Several enigmas huddle about this, the most amiable section of the Byron / Murray correspondence. How far is Byron’s decision to write his doomed Memoirs a result of Murray’s prompting (see Murray, January 22nd 1817)? How far is the writing of Beppo a result of hints by Murray (see, again, Murray, January 22nd, and April 8th 1817)? At what point if any does Byron realise that Murray plans publication of his letters (see suspicions, June 7th 1819)? At what point does Byron realise that Murray reads them aloud to his Utican Senate?

Murray employs diplomatic dispatches for the expedition of his letters to Byron (see March 15th, 1817, and February 20th 1818), and on March 20th 1817 he invites Byron to reciprocate by the same means. Is this a trap? All diplomatic letters, and many others from abroad, were
opened by the government:¹ is this why Byron, distrustful of his publisher’s government connections, seems not to accept Murray’s invitation? The end of his letters of April 9th and 14th (ii) 1817 would imply that.

On January 30th 1821 Murray reveals that all Byron’s letters to him are opened anyway. Byron’s letter of October 29th 1819 is the first which starts “Dear Murray” as opposed to “Dear Sir”.

1816: After a separation agreement has been signed, Byron leaves England on April 25th. He never returns. Douglas Kinnaird acts as his literary agent. From now on, Byron is happy to receive large fees for his poetry. Accompanied by Dr Polidori, he travels via Brussels and the field of Waterloo down the Rhine valley to Geneva in Switzerland. He goes in a replica of Napoleon’s travelling coach – for which he never pays. In Geneva he meets Shelley, Mary Godwin, and Claire Claremont, who is already pregnant by him. He writes Childe Harold III, The Prisoner of Chillon, Darkness, and The Dream. He begins Manfred. Again he meets Madame de Staël. On August 26th, Hobhouse arrives in Geneva with Scrope Davies. Two days later, Shelley, Mary Godwin, and Claire Claremont leave. In September Byron and Hobhouse go on an Alpine tour, then, on October 5th, they cross the Alps and enter Italy.

May 9th 1816: Caroline Lamb’s Glenarvon is published.
April 26th 1816: Byron starts Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage III; finishes it June 28th.
June 27th -29th 1816: Byron drafts The Prisoner of Chillon.

Byron to John Murray, from Ouchy, June 27th 1816:
(Source: NLS Ms.43488; LJ III 333-7; QI 339-40; BLJ V 81-2)

Byron’s first letter to Murray from abroad. The paper on which it is written is identical to Sheet 1 of the first draft of The Prisoner of Chillon (Yale, Beinecke): blue, laid, 18.9 x 23.1 cm. The Prisoner has just been roughed-out.

Ouchy n°. Lausanne –
June 27th. 1816. –

Dear Sir –

I am thus far (kept by stress of weather) on my way back to Diodati (near Geneva) from a voyage in my boat round the lake – & I enclose you a <leaf> {sprig} of Gibbon’s Acacia & <a flower> {some rose leaves} from his garden – <both of> which <&> {with} part of his house I have just seen – you will find honourable mention in his life made of this “Acacia” when he walked out on the night of concluding his history. – The garden – & summerhouse where he composed are neglected – & the last utterly decayed – but they still show it as his “Cabinet” & seem perfectly aware of his memory. – – –

1:2
My route – through Flanders – & by the Rhine to Switzerland <has been> {was} all I expected & more.

² I² have traversed all Rousseau’s ground – with the Heloise before me – & am struck to a degree with the force & accuracy of his descriptions – & the beauty of their reality: – Meillerie – Clarens – & Vevey – & the Chateau de Chillon are places of which <I had no> I shall say little – because all I could say must fall short of the impressions they stamp. – – –
Three days ago – we were most nearly wrecked in a Squall off Meillerie – & driven {to} <a>shore – – I ran no risk being so near <bei> the rocks and a good swimmer – but our party were wet – & incommoded a good deal: – {the wind was strong enough to blow down some trees as we found at landing} – however all is righted & right – & we are thus far on return. – –
D². Polidori is not here³ – – but at Diodati –

1:3
left behind in hospital with a sprained ancle acquired in tumbling from a wall – he can’t jump. – – – –

¹: See William St. Clair, That Greece Might Still be Free, Chapter 14.
²: Should be “Shelley and I”, but B. does not want Mu. to know that.
³: Having said that Polidori is not here, B. does not say who is. He may or may not know that Murray has asked Polidori to keep a diary, with a view to publication.
I shall be glad to hear you are well – & have received for me certain helms & swords sent from Waterloo – which I rode over with pain & pleasure. – – – –

I have finished a third Canto of Childe Harold (consisting of one hundred & seventeen stanzas) (¢<cand>¢ longer than either of the two former, – & in some parts – it may be – better – but of course on that I cannot determine, – I shall send it by the first safe=[looking] opportunity.

ever very truly yours.

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, July 11th 1816
(Source: text from Jarndyce Catalogue, winter 2003-4; LJM 167)

Briefly, Murray answers the previous item.

London July 11th,
1816

My Lord

Should no earlier opportunity have occurred for the safe Conveyance of the important MSS which your Lordship has allowed me, (most anxiously) to look for, I should feel gratified in receiving it by the hands of my friend Mr Brown one of the principal Merchants in this City, and who has most obligingly undertaken, to take charge of it.

I venture also to present Mr Brown to the favour of your Lordships attentions which will add much to the kindness which has already rendered me My Lord

your Lordships
Obliged & faithful Servant
John Murray

To
The R'H Hon
Lord Byron

July 17th 1816: Byron writes the Monody on Sheridan.

Byron to John Murray, from Diodati, July 22nd 1816:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; BLJ V 84-5)

July 22d. 1816 –

Dear Sir –

I wrote to you a few weeks ago – and D'. P. received your letter – but y°. packet has not made its appearance nor y°. epistle {of} which you gave notice therein. – I enclose you an advertisement – which was copied by D'. P – & which appears to be about the most impudent imposition that ever issued from Grub Street. – I need hardly say that I know nothing of all this trash – {nor} whence it may spring – “Odes to S'. Helena – Farewells to England – &c. &c. – and if it can be disavowed – or is worth disavowing you have full authority to do so. – I never wrote nor conceived a line of any thing of the kind – any more than of two

1:2

other things with which I was saddled – something about “Gaul” and another about “M°. La Valette” – and as to the “Lily of France” I should as soon think of celebrating a turnip. – – – – –

On the “morning of my Daughter’s birth” I had other things to think of than verses – and should never have dreamed of such an invention – till M°. Johnston and his pamphlet’s advertisement broke in upon me with a new light on the Crafts & subtilties of the Demon of printing – or rather publishing. – – – –

I did hope that some succeeding lie would have <offered> {superseded} the thousand and one which were accumulated during last winter – I can forgive whatever may be said of or against me – but not what they make me say or sing for myself – it is enough to answer for what I have written – but it were too much

1:3
I have heard – <now do> {and} I know but one thing which a woman can say to the purpose on such occasions – and that she might as well {for her own sake} keep to herself – which by the way they very rarely can – that old reproach against their admirers of “kiss and tell” bad as it is – is surely somewhat less than ___ and publish. –

I ought to be ashamed of the Egotism of this letter – it is not my fault altogether – and I shall be but too happy to drop the subject when others will allow me. – I am in tolerable plight – and in my last letters told you what I had done in the way of all rhyme – I trust that you prosper – and that your authors are in good condition – I should suppose your Stud has received some increase – by what I hear – Bertram must be a good horse – does he run next meeting? and does the Quarterly cover still at so much the mare and the groom? I hope you will beat the Row – y’. alway & [scrawl]


Byron to John Murray, from Diodati, August 28th 1816:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; BLJ V 90-1)

Having told Shelley that he can correct the proofs of CHP III, Byron allows Murray the choice of Shelley, or Gifford, or Moore.

Diodati. – August 28th.
1816

Dear Sir –

The Manuscript (containing the third Canto of Childe Harold – the Castle of Chillon &c. &c.)\textsuperscript{8} is consigned to the care of my friend M’. Shelley – who will deliver this letter along with it. – M’. Gifford will perhaps be kind enough to read it over; – I know not well to whom to consign the correction of the proofs – nor indeed who would be \textless{} good natured enough to overlook it in its progress – as I feel very anxious that it should be published with as few errata as possible. – – Perhaps – my friend M’. Moore (if in town) would do this. – – If not – M’. S. will take it upon himself,\textsuperscript{9} and in any case – he is authorized to act for me \textless{}as to\textgreater{} \{in\} treating with you &c. &c. on this subject. – – – – – – –

You talked of a letter – which was to be sent by you to me – but I have received none – before – or since – one by M’. Browne. – As that Gentleman returned by Brussels – which is the longest route – I declined troubling him with the care of this packet. – – –

1:3

Believe me very truly yours.

Byron

\textsuperscript{4}: Biblical: Job 31: 35.
\textsuperscript{5}: Shakespeare, Hamlet III ii 147.
\textsuperscript{6}: The Corsair, penultimate line.
\textsuperscript{7}: Charles Maturin’s tragedy.
\textsuperscript{8}: This manuscript is Claire Clairmont’s fair copy (NLS 43326). Mary Godwin’s and B.’s own fair copies were taken home by Davies, and lost until 1976.
\textsuperscript{9}: In the event Mu. will have nothing to do with Sh., and Gifford corrects the CHP III proofs.
P.S. –

There is in the volume – an epistle to Mrs. Leigh – on which I should wish her to have her opinion consulted – as before the publication – if she objects – of course – omit it. –

I have been very glad to hear you are well – & well doing – and that you stopped Master Cawthorne in his foolish attempts to republish the E. B. & S. R. –

I wish you all good things. – – – –

[1:4 is blank.]

September 9th 1816: the Monody on Sheridan published.

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, September 12th 1816:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434895; Smiles I 365-7; LJM 172-4)

My most particular compliments to Mr. Hobhouse – & to Mr. Davies & Dr. Polidori

My Lord

I have rarely addressed you with more pleasure than upon the present occasion – I was thrilled with delight yesterday by the announcement of Mr. Shelley with the MSS of Childe Harold – I had no sooner got the quiet possession of it, than trembling with auspicious hope about it, I carried it direct to Mr. Gifford, who has been exceedingly ill with a Jaundice, unable to write or do anything, he was much pleased by my attention & I promised to call the next day – but in the evening of yesterday I received from him, most unexpectedly the note which I inclose – it speaks volumes – I called upon him today – he said that he was unable to leave off last night as his note intimated and that he had sat up until he had finished every line of the Canto – it had actually agitated him into a fever and he was exceedingly worse when I called – he had persisted this morning in finishing the Volume and he pronounced himself to be infinitely more delighted than when he first wrote to me – He says that what you have heretofore published is nothing to this effort – he says also, besides its being the most splendid original & interesting – it is the most finished of your writings and he has undertaken to correct the press & to point it, with a glow of pleasure that

I never saw equalled – he says there are not three words in the whole, of which he would recommend the alteration – never since my intimacy with Mr. Gifford did I see him so heartily pleased or give one fiftieth part of his commendation with one thousandth part of the warmth. Harold is exquisite – but he thinks the Tale no less so – and he speaks in ecstasy of the Dream – the whole volume beams with Genius – With such opinions I would beg the favour of your Lordship to write to me immediately empowering me to give the entire exclusive reading of the Proofs to Mr. Gifford alone and he will attend to it with all his mind – I am sure he loves you in his heart – & when he called upon me some time ago, & I told him that your Lordship was gone he instantly exclaimed in a full room – “Well he has not left his equal behind him that I will say” – perhaps you will write – a line for him. Now for this said Volume I propose to pay into your Lordships Banker the sum of Fifteen Guineas and should this proposal happen to be honoured by your Lordships approbation I would venture to solicit as a mark of your favour, that you would present to me the Original MSS with every scrap belonging to it. Your Lordship will let me know if 2, 3 & 4 Mos Bills would be inconvenient & I can easily manage it, in any Other way. This will be a glorious triumph for you upon my Soul – and set me forward in such force that I shall keep possession of the field during the

10: That is, no sooner had he got the embarrassing Shelley off the premises …
11: PoC.
whole campaign – I shall place it in the hands of the printer immediately, if any addition, correction or emendation of any kind occur, do me the favour to dash it off immediately – Respecting the Monody I extract from a Letter which I received this morning from Sir J. Mackintosh:

“I presume that I have to thank you for a Copy of ‘the Monody’ on Sheridan” received this morning – I wish it had been accompanied by the additional favour of mentioning the name of the writer, at which I can only guess & which it is difficult to read the Poem with [Ms tear: “out”] desiring to know.”

Generally speaking it is not I think popular, and spoken of rather for fine passages than as a whole – how could you give so trite an image as in the last two lines[12] – Gifford does not like it – Frere does – a propos of Mr Frere – he came to me while at breakfast this morning and <with> between some Stanzas wch he was repeating to me of a truly Original Poem of his own[13] – <sa> he said carelessly – by the way about half an hour ago I was so silly (taking an immense pinch of Snuff & priming his nostrils well with it) – as to get Married!!! – perfectly true – he set out for Hastings about an hour after he left me – and upon my conscience I very believe that, if I had had your MSS to have put into his hands – as sure as fate he would have sat with me reading it all the morning & totally forgotten his late engagement.

[1:4, below address:] You have heard that Brougham has got into a Crim Con scrape with the wife of G.L.[14] – the trial is to come on – I saw Lord Holland today looking very well – I wish I could send you Gifford’s Ben Jonson it is full of fun & interest & allowed on all hands to be most ably done, and would I am sure amuse you – I have very many new important & interesting works of all kinds in the Press, wch I should be happy to know any means of sending – My Review is improving in sale beyond my most sanguine expectations [above address:] I now sell nearly 9,000 even Perry says the Edinb Rev is going to the Devil. I was with Mrs Leigh today who is very well, she leaves town on Saturday – her eldest Daughter – I fancy – is a most engaging girl – but yours, my Lord, is unspeakably interesting & promising & I am happy to add that Lady B is looking well. God bless you my best wishes & feelings are always with you & I sincerely wish that your happiness may be as unbounded as your Genius which has rendered me so much My Lord your obliged Servant,

J.M.

John Murray to Byron, from 50 Albemarle Street, London, September 20th 1816:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434895; Smiles I 367; LJM 176-7)
[The R’ Honble / Lord Byron / Diodati / Genéve]
From this letter on, Byron will be aware that Murray is likely to publish his letters.

London Sep‘ 20 – 1816.
Friday

My Lord

As soon as I had read the third Canto <myself> of Childe Harold myself I had no hesitation in telling M’ Kinnaird that I should make my Offer Fifteen Hundred Guineas – but he has called today to say that Two Thousand are expected by your Lordships friends – I told him that hitherto I believed that no one had impugned my estimations, and that with regard to your Lordship I had no other feeling that a desire to give all that was possible <&> – on the present occasion I thought I had anticipated any notions and that I suspected it be rather from my own data than from fair estimation that this extra demand was put upon me. The Poem however is so much beyond anything in Modern days that I may be out in my Calculation – it requires an ethereal mind, like its Authors to cope with it – he was so obliging as to wish the addition 500£ eventual but I have preferred to settle at once at the £2100 – and now the Lord (not you)

R’ Hon Lord Byron

1:2

12: Sighing that Nature formed but one such man, / And broke the die – in moulding Sheridan!
13: Perhaps Whistlecraft, which will in 1817 serve as model for Beppo.
14: George Lamb.
have Mercy upon me – It appears to me that you have completely distanced every Modern Poet & when I read you I wander in the regions of Spencer Milton or Shakespear – it really a Triumph over the whole world which I do from my heart glory in, & congratulate you upon. Remember I do stipulate for All the original MSS Original, Copies or Scraps.

I am thinking more seriously than ever of publishing a Monthly Literary Journal and am promised the Contributions of the greatest Characters here & if I succeed I will venture to solicit the favour of your powerful Assistance in the shape of Letters, Essays, Characters Facts Travels Epigrams & other, to you, small Shot, & to entreat the favour of your influence among your friends – every One can communicate something, fact – or perhaps some curious Letter &c.

I heartily wish your Lordship joy of this production of your intellect and

1:3

with best compliments I remain

My Lord

your faithful Servant

John Murray

When I know exactly where you are I will send the Proofs to you – I have already set up Canto 3 – wch is this day gone to Mr. G. whose second reading only confirms the first.

I offer my best comps to Mr' Hobhouse & Mr' Davies – the latter of whom I look for every day

[Address only on 1:4.]

Byron to John Murray, from Diodati, September 29th 1816:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; LJ III 365-6; BLJ V 105-6)

Byron answers Murray’s of September 12th (and others now lost). He does not mention Manfred.

Diodati. Sept. 29th. 1816 –

My Dear Sir –

I am very much flattered by Mr. Gifford’s good opinion of the M.S.S. – & shall be still more so if it answers your expectations – & justifies his kindness. – I liked it myself – – but that must go for nothing – the feelings with which much of it was written need not be envied me. – With regard {to} the price – I fixed none but left it to Mr. Kinnaird – & Mr. Shelley & yourself to arrange – of course they would do their best – and as to

1:2

yourself – I know you would make no difficulties. – But I agree with Mr. K. perfectly that the concluding five hundred should be only conditional – and for my own sake I wish it to be added only in case of your selling a certain number – that number to be fixed by yourself – I hope this is fair – in every thing of this kind – there must be risk – and till that be past in one way or the other – I would not willingly add to it – particularly in times like the present – and pray always recollect that nothing could

1:3

mortify me more – no failure on my own part – than having made you lose by any purchase from me. –

—

The Monody was written by request of Mr. K. for the theatre – I did as well as I could – but where I have not my choice – I pretend to answer for nothing. – Mr. H. & myself are just returned from a journey of lakes & mountains – we have been to the Grindenwald – & the Jungfrau – & stood on the summit of {the} Wengeren Alp – and seen torrents of nine hundred feet in fall – & Glaciers of all dimensions – we have heard Shep=

1:4

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15: Mu.’s first move in persuading B. to write about himself.
hearts’ pipes – and Avalanches and looked on the Clouds foaming up from the valleys below us like the spray of the ocean of hell. – – Chamouni and that which it inherits we saw a month ago – but {though M’ Blanc is higher} it is not equal in wildness to the Jungfrau – the Eiglers – the Shreckhorn – & the Rose Glacier. – – – –

We set off for Italy next week – the road is within this month infested with Bandits – but we must take our chance & such precautions as are requisite.

ever y’s. very truly

Byron

P.S.
My best remembrances to M’. G. – pray say all that can be said from me to him. – – –

2:1 [a scrap, 11 x 18.2cm.]

I am sorry that M’. M. did not like Phillips picture – I thought it was reckoned a good one – if he <said> [had] made the speech on the original – perhaps he would have been more readily forgiven by the proprietor & the painter of the portrait. – Do not forget to consult M’ Leigh on the lines to her – they must not be published without her full consent & approbation. – – –

[2:2 blank.]  

Byron to John Murray, from Diodati, September 30th 1816: (Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; LJ III 367-9; BLJ II 107-9)

Writing the following day, Byron still does not mention Manfred.

My dear Sir –

I answered your obliging letters yesterday. Today the Monody arrived – with it’s title page – which is I presume a separate publication. – “The request of a Friend” – “Obliged by Hunger and request of friends”

I will request you to expunge that same – unless you please to add “by a person of quality – or of wit and honour about town” – merely say – written to be spoken at D.L. – Tomorrow I dine at Coppet – – – Saturday I strike tents for Italy – this evening on the lake in my boat with M’. Hobhouse – the

1:2

pole which [sustains] the mainsail slipped in tacking & struck me so violently on one of my legs (the worst luckily) as to make me do a foolish thing – viz. to faint – a downright swoon – the thing must have jarred some nerve or other – for the bone is not injured – & hardly painful (it is six hours since) and cost M’. H some apprehension and much sprinkling of water to recover me; – the sensation was a very odd one – I never had but two such before – one from a <cut> on the head {from a stone} several years ago – and once (long ago also) in a great wreck of snow – a sort of gray giddiness first – {then nothingness} – and a total loss of memory on beginning to recover – the last part is not disagreeable – if one did not find it again. – – –

1:3

You want the original M.S.S – M. Davies has the first fair copy in my own hand – & I have the rough composition here – and will send or save it for you since you wish it. –

With regard to your new literary project – if any thing falls in the way which will – to the best of my judgement – suit you – I will send you what I can. – At present I must lay by a little – having pretty well exhausted myself in what I have sent you. – Italy or Dalmatia & another summer may or may not set me off again – I have no plans – & am nearly as indifferent what <I> may come – as where I go. I shall take Felicia Hemans’’ “restoration &” with me – it is a good poem – very. – – –

16: All these details are in the first act of Manfred, which B. has yet to mention to anyone.
17: Shakespeare, The Tempest, IV i.
18: Mu. does not mention the Philips picture in any surviving letter since B. left.
19: Pope, Epistle to Arbuthnot, 1.44.
20: B. does not say that Mary Godwin and Claire Clairmont have both made copies of CHP III. Mary’s is in the Sterling Library; Claire’s is, with B.’s draft, in the NLS.
21: Felicia Hemans, The Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy.
Pray repeat my best thanks & remembrances to M’ Gifford for all his trouble & good nature towards me.

1:4

Do not fancy me laid up from the beginning of this <epi> scrawl – I tell you the accident for want of better to say, – but it is over – and I am only wondering what the deuce was the matter with me – – I have lately been all over the Bernese Alps – & their lakes – I think many of the scenes – (some of which were not usually frequented by the English –) finer than Chamouni – which I visited some time before. – – – I have been to Clarens again – & crossed the mountains behind it – of this tour I kept a short journal for M’s. Leigh which I sent yesterday in three letters – <but> it is not at all for perusal – <&> but if you like to hear about the <picturesque> {romantic} part – she will I dare say show you what touches upon the <places> rocks &. – but it has not – nor can have anything to do with publication – – –

2:1 [a scrap, 8.5 x 21cm.]

“Christabel” – I won’t have you sneer at Christabel22 – it is a fine wild poem. – M’. H tells me you employed the power of Attorney to some purpose against Cawthorn; – he deserved no better – & had fair notice – I regret having made anyone suffer – but it was his own choice. Keep a watch over him still. – – – –
M’ de Stael wishes to see the Antiquary & I am going to take it to her tomorrow; – she has made Coppet <I> as agreeable as society and talent can make any place on earth

yrs ever [swirl signature]

[2:2 blank.]

After September 1816: Poems 1816 published (Stanzas to Augusta, When We Two Parted, Napoleon’s Farewell, From the French, On the Star of the Legion of Honour).

Byron to John Murray, from Diodati, October 5th 1816 (i):
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; LJ III 369-71; BLJ II 110-11)

Diodati. Oct’ r. 5th. 1816. –

Dear Sir –

I have received a letter from M’s. L. in which she tells me that she has decided on the omission of the lines entitled “an Epistle &c.”23 – – Upon this point – her option will be followed. – You will of course remember that these lines are the only ones in the volume which I will allow to be omitted – & that the “Monody on S.” is to be included in the publication – & united with the rest. – As I have no copy of the “epistle to M’s. L. – I request

1:2

that you will preserve one for me in M.S. – for I never can remember a line of that nor any other composition of mine. – I am a good deal surprized that M’. Davies has not arrived – he has several small commissions – amongst other the original (fair copy) M.S. of the volume you have received.24 –
The rough <draft> original – I have sent this evening to my Banker’s (M’. Hentsch of Geneva) who will forward it by M’s. S’. Aubyn to England – it is in a box containing letters &c. and addressed to M’s. Leigh at her

1:3

house in the country – – The parcel containing the Morat Bones is addressed to you – take care them for me. – Recollect – do not omit a line of the M.S. sent you except “the epistle”. – – It is too late for me to start at Shadows. – – –
If you like to have the original – M’s. L. will I dare say send them to you – they are all in the box. – – –
Tomorrow I am for Italy – Milan first – address to Geneva – I do not want to see proofs – if M’. G. will have the goodness to look over them – I have written to you

22: Mu. does not mention Christabel in any surviving letter since B. left
23: Stanzas to Augusta (“My Sister, my sweet sister …”)
24: B.’s fair copy of CHP III was discovered in a Barclay’s Bank vault in 1976; it is now at the B.L.
twice – yrs. in haste
ever & truly
[swirl signature]

P.S. – {Remember me particularly to M. Gifford & M. Moore – if you see the latter. –}
I have been twice at Coppet this week – Madame is very well & particularly agreeable – her
daughter (the Duchess) is with child. – – There were the Duchess of Ragusa & a Prince of – I forget the
name – but it was of fifty consonants25 – German of course – there – both very worthy & pleasing
personages. – I have read the last E. R. they are very severe on the Germans – and their Idol Goethe – I
have also read Wedderburne Webster – and Ilderim – and the Pamphleteer. 26 – – –

Byron to John Murray, from Diodati, October 5th 1816 (ii):
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; LJ III 371-72; BLJ V 111-12)

Diodati Oct’. 5th. 1816
Save me a copy of “Bucks Richard 3d.” republished by Longman – but do not send out more books – I
have too many. – – –
The “Monody” is in too many paragraphs – which makes it unintelligible to me – if anyone else
understands it in the present form they are wiser – however – as it cannot be rectified till my return &
has been already published – even publish it on in the collection – it will fill up the place of the omitted
epistle. – – –

1:2

Strike out “by request of a friend” – which is sad trash & must have been done to make it ridiculous. –
– –
Be careful in {the} printing the <lines> {Stanzas} beginning –
“Though the day of my destiny’s &c.”
which I think well of as a composition. – – – –
“The Antiquary” is not the best of the three – but much above all the last twenty years – saving it’s
er elder brothers. –

1:3

Holcroft’s memoirs are valuable as showing strength of endurance in the man – which is worth {more
than} all the talent in the world. – And so you have been publishing “Margaret of Anjou –” and an
Assyrian tale – and refusing W. W.’s Waterloo – – and the “Hue & Cry” – I know not which most to
admire your rejections or acceptances. – –
I believe that prose is – after all – the most reputable – for certes – if <I> one could foresee – but I wont
go on – that is

1:4

with this sentence – – but poetry is – I fear <an> incurable – God help me – if I proceed in this
scribbling – I shall have frittered away my mind <not> before I am thirty. – – but it is at times a real
relief to me. – – –
For the present – Good Evening. –

On October 5th (the date of the two previous items), Byron and Hobhouse set out to cross the
Alps for Italy.

Byron to John Murray, from Martigny, October 9th 1816:

25: The Prince of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.
26: An essay by Polidori, called On the Punishment of Death, appears early in 1816 in Number VIII of The
Pamphleteer. The periodical also contains the first half of a monograph by Thomas Taylor, called A Dissertation
on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries. This contains the germ for the demonology of Manfred.
Dear Sir –

Thus far on my way to Italy. – We have just passed the “Pisse=Vache–” (one of the finest torrents in Switzerland) – in time to view the Iris – which the Sun flings along it – before Noon.\(^{27}\) I have written to you twice lately – M. Davies I hear is arrived – he brings the original M.S. which you wished to see.\(^{28}\) – Recollect that the printing is to be from

that which M. Shelley brought – & recollect also that the concluding stanzas of C. H. – (those to my daughter\(^{29}\)) which I had not made up my mind {whether} to publish {or not} when they were first written – (as you will see marked on the margin {of y th Copy}) I had (& have) fully determined to publish with the rest of the Canto – as in the copy which you received by M. Shelley – before I sent it to England. –

Our weather is very fine – which is more than the

Summer has been; – at Milan I shall expect to hear from you – address either to Milan poste restante – or by way of Geneva – to the care of Mons. Hentsch Banquier. – I write these few lines in case my other letter should not reach you – I trust one of them will –

y th. ever truly

B

P.S.

My best respects & regards to M. G. – will you tell him – it may perhaps be as well to put a short note to that part relating to Clarens – merely to say – that of course the description does not refer to that particular spot so much as to the command of scenery round it – I do not know that this is necessary – & leave it to M. G’s choice – as my Editor – if he will allow me to call him so at this distance. – – –

Byron to John Murray, from Milan, October 15th 1816:

Murray receives a first instalment of Byron’s art criticism.

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; BLJ V 115-16)

Dear Sir –

I hear that M. Davies has arrived in England – but that of some letters & c. committed to his care by M. H only half have been delivered\(^{30}\) – This intelligence naturally makes me feel a little anxious for mine – and amongst them for the M.S. which I wished to have compared with the one sent by me through the hands of M. Sh – I trust that it has arrived safely – and indeed not less so – that some little chrystals & c. from Mont Blanc – for my daughter – and my nieces – have reached their address – pray have the goodness to ascertain from

M. Davies that no accident (by custom=house – or loss) has befallen them – & satisfy me on this point at your earliest convenience. – – – – –

If I recollect rightly – you told me that M. Gifford had kindly undertaken to \(\text{xxxxxx}\) {correct} the press (at my request) during my absence – at least I hope so – it will add to my many obligations to that Gentleman. – – –

I wrote to you on my way here – a short note – dated Martinach. –

M. Hobhouse & myself arrived here four days ago – by the Simplon – & Lago Maggiore route – of Course we visited the Borromean Islands – which are fine – but too artificial. – The

\(^{27}\): B. puts this waterfall into Manfred Act II.

\(^{28}\): This Ms. does not turn up until 1976, when it’s found in a Barclays Bank vault.

\(^{29}\): CHP III sts.115-18.

\(^{30}\): Thus two agents stand between B. and the non-delivery of his manuscripts.
Simplon is magnificent in its nature and it’s art – both God & Man have done wonders – to say nothing of the Devil – who must certainly have had a hand (or a hoof) in some of the rocks & ravines through & over which the works are carried. Milan is striking – the Cathedral superb – the city altogether reminds me of Seville – but a little inferior – We had heard divers bruits, & [took] precautions on the road near the frontier against some “many worthy fellows (i.e. felons) that were out” – and had ransacked some preceding travellers a few weeks ago near Sesto – or Cesto – I forget which – of cash & raiment – besides putting them in bodily fear – and lodging about twenty slugs in the retreating part of a Courier belonging to M’s Hope; – but we were not molested – and I do not think in any danger – except of making mistakes in the way of cocking & priming whenever we saw an old house – or an ill-looking thicket – and now & then suspecting the “true men” who have very much the appearance of the thieves of other countries. – What the thieves may look like – I know not – nor desire to know – for – it seems – they come upon you in bodies of thirty (“in buckram & Kendal green”) at a time – so that voyagers have no great chance – it is something like poor dear Turkey in that respect but not so good – for there you can have as great a body of rogues to match the regular banditti – but here the gens d’armes are said to be no great things – and as for one’s own people – one can’t carry them about like Robinson Crusoe with a gun on each shoulder. –

I have been to the Ambrosian library – it is a fine collection – full of M.S.S. edited & unedited – I enclose you a little list of the former recently published. – These are matters for your literati – for me in my simple way – I have been most delighted with a correspondence of letters all original and amatory between Lucretia Borgia & Cardinal Bembo – (preserved there ) I have pored over them and a lock of her hair – the prettiest and finest imaginable – – I never saw fairer – and shall go repeatedly to read the epistles over and over – and if I can obtain some of the hair by fair means – I shall try – I have already persuaded the librarian to promise me copies of the letters – & I hope he will not disappoint me. – They are short – but very simple {sweet} & to the purpose – there are some copies of verses in Spanish also by her; – the tress of her hair is long and as I said before – beautiful. The Brera Gallery of paintings has some fine pictures; – but nothing of a collection – of painting I know nothing – but I like a Guercino – a picture of Abraham putting away Hagar – & Ishmael – which seems to me natural & goodly. – The Flemish School such as I saw it in Flanders – I utterly detested despised & abhorred – it might be painting – but was not nature; the Italian is pleasing – & their Ideal – very noble. – – – – The Italians I have encountered here are {very} intelligent & agreeable – in a few days I am to meet Monti. – – By the way I have just heard an anecdote of Beccaria who published {such} admirable things against the punishment of death: – as soon as his book was out – his Servant (having read it I presume) stole his watch – and

31: Shakespeare, Henry IV I.
32: Thomas Hope, future author of Anastasius.
33: Shakespeare, Henry IV I II ii 90 (app.)
34: Shakespeare, Henry IV I II iv 215 (app.)
35: Borgia and Bembo were lovers in 1502-3.
36: Cesare Beccaria (1738-94) jurist and philosopher who condemned the death penalty.
his Master {while} correcting the proofs of a second edition did all he could to have him hanged by way of advertisement. – – – – – – –

I forgot to mention the [triumphal] Arch begun by Napoleon as {a} <a trophy> gate to this city – it is unfinished – but the part completed – – worthy of another age – and the same country. The Society here is very oddly carried on – – – at the theatre – and the theatre only – which answers to our Opera. – People meet there as at a rout<> – but in very small circles. –

From Milan I shall go to Venice. –

If you write to Geneva as before – the letter will be forwarded

November 18th 1816: *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage III* published.

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, November 25th 1816:**

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; LJ IV 13-17; BLJ V 132-4)

Dear Sir – It is some months since I have heard from or of you – I think – not since I left Diodati. – From Milan I wrote once or twice; – but have been here some little time – and intend to pass the winter without removing. – I was much pleased with the Lago di Garda & with Verona – particularly the

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37: Ludovico (Lodovico) de Breme, Milanese man of letters; a “romantic” propagandist.
amphitheatre – and a sarcophagus in a Convent garden – which they show as Juliet’s – they insist on the truth of her history. – Since my arrival at Venice – the Lady of the Austrian

1:2

Governor told me that between Verona & Vicenza there are still ruins of the Castle of the Montecchi – and a chapel once appertaining to the Capulets – Romeo seems to have been of Vicenza by the tradition – but I was a good deal surprized to find so firm a faith in Bandello’s novel – which seems {really} to have been founded on a fact. – – – – Venice pleases me as much as I expected – and I expected much – it is one of those places which I know before I see them – and has always haunted me the most – after the East. – – – –

1:3

I like the gloomy gaiety of their gondolas – and the silence of their canals – I do not even dislike the evident decay of the city – though I regret the singularity of it’s vanished costume – however there is much left still; – the Carnival too is coming. – – St. Mark’s – and indeed Venice – is most alive at night – the theatres are not open till nine – and {the} society is proportionately late – all this is to my taste – but most of your countrymen miss & regret the rattle of hackney coaches – without which they can’t sleep. – – – – – I have got remarkably good apartments in a private house – – I see something of the inhabitants {having had a good many letters to some of them} I have got my gondola – I read a little – & luckily could speak Italian (more fluently though than accurately) long ago; – I am studying out of curiosity the Venetian dialect – which is very naive – soft & peculiar – though not at all classical – I go out frequently – and am in very good contentment. – – – – – –

1:4

The Helen of Canova – (a bust which is in the house of M’ the Countess d’Albrizzi whom I know) is without exception to my mind the most perfectly beautiful of human conceptions – and far beyond my ideas of human execution. –

——

In this beloved marble view
<By> {Above} the works & thoughts of Man –
What Nature could – but would not do –
And Beauty and Canova can! –
Beyond Imagination’s power –
Beyond the Bard’s defeated art,
With immortality her dower –
Behold the Helen of the heart!

