, except his own tragedies.

‡ "Doff that lion's hide

And hang a calf-skin on those recreant limbs." – Shakespeare: *King John*. Lord C.'s works, most resplendently bound, form a conspicuous ornament to his book-shelves: "The rest is all but leather and prunella."¹¹⁰

With you, ye Druids! rich in native lead,
 Who daily scribble for your daily bread
 With you I war not: GIFFORD'S heavy hand
 Has crushed, without remorse, your numerous band.
 On "all the Talents" vent your venal spleen; 745

104: Miles Peter Andrews (d.1824) M.P. and playwright satirised by Gifford in the *Baviad*.

105: The Earl of Roscommon (1634-1685) translator of Horace's *Ars Poetica*.

106: The Earl of Carlisle (1748-1825) was B.'s legal guardian; but would not introduce him officially into the Lords.

107: *Macbeth*, V viii 34: the last words of the protagonist.

108: *King John*, III i 129, 131, 133 and 199. Faulconbridge says the line four times, goading the Duke of Austria.

109: In his 1807 Reading List B. claims to have all three of these Persian poets (see CMP 1).

110: Pope, *Essay on Man*, IV 204.

Want is your plea, let Pity be your screen:
 Let Monodies on Fox regale your crew,
 And Melville's Mantle * prove a Blanket too!
 One common Lethe waits each hapless Bard,
 And, peace be with you! 'tis your best reward. 750
 Such damning fame as Dunciads only give
 Could bid your lines beyond a morning live;
 But now at once your fleeting labours close,
 With names of greater note in blest repose.
 Far be't from me unkindly to upbraid 755
 The lovely ROSA'S prose in masquerade,
 Whose strains, the faithful echoes of her mind,
 Leave wondering comprehension far behind. †
 Though CRUSCA'S bards no more our journals fill,
 Some stragglers skirmish round the columns still; 760
 Last of the howling host which once was BELL'S.¹¹¹
 MATILDA¹¹² snivels yet, and HAFIZ yells;
 And MERRY'S¹¹³ metaphors appear anew,
 Chained to the signature of O. P. Q. ‡

* MELVILLE'S Mantle, a parody on "Elijah's Mantle," a poem.

† This lovely little Jessica, the daughter of the noted Jew K[ing], seems to be a follower of the Della Cruscan School, and has published two volumes of very respectable absurdities in rhyme, as times go; besides sundry novels in the style of the first edition of the Monk. *She since married the Morning Post – an exceeding good Match. – – [in pencil:] & is since dead – which is better.* [1816]

‡ These are the signatures of various worthies who figure in the poetical departments of the newspapers.¹¹⁴

When some brisk youth, the tenant of a stall, *This was meant* 765 *at poor*
 Employs a pen less pointed than his awl, *Blacket – who was then patronized by*
 Leaves his snug shop, forsakes his store of shoes, *A.I.B. but that I did not know*
 St. Crispin quits, and cobbles for the muse, *– or this would not have been*
 Heavens! how the vulgar stare! how crowds applaud! *written – at least I think*
 How ladies read, and Literati laud! *not. – – –* 770
 If chance some wicked wag should pass his jest, [1816]
 'Tis sheer ill-nature; don't the world know best?
 Genius must guide when wits admire the rhyme,
 And CAPEL LOFFT *¹¹⁵ declares 'tis quite sublime.
 Hear, then, ye happy sons of needless trade! 775
 Swains! quit the plough, resign the useless spade!
 Lo! BURNS¹¹⁶ and BLOOMFIELD, †¹¹⁷ nay, a greater far,
 GIFFORD was born beneath an adverse star,
 Forsook the labours of a servile state,
 Stemmed the rude storm, and triumphed over Fate:¹¹⁸ 780
 Then why no more? if Phœbus smiled on you,

111: John Bell (1745-1831) publisher of the Della Cruscan poets, whom Gifford had attacked.

112: "Rosa Matilda" is Charlotte Dacre (1782-1842) poet and novelist who perhaps influenced B. Author of the novel *Zofloya* and such poems as *Moorish Combat*.

113: Robert Merry (1755-1798) minor poet, originator of the phrase "della Crusca."

114: But no-one knows who "O," "P," and "Q" were.

115: Capel Lofft (1751-1824) jurist, poet, critic, and horticulturalist, was patron of Robert Bloomfield.

116: Robert Burns (1759-96) Scots cultural icon.

117: Robert Bloomfield (1766-1823) shoemaker poet of Throston, Suffolk.

118: Gifford came from a poor background, and had been apprenticed to a shoemaker.

