

Waltz

edited by Peter Cochran



Gillray: *le Bon Genre*.

Waltz represents one of Byron's rare and uneasy excursions into satire during his years of fame in London between 1812 and 1816 – a temporary dead-end in his poetic experimentation. Like the “comic” stanzas in *Childe Harold* I and II – both those cut out and those retained – and like *The Devil's Drive*, his attitude to it was self-conscious and half-hearted. He never acknowledged it publicly as his.

With his malformed right calf and ankle, Byron was able to fence, box, ride, walk and above all, swim. But running was difficult for him – and dancing impossible. Castlereagh was a better dancer than Byron would have been,¹ but the poet is never recorded as even trying it. One of his most anguished adolescent experiences was watching his beloved Mary Chaworth dance with other Nottinghamshire youths. Sour grapes may indeed therefore be part of the motivation behind the poem; but it is also true that the waltz (originating in Germany in the 1780s, and finally made respectable in England during the Summer of the Sovereigns in 1814 and at the Congress of Vienna in 1815), was at first regarded as immoral by many. This was in part because the swirling movements revealed the lady's ankles, but largely because of the unprecedented intimacy of the partners' contact, front to front and arms around one another. In previously accepted dances, only hand-contact had been allowed.

At once conservative and radical by instinct, “prudish ... in his libertinism”,² Byron would have been unable to formulate any consistent attitude to waltzing; hence the wisdom of his inventing a comic persona, “Horace Hornem Esq.”, from behind whose ramblings – sometimes outraged, sometimes fascinated, but finally won over, though for the wrong reasons – the full spectrum of his own clashing perspectives could be articulated.

Waltz was written in Cheltenham in October 1812; Byron, fresh from *Childe Harold's* success, described it in offering it to Murray as “in the old style of E.B. & S.R.”³ At about the same time he remained confident: “I have in *hand* a *satire* on *Waltzing* which you must publish anonymously, it is not long, not quite 200 lines, but will make a very small boarded pamphlet – in a few days you shall have it”.⁴ But the Tory Murray was been unable to bring it

1: At Vienna Castlereagh once waltzed for half an hour. See Adam Zamoyski, *Rites of Peace* (HarperCollins 2007), p.394.

2: Marchand, *Byron a Biography* (Knopf 1957), vol.I p.371.

3: BLJ II 228.

4: BLJ II 229.

out under his name because of its references to the Prince Regent, and it was published anonymously early in 1813 by the more fearless Sherwood, Neely and Jones (publishers five years later of Southey's *Wat Tyler*). Byron quickly became embarrassed by it (as he had by "E.B. & S.R."), and on April 21st 1813 wrote to Murray,

I hear that a certain malicious publication on Waltzing is attributed to me. – This report I suppose you will take care to contradict – as the Author I am sure will not like that I should wear his cap & bells.⁵

Waltz:
An Apostrophic Hymn
By Horace Hornem, Esq.

"Qualis in Eurotae ripis, aut per juga Cynthi
Exercet DIANA choros." – OVID.⁶

TO THE PUBLISHER

Sir,

I am a country gentleman of a midland county. I might have been a Parliament-man for a certain borough, having had the offer of as many votes as General T[arleton]. at the last general election.⁷ But I was all for domestic happiness; so fifteen years ago, on a visit to London, I married a middle-aged Maid of Honour. We lived happily at Hornem Hall till last season, when my wife and I were invited by the Countess of Waltzaway (a distant relation of my spouse), to pass the winter in town. Thinking no harm, and our girls being come to a marriageable (or, as they call it, marketable) age, and having besides a Chancery suit inveterately entailed upon the family estate, we came up in our old chariot, of which, by the by, my wife grew so much ashamed, in less than a week, that I was obliged to buy a second-hand barouche, of which I might mount the box, Mrs. H. says, if I could drive, but never see the inside – that place being reserved for the Honourable Augustus Tiptoe, her partner general and opera knight.⁸ Hearing great praises of Mrs. H.'s dancing (she was famous for birth-night minuets in the latter end of last century), I unbooted, and went to a hall at the Countess's, expecting to see a country-dance, or, at most, cotillions, reels, and all the old paces to the newest tunes. But judge of my surprise, on arriving, to see poor dear Mrs. Hornem with her arms half round the loins of a huge hussar-looking gentleman I never set eyes on before, and his, to say truth, rather more than half round her waist, turning round, and round, and round, to a d—d see-saw up and down sort of tune, that reminded me of the "Black Joke",⁹ only more "affettuoso",¹⁰ till it made me quite giddy with wondering they were not so. By and by they stopped a bit, and I thought they would sit or fall down: but, no; with Mrs. H.'s hand on his shoulder, "quam familiariter" (as Terence said when I was at school),¹¹ they walked about a minute, and then at it again, like two cockchafers spitted on the same bodkin. I asked what all this meant, when, with a loud laugh, a child no older than our Wilhelmina (a name I never heard but in the *Vicar of Wakefield*,¹² though her mother would call her after the

5: BLJ III 41.