Talking of the “heart” reminds me that I have fallen in love – which except falling into {the} Canal – (and that would be useless as I swim) is the best (or worst) thing I could do. – – – – I am therefore in love – fathomless love – but lest you should make some splendid mistake – & envy me the possession of some {of those} Princesses or Countesses with whose affections {the} your English voyagers {are} apt to invest them{self}{selves} – I beg leave to tell you – that my Goddess is only the wife of a “Merchant of Venice” – but then she is pretty as an Antelope, – is {but} two & twenty years old – has the large black Oriental eyes – with the Italian countenance – and {the} dark glossy hair of the curl & colour of Lady Jersey’s – then she has

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38: The Segatis’ house in the Frezzeria.
39: Mariana Segati.
the voice of a lute – and the song of a Seraph (though not quite so sacred) besides a long postscript of 
graces – virtues and accomplishments – enough to furnish [out] a new Chapter for Solomon’s song. –
But her great merit is finding out mine – there is nothing so amiable as discernment. – Our little 
arangement is completed – the usual oaths having been taken – and everything fulfilled according to 
the “understood relations”40 of such liaisons. The general race of women appear to be handsome – but 
in Italy as <con> [on] almost all the Continent – the highest orders are by no means a well looking 
<trace> generation –

2:4

and indeed reckoned by their countrymen very much otherwise. – – Some are <otherwise>
[exceptions] but most of them as ugly as Virtue herself. – – [erasure followed by long swirl]
If you write – address to me here Poste Restante – as I shall probably stay the winter over. – I never see 
a newspaper & know nothing of England – except [in] a letter now & then from my Sister. – Of the 
M.S. sent you I know nothing except that you have received it – & are to publish it &c. &c. but when – 
where – & how – you leave me to guess – . But it don’t

3:1

3) much matter. – – – –
I suppose you have a world of works passing through your process for next year – when does Moore’s 
poem1 appear? – I sent a letter for him addressed to your care the other day. – So – M'. Freer is 
married – and you tell me in a former letter that he had “nearly forgotten that he was so –” he is 
fortunate. – – –

yrs ever & very truly

[swirl]

[3:2 blank.]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, December 4th 1816:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; QI 374-6; BLJ V 137-8)
The start of Byron’s Armenian studies.

Venice. – Dec. 4th. 1816. –

Dear Sir –

I have written to you so frequently of late – that you will think me a bore – as I think you a 
very impolite person for not answering my letters – from Switzerland – Milan – Verona – & Venice. –
There are some things I wanted & want to know, – {viz –} whether M'. Davies of inaccurate memory 
had or had not delivered the M.S. as delivered to him – because if he has not – you will find that he will 
bountifully bestow extracts & transcriptions to all the curious of his acquaintance – in which 
case you may possibly find your publication anticipated by the “Cambridge” or other Chronicles: – in 
the next place – I forget what was next – but in the 3d. place – I want to hear whether you have yet 
published – or when you mean to do so – or why you have not done so – because in your last (Sept'. 
20th, you may be ashamed of the date) you talked of this being done immediately. – From England I 
hear nothing – & know nothing of any thing or any body – I have but one correspondent (except M'. 
Kinnaird on business now & then) <she> {& that one} is a female42 – & her letters are so full of 
mysteries & miseries – such a quantity of the trivial & conjectural – & such a <total> dearth of any 
useful or even amusing information – that I know no more of your island – or city – than the Italian 
version of the French papers chooses to tell me – <and> [or] the advertisements of M'. Colburn tagged

40: Shakespeare, Macbeth, III iv 124.
41: Lallah Rooke.
42: Augusta.
to the end of your Quarterly review for the year ago. – I wrote to you at some length last week – so that I have little to add – except that I had begun & am proceeding in a study of the Armenian language – which I acquire as well as I can – at the Armenian convent where I go every day to take lessons of a learned Friar\textsuperscript{43} – and have gained some sin-

1:4

gular and not useless information with regard to the literature & customs of that Oriental people. – – They have an establishment here – a church & convent of seventy monks – very learned & accomplished men – some of them – they have also a press – & make great efforts for the enlightening of their nation. – I find the language (which is twin, the literal – and the vulgar) difficult but not invincible (at least I hope not) – I shall go on. – – I found it necessary to twist my mind round some severer study – and this – as being the hardest I could devise here – will be a <staff> file for the serpent. – – – I mean to remain here till the Spring – so address to me directly to Venice Poste restante. – – M'.

Hobhouse for the

2:1

2) present is gone to Rome with his brother – brother’s wife – & Sister – who overtook him here – he returns in two months – I should have gone too – but I fell in love\textsuperscript{44} – & must stay that over – I shall think that – and the Armenian Alphabet – will last the winter – the lady has luckily for me been less obdurate than the language – or between the two I should have lost my remains of sanity. By the way – she is not Armenian but a Venetian – as I believe I told you in my last. – As for Italian I am fluent enough, even in it’s Venetian modification – which is something like the Somersetshire version of English – and as for the

2:2

more classical parts of it {dialects} – I had not forgot my former practice in it during my voyaging. – – – –

yours ever & truly

[swirl signature]

PS

Remember me to M’. Gifford – and do not forget me to – but I don’t think I have any other friends of your acquaintance. –

December 5th 1816: \textit{The Prisoner of Chillon} and other Poems published (Churchill’s Grave, Darkness, \textit{The Dream}, Prometheus).

\textbf{Byron to John Murray, from Venice, December 9th 1816:}
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; BLJ V 138-9)

Venice. Dec'. 9th. 1816. –

Dear Sir –

In a letter from England I am informed that a man named Johnson has taken upon himself to publish some poems called “a Pilgrimage to Jerusalem – {a tempest – and { [an] ] } address to my daughter} – &.” and to attribute them to me – adding that he had paid five hundred guineas for them. – The answer to this is short. – I never wrote such poems – never received the sum he mentions – nor any other in the same quarter – nor (<to the best of my own knowledge & belief> [as far as moral or mortal certainty can be sure]) ever had directly or indirectly the slightest communication with Johnson in my life; – not being aware that <such a> [the] person existed till this intelligence – gave me to understand, [that] there were such

1:2

\textsuperscript{43}: Father Harit’wn Avgerian (”Paschal Aucher”).
\textsuperscript{44}: With Marianna Segati, his landlady in the Frezzeria.
people. – Nothing surprises me – or this perhaps would – & most things amuse me – or this probably would not. – – –
With regard to myself – the man has <me> merely lied – that’s natural – his betters have set him the example. – But with regard to you – his assertion may perhaps injure you in your publications – and I desire that it may receive the most public and unqualified contradiction. – – –
I do not know that there is any punishment for a thing of this kind – & if there were – I should not feel disposed to pursue this ingenious mountebank further than was necessary for his confutation – but thus far it may be necessary to proceed. –

1:3

You will make what use you please of this letter – and Mr. Kinnaird – who has power to act for me during my absence – will I am sure readily join you in any steps which it may be proper to take – with regard to the <false> absurd falsehood of this poor creature. As you [will] have recently received several letters from me in my way to Venice – as well as two written since my arrival – – I will not at present trouble you further. –

ever very truly
yours.

Byron

P.S.

Pray let me know that you have received this letter – address to Venice – Poste Restante.

1:4

To prevent the recurrence of <such> similar falsifications you may state – that I consider myself responsible for no publication [from the year 1812.] up to the present date <which> which is not from your press – I speak of course from that period – because previously Cawthorn – & Ridge had both printed compositions of mine. – ”A Pilgrimage to Jerusalem”! how the devil should I write about Jerusalem – never having yet been there? – as for “a tempest” it was not a tempest when I left England – but a very fresh breeze – and as to {an} address to <poor> little Ada (who by the way is a year old tomorrow) I never wrote a line about her except in “Farewell” & the 3d. Canto of Childe Hé.” – – –

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, December 13th 1816:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; Smiles I 369-70; LJM 181-2)
[a My Lord / My Lord Byron / Poste restant / a Venise / En Italie]

Murray's first letter to Byron since September 20th. He answers Byron's of November 25th.

My Lord

I do believe that if all the instances of your indulgent kindness were put together they could not excite in me a greater obligation than I feel for the extreme forbearance exhibited in your Letter of the 25th ult. received this day – I expected a Shot from you that would have shivered all my nerves in return for my baseness in not answering your many most obliging and delightful Letters. And instead of it you have amused me beyond measure with the Account of Venice, Juliet – the Capulets and the Bust – but what is even this – the Marble Helen to the One capable of “Discernment” through animated “Oriental Eyes” – By Heavens – if it be not profane to use the word – thou art squeezing out the very Life of Life – and wouldst make <we> us inferior <men> petty men believe that there never was any thing in the Rhind which you describe & fling to us – Who would not endure thy fancied Pains for all thy delicious enjoyments – you who do what all so wish but<n> want the power to do – We wonder & wonder & wonder but we have not the same creative powers of enjoyment which you possess – & our case is hopeless – even if the means of applying them were before us – here ends my philosphy – but I admire, & delight in your genius for Pleasure in every shape and wish you the perpetuity of St Leon – to pursue its operations.

Well you are so much in Love – that you will not condesend to think of Poetry – merely because all the world here are thinking of nothing else (the Shadow for the Substance) – I did not care to write to you until I could ascertain the opinions of the knowing ones respecting a re-

1:2
cent publication of mine – entitled C. H<ar>. Cant o III which has drawn the leaders of all our literary
drafts together in Consultation and they have determined – that this, alone, must have ensured the
Author preeminent fame (Poetical, I mean) which had already been assigned to him, and this being
allowed, it follows that it is in fact superior to his other efforts, by which a writer is always sure to be
tried. It is allowed that there are Stanzas in it equal to any thing that has been written & M Frere, in a
Letter to me adds “to any thing either Antient or Modern – as applied to the Stanzas on Waterloo – The
Dream is also considered of the same high class – the Dream has created a division but the ayes are the
majority – Kinnaird has had the cruelty to divide into Hysterics by it – I hope he had not the
wickedness to take any naughty advantage of his art. Chillon in parts very fine – the Incantation fine15
– but then to the Practical Proof of this Summary – I thy Most faithful Publisher, gave his Bretheren 99
in it earlier a dinner at the Albion & sold them after the first Pint Five Thousand Pounds Worth of thy
Poetry including 1,500 of the Works now 5 Vols <but not> 1,800 Vol 5 separate (not containing
Childe H Canto 3 &c) and 7,000 of C. Harold Canto 3 – & 7,000 of Prisoner of Chillon &c – for your
Lordship must know & will I trust excuse, that the auri sacra Fames induced me to divide the Works
sent me into two brochures at 5/6 to ensure my Pelf – & thy popularity – and so my speculation
will not fail – although your Lordships kind anxiet y shall be gratefully Remembered. – I have had a
tremendous fight with a dirty Villain who availing himself of the announcement of some New Poems
advertised vehemently that he would Publish “Lord Byrons Pilgrimage to the Holy Land” and the
“Tempest” – to the which I ventured to announce the falsity – that mine was the real Simon Pure – the
very next day the fellow inserted an advertisement, cautiously worded, but insinuating stoutly – the He
had received these Poems from the Noble Auth{or}

1:3

had paid for them Five Hundred Pounds! an inuendo which Job never templated – However with the
stance of M’s S. Davies’s Oath accompanied by one from myself I tried the Lord Chancellour & aided
by the Literary recollections of Sir S. Romilly respecting Pope & his annoyer Curl – we succeeded in
obtaining an injunction – which has operated very favourably in putting an end to his trash – & in
making known my Poems – We must now think of prosecuting him for damages – as a punishment &
if any be obtained it may be sent to the Middlesex Lying-in-Hospital whose funds, in consequence of
so many Gentlemen having returned to the Wars, is nearly exhausted. At any rate I will prepare a
power of Attorney enabling some one whom your Lordship may choose to deligate – this shall be sent
instantly now that I know where to direct my Arrow.

In Literary Affairs I have taken the field in great Force Opening with The Third Canto & Chillon –
and, following up my blow, I have since published Tales of my Landlord another Novel I believe but
I really dont know by the Author of Waverley &c – but excepting the Character of Meg Meriles –
much superior – every One is in exacty about it – & I would give a finger if I could send it to you – but
this I will “contrive” – Conversations with your friend Buonaparte at St Helena – amusing but scarce
worth sending – L’ Holland has just put forth a very improved Edit of the Life of Lope de Vega & de
Castro Giffords Ben Jonson has put to death all former Critics and is very much liked – The Faro-Table
of Tobin has been acted & successfully but it is very paltry – made up from the School for Scandal –
M Legh an MP’s acct of his Travels contains a very remarkable and well told incident which would
amuse you – We have letters coming out from Hume – Chesterfield – & Franklin whc may produce
some <un> information – Moore’s Poem is to be in the press in February – so tells me its author – I
have a Poem, or rather one is coming to me by an Obscure Author on Paris – which I am

1:4 [below address:] assured contains some very powerful passages indeed – this <g>Gifford allows –
who by the way wants very much that you would give him a Carte Blanche respecting the Siege of
Corinth – parts of which he abuses vehemently – though I assure you he speaks with admiration of its
author everywhere – indeed you could not stand better in Literary Fame wch has extinguished every
other feeling, but an anxious desire to read more of you – <Poo> M’ K. has been ejected from Drury
Lane – to his no small annoyance – this comes of quarrelling with a Woman –. [above address:] Poor
Semple whom you knew a Little of – has been killed in an Affray in Hudsons Bay – of wch he went
out Gouverner. I pray your Lordship to let me know if I can, in any way, be made useful to you here –
& I entreat you to honour me with a Letter as often as you can – I beg you to observe that I calculate
Canto IV by September Next – the Scrap of your Journal delighted me – there is a poem in it – Scott is

45: The Incantation is a previously-composed fragment from the first scene of Manfred.
46: Guy Mannering.
writing the Hist’ of Scotland47 – I beg my best remembrance to M’ Hobhouse – from whom I hope to
get the Prose Cantos of your joint-progresses.48 I am ever My Lord
Your faithfully attached
Servt J. M.

[Inverted over / under address:] This moment received what I suppose to be Copy of Lope de Vega –
for you – from the Noble author

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, December 27th 1816:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43488; LJ IV 34-7; QII 384-6; BLJ V 150-3)
Byron has yet to receive the previous item.

Venice Dec’. 27th. 1816. –
Dear Sir –
As the Demon of Silence seems to have possessed you – I am determined to have my revenge in
postage. – This is my sixth or seventh letter since summer and Switzerland. – My last was an injunction
to contradict & consign to confusion that Cheapside imposter – who (I heard by <the exagg> a letter
from your island) had thought proper to append my name to his spurious poesy – of which I know
nothing – nor of his pretended purchase or copyright. – – – – – I hope you have at least received that
letter. As the news of Venice must be very interesting to you I will regale you with it. – –
Yesterday being the feast of S’. Stephen – every mouth was put in motion – there was no=

1:2

=thing but fiddling and playing on the virginals – and all kinds of conceits and divertisements on every
canal of this aquatic city. – – I dined with the Countess Albrizzi and a Paduan and Venetian party – and
afterwards went to the Opera – at the Fenice theatre (which opens for the Carnival on that day) the
finest by the way I have ever seen – it beats our theatres hollow in beauty & scenery – and those of
Milan & Brescia bow before it. – – –
The Opera and its’ Syrens were much like all other operas & women – but the subject of the said Opera
was something edifying – it turned – the plot & conduct thereof – upon a fact narrated by Livy – of a
hundred & fifty married ladies having poisoned a hundred & fifty husbands in the good old times – the
bachelors of Rome believed this extraordinary <slaughter> mortality to be merely the

1:3

common effect of matrimony or a pestilence – but the surviving Benedictics being [all] seized with the
cholic examined into the matter and found [that] “their possets had been drugged”49 the consequence
of which was much scandal and several suits at law. – This is really & truly the subject of the Musical
piece at the Fenice – & you can’t conceive what pretty things are sung & recitative about the
“horrenda strage” the conclusion was a Lady’s head about to be chopped off by a lictor – but (I am
sorry to say) he left it on – and she got up & sung a trio with the two Consuls – the Senate in the
background being chorus. – The Ballet was distinguished by nothing remarkable – except that the
principal she=dancer went into convulsions because she was applauded <at> {on}her first appearance –
and the manager came forward to ask if there was “ever a

1:4

physician in the theatre” – there was a Greek one in my Box whom I wished very much to volunteer his
services – being sure that in this case these would have been the last convulsions which would have
troubled the Ballerina – but he would not. – – – – – The crowd was enormous – and in coming out –
having a lady under my arm – I was obliged in making way {almost} to “beat a Venetian & traduce the
state”50 being compelled to regale a person with an English punch in the guts – which sent him as far

47: Scott is not yet acknowledged as author of the Waverley novels.
48: Having lost Polidori, Mu. now wants Hobhouse to write up B.’s continental adventures. H. never mentions any
such idea.
50: Shakespeare, Othello, V ii 357.
back as the squeeze and the passage would admit – he did not ask for another – but with great signs of
disapprobation & dismay appealed to his compatriots – who laughed at him. – – –
I am going on with my Armenian studies in a morning – and assisting & stimulating in the English
portion of an English & Armenian grammar now publishing at the Convent of St. Lazarus. – – – – –

2:1

2) The Superior of the Friars is a bishop and a fine old fellow – with the beard of a meteor. – My
spiritual preceptor – pastor – and master 51 – Father Paschal – is also a learned & pious soul – he was
two years in England – – I am still dreadfully in love with the Adriatic lady I spoke of in a former letter
(and not in this – I add for fear of mistakes – for the only one mentioned in the first part of this epistle
is elderly and bookish – two things which I have ceased to admire) and love in this part of the world is
no sinecure. – – – – – – This is also the season when everybody make up their intrigues for the ensuing
year – and cut for partners for the next deal. – – – – – –
And now if you don’t write – I don’t know what I won’t say or do – nor what I will; – send me some
news – good news –
yours very truly &c. &c. &c.

P.S.
Remember me to Mr. G. with all duty. – – – –

2:2

I hear that the E. R. has cut up Coleridge’s Christabel & me for praising it – which omen I think bodes
no great good to your forthcome – or coming Canto and Castle (of Chillon) – my run of luck within the
last year seems to have taken a turn {every way} but never mind – I will bring myself through in the
end – if not – I can but be where I began – in the mean time I am not displeased to be where I am – I
mean – at Venice. – My Adriatic nymph is this moment here – and I must therefore repose
from this letter “rocked by the beating of her heart.” ———–

1817: In England, Claire Claremont gives birth to Allegra, January 12th. Byron finishes
*Manfred*, after study at the Armenian monastery of San Lazzaro. From April 17th to May 28th,
he travels via Florence to Rome, where he revises *Manfred*’s third act under advice from William
Gifford. He starts *Childe Harold IV*. In June he leases the Villa Foscarini on the Brenta. On June
16th, *Manfred* is published. In October, as he is finishing *Childe Harold IV*, he reads *Whistlecraft*,
a mock-epic in ottava rima by John Hookham Frere: and writes *Beppo* in two nights by way of
imitation. On December 10th, he hears that Newstead Abbey has at last been sold, to Colonel
Thomas Wildman, for £94,554 3s 1d; his years of financial insecurity are at last over.

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, January 2nd 1817:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; QII 387-90; BLJ V 154-8)

At last, Byron and Murray are back in touch. Byron answers Murray’s of December 13th.

My dear Sir –

Your letter has arrived. – – – –

Pray – in publishing the 3d. Canto – have you omitted any passage or passages? I hope not – and
indeed wrote to you on my way over the Alps to prevent such an accident – say in your next whether or
not the whole of the Canto (as sent to you) has been published. – – – – I wrote to you again the other day
(twice I think –) and shall be glad to hear of the reception of those letters. – To-day is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January
– on this day 3 years ago the Corsair’s publication <was> {is} dated I think in my letter to Moore – on
this day two years I married – “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth” 52 – blessed be the name of
the Lord!” – I shan’t forget the day in a hurry – & will take care to keep the Anniversary before the Evening
is over. – – It is odd enough

1:2

51: Others who rate this appellation from B. are William Bankes, Gentleman John Jackson, and Douglas Kinnaird.
that I this day received a letter from you announcing the publication of C\textsuperscript{4}. H\textsuperscript{4}. &c. on the day of the date of “the Corsair –” and that I also received one from my Sister <dated> written on the 10\textsuperscript{th} of Dec\textsuperscript{4}. my daughter’s birthday (and relative chiefly to my daughter) & {arriving} on the day of the date of my marriage – this present 2\textsuperscript{d}. of January the month of my birth and various other Astrologous matters – which I have no time to enumerate. – By the way, you might as well write to Hentsch my Genevese Banker – and enquire whether the two packets consigned to his care were or were not delivered to M\textsuperscript{2}. S\textsuperscript{2}. Aubyn – or if {they are} still in his keeping. – – One contains papers letters and all the original M.S. of your 3\textsuperscript{d}. Canto – as first conceived – & the other – some bones from the field of Morat. – – – – – – Many thanks for your news – & the good Spirits in which your letter is written – – –

1:3

Venice & I agree very well – but I do not know that I have anything new to say – except of the last new Opera – which I sent in my late letter. – The Carnival is commencing and there is a good deal of fun here & there – besides business – for all the world are making up their intrigues for the season – changing – or going on upon <the> a renewed lease. – – I am very well off with Marianna – who is not at all a person to tire me – firstly because I do not tire of a woman personally – but because they are generally bores in their disposition – & secondly – because she <has> is amiable & has a tact which is not always the portion of the fair creation – – & 3\textsuperscript{d}. she is very pretty – & 4\textsuperscript{th}. – but there is no occasion for further specification. – I have passed a great deal of my time with her since my arrival at Venice – & never twenty=four hours – without giving & receiving from one to three (and occasionally an extra or so)\textsuperscript{53} pretty unequivocal proofs of mutual good contentment. – So far we have gone on very well – as to the future I now anticipate – “Carpe diem” the past at least is one’s own – which is one reason for making more of the present. – – – So much for my proper liaison. – The general state of morals here is much the same as in the Doges’ time – a woman is virtuous (according to the code) who limits herself to her husband and one lover – those who have two three or more – are <rather> [a little] wild; – but it is only those who are indiscriminately diffuse – and form a low connection – such as the Princess of Wales with her courier (who by the way is made <of> a Knight of Malta) who are considered as overstepping the modesty of marriage.\textsuperscript{54} – In Venice – the Nobility have a trick of marrying with dancers or singers – & truth to say the women of their own order are by no means handsome – but the general race – the women of the 2\textsuperscript{d}. and other orders – the wives of the Advocates – merchants & proprietors & untitled gentry are mostly “bel’ sangue” and it is with these that

1:4

2) the more amatory connections are usually formed – there are also instances of stupendous constancy – I know a woman of fifty who never had but one lover who dying early – she became devout – renouncing all but her husband – she piques herself as may be presumed upon this miraculous fidelity – talking of it occasionally with a species of misplaced morality – which is rather amusing. – There is no convincing a woman – here – that she is in the smallest degree deviating from the rule of right or the fitness of things – in having an “Amoroso” – the great sin {seems} to <li> {lie} in concealing it – or in having more than one – that is – unless such an extension of the prerogative is understood & approved of by the prior claimant. – In my case – I do not know that I had any predecessor – & am pretty sure that there is no participator – & am inclined to think from the youth of the party – & from the frank undisguised way in which every body avows everything in this part of the world – {when there is anything to avow} as well as from some

2:1

other circumstances – such as the marriage being recent &c. &c. that this is the “premier pas” – it does not much signify. – – – – – – –

\textsuperscript{53}: Compare DJ III, 25, 8.
\textsuperscript{54}: Shakespeare, Hamlet III ii 20 (adapted).
In another sheet I send you some sheets of a grammar English & Armenian for the use of the Armenians – of which I promoted & indeed induced the publication; {(it cost {{me}} but a thousand francs of <f/>French livres)} I still pursue my lessons in the language – without any rapid progress – but advancing a little daily – Padre Paschal – with some little help from me as a translator {of his Italian} into English – is also proceeding in an M.S. grammar for the English <a> acquisition of Armenian – which will be printed also when finished. – We want to know if there are any Armenian types [or letterpress] in England – at Oxford – Cambridge or elsewhere? – You know I suppose that many years ago the two Whistons published in England an original text of a history of Armenia with <the> <a> [their own] Latin translation. <of their own> – Do these types still exist? &

2:3

where. – Pray enquire among your learned acquaintance. – When this grammar – (I mean the one now printing) is done will you have any objection to take 40 or fifty copies – which will not cost [in all] above five {or ten} guineas – & try the curiosity of the learned with the sale of them. – Say yes or no as you like. – – I can assure you that they have some very curious books & M.S. chiefly translations from Greek originals now lost. – They are besides a much respected and learned community & the study of their language was taken up with great ardour by some literary Frenchmen in Buonaparte’s time. – I have not done a stitch of poetry since I left Switzerland – & have not at present the “estro” upon me – the truth is, that you are afraid of having a 4th. Canto before September – and of another copyright – but I have at present no thought of resuming that poem – nor of beginning any other. – If I write – I think of trying prose – but I dread introducing living people

2:4

or applications which <under> might be made to living people – perhaps one day or other – I may attempt some work of fancy in prose – descriptive of Italian manners & of human passions – but at present I am preoccupied. – As for poesy – mine is the dream of my sleeping Passions – when they are awake – I cannot speak their language; – only in their Somnambulism. – & Just now they are not dormant. – – – –

If M. G. merits Carte blanche as to the “Siege of Corinth” – he has it – & may do as he likes with it. – I sent you a letter contradictory of the Cheapside man – (who invented the story you spoke of) the other day. – My best respects to M. Gifford – & such of my friends as you may see at your house. – I wish you all prosperity & new years gratulation & am yrs ever & truly

[swirl signature]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, January 22nd 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; Smiles I 370-2; LJM 187-91)

London 22nd Jan. 1817

Wednesday

My Lord

This is your birth day and it is with feelings of the most sincere friendship rather than from motives of interest that I rejoice in the renewal of an event which has so largely contributed to my own & honour as well as worldly advantage. Upon the present occasion I feel most particularly grateful for the marked confidence which I have received from you in the many kind & interesting Letters with which your Lordship has favoured me during your absence notwithstanding my tardiness to acknowledge the pleasure which they have invariably afforded me – <n>in no small degree heightened by the opportunity which you have also afforded me of reading them under your Lordships own Portrait. – May you see many truly happy returns of this day.

I have received all your Lordships Letters – the last dated Jan 2d, the former one, respecting the rogue in Cheapside, my legal success against him, anticipated in a way that was I trust satisfactory. I sent to you the Foreign Office a Copy of all your recent Poems – that your Lordship might make any corrections for a new Edition – I left out only a note in Lines 18 – & a line in Chillon55 – because as I had a great stake in the first instant Popularity of their publication at my paying this natural regard to my own interest – and they will be restored in a new Edition – abstractedly from this I can honestly say that both M’ Gifford & myself were convinced that their omission cold not be felt: but as I have just observed I did this purely for my own interest – these passages picked out by malicious people would

55: Mu. means “a couplet”: Nor slew I of my subjects one – / What sovereign hath so little done? (l.390-1)
have damped my first sale – so I entreat your Lordship to consider your publisher & to be pacified. – At the time I sent your Lordship the Copy of your Poems – I added a Set of “Tales of my Landlord” which I think to you about in my Last, as a production of the same author as Waverley &c but infinitely surpassing either – indeed I continue to consider this work as one of the most wonderful of my time – perfectly Shakespearean – and I flatter myself that your delight at receiving it will compleatly overbalance

1:2

your momentary rage at omitting a line. – I forgot to observe that the Poem which is left out was done so by your Editor who did not think it worthy of the rest – and I beg you to confide honestly in Mr G – who is really your faithful friend and honest monitor – as well as your earliest and firmest admirer – therefore trust boldly to us – I am sure that the person who was to have been your supervisor is a perfect <wreth> wretch – without any homogenous qualities to compensate. – but I am running from my subject – which was the Tales – and moreover their author – whom I have discovered to be Thomas Scott – Walter Scotts brother – he was Bailiff to Lord Somerville – formerly and could not make up his accounts – ever since he has been confined to the Isle of Man – until lately that they have transported him to America – Canada – Scott did much to Waverly in adding Anecdotes &c which occasioned many who heard these told by Scott himself, perfectly certain that he was the author. – but – though I can not here &c detail all my grounds of reason for determining the certainty of this I venture to pledge myself that your Lordship may rely upon the fact. We have had little else in Literature of a value or interest that should occasion any regret at your Lordships privation. I am continually harrassed by shoals of MSS Poems – Two three four a day – I require a Porter to carry – an Author to read – and a secretary to answer them. – Maturin you will have heard from Mr Kinnaird – has written two acts of a New Tragedy which I think they are spoiling by sending him criticisms in limine – instead of encouraging the whole scope of his mind to spread out to its compleation – & then introducing the pruning knife – – Schill another Irishman the Author of Adelaide exceedingly applauded in Dublin but “hastily damned in London – which a favourable wind by detaining the author one day longer at sea, prevented him from witnessing – for he arrived the night after – tells me that he has another work in rehearsal whose is to be produced a Covent Garden in a Month – called the Apostate. – I am just about to publish a strange political Rhapsody – by Lord Erskine – called Armata – describing our constitution under a feigne d name – “damn them” (says the author I’ll show the world that I am not in my dotage yet – what the Devils all this cries Frere taking up some sheets of the said – Oh something that Murray is publishing – says Gifford – Not upon his own account replies Frere By the way Frere, who always remembers you with honour (& I told you before what he wrote about the 3 Canto) likes very much the Armenian Grammar – though he would

1:3

– prefer the English part of it. He wishes me to send you Mitford on the harmony of Languages which I will do – he says that the Type is not so large as it ought to be for a language which is not to be whipped into one – but coax into by the most enticing appearances – I will most willingly take 50 Copies even upon my love of letters – so they may be sent as soon as compleated – We are all much interested with “the very curious books and MSS chiefly translations from Greek originals now lost” and I am desired to entreat that your Lordship will gain every particular respecting their history & Contents together with the best account of the Armenian Language which may form a very interesting introduction to the Copies which you send here – and which preface I will print myself – unless as a curiosity you print this there also – or if you would review the Grammar for me and insert all this knowledge in the article – which would certainly be the very best way of making the grammar known to the public. I wish besides obliging me with such a curious and interesting critique – that your Lordship would unknown even to thy bosom friend Hobhouse (to whom I beg to repeat my kindest remembrances, attempt some work in prose, which I will engage to keep sacredly secret, and publish

56: “Could I remount the river of my years”.  
57: Shelley, to whom B. promised the job of seeing CHP III through the press.  
58: Manuel; it failed.  
59: Richard Shiel.  
60: Shiel’s The Apostate is a great success.  
61: None of the foregoing happens.
anonymously. I beg your Lordship to be perfectly assured that I am perfectly ready to undergo the
Copyright of as many Cantos of Childe Harold – or any other Poem – as fast as they are compleated to
your own entire satisfaction – but remember we have got to heap Pelion on Ossa – the higher the pile
already – the far greater our future labour. – I forgot to mention above that I have as yet ascertained
only that there are no Armenian Types at Cambridge – In my next I will know in regard to this matter
at Oxford — If you can pick up at Venice a 4th entitled ‘I storia di Verona del Sig. Girolamo’ Verona
1594 you will find at page 589 – the Story of the Montagues & Capulets given historically – and
related with great beauty & interest – M’ Kinnaird lent me the Volume to copy this for you but I have
no amanuensis sufficiently literary & I think it likely that you may pick up the book at Venice – pray
keep an exact Journal of all you see or write me faithful accounts of sights, curiosities, Shows manners
&c – I will use nothing without your positive permission – We had a quizzing Article on Wed. Webster
– who has replied through the M. Chronicle in a Letter to M’ Gifford which he concluded by leaving
him with “feelings of contempt and Oblivion” – I am sorry that M’ Hobhouse is answering also – a
man has no chance against an Army – & he should have laughed – who he quizzes others must
calculate upon being quizzed himself – and I really esteem M’ Hobhouse and wish he had not done this.
I would pay any one to write against me – In a few days I shall send you our Article on the Third Canto

– you will not have occasion to answer that – <The> An Edinburgh has not come out since the
publication of your Poems – their article on Coleridge was base – after what had passed between you &
the Editor. M’ Gordon has carefully deposited your Spoils of Waterloo – which ornament my Room, as
the best & indeed only means I have of preserving them for you – G – is a good creature but his
deafness is most cruel & annoying setback – The MSS & Bones have not appeared – and I will write
about them – I forward your Letters carefully to Moore & to M’ Leigh for whom I forwarded one for
you yesterday – she is to be in town next week – Sir John Malcolm is almost at Madras by this time –
he left <t>his sincere good wishes for you – I let him read the MSS and he was in extacy – All your old
friends chez moi remember you & you are often the subject of their conversation – as their eye catches
yours in the Portrait – which I am now facing & which I am sure you no small happiness to me to
possess – as it eternally renews the association of your constancy to me – Lady — taking up the
Waterloo Sword – Oh – I wish I could run it through his body – He is even yet I hope even more likely
to run your Ladyship through the body – said I. You know that B— is mad for love of Mrs L— whom
he has been pursuing through Italy – I am unassured – without success – it has hurt his name,
business – & Character in Parliament – Sir Ja’ Mackintosh remembers you – I had a letter from M’
Ward to whom, at Paris, I sent the Poems – & he is delighted – and M’ Canning most particularly so
with the 3d Canto – I now this time print 10,000 of my Review – and you are in it. – I have the
translation of a Chinese Comedy in the Press – and of some Tales by Antara – an hundred years
previous to the conversion of the Arabians to Mahomedanism – The Journal of Capt’ Tucker who
commanded the unfortunate expedition to Africa by the Congo – <can>He & his officers died of fatigue
& overexertion – but in all other respect nothing could have been better planned or executed – and the
Journal is very interesting – this I will contrive to send you – and though – not quite apropos – I may
here say that I have procured the Tooth Powder – I think you should write me a note of thanks for Lord
Holland – Your friend Sir James Burgess with whom I dined yesterday at M’ Croker’s, often calls &
talks to me about you – Walter Scott always mentions you with kindness in his Letters – & he thinks
nothing better than Canto III – Give me a poem a good Venetian tale describing Manners formerly –
from the Story itself – & now from your own observations & call it Marianna – I have ever loved –
upon my soul I believe so – by Sympathy all whom you have loved (in my time) & so I venture to offer
my Love to Marianna – can I give a stronger assurance of my devotion to you my dear Lord whose
faithful servant I am ever

John Murray

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, January 24th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; BLJ V 163-4)

Dear Sir –

Venice January 24th. 1817.

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62: This hint may be what inspires B. to write his Memoirs.
64: Brougham … Mrs Lamb.
65: The heroine of Beppo was at first to be called Rosanna; but became Laura.
By the enclosed you will perceive that M'. Hentsch consigned to M'. St. Aubyn the packages long ago – I will therefore thank you to enquire after the said M'. St. Aubyn of the university of Oxford Son of Sir John St. Aubyn & lately travelling in Switzerland – he had them before the 17th Nov', – & as it was at his own offer & desire that he took this trouble – I hope he has – or will fulfill it – the parcel for M'. Leigh contained papers – & the one addressed to you some relics of Morat. –

I have been requested by the Countess Albrizzi here to present her with “the works” I wish you therefore to send me a copy <of them> <here> that I may comply with her requisition – you may include the last published of which I have seen & know nothing but from y'. letter of the 13th of December. – M'. Leigh tells me that most of her friends prefer the 2 first cantos – I do not know whether this be the general opinion or not (it is not hers) but it is natural it should be so – I however think differently – which is natural also – but who is right or who is wrong is of very little consequence.

D'. Polidori as I hear from him by letter from Pisa is about to return to England – to go to the Brazils on a medical Speculation with the Danish Consul: – as you are in the favour of the powers that be – could you not get him some letters of recommendation from some of your Government friends – to some of the Portuguese settlers – he understands his profession well – & has no want of general talents – his faults are the faults of a pardnable vanity & youth – his remaining with me was out of the question – I have enough to do to manage my own scrapes – & as precepts without example are not the most gracious homilies – I thought it better to give him his congè – but I know no {great} harm of him – & some good – he is clever – & accomplished – knows his profession by all accounts well – and is honourable in his dealings – & not at all malevolent. – I think with luck he will turn out a useful member of society {(from which he will lop the diseased members)} & the college of Physicians; – If you can be of any use to him – or know any one who can – pray be so – as he has his fortune to make. – He has kept a medical journal under the eye of Vacca (the first Surgeon on the Continent) at Pisa – Vacca has corrected it – & it must contain some valuable hints or information on the practice of this Country. – I f you can aid him in publishing this also – by your influence with your brethren – do – I do not ask you to publish it yourself – because that sort of request is too personal & embarrassing. –

He has also a tragedy – of which having seen nothing I say nothing – but the very circumstance of his having made these efforts (if they are only efforts) at one & twenty – is in his favour & proves him to have good dispositions for his own improvement. – – – – So – if in the way of commendation or recommendation – you can aid his objects with your government friends – I wish you would – I should think some of your Admiralty board might be likely to have it in their power. – – – – – – –

y'. very truly

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, February 7th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 195)

My Lord

I have time only to write a few lines with the inclosed Sheets wch may I not not dis-please you. M' Kinnaird has this moment popped in & tells me that you had not heard of the Poems wch vexes me much as I thought we had both told you of their Success – did I not

1:2

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66: At eleven dashes (the penultimate dash perhaps two) this is the largest number of dashes so far discovered in a Byron letter.
give you the best practical criticism upon them – in the Account of my Sale – no Review worth noticing has yet touched upon them – M’th Leigh is in town for the Drawing Room & I am to see her tomorrow.