BLOOMFIELD! why not on brother NATHAN¹¹⁹ too?
 Him too the Mania, not the Muse, has seized;
 Not inspiration, but a mind diseased:
 And now no Boor can seek his last abode, 785
 No common be enclosed without an ode.
 Oh! since increased refinement deigns to smile
 On Britain's sons, and bless our genial Isle,
 Let Poesy go forth, pervade the whole,
 Alike the rustic and mechanic soul: 790
 Ye tuneful cobblers! still your notes prolong,
 Compose at once a slipper and a song;
 So shall the fair your handy work peruse,
 Your sonnets sure shall please – perhaps your shoes.
 May Moorland ‡ weavers boast Pindaric skill, 795
 And tailors' lays be longer than their bill!
 While punctual beaux reward the grateful notes,
 And pay or poems – when they pay for coats.

* CAPEL LOFFT, Esq. The Mæcenas of shoemakers, and Preface-writer-general to distressed versemen; a kind of gratis Accoucheur to those who wish to be delivered of rhyme, but do not know how to bring it forth.

† See NATHANIEL BLOOMFIELD'S ode, elegy, or whatever he or anyone else chooses to call it, on the enclosure of "Honington Green."

‡ Vide "Recollections of a Weaver in the Moorlands of Staffordshire."

To the famed throng now paid the tribute due,
 Neglected Genius! let me turn to you. 800
 Come forth, oh CAMPBELL! *¹²⁰ give thy talents scope;
 Who dares aspire if thou must cease to hope?
 And thou, melodious ROGERS!¹²¹ rise at last, *R^s has not fulfilled the promise of*
 Recall the pleasing memory of the past;¹²² *his first poems, but still has very*
 Arise! let blest remembrance still inspire, *great merit. — — —* 805
 And strike to wonted tones thy hallowed lyre; [1816]
 Restore Apollo to his vacant throne,
 Assert thy country's honour and thine own.
 What! must deserted Poesy still weep
 Where her last hopes with pious COWPER¹²³ sleep? 810
 Unless, perchance, from his cold bier she turns,
 To deck the turf that wraps her minstrel, BURNS!
 No! though contempt hath marked the spurious brood,
 The race who rhyme from folly, or for food;
 Yet still some genuine sons 'tis hers to boast 815
 Who least affecting, still affect the most;
 Feel as they write, and write but as they feel –
 Bear witness GIFFORD, SOTHEBY,¹²⁴ MACNEIL.¹²⁵ †

119: Nathan Bloomfield, his shoemaker brother.

120: Thomas Campbell (1777-1844) Scots poet. See *Beppo*, 76, 3, *Don Juan* I, 7, 7; the quotation from his *Gertrude of Wyoming* at I, 88, 1-4; and 205, 6.

121: Samuel Rogers (1763-1855) banker, poet, London acquaintance of B. See *Beppo*, 76, 3, *Don Juan* I, 7, 7, and 205, 7; and V, 89, 4.

122: *The Pleasures of Memory* is a 1792 poem by Rogers. The *Pleasures of Hope* is a 1799 poem by Campbell.

123: William Cowper (1731-1800) author of *John Gilpin*; declared by B. to be "no poet" (BLJ III 179).

124: William Sotheby (1757-1833) poet. See *Beppo* stanzas 72-6, and *Don Juan*, I, 206, 1.

125: Hector Macneil (1746-1816) Scots poet.

*Pretty Miss Jacqueline
Had a nose aquiline,
And would assert rude
Things of Miss Gertrude,
While M'. Marmion
Led a great army on,
Making Kehama look
Like a <dead> fierce Mamaluke. [1816]*

* It would be superfluous to recal to the mind of the reader the author of “The Pleasures of Memory” and “The Pleasures of Hope,” the most beautiful didactic poems in our language, if we except POPE’S Essay on Man: but so many poetasters have started up, that even the names of CAMPBELL and ROGERS are become strange.

† GIFFORD, author of the Baviad and Mæviad, the first satires of the day, and translator of JUVENAL. SOTHEBY, translator of WIELAND’S Oberon, and VIRGIL’S Georgics, and author of SAUL, an epic poem. MACNEIL, whose poems are deservedly popular: particularly “SCOTLAND’S Scaith, or the Waes of War,” of which ten thousand copies were sold in one month.