6: Not Ovid, but Virgil, *Aeneid* I 497-8: *Even as the banks of Eurotas or along the heights of Cynthus Diana guides her dancing bands* ... the lines describe Dido walking in procession.

7: General Sir Banastre [sic] Tarleton had stood unsuccessfully for Liverpool in October 1812. Canning beat him.

8: Tiptoe is evidently Mrs Hornem's Cavalier Servente (see *Beppo*, sts.36-40).

9: *The Black Joke* is a traditional Irish dance tune.

10: "With tender and passionate expression".

11: **BYRON'S NOTE: My Latin is all forgotten, if a man can be said to have forgot what he never remembered – but I bought my title-page motto of a Catholic priest, for a three shilling Bank token, after much haggling for the even sixpence. I grudged the money to a Papist, being all for the memory of Perceval and "No Popery", and quite regret the downfall of the Pope, because we can't burn him any more.** The Latin phrase is from Terence, *Andria*, I 135-6 : "... tum illa ... reiecit se in eum flens quam familiariter!" ("she fell back into his arms and wept so confidingly"). B., who also quotes from the play at *Don Juan* I, 30, 5 and XIII, 12, 8, evidently studied it at Harrow. For Terence, see also *Don Juan* XI, 58, 4.

12: Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs is a character in Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

Princess of Swappenbach), said, “L—d, Mr. Hornem, can’t you see they are valtzing?” or waltzing (I forget which); and then up she got, and her mother and sister, and away they went and roundabouted it till suppertime. Now that I know what it is, I like it of all things, and so does Mrs. H.; though I have broken my shins, and four times overturned Mrs. Hornem’s maid in practising the preliminary steps in a morning. Indeed, so much do I like it, that having a turn for rhyme, tastily displayed in some election ballads and songs, in honour of all the victories (but till lately I have had little practice in that way), I sate down, and with the aid of W[illiam]. F[itgerald]. Esq.¹³ and a few hints from Dr. B[usby].¹⁴ (whose recitations I attend, and am monstrous fond of Master B[usby].’s manner of delivering his father’s late successful D[rury]. L[ane]. Address),¹⁵ I composed the following Hymn, wherewithal to make my sentiments known to the Public, Whom, nevertheless, I heartily despise as well as the Critics.

I am, SIR, yours, &c. &c.

HORACE HORNEM.



Gillray: *le Bon Genre*.

Muse of the many-twinkling feet! – whose charms *
 Are now extended up from legs to arms;
 Terpsichore!¹⁶ – too long misdeemed a maid –
 Reproachful term – bestowed but to unbraid –
 Henceforth in all the bronze of brightness shine, 5
 The least a Vestal of the Virgin Nine.
 Far be from thee and thine the name of Prude;
 Mocked, yet triumphant, sneered at, unsubdued,
 Thy legs must move to conquer as they fly,
 If but thy coats are reasonably high; 10
 Thy breast – if bare enough – requires no shield;
 Dance forth – *sans armour* thou shalt take the field,
 And own, impregnable to *most* assaults,

13: For “hoarse Fitzgerald”, see *EBSR*, line 1.

14: For Busby, see *Paranetical Address by Dr Plagiary*, in *Drury Lane Addresses* on this website.

15: Busby jr. recited his father’s rejected address, and himself wrote an Unalogue for Drury Lane. See *Drury Lane Addresses* also.

16: Terpsichore is the muse of dancing.

Thy not too lawfully begotten “Waltz”.

* “Glance their many-twinkling feet.” GRAY.¹⁷

Hail nimble Nymph! to whom the young hussar, 15
 The whiskered votary of Waltz and War –
 His night devotes, despite of spur and boots,
 A sight unmatched since Orpheus and his brutes:
 Hail spirit-stirring¹⁸ Waltz! – beneath whose banners
 A modern hero fought for modish manners; 20
 On Hounslow’s heath to rival Wellesley’s fame, *
 Cocked – fired – and missed his man – but gained his aim.
 Hail moving Muse! to whom the fair-one’s breast
 Gives all it can, and bids us take the rest.
 Oh! for the flow of Busby, or of Fitz, 25
 The latter’s loyalty, the former’s wits,
 To “energize the object I pursue”,
 And give both Belial and his Dance their due!¹⁹