I hope your Lordship has received Tales of my Landlord – nothing

1:3

but this & My Poems – have appeared this Season.

With best Compliments I am faithfully your Lordship’s
Servant
Jno. Murray

Lords Grenville & Grey & the Whigs generally are differing

[1:4 is blank.]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, February 15th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; first sheet only at LJ IV 52-5 and BLJ V 169-70)

This letter, in which Byron announces Manfred, has never been published complete. He answers Murray’s of December 13th and January 22nd.

Venice – February 15th, 1817

Dear Sir –

I have received your two letters – but not the parcel you mention. – As the Waterloo spoils are arrived – I will make you a present of them – if you choose to accept them – pray do. — I do not exactly understand from your letter what has been omitted – or what not – in the publication – but I shall see probably some day or other – — I could not attribute any but a good motive to M. G. – or yourself in such omission – but as our politics are so very opposite – we should differ as to the passages – however if it is only the note – or notes – and a line or so – it cannot signify. – You say “a poem” what poem? – you can tell me in your next. – ——

Of M. H’s quarrel with the Quarterly R. – I know very little – – except the [Barrow’s] article itself – which was certainly harsh enough – but I quite agree that it would have been better not to answer – particularly after M. W. who never more

1:2

will trouble you – trouble you. – — I have been uneasy – because M. H told me that his letter or preface was to be addressed to me. – now he & I are friends of many years – I have many obligations to him – & he none to me – which have not been cancelled & more than repaid – but M. G. & I are friends – also, and he has moreover been literally so – through thick & thin – in despite of difference of years – morals – habits – & even politics (which I believe if they were in heaven divide the Trinity – & the Holy Ghost out of [seniority] {place}) and therefore I feel in a very awkward situation between the two M. G. & my friend H. – & can only wish that they had no differences – or that such as they have were accommodated. – The answer I have not seen – for it is odd enough – for people so intimate – but M. H. & I are very sparing of our literary confidences – for example – the other day he wished

1:3

to have an M.S. of the 3rd Canto to read over to his brother & which was refused: – and I have never seen his journals – nor he mine – (I only kept the short one of the mountains for my sister) nor do I think that hardly ever he or I saw any of our own productions previous to publication. – —— The article in the E. R. on Coleridge I have not seen – but whether I am attacked in it or not – or in any other of the same journal – I shall never think ill of M. Jeffrey on that account – nor forget that his conduct toward me has been certainly most handsome during the last four or more years. –

I forgot to mention to you – that a kind of poem in dialogue (in blank verse) or drama – from which “the Incantation” is an extract – begun last summer in Switzerland – is finished – it is in three acts – but

67: H.’s Substance of some Letters ... from Paris.
of a very wild – metaphysical – and inexplicable kind. – Almost all the persons – but two or three – are Spirits of the earth & air – or

1:4

the waters – the scene is in the Alps – the hero a kind of magician who is tormented by a species of remorse – <when> the cause of which is left half unexplained, – – he wanders about invoking these spirits – which appear to him – & are of no use – he at last goes to the very abode of the Evil principle in propria persona – to evocate a ghost – which appears – & gives him an ambiguous & disagreeable answer – & in the 3rd. act he <dies> is found by his attendants dying in a tower – where he studied his art. – You may perceive by this outline that I have no great opinion of this piece of phantasy – but I <figure on> have at least rendered it quite impossible for the stage – for which <I have> my intercourse with D. Lane had given me the greatest contempt. 68

I have not even copied it off – & feel too lazy at present to attempt the {whole – but} when I have I will send it you – & you may either throw it into the fire or not; – I would send you the

2:1

2) rough copy as it is – but it would be illegible – & perhaps not less so when copied fair. – The “Incantation” was the conclusion – (a kind of Chorus) of the 1st. scene .. – – – Nobody has seen it. – – I send you an extract. – from out act 2d, –

Beautiful Spirit! – with thy hair of light
And dazzling eyes of Glory – in whose form
mortal
The charms of Earth’s least=<earthly> daughters grow
To an unearthly stature in an essence
Of purer elements – while the hues of youth,
Carnationed like a sleeping Infant’s cheek
Rocked by the heating of her mother’s heart, or heaving
Or the rose=tints which Summer’s twilight leaves
Upon the lofty Glacier’s virgin snow
The blush of Earth embracing with her Heaven,
Tinge thy celestial aspect, & make tame
The beauties of the Sun=bow which bends oer thee –
+
Beautiful Spirit! In thy calm clear brow
Wherein seems glassed Serenity of Soul
Which in itself shows Immortality –

Note The Sunbow is an Iris formed (before Noon) over the Alpine waterfalls – it is of the same form & colours as the rainbow.

2:2

I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of Earth – whom the abstruser powers permit
At times to commune with them – if that he 30
Avail him of his Spells to call thee thus
And gaze on thee a moment. –
&c. &c. –

So much for that – I send you another – from a different part of the same act. – – – –

68: Manfred is in fact tailor-made for Drury Lane, with a superb role for Kean.
Manfred] Daughter of Air! – I tell thee since that <hour> But words are breath – look on me in my sleep – Or watch my watchings – Come – and sit by me! My Solitude is Solitude no more But peopled with the Furies – I have gnashed My teeth in darkness till returning light Then cursed myself till Sunset. – I have prayed For madnes as a blessing – ’tis denied me – I have affronted death, but in the war Of Elements the waters shrunk from me – And fatal things passed harmless – the cold hand Of an all pitiless Demon held me back Back by a single hair which would not break. –

3:1

In phantasy – imagination – all The Affluence of my Soul – which one day was A Crœsus in creation – I plunged deep – But as an ebbing wave it dashed me back Into the Gulph of my unfathomed thought. – I plunged amidst mankind; Forgetfulness I sought in all save where ’tis to be found And that I have to learn – my Sciences – My long pursued & superhuman art Is mortal here – I dwell in my despair And live – & live forever. – – – – –

Another extract

#Arimates

Hymn of the Spirits – in the Hall of <Arimates>

Hail to our Master! – Prince of earth and air! Who walks the clouds & waters – in his hand The Sceptre of the Elements – which tear Themselves to Chaos at his high command – He breatheth – and a tempest shakes the sea – He speaketh – & the Clouds reply in thunder – He gazeth – from his glance the Sunbeams flee – He moveth – Earthquakes rend the world asunder –

3:2

Beneath his footsteps the Volcanoes rise, – His Shadow is the Pestilence; – his path The Comets herald through the burning skies – And Planets turn to ashes at his wrath: To him War offers daily Sacrifice, To him Death pays <to> his tribute: Life is his, With all it’s infinite of agonies, – And his the Spirit of whatever is. –

Another extract

|Manfreds address to the phantom which I has refused to reply to Nemesis and to
Manfred

Hear me – Hear me –
Astarte! my beloved speak to me –
I have so much endured – so much endure
Look on me – the Grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee – thou loved’st me
Too much as I loved thee; we were not made
To torture thus each other; – though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved,
Say that thou loths’st me not – that I do bear
This punishment for both – that thou wilt be

4:1

One of the blessed – and that I shall die –
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence, in a life
Which makes me shrink from Immortality,
A future like the past. – I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask – nor what I seek
I feel but what thou art – & what I am
And I would hear that voice which was my Music
Yet once more ere I perish. Speak to me –
For I have called on thee in the still night –
Startled the slumbering birds from the hushed boughs,
And woke the mountain= wolves, & made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
Which answered me – many things answered me –
Spirits & men – but thou wer’t silent all –
Yet speak to me – I have outwatched the Stars
And gazed in vain oer heaven in search of thee –
Speak to me – I have wandered oer the earth
And have not found thy likeness – Speak to me –
Look on the fiends around – they feel for me –

4:2

I fear them not – and feel for thee alone
Speak to me – though it be in wrath – but say –
I reck not what – but let me hear thee once –

Another extract from Act 3d.

To the Sun

Glorious Orb! the Idol
Of early Nature and the vigorous race
Of undiseased Mankind – those Giant Sons
Of the embrace of Angels with a sex
More beautiful than they – which did draw down
The erring Spirits who can neer return: –
Most glorious Orb – that wert a worship eer
The Mystery of thy making was revealed –
Thou earliest Minister of the Almighty –
Which gladdened on their mountain–tops the hearts
Of the Chaldean Shepherds till they poured
x See Genesis – where it is mentioned that a race of Giants was produced by the intercourse of women and angels.

4:3

Themselves in orisons – Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown
Who chose thee for his Shadow – thou chief Star
Centre of many Stars – which mak’st our earth
Endurable – & temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk beneath thy rays –
Sire of the seasons – Monarch of the climes –
And those who dwell in them – for near or far
Our inborn Spirits have a tint of thee
Even as our outward aspects – Thou dost’st rise –
And shine – & set in Glory – Fare thee well –
I neer shall see thee more – as my first Glance
Of love & wonder was for thee – then take
My latest look – thou wilt not beam on one
To whom the Gifts of life & warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. – He is gone –
I follow.

<Mountains have fallen>    Mountains have fallen
Leaving a gap in the clouds – & with the shock
Rocking their Alpine brethren – filling up
The ripe green valleys with Destruction’s splinters –
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash

4:4

Which
<That> crushed the waters into Mist – and made
Their fountains find another channel<s> – thus –
Thus in it’s old age did Mount Rosenburg –
Why stood I not beneath it? ——

Thinks’t thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth, but actions are our epochs – mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable
Endless & all alike – as sands on the shore
Innumerable atoms & one desart –
Barren & cold on which the wild waves break
But nothing rests save carcasses, & wrecks,
Rocks, & the salt=surf weeds of bitterness. –

I send you these extracts at random – the rest is about the same pitch – no better & no worse – but
whether good bad or indifferent I do not know – and you can judge (or get judged) for yourselves – I
have filled up my sheets with this &.½ but will write to you again soon.

yours, very truly

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, February 18th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 196-8)
Murray answers Byron’s of January 24th.

My Lord
I inclose the Sheets of an Article on Childe Harold torn from my "Mail Coach" Copy of the Edinburgh Review— I hope you received some ten days since the pages on the same subject in the Quarterly and then I think you ought to feel compleatly satisfied – as I am – like Mahomed your fame is suspended between these two literary attractives. – Jeffery & Walter Scott are the authors of these critiques – and so you may be satisfied that I am ready for another Copy right whenever you are. – I received your Lordships Letter respecting Polidori whom I think I can assist with the very best recommendations – I regretted that you do not in that Letter acknowledge a very long one which I wrote a month ago – or the Tales of my Landlord & Copies of the late Poems which I sent to the under Secretary of State to be forwarded to you – two months ago – of the Tales I am eager to learn – your delight rather than opinion – Mr. L. – will not be convinced but that you are the author of them – she is very well & in very Good spirits – I will contrive to send you a copy of The Works by the Messenger The Lord Byron

1:2

Who goes tomorrow – though – though I regret that I must send it without plates or Portrait.

I have read the New Tragedy of Maturin entitled Manuel – the first act of which is magnificent in all respects – but it appears to M' G the whole interest terminates with it – & the demuement is terribly bad – The Style is much improved – it is replete with imagination – but there is a total want of judgment – Holland is a monk again & there are Trials, processions, & Tournaments – they proposed it to me at £500 – but I declined it. –

Your young friend M’ Gordon – is always most anxiously enquiring after you & is sitting before me copying out a paragraph from a Letter of Walter Scott to him & which I begged him to do, as it shews that privately as well as publicly, he is equally your friend – M’ Gordon sends his most particular compliments to you.

A paragraph was inserted in the Morning Chronicle of last week headed M’ Croker & Lord B – & saying you had written his character, which they would give in a few days – This was taking so shameful a liberty with your name during your absence – that I called upon M’ Davies respecting it & he obligly went

1:3

to Perry – who confessed that he had not seen the lines – I suspect that it was your incessant persecuter B – who was the source of all affected public opinion respecting you – but it would be as well perhaps to tell Kinnaird to desire Perry not to use your name without your authority again – – I gave M’ Davies the Article in the Ed. Rev. to read & he is delighted with it – I have sent it also to M’s Leigh – who was compleatly satisfied with that in the Quarterly –

I hope your next will tell me that you have something nearly ready for me in prose or verse or both – bene mixtura – I have done exceedingly well with the two last Poems & the works continue in equal demand — indeed by the blessing of God on my honest labours – all my publications appear to prosper – except Margaret of Anjou & Ilderim – <Bo> The Missionary sold very well until the Author put his name to it – & then it stopped – I have just Published & nearly sold the edition of Armata a political Romance by your friend Lord Erskine – who was very much delighted by the note you had written in his

1:4

70: Mahomet’s sarcophagus was said to be suspended between two magnets.
71: Holland was a Drury Lane actor who specialised in monks and priests.
72: Maturin’s Manuel; a tragedy in five acts is in fact published by Mu. in 1817.
73: James Perry, editor of the Morning Chronicle.
74: Henry Brougham.
75: An 1816 poem by Margaret Holford.
76: B. despised this 1816 oriental romance by Henry Gally Knight.
78: Armata; a fragment (1817) by Thomas, Lord Erskine, the famous jurist.
Pamphlet & he loves you staunchly – I have many interesting Voyages & adventures in the press & I wish I could amuse your Lordship with some of them – They have a Tragedy coming forth at Covent Garden by the Author of Adelaide79 – wch was damned last year. Gifford sends his best compliments to you & M' Frere, Heber, Hallam, & many others always talk to me of you with delight – you and the Author of Tales of my Landlord – are said to be the only persons worth talking about now a days – I hope to learn in your next that your Lordship is to return this spring, (by the way we have had nothing but Spring & summer, all this winter – this day is perfectly Summer – to make up for giving us Winter last Summer) but you must not return without visiting Rome – You may expect to see M' Sotheby at Venice there this Month & he is always your friend – I will & enquire after M' S' Aubin for no bones have yet appeared – I always forgot, to assure your Lordship how much I felt obliged by your kind attention to my friend M' Brown – when at Diodati – There is a drawingroom tomorrow so that M's L will be fully occupied. Pray favour me with an early Letter & tell me if I may expect a Copyright this Spring. I beg your Lordship to accept my hearty wishes for your happiness & to renew the assurance of remaining most faithfully
My Lord
Your obliged Servant
John Murray

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, February 25th 1817 (i):
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.189; BLJ V 173-4)
[To, / Jno. Murray Esq  
50 Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre // Inghilterra]
The start of Byron’s interest in Marino Faliero.

Venice. February 25th. 1817. –
[Rec’d March 13th]

Dear Sir –

I wrote to you the other day in answer to your letter – at present I would trouble you with a commission <for me> if you will be kind enough to undertake it. -- -- -- -- --
You perhaps know M'. Love the Jeweller of old Bond Street.80 – In 1813 – when in the intention of returning to Turkey – I purchased of him – and paid (argent comptant) about a dozen snuff boxes of more or less value – as presents for some of my Mussulman acquaintances. – These I have now with me. – The other day – having occasion to make an alteration in the lid of one (to place a portrait in it) it has turned out to be silver=gilt instead of Gold – for which {last} it was sold & paid for. – This was discovered by the workman in {trying it before} taking off the hinges – & working upon the lid. – I have of course recalled & preserved the box in statu quo. – What I wish you to do is to see the said M'.

1:2

Love – and inform him of this circumstance – adding from me – that I will take care he shall not have done this with impunity. -- --
If there is no remedy in law – there is at least the equitable one of making known his guilt – that is – his silver=gilt – and be damned to him. --
I shall carefully preserve all the purchases I made of him on that occasion – for my return – as the Plague in Turkey is a barrier to traveling there – at present – or rather the {endless} Quarantine which would be the consequence – before one could <sh> land in coming back. -- – Pray state the matter to him with due ferocity. -- -- --
I sent you the other day <a quantity> {some} extracts from a kind of drama81 – {which} I had begun in Switzerland – {& finished here,} you will tell me if they are received – they were only in a letter. -- --
I have not yet had energy to copy it out – or I would send you the whole in different covers. -- --
The Carnival closed this day last week. -- --

1:3

M'. Hobhouse is still at Rome. – I believe. – I am at present a little unwell – sitting up too late – & some subsidiary dissipations – have lowered my blood a good deal – but I have at present the quiet & temperance of Lent. before me. – --

79: The Apostate by Richard Shiel was a success; his previous play, Adelaide, had failed.
80: B. often bought jewellery from Love and Kelty.
81: Manfred.
Believe me very truly

yours & c.

[swirl]

PS.

Remember me to Mr. G – I have not received your parcel – or parcels. – Look into “Moore’s (D’ Moore’s) view of Italy” for me – in one of the volumes you will find an account of the Doge Valiere (it ought to be Falieri) and his conspiracy – or the motives of it – get it transcribed for me & send it in a letter to me here [soon] – I want it – & can not find so good an account of that business here – though the veiled portrait – & the place where he was [once] crowned – and afterward decapitated still exists – [& are shown]. – I have searched all their libraries – but the policy of the old <report> Aristocracy made their writers silent on his motives which were a private grievance against one of the <nobles> Patricians. –

[vertically down right-hand side:] I mean to write a tragedy upon the subject which appears to me very dramatic – an old man – jealous – and conspiring against the state of which he was the actual reigning Chief – the last circumstance makes it the most remarkable & only fact of the kind in all history of all nations. –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, February 25th 1817 (ii):
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489, no f.; BLJ V 174)

[February 25, 1817?]

If you publish this – publish the original Spanish also – which [Ms. tear: “I”] enclose – as I wish to show that I have kept near the text. – – – M. Freere will be the best corrector – if he would have the goodness to take the trouble. – – – –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, February 28th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.190; BLJ V 177-8)
[To John Murray Esq. / 50 Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre // Inghilterra]

Byron encloses Manfred’s first act.

Venice – Feb’y. 28th, 1817
[Rec’d Mar 18.]

Dear Sir

Enclosed in this & another cover – is the first act of the kind of dramatic poem – from which I sent you some extracts in a recent letter – I will copy out the rest at leisure & send it you piecemeal by the post. —

yours ever

[swirl]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, March 3rd 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.191; BLJ V 178-9)

As Byron writes, this letter is begun on what would normally be the fourth side, then going side 1 – side 2 – and ending on side 3.

Venice. March 3rd, 1817

My dear Sir –

In acknowledging the arrival of the article from the “Quarterly” which I received two days ago – I cannot express myself better than in the words of my sister Augusta – who (speaking of it) says that [it] is written in a spirit “of the most feeling & kind nature”. – It is however something more – it seems to me – (as far as the subject of it may be permitted to judge) to be very well written as a composition – & I think will do the journal no discredit – because – even those who may condemn its partiality, must praise it’s generosity. – – – The temptations to take another [& less favourable] view of the question have been so great & numerous – that what with public opinion – politics – & c. – he must be a gallant as well as a good man – who has ventured in that place – & at this time – to write such an article even anonymously. – Such things however are their own reward – & I even flatter myself that the writer whosoever he may be (and I have no guess) will

82: View of Society and Manners in Italy (1781) by John Moore, author of Zeluco.
83: A Very Mournful Ballad on the Siege and Conquest of Alhambra.
84: This is Scott’s review of CHP III and PoC; see this website, Byron and Scott.
not regret that the perusal of this has given me as much gratification – as any composition of that nature
could give – & more than any other ever has [given] – and I have had a good many in my time – of
one kind or the other. – It is not the mere praise, but there is a tact & a delicacy throughout not only
with regard to me – but to others – which as it had not been observed elsewhere. – I had till now
doubted – whether it could be preserved any where. – – – – – Perhaps some day or other – you will
know or tell me the writer’s name – be assured – had the article been a harsh one – I should not have
asked it. – – – – – –

I have lately written to you frequently – with extracts &c. which I hope you have received – or will
receive with – or before this letter. – – – –

Ever since the conclusion of the Carnival – I have been unwell – (do not mention this on any account t
to Augusta for if I grow worse – she will know it too soon – & if I get better there is no occasion that she
should know it at all) & have hardly stirred out of the house – however I don’t want

a Physician & if I did – very luckily those of Italy are the worst in the world – so that I should still have
a chance. – They have I believe one famous Surgeon – Vacca – who lives at Pisa – who might be
useful in case of dissection. – But he is some hundred miles off. – My malady is a sort of lowish fever
– originating from what my pugilistic “pastor & master” Jackson would call – “taking too much out
of oneself” however I am better within this day or two. – – – I missed seeing the new Patriarch’s
procession to S’t. Mark’s the other day (owing to my indisposition –) with six hundred and fifty priests
in his rear – a “goodly army”. – The admirable government of Vienna in its edict from thence –
authorizing his installation – prescribed as part of the pageant – a “Coach & four horses” to show how
very very “German to the matter” this was – you have only to suppose our Parliament commanding
the Archbishop of Canterbury to proceed from Hyde park Corner to S’t. Paul’s Cathedral in the Lord
Mayor’s Barge – or

the Margate Hoy. – – There is but S’t. Marc’s place in all Venice – broad enough for a carriage to move
– & it is paved with large smooth flag=stones – so that the Chariot & horses of Elijah himself would be
puzzled to manoeuvre upon it – – those of Pharaoh might do better – for the Canals & particularly the
Grand Canal are sufficiently capacious & extensive for his whole host. {of course no coach could be
attempted – but the Venetians who are very naive as well as arch – were much amused with the
ordinance.} – – – – – – –

The Armenian Grammar is published – but my Armenian studies {are} suspended for the present – till
my head aches a little less. – I sent you the other day in two covers – the first act of “Manfred” a
drama as mad as Nat. Lee’s Bedlam tragedy – which was in 25 acts & some odd scenes – mine is but
in three acts. – – I find I have begun this letter at the wrong end – never mind – I must end it at the right
yours. ever –

very truly

& obligedly

B[scrawl]

PS.
Marianna is very well. – She has
been sitting for her picture {for me} – a miniature –
which is very like.

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, March 6th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 201-3)

85: B. puts two sets of three dashes, one over the other.
86: Andrea Vacca Berlinghieri (1772-1826); attends Sergeant-Major Masi after the Pisan Affray.
87: B. applies this phrase in different letters to Jackson, Bankes, Aucher, and Kinnaird.
88: Shakespeare, Hamlet, V ii.
89: B.’s Armenian studies were never resumed.
90: Nathaniel Lee, restoration dramatist; he spent time in an asylum, where he wrote the play B. mentions.
91: This miniature of Mariana Segati has not been identified.
My Lord

I can not allow a moment to pass without acknowledging the receipt of your obliging Letter of the 15th Feb. which has just arrived – I have been most anxiously looking for it fearful that mine might have miscarried & if so fearing that you must consider me ungrateful for the favour of your obliging communications. I am sadly vexed to find that you have not received the Copies of the Poems & of Tales of My Landlord which were sent by me three months ago, nearly. I have now put up other Copies of each which I will again send to the Secretary of States office & I will hope for a better fate. Your Lordship I rejoice to say will find the errors of omission come within the pale of your forgiveness – The Poem that was omitted is entitled “Extract from an unpublished Poem” – there is no politics in this & it was omitted by M’ G – thought it was so much eclipsed by the others – & the lines omitted in Chillon are

Nor slew I of my subjects one
What Sovereign hath so little done

because they abruptly unhinged the pleasing associations arising from the rest of the poem – The Note omitted was I think some personal allusion to poor Louis XVIII – & this I desired lest it might in any way interfere with the popularity of my book – I trust that your Lordships usual indulgence will pardon this – and when we reprint either in 8vo or when the small edition is printing the whole can be restored or not as you, in your next shall do me the favour to desire. – The sale of these poems have equalled, which is more complimentary than if I had said, they had surpassed, my expectations – these I shall next winter publish in the small size & they will form a Sixth Volume, the Fifth Volume, as I believe I have already informed your Lordship I have already published, & what is better, nearly sold – consists of Siege of Corinth Parisina & the smaller Poems. I have paid M’ Kinnaird £1000 – £500 I shall send him next week and the fourth £500 I shall give, with great convenience & with no less satisfaction to myself, in a month or two. If it were perfectly agreeable to your Lordship to sign your name to the inclosed paper – in the presence of some English Gentleman, you can inclose it to M’ Kinnaird who will give it to me, when my part is fulfilled – there are all the smaller poems inserted upon my presumption respecting your Lordships kindness.

The Lord Byron

1:2

And now having nearly settled one account – I am perfectly ready to open a new one – I always thought the “Incantation” exceedingly wilde & beautiful – though I smiled at its being an extract from “An Unfinished Witch Drama” – which I now Smile more heartily to find to be a true bill – I shall send the interesting extracts with which you have favoured me – to M’ Gifford & faithfully detail to you his opinion – in the mean time I hope you will spare a little time to the writing of it out – I am much gratified by your Lordships expressions respecting M’ Gifford – which the last Number of the Quarterly will give you ample reason to be satisfied – he behaved with most particular kindness on this occasion – I induced M’ S to write it – from an expression of kindness regarding you in One of his letters – & I thought his mind was full of the subject – & it was out in three days. I hope this has reached you safely & the Critique in the Ed. Rev. both of wch I tore out the moment I got them & inclosed in Letters to you – If your Lordship have occasion to send any MSS to me do me the favour to address it, under cover, to John Barrow Esq’ Sec’ Admiralty London – as it is more likely to proceed in Safety – Moore has announced his poem Lallah Rookh – a Persian Tale – not a very happy title – I think – he has taken a Cottage at Hornsey & is gone down to bring his wife & family – I shall put it under Covers & send in that way if I do not find a better. – Poor Horners death at Pisa – given universal regret no man was so thoroughly respected by all parties – his fate was hard

92: “pleasing associations” hardly shows a normal reaction to PoC.
93: The lines (PoC 389-90) are never restored in B.’s lifetime, and are omitted even in the 2010 Norton edition.
94: At the end of Manfred, I i.
95: Walter Scott.
96: Francis Horner (1778-1817), co-founder of the Edinburgh Review.
indeed – he called upon me the last four days he was in England – & solicited as a very great favour that I would allow him to read your new Poems – a Pleasure which I was most happy to grant – & so thank God we parted in great friendship. Manuel Maturins New Tragedy is to Come out on Saturday I have not ventured upon it before its trial – as I did upon the last97 of which I had the extraordinary good fortune to sell betwixt 6 & 7000 – Lord Erskine has just interrupted me I believe I told your Lordship that I had published a sort of political Romance – describing our own political History under the name of Armata – I have sold the best part of a Second Edition – he is a staunch friend of yours – I told

1:3

him I had just heard from you, holding up your Letter “He is an excellent fellow” – says he – “the best friend I have in the World” – He was quite delighted by your Lordships notes in his pamphlet which I lent him to quote from – As you have not received Tales of My Landlord you will not comprehend Mt. Leigh’s allusion to your prose – In which Language I hope yet to have something – Not one word about your Armenian Grammar – do write me a review of it & put in it all your observations upon Italy &c &c – no matter how irrelevant – – I trust from your not mentioning your health that you continue well – I am sorry you do not appear to think of visiting Rome during Easter – pray if your Lordship stumble upon any curious MSS &c – think of me – I offer your Lordship my best thanks for your presence of the Spoils of Waterloo which I gladly accepted & shall preserve – from the double association – Does your Lordship know of any Conveyance by wch I could send you curious things – I am well & flourishing I printed 10,000 of the last Q. Rev & the Number of the next is 12,000 – it is a great happiness to true to be allowed the Pleasure of writing to you & of being honoured by your Lordships interesting & always lively Letters – With most affectionate regards I have the honour to remain My Lord

Your faithful Servant

John Murray

[1:4 has the address.]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, March 9th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.192; BLJ V 183-5)

Byron sends Manfred’s third act. He answers Murray’s of February 18th.

Venice. March 9th. 1817

Answer [this] by return of post as I wish to hear that it has arrived.

My dear Sir –

In remitting the third act of the sort of dramatic poem of which you will by this time have received the two first – (at least I hope so) which were sent within the last three weeks – I have little to observe except that you must not publish it (if it ever is published) without giving me previous notice. – I have really & truly no notion whether it is good or bad – & {as} this was not the case with the principal of my former publications – I am therefore inclined to rank it but humbly. – You will submit it to Mr. G. {to whomsoever you please besides. --} With regard to question of copyright – (if it ever comes to publication –) I do not know whether you would think three hundred guineas – an over estimate – if you do you may diminish it – I do not think it worth more – so you may see I make some difference between it and the others. -- -- -- --

1:2 [sheet 1 has only two sides]

I have received your two reviews – (but not the “Tales of my Landlord”) the Quarterly I acknowledged particularly in a letter to you on its’ arrival, ten days ago. -- -- -- what you tell me of Perry petrifies me – it is a rank imposition. -- --

In or about February or March 1816. – I was given to understand that Mr. Croker was not only a coadjutor in the attacks of the Courier in 1814 – but the author of some lines tolerably ferocious then recently published in a Morning paper.98 – – Upon this I wrote a reprisal – the whole {of the lines I have forgotten} & even the purport of <which> {them} I scarcely remember – for on your assuring me that

97: Bertram.
98: On February 18th Mu. had assured B. that the offensive passage was by Brougham. From now on, B. wants to challenge Brougham.
he was not & c. & c. I put them into the fire before your face – & there never was but that one rough copy. – M'. Davies the only person who ever heard them read – wanted a copy – which I refused. – – If however by some impossibility – which I cannot divine – <they should> the ghost of those rhymes should walk into the world – I never will <deny it> deny what

2:1

2) I have really written but <I never> hold myself {personally} responsible for satisfaction – though I reserve to myself the right of disavowing all or any fabrications. – To the previous facts you were a witness – & best know how far my recapitulation is correct – & I request that you will inform M'. Perry from me that I wonder he should permit such an abuse of my name & his paper – I say an abuse – because my absence at least demands some respect – & my presence & positive sanction could alone justify him in such a proceeding – even were the lines mine – & if false – there are no words for him. – I repeat to you that the original was burnt before you on your assurance – & there never was a copy nor even a ver=

2:2

=}bal repetition – very much to the discomfort of some zealous whigs – who bored me for them (having heard it bruited by M'. D. that there were such matters) to no purpose – for having written {them} solely <for> with the notion that M'. C. was the aggressor – & for my own & not party reprisals – I would not lend me to the zeal of any sect – when I was made aware that he was not the writer of the offensive passages. – – –

You know if there was such a thing I would not deny it – I <said> {mentioned} it openly at the time to you – & you will remember why and where I destroyed it – & no power nor wheedling on earth should {have} made or could make me (if I recollected them)

2:3

give a copy after that – unless I was well assured that M'. C. was really the author of that which you assured me he was not. – –
I intend for England this spring – where I have some affairs to adjust; – but the post hurries me. For this month past I have been unwell – but am getting better – and thinking of moving homewards towards May, – without going to Rome as the unhealthy season comes on soon – & I can return when I have settled the <thing> {business} I go upon which need not be long. – – –
You say that “Margaret of Anjou” & Ilderim” do not keep pace with your other saleables – I should have thought the Ass=

2:4

dian tale very succeedable. – – –
I saw in M'. Wedderburne Webster’s {poetry} that he had written my epitaph – I would rather have written his. –
The thing I have sent you you will see at a glimpse – – could never be attempted or thought of for the stage – I much doubt it for publication even. – It is too much in my old style – but I composed it actually with a horror of the stage – & with a view to render even the thought of it impracticable,99 knowing the zeal of my friends, that I should try that for which I have an invincible repugnance – viz – a representation. – – –
I certainly am a devil of a mannerist100 – & must leave off but what could I do, without exertion of some kind – I should have sunk under my imagination and reality. – My <best> {best} respects to M'. Gifford – to Walter Scott & to all friends. –

99: B. is writing the opposite of the truth. Manfred’s scenic demands are tailored for Drury Lane.
100: B. has learned this word from Scott’s Quarterly review of CHP III: Our opinion must necessarily be qualified by the caution, that as no human invention can be infinitely fertile, as even the richest genius may be, in agricultural phrase, cropped out, and rendered sterile, and as each author must necessarily have a particular style in which he is supposed to excel, and must therefore be more or less a mannerist; no one can with prudence persevere in forcing himself before the public when from failure in invention, or from having rendered the peculiarities of his style over trite and familiar, the veteran ‘lags superfluous on the stage,’ a slighted mate in those dramas where he was once the principle personage.
John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, March 15th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; Smiles I 296; LJM 206-7)
[My Lord / My Lord Byron / Poste restante / a Venise / en Italie]
Murray answers Byron’s of February 25th.

London 15th. March 1817
Saturday

My Lord

I had the pleasure of receiving your Letter of the 25th Feb. the day before yesterday, Thursday 13th
 – I could not see Mr. Love yesterday but this day I with a friend, found him at home & the result of
opinion is that he may have been deceived by his workmen. – he will take the snuff boxes back &
return either gold or goods for them he is sorry for what has happed from its inconvenience to you –
but his conscience – whatever his box has proved appears to be Sterling – & does not swerve at the
touch of enquiry – he is anxious to see the box.

I inclose a transcription of the passage from Moore’s Italy in which by the way yr Lordship will
observe that Moore has given the Name nearly right Falliero – the Subject is a mighty one & with it
you must spring over the head of Otway. I have very strong and peculiar confidence in the success of
your Lordships efforts in this department. – Confoundedly am I vexed at your not getting the books
which I sent you but I trust that the second Copy will not miss & every day I look for your Lordships
notice of the two Articles in the Quarterly & Edinburgh Reviews which I sent more than a month ago,
under two covers & which with Mr. Giffords very favourable opinion of the Specimens of the Witch
Drama, which I have now authority for reporting to your Lordship, will have stimulated you to
complet it & to the yet greater effort – the copying of it out – – M. Gifford trusts that you will finish it
– Well Maturins new tragedy appeared on Saturday last, and I am sorry to say that the opinion of my
friend M. G was established by the impression made on the audience – The first Act very fine – the rest
exhibiting a want of judgement not to be endured – it was brought out with uncommon splendour &
was well acted Keans character as an Old Man a Warrior – was new

and well sustained – for he had of course selected it, and professed to be and he acted as if he were
really pleased with it – but this feeling changed to dislike, after the first night for he then abused it &
has actually walked through the part ever since – that it to say for the other three nights of performance
– for they do not act on Wednesdays, or Fridays & this night the performance is changed to
Lovers’ Vows – I met Geo Lamb on Tuesday & he complained bitterly of Keans conduct, said that he
had ruined the success of the Tragedy & said that in consequence he feared, that Maturin would receive
nothing – The expense to the managers must have been very great – & it will complete I suspect the
ruin of Drury under its present directorship – & so I rejoice that your name appears not amongst them.
– I send you the first Act – that you may read the best of it. I have undertaken to print the Tragedy at
my own expense & give the poor Author the whole of the Profit.