“Why slumbers GIFFORD?” once was asked in vain; *
Why slumbers GIFFORD? let us ask again. 820
Are there no follies for his pen to purge?
Are there no fools whose backs demand the scourge?
Are there no sins for Satire’s Bard to greet?
Stalks not gigantic Vice in every street?
Shall Peers or Princes tread pollution’s path, 825
And ’scape alike the Law’s and Muse’s wrath?
Nor blaze with guilty glare through future time,
Eternal beacons of consummate crime?
Arouse thee, GIFFORD! be thy promise claimed,
Make bad men better, or at least ashamed. 830

* Mr. GIFFORD promised publicly that the Baviad and Mæviad should not be his last original works: let him remember; “Mox in reluctantes Dracones.”¹²⁶

Unhappy WHITE! *¹²⁷ while life was in its spring,
And thy young Muse just waved her joyous wing,
The Spoiler swept that soaring Lyre away,
Which else had sounded an immortal lay.
Oh! what a noble heart was here undone,¹²⁸ 835
When Science’s self destroyed her favourite son!
Yes, she too much indulged thy fond pursuit;
She sowed the seeds, but Death has reaped the fruit.
'Twas thine own Genius gave the final blow,
And helped to plant the wound that laid thee low: 840
So the struck Eagle, stretched upon the plain,
No more through rolling clouds to soar again,
Viewed his own feather on the fatal dart,
And winged the shaft; that quivered in his heart;
Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel 845
He nursed the pinion which impelled the steel;

126: “Soon into the struggling/resisting snakes/dragons/mythical beasts (or people called Draco / family of Draco).”

127: Henry Kirke White (1785-1806). What poetry he had written was edited by Southey. See *TVOJ*, 98, 3n.

128: Echoes the words of Ophelia at *Hamlet*, III i 150: *Oh, what a noble mind is here o’erthrown!*

While the same plumage that had warmed his nest
Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast.

* HENRY KIRKE WHITE died at Cambridge in October 1806, in consequence of too much exertion in the pursuit of studies that would have matured a mind which disease and poverty could not impair, and which Death itself destroyed rather than subdued. His poems abound in such beauties as must impress the reader with the liveliest regret that so short a period was allotted to his talents, which would have dignified even the sacred functions he was destined to assume.

There be, who say in these enlightened days
That splendid lies are all the poet's praise; 850
That strained Invention, ever on the wing,
Alone impels the modern Bard to sing:
'Tis true, that till who rhyme, nay, all who write,
Shrink from that fatal word to Genius – Trite;
Yet Truth sometimes will lend her noblest fires, 855
And decorate the verse herself inspires:
This fact in Virtue's name let CRABBE¹²⁹ attest;
Though Nature's sternest Painter, yet the best. *I consider Crabbe and Coleridge
as the first of these times in point of power and Genius. [1816]*

And here let SHEE *¹³⁰ and Genius find a place,
Whose pen and pencil yield an equal grace; 860
To guide whose hand the sister Arts combine,
And trace the Poet's or the Painter's line;
Whose magic touch can bid the canvas glow,
Or pour the easy rhyme's harmonious flow;
While honours, doubly merited, attend 865
The Poet's rival, but the Painter's friend.

* Mr. SHEE, author of "Rhymes on Art," and "Elements of Art."

Blest is the man! who dares approach the bower
Where dwelt the Muses at their natal hour;
Whose steps have pressed, whose eye has marked afar,
The clime that nursed the sons of song and war, 870
The scenes which Glory still must hover o'er,
Her place of birth, her own Achaian¹³¹ shore.
But doubly blest is he whose heart expands
With hallowed feelings for those classic lands;
Who rends the veil of ages long gone by, 875
And views their remnants with a poet's eye!
WRIGHT! *¹³² 'twas thy happy lot at once to view
Those shores of glory, and to sing them too;
And sure no common Muse inspired thy pen
To hail the land of Gods and Godlike men. 880

* Mr. WRIGHT, late Consul-General for the Seven Islands, is author of a very beautiful poem just published: it is entitled, "Horæ Ionicæ," and is descriptive of the Isles and the adjacent coast of Greece.

And you, associate Bards! who snatched to light *

129: George Crabbe (1754-1832) major Suffolk poet, author of *Peter Grimes*. See *Don Juan* I, 205, 5.

130: Sir Martin Archer Shee (1770-1850) novelist, poet, and President of the Royal Academy.

131: Achaian means "Greek."

132: Waller Rodwell Wright (1770-1826) former English Consul on Corfu. His *Horæ Ionicæ* is said to be an influence on *CHP*.