* To rival Lord W[ellington].’s, or his nephew’s, as the Reader pleases:²⁰ the one gained a pretty woman, whom he deserved by fighting for her – and the other has been fighting in the Peninsula many a long day, “by Shrewsbury clock”,²¹ without gaining anything in *that* country but the title of “the Great Lord”, and “the Lord”, which savours of profanation, having been hitherto applied only to that Being to whom “*Te Deums*” for carnage are the rankest blasphemy. It is to be presumed the General will one day return to his Sabine farm, there

“To tame the genius of the stubborn plain
 Almost as quickly as he conquered Spain!”²²

The Lord Peterborough conquered continents in a summer²³ – we do more – we contrive to conquer and lose them in a shorter season. – If the “Great Lord’s” *Cincinnati*²⁴ progress in agriculture be no speedier than the proportional average of time in Pope’s couplet, it will, according to the farmer’s proverb, be “ploughing with dogs”.

By the bye – one of this illustrious person’s new titles is forgotten – it is however worth remembering – “*Salvador del Mundo!*” – *credite poster!*²⁵ If this be the appellation annexed by the inhabitants of the Peninsula to the name of a man who has not yet saved them – query – are they worth saving even in this world? – for, according to the mildest modifications of any Christian creed, those three words make the odds much against them in the next. “Saviour of the World”, quotha!²⁶ – it were to be wished that he, or any one else, could save a corner of it – his country. Yet this stupid misnomer, although it shows the near connexion between Superstition and Impiety – so far has its use – that it proves there can be little to dread from those Catholics (inquisitorial Catholics too) who can confer such an appellation on a *Protestant*. – I suppose next year he will be entitled the “Virgin Mary” – if so, Lord George

17: The Gray reference is *The Progress of Poetry, A Pindaric Ode* (1768), 1, 3, 11.

18: Echoes *Othello*, III iii 356: *The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife!*

19: For Belial, see I *Samuel*, 2, 12, *Corinthians*, II 2, 16, or *Paradise Lost* II 108-17.

20: In August 1811 William Wellesley-Pole, Wellington’s nephew and an expert waltzer, had had two near-duels, over a lady’s honour, with Lord Kilworth. The second duel was on Hounslow Heath.

21: *Henry IV I*, V iv 148 app. Wellington had by now driven Napoleon’s army out of Spain.

22: Pope, *Imitations of Horace*, Sat. II i, 131-2.

23: The Earl of Peterborough (1658-1735), didn’t actually “conquer Spain” in 1705-6; but he did fight there.

24: Cincinnati (sixth century BC), was a Roman general who upon completing his great victories retired to his farm. Compare *Don Juan IX*, 7, 7-8.

25: “Saviour of the world!” (Spanish); “believe it, posterity!” (Latin).

26: “Quotha!” – “Says he!” Compare *Henry IV II V iii* 16, or *Troilus and Cressida V i* 72. Should be “quoth ’a!”

Gordon himself²⁷ would have nothing to object to such liberal bastards of our Lady of Babylon.²⁸

Imperial Waltz! imported from the Rhine,
 (Famed for the growth of pedigrees and wine) 30
 Long be thine import from all duty free,
 And hock itself be less esteemed than thee;
 In some few qualities alike – for hock
 Improves our cellar – *thou* our living stock.
 The head to Hock belongs – thy subtler art 35
 Intoxicates alone the heedless heart;
 Through the full veins thy gentler poison swims,
 And wakes to Wantonness the willing limbs.

O Germany! how much to thee we owe,
 As heaven-born Pitt can testify below;²⁹ 40
 Ere curs'd Confederation³⁰ made thee France's,
 And only left us thy d—d debts and dances;
 Of subsidies and Hanover bereft,
 We bless thee still – for George the Third is left!
 Of kings the best – and last, not least in worth, 45
 For graciously begetting George the Fourth.
 To Germany, and Highnesses serene,
 Who owe us millions – don't we owe the Queen?³¹
 To Germany, what owe we not besides?
 So oft bestowing Brunswickers³² and brides; 50
 Who paid for vulgar with her royal blood,
 Drawn from the stem of each Teutonic stud;
 Who sent us – so be pardoned all her faults,
 A dozen Dukes – some Kings – a Queen – and "Waltz".

But peace to her – her Emperor and Diet,³³ 55
 Though now transferred to Buonaparte's "fiat";
 Back to my theme – O Muse of Motion! say,
 How first to Albion found thy Waltz her way?