Still no word of the Armenian Grammar I have just published a Drama translated direct from the
Chinese, which is curious & rather interesting for its view of Manners – I wish I could shew you
extracts from the Pekin Gazettes in which the Chinese speak of our Embassy such contempt – we have
got near to them by means of Nepaul & before I die I hope we shall have a war with them – our
expedition up the Congo too has proved unsuccessful – but it will be productive of two Works for
me – I have just received in a way perfectly unaccountable a MSS from S’ Helena – with not one word
– I suppose it to be originally written by Buonaparte or his agents – it is very curious his Life in which
call the events are given in almost a word – a battle described in a short sentence – I call it
therefore simply Manuscrit venu de S’ Helene d’une maniere inconnue Lord Holland has a motion on
our treatment of Buonaparte

1:2

<in> at S’ Helena for Wednesday next – & on Monday I shall publish You will have seen Buonapartes
Memorial on this Subject complaining bitterly of all – pungent but very injudicious, as it must offend

101: Otway’s 1682 Venetian tragedy Venice Preserved.
102: Manuscrit venu de S. Hélène d’une manière inconnue was in fact by a Swiss economist and journalist called
Jacob Frédérick Lullin de Chateauvieux, a friend of Madame de Staël.
all the other allied powers to be reminded of their former prostration. – – The report is strong that Miss Mercer – Lord Keiths Daughter – is about to bestow – throw away – her hand Flah<o>{au}>t, – do I spell him rightly – the french General – a fit punishment for having made a fool of so many Englishmen – to be made a fool of herself. – I have a long & amusing Letter from Sir Jno Malcolm from the Cape – in which he remembers you – Lady Davy has the reputation of giving the most agreeable parties in London just now – Walter Scott has had a most severe spasmodic attack – from which he is recovering however – he always mentions you in his letter – M Frere still enquires after you – & I have many visitors to my Portraits – I now print 12,000 Copies of the Quarterly Review which I believe exceeds the Editions of the Edinburgh – Veritas prevalebit!!

I hope to have occasion to write again, in a few days in answer to Letters which I then hope to have received from you – in the mean time I anxiously hope that you have perfectly recovered & that you propose to be a little careful of yourself – I hope you will give a description of Venice – its Carnival – &c &c &c

Mr Gifford ever desires me to present his Kind remembrances to you – I remain

My Lord

Your faithful Servant

John Murray

I have sent the Whole of the Tragedy

Mad. De Stael will not accept of my Offer 1000G for 1500 Cop & £500 – for each 1000 Cop after – & she can get a purchaser

[vertically up right-hand side of page] Upon Consideration I have sent the Play & the Extract to the Foreign Office

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, March 18th 1817:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 211-12)

[My Lord / My Lord Byron / Poste restante / a Venise / en Italie]

Murray has now received all of Manfred, and proposes to print it at once.

London 18 March. 1817

Tuesday

My Lord

I hasten to acquaint you with the safe receipt of your short letter of the 28th Feb with another Cover inclosing together the first act of Man<uel>{fred} it came 5 Minutes ago. I have sent it to M G – & tomorrow I will give it to the printer, intending to send the proofs to your Lordship, as quickly as possible, with any remarks that Mr G – make think proper to make, upon them. – Your Letter to M Moore, arriving at the same time, I have forwarded to him – he has taken a house at Hornsey as I hinted in my last. Surely you ought to have received my packet containing the Q. Review which was sent away on the 10th – but upon calculating, I find to my consolation, that your present letter has been 18 days on its passage & so I hope mine will have reached its destination in due course.

In my last, written on the 14th, I gave you my opinion of Love – he has called since, & told me that there was one box silver plated & which he thinks

1:2

you will recollect, that he induced you to include in the bargain, you bought them in the lump & this was one which he was anxious to get quit of – He speaks in the warmest terms of gratitude <for> of your Lordships continual kindness to him and I can not but believe his story – so pray, at any rate, open another Lid & try – I have given the Man some orders in consequence of the fervour with which he spoke of you – & made him a present of your Portrait!! – So I hope you wont employ me in this way again –

I have published this hour my Manuscrit venu de St Heléne d’une manière <an> inconnu – & am now 3p.m setting off to the Lords to hear Lord Hollands Motion – on the Illtreatment of Buonaparte – of wch his Valet de Cham. has published a grotesque Account. M Ward is here & asks about you – He is in great feather & in a debate with Sir Ja Mackintosh, Rose, Hallam &c – he was decreed to be the <cm> Wittiest Man in the Country –

We have had the mildest & most delightful weather throughout the whole

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103: Mu.’s “government connections” enable him to send letters to Byron in diplomatic bags.

104: Mu. is writing so quickly that he confuses Maturin’s play with B.’s.

105: Gifford will just read it; the job of decoding the Ms. is the printer’s.
of the winter – which has passed without Snow or Cold & now the Spring appears compleatly set in – – Pray tell me of your proposed movements – the Chronicle of yesterday congratulated the world – on Lord Byron’s return in a few weeks – from Switzerland. – Poor Maturin’s Play will not live Eight Nights & the expense of it – will ruin the house – there is a Meeting of Proprietors on Thursday to determine on the propriety of letting the Theatre at the end of the Season – After the Play on its first representation – the Green Room possessed all the long faces of a funeral no one spoke – for some time – at length Perry walked up to Ray & whispers – it wont do by G—d” – The Grand Duke Nicholas has enchanted every one – & has just gone carrying with him the Duke of Devonshire – to great grief of Miss Mercer – who has never smiled since – Ward says that Coleridge is Summum Borium – he has cheated me out of a Tragedy for wch I gave him £100 – I set up part of it – he took it away & I have not heard of it since – He says he will either return me my money – if he can get it – or write it out in some other way – but he is very welcome to the said sum.

I would not buy – “My dear Lord” – Hunt’s Rimini – & he abuses me like a pickpocket – I hope soon to hear again from your Lordship & offering every good wish I beg leave to be considered as remaining. My Lord

Your faithful Servant

John Murray

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, March 20th 1817:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; Smiles I 382; LJM 214-15)

London 20th March 1817

Thursday

My Lord,

I have to acknowled your Lordships kind letter, dated the 3rd received this hour – but I am sorry to say that it has occasioned me great anxiety about your health – You are not wont to cry before you are hurt – & I am apprehensive that you are worse even than you allow – pray keep quiet & take care of yourself – My Review shows that you are worth preserving and that the world yet loves you – If you become seriously worse – <pray> I entreat you to let me know it and I will fly to you with a Physician – an Italian one is only a preparation for the Anatomist – I will not tell your Sister of this – if you will tell me true – I had hopes that this Letter would have confirmed my expectations of your speedy return – which has been stated by Mr Kinnaird & repeated to me by Mr Davies – whom I saw yesterday & who promises to write – We often indulge our recoll ections of you & he allows me to believe that I am one of the few who really know you.

Gifford gave me yesterday the first Act of Manfred with a delighted countenance – telling me it was wonderfully poetical & desiring me to assure that it well merits publication – I shall send proofs to your Lordship with his remarks – if he have any – it is a wild and delightful thing & I like it myself – hugely.

Rt Honble Lord Byron

I had a letter from M’ Leigh yesterday, inclosing one for your Lordship – M’ Leigh promises me a visit by the end of the Month.

The public very generally accord with your opinion of the Critique in the Quarterly & it has actually as your friend Heber said produced a sensation – it is equally honourable to Scotts head and

106: Manuel.
107: Alexander Rae, co-manager of Drury Lane.
108: Zapolya.
109: Mu. jokes about Hunt’s Dedication to The Story of Rimini, which opens “My dear Byron …”
Heart and I rejoice much in my sagacity in soliciting him to write it – Gifford said to me – Lord Byron is much obliged to you – Scott was much satisfied with it himself & still more by the praise which has followed it – & this will be raised & confirmed by your Lordships approbation wch, in substance, I shall venture to communicate – <Of> The article is likely to have proved the more efficacious <for>from the good fortune of its having appeared in our perhaps very best Number – of which I have sold already 10,000 Copies – of the next number I am printing 12,000 – the sale is not exceeded by the Edinb. Rev – The Article in that Journal wch I also sent your Lordship is very good & satisfactory – but ours is peculiar – and therefore the more attractive.

Mr. Gifford who is at my Elbow & <who has> to whom {I have} just read your letter at least that part of it referring to the Review – & the Procession – desires me to present his sincere regards to you & to assure you how much he joins in my anxieties & regret at your Lordships illness – which however I will flatter myself with hoping that your next will tell us <have/> has very materially abated.

I long to be admitted to a sight of the Miniature – how many have I seen?

Wedderburn Webster is again at work he is composing a pamphlet on the Subject of the recent Suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act.

With the most sincere and anxious wishes for your Lordships Speedy recovery
I remain

My Lord
your Lordships
attached & faithful Servant
John Murray

If any thing the least Curious or interesting happen to be published or printed in the Course of your Travels – allow me to request that your Lordship would send it to our Ambassadors Envoys or Consuls at the place directed to J.W.Croker Esq' Admiralty under Cover – to Me

[1:4 blank except for address.]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, March 21st 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 217)

Gifford has yet fully to express his dissatisfaction with Manfred’s third act, which causes Byron to rewrite it. Murray writes on the day following the previous item.

My Lord

Three Packets and not one Letter or line – is sufficiently tantalizing – but I console myself with the belief that if you had not been much better you would not have transcribed so much – and moreover M’ Davies came in soon after the arrival of the Second Act and read me a portion a Letter to himself written in spirits sufficient to satisfy me that you were better – By the way I do seriously aver that the Letter of J. H. is inferior in spirit & sagacity to that of W. W. – who yields to the other in length only – M’ D has borrowed the 1st & 2nd Act for three hours – in the mean time I inclose a proof of the first – & <to/>by tomorrow I shall be able to send a duplicate with the remarks of M’ G – the others shall follow in the same way – in the little extract – from the extract – from your journal wch I <was much> {saw I was} much struck with your description of pastoral life in the Alps – wch I hope you do not omit & indeed as much of the first impressions made by this Scenery will be given as you can – all the world has been there & will be delighted to tread the Air again in imagination –

1:3

110: The miniature of Marianna Segati referred to by B. in his March 3rd P.S.
111: An invitation to B. to use the diplomatic service for his letters. It is not clear that he ever does.
112: H. had protested about the review of Letters, and Webster about that of his poem Waterloo.
I shall have occasion to write again tomorrow – in the mean while I remain
My Lord
Your faithful Servant
Jno. Murray

Cap't. Byrons Lady – has a Son

1:3

M' Gifford has this moment brought me his Copy – he is truly delighted with it – & repeats that it is exceedingly good – he is only anxious lest you will not take the pains to bring it to a good conclusion which I really hope you will be able to do – make it compleat – for honour & reputation –

I will send other proofs in a day or three

I send a duplicate of this in another Cover

[1:4 is blank.]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, March 25th 1817: (Source: text from B.L.Ashley 4729; LJ IV 83-8; BLJ V 191-4)

[To, / Jno Murray Esqre / 50 Albemarle Street / London / Angeleterre / Inghilterra]

Byron answers Murray’s of March 6th. He claims not to be qualified to write about Italian manners. Several of his satirical comments anticipate Beppo (written in October).

Venice. March 25th, 1817

Dear Sir – Your letter & enclosure are safe – but “English gentlemen” are very rare – at least in Venice – I doubt whether there are at present any – save the Consul & vice=Consul – {with} neither of whom I have the slightest acquaintance.

– The moment I can pounce upon a witness – I will send the deed properly signed – but must he necessarily be gentle? would not a servant or a merchant do? – Venice is not a place where the English are gregarious – their pigeon=houses are Florence – Naples – Rome &c. & to tell you the truth this was one reason why I staid here – till the season of the purgation of Rome from these people – which is infected with them at this <season> {time} – should arrive – besides I abhor the nation – &

the nation me; – it is impossible for me to describe my own sensation on that point – but it may suffice to say – that if I met with any of the race in the beautiful parts of Switzerland – the most distant glimpse or aspect of them – [{<ils>}'] poisoned the whole scene – & I do not choose to have the Pantheon & St. Peter’s & the Capitol spoiled for me too. – This feeling may be probably owing to recent events – & the destruction {with} which my moral Clytemnestra hewed me down – but it does not exist the less – & while it exists I shall conceal it as little as any other. – I have been seriously ill with a fever – but it is gone. – I had no physician. – – I believe or suppose it was the indigenous fever of the place which comes every year at this time, & of which the Physicians change the name an=

=ually to dispatch the people sooner – it is a kind of Typhus – & kills occasionally; – it was pretty smart – but nothing particular – & has left me some debility & a great appetite. – There are a good many ill <of> at present I suppose of the same. – I feel sorry for Horner114 – if there was any thing in the world to make him like it – and still more sorry for his friends – as there was much to make them regret him. – I had not heard of his death till by your letter. – Some weeks ago I wrote to you my acknowledgements of W. S.’s article – now I know it to be his – it cannot add to my good opinion of him – but it adds to that of myself. – He & Gifford & Moore are the only regulars I ever knew who had

113: B. has yet to meet R.B.Hoppner.
114: Francis Horner (1778-1817) Whig lawyer and politician; co-founder of the Edinburgh Review.
nothing of the <Garris> Garrison about their {manner} – no nonsense – nor affectations look you! – as for the rest whom I

have known – there was always more or less of the author about them – the pen peeping from behind the ear – & the thumbs a little inky or so. – “Lalla Rookh” – you must recollect that in the way of title – the “Giaour” has never been pronounced to this day – & both it & Childe Harold sounded very formidable & facetious to {the} blue= bottles of wit & honour about town – till they were taught <into> & startled into a proper deportment – & therefore Lalla Rookh which is very orthodox & oriental – is as good a title as need be – if not better. – I could wish rather that he had not called it “a Persian tale” firstly because we have had “Turkish tales” & Hindoo tales – & Assyrian tales – already – & tale is a word of which it repents me to have nick=named poesy – <f> fable would be better; –

2:1

and secondly – “Persian tale” reminds one of the lines of <Amb> Pope – on Ambrose Phillips – though no one can say to be sure that this tale has been “turned for half a crown”115 – still it is as well to avoid such clashings. – “Persian story” why not? – or romance? – I feel as anxious for Moore as I could do for myself for the soul of me – & I would not have him succeed otherwise than splendidly – which I trust he will do. – – – –

With regard to the “witch drama” I sent all the three acts – by post – week after week – within this last month. – I repeat that I have not an idea if it is good or bad – if bad it must on no account be risked in publication – if good – it is at your service – I value it at three hundred guineas – or less if you like it – – perhaps if published the

2:2

best way will be <to add> to add it to your winter volume – & not publish separately. – The price will shew you I don’t pique myself upon it – so speak out – you way put it in the fire if you like – & Gifford don’t like. – The Armenian grammar is published – that is one – the other is still in M.S. – – My illness has prevented me from moving this month past. – & I have done nothing more with the Armenian. – Of Italian or rather Lombard Manners – I could tell you little or nothing. – I went two or three times {to} the Governor’s Conversazione, (& if you go once you are free to go always) at which as I only saw very plain women – a formal circle – in short a worse sort of rout – I did not go again. – I went to some Academie & to Madame Albrizzi’s – where I saw pretty much the same thing – with the addition of some literati – who are the same – blue by God! – all the world over. – I fell in love the first week with Madame Segati & I have continued so ever since – because she is very pretty & pleasing – & talks Venetian – which amuses me – & is naive – & I can besides see her & make love <to> {with} her at all {or any} hours – which is convenient, with my temperament. – I have seen all their spectacles & sights – but I do not know anything very worthy of observation – except that the women kiss better than<g> those of any other nation – which is notorious – and is attributed to the worship of images and the early habit of <kissing> osculation induced thereby. – very truly yrs

P.S. – Pray send the red <toothpow> toothpowder by a safe hand & Speedily. – –

2:4

I read the “Christabel”116

Very well. –

I read the “Missionary”117

115: Pope, Epistle to Arbuthnot, L.180.
116: B. was a great admirer of Coleridge’s Christabel, and persuaded Mu. to publish it in 1816.
To hook the Reader – you – John Murray –
Have published “Anjou’s Margaret”
Which won’t be sold off in a hurry,
(At least, it has not been as yet)
And then still further to bewilder him,
Without remorse you set up “Ilderim,”
So mind you don’t get into debt, –
Because – as how – if you should fail
These books would be but baddish bail. –
And mind – you do not let escape
These rhymes to Morning Post, or Perry, –
Which would be very treacherous – very –
And get me into such a scrape. –
For firstly I should have to sally
<Arm> All in my little boat, against a Galley –
And should I chance to slay the Assyrian wight
Have next to combat with the female knight –
And pricked to death expire upon her needle,
A sort of end which I should take indeed ill! – – [inverted at page top:]

You may shew these matters to Moore and the select – but not to the prophane. – And tell Moore – that I wonder he don’t write to me now & then. – – – –

**note from William Gifford to John Murray, late March 1817:**
(Source: text from John Murray Archive, 50 Albemarle Street)

**Gifford criticises Manfred’s original third act.**

No 2 Albemarle St
My dear Sir,

I found your parcel here at 4 – so that it is hardly possible to do any thing by Post time – nor indeed can I say much more. I have marked a passage or two which might be omitted with advantage: but the Act requires strengthening. There is nothing to bear it out but one speech. The Friar is despicable, & the servants uninteresting. The scene with the Friar ought to be imposing, & for that purpose the Friar should be a real good man – not an idiot. More dignity should be lent to the catastrophe. See how beautifully our old poet Marlow has wrought up the death of Faustus – Several of our old plays have scenes of this kind – but they strove to make them impressive. Manfred should not end in this feeble

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118: *Ilderim* by Henry Gally Knight (John Murray, 1816).
119: *Margaret of Anjou* by Miss Holford (John Murray, 1816).
120: *Waterloo and other Poems* by James Wedderburn Webster (Ridgway, 1816). B. had flirted with the author’s wife in 1813.
121: *The White Doe of Rylstone, or The Fate of the Nortons* by William Wordsworth (Longman, 1815).
122: *A hunting call* implies the White Doe should be shot.
123: *Glenarvon* by Lady Caroline Lamb (Henry Colburn, 1816). B. had had an affair with the author in 1812. It contains a fanciful portrait of him.
My Lord

I received the last Act with your favour of the 9th, yesterday & now I inclose a proof both of the Second and Third Acts¹²⁴ – with the Title Dram Pers – &c – all for correction & emendation – by the way there are several errors which may affront you as not existing in the Original – which are owing to the haste with which my family transcribed them – as I am anxious to preserve the original with which I had not time to compare it – & having at first, after transcribing sent it to Mr G –

For the Drama Do me the favour to draw upon me for 300 Gs when + you please – & I hope to make a living profit upon it –

<No> I told you in my last letter that Mr G was very much pleased with Act 2 – & as you know he takes a paternal interest in your literary well being – he does not by any means like the Conclusion – now I am venturing upon the confidence with which your Lordship has ever honoured me in sending the inclosed²²⁵ – I fear I am not doing right – I am not satisfied – but I venture – & I entreat that you will make a point of returning them. I have told him that I have made a Letter from them – but there is so much friendly good sense in them that I can not refrain – I am sure you can – & I am almost sure that you will improve what begins & continues so beautifully

+ or I will pay it into Kinnairds

I shall pay the 3rd £500 – tomorrow –

1:2

in a Drama of any Kind – the last Act is the Difficulty & this you must surmount –

I very much fear that Mad de Stael is on the point of death – she is very ill has been so for some time

I thank you for your reply about Croker – I am going to a great party at Perrys tonight to meet Mesd Fodor – Campresi – &c &c &c &c &c I shall say a word to him – I expect to meet M’ Moore & Lady – I sent him your Letter received with mine yesterday – The Prince is now enchanted with Mad. Fodor – goes no where where she is no & sits 3 hours at the Piano with her – – He has at length visited the Duchess of Cumberland – with all his Courtiers – who had before abused her – she is now a Marvelously ill used woman. – Poor Maturin will get little or nothing from the Theatre – Kean was disgusted with his Character & ruined the Play – he has in this respect behaved basely.

Scott is very much pleased that you like the Article in the Q. Rev. & has told me me I may now mention the Author –

1:3

I am most happy to hear that you will return in May – I am flattering myself that you are much better –

Pray give us more of The Pastorals & Scenery of the Alps – & a Close working of the Whole – do it will be the best announcement of your Return – Mr G – is equally firm & Sincere in his admiration of Act I (most particularly) & of Act 2 – as poetry – which he says can not go far beyon it –

Ever My Lord

Most faithfully

Your Servant

Jno Murray

¹²⁴: Of Manfred.
¹²⁵: See previous item.
I beg you to offer my particular Compliments to M’ Hobhouse – <for> to whose Elephntine 4\textsuperscript{126} I earnestly aspire

[1:4 blank.]

April 2nd–September 26th 1817: Byron writes Mazeppa.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 2nd 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 91; QII 404-6; BLJ V 203-5)

Byron answers Murray’s of March 18th.

Venice April 2\textsuperscript{d}, 1817

Dear Sir /

I sent you the whole of the drama\textsuperscript{127} – at three several times – act by act in separate covers – I hope [that] you have or will receive some – or the whole of it. – – –

So Love has a conscience – by Diana! – I shall make him take back the box though it were Pandora’s; – the discovery of its intrinsic {silver} occurred on sending it to have the lid adapted to admit Marianna’s portrait – of course I had the box remitted in Stat u quo – & had the picture set in another – which suits it (the picture) very well. – The defaulting box is not touched hardly – it was not in the man’s hands above an hour; – I am aware of what you say of Otway – and am a very great admirer of his – all except of that maudlin bitch of [chaste lewdness] & blubbering curiosity Belvidera –

1:2

whom I utterly despise, abhor, & detest – but the story of Marino Falieri – is different & I think so much finer – that I wish Otway had taken it instead; – the head conspiring against the body – for refusal of redress for a real injury; – jealousy, treason – with the more fixed and inveterate passions (mixed with policy) of an old or elderly man – the Devil himself could not have a finer subject – & he is your only tragic dramatist. – – When Voltaire was asked why no woman has ever written even a tolerable tragedy? “Ah! (said the Patriarch) the composition of a tragedy requires testicles”. – If this be true Lord knows what Joanna Baillie does – I suppose she borrows them. There is still in the Doge’s palace the black {painted} over Falieri’s picture & the staircase whereon he was first crowned {Doge} & <then had a> subsequently decapitated. – This was the thing that most struck my imagination

1:3

in Venice – more than the Rialto, which I visited for the sake of Shylock – and more <even> {too} than Schiller’s “Armenian” – a novel which took a great hold of me when a boy – it is also called the “Ghost Seer” – & I never walked down S’. Mark’s by moonlight without thinking of it & – “At nine o’clock he died!”\textsuperscript{128} – – But I hate things all fiction & therefore the Merchant & Othello – have no great associations to me – but Pierre has – there should always be some foundation of <fact> fact for the most airy fabric – and pure invention is but the talent of a liar. – – –

Maturin’s tragedy. – – By your account of him last year to me he seemed a bit of a coxcomb personally; – poor fellow – to be sure he had a long seasoning of adversity – which is not so hard to bear as t’other thing – I hope that this won’t throw him back into the “Slough of Despond” – let him take heart “whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth blessed be the name of the Lord!”

1:4

This sentence by the way is a contrast to the other one of “Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat” which may be thus done into English –

God maddens him whom ’tis his will to lose,
And gives the choice of death or phrenzy – Choose! –

\textsuperscript{126}: Mu. signals that he has read Byron to Davies, March 7th 1817: \textit{I do not send you any descriptions – which you will find better in the Road book – or in H.’s future Elephantine quarto ...}

\textsuperscript{127}: \textit{Manfred}, with the revised third act.

\textsuperscript{128}: Schiller, \textit{Der Geisterseher}, first chapter.
You talk of “marriage” – ever since my own funeral – the word makes me giddy – & throws me into a cold sweat – pray don’t repeat it. – – Tell me that Walter Scott is better – I would not have him ill for the world – I suppose it was by sympathy that I had my fever at the same time. – – – I joy in the success of your Quarterly – but I must still stick by the Edinburgh – Jeffrey has done so by me I must say through everything – & this is more than I deserved from him. – – – I have more than once acknowledged to you by letter the “Article” (& Articles) say – that you have received the said letters – as I do not otherwise know what letters arrive. – – –

Both reviews came – but nothing more. M’s play & the extract not yet come. – – – – – – – 129

2:1

There have been two Articles in the Venice papers one a review of C. Lamb’s “Glenarvon” – (whom may it please the beneficent Giver of all Good to damn in the next world! as she has damned herself in this!) with the account of her scratching attempt at Canicide (at Lady Heathcote’s) – & the other a review of C 18 Har 1 in which it proclaims me the most rebellious & contumacious Admirer of Buonaparte – [now] surviving in Europe; – both these articles are translations from the literary Gazette of German Jenna. – I forgot to mention them at the time – they are some weeks old. – – – They actually mentioned Caro. Lamb – & her mother’s name at full length – I have conserved these papers as curiosities. – – – – – –

Write to say whether or no my <M/>Magician has arrived with all his scenes spells &c.

P.S. –

Will you tell Mr. Kinnaird – that the two recent letters I wrote to him were owing to a mistake of a booby of a Partner of Siri and Wilhalm (the Bankers here) & that one of them called this morning to say all was right – & that there was no occasion for [a] further letter – however – heaven knows whether they are right or not – I hope I shall not have the same bother at Rome. – – – You should close with Madame de Stael – this will be her best work – & permanently historical – it is on her father – the revolution – & Buonaparte, &c. Bonstetten told me in Switzerland it was very great. I have not seen it myself – but the author often – she was very kind to me at Coppet. – – – – – I like your delicacy you who print Margaret – & Ilderim and then Demur at Corinne. – – The failure of poor M’s play will be a cordial to the aged heart of Saul – who has been “kicking against the pricks”130 of the managers so long and so vainly – they ought to act his “Ivan” – as for Kean he is an “infidus Scurra” and his conduct on this occasion is of a piece with all one ever heard of him. – – – – – –

[NOT YET FOUND:] Pray look after M’. S. Aubin – He is an Oxonian – it is very odd & something more than negligent that he has not consigned the letters &c. it was his own offer. – It is useless to send to the Foreign Office nothing arrives to me by that conveyance – I suppose some zealous Clerk thinks it a Tory duty to prevent it. – –

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, April 8th 1817:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 221-2)

London 8 April 1817

My Lord

As the interval of hearing from you was much longer than I have lately been accustomed to calculate upon – I had begun to feel rather uneasy lest the cause should have been – an increase of your <xx>fever – I am sorry that you have been so severely indisposed – but I trust that the worst is passed & that you have only to acquire strength to be perfectly restored – As I have now sent your Lordship a proof of the whole of the Drama – I shall presume upon your Placing all additions upon it & shall therefore retain the one you have now sent me until I hear from you again. – It is very singular that

129: Byron adds twelve dashes.
130: Biblical; Acts 9:5, or 26:14.
You should not have received even the Second Copy wch I sent you of your last poems & of Tales of My Landlor. I would have given much that you had received them during your illness – I have just got a Letter from Augustus de Stael in which he tells me that his mother is out of danger – though there are yet very great apprehensions entertained by her friends. – I have just been called away by a visit from Captain Byron – who has had a most dreadful attack of Rheumatic Fever – for a whole fortnight he did not know what it was to be free from the most acute pain – his wife has brought him a Son – as I think I told your Lordship – I hope soon to hear that your Lordship is much better. Is there no original Venetian Story that you can make use of to give us another Tale?

I am <Dear Sir> your Lordships faithful Servant

John Murray

I offer best Comp’ to Mr Hobhouse – his Cambridge Adversary the son of Lord Townsend is dead –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 9th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.196; BLJ V 207-9)

[To, J. Murray Esq. / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]

Byron answers Murray's of March 18th and 20th. In the third line, “he” is underlined four times.

Venice. – April – 9th. 1817

Dear Sir, – Your letters of the 18th. & 20th. are arrived – In my own I have given you the rise, progress – decline – and fall – of my recent malady – it is gone to the Devil – I won’t pay him so bad a compliment as to say it came from him – he is too much of a Gentleman. – It was nothing but a slow fever – which quickened its’ pace towards the end of its’ journey – I had been bored with it some weeks – with nocturnal burnings – & morning perspirations – but I am quite well again – which I attribute to having had neither medicine nor Doctor thereof. – – – – – –

In a few days I set off for Rome – such is my purpose – I shall change it very often before monday next – but do you continue to direct & address to Venice as heretofore; – If I go – letters will be forwarded – I say “if,” because I never know what I shall do – till it is done – and as I mean most firmly to set out for Rome – it is not unlikely I may find myself at St. Petersburg – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

1:2

You tell me to “take care of myself” – faith and I will – I won’t be posthumous yet <being so> if I can help it – notwithstanding – only think – what a “Life & adventures” – <from> while I am in full scandal – would be worth – together with the “membra” of my writing desk – the sixteen beginnings of poems <never> {never} to be finished – Do you think I would not have shot myself last year – had I not luckily recollected that M. Clermont & Lady Noel & all the old women in England would have been delighted – besides the agreeable “Lunacy” of “the<>” “Crowner’s Quest” – – and the regrets of two or three <and> {or} half a dozen? Be assured – that I would live for two reasons – or more – there are one or two people whom I have to put out of the world – & as many into it – before I <should> {can} “depart in peace” if I do so before – I <has it> have not fulfilled my mission. – Besides when I turn thirty – I will turn devout – I feel a great vocation that way – in Catholic churches – & when I hear the Organ. –

1:3

So – Webster is writing again – is there no Bedlam in Scotland? – nor thumb=screw? – nor Gag? – nor hand=cuff? – I went upon my knees to him almost some years ago to prevent him from publishing a

131: Mu. leaves off the final “d”.
132: It’s seven months before B. obliges, with Beppo.
133: The speed at which Mu. writes causes him to address B. incorrectly.
134: H. was standing as MP for Cambridge University.
135: Shakespeare, Hamlet V i 22.
[political] pamphlet which would have given him a livelier idea of “Habeas corpus” than the world will derive from his [pre] [present] production upon that suspended subject – which will doubtless be followed by the suspension of other (his Majesty’s) subjects. -- I condole with Drury Lane – and rejoice with Sotheby – that is in a modest way, – on the tragical end of the new tragedy. -- You & Lg. Hunt have quarrelled then it seems; <xxxx xxx xxxxxx xxxx xxx xxx xxx xx>136 I introduce him & his poem to you – in the hope that (malgré politics) the union <will> would be beneficial to both – and the end is eternal enmity – & yet I did this with the best intentions; – I introduce Coleridge & Christabel – & Coleridge runs away with your money. – My friend Hobhouse <quarrel> [quarrels] <too> too with the Quarterly –

1:4

and (except the last) I am the <P> innocent <Isthmus> Isthmus (damn the word I can’t spell it)137 – though I have crossed that of Corinth a dozen times) of these <en> enmities. -- -- -- -- -- I will tell you something about Chillon. -- -- A M'. De Luc ninety years old – a Swiss – had it read to him & is pleased with it – so my Sister writes. – He <was> [said] that he was with Rousseau at Chillon – & that <my> {the} description is perfectly correct – but this is not all – I recollected something of the name & find the following passage in “The Confessions” – vol 3. page 247. – Liv. 8th “De tons ces amusemens celui qui me plut davantage – – fut une promenade autour du Lac – que je fis en bateau avec De Luc pere – sa bru – ses deux fils – et ma Therése. – Nous mimes sept jours a cette tournée par le plus beau temps du monde. J’en garde le vif souvenir des sites qui m’avoient frappé a l’autre extremité du lac, et dont Je fis la description quelques années apres, dans la Nouvelle Heloise.” This nonag<en>{in}arian De Luc must be one of the “deux fils”. He is in England – infirm but still in faculty. -- -- -- --

2:1

It is odd that <th> he should have lived so long – & not wanting in oddness that he should have made this voyage with Jean Jacques – & afterwards at such an interval read a poem by an Englishman (who had made precisely the same circumnavigation) upon the same scenery. – As for <the> “Manfred” – it is of no use sending “proofs” nothing of that kind comes. -- -- I sent the whole at different times – the 2 first acts are the best – the third – so – so – but I was blown with the first <heat> and second heats. – You must call it “a poem” for it is no drama (& I do not choose it to be called by so Sothebyish <a> [a] name) – a “poem in dialogue” or – pantomine if you will – anything – but a Green room Synonime. – And this is your Motto “There are more things in heaven & earth, Horatio, “Than <chave> {are} dreamt of in your philosophy. – 138

My love and thanks to M'. Gd.

1:4 [to the left of the address, at right-angles:] Don’t forget my toothpowder – its’ of no use to send it by the damned & double=damned conveyances – but by some private hand – by M’. Kinnaird, – or M’. Davies if they come out – or any body – let it be left at my bankers here [to the right of the address, at right-angles:] “Siri & Wilhalm.” – I mean to be in Venice again in July. -- -- -- Nothing yet whatever from the foreign office – why do you send <any> [any] thing to such <scoundrels> a “den of thieves” as that?!139

John Murray to Byron, from 50 Albermarle Street London, April 12th 1817:
(Text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 223-4)

[My Lord Byron / a Venise]

Murray answers Byron’s of March 25th. For the first time, Byron hears about Southey and Wat Tyler.

Albermarle Street. 1817

136: This heavy erasure would be interesting to scan.
137: In fact he spells it correctly the first time.
139: B.’s distrust of the English government is presumably why he doesn’t entrust his letters to the diplomatic bag.
My Lord

I was very much delighted by your amusing Letter of the 25th received on Thursday – I forwarded the Letter to M' Moore – & delivered that for M' Leigh – who came to town the day it arrived a the same day I sent sundry Packets – I Tooth Powder II – your Works 5 V – III Two Cop each of Harold & Chillon IV sundry Letters for you, accumulated during your absence – All of which Mr Croker very obligingly took charge off, & has sent to you via Paris – with orders to Sir Cha' Stewart to forward them instantly. M' Croker has sent them by this Channel finding that the things I twice sent you by Messenger direct to Italy – from the foreign Office had never reached – I <writ> send this by Post & I will be glad to learn the dates of Arrival of the Parcel & this Epistle –

I lent M' Croker – in reward the two first Acts of the Drama to read I think there is so much justice in his mode of liking them – that I venture to inclose his letter to me – I shew the Third Act to no one hoping that you will insist upon your Genius's making it what it ought be – Gifford was very much amused with your Letter – but fears that you are determined – by your remarks up Kissing – you see a great more before you subside into habits of discretion. – We admire the justice of your poetical criticism – as much as we laugh at your

The Lord Byron

1:2

mode of expressing it – I fear you must yet make allowances for the tardy correspondence of Moore – who is in bed with the Muses – what will come of it we are yet to learn –

Our friend Southey has got into a confounded Scrape – Some Twenty years ago, when he knew no better, & was a republican he wrote a certain Drama entitled Wat Tyler in order to disseminate wholesome doctrine amongst the lower orders – this he presented to a friend, with a fraternal embrace, who was at that time enjoying the reflection generated by his residence in Newgate – His friend however either thinking its publication might prolong his durance or fancying that it would not become profitable – as a speculation – quietly put it into his pocket – & now that the Author has most manfully laid about him Slaying Whigs & Republicans by the Million – this Cursed friend publishes – but what is yet Worse the Author upon suing for an injunction – to proceed in which he is obliged to swear that he is the Author – is informed by the Chancellor that it is seditious – for sedition there is no Copyright – I will inclose either now or in my next a 2d Copy – for as there is no Copyright everyone has printed it – wch will amuse you.

I am not surprised at your unacquaintance with the Vice-Consul – because he is your intimate friend M' Scott – <whom you> whose Nephews & Nieces you made such fair efforts

1:3

to increase – but the Consul – my friend M' Hoppner has the most charming wife a Swiss that you have seen<140> – M' Ward told me yesterday that She was just one of the most accomplished & delightful Women he ever with – – Lord March married yesterday the Eldest daughter of the Earl of Anglesea –

I have got the Wat Tyler wch I inclose with a Letter from M' Leigh who has been much distressed at your Lordships illness – I hope this will find you recovered – Pray Work up the last Act of the Drama You must not publish any thing that will not set the town in flames noe after the good account we have given of you –

I send my most hearty good wishes to your Lordship & remain

My Lord
Your faithful Servant
John Murray

[1:4 contains address only.]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 14th 1817 (i):
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 109-111; BLJ V 213-4)
Byron answers Murray's of March 28th (with Gifford's enclosure), and promises to rewrite Manfred Act III.