Those Gems too long withheld from modern sight;
 Whose mingling taste combined to cull the wreath
 Where Attic flowers Aonia¹³³ odours breathe,
 And all their renovated fragrance flung, 885
 To grace the beauties of your native tongue;
 Now let those minds, that nobly could transfuse
 The glorious Spirit of the Grecian Muse,
 Though soft the echo, scorn a borrowed tone:
 Resign Achaia's lyre, and strike your own. 890

* The translators of the Anthology have since published separate poems, which evince genius that only requires opportunity to attain eminence. *Bland and Merivale*. [1816]¹³⁴

Let these, or such as these, with just applause,
 Restore the Muse's violated laws;
 But not in flimsy DARWIN'S¹³⁵ pompous chime,
 That mighty master of unmeaning rhyme;
 Whose gilded cymbals, more adorned than clear, 895
 The eye delighted but fatigued the ear;
 In show the simple lyre could once surpass,
 But now, worn down, appear in native brass;
 While all his train of hovering sylphs around
 Evaporate in similies and sound: 900
 Him let them shun, with him let tinsel die:
 False glare attracts, but more offends the eye. *

* The neglect of the "Botanic Garden," is some proof of returning taste: the scenery is its sole recommendation.

Yet let them not to vulgar WORDSWORTH stoop,
 The meanest object of the lowly group,
 Whose verse, of all but childish prattle void, 905
 Seems blessed harmony to LAMB¹³⁶ and LLOYD: *¹³⁷
 Let them – but hold, my Muse, nor dare to teach
 A strain far, far beyond thy humble reach:
 The native genius with their being given
 Will point the path, and peal their notes to heaven. 910

* Messrs. LAMBE and LLOYD, the most ignoble followers, of SOUTHEY and Co.

And thou, too, SCOTT! * resign to minstrels rude
 The wilder Slogan of a Border feud:
 Let others spin their meagre lines for hire;
 Enough for Genius, if itself inspire!
 Let SOUTHEY sing, although his teeming muse, 915
 Prolific every spring,¹³⁸ be too profuse;
 Let simple WORDSWORTH chime his childish verse,
 And brother COLERIDGE lull the babe at nurse;
 Let Spectre-mongering Lewis aim, at most,

133: Aonia is the area of Greece where Mount Helicon is situated.

134: B. refers to the translations from the Greek Anthology by the Rev. Robert Bland (1779-1825) in his note to *The Island*, IV 194. John Herman Merivale (1779-1844) published in 1814 a cut and bowdlerised version of Pulci's *Morgante* (see BLJ IV 12). He was son-in-law to Joseph Drury, B.'s headmaster at Harrow.

135: Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802) grandfather of Charles. Author of *The Botanic Garden* and *Loves of the Plants*.

136: Charles Lamb (1775-1834) poet and essayist.

137: Charles Lloyd (1775-1839) poet and friend of Coleridge.

138: This joke is echoed at *Don Juan* III, 97, 2-4.

To rouse the Galleries, or to raise a ghost; 920
 Let Moore still sigh; let STRANGFORD steal from MOORE,
 And swear that CAMOENS sang such notes of yore!
 Let HAYLEY hobble on, MONTGOMERY rave,
 And godly GRAHAME chant a stupid stave:
 Let sonneteering BOWLES his strains refine, 925
 And whine and whimper to the fourteenth line;
 Let STOTT, CARLISLE, MATILDA, and the rest †
 Of Grub-street, and of Grosvenor-Place the best,
 Scrawl on, till death release us from the strain,
 Or Common Sense assert her rights again; 930
 But thou, with powers that mock the aid of praise,
 Shouldst leave to humbler Bards ignoble lays:
 Thy country's voice, the voice of all the Nine,
 Demand a hallowed harp – that harp is thine.
 Say! will not Caledonia's annals yield 935
 The glorious record of some nobler field,
 Than the wild foray of a plundering clan,
 Whose proudest deeds disgrace the name of man?
 Or Marmion's acts of darkness, fitter food
 For SHERWOOD'S outlaw tales of ROBIN HOOD? 940
 Scotland! still proudly claim thy native Bard,
 And be thy praise his first, his best reward!
 Yet not with thee alone his name should live,
 But own the vast renown a world can give:
 Be known, perchance, when Albion is no more, 945
 And tell the tale of what she was before;
 To future times her faded fame recall,
 And save her glory, though his country fall.

* By the bye, I hope that in Mr. SCOTT'S next poem his hero or heroine will be less addicted to "Gramarye," and more to Grammar, than the Lady of the Lay, and her Bravo WILLIAM of DELORAINE.