Borne on the breath of Hyperborean gales,³⁴
 From Hamburg's port (while Hamburg yet had *Mails*)³⁵ 60
 Ere yet unlucky Fame – compelled to creep
 To snowy Gottenburgh³⁶ – was chilled to sleep;
 Or, starting from her slumbers, deigned arise,
 Heligoland!³⁷ to stock thy mart with lies;
 While unburnt Moscow yet had news to send, *³⁸ 65

27: Lord George Gordon (1751-93), leader of the anti-Catholic Gordon Riots in 1780.

28: "Our Lady of Babylon" – the Whore of Babylon, that is, the Catholic Church (Revelation 17, 1-2).

29: "Heaven-born" was the epithet Pitt the Elder applied to Clive of India.

30: The Confederation of the Rhine was a league of German states created by Napoleon against England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia.

31: George III's wife was Princess Charlotte-Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

32: Brunswickers were German troops in English pay, used, for example, in the American Revolution.

33: Echoes Hamlet IV ii 22 app.: *Your worm is your only Emperor for Diet.*

34: Hyperborean: from the north. A hyperborean gale ought to be freezing.

35: The Confederation of the Rhine stopped the mail coming to England from Hamburg, and so ...

36: ... what mail reached England from northern Europe came via Gothenburg in Sweden, or ...

37: ... from Heligoland, the islands off north-west Germany.

38: The burning of Moscow had occurred in the winter of 1812. See B.'s note.

Nor owed her fiery Exit to a friend,
 She came – Waltz came – and with her certain sets
 Of true dispatches, and as true Gazettes;
 Then flamed of Austerlitz the blest dispatch,³⁹
 Which *Moniteur* nor *Morning Post* can match;⁴⁰ 70
 And – almost crushed beneath the glorious news,
 Ten plays – and forty tales of Kotzebue's;⁴¹
 One envoy's letters, six composers' airs,
 And loads from Frankfort and from Leipsic fairs;
 Meiner's four volumes upon Womankind,⁴² 75
 Like Lapland witches to ensure a wind;
 Brunck's heaviest tome⁴³ for ballast, and, to back it,
 Of Heyne,⁴⁴ such as should not sink the packet.

* The patriotic arson of our amiable allies cannot be sufficiently commended nor subscribed for. Amongst other details omitted in the various dispatches of our eloquent Ambassador, he did not state (being too much occupied with the exploits of Col. [Chernichef],⁴⁵ in swimming rivers frozen, and galloping over roads impassable) that one entire province perished by famine in the most melancholy manner, as follows: In General Rostopschin's consummate conflagration,⁴⁶ the consumption of tallow and train-oil was so great, that the market was inadequate to the demand; and thus one hundred and thirty-three thousand persons were starved to death by being reduced to wholesome diet! The lamplighters of London have since subscribed a pint (of oil) apiece, and the tallow-chandlers have unanimously voted a quantity of best moulds (four to the pound), to the relief of the Surviving Scythians⁴⁷ – the scarcity will soon, by such exertions, and a proper attention to the *quality* rather than quantity of provision, be totally alleviated. It is said, in return, that the untouched Ukraine has subscribed sixty thousand beeves for a day's meal to our suffering manufacturers.⁴⁸

Fraught with this cargo – and her fairest freight,
 Delightful Waltz, on tiptoe for a mate, 80
 The welcome vessel reached the genial strand,
 And round her flocked the daughters of the land.
 Not decent David, when, before the ark,
 His grand *Pas-seul* excited some remark;⁴⁹
 Not lovelorn Quixote – when his Sancho thought 85
 The knight's *Fandango* friskier than it ought;⁵⁰

39: Napoleon's victory over the Russians and Austrians at Austerlitz in December 1805.

40: Compare *Don Juan* I, 2, 8.

41: August von Kotzebue (1761-1819), German dramatist often accused of corrupting the English theatre. Author of *Lovers Vows*, the play banned in *Mansfield Park*. Assassinated by a left-wing student.

42: Christoph Meiners' *History of the Female Sex* (4 vols. 1808) was in B.'s library.

43: Richard François Philippe Brunck's edition of Sophocles (2 vols. 1786), was in B.'s library.

44: Christian Gottlob Heyne's editions of Homer and Pindar (8 vols 1802, 3 vols 1817), *may* have been in B.'s library.

45: It was Colonel Chernichef who forded several freezing rivers to deliver despatches to Moscow.

46: Moscow was fired at the initiative of General Rostopchin, its military commander.

47: Scythians: Russians.

48: B.'s assumption that everything about Russia, including starvation, is funny, is echoed in *Don Juan* VII-IX.