Venice, April 14th.

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140: The Byron / Hoppner correspondence starts on September 5th.
Dear Sir /

The present proofs (of the whole) begin only at the 17th page – but as I had corrected & sent (back) the 1st. act, it does not signify. –

The third {act} is certainly d—d bad – & like the Archbishop of Grenada’s homily (which savoured of the palsy) has the dregs of my fever – during which it was written. – It must on no account be published in its present state; – I will try & reform it – or re write it altogether – but the impulse is gone – & I have no chance of making anything out of it. – I would not have it published as it is on any account. –

1:2

The speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of {this act} I thought good myself – the rest is certainly as bad as bad can be – & I wonder what the devil possessed me – I am very glad indeed that you {sent} me Mr. Gifford’s opinion without deduction – do you suppose me such a Sotheby as not to be very much obliged to him? – or that in fact I was not & am not convinced {of the} & convicted in my conscience of the absurdity of this same overt act of nonsense? – I shall try at it again – in the mean time lay it upon the Shelf (the whole drama, I mean) but pray correct your copies of the 1st. & 2nd. acts by the original MS. – – – –

1:3

I am not coming to England – but going to Rome in a few days – I return to Venice in June – so – pray – address all letters & c. to me here as usual – that is to – Venice. –

D’. Polidori this day left this city with L. Guilford for England – he is charged with some books – to your care (from me) and two miniatures also to the same address – both – for my sister. – Recollect – not to publish upon pain of I know not what – until I have tried again at the third act. – I am not sure that I shall try – and still less that I shall succeed if I do – but I am very sure – that (as it is) it is unfit for publication or perusal –

1:4

& unless I can make it out to my own satisfaction – I won’t have any part published. – – – –

I write in haste – & {after} having lately written very often.

yrs ever truly,

[swirl signature]

P.S. – Enclosed are the {2 letters.} – –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 14th 1817 (ii):
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; BLJ V 213-4)

Venice – April 14th, 1817

Dear Sir –

By the favour of D’. Polidori – who is here on his way to England with the present Lord Guilford – (the late Earl having <partly> gone to England by another road – accompanied by his bowels in a separate coffer) I remit to you to deliver to M’Mr. Leigh two Miniatures – but previously you will {have the goodness to} desire M’. Love (as a peace offering between him & me) to set them in plain gold – with my arms complete – and “Painted by <Prepiani> Prepiani – Venice – 1817” – on the back. –

I wish also that you would desire Holmes to make a copy of each {that is both} for myself – and {that you will} retain the said copies till my return. – One was done while I was very unwell – the other in my health – <which> which <may> may account for their dissimilitude. – – – –

I trust {that} they will reach their destination in safety. – –

I recommend the Doctor to your good offices with your Government friends – & if you can be of any use to him in a literary point of view – pray – be so. – – – –

1:2

141: The proofs of Manfred.
142: See Le Sage, Gil Blas, VII 4.
143: B. may have written his original third act as a deliberate experiment in comic bathos.
144: Peach figs. 51 and 52.
To day or rather yesterday for it is past midnight I have been up to the battlements of the highest tower in Venice, & seen it & it’s view in all the glory of a clear Italian sky. – I also went over the Manfrini palace – famous for it’s pictures – amongst them there is a Portrait of Ariosto by Titian surpassing all my <conception> [anticipation] of the power of painting – or human expression – it is the poetry of portrait – & the portrait of Poetry. – There was also one of some learned lady – centuries <ago> (old) whose name I forget – & it is forgotten – but whose features must always be remembered – I never saw greater beauty <or> or sweetness or wisdom – it is the kind of face to go mad for – because it cannot walk out of its frame. – – –

There is also a famous [dead] Christ & live apostles – for which Buonaparte offered in vain five thousand Louis – & of which though it is a {<ca> capo d’opera of} Titian – as I am no connoisseur I say little – & thought less, except of one figure in it. – There are ten thousand others – &

1:3

[some very] fine Giorgiones amongst them, & & & ——————————

There is an Original Laura & Petrarch – very hideous both – Petrarch has not only the dress – but the features & air of an old woman – & Laura looks by no means like a young <one> one, – {or a pretty one.} ——————————

What struck me most in the general collection was the extreme resemblance of the style of the <women> female faces in the mass of pictures <to> <so> so many centuries or generations old to those you see & meet every day amongst the [existing] Italians. – The queen of Cyprus & Giorgione’s wife – {particularly the latter} – are Venetians as it were of yesterday – the same eyes and expression – & to my mind there is none finer. You must recollect however – that I know nothing of painting – & that I detest it – unless it reminds me of something I have seen or think it possible to see – for which I spit upon & abhor all the saints & subjects of one half the impostures I see in the churches & palaces – & when in Flanders, I never was so disgusted in my life as with Rubens & his eternal

1:4

wives & infernal glare of colours – as they appeared to me, – {& in Spain I did not think much of Murillo & Velasquez.} – Depend upon it of all the arts it is the most artificial & unnatural – & that by which the nonsense of mankind is {the} most imposed upon. – – I never yet saw the picture – or the statue – which came within a league of my conception or expectation – but I have seen many mountains & Seas – {& Rivers} and views – & two or three women – who went as <much> {far} beyond it – besides some horses; and a Lion <at> (at Veli Pasha’s) in the Morea; & a tiger at supper in Exeter ’change, ——————————

When you write continue to address to me at Venice – where do you suppose – the books you sent to me are? – At Turin – this comes of “the foreign office” – which is foreign enough God knows for any good it can be of to me, or any one else – & be damned to it – with <its> it’s last Clerk – & first Charlateral Castlereagh, ——————————

This makes my hundredth letter at least.

yr[scrawl]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 14th 1817 (iii):
(Source: this text from BLJ V 215-6)

Venice, April 14th, 1817

[written on last page of proof of Act II of Manfred:]

Recollect to correct this by the original M. S. – There are many errors – & I have not had time to look over it carefully

I do not return the third act for reasons mentioned in my letter under another cover. –

April 17th-29th: Byron travels to Rome.

April 19th 1817: Byron writes The Lament of Tasso.

145: In art criticism, B. has only a limited array of vocabulary and concepts.
Byron to John Murray, from Florence, April 23rd 1817:
(Source: this text from BLJ XI 190)

Byron sends Murray The Lament of Tasso.

Florence – April 23d. 1817

If Mr. Gd thinks this good – it may be published – you will see that it is a consequence of a visit to Ferrara. – – I am thus far on my way to Rome – but mean to return to Venice directly – so address your answer to Venice, as usual – – I have done nothing at the 3d. act of Manfred – but will – by and bye. – –

yrs. [scrawl]

P.S. – On this day year the 23d. – I left London – & on the 25th. England. – –

Byron to John Murray, from Foligno, April 26th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.198; BLJ V 212-14)

Yet more art criticism.

Foligno – April 26th. 1817.

Dear Sir / I wrote to you the other day from Florence – inclosing an M.S.S. entitled the “Lament of Tasso” – it was written in consequence of my having been lately at Ferrara. – In the last section of this M.S. but one (that is the penultimate) – I think that I have omitted a line in the copy sent to you from Florence – viz – after the line <Aft>

“And woo compassion to a blighted name
Insert
“Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.”

The context will show you the sense – which is not clear in this quotation – remember – I write this in the supposition that you have received my Florentine packet. – – –

At Florence I remained but a day – having a hurry for Rome to which I am thus far advanced. – –

However – I went to the two

1:2
galleries – <and> from which one returns drunk with beauty – the Venus is more for admiration than love – but there are sculpture and painting – which for the <same> first time at all gave me an idea of what people <bea> mean by their cant & (what M’. Braham calls) “entusimusy” (i.e. enthusiasm) about those two most artificial of the arts. – – – What struck me most were <some> the Mistress of Raphael a portrait – the mistress of Titian a portrait – a Venus of Titian in the Medici gallery – the Venus; –

Canova’s Venus {also} in the other gallery – Titian’s mistress is also in the other gallery – (that is, {in} the Pitti Palace gallery –) the Parcae of Michel Angelo {a picture} – -- and the Antinous – the Alexander – & one or two not very decent groupes in marble – -- the Genius of Death {also} in the other gallery –

I also went to the Medici Chapel – fine frippery in great slabs of {various} expensive stones – to commemorate fifty rotten & forgotten carcases – it is unfinished & will remain so. – --

1:3

The church of “Santa Croce” contains much illustrious nothing – the tombs of Machiavelli – Michel Angelo – Galileo Galilei – and Alfieri – make it the Westminster abbey of Italy. – -- I did not admire any of these tombs -- beyond their contents. – -- -- That of Alfieri is heavy – and all of them seem to me overloaded – what is necessary but a bust & a name? – and perhaps a date? – the last for the unchronological – of whom I am one. – -- -- But all your Allegory & eulogy is infernal – & worse than the long wigs of English numskulls upon Roman <statues> {bodies} <of> {in} in the {statuary of} reign of Charles – William – and Anne. –

When you write – write <to> {to} Venice as usual – I mean to return {there} in a fortnight. –
I shall not be in England for a long time. – This afternoon I met Lord and Lady Jersey – & saw them for some time – all well – children grown {[& healthy]} – she very pretty but sunburnt – he very sick of travelling – bound for Paris. – There are not many English on the move – & those who are {are} mostly homewards – I shall not return till

1:4
business makes me – being much better where I am – in health & – & – For the sake <of m> of my personal comfort – I pray you send me immediately to Venice – mind – Venice – viz – Waite’s tooth powder – red a quantity – Calcined Magnesia of the best quality – a quantity – and all this by safe sure & speedy means – & by the Lord! do it. – I have done nothing at Manfred’s third act – you must wait – I’ll have at it – in a week or two – or so. – yrs ever

Byron and John Cam Hobhouse to John Murray, from Rome, May 5th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 115-16; BLJ V 219)
Byron has rewritten Manfred’s third act.

Byron writes: Rome, May 5th. 1817. –
Dear Sir / By this post (or next at farthest) I send you in two other covers – the new third act of “Manfred.” – I have rewritten the greater part – & returned what is not altered in the proof you sent me. – The Abbot is become a good man – & the Spirits are brought in at the death – – you will find [I think] some good poetry in this {new} act here & there – & if so – print it – without sending me further proofs – under M. G’s correction – [if he will have the goodness to overlook it.} – Address all answers to Venice as usual – I <do> mean to return there in ten days. – The “Lament of Tasso” which I sent from Florence has I trust arrived – I look upon it as a “these be good rhymes” – as Pope’s papa said to him – when he was a boy. – – For the two – it & the drama – you will disburse to me (via Kinnaird) Six hundred guineas – you will perhaps be surprized that I set the same price

1:2
upon this – as upon the drama – but besides that I look upon it as good – I <am> won’t take less than three hundred gs for anything. – – – The two together will make you a larger publication than the “Siege & Parisina” – so you may think yourself let off very easy – that is to say – if these poems are good for anything, which I hope and believe. – – I have been some days in Rome – <which is a> {the} wonderful – I am seeing sights – & have done nothing else – except the {new} third act for you – I have this morning seen a live Pope & a dead Cardinal – Pius 7th has been burying Cardinal Bracchi – whose body I saw in State at the Chiesa nuova – – Rome has delighted me beyond everything since Athens – & Constantinople – but I shall not remain long this visit – Address to Venice.

ever yours [scrawl]

P.S. I have got my {saddle} horses here & have ridden & am riding all about the country. – –

1:3 Hobhouse writes:
My dear Sir –
I cannot let Lord B’s letter go without acknowledging a postscript or two which you have been good enough to send me in your dispatches to his Lordship –
It will be but one word that I shall say but that one word is intended to assure you that I am extremely sensible of your attentions and am with much sincerity
– Your oblig’d Sert;
John Hobhouse

Byron to John Murray, from Rome, May 9th 1817:
(Source: text from B.L.Ashley 4730; LJ IV 116-21; BLJ V 220-2)
Byron answers Murray’s of April 8th.

Rome May 9th. 1817.
My Dear Sir / – Address all answers to Venice for there I shall return in fifteen days – God willing. – – I sent you from Florence the “Lament of “Tasso” – & from Rome the reformed third act of Manfred – both of which I trust will duly arrive. – The terms of these two – I mentioned in my last – & {will}
repeat in this – it is three hundred for each – or six hundred guineas for the two – that is – if you like – & they are good for any thing.

At last one of the parcels is arrived – in the notes to C. H. there is a blunder of yours or mine – you talk of arrival at S. Gingo and immediately after add – “on the height is the Chateau of Clarens” – this is sad work – Clarens is on the other side of the lake – & it is quite impossible that I should have so bungled – look at the MS., & at any rate rectify this.

1:2

The “Tales of my Landlord” I have read with great pleasure – & perfectly understand now why my Sister & aunt are so very positive in the very erroneous persuasion that they were {must have been} written by me – if you knew me as well as they do – you would have fallen perhaps into the same mistake; – some day or other I will explain to you why – when I have time – at present it does not matter – but you must have thought this blunder of theirs very odd – & so did I – till I had read the book. – – Croker’s letter to you is a very great compliment – I shall return it to you in my next. – – Southey’s Wat Tyler is rather awkward – but the Goddess Nemesis has done well – he is – I will not say what – but I wish he was something else {else} – I hate all intolerance – but most the intolerance of Apostacy – & the wretched vehemence with which a miserable crea=

1:3

ture who has contradicted himself – lies to his own heart – & endeavours to establish his sincerity by proving himself a rascal – not for changing his opinions – but for persecuting those who are of less malleable matter – it is no disgrace to M’. Southey to have written Wat Tyler – {now} {& afterwards} to have written his birthday or Victory Odes (I speak only of their polities) but it is something for which I have no words for this man to have endeavoured to bring to the stake (for such would he do) men who think as he thought – & for no reason but because they think so still, where he has found it convenient to think otherwise. – Opinions are made to be changed – or how is truth to be got at? we don’t arrive at it by standing on one leg? or on the first day of our setting out – but though we may jostle one another on the way that is no reason

1:4

why we should strike or trample – elbowing’s enough.

2:1

2.) I’ll tell you a story. – The other day a man here – an English – making a mistake the statues of Charlemagne and Constantine – {for} which are Equestrian for those of Peter & Paul – asked another – which was Paul – of these same horsemen? – to which the reply was – “I like thought Sir that S. Paul had never got on horseback since his accident?” – . I’ll tell you another. – – Henry Fox writing (to some one) from Naples the other day after an illness – adds “and I am so changed that my oldest Creditors would hardly know me.” – -. -

I am delighted with Rome – as I would be with a hand box – that is it is a fine thing to see – finer than Greece – but I have not been here long enough to affect it as a residence – & I must go back to

2:2

Lombardy – because I am wretched at being away from M’. . . .

I have been riding my saddle horses every day – and been to Albano – it’s lakes – & to the top of the Alban mount – & to Frascati – Aricia – &c. &c. &c. with an &c. &c. &c. about the city & in the city – for

146: Shakespeare, Hamlet, V ii 154-5.
all which – vide Guide=book. – As a whole – ancient & modern – it beats Greece – Constantinople
– every thing – at – least that I have ever seen. –
But I can’t describe because my first impressions <at> are always strong & confused – & my
Memory selects & reduces them to order – like distance in the landscape – – & blends them better
– although they may be less distinct – there must be a sense or

2:3
two more than we have as mortals – which I suppose the Devil has – (or t’other) for where thers much
to be grasped we are always at a loss – and yet feel that we ought to have a higher and more extended
comprehension. –
I have had a letter from Moore – who is in some alarm about his poem – I don’t see why. – –
I have had another from my poor dear Augusta who is in a sad fuss about my [late] illness – do pray
tell her – (the truth) that I {am} better than ever – & in importunate health – growing (if not grown)
large & ruddy – & congratulated by impertinent persons on my robustious appearance – when I ought
to be pale and interesting. – – –
You tell me that George B. has got a son – and Augusta says – a daughter – which is it? it is no great
matter – the father is a

2:4
good man – an excellent officer – & has married a very nice little woman – who will bring him more
babes than income – howbeit she had a handsome dowry – & is a very charming girl – but he may as
well get a ship. – – –
I have no thoughts of coming amongst you yet a while – so that I can fight off business; – if I could but
make a tolerable sale of <that> Newstead – there would be no occasion for my return & I can assure
you very sincerely – that I am much happier <and> – (or at least have been so –) out of your island than
in it. – – –
yrs [scrawl]

P.S –
There are few English here – but several of my acquaintance – amongst others the Marquis of
Lansdowne with whom I dine tomorrow – I met the Jerseys on the road at Foligno – all well – Oh – I
forgot – the Italians have printed Chillon &<c>. a piracy a pretty little edition prettier than yours and
published as I found to my great astonishment on arriving here & what

[up right-hand side of page:]
is odd is, that the English is quite correctly printed – why they did it or who did it I know not – but

[inverted across page top:]
so it is – I suppose for the English people. – I will send

[down left-hand side of page:]
you a copy.

Byron to John Murray, from Rome, May 9th 1817:
(Source: not yet found in NLS Ms.43489; this text adapted from BLJ XI 190)

Corrections Canto 3rd.

Stanza 103 – you have printed in line first love instead of “learn that Lore” – which you may easily see
by the ultimate rhyme of “more” as well as by the sense that it should be – I remember in the M.S. –
taking particular pains to make the r legible – anticipating some such cursed blunder of Mr. Davidson.
–
Stanza 85.
Line 2d. – it was not “wide world” but “wild world” – – I sent you a long letter last night. – –
yrs.
Byron to John Murray, from Rome, May 10th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.202; BLJ V 222-3)

May 10th, 1817.

Dear Sir / Will you forward the enclosed letter to its' address. – The person to whom it is addressed will probably have a parcel for me in a fortnight after the receipt {of this letter} – which I have desired him to consign to you – & I request you will have the goodness if possible to get it forwarded to me at Venice by some safe & sure conveyance – which may surely be done – though I have not been lucky with my parcels hitherto. – – – –

If Mr. Kinnaird or Mr. Davies come out – they would convey it –

1:2 / 3

but I want it to be sent sooner – so perhaps some other way would be better. – I also would thank you to send me some calcined Magnesia – & toothpowder. –

yours very truly,
[swirl]

I have written to you often lately.

[1:4 has just the extended line “so perhaps some other way would be better.”]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, May 13th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; Smiles I 384-5; LJM 228-9)

[My Lord / My Lord Byron / Poste restante / a Venise / en Italie]

Murray answers Byron's of April 2nd, 14th and 23rd.

London May 13th. 1817

My Lord

I have received safely your obliging Letters of the 14th, 2nd and 23d April inclosing proofs returned of the Drama & many interesting observations on Men & Things – Your favour of the 23d arrived yesterday & I instantly sent the Lines upon Tasso <of> to M G – who called with them Soon afterwards and assured me that they were exceedingly good & that there was besides a difference in the style which would by being novel prove exceedingly interesting – He thinks they should not be published separately but remain until we form another pamphlet, probably with the Drama – & will you not finish one of the many Fables (I think is your new name) which you have sketched out & then our Coach is full – I rejoice to find you so much recovered for I suspect that you have been very ill indeed –

Moores Poem is to appear on the 22nd inst and I will try to send it – Mr Sheil the Author of Adelaide – has had most extraordinary Success on the Stage with a Tragedy called the Apostate – merely from forming a Series of interesting Situations – I read it with M G

1:2

in MSS & we both thought it impossible that it could succeed – & I went fully convinced that it would be d—d – but nothing could exceed the applause which it drew throughout – it had the advantage of giving four exceedingly appropriate Characters to C. Kemble – M'Creedy Young & Miss O’Neil neither of whom ever had an opportunity of acting better – its Success has been compleat & it must be Acted as long as four good Actors can be brought together –

Pray have you not received the Copy of Manuel by Maturin wch I sent you nor yet the Copies of your Own Poems? nor Tales of My Landlord? Do you think that merely addressing you Poste Restante – could have occasioned the failure?

Your friend Hunt, because I could not give him £500 for his Rimini – has had the baseness to enter upon a Series of Abuse of me – which I really regard no further than that I never did give my

1:3

name to the Public, except in a business advertisement –

I breakfasted yesterday with your friend M Davies who is in health & usual spirits – I wish very much that he would marry Miss M – r – <y> whose Affections he gains by reading to her your

147: Lallah Rookh.
“I should but teach him how to read
Byrons Verses & that would woo her”\(^\text{148}\)

I received a letter from you yesterday containing the additional line – & Some Tooth Powder – I
sent five Boxes to you via Paris & <Sir > Charles Stewart wch I hope you have got – & I will repeat
the dose with the addition of Magnesia in a day or two – Sir Ja’ Mackintosh is in a corner reading with
expressions of high commendation yr Lines of Tasso – & he sends his Comps –
I shall write again on Tuesday in the mean time I remain, devotedly
My Lord
your Lordships faithful Servant
Jno. Murray

\(^{1:4\text{ contains address only.}}\]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, May 30th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 231-2)

My Lord

I have to acknowledge the arrival of your Letter by Mr Polidori & of two subsequently, from
Rome, dated the 5\(^\text{th}\) & 9\(^\text{th}\) Ins – of a short one also of corrigenda – – for all which I am grateful –
Now of their principal Topic – the Drama and Poem on Tasso – The Third Act is not only
infinitely Improved – but contains some of the finest passages in the Drama – most particularly am I
delighted, and supported in it by Mr G. with your exquisite view of Rome struck off in the heat & in
your best manner – so that we shall do –
Now respecting price I shall give the sum which you desire – but then I must publish in my
own way – the Drama makes the same quantity as the third Canto or as any of the other publications –
& therefore you must understand – as I can not put a larger price upon it – all that I give more is so
much Money (expense) thrown away – & Imus there

The Lord Byron

1:2

fore be allowed to print the Lament of Tasso Separately – I will Say more about this in my next –
M’ G. has corrected the Proofs & I have just sent them to press, hoping to publish next week –
I am glad that you have received the Parcel containing the Tales at last wch must have been a
particular gratification to you from what you tell me – I must contrive to send you Moores Poem wch is
very good but not within 50 Miles of you – I can assure you – I am doing all I can for him – & he tells
me he has got the 3,000Gs, the price of his Volume is £2. 2. 0
I suspect you are preparing a magnificent Third Canto\(^\text{149}\) – which I shall be most glad to
receive in October next

1:3

Upon my word I think you ought to be satisfied at our having printed your poems with no more than
three very unimportant, & one self correcting error “lore” – “more” – I pray you send me the Italian
Copy of Chillon\(^\text{150}\) & if any new & Curious Book or pamphlet spring under your way, pray do me the
favour to dash it off to me
I am sorry to say that we do not like either of the Portraits\(^\text{151}\) –
I hope you have received the Second Parcel with a Copy of the Poems in 5 Vols – pray did
you get the Tooth Powder – & Letter?
With best Compliments
I remain My Lord
Your faithful Servant

148: Shakespeare, Othello, I iii 165-6 (adapted).
149: Mu., thinking of CHP I and II as a unit, means “Fourth Canto”.
150: See B.’s reference to an Italian translation of PoC, to Mu., May 9th 1817.
151: Peach figs. 51 and 52; see B. to Mu., April 14th (ii).
John Murray

I fear it is impossible for Mad. de Stael to recover

May 20th 1817: Byron leaves Rome.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, May 30th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 124-6; QII 408-9; BLJ V 229-30)

Byron answers Murray’s of May 13th.

Venice May 30th, 1817.

Dear Sir / I returned from Rome two days ago – & have received your letter but no sign nor tidings of the parcel sent through Sir – Stuart which you mention; – after an interval of months a packet of “Tales,” &c. found me at Rome – but this is all – & may be all that ever will find me – the post seems to be the only sane conveyance – & that only for letters. – – – From Florence I sent you a poem on Tasso – and from Rome the new third act of “Manfred,” & by Dr. Polidori two pictures for my sister. I left Rome & made a rapid journey home. – You will continue to direct here as usual. – Mr. Hobhouse is gone to Naples – I should have run down there too for a week – but for the quantity of English whom I heard of there – I prefer hating them at a distance – unless an Earthquake or a good real eruption of Vesuvius were insured to reconcile me to their vicinity – I know no other situation except Hell which I should feel inclined to participate with them – as a race – always excepting several individuals. – – There were few of them in Rome & – I believe none whom you know – except that old Blue-bore Sotheby – <of whom xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx> who will give a fine account of Italy in which he will be greatly assisted by his total ignorance of Italian – & yet this is the translator of Tasso. – The day before I left Rome I saw three robbers guil=

1:2

=lotined – the ceremony – including the masqued priests – the [half] naked executioners\textsuperscript{152} – the bandaged criminals – the black Christ & his banner – the scaffold – the soldiery – the slow procession – & the quick rattle and heavy fall of the axe – the splash of the blood – & the ghastliness of the exposed heads – is altogether more impressive than the vulgar and ungentlemanly dirty “new drop” & dog=like agony of infliction upon the sufferers of the English sentence. Two of these men – behaved calmly enough – but the first of [the] three – died with great terror and reluctance – which was very horrible – he would not lie down – then his neck was too large for the aperture – and the priest was obliged to drown his exclamations by still louder exhortations – the head was off before the eye could trace the blow – but from an attempt to draw back the head – notwithstanding it was held forward by the hair – the first head was cut off close to the ears – the other two were taken off more cleanly; – it is better than the Oriental way – & (I should think) than the axe of our ancestors. – The pain seems little – & yet the effect to the spectator – & the preparation to the criminal – is very striking & chilling. – The first turned me quite hot and made me shake so that I could hardly hold the opera – glass (I was close – but was determined to see – as one should see every thing {once} – with attention) the second and third (which shows how dreadfully soon things grow indifferent) I am ashamed to say had no effect on me – as a horror – though I would have saved them if I could. – – –

1:4

2:1

It is some time since I heard from you – the 12\textsuperscript{th}. April I believe.

\textsuperscript{152}: The executioner was Giambattista Bugatti (1779-1869, Roman state executioner from 1794-1864) famous for sharing his tobacco with those condemned (who were in this case “rei di crassazioni”): execution (on a Monday) confirmed by article in the Gazzetta di Genova, Mercoledi 28 Maggio 1817 (KSHR Gay papers, Box 43, f.163).
Byron to John Murray, from Venice, June 4th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.204; BLJ V 232-3)

Childe Harold IV is engendering.

Venice - June 4th. 1817.

Dear Sir – I have received the proofs of ye. “Lament of Tasso” which makes me hope that you have also received the reformed third act of Manfred – from Rome – which I sent soon after my arrival there. –

My date will apprize you of my return home within these few days. – For me I have received none of your packets – except – after long delay – the “Tales of my Landlord” which I before acknowledged. –

I do not at all understand the why nots – but so it is – no Manuel – no letters – no tooth powder, no extract from Moore’s Italy concerning Marino Falieri – no nothing – as a man hallooed out at one of Burdett’s elections – after a long ululatus of No Bastille! No Governor Aris! No

1:2

God knows who – or what – but his ne plus ultra was no nothing – & my receipts of your packages amount to about his <m/>Meaning. – I want the extract from Moore’s Italy very much – & the toothpowder – & the magnesia – I don’t care so much about the poetry – & the letters – or Mr. Maturin’s by Jasus tragedy. – Most of the things sent by the post have come – I mean proofs & letters – therefore send me Marino Falieri by the post, in a letter. – I was delighted with Rome – & on horseback all round it many hours daily besides in it the rest of my time – bothering over its marvels. –

I excursed and skirted the country153 round to Alba – Tivoli – Frascati – Licenza – & besides I visited twice the fall of Terni154 – which beats every thing. –

1:3

On my way back, close to the temple by its banks – I got some famous trout out of the river Clitumnus155 – the prettiest little stream in all poesy – near the first post from Foligno – & Spoletto. –

I did not stay at Florence, being anxious to get home to Venice – & having already seen the galleries – & other sights – I left my commendatory letters the evening before I went so I saw nobody. – Today Pindemonte the celebrated poet of Verona – called on me – he is a little thin man – with acute and pleasing features – his address good & gentle – his appearance altogether very philosophical – his age about sixty – or more – he is one of their best going. – I gave him Forsyth as he speaks or reads rather a little English – & will find there a favourable account of himself. –

1:4

He enquired after his old Cruscan friends Parsons – Greathead – Mrs. Piozzi – & Merry – all of whom he had known in his youth. – I gave him as bad an account of them as I could – answering as the false “Solomon Lob” does to “Totterton” in the farce156 – that they were “all gone dead,” – & damned by a satire157 more than twenty years ago – that the name of their extinguisher was Gifford – that they were but a sad set of scribes after all – & no great things in any other way. – – He seemed – as was natural – very much pleased with this account of his old acquaintances – and went away greatly gratified with that & M r. Forsyth’s sententious paragraph of applause in his own (Pindemonte’s) favour. –

After having been a little libertine in his youth – he is grown devout – & takes

2:1

2) prayers – & talks to himself – to keep off the Devil – but for all that he is a very nice little old gentleman. –

153: Shakespeare, Macbeth V.
154: See CHP IV sts.69-72.
155: See CHP IV st.66.
156: The farce Love Laughs at Locksmiths by George Colman the younger.
157: Gifford’s Maeviad and Baviad.
I forgot to tell you that at Bologna (which is celebrated for producing Popes – Painters – & Sausages) I saw an Anatomical gallery – where there is a deal of waxwork – in which the parts of shame of both sexes are exhibited to the life – all made & moulded by a female Professor whose picture & merits are preserved & detailed to you – I thought the male part of her performance not very favourable to her imagination – or at least to the Italian Originals – being considerably under our Northern notions of things – & standard of <mensuration> [dimensions] in such matters – more particularly as the feminine display was a little in the other extreme – which however is envy

2:2

also – as far at least as my own experience & observation goes on this side of the Alps – & both sides of the Appennines. – – –

I am sorry to hear of your row with Hunt – but suppose him to be exasperated by the Quarterly – & your refusal to deal – & when one is angry – & edits a paper – I should think the temptation too strong for literary nature – which is not always human. I can’t conceive in what – & for what he abuses [you] – what have you done? You are not an author – nor a politician – nor a public character – I know no scrape you have tumbled into. – I am the more sorry for this because I introduced you to Hunt – & because I believe him to be a very good man – but till I know the particulars I can give no opinion. –

2:3

Let me know about Lallah Rookh – which must be out by this time. – –

I restore the proofs – but the punctuation should be corrected – I feel too lazy to have at it myself – so beg & pray M. Gifford for me. – Address to Venice – in a few days I go to my Villeggiatura in a Casino near the Brenta – a few miles only on the main land – I have determined on another year & many years of residence if I can compass them. – –

Marianna is with me – hardly recovered of the fever – which has been attacking all Italy last winter – – I am afraid she is a little hectic – but I hope the best.

ever yr[scrawl]
[scrawl]

PS

Torwaltzen has done a bust of me at Rome for M. Hobhouse – which is reckoned very good – he is their best after Canova – & by some pre= [turns through ninety degrees and crawls up right-hand side:] =ferred to him. –

2:4

I have had a letter from M. Hodgson – maudlin & fine=feeling – he is very happy – has got a living – but not a child – if he had stuck to a Curacy – babes would have come of course because he could not have maintained them. – – – –

Remember me to all your friends, &c. &c. &c.

An Austrian officer the other day, being in love with a Venetian – was ordered with his regiment into Hungary – distracted between love & duty he purchased a deadly drug which dividing with his mistress both swallowed – The ensuing pains were terrific but the pills were purgative – & not poisonous – by the contrivance of the unsentimental apothecary – so that so much <good> suicide was all thrown away – you may conceive the previous confusion & the final laughter – but the intention was good on both sides. – – – – –

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, June 14th 1817:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.206; BLJ V 237-8)

Dear Sir /

I write to you from the banks of the Brenta – a few miles from Venice – where I have colonized for six months to come. – Address as usual to Venice. – – Three months after date (17th March) like the unnegociable bill despondingly received by the reluctant tailor – your dispatch has arrived containing the extract from Moore’s Italy – & M’. Maturin’s bankrupt tragedy. It is the absurd
work of a clever man. – I think it might have done upon the stage, if he had made Manuel (by some trickery – in a masque or vizar) fight his own battle instead of employing Molineux as his champion – & after defeating Torrismond have made him spare the son of his enemy by some revulsion of feeling not incompatible with a character of extravagant and
distempered emotions – but as it is – what with the Justiza – & the ridiculous conduct of the whole dram. Pers. (for they are all as mad as Manuel – who surely must have had greater interest with a corrupt bench – than a distant relation & heir presumptive somewhat suspect of homicide) I do not wonder at its failure – as a play it is impracticable – as a poem – no great things. – Who was the “Greek that grappled with Glory naked?” the Olympic wrestlers? – or Alexander the great when he ran stark round the tomb of t’other fellow? or the Spartan who was fined by the Ephori for fighting without his armour? or who? – & as to “flinging off life like a garment” Helas! that’s in Tom Thumb – see – King Arthur’s soliloquy

“Life’s a mere rag not worth a prince’s wearing
“I’ll cast it off.”

and the stage directions – “staggers among the bodies” – the slain are too numerous – as well as the

blackamoor Knight=penitent being one too many – and De Zelos is such a shabby Monmouth=street villain – without any redeeming quality – Stap my vitals! – – Maturin seems to be declining into Nat. Lee. but let him try again – he has talent – but not much taste; – I ’gin to fear – or to hope that Sothey after all is to be the Eschylus of the age – unless M’. Shiel – be really worthy his success. – – The more I see of the stage – the less I would wish to have anything to do with it – as a proof of which I hope you have received the 3d of M. – which will at least prove that I wish to steer very clear of the possibility of being put into scenery. – – –
I sent it from Rome. – – – –
I returned the proof of Tasso – by the way have you never received a translation of St. Paul? which I sent you not for publication – before I went to Rome?

I am at present – on the Brenta – opposite is a Spanish Marquis – ninety years old – next his Casino – is a Frenchman’s besides the natives – so that as Somebody said the other day – we are exactly one of Goldoni’s comedies (La Vedova Scaltra) where a Spaniard – English – & Frenchman are introduced; – {but} we are all very good neighbours, Venetians, &c. &c. I am just getting on horseback for my evening ride – & a visit to a Physician who has an agreeable family of {a wife &} four unmarried daughters – all under eighteen – who are friends of Signora Segati – and enemies to nobody; – there are {& are to be} besides Conversaziones – & I know not what {at a Countess Labbia’s & I know not whom.} The weather is mild – the thermometer 110 in the Sun this day & eighty odd in the shade.

June 16th September 1817: Manfred published.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, June 17th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.207; BLJ V 239-41)

This intemperate letter seems to answer one of Murray’s which is missing.

La Mira –
n. Venice. –

158: Fielding, Tom Thumb the Great: in fact, My life is worn as ragged as a coat / A beggar wears; a prince should put it off.
159: One of B.’s translations from the Armenian (CMP 70-7).
160: The Cunning Widow.
June 17th, 1817.

Dear Sir /

It gives me great pleasure to hear of Moore’s success – & the more so that I never {doubted} that it would be complete – whatever good you can tell me of him & his poem will be most acceptable; – I feel very anxious indeed to receive it; I hope that he is as happy in his fame & reward as I wish him to be – for I know no one who deserves both more – if any so much. 