† It may be asked why I have censured the Earl of Carlisle, my guardian and relative, to whom I dedicated a volume of puerile poems a few years ago. The guardianship was nominal, at least as far as I have been able to discover: the relationship I cannot help, and am very sorry for it; but as his Lordship seemed to forget it on a very essential occasion for me, I shall not burthen my memory with the recollection. I do not think that personal differences sanction the unjust condemnation of a brother scribbler; but I see no reason why they should act as a preventative, when the author, noble or ignoble, has for a series of years beguiled a "discerning public" (as the advertisements have it) with divers reams of orthodox, imperial nonsense. Besides, I do not step aside to vituperate the Earl; no – his works come fairly in review with those of other Patrician Literati. If, before I escaped from my teens, I said any thing in favour of his Lordship's paper books,¹³⁹ it was in the way of dutiful dedication, and more from the advice of others than my own judgement, and I seize the first opportunity of pronouncing my sincere recantation. I have heard that some persons conceive me to be under obligations to Lord Carlisle: if so, I shall be most particularly happy to learn what they are, and when conferred, that they may be duly appreciated, and publicly acknowledged. What I have humbly advanced as an opinion on his printed things, I am prepared to support if necessary, by quotations from Elegies, Eulogies, Odes, Episodes, and certain other facetious and dainty tragedies bearing his name, and mark:

"What can ennoble knaves, or fools, or cowards?
 Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards!"¹⁴⁰

139: *Much Ado About Nothing* II iii 220 app: ... *these paper bullets of the brain* ...

140: Pope, *Essay on Man*, IV 215-16.

So says Pope, Amen! *Much too savage – whatever the foundation might be.* – [1816]

Yet what avails the sanguine Poet's hope,
To conquer ages, and with time to cope? 950
New eras spread their wings, new nations rise,
And other Victors * fill the applauding skies;
A few brief generations fleet along,
Whose sons forget the Poet and his song;
E'en now, what once-loved Minstrels scarce may claim 955
The transient mention of a dubious name!
When Fame's loud trump hath blown its noblest blast,
Though long the sound, the echo sleeps at last;
And glory, like the Phoenix midst her fires, *The devil take that "Phoenix" how*
Exhales her odours, blazes, and expires. *came it there?* 960 [1816]

* "Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora." – VIRGIL.¹⁴¹

Shall hoary Granta¹⁴² call her sable sons,
Expert in science, more expert at puns?
Shall these approach the Muse? ah, no she flies,
Even from the tempting ore of Seaton's prize;
Though Printers condescend the press to soil 965
With rhyme by HOARE,¹⁴³ and epic blank by HOYLE:¹⁴⁴
Not him whose page, if still upheld by whist,
Requires no sacred theme to bid us list. *
Ye! who in Granta's honours would surpass,
Must mount her Pegasus, a full-grown ass: 970
A foal well worthy of her ancient dam,
Whose Helicon is duller than her Cam.

* The "Games of HOYLE," well known to the votaries of Whist, Chess, &c. are not to be superseded by the vagaries of his poetical namesake, whose poem comprised, as expressly stated in the advertisement, all the "Plagues of Egypt."

There CLARKE,¹⁴⁵ still striving piteously "to please,"
Forgetting doggrel leads not to degrees,
A would-be satirist, a hired Buffoon, 975
A monthly scribbler of some low Lampoon,
Condemned to drudge, the meanest of the mean,
And furbish falsehoods for a magazine,
Devotes to scandal his congenial mind;
Himself a living libel on mankind. * 980

* This person, who has lately betrayed the most rabid symptoms of confirmed authorship, is the writer of a poem denominated the "Art of Pleasing", as "Lucus a non lucendo", containing little pleasantry, and less poetry. He also acts as a monthly stipendiary and collector of calumnies for the Satirist. If this unfortunate young man would exchange the magazines for the mathematics, and endeavour to take a decent degree at his university, it might eventually prove more serviceable than his present salary. *Right enough – this was well deserved & well laid on.* – [1816]

Oh! dark asylum of a Vandal race! *

141: Virgil, *Georgics*, III 9: "I, too, may rise from earth and fly victorious on the lips of men."

142: Granta is Cambridge.

143: The Rev. Charles Hoare (1781-1865) had won the Cambridge Seatonian Prize for poetry in 1807.

144: Edmund Hoyle (1672-1769) writer on whist and other games. See *Don Juan* III, 90, 5.

145: Hewson Clarke (1787-c.1832) Cambridge satirist. For B.'s proposed challenge to him, see BLJ II 68.

At once the boast of learning, and disgrace;
 So lost to Phœbus, that nor HODGSON'S¹⁴⁶ verse †
 Can make thee better, nor poor HEWSON'S worse.
 But where fair Isis rolls her purer wave,¹⁴⁷ 985
 The partial Muse delighted loves to lave;
 On her green banks a greener wreath she wove,
 To crown the Bards that haunt her classic grove,
 Where RICHARDS¹⁴⁸ wakes a genuine poet's fires,
 And modern Britons glory in their Sires. ‡ 990

* "Into Cambridgeshire the Emperor PROBUS transported a considerable body of Vandals." – GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, page 83, vol. 2. There is no reason to doubt the truth of this assertion; the breed is still in high perfection.