49: For King David dancing before the Ark, see 2 Samuel 6 14-16: *And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.*

50: In Part II, Ch. 62, Don Quixote makes a spectacle of himself by dancing until he drops: *Night came and they went home, and there was a ladies' dancing party, for Don Antonio's wife, a lady of rank and gaiety, beauty and wit, had invited some friends of hers to come and do honour to her guest and amuse themselves with his strange delusions. Several of them came, they supped sumptuously, the dance began at about ten o'clock. Among the ladies were two of a mischievous and frolicsome turn, and, though perfectly modest, somewhat free in playing tricks for harmless diversion sake. These two were so indefatigable in taking Don Quixote out to dance that they tired him*

Not soft Herodias, when, with winning tread,
 Her nimble feet danced off another's head;⁵¹
 Not Cleopatra on her galley's deck,⁵²
 Displayed so much of *leg*, or more of *neck*, 90
 Than thou, ambrosial Waltz, when first the Moon
 Beheld thee twirling to a Saxon tune!

To you – ye husbands of ten years! whose brows
 Ache with the annual tributes of a spouse;
 To you, of nine years less – who only bear 95
 The budding sprouts of those that you *shall* wear,⁵³
 With added ornaments around them rolled,
 Of native brass, or law-awarded gold;⁵⁴
 To you – ye Matrons, ever on the watch
 To mar a son's, or make a daughter's match; 100
 To you – ye children of – whom chance accords,
Always the Ladies, and *sometimes* their Lords;
 To you – ye single gentlemen! who seek
 Torments for life, or pleasures for a week;
 As Love or Hymen your endeavours guide, 105
 To gain your own, or snatch another's bride:
 To one and all the lovely Stranger came,
 And every Ball-room echoes with her name.

Endearing Waltz – to thy more melting tune
 Bow Irish Jig and ancient Rigadoon;⁵⁵ 110
 Scotch reels avaunt! – and Country dance forego
 Your future claims to each fantastic toe;
 Waltz – Waltz – alone both arms and legs demands,
 Liberal of feet – and lavish of her hands;
 Hands which may freely range in public sight, 115
 Where ne'er before – but – pray “put out the light”.⁵⁶
 Methinks the glare of yonder chandelier
 Shines much too far – or I am much too near;
 And true, though strange – Waltz whispers this remark,
 “My slippery steps are safest in the dark!” 120
 But here the Muse with due decorum halts,

down, not only in body but in spirit. It was a sight to see the figure Don Quixote made, long, lank, lean, and yellow, his garments clinging tight to him, ungainly, and above all anything but agile.

The gay ladies made secret love to him, and he on his part secretly repelled them, but finding himself hard pressed by their blandishments he lifted up his voice and exclaimed, “Fugite, partes adversae! Leave me in peace, unwelcome overtures; avaunt, with your desires, ladies, for she who is queen of mine, the peerless Dulcinea del Toboso, suffers none but hers to lead me captive and subdue me”; and so saying he sat down on the floor in the middle of the room, tired out and broken down by all this exertion in the dance.

Don Antonio directed him to be taken up bodily and carried to bed, and the first that laid hold of him was Sancho, saying as he did so, “In an evil hour you took to dancing, master mine; do you fancy all mighty men of valour are dancers, and all knights-errant given to capering? If you do, I can tell you you are mistaken; there's many a man would rather undertake to kill a giant than cut a caper. If it had been the shoe-fling you were at I could take your place, for I can do the shoe-fling like a gerfalcon; but I'm no good at dancing.”

With these and other observations Sancho set the whole ball-room laughing, and then put his master to bed, covering him up well so that he might sweat out any chill caught after his dancing. – tr. John Ormsby.

51: It was Salome, Herodias' daughter, who “danced off the head” of John the Baptist: see Matthew 14, 6.

52: Cleopatra did not dance on her barge.

53: Refers to the cuckold's horns.

54: Cuckolds are rewarded by their cuckolders with political places, honours, and money.

55: A rigadon was a dance for couples, popular at the eighteenth-century French court.

56: Here, a hushed request for discreet silence. In fact, a quotation from *Othello*, V ii 7.

And lends her longest petticoat to “Waltz”.

Observant Travellers! of every time,
 Ye Quartos! published upon every clime;
 O say, shall dull *Romaika*'s heavy round, 125
Fandango's wriggle, or *Bolero*'s bound;⁵⁷
 Can Ægypt's *Almas* – tantalizing groupe – *
 Columbia's caperers to the warlike whoop –
 Can aught from cold Kamschatka to Cape Horn,⁵⁸
 With Waltz compare, or after Waltz be borne? 130
 Ah no! from Morier's pages down to Galt's,⁵⁹
 Each tourist pens a paragraph for “Waltz”.