Now to business – our own. – For the drama I required three hundred guineas – & desire no more – & for the other – three hundred guineas & will take no less. – When you say that the Drama is of the same length & will form the same-sized publication as most of the preceding – it is probable that you will charge the same price to the purchaser – & in that case (unless the publication fails altogether) will probably be not less a gainer than upon the former – at least it seems <to> <he> that you can hardly be a loser – when the author’s demand has not been a third of what you have already paid for productions of the like calibre. – Do you mean to say that it is dearer or shorter than [Mr. R.’s] Jaqueline? or than my Lara? or than the Giaour? or the Bride? Or do you mean to say that it is inferior to these as Poetry or that its <form as a drama> [dramatic] form renders it less susceptible of profit? I will tell you that to you from its being the first poem of mine in that form – it must to a certain degree be more advantageous – as far as an <te> <first> [object of] curiosity – & although it is not a drama properly – but a dialogue – still it contains poetry & passion – although I by no means look on it as the best – or conceive that it will be the most fortunate of compositions by the same writer. – When therefore you talk to me as of its being a dear purchase – I answer you in so many words – that if I had not named the prior price (with which by the way I <am> {was} satisfied & had no wish to enlarge) you would yourself have offered me a greater – & if you would not – I could find those who would. – As to the other poem – I look upon that as good of its’ kind – & the price not at all out of proportion to what writers require and obtain. – You are to print in what form you please – that is your concern; – as far as your connection with myself has gone – you are the best judge – how far you have lost or gained – probably – sometimes one – & sometimes the other – but when you come to me with your “can” and talk to me about the copy of Manfred as if “the force of purchase would no further go” – to make a book he separates the two” – I say unto you verily it is not so – or as the Foreigner said to the Waiter after <ordering> {asking him <for> to bring} a glass of water – to which the man answered “I will – Sir,” – “You will! – God d – n – I say – you mush!” – 

And I will submit this to the decision of any person or persons to be appointed by both on a fair examination of the circumstances of this as compared with the preceding publications, – so – there’s for you; – there is always some row or other previously to all our publications – it should seem that on approximating we can never quite get over the natural antipathy of author & bookseller – & that more particularly the ferine nature of the latter must break forth. 

You are out about the third Canto – I have not done – nor designed a line of continuation to that poem – I was too short a time at Rome for it – & have no thoughts of recommencing but if ever I do – I will put it to market to the best bidder – or will desert at once to the “Row” – <in which> if you come over me with your pitiful=hearted speeches – – about “can” & “not” of

3) which if you are not ashamed – you deserve to be {the} publisher <to> of Saul – on your sole account – (paying the author five pounds copyright) with all expenses for ever – now & to posterity. 

161: B. starts CHP IV a week after writing this letter.
I cannot well explain to you by letter what I conceive to be the origin of Mrs. Leigh’s notion about “tales of my Lord” – but it is some points of the characters of Sir E. Manley – & Burley – as well as one or two of the jocular portions – on which it is founded probably.

If you have received Dr. Polidori – as well as a parcel of books – & you can be of use to him be so. – I never was much more disgusted with any human production – than with the eternal nonsense – {& tracasseries} – & emptiness – & ill-humour – & vanity of that young person – but he has some talent – & is a man of honour – – and has dispositions of amendment – in which he has been aided by a little subsequent experience – & may turn out well – therefore use your government interest for him – for he is improved and improvable.

P.S. – Bowles’s Story of the interview at the “common friend’s” (“common” enough the Gods know) is not correct. – It did not occur “soon after the publication” &c. but in 1812 – three good years after – I recollect nothing of “seriousness” now as the company were going into another room – he said to me that all his friends had bothered him crying out “Eh Bowles how come you to make the woods of Madeira tremble to a kiss”? whereas it was not the woods but the lovers who trembled – though I see no great reason why they should either. – I have had no opportunity of restoring the “trembling” to it’s right owners – as I had previously suppressed the Satire at Rogers’s particular suggestion “that it would gratify Lord Holland” and I beg leave to observe that this was some time after I was acquainted with Lord Holland and a consequence not a cause of that connection. – Bowles was courteous and civilized enough & so was I too I hope.

June 26th-July 19th 1817: Byron drafts Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage Canto IV.

Byron quotes for the first time from Childe Harold IV.

La Mira – n Venice. –

Dear Sir – Since my former letter – I have been working up my impressions into a 4th. Canto of C. H. of which I have roughened off about rather better than thirty stanzas – & mean to go on – & probably to make this “Fytte” the concluding one of the poem so that you may propose against the Autumn to draw out the Conscription for 1818. – – You must provide monies as this new resumption bodes you certain disbursements; – somewhere about the end of September or October – I propose to be under way (i.e. in the press); but I have no idea yet of the probable length or calibre of ye. canto – or what it will be good for – but I mean to be as mercenary as possible – an example (I do not mean of any individual in particular & least of all any person or persons of our mutual acquaintance) which I should have followed in my youth – & I might still have been a prosperous Gentleman.

No toothpowder – no packet of letters – no recent tidings of you. – M. Lewis is at Venice & I am going up to stay a week with him there – as it is one of his enthusiasms also to like the City.

“I stood in Venice, on the “Bridge of Sighs”
A palace and a prison on each hand
I saw from out the wave her structures rise

As from the stroke of enchanters wand;

A thousand Years their cloudy wings expand
Above me, and a dying Glory smiles
O’er the far times when many a subject land
Looked to the winged Lion’s marble piles

162: See EBSR II.359-60.
163: Shakespeare, Macbeth, I iii 73.
Where Venice sate in state – throned on her Seventy Isles.

The “Bridge of Sighs” (i.e. Ponte dei sospiri) is that which divides <the> or rather joins the palace of the doge to the prison of the state – it has two passages – the criminal went by the one to judgement – & returned by the other to death – being strangled in a chamber adjoining – where there was a mechanical process for the purpose.

1:3

This is the first stanza – of the new canto – & now for a line of the second –

2

In Venice Tasso’s <e>E>cho is no more
And silent rows the songless gondolier
Her palaces &c. &c.

You know that formerly the Gondoliers sang always – & Tasso’s {Gierusalemme} was their ballad – Venice is built on Seventy two islands. — — —

There – there – is a brick of your new Babel – & now, Sirrah! – what say you to the sample?

yrs [scrwrl]
[scrwrl]
[squiggle]

P.S. I shall write again by & bye. – – –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, July 8th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.210; BLJ V 247-8)

La Mira – n° Venice. – July 8th 1817

Dear Sir – If you can convey the enclosed letter to its address – or discover the person to whom it is directed you will confer a favour upon the Venetian Creditor of a deceased Englishman. – This epistle is a dun to his Executor for house rent – the name of the insolvent defunct is or was Porter Walter according to the account of the plaintiff which I rather suspect ought to be Walter Porter according to our mode of Collocation – if you are acquainted with any dead man of the like name a good deal in debt – pray dig him up – & tell him that “a pound of his fair flesh” or the ducats are required – & that “if you deny them, fie upon your law”164 –

I hear nothing more from you about Moore’s poem – Roger’s looks – or other literary phenomena – but tomorrow being post-day will bring

1:2

perhaps some tidings. – I write to you with people talking Venetian [all about] – so that you must not expect this letter to be all English. – – –

The other day I had a squabble on the highway as follows. – I was riding pretty quickly from Dolo home about 8 in the Evening – when I passed a party of people in a hired carriage – one of whom poking his head out of the window began bawling to me in an inarticulate but insolent manner; – I wheeled my horse round & overtaking, stopped the coach & said “Signor<> have you any commands for me?” he replied impudently as to manner “No” – I then asked him what he meant by that unseemly noise to the discomfiture of the passers by – he replied {by} some piece of impertinence – to which I answered by giving him a violent slap in the face. –

1:3

I then dismounted (for this passed at the window – I being on horseback still) & opening the door desired him to walk out – or I would give him another. – But the first had settled him – except as to words – of which he poured forth a profusion in blasphemies swearing that he would go to the police &

164: Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, I iii 145 and IV i 101. The first of many MoV quotations in the coming months.
<swear> {avouch} a battery sans provocation – I said he lied and was a b— & if he did not hold his tongue should be dragged out & beaten anew – he then held his tongue. – –

I of course told him my name & residence & defied him to the death if he were a gentleman – or not a gentleman & had the inclination to be genteel in the way of combat. – He went to the police – but there having been bystanders in the road – particularly <xxx> a soldier – who had seen the business – as well as my servant – notwithstanding the oaths

of the Coachman & five insides besides the plaintiff – & a good deal of perjury on all sides – his complaint was dismissed – he having been the aggressor – and I was subsequently informed that had I not given him a blow <the b> he might have [been] had into durance. So set down this “that in Aleppo once—” I <have> “beat a Venetian”\(^{165}\) but I assure you that he deserved it – for I am a quiet man like Candide – though with somewhat of his fortune in being forced to forego my natural meekness every now & then.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, July 9th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.211; BLJ V 249)
[To, – / Jno. Murray Esq. / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]

This seems to answer another letter of Murray’s which is missing.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, July 15th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.212; BLJ V 251-3)

Byron’s dislike of William Sotheby. His “spontaneous abuse” is carefully crafted: see 1:4 and 2:1.

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165: Shakespeare, Othello, V ii 355 and 357.
being already of the dimensions of the first or second cantos. – I look upon parts of it as very good –
that is if the three former are good – but this we shall see – and at any rate good or not – it is rather a
different style from the last – less metaphysical – which at any rate will be a variety. I sent you the
shaft of the column as a specimen the other day – i.e. the first stanza. So you may be thinking of its’
arrival towards Autumn – those winds will not be the only ones to be raised if so be as how that it
<was> [is] ready by that time. – – –

1:2

I lent Lewis who is at Venice (in or on the Canalaccio the Grand Canal) your extracts from Lalla
Rookh – & Manuel – & out of contradiction it may be – he likes the last – & is not much taken with the
first of these performances. – Of Manuel I think with the exception of a <Class> few <Xxxx> capers –
it is as <turbid> {heavy} a Nightmare as {was} ever bestrode {by} Indigestion. – – Of the extracts I
can but judge as extracts & I prefer the “Peri” to the “Silver Veil” – he seems not so much at home in
his versification of the “Silver Veil” & a little embarrased with his horrors – but the Conception of
the Character of the Impostor is fine – & the plan of great scope for his Genius – & I doubt not that as a
whole it will be very Arabesque and beautiful. – – – – – – –

1:3

Your late epistle 166 is not the most abundant in information – & has not yet been succeeded by any
other – so that I know nothing of your own concerns – or of any concerns – and as I never see or hear
from anybody but yourself – who does not tell me something as disagreeable as possible – I should not
be sorry to hear from you – And as it is not very probable – if I can by any device or possible
arrangement with regard to my personal affairs so manage it – that I shall return soon – or reside ever
in England – all that you tell me will be all I shall know or enquire {after} as to our beloved realm of
Grubstreet – & [the black] brethren and blue Sisterhood of that extensive Suburb of <the> Babylon. –
Have you had no new Babe of Literature sprung up to replace the dead – the distant – the tired & the
retired? no prose – no

1:4

verse – no nothing?

No infant Sotheby whose dauntless head
Translates ununderstood <so well from> {a deal of <the>} German;
No city Wordsworth more admired than read –
No drunken Coleridge with a new “Lay Sermon.

Talking of Sotheby – you will perceive that I more than once make dishonorable mention of that
venerable <mountebank> {Mokanna. – }167 – Hear then why – besides my previous & impartial
opinion of his being a tiresome man. – <Wh> Some time [ago] – I received the Italian Edition of some
poems of mine168 – with an anonymous note <with a note> {containing} some gratuitously impertinent
remarks – which might or might not be well founded – but should not have been sent in that manner.
This is no great matter – because I suppose in my life I have received at least two hundred anonymous
consolation – upon all topics – & in every shape. – – – – –

2:1

But I happen to know the hand of that man of age – & the style – (I would swear to the word
“effulgence” & two or three {other} blue technicals) because I was {once} in doleful correspondence
about his un=damned tragedy “Ivan” when I was a Committer of D’.L Theatre. – I say – says I – I
know the hand – & I think it a piece of impertinence – in him to write to me at all unless on business –
& it is {at any rate} usual for <Gemmen> {well conditioned persons} to put their names. – So – let him

166: The last surviving Murray letter was May 30th.
167: Mokanna is the prophet in Mo.’s Lalla Rookh, veiled to cover his repulsiveness. See B. to Mo, July 10th
1817, where he uses the word to describe Mu.
168: I do not know whether this book survives.
look to it – he had better have written to the Devil a criticism upon Hell=fire – I will raise him such <an> <apparition as would have set up> a {Samuel for} his "Saul" as <could he have managed the like with his own> {will astonish him without the} Witch of Endor. – An old tiresome blockhead – blundering through Italy without a word of the language – or of any language

2:2

except the wretched affectionations of our own which he called English – to come upon poor dear quiet me with his nonsense – but never mind – we shall see. – – – – –

If he had attacked me in print – that’s all fair – “foul is fair” at least among authors – but to come upon me with his petty – mincing – paltry – dirty – notes – & nameless as he will be himself years hence – Sunburn me! <but> if I don’t stick a pin through this old Blue=bottle. – 'Gin you doubt – ask him – & if he don’t own it – why I will read his next or last work through – that’s all. – – – – –

Since this epistle begun – the stanzas of Canto 4 th. have jumped to 104. – & Such stanzas! by S t. Anthony! (who has a church at my elbow<> and I like to be neighbourly) some of them are the right thing. – – –

Yrs
[scrawl]
[squiggle]

July 17th September 1817: The Lament of Tasso published.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, July 20th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.213; BLJ V 253-4)

[To, / J no. Murray Esq re / 50 Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]

Byron thinks he's finished CHP IV.

Venice, July 20th. 1817.

Dear Sir –

I write to give you notice that I have completed the 4 th. and ultimate Canto of Childe Harold – it consists of 126 stanzas & is consequently the longest of the four. – It is yet to be copied and polished – & the notes are to come – of which it will require more than the third {Canto} – as it necessarily treats more of works of art than of Nature. – It shall be sent towards Autumn – & now for our barter – what do you bid? eh? you shall have samples an it so please you – but I wish to know what I am to expect (as the saying is) in these hard times – when poetry does not let for half its' value. – If you are disposed to do what M rs. Winifred Jenkins calls "the handsome thing" I may perhaps throw you some odd matters to the lot – translations – or slight originals – there is no saying what may be on the anvil between this & the <season> booking Season. – Recollect that it is the last Canto – & completes the work, – <&> whether as good as the others I cannot judge in course – least of all as yet – but it shall be as little worse as I can help; – I may perhaps give some little gossip in the notes as to the present state of Italian literati & literature, – being acquainted with some of their Capi – {men as well as books –} but this depends upon my humour at the time; – so now – pronounce – I say nothing. – – –

When you have got the whole 4 cantos – I think you might venture {on} an edition of the whole poem in quarto – with spare copies of the two last for the purchasers of the old edition of the first two. – There is a hint for you worthy of the <ct>Row – & now – perpend – pronounce. – I have not received a word from you of the fate of “Manfred” or “Tasso” which seems to me odd – whether they have failed or succeeded.

1:2

As this is a scrawl of business – & I have lately written at length & often on other subjects I can only add that I [scrawl]
[scrawl]

169: Shakespeare, Macbeth, I i.
170: CHP IV grows to 186 stanzas.
171: Smollett, Humphrey Clinker, final letter.
July 26th-27th 1817: Byron writes the Ode to Venice.

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, August 5th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; LJM 233-5)
[My Lord / My Lord Byron / poste restante / a Venise / en Italie]
Murray answers Byron’s of July 15th.

London August 5 1817
Tuesday

My Lord

This day has brought me your Letter of the 15th July adding another to the many instances of your truly kind indulgence to my unpardonable indolence – I am very sorry indeed to find that there is so little chance of seeing you soon in England and I fancy you will suffer equal grief when you learn that next year <I am> you will certainly have a visit from me – In the mean time if you will forgive me I will send you a regular journal of news literary & domestic. – I perceive by your Lordships reconing by stanzas that you are within Fourteen Stanzas of compleating your Opus Magnum – for such I think it is your determination to make Childe Harold – The first Stanza M’ Gifford thinks very highly of – as does M’ Frere & many more to whom I have ventured to shew it – your Lordship need not be assured how much I rejoiced at the Prospect of again opening my Literary Campaign <with> under such brilliant auspices – I should like to have time to send the proofs sheets out for your Lordships inspection and this I could easily do if I received the MSS next month.

I am sorry that you do not yet acknowledge the receipt of a Parcel containing Moores Poem &c. & packages of Magnesia – Tooth Powder wch I send under the care of M’ Rose – who I think was to forward them to you from Padua – However as I have repeated with increase all that I sent by him in the packets which you will certainly have received before this from the kindness of

The Lord Byron

1:2

M’ Kinnaird – the loss is of less consequence – No word yet of the Parcel via Sir Cha’t Stewart? I can not find even a clue to <Sir Jno S’ Aubyn> M’ S’ John I mean – can you tell me any place to apply?

I am sorry that M’ S’s has so unwittingly incurred your anger – he always continues to speak of you with the most unfeigned kindness – I had wondered at the recent asperity of your remarks upon him – he is on his return freighted, I fancy with <Translation & A Tour> of the latter – I have already engaged for two One by M’ Rose who possesses an intimate knowledge of the People of Italy & their Language – and another by a Person perhaps even better informed – well known to poor Horner – a M’ Gaeliffe – Professor Playfair too is reported to have written one – By the way – & if it be no sin – by the Lord Polidori has sent me his Tragedy!!! do me the kindness to send me by return of Post a delicate declention of it – which I engage faithfully to copy – I am truly sorry that he will employ himself in a way so ill suited to his genius – he is not without literary talents –

I sent yr Lordship Copies of Manfred & of Tasso which are I trust printed correctly – they are both but particularly the former greatly admired by the best Critics – but they soar above the million – M’ Frere, I think I told you, says that it and the third Canto – place you in a higher Class of Poets – that is the very highest – – Amongst the Books I intruded upon M’ Kinnaird – was Coleridges Life & Opinions r3d – wch will I think interest you – you will pardon the occasional obscurities – & I fear absurdities – for its power in most parts – I think you will like my MSS de S’ Helena – Talma said when he read it he conversed with Buonaparte – I sent him one splendidly bound – & he wrote me a Letter expressing his delight at what reminded him of past Glory

1:3

172: Mu. never visited B. in Italy.
173: Sotheby.
174: Biographia Literaria.
your Lordship will have heard, not without regret, of the premature (for her age) death of Mad. de Stael who with all her faults was an excellent person – I think she had a good heart – and I know that she was very kind to me – I had a letter from the Hon. J.W. Ward dated Paris July 17 in which he tells me “I saw poor Mme de Stael four days before she died. She was looking wretchedly ill, and showed marks of great languor & weakness. But her understanding was unimpaired. She evidently thought very ill of her own situation, tho’ at the same time, she had no notion how near she was to her end.” There is a story here that at last she was reconciled to the Church of Rome – chiefly it is said by the persuasion of the Viscount Montmorency. – Perhaps too M’ Schlegel contributed his influence to this event. He had already set the example. I do not know the fact for certain, but I think it not improbable. I also understand that it now appears she had been for some time married to M’ Rocca. I do not hear in what state of forwardness her last book was – but I should [Ms. tear: “hope”] that a part of it at least was fit for public [Ms. tear: “cation”]

She confesse[d] her Marriage & acknowledged [Ms. tear: “a”] Child a Son – born when she was 49

I enclose the Edinb. Criticism compleat it is written by Wilson (Isle of Palms) – and add two others from the British Rev. – you will not be in the forthcoming N° of the Q. R. – M’ Scrope Davis <off to> often does me the favour to call & we discuss your Letters Poetry &c &c – I saw M’ Leigh three days ago in some trouble at the entrance of the Hooping Cough but otherwise well – M’ Moore I believe I told you is gone to Paris with M’ Rocca – who dedicates all his time to him

[below address:] My Lord
Your obliged & faithful Servant
John Murray

Mr Gifford always
remembers you –
he
is now at Ramsgate
after being very ill

[parallel to and beneath address, inverted:] Your Armenian Friends have this Moment presented themselves with your Letter – I will take all their Grammars & do all otherwise to serve & assist them – I will recommend them to Sir John M – at Madras – I am very sorry they miss the value of M’ K’s more powerful aid. 4 o Clock

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, August 7th 1817:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.214; BLJ V 254-5)

Dear Sir / Your letter of the 18th & what will please you as it did me the parcel sent by the goodnatured aid & abetment of M’. Croker are arrived. – – Messrs. Lewis & Hobhouse are here – the former in the same house – the latter – a few hundred yards distant. You say nothing of Manfred, from which its failure may be inferred – but I think it odd you should not say so at once – I know nothing – and hear [absolutely] nothing of anybody or any thing in England – & there are no English papers – so that all you say will be news – of any person or thing – or things – I am at present very anxious about Newstead – & sorry that Kinnaird is leaving England at this minute – though I do not tell him {so} – & would rather he should

1:2

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175: “Hanson’s”.
176: Mu.’s of July 18th 1817 is missing.
have his pleasure – though it may not in this Instance tend to my profit. – – –
If I understand rightly – you have paid into Morland’s177 1500 pounds – as the agreement in the paper is {two thousand} Guineas – there will remain therefore <six> six hundred pounds – & not five hundred – the odd hundred being the extra to make up the specie. – Six hundred and thirty pounds will bring it to the like for Manfred and Tasso – making a total of twelve hundred & thirty – I believe – for I am not a good calculator – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –
The new & last Canto is 130 Stanzas in length – & may be made more or less. – I have fixed no price even in idea – & have no notion – of what it may be good for – there are no metaphysics

1:3

in it – at least I think not. – M’. H’. has promised me a copy of Tasso’s will for the notes178 – & I have some curious things to say about Ferrara – & Parisina’s story – & perhaps a farthing candles’ worth of light upon the present state of Italian literature. – – – – – – – –
I shall hardly be ready by October – but that don’t matter. – I have all to copy & correct – and the notes to write. – I do not know whether Scott will like it – but I have called him the “Ariosto of the North,” in my text.179 If he should not – say so in time. –
Lewis Hobhouse & I went the other day to the circumcision of a sucking Shylock – I have seen three men’s heads & a child’s foreskin cut off in Italy. – The ceremonies are very moving – but too long for detail in this weather. – – – – – – – –

1:4

An {Italian} translation of “Glenarvon” came {lately} to be printed at Venice – the Censor (S’. Petrotini) refused to sanction the publication till he had seen me upon the subject; – I told him that I did not recognise the slightest relation between that book and myself – but that whatever opinions might be upon that subject – I would never prevent or oppose the publication of any book in any language – on my own private account; – & desired him (<rather> against his inclination) to permit the poor translator to publish his labours. – It is going forward in consequence. – You may {say} this with my compliments to the Author. – – – – – –
yrs[scrawl]
[scrawl]

[POSTSCRIPT NOT YET FOUND IN NLS] P.S. – Mrs. Leigh has written me an uncomfortable letter – from which I suppose George Leigh’s affairs are in disorder – is it so? or what is the matter? I can make out nothing from her letter – it is very foolish to torment me with ambiguities at this distance. –
Do tell me that Gifford is better – & well. – – There are some sad errors in your 5th. volume – not for “nor Cypress nor [yew?] let us see” in one of the songs?180 – & in the Monody – a whole passage made absolute nonsense. – Do pray [join]
“Ye Orators when still our councils yield”181 to the preceding lines – it does not begin a separate paragraph. – –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, August 12th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.215; BLJ V 256-7)
[To, Jno. Murray Esq. / 50 Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]
Venice, August 12th, 1817

Dear Sir –
I have been very sorry to hear of the death of M’. de Staël182 – not only because she had been very kind to me at Coppet – but because now I can never requite her. – In a general point of view she will leave a great gap in society & literature. – – –
With regard to death – I doubt that we have any right to pity the dead for their own sakes. – – –

177: Ransom and Morlands, the bank in which Kinnaird is partner.
178: H.’s notes to CHP IV grow to an entire volume.
179: CHP IV 40, 8.
180: Bright be the Place of Thy Soul! 1.15.
182: Mu. tells B. of de Stael’s death on August 5th: too recently for the letter to have arrived yet.
The copies of Manfred & Tasso are arrived – thanks to Mr. Croker’s cover. – You have destroyed the whole effect & moral of the poem by omitting the last line of Manfred’s speaking—which I know

1:2

not. – -- Why you persist in saying nothing of the thing itself I am equally at a loss to conjecture – if it is for fear of telling me something disagreeable – you are wrong – because sooner or later I must know it – & I am not so new nor so raw nor so inexperienced – as not to be able to bear – not the mere paltry petty disappointments of authorship – but things more serious – at least I hope so – & that what you may think irritability is merely mechanical – & only acts like Galvanism on a dead body, – or the muscular motion which survives sensation. – --

If it is that you are out of humour because I wrote to you a sharp letter –

1:3

recollect that it was partly from a misconception of your letter – & partly because you did a thing you had no right to do without consulting me. – I have however, heard [good] of Man3 from two other quarters – & from men – who would not be scrupulous in saying what they thought – or what was said – & “So Good Morrow to you – Good Master Lieutenant...” I wrote to [you] twice about the 3rd Canto185 which you will answer at your pleasure. – Mr. Hobhouse & I have come up for a day to the city – Mr. Lewis is gone to England – & I am

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, August 15th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; Smiles I 387; LJM 239-40)

London 15 August 1817

By this time M’ Kinnaird has I hope reached you in safety and presented all my packets of poetry & tooth powder – and hereafter I hope to receive your comments – on the one portion & your thanks for the other –

Your Lordship will readily believe how much I am delighted to learn that the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold and if so please your Lordship to accept the exchange I shall readily present Fifteen Hundred Guineas for the Copyright. (Mem. I entreat you to let me have the original MSS)

M’ Moore & M’ Rogers have not yet returned from Paris – I have a Letter from M’ Whishaw dated Paris Aug 10 in wch

The Lord Byron

1:2

he begs me to contradict the Report of Mad de Stael having become Catholic – which he assures me, from good authority was not the case –

M’ Davis was with me yesterday (wch I shall not forget as he promised me a Dozen of extraordinary Burgundy) & swore that he would bring me a long Letter for your Lordship tomorrow – he is not very well – but in no worse spirits –

I hope soon to have the pleasure of hearing from your Lordship –

I beg the favor of you to present my Compliments to M’ Kinnaird –

I remain My Lord

Your obliged & faithful Servant

John Murray

yr Lordships last Letter is dated July 20

183: “Old man! ’tis not so difficult to die” was cut from the first edition.
184: Shakespeare, Henry V, II i 2 (“Good morrow, Lieutenant Bardolph”).
185: B. means “4th”.
La Mira – Near Venice –
August 21st, 1817
Dear Sir – I take you at your word about Mr. Hanson – & will feel obliged if you will go to him – & request Mr. Davies also to visit him by my desire – & repeat that I trust [that] neither Mr. Kinnaird’s absence nor mine will prevent his taking all proper steps to accelerate and promote the sales of Newstead and Rochdale – upon which the whole of my future personal comfort depends – it is impossible for me to express how much <the> any delays upon these points would inconvenience me – & I do not know a greater obligation that can be conferred upon me than [the] pressing these things upon Hanson – & making him act according to my wishes. – I wish you would speak out at least to me & tell me what you allude to by your odd way of mentioning him – all mysteries at such a distance are not merely tormenting – but mischievous – & may be prejudicial to my interests – so pray – expound – that I may consult with Mr. Kinnaird when he arrives – & remember that I prefer the most disagreeable certainties to hints & innuendoes – the devil take every body – I never can get any person to be explicit about any thing – or any body – & my whole life is past in conjectures of what people mean – you all talk in the style of Caroline Lamb’s novels. – – – –
It is not Mr. S. John – but Mr. S. Aubyn, Son of Sir John S’. Aubyn. — Polidori knows him – & introduced him to me – he is of Oxford – & has got my parcel – the Doctor will ferret him out or ought.
—— The Parcel contains many letters – some of M. de Stael’s and other people’s – besides M.S.S. &c.
– by G – d – if I find the gentleman & he don’t find the parcel – I will say

1:2

something he won’t like to hear. – –
You want a “civil and delicate declension” for the medical tragedy – take it –

Dear Doctor –
I have read your play
Which is a good one in its’ way
Purges the eyes & moves the bowels
And drenches handkerchiefs like towels
With tears that in a flux of Grief
Afford hysterical relief
To shattered nerves & quickened pulses
Which your catastrophe convulses.
I like your moral & machinery
Your plot too has such scope for Scenery!
Your dialogue is apt & smart
The play’s concoction full of art
Your hero raves – your heroine <dies> {cries}
All stab – & every body dies;
In short your tragedy would be
The very thing to hear & see –
And for a piece of publication
If I decline on this occasion
It is not that I am not sensible
To merits in themselves ostensible
But – and I grieve to speak it – plays
Are drugs – mere drugs, Sir, nowadays –
I had a heavy loss by “Manuel”\footnote{186: By Maturin.} –
Too lucky if it prove not annual
And Sotheby with his damned “Orestes”
(Which by the way the old Bore’s best is,)
Has lain so very long on hand
That I despair of all demand –
I’ve advertized – but see my books –
Or only watch my Shopman’s looks –
Still Ivan\footnote{187: By Sotheby.} – Ina\footnote{188: By Mrs Wilmot.} & such lumber
My back shop glut – my shelves encumber. –
There’s Byron – too – who once did better
Has sent me, – folded in a letter, –
A sort of, – it’s no more a drama
Than Darnley\footnote{189: Also by Sotheby.} – Ivan – or Kehama –
So altered since last year his pen is
I think he’s lost his wits at Venice
Or drained his brains away, as Stallion
To some dark-eyed & warm Italian;
In short – Sir – what with one & t’other
I dare not venture on another –
I write in haste, excuse each blunder
The Coaches through the Street so thunder!

2:1

My Room’s so full – we’ve Gifford here
Reading M.S.S. \textit{<to>} with Hookham Frere
Pronouncing on the nouns & particles
Of some of our forthcoming articles,
The Quarterly – Ah Sir! if you
Had but the Genius to review; –
A smart Critique upon St. Helena
Or if you only would but tell in a
Short compass what – but, to resume –
As I was saying – Sir – the Room –
The Room’s so full of wits & bards –
Crabbes – Campbells – Crokers – Freres – & Wards;
And others neither bards nor wits;
My humble tenement admits
All persons in the dress of Gent.
From Mr. Hammond to Dog Dent.
A party dines with me today
All clever men who make their way,\footnote{190: On October 12th B. adds here, “Crabbe – Malcolm – Hamilton and Chantry / “Are all partakers of my pantry –} 
They’re at this moment in discussion
On poor De Staël’s late dissolution –

2:2

“Her book they say was in advance –
“Pray Heaven! she tell the truth of France,
”’Tis said she certainly was married
“To Rocca – & had twice miscarried,
“No – not miscarried – I opine –
"But brought to bed at forty nine,
"Some say she died a Papist – Some
"Are of opinion that’s a Hum –
"I don’t know that – the fellow Schlegel
"Was very likely to inveigle
"A dying person in compunction
"To try the extremity of Unction –
"But peace be with her – for a woman
"Her talents surely were uncommon
"Her Publisher (& Public too)
"The hour of her demise may rue –
"For never more within his shop he –
"Pray – was not she interred at Coppet?

Thus run our time & tongues away –
But to return Sir – to your play –
Sorry – Sir – but I can not deal –
Unless ’twere acted by O’Neill –
My hands so full – my head so busy –
I’m almost dead – & always dizzy –
And so with endless truth & hurry –
Dear Doctor – I am yours

Jno Murray.

P.S. –

2:4

P.S. – I’ve done the 4th & last Canto – which mounts 133 Stanzas. – – I desire you to name a price – if you don’t – I will – so I <apprize> {advise} you in time.

there will be a good many notes. – –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, September 4th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.217; BLJ V 262-3)

Byron answers Murray’s of August 15th. He asks 2,500gs for CHP IV.

Dear Sir –

Your letter of the 15th. has conveyed with its’ contents the impression of a Seal to which the “Saracen’s head” is a Seraph – and the “Bull and Mouth” a delicate device. – – I knew that Calumny had sufficiently blackened me of later days – but not that it had given the features as well as complexion of a Negro. – –

Poor Augusta is not less – <so> {but} rather more shocked than myself – and says, “people seem to have lost their recollection strangely” when they engraved <me into> such a “blackamoor.” – Pray don’t seal (at least to me) with such a Caricature of the human numskull altogether – & if you don’t break the Sealcutter’s head – at least crack his libel (or likeness, if it should be a likeness) of mine. –

Mr. Kinnaird is not yet arrived – but expected – he has lost by the way all the toothpowder – as a letter from Spa informs me. – – –

By M’. Rose – I received safely though

1:2

tardily – Magnesia – and Tooth=powder – “Phrosine” and “Alashtar” – I shall clean my teeth <my> with one – and wipe my ——— not shoes with the other. <which> – Why do you send me such <infernal> trash – worse than trash – the Sublime of Mediocrity? – – –

191: Eliza O’Neill, leading Drury Lane actress.
192: Oriental poems by Henry Gally Knight.
Thanks for Lallah however which is good – & thanks for the Edin’ and Quarterly – both very amusing and well-written – – Paris in 1815 &c. good. – Modern Greece Good for nothing – written by some one who has never been there – and not being able to manage the Spenser Stanza has invented a thing of its’ own – consisting of two elegiac stanzas a heroic line and an Alexandrine twisted on a string – besides why “modern”? – you may say modern Greeks but surely Greece itself is rather more ancient than ever it was. – – Now for business. –

1:3

You offer 1500 guineas for the new Canto – I won’t take it. – I ask two thousand five hundred guineas for it – which you will either give or not as you think proper. – It concludes the poem – and consists of 144 Stanzas – the Notes are numerous and chiefly written by M’. Hobhouse – whose researches have been indefatigable – and who I will venture to say has more real knowledge of Rome & its environs than any Englishman – who has been there since Gibbon. – By the way – to prevent any mistakes – I think it necessary to state the fact that he M’. H. has no interest whatever in the price or profit to be derived from the copyright of either poem or notes directly or indirectly – so that you are not to suppose that it is by – for – or through him – that I require <such> more for this Canto than the preceding. – No – but if M’. Eustace was to have [had] two thousand for a poem on education – if M’. Moore is to have three thousand for Lallah &c. – if M’. Campbell is to have three

1:4

thousand for his prose on poetry – I don’t mean to disparage these gentlemen or their labours – but I ask the aforesaid price for mine. – You will tell me that their productions are considerably longer – very true – & when they shorten them – I will lengthen mine and ask less. – – – – – –

You shall submit the M.S. to M’. Gifford – and any other two gentlemen to be named by you (M’. Frere – or M’. Croker or whomever you please except such fellows as your Galley Knights & Sothebys) and if they pronounce this Canto to be inferior as a whole to the preceding – I will not appeal from their award – but burn the <Con> manuscript and leave things as they are. – – –

yours very truly

[long diagonal scrawl]

P.S.

In answer to your former letter
I sent you a short statement of what I thought the state of our present copyright account –

viz – six hundred (pounds) still (or lately) due on Child’s Harold – & six hundred guineas Manfred and Tasso – making a total of twelve hundred and thirty pounds – If we agree about the new poem I shall take the liberty to reserve the choice of the manner in which it should be published – viz – a Quarto certes; – If we do not agree – recollect that you have had the refusal. – – –

John Murray to Byron, from Broadstairs, Kent, August 29th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43495; Smiles 387-8; LJM 241-2)
[Mylord / Mylord Byron / Poste Restante / a Venise / en Italie pm: Ramsgate 30 August // Venice 17 September]

Murray answers Byron’s of August 7th and 12th.