† This gentleman's name requires no praise: the man who in translation displays unquestionable genius, may well be expected to excel in original composition, of which it is to be hoped we shall soon see a splendid specimen.

‡ The "Aboriginal Britons," and excellent poem by RICHARDS.

For me, who, thus unasked, have dared to tell
 My country what her sons should know too well,
 Zeal for her honour bade me here engage
 The host of idiots that infest her age.
 No just applause her honoured name shall lose, 995
 As first in freedom, dearest to the Muse.
 Oh! would thy Bards but emulate thy fame,
 And rise more worthy, Albion, of thy name!
 What Athens was in science, Rome in power,
 What Tyre appeared in her meridian hour, 1000
 'Tis thine at once, fair Albion! to have been;
 Earth's chief dictatress, Ocean's lovely queen:
 But Rome decayed, and Athens strewed the plain,
 And Tyre's proud piers lie shattered in the main;
 Like these, thy strength may sink, in ruin hurled, 1005
 And Britain fall, the bulwark of the World.
 But let me cease, and dread Cassandra's fate,
 With warning ever scoffed at, 'till too late;
 To themes less lofty still my lay confine,
 And urge thy Bards to gain a name like thine. 1010

Then, hapless Britain! be thy rulers blest,
 The senate's oracles, the people's jest!
 Still hear thy motley orators dispense
 The flowers of rhetoric, though not of sense,
 While CANNING'S¹⁴⁹ colleagues hate him for his wit, 1015
 And old dame PORTLAND *¹⁵⁰ fills the place of PITT.¹⁵¹

146: Francis Hodgson (1781-1852) friend of B. Poet and translator (like Gifford) of Juvenal

147: That is, Oxford.

148: The Rev. George Richards (1769-1835) minor poet from Oxford.

149: George Canning (1770-1827) satirist and Tory politician. Later Foreign Secretary, admired by B. See *Don Juan*, Preface to Cantos VI, VII and VIII.

150: The Duke of Portland (1738-1809) was briefly Prime Minister.

151: William Pitt (1759-1806) Tory Prime Minister.

* A friend of mine being asked why his Grace of P. was likened to an old woman? replied, “He supposed it was because he was past bearing.”

Yet once again, adieu! ere this the sail
 That wafts me hence is shivering in the gale;
 And Afric’s coast and Calpe’s adverse height, *
 And Stamboul’s minarets must greet my sight: † 1020
 Thence shall I stray through beauty’s native clime,
 Where Kaff is clad in rocks, and crowned with snows sublime. ‡¹⁵²
 But should I back return, no tempting press
 Shall drag my Journal from the desk’s recess;
 Let coxcombs, printing as they come from far, 1025
 Snatch his own wreath of Ridicule from CARR;
 Let ABERDEEN¹⁵³ and ELGIN §¹⁵⁴ still pursue
 The shade of fame through regions of Virtu;
 Waste useless thousands on their Phidian freaks,
 Mis-shapen monuments and maimed antiques; 1030
 And make their grand saloons a general mart
 For all the mutilated blocks of art:
 Of Dardan tours let Dilettanti tell,
 I leave topography to rapid GELL; ||¹⁵⁵
 And, quite content, no more shall interpose 1035
 To stun the public ear – at least with prose.

* Calpe is the ancient name of Gibraltar. *Saw it August 1809.* [1816]

† Stamboul is the Turkish word for Constantinople. *Was there the Summer 1810.* [1816]

‡ Mount Caucasus. *Saw the distant ridge of – 1810 – 1811.* [1816]

§ Lord ELGIN would fain persuade us that all the figures, with and without noses, in his stone-shop, are the work of PHIDIAS; “Credat Judæus!”

|| Mr. GELL’S Topography of Troy and Ithaca cannot fail to ensure the approbation of every man possessed of classical taste, as well for the information Mr. G. conveys to the mind of the reader, as for the ability and research the respective works display.

Thus far I’ve held my undisturbed career,
 Prepared for rancour, steeled ’gainst selfish fear:
 This thing of rhyme I ne’er disdained to own,¹⁵⁶
 Though not obtrusive, yet not quite unknown: 1040
 My voice was heard again, though not so loud,
 My page, though nameless, never disavowed;
 And now at once I tear the veil away: –
 Cheer on the pack! the Quarry stands at bay,
 Unscared by all the din of MELBOURNE house, *Singular enough* 1045
 By LAMB’S resentment, or by HOLLAND’S spouse, – and “*Din*” enough –
 By JEFFREY’S harmless pistol, HALLAM’S rage, *God knows.* [1816]
 Edina’s brawny sons and brimstone page.