* Dancing girls – who do for hire what Waltz doth gratis.

Shades of those Belles, whose reign began of yore,
 With George the Third's – and ended long before;
 Though in your daughters' daughters yet you thrive, 135
 Burst from your lead, and be yourselves alive!
 Back to the Ball-room speed your speared host,
 Fools' Paradise is dull to that you lost;
 No treacherous powder bids Conjecture quake,
 No stiff-starched stays make meddling fingers ache; 140
 (Transferred to those ambiguous things that ape
 Goats in their visage, women in their shape); *
 No damsel faints when rather closely pressed
 But more caressing seems when most caressed;
 Superfluous Hartshorn, and reviving Salts, 145
 Both banished by the sovereign cordial “Waltz”.

* It cannot be complained now, as in the Lady Baussiere's time, of the “*Sieur de la Croix*”,⁶⁰ that there be “no whiskers”; but how far these are indications of valour in the field, or elsewhere, may *still* be questionable. Much may be and hath been avouched on both sides. In the olden time philosophers had whiskers, and soldiers none – Scipio himself was shaven – Hannibal thought his one eye handsome enough without a beard; but Adrian, the Emperor, wore a beard (having warts on his chin, which neither the Empress Sabina, nor even the Courtiers, could abide) – Turenne had whiskers, Marlborough none – Buonaparte is unwhiskered, the R[egent] whiskered,⁶¹ “*argal*” greatness of mind and whiskers may or may not go together; but certainly the different occurrences, since the growth of the last-mentioned, go further in behalf of whiskers than the anathema of Anselm did *against* long hair in the reign of Henry I.⁶²

57: A *Romaika* is a Greek dance (“the stupid *Romaika*, the dull roundabout of the Greeks” – CHP II 38 5, B.'s n); a *Fandango* is an ancient flamenco dance with accelerating tempo, and a *Bolero* is a slow Spanish dance from the late eighteenth century.

58: Ægypt ... Columbia ... Kamchatka: B.'s imagined native dances come from further and further away.

59: B. had known James Philip Morier, who was British Resident and Consul-General in Albania. He had been Lord Elgin's private secretary. The book is *Memoir of a campaign with the Ottoman army in Egypt, from February to July 1800* (1801). He had also known John Galt, the Scots writer and traveller, whose book is *Voyages and travels, in the years 1809, 1810, and 1811* (1812).

60: “The excellency of the figure and mien of the young *Sieur de Croix*, was at that time beginning to draw the attention of the maids of honour towards the terras before the palace gate, where the guard was mounted. The *Lady de Baussiere* fell deeply in love with him, – *La Battarelle* did the same” – Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, V i.

61: Scipio ... Hannibal ... Adrian, the Emperor ... Turenne ... Marlborough: all clean-shaven generals.

62: St Anselm (1033-1109), Archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of Henry I, tried without success to excommunicate all men with long hair; he probably favoured tonsures.

Formerly *red* was a favourite colour. See Lodowick Barrey's comedy of *Ram Alley*, 1611, Act I. Sc. 1.

Taffeta: Now for a wager – What coloured beard comes next by the window?

Adriana: A black man's, I think.

Taffeta: I think not so: I think a *red*, for that is most in fashion.

There is “nothing new under the sun”; but *red*, then a *favourite*, subsided into a *favourite's* colour.⁶³

Seductive Waltz! though on thy native shore
E'en Werter's self proclaimed thee half a w—re;⁶⁴
Werter – to decent vice though much inclined,
Yet warm not wanton, dazzled but not blind; 150
Though gentle Genlis, in her strife with Stael,⁶⁵
Would e'en proscribe thee from a Paris ball;
Thee Fashion hails – from Countesses to Queans,
And maids and valets waltz behind the scenes;
Wide and more wide thy witching circle spreads, 155
And turns – if nothing else – at least our *heads*;
With thee e'en clumsy cits attempt to bounce,
And cockneys practice what they can't pronounce.
Gods! how the glorious theme my strain exalts,
And Rhyme finds partner Rhyme in praise of “Waltz”. 160