Broadstairs 29th August 1817

My Lord

I have received your Letter of the 12th this day and just as I left London I had the pleasure of receiving that dated the 7th. – I am glad that you received even – lungo post tempore – the packet forwarded by M’ Croker & am no less so that the Copies of Manfred & Tasso have reached you – – Your Lordship will allow that Persons at a distance from the means of rectifying an error are very apt to magnify it & to misconceive its cause – I do assure you that in the present instance as in any preceeding one you will find that I am absolutely incapable of doing any thing which I did not think you would approve – or any rate that concealment – is totally out of the question – M’ Gifford after

193: By the Revd. George Croly (see DJ IX, 57, 6).
194: By Felicia Hemans.
consulting me omitted your close of the Drama from no other motive than because he thought the words you allude too – lessened the effect – & I was convinced of this myself – and the omission to send a Copy to you earlier was merely that having no direct opportunity it did not, before, occur to me to send it by post – & upon my honour the alteration was so trivial in my mind that I forgot the importancy which it might have in the <finelier> eye of an author – I have written up this day to have the page cancelled & your reading restored – In future I propose to send you every proof by post – with any suggestions of

The Lord Byron

1:2

M’ G. upon them for your approbation – the slight errors of the press which you point out in the Fifth Volume have been corrected against a new edition – I assure your Lordship that I take no umbrage at <the spirit of> irritability which will occasionally burst from a mind like yours but I sometimes feel a deep regret that in our pretty long intercourse I appear to have failed to shew, that a man in my situation may <be> possess the feelings & principles of a Gentleman – most certainly I do think that from personal attachment, I could venture as much in any shape for your service as any of those who have the good fortune to be ranked amongst your Lordships friends – & therefore do cut me up at a word as if I were your Taylor

How I have omitted to tell you what I have heard of Manfred – I cannot conceive – but so it appears to be – – All the higher critics such as Frere are in extacy with it averring that it places you far above all your former efforts – but it is not so popular with the general reader, because the go through it at once expecting to find their pleasure in the intricacy & interest of the plot – & being therein disappointed – they do not recur to the beauties which they had hastily passed over – to conclude it is less popular but more praise M’ Crabbe did not think Tasso equal to yourself – but he added – who could <write> have written it but Lord Byron?

By the way I asked Gifford & some others how Scott would like to be called the Scotch Ariosto &

1:3

no one can tell why you should call him so – except perhaps on account of his adopting the same measure

I gave your message to a certain person respecting your kind license to the publication of the Italian translation of Glenarvon – & behold an answer – Polidoris Father has sent me an Italian Translatio of the Lament of Tasso wch I will forward to You

I much regret that your Letters contain no word of civility to me from M’ Hobhouse – from whom I had flattered myself with the hope of the offer of his Travels196 – I have nearly ready for publication – Our Mission to Africa by the Congo – & Lord Amhersts to China – also Two 4th Vols by Mr Hallam &c &c

I directed a Letter to you from M’ S. Davies a few days ago – he would tell you about the Affairs of Col. L – wc I before hinted are I fear deranged – I see Newstead advertised for Sale this month & I trust that it may meet with a purchase – I wrote to your Lordship on the 16th proposing 1500G for Canto 4 – – it was a mistake only my mentioning Pounds for G – on the former things – Send me the Assignment

1:4

by M’ Lewis or some other friend & I will pay the balance to M’ Kinnaird – who carries me also for Manfred & Tasso for wch the Amn is forthcoming on his return – this will I hope be in time – I hope the Daughters of the Physician at La Mira – are well.

I beg you to offer my remembrances to M’ Hobhouse With unabated regard I have the honour to remain your Lordships

obliged & faithful Servant

John Murray

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, September 9th 1817:

195: Mu. means “do not cut me up”.
196: Instead, Mu. gets Historical Illustrations.
Murray answers Byron’s of August 21st. He announces the death of Jane Austen (of whom Byron never makes mention).

London Sep 9th. 1817

My Lord

I thank you for your epistle poetical & prose which I had the pleasure of receiving this day – I was very much rejoiced to perceive by the papers, in the Country, that Newstead had been knocked down at £95,000 odd – & both surprised & disappointed to learn subsequently that it had not been bona fide sold – as this sum had exceeded your expectations as to positive sale my only hope is that you have received reasons for the reiterated non-execution of your positive injunction that satisfy you – One thing is certainly favourable that the price of land is everywhere rising, but yours has been suffered I hear from all hands to go into such careless waste that would have been better to have taken this fair sum, & thus have relieved you from an anxiety, & placed yourself in comfort or at least certainty as to the future, for the omission of which £10,000 <po> more, or less can not afford I fear an adequate compensation – As soon as I received your Letter I wrote M’ Davies to favour me with a call & he agrees in the sentiments which I have just expressed, and has undertaken to go tomorrow to M’ Hanson & obtain a thorough explanation of his conduct on this point and to write you or to give me the means of writing to you on Friday – I have been most happy to learn that Rochdale is likely – certain of proving a property of infinitely more value than you have ever been allowed to suppose and this must very much increase if the present universal aspect of things maintain their improved estimate – What can be any satisfactory reason why Mr H—n – after repeated applications from

1:2

M’ K & others – should persist in withholding a proper Statement of your account with him & thus keeping over your head a Cloud incessantly lowering & threatening with any & every thing – there must be some motive for these uncertainties & if this were once sent to you & the estate sold you would be perfectly free – he absolutely manacles you & two thirds of any uneasiness which you suffer arise, from this source not always admitted – but still at the bottom of all – & you should insist upon having the veil drawn up –

I have just come to town for a few days & have my hands quite full – I am preparing two accounts of the unfortunate China Expedition of which I know of no less than Eight have been written by Lord Amherst, Sir Geo Staunton – M’ Davies (an able young Man who understands the language) Cap’ Hall – Mr Morrison the Interpreter – M’ Abel – Naturalist – Mr M’Cleod – Surgeon & last not least M’ Ellis (Ld Buckinghamshires Son – who was second in the Embassy – the two last I am publishing & one other is announced – – I have Cap’ Tuckey’s Journal a very interesting one of the <Embass> Mission to Africa Kept to the day of his death – All Burkhards Papers (the Sikh Ibrim) Two new Novels left by Miss Austen – the ingenious Author of Pride & Prejudice – who I am sorry to say died about 6 weeks ago

1:3

I am printing “A View of the Gouvernments & History of the Middle Ages {2 Vols 4”} – by M’ Hallam – And a Work 2 Vols 8” by M’ Bankes the Member – cum multis alibus – I hope to be allowed to place at the Head of this List Childe Harold Canto IV and then I can leave the remainder of the Season to Chance do you think 1500 Guineas enough? and has my proposal found favour in your Lordships Sight? – If so let me have it immediately that I may send you the proofs before its publication.

You dont say a word about the books which I sent you, I mean in the way of criticism & perhaps I had as well not ask it unless your prose be less caustic than your poetry – Is Paris pretty good & Modern Greece – & the MSS de St Helene? which I published to shew my independence – I have sent you Coleridge’s Life – by Mr Kinnaird with other things which will I trust arrive safe –

M’ Ticknor the American has written to me from Paris to say that hed did not go to Albania & wishing likewise to know “what disposition he is to make of a Present your Lordship gave him for Ali Pasha” in the mean time he has deposited it, for your order, in the hands of Mess’ Wells & Williams

197: Austen died on July 18th.
Bankers, Rue Faubourg Poissonniere N° 26 – Paris – I can not even hear of this Son of a — Sir Jno S\^t Aubyn – but the winter shall not commence its darkness before I discover him & get account of your Box – I admire your Poetical Epistle wch has too much prose – not prosing good sense in it. J Murray

1:4 [above address:] M' Hobhouse is marvelously ill used in the Quarterly just published\(^{198}\) – where he is called a Bone-grubber to the no small entertainment of that wicked wight S.B.Davies Esq

I remain in Duty & faith

My Lord

Your affectionate Servant Jno Murray

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Byron to John Murray, from Venice, September 15th 1817:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 168; QII 418-19; BLJ V 264-6)

[To, J\(^{o}\) Murray Esq / 50 Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]

Byron's letter about the “wrong revolutionary {poetical} system”.

Sept\(^{e}\). 15\(^{th}\), 1817. –

Dear Sir

I enclose a sheet for correction if ever you get to another edition – you will observe that the blunder in printing makes it appear as if the Chateau was over St. Gingo – – instead of being on the opposite shore of the lake over Clarens – so – separate the paragraphs otherwise my topography will seems as inaccurate as your typography on this occasion. – – The other day I wrote to convey my proposition with regard to the {4\(^{th}\) &} concluding Canto – I have gone over \(<\!\!\!>\) & extended it to one hundred and fifty stanzas which is almost as long as the two first were originally – & longer by itself – than any of the smaller poems except the “Corsair” – M'. Hobhouse has made some very valuable & accurate notes of considerable length – & you may be sure I will do for the text all that I can to finish with 1:2
decency. – I look upon C\(^{o}\) Harold as my best – and as I begun – I think of concluding with it – but I make no resolutions on that head – as I broke my former intention with regard to “the Corsair” – however – I fear that I shall never do better – & yet – not being thirty years of age for some moons to come – one ought to be progressive as far as Intellect goes for many a good year – but I have had a devilish deal of wear & tear of mind and body – {in my time} – besides having published too often & much already. God grant me some judgement! to do what may be most fitting in that & every thing else – for I doubt my own exceedingly. – – I have read “Lallah Rookh” – but not with sufficient attention yet – for I ride about – & lounge – & ponder & – two or three other things – so that my reading is very desultory & not so attentive as it used to 1:3

be. – I am very glad to hear of its popularity – for Moore is a very noble fellow in all respects – & will enjoy it without any of the bad feelings which Success {– good or evil –} sometimes engenders in the men of rhyme. – Of the poem itself – I will tell you my opinion when I have mastered it – I say of the poem\(^{199}\) – for I don't like the prose at all – at all – and in the mean time the “Fire=worshippers” is the best and the “Veiled Prophet” the worst, of the volume. – With regard to poetry in general I am convinced the more I think of it – that he \(<\!\!\!>\) and all of us – Scott – Southey – {Wordsworth} – Moore – Campbell – I – are all in the wrong – one as much as another – that we are upon a wrong revolutionary {poetical} system – or systems – not worth a damn in itself – & from which none but Rogers and Crabbe are free – and that 1:4

the present & next generations will finally be of this opinion. – I am the more confirmed in this – by having lately gone over some of our Classics – particularly Pope – whom I tried in this way – – I took Moore’s poems & my own & some others – & went over them side by side with Pope’s – – and I was really astonished (I ought not to have been {so}) and mortified – at the ineffable distance in point of

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198: Letters is reviewed (by Croker + Gifford) as if it’s a parody.
199: “poem” underlined four times.
sense – harmony – effect – and even Imagination {Passion} – & – Invention – between the little Queen Anne’s Man – & us of the lower Empire – depend upon it is all Horace then, and Claudian now among us – and if I had to begin again – I would model myself accordingly – Crabbe’s the man – but he has got a coarse and impracticable subject – & Rogers the Grandfather of living Poetry – is retired upon half-pay, (I don’t mean as a Banker) – <and bating> [since] pretty Miss Jaqueline with her nose aquiline,

2:1

2) {and} has done enough – unless he were to do as he did formerly. –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, September 17th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 170-1; BLJ V 266)
[To, Jno Murray Esqre / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]  
Byron answers Murray’s of August 29th.

Venice. Sept’ 17th. 1817.

Dear Sir –  
I shall send the assignment by M’. Kinnaird – who is not yet arrived here – but your rectification of guineas does not bring you quite right yet – you said a thousand pounds – it is however – twelve hundred & thirty pounds – viz – a balance of £ six hundred – on the 3rd C’ & three hundred g.’ Manfred – & three hundred Tasso – making six hundred & thirty pounds on the latter – according to my Cocker. 200 – As to the time of payment – I repeat that I don’t wish to press you – but that when it suits your convenience – it will not be incompatible with mine; – by Me 201. Morland

1:2

last account I perceive that a sum which I imagined to have been from your quarter came {instead} from M’. Hanson – so that it should seem you are more in my books than I thought – for which reason I am thus precise as to items. – M’. Hobhouse purposes being in England in November – he will bring the 4th. Canto with him notes and all – the text contains one hundred and fifty stanzas – which is long for that measure. – With regard to the “Ariosto of the North” surely their themes Chivalry war – & love were as like as Can be – and as to the compliment if you knew what the Italians think of Ariosto – you would not hesitate about that. –  
But as to their “measures” you forget

1:3

that Ariosto’s is an [octave] stanza – and Scott’s any thing but a Stanza. – – If you think Scot will dislike it – say so – & I expunge. – I do not call him the “Scotch Ariosto” which would be sad provincial eulogy – but the “Ariosto of the North” – meaning of all countries that are not the South. – I have received your enclosed letter from Lady Caroline Lamb – & am truly sorry (as she will one day be) that she is capable of writing such a letter – poor thing – it is a great pity. – As I have recently troubled you rather frequently – I will conclude repeating that I am y’ ever very truly,

October 8th-10th 1817: Byron drafts Beppo in two nights.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, October 12th 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 171-6; BLJ V 266)  
[To, Jno Murray Esqre / 50 Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]  
Byron has written Beppo. He denies that Manfred is based on either Faustus or Faust.

Oct’. 12th. 1817. – –

Dear Sir – M’. Kinnaird & his brother Lord K. have been here – and are now gone again; all your missives came except the tooth=powder – of which I request further supplies at all convenient opportunities as also of Magnesia & Soda=powders 201 – both great luxuries here – & neither to be had

201: For his indigestion.
and hence this long tirade – which is the last Chapter of his vagabond life. – As for Bertram, Mathurin may defend his own begotten – if he likes it well enough – I leave the Irish Clergyman and the<br>Orator Henley to battle it out between them – satisfied to have done the best I could for both – I may say this to you – who know it. – Mr. Coleridge may console himself with the “fervour – the almost religious fervour” of his and Wordsworth’s disciples as he calls it – if he means that as any proof of their merits – I will find him as much “fervour” in behalf of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcote – as ever gathered over his pages – or round his fireside. He is a shabby fellow – and I wash my hands of, and after him.

My answer to your proposition – about the 4th Canto – you will have received – and I await yours – perhaps we may not agree. – – I have since written

a poem (of 84 Stanzas) humourous, in or after the (excellent) manner of Mr. Whistlecraft (whom I take to be Frere), on a Venetian anecdote – which amused me;” – but till I have your answer – I can say nothing (more) about it. – – Mr. Hobhouse does not return to England in Novr as he intended, but will perhaps winter here – and as he is to convey the poem or poems – for there may perhaps be more than the two mentioned (which by the way I shall not perhaps include in the same publication or agreement) shall not be able to publish so soon – as expected – but I suppose there is no harm in the delay. – I have signed and sent your former copyrights by Mr. Kinnaird – but not the receipt because the money is not yet paid – Mr. K. has a power of Attorney to sign for me – and will when necessary –

Many thanks for the Edin. R. which is very kind about Manfred – and defends it’s originality – which I did not know that any body had attacked. – I never read – & do not know that I ever saw the “Faustus of Marlow” and had & have no Dramatic works by me in English – except the recent things you sent me; – but I heard Mr. Lewis translate verbally some scenes of Goethe’s Faust (which were some good & some bad) last Summer – which is all I know of the history of that magical personage; and as to the germs of Manfred – they may be found in the Journal (which) I sent to Mr. Leigh (part of which you saw) when I went over (first) the Dent de Jamant & then the Wengeren or Wengeberg Alp & Sheideck) and made the giro of the Jungfrau &c. &c. shortly before I left Switzerland – I have the whole scene of Manfred before me as if it was (but) yesterday – & could point it out spot by spot, torrent and all. – –

2) Of the Prometheus of Aeschylus I was passionately fond as a boy – (it was one of the Greek plays we read thrice a year at Harrow) indeed that and the “Medea” were the only ones – except the “Seven before Thebes” which ever much pleased me. – – As to the “Faustus of Marlow” – I never read – never saw – nor heard of it – at least thought of it – except that I think Mr. Gifford mentioned, in a note of his

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202: Biographia Literaria, XXIII.
203: Ibid., XIV.
204: Beppo.
205: B. may have read parts of Dr. Faustus in Charles Lamb’s Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived About the Time of Shakespeare (1813) or in Old English Plays (1814 / 15), edited by C.W.Dilke.
206: B. would have gathered an excellent outline of Faust from de Staël’s de l’Allemagne (1813).
{which you sent me} – something about the catastrophe; – but not as having any thing to do with mine – which may or may not resemble it – for any thing I know. – – – –

The Prometheus – if not exactly in my plan – has always been so much in my head – that I can easily conceive its’ influence over all or anything that I have written; – but I deny Marlow & his progeny – & beg {that} you will do the same. – – – – – –

2:2

If you can send me the paper in question – which the E. R. mentions – do – The Review in the Magazine you say was written by Wilson – it had all the air of being a poet’s, & was a {very} good one. – The Edin. Review – I take to be {Jeffrey’s} own by it’s friendliness. – – I wonder they <have> thought it worth while to do so – so soon after the former; – but it was evidently with a good motive. – – – –

I saw Hoppner the other day – whose {country} house at Este – I have taken for two years – if you come out next Summer – let me know in time; – love to Gifford.

yrs. ever truly

[double swirl signature]

2:3

“Crabbe – Malcolm – Hamilton and Chantry

“Are all partakers of my pantry –

these two lines were <altered> omitted in your letter to the Doctor – after

“All clever men who make their way.”

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, October 23rd 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 176-8; BLJ V 269-70)
Byron answers two Murray letters which are missing. One is dated October 7th.


Dear Sir – Your two letters are before me – and our bargain is so far concluded. – How sorry I am to hear that Gifford is unwell – pray tell me that he is better – I hope it is nothing – but cold – as you say his illness originates in cold – I trust it will get no further. – – – – Mr. Whistlecraft has no greater admirer than myself – I have written a story in 89. stanzas – in imitation of him – called Beppo (the short name for Giuseppe – that is the Joe of the Italian Joseph) which I shall throw you into the balance of the 4th. Canto – to help you round to your money – but you perhaps had better publish it anonymously – <as> but this we will see <too> {to} by and bye. – In the notes to Canto 4, Mr. Ho’s. has pointed out

1:2

several errors of Gibbon – you may depend upon H.’s research and accuracy. – As to the form you may print it in what shape you please. – With regard to a future large Edition – you may print all or any thing except “English Bards” to the republication of which at no time will I consent – I would not reprint them <because> on any consideration – I don’t think them good for much – even in point of poetry – and as to the other things – you are to recollect that I gave up the publication on account of the Hollands – and I do not consider that any time or circumstances can neutralise my <previous> suppression; – add to which that after being on terms with almost all

1:3

the bards & Critics of the day – it would be <bad> {savage} at any time – but worst of all now when in another country – to revive this foolish lampoon. – – –

I am glad that you and the Chancellor clapped an extinguisher on Master Cawthorn – I thought that person’s impudence would get him into a scrape. – – – –

The Review of Manfred came very safely – and I was <much> much pleased with it. It is odd that they should say – (that is somebody in a magazine whom the Edinburgh controverts) that it was taken from
Byron to John Murray, from Venice, November 15th 1817:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 181-3; BLJ V 272-3)

[To, Jno. Murray Esqre. / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]

Venice, November 15th, 1817

Dear Sir / M'. Kinnaird has probably returned to England by this time – & will have conveyed to you any tidings you may wish to have of us and ours. – I have come back to Venice for the Winter – M'. Hobhouse will probably set off in Dec'. but what day or week I know not – he is my opposite neighbour at present. – – I wrote yesterday in some perplexity and no very good humour to M'. Kd. to inform me about Newstead and the Hansons – of which & whom I hear nothing since his departure from this place – except in a few unintelligible words from an unintelligible woman. – – – –

1:2

I am as sorry to hear of D'. Polidori’s accident as one can be for a person for whom one has a dislike – and – something of contempt – when he gets well tell me – and how he gets on in the sick line – poor fellow! how came he to fix there?

I fear the Doctor’s Skill at Norwich
Will hardly salt the Doctor’s porridge.

Methought he was going to the Brazils to give the Portuguese physic (of which they are fond to desperation) with the Danish Consul – and the patronage of Frederic North (the most illustrious Humbug of his age and country) and the blessing of Lady Westmoreland – William Ward’s Madwoman. – – – – – – – –

1:3

207: Goethe disagreed. He wrote on October 13th, to Knebel: This strange and witty poet has completely absorbed my Faust and sucked the most peculiar nourishment from it for his hypochondria. He has used all the motifs in his own way, so that none remains quite the same, and for that reason especially I cannot sufficiently admire his genius. The remodelling is so complete that very interesting lectures could be given about it, as well as about the similarity with the original and the dissimilarity from it …
Your new Canto has expanded to one hundred & sixty seven stanzas – it will be long you see – and as for the notes {by H.} – I suspect they will be of the heroic size; you must keep M. Hobhouse in good humour – for he is devilish touchy yet about your review208 and all which it inherits209 – including the Editor – the Admiralty – and it’s bookseller; – I used to think that I was a good deal of an author in a“A mour propre and “noli me tangere” – but these prose fellows are worst after all about their little comforts. – —

Do you remember my mentioning some months ago the Marquis Moncada? – a Spaniard of distinction and fourscore years – my summer

1:4

neighbour at La Mira? – Well – about six weeks ago he fell in love with a Venetian girl of family & no fortune or character – took her into his mansion – quarrelled with all his former friends for giving him advice (except me who gave him none) and installed her present concubine and future wife {& Mistress} of <xxx xxxx xxxx> {himself} and furniture; – at the end of a month in which she demeaned herself as ill as possible he found out a correspondence between her and some <old> {former} keeper – and after nearly strangling – turned her out of the house – to the great scandal of the keeping part of the town – and with a prodigious <é clat> éclat which has occupied all the Canals and

2:1

2) Coffeehouses in Venice. – He said she wanted to poison him – & she says – God knows what – but between them they have made a great deal of noise. – — I know a little of both the parties – Moncada seemed a very sensible old man – – a character which he has not quite kept up on this occasion; – and the woman is rather showy than pretty – for the honour of religion she was bred in a convent – and for the credit of Great Britain – taught by an Englishwoman. – — – —

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, December 3rd 1817:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.223; BLJ V 275-7)
[To, / John Murray Esq. / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]

Venice. Dec 3rd. 1817

Dear Sir –

A Venetian lady, learned and somewhat stricken in years, having in her intervals of love and devotion taken upon her to translate the letters – & write the life of lady M. W. Montague seemed a very sensible old man – – a character which he has not quite kept up on this occasion; – and the woman is rather showy than pretty – for the honour of religion she was bred in a convent – and for the credit of Great Britain – taught by an Englishwoman. – — – —

1:2

The death of the Princess Charlotte210 has been a shock even here – and must have been here no great distinction – because the first <is> {is} in no request – and the two latter are <as> common to all women – or at <last> least the last of them. – If you can therefore tell me anything or get any thing told of Lady. W. M. – I shall take it as a favour – & will transfer & translate it to the “Dama” in question – and I pray you besides to send me by some quick and safe voyager the edition of her letters – and the stupid life by D. Dallaway – published by her proud & foolish family. – — – —

The death of the Princess Charlotte210 has been a shock even here – and must have been an earthquake at home – the Courier’s list of some three hundred heirs to the Crown (including the house of Wirtemberg with that blackguard Paul of disreputable memory

1:3

208: The sarcastic Quarterly review of Letters.
210: B. adds sts.167-72 to CHP IV to mourn the death of Princess Charlotte.
whom I remember seeing at various balls during the visit of the Muscovites &c, in 1814.) must be very consolatory to all true lieges <and> as well as foreigners except Signr. Travis a rich Jew Merchant of this city – who complains grievously of the length of British Mourning – which has countermanded all the Silks which he was on the point of transmitting, for a year to come. – The death of this poor Girl is melancholy in every respect – dying at twenty or so – in childbed – of a boy too – a present princess and future queen – and just as she began to be happy – and to enjoy herself and the hopes which she inspired. – –

To be sure Providence is a fine fellow and does wonders – “the Gods take care of Cato”\textsuperscript{211} – – I think as far

1:4

as I can recollect she is the first royal defunct in childbed upon record in our history. – – I feel sorry in every respect; for the loss of a female reign – and a woman hitherto harmless – and all the {lost} rejoicings, and addresses, and drunkenness, and disbursements, of John Bull on the occasion. – but not surprized – because “the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away – blessed be the name of the Lord” – –

The Prince will marry again after divorcing his wife, and Mr. Southey will write an elegy now – and an ode then – the Quarterly will have an article against the Press – and the Edinburgh an article half and half. [about Reform and right of divorce –]

\textless{five lines deleted, including “for … has an eye to”}\textgreater

2:1

2) the British will give you D\textsuperscript{r}. Chalmers’ funeral Sermon much commended – with a place in the Stars for deceased Royalty, and the Morning Post {will} have already yelled forth its “Syllables of dolour.”\textsuperscript{212}

“Woe woe Nealliny! – the young Nealliny!”\textsuperscript{213}

It is sometime since I have heard from you – are you in bad humour? I suppose so. – \textlangle I so\textrangle I have been so myself – it is your turn now – and by & by mine will come round again. –

y\textsuperscript{th} truly

[squiggle]

P.S.

\textless I have\textgreater Countess Albrizzi cone back from Paris has brought {me} a medal of himself \textlangle> {a} present from Denon {to me} – and a likeness to the death of Mr. Rogers (belonging to her) by Denon also – I never saw so good a portrait – “And the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised.”\textsuperscript{214} –

1818: \textit{Beppo} is published anonymously on February 28th, and \textit{Childe Harold IV} (with Byron’s name), on April 28th. Byron’s liaison with Marianna Segati ends, and he embarks upon a period of total debauchery, encouraged by the Venetian way of life. He leases the Palazzo Mocenigo on the Grand Canal. In June he wins a swimming race the length of the Grand Canal. Margarita Cogni becomes his mistress and housekeeper, cutting the household expenses by half. He writes \textit{Mazeppa}, and begins \textit{Don Juan I}, which he finishes on September 19th. He writes his Memoirs. On November 11th, John Hanson arrives in Venice with the papers for the sale of Newstead. Byron hears that Robert Southey, whom he despises already on political grounds, has been spreading rumours about his sex-life in Switzerland, and he composes the Dedication to \textit{Don Juan I}, attacking Southey. He starts \textit{Don Juan II}.

January 8th 1818: Hobhouse leaves Venice for London, taking \textit{Childe Harold IV}. He and Byron only meet once again.

\textsuperscript{211}: Addison, \textit{Cato} II i.
\textsuperscript{212}: Shakespeare, \textit{Macbeth}, IV iii 8.
\textsuperscript{213}: Southey, \textit{The Curse of Kehama}, I 11.
\textsuperscript{214}: Biblical; I Corinthians 15:52.
Byron to John Murray, from Venice, January 8th 1818:
(Source: not found at B.L.Ashley 2777; text from Lord Byron to John Murray, Scolar Press / John Murray 1974; LJ IV 191-3, though “Stanzas 12, 13 14 cannot be published”; BLJ VI 3-6)
Written on the day Hobhouse leaves, with CHP IV.

Venice, January 8th, 1818

My dear M'. Murray,

You’re in a damned hurry,
To <print> set up this ultimate Canto;
But (if they don’t rob us)
You’ll see Mr. Hobhouse
Will bring it safe in his portmanteau. –

2. For the Journal you hint of,
As ready to print off,215
No doubt you do right to commend it;
But as yet I have writ off
The devil a bit of
Our “Beppo,” when copied – I’ll send it.216 –

3. In the mean time you’ve “Gally”217
Whose verses all tally,
Perhaps you may say he’s a Ninny,
But if you abashed are
Because of “Alashtar,”
He’ll piddle another “Phrosine”.218

4. Then you’ve Sotheby’s tour,219
No great things, to be sure –
You could hardly begin with a less work;
For the pompous rascallion,
Who don’t speak Italian
Nor French, must have scribbled by guess-work.

5. No doubt he’s a rare man
Without knowing German
Translating his way up Parnassus,
And still now absurder
He meditates Murder
As you’ll see in the trash he calls Tasso’s.220

6. But you’ve others his betters
The real men of letters
Your Orators, critics, and wits,
And I’ll bet that your Journal
(Pray, is it diurnal?)
Will pay with your luckiest hits, –

1:2

215: Mu’s letter is missing; he was thinking of founding a new journal called The Edinburgh Monthly Magazine.
216: Beppo was still being revised at this date. Mu. published three editions before it was finished.
217: Henry Gally Knight (again).
218: Knight’s two oriental poems of 1817.
219: William Sotheby, Farewell to Italy, and occasional poems (John Murray, 1818.)
220: Sotheby’s Tasso unidentified.
7.
You can make any loss up
With “Spence” and his Gossip,
A work which must surely succeed;
Then Queen Mary’s Epistle=craft,
With the new “Fytte” of “Whistlecraft”,
Must make people purchase and read.

8.
Then you’ve General Gordon,
Who “girded his sword on”
To serve with a Muscovite Master
And help him to polish
A <people> Nation so owlish,
They thought shaving their beards a disaster.

9.
For the man, “poor and shrewd”, X
With whom you’d conclude
A Compact without more delay,
Perhaps some such pen is

X Vide your letter

1:4

Still extant in Venice;
But <pray> {please} Sir to mention your pay? –

10.
Now tell me some news
Of your friends and the Muse
Of the Bar, – or the Gown, – or the House,
From Canning the tall wit
To Wilmot the small wit
Ward’s creeping Companion and Louse,

11.
<He’s> {Who’s} so damnably bit
With fashion and Wit
That <still as> {he crawls on} the surface like Vermin,
But an Insect in both, –
By his Intellect’s growth
Of what size you may quickly determine.

12.
Now, I’ll put out my taper
(I’ve finished my paper
For these stanzas you see on the brink stand)

2:1

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221: Joseph Spence, *Anecdotes, observations and characters of books and men* (1820), not published by Mu..
222: George Chalmers, *Life of Mary Queen of Scots; drawn from the State Papers* (John Murray 1818).
224: General Thomas Gordon (1788-1841), fought in Greece with Richard Church in 1821 and published a *History of the Greek Revolution* in 1832. He had met Ali Pasha in 1810.
225: There are no letters from Mu. to B. between September 9th 1817 and June 16th 1818. Another missing Murray letter.
226: George Canning (1770-1827), future Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister, had written for the *Anti-Jacobin*.
227: Sir Robert Wilmot (subsequently Wilmot Horton: 1784-1841), a cousin of Annabella’s. At BLJ XI 169 B. refers to him as “that wretched Coxcomb Wilmot”; with Colonel Doyle, he was a burner of B.’s Memoirs in 1824.
228: John William Ward (1781-1833), later Earl of Dudley and Ward; friend of B.’s.
There's a whore on my right,
For I rhyme best at night
When a C—t is tied close to my Inkstand.

13.

It was Mahomet's notion
That comical motion
Increased his “devotion in prayer” – 229 [sideways:] See his life in Gibbon’s
If that tent holds good
In a Prophet, it should
In a poet be equally fair. –

14.

For, in rhyme or in love
(Which both come from above)
I'll stand <at you> with our “Tommy” or “Sammy”
But <the Soph> the Sopha and lady
Are both of them ready
And so, here’s “Good <Night! And God dammee> {Night to you
dammee!”

“Moore” and “Rogers”

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, January 27th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 194-5; QII 420; BLJ VI 9-11)
[Venezia / To, J
no. Murray Esqre / 50 Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra
Venice. J
o. 27
th. 1818]

Dear Sir /

My father – that is, not God the Father, but my father in God – my Armenian father Padre Pasquali <in> in the name of all the other fathers of our convent sends you the inclosed Greeting. –

Inasmuch as it has pleased the translators of the long lost & lately found portions of the text of Eusebius to put forth the inclosed prospectus of which I send six copies – you are hereby implored to obtain Subscribers in the two Universities – & among the learned and the unlearned who would unlearn their ignorance; – this they <req> (the Convent) request – I request – & do you request.

1:2

I sent you Beppo – some weeks ago – you had best publish it alone – it has politics & ferocity, &

must do for your Isthmus of a Journal. –

M’. Hobhouse if the Alps have not broken his neck – is – or ought to be – swimming with my Commentaries & his own coat of Mail in his teeth & right hand – in a Cork jacket between Calais & Dover. It is the height of the Carnival and I am in the estrum & agonies of a new intrigue – with I don’t exactly know whom {or what} except that she is insatiate of love – & won’t take money 231 – & has light hair & blue eyes – which <I> {are} not common here – & that I met her at the Masque – & that when her mask is off I am as wise as ever. –

1:3

I shall <A> make what I can of the remainder of my youth – & confess – that like Augustus – I would {rather} die standing. – [scrawl]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, February 20th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 199-204; QII 420-3; BLJ VI 11-13)
[Another answer to two (perhaps two) missing Murray letters.]

Venice. – Feb. 20th.

229: Mahomet’s notion: “Mahoment” bisyllabic. The Qu’ran encourages sex, but does not say that it improves one’s capacity to pray.
230: “The voluntary penance of the ascetics, the torment and glory of their lives, was odious to a prophet who censured in his companions a rash vow of abstaining from flesh, and women, and sleep; and firmly declared, that he would suffer no monks in his religion” – Gibbon, Decline and Fall, Chapter 50.
231: Elena da Mosta; she gives him the clap.
Dear Sir

I have to thank Mr. Croker\textsuperscript{232} for the arrival – & you for the Continents of the Parcel which [arrived] last week – much quicker than any before – owing to Mr. C’s kind attention, and [the] official exterior [of the bags,] and all safe – except much fraction amongst the Magnesia – of which only two [bottles] came entire – but it is all very well – and I am accordingly obliged to you.

The books I have read, or rather am reading – pray who may be the Sexagenarian – whose Gossip is very amusing – many of his sketches I recognize – particularly Gifford – {Mackintosh} – Drummond – {Dutens} – {H. Walpole} – Mr. Inchbald – Opie &c. with the Scotts – Loughborough & most of the divines and lawyers – besides a few shorter hints [of authors,] – & a few lines about a certain “Noble Author” characterized as Malignant and Sceptical according to the good old story “as it was in the beginning – is now – but not always shall be” -- do you know such a person Master Murray? eh? and pray of the Booksellers which be you? the dry – the dirty – the honest – the opulent – the finical – the splendid, or the Coxcomb Bookseller? --

“Stap my vitals” – but the author grows scurrilous in his grand Climacteric. -- -- I remember to have seen Porson at Cambridge in the Hall of our College – and in private parties – but not frequently – and I never can recollect him except [as] drunk or brutal and generally both – (<>) I mean in an Evening for in the hall he dined at the Dean’s table – & I at the Vice=Master’s so that I was not near him, and [he then & there] appeared sober in his demeanour – nor did I ever hear of <his> excess or outrage on his part in public <fel> Commons – & then I was never near enough to hear -- of his drunken deportment I can be sure <of what I say> because I saw it. -- -- -- -- -- --

2) With the Reviews I have been much entertained – it requires to be as far from England as I am – to relish a periodical paper properly – it is like Soda water in an Italian Summer – but what cruel work you make with Lady Morgan – you should recollect that she is a woman – though to be sure they are now & then very provoking – still as authoresses they can do no great harm – and I think it a pity so much good invective should have been laid out upon her – when there is such a fine field of us Jacobin Gentlemen for you to work upon; it is perhaps as bitter a critique as ever was written – & enough to make <an> sad work for Dr. Morgan – both as a husband and an Apothecary – unless she

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\textsuperscript{232}: Via Croker of the Admiralty, Mu. is sending his letters in the diplomatic bag.
should say as Pope did – of some attack upon him – “that it is as good for her as a dose of Hartshorn”. 

I heard from Moore lately & was very sorry to be made aware of his domestic loss233 – thus it is – “Medio de fonte leporum”234 in the acme of his fame – & of his happiness comes a drawback as usual. 