152: Compare *Don Juan*, VI, 86, 8.

153: George Hamilton Gordon, fourth Earl of Aberdeen (1784-1860) old Harrovian; Prime Minister during the Crimean War see also *Childe Harold* II rejected Stanza 14, 2.

154: Earl of Elgin (1766-1841). Later disliked by B. for despoiling the Parthenon. See *The Curse of Minerva*.

155: William Gell (1777-1836) classical topographer: B. called him “rapid Gell” because he surveyed the Plain of Troy in three days.

156: *The Tempest* V, i 275-6: *This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine.*

Our men in buckram shall have blows enough,
 And feel they too are “penetrable stuff.”¹⁵⁷ 1050
 And though I hope not hence unscathed to go,
 Who conquers me, shall find a stubborn foe.
 The time hath been, when no harsh sound would fall
 From lips that now may seem imbued with gall,
 Nor fools nor follies tempt me to despise 1055
 The meanest thing that crawled beneath my eyes:
 But now, so callous grown, so changed since youth,
 I’ve learned to think, and sternly speak the truth;
 Learned to deride the critic’s starch decrees
 And break him on the wheel he meant for me; 1060
 To spurn the rod a scribbler bids me kiss,
 Nor care if courts and crowds applaud or hiss:
 Nay, more: though all my rival rhymesters frown,
 I too can hunt a Poetaster down;
 And, armed in proof, the gauntlet cast at once 1065
 To Scotch marauder, and to Southern dunce.
 Thus much I’ve dared; if my incondite lay
 Hath wronged these righteous times, let others say;
 This, let the world, which knows not how to spare,
 Yet rarely blames unjustly, now declare. 1070

The greater part of this Satire – I most sincerely wish had never been written – not only on account of the injustice of much of the critical & some of the personal part of it – but the tone & temper are such as I cannot approve. – Byron July 14th 1816. Diodati – Geneva. – [1816]

POSTSCRIPT TO THE SECOND EDITION

I have been informed, since the present edition went to the press that my trusty and well-beloved cousins, the Edinburgh Reviewers, are preparing a most vehement critique on my poor, gentle *unresisting* Muse, whom they have already so bedevilled with their ungodly ribaldry:

“Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ!”¹⁵⁸

I suppose I must say of JEFFREY as SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK saith, “An I had known he was so cunning of fence, I had seen him damned ere I had fought him.”¹⁵⁹ What a pity it is that I shall be beyond the Bosphorus before the next number has passed the Tweed! But I yet hope to light my pipe with it in Persia.

My northern friends have accused me, with justice, of personality towards their great literary anthropophagus,¹⁶⁰ Jeffrey; but what else was to be done with him and his dirty pack, who feed by “lying and slandering,” and slake their thirst by “evil speaking”? I have adduced facts already well known, and of JEFFREY’S mind I have stated my free opinion, nor has he thence sustained any injury; what scavenger was ever soiled by being pelted with mud? It may be said that I quit England because I have insured there persons of honour and wit about town; but I am coming back again, and their vengeance will keep hot till my return. Those who know me can testify that my motives for leaving England are very different from fears, literary or personal: those who do not, may one day be convinced. Since the publication of this thing, my name has not been concealed; I have been mostly in London, ready to answer for my transgressions, and in daily expectation of sundry cartels; but, alas! “the age of chivalry is over” or, in the vulgar tongue, there is no spirit now-a-days.

¹⁵⁷: *Hamlet*, III iv 36: *For so I shall, if it be made of penetrable stuff ...*

¹⁵⁸: Virgil, *Aeneid*, I, 11: “Can resentment so fierce dwell in heavenly breasts?”

¹⁵⁹: *Twelfth Night*, III iv 270 *et seq.*

¹⁶⁰: *Othello*, I, iii 144: “the Anthropophagi, and men / Whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders ...”