Blest was the time Waltz chose for her *debut!*
The Court, the R[egen]t, like herself – were new; *
New face for friends, for foes some new rewards,
New ornaments for black – and royal Guards;
New laws to hang the rogues that roared for bread;⁶⁶ 165
New coins (most new) to follow those that fled; †
New victories – nor can we prize them less,
Though Jenky wonders at his own success;⁶⁷
New wars, because the old succeed so well,
That most survivors envy those who fell; 170
New mistresses – no – old – and yet 'tis true,
Though they be *old*, the *thing* is something new;
Each new, quite new – (except some ancient tricks) ‡
New white-sticks, gold-sticks, broom-sticks, *all new sticks!*⁶⁸
With vests or ribands decked alike in hue, 175
New troopers strut, new turncoats blush in blue;
So saith the Muse – my M[oira], what say you?⁶⁹

63: This reference to red whiskers, taken with the previous part of the note, probably constitutes a slur against the red-whiskered Earl of Yarmouth (1777-1842), friend of Gentleman John Jackson, inhabitant of 13 Piccadilly Terrace before B. moved in, and a famous rake.

64: “30th May. / ... I never danced with so much ease: I seemed to be no longer a mortal. To hold the most amiable of beings in my arms, and to dart round with her like lightning, while every other object vanished before my eyes! – William, to say the truth, I then swore to myself, that the girl whom I loved and expected to marry should never dance a *waltz* except with me, though my head were at stake for it: you understand me.” (*The Sorrows of Werter*, translated from the German of Baron Goëthe, by William Render, D.D., 1801, pp.61-2).

65: The novelist, comtesse Stéphanie-Félicité de Genlis (1746-1830), believed women should be self-effacing and not cultivate a public image. In *Madame de Staël* (1766-1817), she found a woman whose life and writings proclaimed the opposite.

66: Refers to the proposed law for hanging framebreakers, against which B. had spoken on February 27th 1812.

67: Jenky: Robert Banks Jenkinson, Earl of Liverpool (1770-1828), the new Prime Minister.

68: The first two phrases refer to positions in the royal household; *White* [i.e., silver] *Stick* is Commander of the Household Cavalry, *Gold Stick* is the sovereign's personal bodyguard, *broom-sticks* are witches (with a glance at cleaning-out), and *new sticks* are a new set of stiff, boring people.

69: B. originally intended a reference to Lord Moira (1754-1826), who had failed to form a government in 1812.

* An anachronism – Waltz, and the battle of Austerlitz, are before said to have opened the ball together – the Bard means (if he means any thing), Waltz was not so much in vogue till the R[egen]t attained the acme of his popularity. Waltz, the comet, Whiskers, and the new Government, illuminated heaven and earth, in all their glory, much about the same time: of these the Comet only has disappeared; the other three continue to astonish us still.⁷⁰ PRINTER’S DEVIL.⁷¹

† Amongst others a new Ninepence – a creditable coin now forthcoming, worth a pound, in paper, at the fairest calculation.⁷²

‡ “Oh that *right* should thus overcome *might*!”

Who does not remember the “delicate Investigation” in the “*Merry Wives of Windsor*”?

Ford: Pray you come near: if I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me; then let me be your jest; I deserve it. – How now? whither bear you this?

Mrs. Ford: What have you to do whither they bear it? – you were best meddle with buckwashing.⁷³

§ The gentle, or ferocious Reader, may fill up the blank as he pleases – there are several dissyllabic names at his service (being already in the (R[egen]t’s): it would not be fair to back any peculiar initial against the alphabet, as every month will add to the list now entered for the sweepstakes – a distinguished consonant is said to be the favourite, much against the wishes of the *knowing ones*.

Such was the time when Waltz might best maintain
Her new preferment in this novel reign;
Such was the time, nor ever yet was such, 180
Hoops are *no more*, and petticoats *not much*;
Morals and Minuets, Virtue and her stays,
And tell-tale Powder – all have had their days.

The Ball begins – the honours of the house
First duly done by daughter or by spouse, 185
Some Potentate – or royal, or serene,
With K[en]t’s gay grace, or sapient G[louce]st[er]’s mien,⁷⁴
Leads forth the ready dame, whose rising flush
Might once have been mistaken for a blush.
From where the garb just leaves the bosom free, 190
That spot where hearts were once supposed to be; *
Round all the confines of the yielded waist,
The strangest hand may wander undisplaced;
The lady’s in return may grasp as much
As princely paunches offer to her touch. 195
Pleased round the chalky floor how well they trip,
One hand reposing on the royal hip;
The other to the shoulder no less royal
Ascending with affection truly loyal:
Thus front to front the partners move or stand, 200
The foot may rest, but none withdraw the hand;

70: Liverpool’s administration, the new fashion for whiskers, and the famous comet, all appeared first in 1812 (for the comet, see *War and Peace*, first part, last paragraph). Only the comet faded away.

71: B. uses the PRINTER’S DEVIL joke again at *Beppo*, stanza following 46.