There is a youth ycleped Hewson Clarke (sub audi *esquire*), a sizer of Emmanuel College, and, I believe, a denizen of Berwick upon Tweed, whom I have introduced in these pages to much better company than he has been accustomed to meet; he is, notwithstanding, a very sad dog, and for no reason that I can discover, except as personal quarrel with a bear, kept by me at Cambridge to sit for a fellowship and whom the jealousy of his Trinity contemporaries prevented from success, has been abusing me, and, what is worse, the defenceless innocent above mentioned in the *Satirist*, for one year and some months. I am utterly unconscious of having given him any provocation indeed, I am guiltless of having heard his name, till coupled with the *Satirist*. He has therefore no reason to complain, and I dare say that, like Sir Fretful Plagiary, he is rather *pleased* than otherwise. I have now mentioned all who have done me the honour to notice me and mine, that is, my bear and my book, except the editor of the *Satirist*, who, it seems, is a gentleman – God wot! I wish he could impart a little of his gentility to his subordinate scribblers. I hear that Mr. JERNINGHAM is about to take up the cudgels for his Mæcenas, Lord Carlisle. I hope not: he was one of the few, who, in the very short intercourse I had with him, treated me with kindness when a boy; and whatever he may say or do, pour on, I will endure. I have nothing further to add, save a general note of thanksgiving to readers, purchasers, and publishers, and, in the words of *Scott*, I wish

“To all and each a fair good night,
And rosy dreams and slumbers light.”¹⁶¹

161: Scott, *Marmion*, final lines. B. trusts his memory too much. The lines are in fact, “To all, to each, a fair good-night, / And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light!”

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The British Bards. (Newark 1808) [proof in BM] Largely incorporated in the next entry.

English Bards and Scotch Reviewers: a Satire. *Started, as British Bards, October 1807, finished September 1808; as finally titled, started February 1808; published anonymously by James Cawthorne March 1809;* 2 variants, 3 counterfeits) 1809 ('with considerable additions and alterations') 1810 (8 counterfeits) Philadelphia and Charleston 1811, 1810 (4th edition) (one counterfeit) 1811 (4th edition) (6 counterfeits) *5th edition published December 1811 or January 1812 and suppressed by Byron,* Boston 1814, 1816 ('with additions') New York 1816 (PXA), 1817, Paris 1818, 1819, Brussels 1819, Baltimore 1819 (PXA), Geneva 1820, London 1821, Paris 1821, London 1823, 1823, Glasgow 1824, 1825, London 1825, 1826, 1827, 1827, (c. 1830) Halifax 1834; C(ampbell) J. D. et al. Athenaeum 5 May - 7 July 1894; ed. J. Murray 1936 (Roxburghe Club) (facsimile of a copy with Byron's ms notes); [MSS are at JMA; BL; Princeton / Taylor; New York Berg; Kent Archives Office; Bodleian Lovelace; Texas; Newstead; Yale / Tinker; Central Literary Archive, Moscow; the V&A; and in private hands. The copy of the fourth edition with Byron's 1816 marginalia is in the John Murray Archive.]

Reviewed. AntiJacobin Review (March 1809: second edition reviewed September 1810); Le Beau Monde (June 1809); British Critic (April 1809); Cabinet (June 1809); Critical Review (May 1809); Eclectic Review (May 1809); Gentleman's Magazine (March 1809: second edition reviewed February 1810) probably by John Nichols; Literary Chronicle (May 4th / 11th 1818); Literary Journal (April 19th / May 3rd / May 10th 1818); Literary Panorama (June 1809); New Annual Register for 1809 (1810); Poetical Register for 1808 - 1809 (1812); Portfolio (May 1811); Satirist (July 1809); Town (1810); Town Talk (August / September / October 1812); Ulster Register (June 1818)

Criticism. Bassett, Michael E. Pope, Byron and Satire Technique, Satire Newsletter 1968
Byron, Robin. "Hints From Horace": An Unpublished Note by Lord Byron, BJ 16 (1988) pp 86-7

Christie, William. Running with the English Hares and Hunting with the Scotch Bloodhounds, BJ 25 (1997) pp 23-31

Clearman, Mary. A Blueprint for English Bards and Scotch Reviewers: The First Satire of Juvenal, KSJ 1970 pp 87-100

Hume, Robert D. The Non-Augustan Nature of Byron's Early Satires, Revue des Langues Vivantes 1969

König, C. Byrons English Bards and Scotch Reviewers Entstehung und Beziehungen zur zeitgenössischen Satire und Kritik. Berlin 1914

Manning, Peter J. Byron's English Bards and Scotch Reviewers: The Art of Allusion, KSMB 1970 pp 7-11

Mellown, Muriel J. Francis Jeffrey, Lord Byron and English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, SSL 1981

Redgrave, G. R. The first four editions of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. Library 2nd series 1 1899

Rutherford Andrew. An Early MS of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, KSMB VII (1956) pp 11-13

Translations. **French** by Raoul (as Les poètes anglais et les auteurs de l'Edinburgh Review) Ghent 1821

German as Englischer barden und schottischer kritiker by Karl Ludwig Kannegieser, Zwickau 1827

Japanese With Hints from Horace, tr Itsuyo Higashinaka (Kyoto 1989)