72: A ninepenny coin was planned, but never issued.

73: *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, III iii 132-7. This scene is subtext for the second half of *Don Juan I*.

74: Refers to the Dukes of Kent and Gloucester, the first another rake, the second a philanthropist.

And all in turn may follow in their rank,
 The Earl of – Asterisk – and Lady – Blank;
 Sir – Such a one⁷⁵ – with those of Fashion’s host,
 For whose blest surnames – vide *Morning Post*; 205
 (Or if for that impartial print too late,
 Search Doctors’ Commons six months from my date) –⁷⁶
 Thus all and each, in movement swift or slow,
 The genial contact gently undergo;
 Till some might marvel, with the modest Turk, 210
 If “nothing follows all this palming work”? †
 True, honest Mirza – you may trust my rhyme,
 Something does follow at a fitter time;
 The breast thus publicly resigned to man,
 In private may resist him – if it can. 215

* “We have changed all that,” says the Mock Doctor⁷⁷ – ’tis all gone – Asmodeus knows where.⁷⁸ After all, it is of no great importance how women’s hearts are disposed of; they have Nature’s privilege to distribute them as absurdly as possible. But there are also some men with hearts so thoroughly bad, as to remind us of those phenomena often mentioned in natural history; – viz. a mass of solid stone – only to be opened by force – and when divided you discover a *toad* in the centre, lively, and with the reputation of being venomous.

† In Turkey a pertinent – here an impertinent and superfluous question – literally put, as in the text, by a Persian to Morier, on seeing a Waltz in Pera. – *Vide Morier’s Travels, &c.*⁷⁹

O ye! who loved our Grandmothers of yore,
 F[i]tz[pa]t[ric]k, Sh[e]r[i]d[a]n, and many more!⁸⁰
 And thou, my Prince! whose sovereign taste and will
 It is to love the lovely beldames still;
 Thou Ghost of Queensbury!⁸¹ whose judging Sprite 220
 Satan may spare to peep a single night,
 Pronounce – if ever in your days of bliss
 Asmodeus struck so bright a stroke as this;
 To teach the young ideas how to rise,
 Flush in the cheek and languish in the eyes; 225
 Rush to the heart, and lighten through the frame,
 With half-told wish, and ill-dissembled flame;
 For prurient nature still will storm the breast –
Who, tempted thus, can answer for the rest?

But ye – who never felt a single thought 230
 For what our Morals are to be, or ought;
 Who wisely wish the charms you view to reap,
 Say – would you make those beauties quite so cheap?

75: Echoes *Hamlet*, V i 83: *This might be my Lord Such-a-One ...*

76: Doctors Commons was where divorce petitions were filed. See *Don Juan* I, 36, 8.

77: « Nous avons changé tout cela » – Molière, *Le Médecin Malgré Lui*, Act II. Used again by B. in the Preface to *Sardanapalus*.

78: For the devil Asmodeus, see *Granta A Medley*, 1-2; *TVOJ* 86, 3 *et seq.*, and *Def. Tra.* II iii 182. He was “patron devil” of homosexuals and gamblers.

79: For J.P.Morier, see above, 131n.

80: The politician Richard Fitzpatrick (1747-1813) and the politician and dramatist Richard Brindsley Sheridan (1751-1816), are, for “Hornem” / Byron, two great sexual stylists of the last generation who would still have benefited from knowing how to waltz.

81: The fourth Duke of Queensberry (1724-1810) remained a libertine until his old age. But he never learned to waltz either.

Hot from the hands promiscuously applied,
 Round the slight waist, or down the glowing side; 235
 Where were the rapture then to clasp the form,
 From this lewd grasp, and lawless contact warm?
 At once Love's most endearing thought resign,
 To press the hand so pressed by none but thine;
 To gaze upon that eye which never met 240
 Another's ardent look without regret;
 Approach the lip, which all, without restraint,
 Come near enough – if not to touch – to taint;
 If such thou lovest – love her then no more,
 Or give – like her – caresses to a score; 245
 Her Mind with these is gone, and with it go
 The little left behind it to bestow.

Voluptuous Waltz! and dare I thus blaspheme?
 Thy bard forgot thy praises were his theme.
 Terpsichore, forgive! – at every Ball, 250
 My wife *now* waltzes – and my daughters *shall*;
 My son (or stop – 'tis needless to enquire –
 These little accidents should ne'er transpire;
 Some ages hence our genealogic tree
 Will wear as green a bough for him as me) 255
 Waltzing shall rear, to make our name amends,
 Grandsons for me – in heirs to all his friends.