His letter somehow or other was more than two months on the road – so that I could only answer it the other day. – What you tell me of R<ogers> in your last letter235 is like him – but he had best let us that is one of us – if not both – alone – he cannot say that I have not been a sincere & a warm friend to him – till the black drop of <his> liver oozed 

through too palpably to be overlooked – now if I once catch him at any of his juggling with me or mine – let him look to it – for – if I spare him – {then write me down a goodnatured gentleman;} & the more that I have been deceived – the more that I once relied upon him – I don’t mean his petty friendship (what is that to me?) but his good will – which I really tried to obtain thinking him at first a good fellow – – the more will I pay off the balance – and so if he values his quiet – let him look to it – in three months I <would> could restore him to the Catacombs. – – – –  – 

Mr. Hoppner – whom I saw this morning – has been made the father of a very fine boy – Mother & Child doing very well indeed. – By this time Hobhouse should be with you – & also certain packets – letters & of mine sent since his departure. – – – – 

I am not at all well in health within this last eight days; – – my remembrances to Gifford & all friends y³. [scrawl]  
B

P.S. 
In the course of a Month or two, Hanson will have probably to send off a Clerk with conveyances to sign – (N⁰ being sold in Nov’. last for Ninety four thousand & five hundred pounds) in which case I supplicate supplies of articles as usual – for which desire {M’} Kinnaird to settle from funds in their bank – & deduct from my account with him. – 

3:1

P.S. 
Tomorrow night I am going to see “Otello” an opera from our “Othello” – and one of Rossini’s best, it is said. – It will be curious to see in Venice – the Venetian story itself represented – besides to discover what they will make of Shakespeare in Music. – 

February 28th 1818: Beppo published, incomplete.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, March 9th 1818: 
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.231; BLJ VI 21-2) 
Three extra stanzas for Beppo (which Murray has already published). 

These with speed. 

Venice, March 9th. 
1818.

Dear Sir /

233: Moore’s daughter Barbara had died. 
234: Lucretius, De Rerum Natura, IV 1224: medio de fonte leporum surget amari aliquid (“from the very fountain of enchantment rises a drop of bitterness”). 
235: This letter from Mu seems also missing.
If you have not yet printed, – or have an opportunity of reprinting “Beppo”; – after the stanza which ends (I forget the Number) with

“For most men till by losing rendered sager
Will back their own opinions <by> {with} a wager

Insert this. –

‘Tis said that their last parting was pathetic,
As partings often are, or ought to be,
<That> {<And>} And their presentiment was quite prophetic
That they should never more each other see,
(A sort of morbid feeling half poetic
Which I have known occur <in> [in] two or three)
When kneeling on the shore upon her sad knee
He left this Adriatic Ariadne. –

yⁿ[scrawl]

1:2

And After the stanza concluding with

“Or what becomes of damage and divorces?"

Insert. –

However – I still think with all due deference
To the fair single part of the Creation
That married ladies should preserve the preference
In tête à tête, or general conversation, –
And this I say without peculiar reference
To England, France, or any other nation,
Because they know the world, & are at ease,
And being natural, naturally please. –

——

‘Tis true, your budding Miss is very charming,
But shy, and awkward, at first coming out,
So much alarmed, that she is quite alarming,
All Giggle, Blush; – half Pertness, and half Pout,
<Still> {And} glancing at Mamma for fear there’s harm in
What you, <or> she, <or they> it, or they, may be about,
The Nursery [still] lisps out in all they utter,
Besides, they always smell of Bread and Butter.

[BLJ adds this fragment, also dated March 9th:

The Line on Italy must run

“With all its’ sinful doings I must say” &c.
instead of <“their” &c.>

“their” &c.
as put at first.]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, March 11th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.232; BLJ VI 22)
Another stanza for Beppo.

D². S².

To & In “Beppo” after [yⁿ] stanza which concludes “though Laughter
Leaves us so doubly serious shortly after.” –
Add & insert

Oh! Mirth and Innocence! Oh! Milk and Water!
Ye happy mixtures of more happy days!
In these sad Centuries of sin & slaughter,
Abominable Man no more allays
His thirst with such pure beverage. – No matter,
I love you both, & both shall have my praise,
Oh! for old Saturn’s reign of Sugar=candy! –
Meantime I drink to <its’> your return in Brandy.

This is the 4th. additional Sa I sent within ye. week – tell me if you have received the others – three in one cover.

[scrawl]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, March 25th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 216-18; BLJ VI 24-5)

Byron answers another missing Murray letter.

Venice. March 25th,
1818

Dear Sir /

I have your letter236 with ye. account of “Beppo” for which I sent you 4 new Stanzas a fortnight ago – in case you print – or reprint. – – –
As for the “amiable Man”237 what “do the honest Man in my Closet?” why did the “amiable man” write me a scurvy anonymous letter at Rome? – (ask M’. Hobhouse for it he has it with the book & his remarks) telling me that out of ten things – eight were good for nothing? – I dare say – the dog was right enough – but he should put his name to a note – <&> a man may print a

1:2

=nonymously – but not write letters so – it is contrary to all the courtesies of life & literature. – – I had no prejudice against the pompous buffoon – I endured his acquaintance – I permitted his coxcombr – I endeavoured to advance his petty attempts at Celebrity; – I moved the Sub Committee & Kinnaird & Kean & all the Aristocracy of Drury Lane – to bring out his play – whose <insu>utterable <m/>Mediocrity gave it a great chance of success – I bore with him – the Bore –

Bear <witness> witness all ye <God> Gods of Rome & Greece!
How willing <I> I have been to keep the peace.

1:3

But he would begin – so he would – & see what he gets by it – it quite distresses me to be obliged to do such things – but Self Defence – you know – what can a man do? – – – –
Croker’s is a good guess – but the style is not English – it is Italian – Berni is the Original of all – Whistlecraft was my {immediate} model. Rose’s Animali – I never saw till a few days ago – <it/>they <is/>are excellent – but – (as I said above) Berni is the father of that kind of writing – which I think suits our language too very well – we shall see by the experiment. – If it does – I’ll send you a volume in a year or two – for I know the

1:4

Italian way of life well238 – & in time may know it yet better – & as for the verse & the passions – I have them still in tolerable vigour, – If you think {that} it will do you or the work – or works any good – you may – or may not put my name to it – but first consult the knowing ones; – it will at any rate

236: This letter from Mu. has not been found.
237: William Sotheby.
238: But B.’s next ottava rima work is Don Juan, set at first in Spain.
shew them – that <One> I can write cheerfully, <xxxxxxx> & repel the charge of monotony & mannerism.\(^{239}\) –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 11th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 218-22; BLJ VI 26-9)

Venice. April 11th. 1818.

Dear Sir / Will you send me by letter, packet, or parcel, half a dozen of the coloured prints from Holmes’s Miniature ([the latter])\(^{240}\) done shortly before I left your country & the prints about a year ago). I shall be obliged to you as some people here have asked me for the like. – – – –

It is a picture of my upright Self – done for Scrope B. D’\(^{241}\) Esquire. –

When you can reprint “Beppo” – instead of line

“Gorging the little Fame to get all raw”\(^{241}\)

insert –

Gorging the slightest slice of Flattery raw,

because – we have the word “Fame” in the

1:2

preceding Stanza – (also as a rhyme too) – perhaps the line is [now] a little weakened – because “all raw” expresses the Cormorant Cameleon’s avidity for air – or inflation of his vicious vanity – but – ask M’. Gifford – & M’. Hobhouse – & as they think so let it be – for though repetition is only the “soul of Ballad singing” & best avoided in describing the Harlequin Jacket of a Mountebank – yet anything is better than weakening an expression – or a thought. – I would rather be as bouncing as Nat Lee – than wishy=washy like – like –

He has ten thousand pounds a year
    I do not wish tto rally –
His Songs at sixpence would be dear
    So give them gratis, Gally!

1:3

And if this statement should seem queer
    Or set down in a hurry
Go – ask (if he will be sincere)\(^{242}\)
    His bookseller John Murray –
Come say – how many have been sold?
    And don’t stand shilly-shally?
Of bound & lettered red and gold
    Well printed works of Gally?

For Astley’s Circus Upton writes\(^{243}\)
    And also for the Surry\(^{244}\) –
Fitzgerald weekly (or weakly) still recites\(^{245}\)
    Though grinning Critics worry –
Miss Holford’s.Peg\(^{246}\) – and Sotheby’s Saul\(^{247}\)

\(^{239}\): B. is again recollecting Scott’s charge of “mannerism” in his review of CHP III,
\(^{240}\): Peach fig.47.
\(^{241}\): Beppo, 74, 6.
\(^{242}\): The line implies an habitually guarded quality in Mu.’s conversation.
\(^{243}\): Philip Astley’s Amphitheatre was near Westminster Bridge. William Upton was its resident composer.
\(^{244}\): The Surrey Theatre was in Blackfriars Road. Like Astley’s, it was a popular, non-monopoly theatre which no self-respecting author would write for.
\(^{245}\): William Thomas Fitzgerald (c.1759-1829) minor poet. See EBSR, first line.
\(^{246}\): Margaret (“Peg”) of Anjou, a poem in ten cantos by Miss Holford (Mrs Margaret Hodson), 1816.
\(^{247}\): Saul, a poem in two parts by William Sotheby (1807).
In fame exactly tally –
From Stationer’s Hall – to Grocer’s Stall
They go – and so – does Gally.

He hath a seat in Parliament –
Is fat, and passing wealthy –
And surely he should be content
With these – and being healthy;
But Great Ambition will misrule
Men at all risks to sally –
Now makes a poet – now a fool
And – we know which – of Gally.

Between whom & Sotheby there is the difference of the foam of a washing tub from <that of a> the froth of a Syllabub. – And you talk to me of sparing” <your> <inquiries> the Knight – because he probably is – but no matter – I was going to say a good customer – but you are above that – however don’t I spare him? – do I molest him?

2) I laugh at him in my letters to you – & that is all – & to these I would have confined myself with regard to t’other fellow – if he had not begun first – but in these at <last> least I may say a coxcomb is a coxcomb – so allow me to expectorate the ineffable contempt I have for the genus – of that animal – do you ever find me attack the real men of merit – {even privately?} do I not delight in them? But –

Some in the playhouse like a row
Some with the Watch to battle
Exchanging many a midnight blow
To music of the Rattle –
Some folks like rowing on the Thames
Some rowing in an Alley –
But all the Row my fancy claims
Is rowing of my Gally –

If you like the same chorus to another tune – of “Tally i.o. the Grinder. –

Mrs. Wilmot sate scribbling a play
M’. Sotheby sate sweating behind her –
But what are all these to the lay
Of Gally i.o. the Grinder –
Gally i.o. i.o.

2.
I bought me some books t’other day
And sent them down stairs to the binder –
But the Pastry Cook carried away –
My Gally i.o. the Grinder. –

3.
I wanted to kindle my taper
And called {to} the Maid to remind her

248: A recurrent joke is the way unsuccessful books end as wrapping paper around groceries.
249: B. refers to the Old Price Riots at Covent Garden in 1809-10.
250: A favourite pastime of upperclass London drunks was beating up nightwatchmen.
251: The watchman would raise the alarm when attacked by waving a loud rattle.
252: The play is Ina a tragedy in five acts by Mrs Wilmot (1815).
And what should she bring me for paper?
But Gally i.o. the Grinder.

4.
Among my researches for Ease
I went where One’s certain to find her –
The first thing by her throne that one sees
Is Gally i.o. the Grinder. – –

3:1

3) Why have you not sent me an answer & list of Subscribers to the translation of the Armenian
Eusebius – of which I sent you six copies of [the] printed prospectus (in French) two months ago. –
Have you had this letter – I shall send you another – you must not neglect my Armenians. – Tooth
powder – Magnesia – Tincture of Myrrh – tooth Brushes – diachylon plaister. – – – and Peruvian Bark
– are my {personal} Demands. –

Strahan – Tonson – Lintot of the times.
Patron and Publisher of rhymes
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs My Murray. –

3:2

To thee with hope & terror dumb –
The unedged M.S. authors come –
Thou printest all – and sellest some –
My Murray. –

Upon thy table’s baize so green
The last new Quarterly is seen
But where is thy new Magazine
My Murray? –

Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine –
The works thou deemest most divine –
The “Art of Cookery” and Mine
My Murray. –

Tours – Travels –Essays – too – I wist –
And Sermons to thy Mill bring Grist –
And then thou hast the “Navy List”
My Murray. –

And Heaven forbid I should <in> {con}clude
<Thy Patron> {Without “the} Board of Longitude” –
Although this narrow paper would –
My Murray. –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 12th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 222-5; BLJ VI 30-1)

253: Ease – relaxation of the bowels. The “throne” of “Ease” is the W.C.
254: William Strahan (1715-85), Jacob Tonson (1655-1736), and Barnaby Lintot (1675-1736), famous publishers
of Pope’s time. Tonson and Lintot were rivals.
255: Refers to Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage II (published by Mu.). See II, 42, 2, and II, 47, 1.
256: B. is parodying My Mary by Cowper.
257: Mu. had published the conservative Quarterly Review since its foundation in 1809.
258: Mu.’s most profitable title was A New System of Domestic Cookery by Maria Eliza Rundell (1806).
259: The Navy List lists ships, their officers, ranks and seniority. Mu. published for the Admiralty.
Dear Sir –

This letter will be delivered by Signor Gio.\'e Bat\'a Missiaglia – proprietor of the Apollo library – and [\textit{y}] principal publisher & bookseller now in Venice. – He sets out for London with a view to business and correspondence with the English Booksellers – & it is in the hope that it may be for your mutual advantage that I furnish him with this letter of introduction to you – if you can be of use to him either by recommendation to others, or by any personal attention on your own part – you will oblige him – & gratify me; – you may also perhaps both be able to derive {advantage} or establish some mode of literary communication pleasing to the public & beneficial to one another. – – –

To J\textsuperscript{th} Murray Esq\textsuperscript{th}. 50. Albemarle Street.

1:2

At any rate be civil to him for my sake – as well as for the honour & glory of publishers & authors now & to come for evermore. – With him I also consign a great number of M.S.S. letters written in English – French – & Italian by various English established in Italy during the last Century – the names of the writers – L\textsuperscript{t}. Hervey – Lady M. W. Montague (hers are but few – some billets=doux in french to Algarotti – & one letter in English – Italian – & all sorts of jargon to the same) Gray the poet – (one letter) Mason two or three – Garrick – Lord Chatham – David Hume – & many of lesser note all addressed to Count Algarotti. – Out of these I think with discretion an amusing <with> Miscellaneous vol. of

1:3

letters might be extracted – provided Israeli or some other good Editor were disposed to undertake the selection – & preface – & a few notes &\textsuperscript{t}. – – The Proprietor of these is a friend of mine – Dr. Aglietti – a great name in Italy – & if you are disposed to publish it will be for his benefit – & it is to & for him – that you will name a price – if you take upon you the work. – I would edit it myself – but am too far off – & too lazy to undertake it – but I wish that it <could> could be done. – The letters of L\textsuperscript{t}. Hervey in [M\textsuperscript{t}] Rose\’s opinion & mine are good – & the Short French love letters certainly are Lady M. W. Montague\’s – the French not good but the Sentiments beautiful – Gray\’s letter

1:4

good – & Mason\’s tolerable – the whole Correspondence must be well weeded – but this being <do> done – a small & pretty popular volume might be made of it. – There are many Ministers letters – Gray the Ambassador {at Naples} – Horace Mann – & others of the same kind of animal. – – I thought of a preface – defending L\textsuperscript{t}. Hervey {against} Pope\’s {attack} – but Pope quoad Pope {the poet} against the world – in the unjustifiable attempts at depreciation begun by Warton – & carried on to & at this day by the new School of Critics & Scribblers who think themselves poets because they do not write like Pope – – I have no patience with such cursed humbug – & bad taste – your whole generation are not worth a Canto of the Rape of the Lock – or the Essay on Man – or the Dunciad – or “anything that is his” but it is three in the matin & I must go to bed. y\textsuperscript{o}. always [scrawl] Byron [scrawl]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 15th 1818:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.96; BLJ VI 31)

[To, / J\textsuperscript{th} Murray Esq\textsuperscript{th}. / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angletre. / Inghilterra.]

Venice. April 15\textsuperscript{th}. 1818.

Dear Sir /

Two words in haste to deliver to M\textsuperscript{r}. Hanson, – or [to] my friend {M\textsuperscript{r}.} Hobhouse to convey to him. – – –

I will not go to Geneva – not stir from Italy – (or Venice at present) for any human power or interest whatever. – It is as easy for the Messenger to proceed here as there – or for me to go there – and every step nearer England – would be to me disgusting. – – – Let this be said to H. as my positive determination – y\textsuperscript{o} in haste the Post just going
ev[scrawl]
Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 17th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; BLJ VI 32-3)

Byron is using a very thin paper, which allows severe bleed-through. He seems to answer a missing Murray letter.

Venice. April 17\textsuperscript{th}. 1818.

Dear Sir

A few days \{ago\} I wrote \{to\} you a letter requesting you to desire Hanson to desire his Messenger to come on from Geneva to Venice – because I won’t go from Venice to Geneva, & if this is not done – this Messenger may be damned with him who missent him. – – – –

Pray reiterate my request. – – – –

With the proofs returned I sent two additional stanzas for Canto 4\textsuperscript{th}. did they arrive? – – – –

Your Monthly reviewer has made a mistake – Cavaliere alone is well enough – but “Cavalier servente” has always the \textit{e} mute in conversation and omitted in writing – so that it

1:2

is not for the sake of metre – & pray let Griffiths\textsuperscript{260} know this with my compliments – I humbly conjecture that I know as much of Italian society and language as any of his people – but to make assurance \{double sure\}\textsuperscript{261} – I asked at the Countess Benzoni’s last night the question of more than one person in \{the\} office – and of these “Cavaliere serventi” (in the plural recollect) I found \{that\} they all accorded in pronouncing for Cavaliere Servente in the singular number, – I wish M. Hodgson (or whoever Griffith’s Scribbler may be –) would not talk of what he don’t understand – such fellows are not fit to be intrusted with Italian, even in a quotation. –

1:3

Sotheby again! – he had best be quiet – but no – ask him from me in so many words – did he or did he not write an anonymous note at Rome accompanying a copy of the “Castle of Chillon &,” – ask him from me? & let him be confronted with the note now in the possession of M. Hobhouse? He (Sotheby) is a vile – stupid – old Coxcomb – & if I do not weed him from the surface of the society he infects & infects – may – may – but I won’t adjure a great power – for so scabby an object – as that wretched leper of literature – that \textit{Itch} of Scribbling personified – Sotheby.

1:4

It is ten o’clock – & time to dress. –

[scrawl]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 23rd 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; LJ IV 228-31; QII 425-8; BLJ VI 34-6)

[To John Murray Esq/ 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra / April 23\textsuperscript{rd} 1818 ———]

In another missing letter, Murray seems to have announced the death of Lady Melbourne, and defended Sotheby. Byron concedes that he may have been mistaken about Sotheby, but still insists on attacking him.

Venice. April 23\textsuperscript{rd}. <1818> {1818}]

Dear Sir – The time is past in which I could feel for the dead – or I should feel for the death of Lady Melbourne\textsuperscript{262} the best & kindest & ablest female I ever knew – old or young – but “I have supped full of horrors”\textsuperscript{263} – & events of this kind leave only a kind of numbness worse than pain – like a violent blow on the elbow or on the head – there is one link the less between England & myself – – – –

Now to business. I presented you with “Beppo” as part of the contract for Canto fourth – considering the price you \<chad\> are to pay for the same – & intending it eke you out in case of public caprice or my own \{poetical\} failure – if you choose to suppress it entirely at M’. Sotheby’s suggestion – you may do as you please – but recollect that it is not to be published \{in a\} \textit{garbled} or \textit{mutilated} state. – I reserve to my friends & to myself the right of correcting the press,

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\textsuperscript{260}: Ralph Griffiths, editor of \textit{The Monthly Review}, with whose critique of \textit{Beppo} B. is quarrelling.

\textsuperscript{261}: Shakespeare, \textit{Macbeth}; B. adds the last two words to make the reference unambiguous.

\textsuperscript{262}: If B. learns of Lady Melbourne’s death in a letter from Mu., the letter has not been found.

\textsuperscript{263}: Shakespeare, \textit{Macbeth}, V v 13 (“with horrors”).
if the publication continues it is to continue in it’s present form. – – – –

If Mr. S. fancies – or feels himself alluded to & injured by the allusion – he has his redress – by law – by reply – or by such other remedy personal or poetical as may seem good to himself or any person or persons acting for by or at his suggestion. – – – –

My reasons for presuming Mr. S. to be {ye} author of the anonymous note sent to me at Rome in May last Spring with a copy of “Chillon” & c. with marginal notes by the writer of the <note> {billet} were – firstly – Similarity in the handwriting; – of which I could form a recollection from correspondence between Mr. S. & myself on the subject of “Ivan” a play offered to D. L. Theatre – 2ndly. the Style more especially the word “Efufulence” a phrase which clinched my conjecture as decisively as any coincidence between Francis & Junius – 3rdly. the paucity of English then at Rome – & the circumstances of Mr. S.’s return from Naples & the delivery of this note & book occurring at the same period – he having <just> then & there arrived with a party of <bad> Blue=stocking Bi-women – I would say – of the same complexion whom he afterwards conveyed to the Abbate Morelli’s at Venice – to view his Cameo – where they so tormented the poor old man (nearly twenty in number all with pencil & notebook in hand & questions in infamous Italian & villainous French) that it became the talk of Venice – as you may find by asking my friend Mr. Hoppner or others who were then at Venice – 4thly. my being aware of Mr. S.’s patronage & anxiety on such occasions which led me to the belief that with very good intentions – he might nevertheless blunder in his mode of giving as well as taking opinions – & 5thly. the Devil who made Mr. S one author and me another. – – – –

As Mr. S says {that} he did not write this letter & c. I am ready to believe him – but for the firmness of my former persuasion – I refer to Mr. Hobhouse who can inform you how sincerely I erred on this point he has also the note – or at least had it – for I gave it to him with my verbal comments thereupon.

As to Beppo I will not alter or suppress a syllable for any man’s pleasure but my own – if there are resemblances between Botherby & Sotheby or Sotheby and Botherby the fault is not mine – but in the 2:1

2) person who resembles – or the persons who trace a resemblance. – Who find out this resemblance? – Mr. S’s friends – who go about moaning over him & laughing? Mr. S’s friends – whatever allusions Mr. S. may imagine – or whatever may or may not {really} exist in the passages in question – I can assure him – that there is not a literary man or a pretender to Literature – or a reader of the day – in the World of London – who does not think & express <harsher> {more obnoxious} opinions of his Blue=stocking Mummmeries than are to be found in print – and I for one think and say that to the best of my knowledge & belief from past experience and present information Mr. Sotheby has made & makes himself highly ridiculous. –

He may be an amiable man – a moral man – a good father – a good husband –

2:2

a respectable & devout <subject> <& single> individual – I have nothing to say against all this – but I have something to say of Mr. S. ‘s literary foibles – and of the wretched affectations & systematized Sophistry of many men, women, & Children now extant & absurd, in & about London & elsewhere; – which & whom in their false pretensions & nauseous attempts to make Learning a nuisance – & society a Bore – I consider as fair Game – to be brought down on all fair occasions – & I doubt not by the blessing of God on my honest purpose <to> and the {former} example of Mr. Gifford & others my betters before my eyes – to extirpate – extinguish & eradicate such as come within the compass of <my [ ]> my intention. – – – ————

And this is my opinion – of which you will express as much or as little as you think proper. –

264: Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, III i 53.
3:1

3) Did you receive two additional Stanzas to be inserted towards the close of Canto 4th.? – Respond – that (if not) they may be sent. – Tell M’r. Hobhouse & M’r Hanson that they may as well expect Geneva to come to me as [that] I <go> [should] go to Geneva. – The Messenger may go on or return as he pleases – I won’t stir – & I look upon [it] as a piece of singular absurdity, in those who know me imagining that I should – not to say Malice, in attempting unnecessary torture. – If <my> on the occasion my interests should suffer – it is their neglect that is to blame – and they may all be damned together. – You <let> may tell them this – and

3:2

add, that nothing but force – or necessity – shall stir me one step towards the places to which they would wring me –
I wonder particularly at M’r. Hobhouse (who is in possession of my opinions) sanctioning such a conspiracy against my tranquillity. – – – –
If your literary matters prosper – let me know. – If “Beppo” pleases you shall have more in a year or two in the same mood. – And so “Good Morrow to you good Master Lieutenant.”

3:3 blank; 3:4 has the address.

April 28th 1818: Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage Canto IV published. On this date Murray writes a letter to Byron, which is missing.

From Hobhouse’s diary, April 28th 1818:
(Source: text edited from B.L.Add.Mss.47235)

Tuesday April 28th. Childe Harold published today – God knows what will be the fate of notes and Illustrations – I have worked like a horse and perhaps like an ass at them. Journal since Thursday April 9th. Dined with John Murray of Albemarle Street, to usher in the birth – poets Moore, Shiel, of The Apostate, Milman of Fazio, Dr Black of Tasso, Ellis of China, several others. Mrs Murray was at the head of the table – we had a most singular evening and sat up till near three in the morning drinking Murray’s Hock – our host very tipsy – Murray has sold between between nine and ten thousand of the Childe. He said to me, “Moore is a good fellow, but he can’t write – there is no man can like my man.” He was drunk when he said this, and I was afraid would be overheard.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, June 16th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.238; BLJ VI 52-3)

[To, / Jno. Murray Esq[r]. / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]

Byron answers Murray’s missing letter of April 28th; he claims never to have read Hobhouse’s Historical Illustrations.

Venice June 16th. 1818. –

Dear Sir –

Your last letter was dated the 28th of April. – consequently a {much} longer period has elapsed than usual – without my hearing from you – (<&> {or} indeed from any one else) and considering all things & the time you have chosen for this cessation – methinks it is not well done. – If you have anything uncomfortable to say – recollect it must come {out} at last – & had better be said at once than retained to terminate a disagreeable suspense. – –
I have written repeatedly to M’r. Hobhouse & M’r. Kinnaird – without the smallest effect – & am fortunate in such friends & correspondents. – Most of my letters to them & you required an answer. – –
The only thing M’r. H. has done has been to advise me to go to Geneva – which

1:2

would have been the cause of much useless expence & trouble to no purpose as the Hanson Messenger is not yet arrived if even set out. – – –

265: Shakespeare, Henry V, II i 2 (“Good morrow, Lieutenant Bardolph”).
Tell Hobhouse that I trust his tragedy will be damned – & that the Chevalier di Breme has written to me a long letter – attacking him (Hobhouse) – for abusing the Italian Romantici in his notes – Mr. H. will answer for himself – I never read the notes, - - - 
yours, very truly

P.S.

Mr. H. & Ki[d] will have something to say to you from me – at least, if they give themselves the trouble to comply with my request. –

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, June 16th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434895; Smiles I 392-5; LJM 250-3)
The first surviving Murray letter since September 9th 1817. He answers Byron’s of April 12th.

Mr Gifford, whom I never recollect to be so well, always enquires after & remembers himself to you – cum multis Aliis

My Lord

Having waited from day to day in the incessant expectation of the opportunity of sending my Letters and various packages by Hansons Clerk – I gathered from Mr Hobhouse yesterday the continued uncertainty of his setting out and I can therefore delay no longer to thank your Lordship, in the first instance, for your several kind as well as entertaining Letters – Mr Hobhouse told me yesterday that Hanson had not yet been paid any sums upon your account, to your bankers – and I have therefore sent this morning to Mr Ransom Morland & Co a Thousand Guineas desiring them to remit it to you by this evenings Post – with the remaining 1,500 G[] I shall be prepared against your Lordships order, indeed, if your Lordship drew upon me for this Sum at Sixty days Sight, it would settle this matter at once – but this as your Lordship may find most convenient (+ they have since sent word that they will remit to <at> you at this Evg)

I have been collecting Soda Powder – &c &c &c to send by Hansons Clerk which I have this day cause to be put up in small packages & I will try to despatch them by my friends in Office –

I received very safely a few days ago by the care of Signor Gio. Bat[ta] Missiaglia xx – the curious the curious collection of Letters belonging to the Dr Aglietti – and wch I gave in the first instance to Mr Gifford to read – he thinks them very interesting as Autograph – but with the exception of those pointed out by your Lordship – there

xx I was very much obliged indeed by the Books & Periodicals which your Lordship was so good as to send me

are few that would afford more than extracts to be selected by a judicious Editor – I think D Israeli from the nature of his Studies might be trusted with their selection and I shall be able to send them to him tomorrow & by this day week I will propose a sum for them to your friend the proprietor – – Pope whose unmanly persecution of Lady M. Montagu & of her friend Harvey arose from disappointed love, is you see no less insidiously spoken of by L[ord] Harvey – whose letters some three & some bits are good but not of the first water – Lord Orford beats them all – Grays Letter excellent – & Ldy Montagues Ideas equal to her literary Character – I have been lately reading again her Letters particularly her latest ones in her old age to her Daughter which are as full of wisdom almost proverbial, as of beauty – I should think your Lordship may stumble upon a letter full of anecdotes of her which I beg you to hoard up as I am the proprietor of her Works & would like to introduce a new Edition with any variety of this kind.

M’ Frere is at length satisfied that your Lordship is the Author of Beppo, he had no conception that you possessed the protean talent of Shakespeare – thus to assume at will so different a character – he and every one continues in the same very high opinion of its great beauties – I am glad to find that your Lordship is disposed to perseue this strain which has occasioned so much delight – Does your
Lordship ever think of Prose – though like Lord Harvey I suspect yr Lordships thoughts fall so
naturally into Rhyme that you are obliged to think twice to put them in prose – yet the specimen of
Prose in
1:3
the dedication to Hobhouse\textsuperscript{266} is so much admired and talked of that I should much like to surprise the
world with a more compleat <specimen> {sample} of it – to be given at first anonymously one of the
Dons in criticism have yet taken the field for Canto IV but the next No’ of the Edinbro & Quarterly will
certainly contain papers upon it – wch I shall put into a Cover & send to you at once – the whole Canto
has been quoted ten times over in the different scraps which diversity of Taste has selected in the
Monthly, Weekly, & daily. Journals of the Metropolis & Country – so that some individual – or We –
have selected each part as the best. – and in conclusion the public will be as eager to receive anything
from your Lordships pen – as ever they were – I am now meditating or rather have made preparation to
print a uniform edition of your Lordships poems in 3 Octave Volumes – Childe Harold, <with> the four
Cantos with your Lordships own notes, will form the <V>first Volume – All the Tales, including
Beppo will constitute the Second – And the Miscellaneous Poems, Manfred &c will fill a Third – these
I intend to print very handsomely & to sell very cheap – so that every facility shall be given to their
popularity – I propose to print at the same time the whole works in 5 Small Volumes – in which size
when I print the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} Canto & Beppo – they will occupy 7 – which is too many – and they are
printed loosely. Westall has nearly compleated 25 beautiful designs to accompany these Editions and I
trust that your Lordship will have no objection to my engraving again Phillips’s Portrait – which every
indifferent person thinks yet, by far the finest. I will be glad to be favoured with your Lordships early
commands respecting Any alterations in the works and to know if my plan obtain your Lordship
approbation – I mean that they
1:4 [above address:] shall both be ready in November –

I have just put forth two more Cantos of Whistlecraft – which the knowing ones think
excellent and of wch the public think nothing – for they cannot see the drift of it. – I have not sold 500
Copies of the first parts yet – and of Beppo I have sold Six times that quantity in a Sixth part of the
time & before indeed it is generally known to be yours – – I have heard no word more from M’ Sotheby
– & as to my having ventured upon any alteration – or omission – I should as soon have scooped one of
my eyes out.\textsuperscript{267} – I am anxious to know if your Lordships is satisfied with Mr
Hobhouses Notes – the part he thinks best of are those upon the Antiquities – but we feel very \textsuperscript{below address:} little interest
for these – & much prefer the Essay on Italian Literature\textsuperscript{268} wch if enlarged with yr Lordships
assistance & with the addition of translations <f>, would become a popular Work – & one much
wanted. – Hobhouse set out last night for Dorchester (worn absolutely to Skin & bone in a vexatious &
hopeless canvass of Westminster for Mr Kinnaird) – in the neighbourhood of wch he has some
prospect of parliamentary success – I am glad he avoided Westminster for after swallowing Annual
Parliaments & universal suffrage by Ballot – what Scope can a man have left himself – I <cho>Will do
myself the pleasure of writing to your Lordship again in a few days in the mean time I beg your
Lordship to be assured of the affectionate faithful & unabated devotion of yr Lordships

{obligd} Servant

J Murray

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, June 18th 1818:

(\textit{Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.239; BLJ VI 53-4})

[To, / J Murray Esq / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]

Venice. June 18\textsuperscript{th}. 1818.

Dear Sir –

Business and the utter and inexplicable silence of all my Correspondents renders me impatient
& troublesome. – I wrote to M’. Hanson for a balance which is (or ought to be) in his hands – no
answer. – I expected the Messenger with the Newstead papers two months ago – & instead of him – I
received a requisition to proceed to Geneva – which (from Hobhouse who knows my wishes &
opinions about approaching England) could only be irony or insult. – – – –

\textsuperscript{266}: CHP IV is dedicated to H.
\textsuperscript{267}: Mu. only had one functioning eye.
\textsuperscript{268}: This part of \textit{Historical Illustrations} is by Ugo Foscolo; it is hard to know whether Mu. or even B. know this.
I must therefore trouble you to pay into my Bankers immediately whatever <sum> {sum} or sums you can make it convenient to do on our agreement – otherwise I shall be put to the severest & most immediate inconvenience – & this at a time when by every rational prospect & calculation I ought to be in the receipt of considerable sums. – – Pray do not neglect this – you have no idea to what inconvenience you will otherwise put me. – Hobhouse had some absurd notion about the disposal of this money in annuity – (or God knows what) which I merely listened to when he was here to avoid squabbles & sermons – but I have occasion for <it in> {the} principal – & had never any serious idea of appropriating it otherwise than to answer my [personal] expences. – Hobhouse’s wish is (if possible) to force me back to England – he will not succeed – & if he did I would not stay – I hate the Country – & like this – & all foolish opposition of course merely adds to the feeling. – Your silence makes me doubt the success of C° 4th. – if it has failed

I will make such deduction as you think proper & fair from the original agreement – but I could wish whatever is to be paid – were remitted to me without delay through the usual Channel of course by post. – – – When I tell you that I have not heard a word from England since {very} early in May – I have made the eulogium of my friends – or the persons who call themselves so – {since} I have written {so} often & in the greatest anxiety – thank God – the longer I am absent the less cause I see for regretting the Country or it’s living contents. – – –

I am y°ever & truly

Byron

P.S. Tell Mr. Hobhouse that he has greatly offended all his friends at Milan by some part or other of his illustrations – that I hope (as an author) he will be damned – and that I will never forgive him (or any body) the atrocity of their late [curls round top of sheet:] neglect & silence at a time [Ms. tear: “when I wish”]ed particularly to hear (for every reason) [curls round top of sheet:] from my friends.

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, June 25th 1818:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.240; BLJ VI 55)

**A rare example of the furious Byron leaving most of the paper blank.**

Dear Sir –

The Post having arrived without any Answer to various letters of mine to you & others – I continue my determination of reminding you as usual that it might be as well to take some notice of my request for a few lines of reply. I remain y°

&c.[scrawl]

P.S. –

Your last letter was dated April 25th. – I wrote to you twice last week on business. –

[1:2 and 3 are both blank. 1:4 contains the address.]

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, June 30th 1818:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489; BLJ VI 57)

**Another example of Byron leaving most of the paper blank by way of deliberate discourtesy.**

Dear Sir – I continue to remind you that I have received no letters from your quarter. – What your motives may have been for a neglect which has made me uneasy in one point of view – & has been of great inconvenience to me in another – I know not, but I tell you that I am not at all pleased with it – with the same sincerity which I used & will me with every one – One of my many letters was of
recommendation to a Venetian now in London – I presume that he has delivered it – & imagine that it might have been acknowledged. – I am yours very truly

P.S. – I will wait ten days longer – if by that time I do not hear from you – you will then receive the last letter to be addressed to you from me.

**July 3rd 1818: Byron starts *Don Juan* Canto I.**

**John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, July 7th 1818:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434895; Smiles I 395-6; LJM 256-8)

Murray answers Byron’s of June 16th and 18th.

My Lord

Your Letters dated the 16th & 18th June arrived both on Saturday last and I confess to you that my consciousness of merited rebuke made me very fearful of opening them – but as usual you are very lenient with my sins of remissness in writing which arises from a love of indolence which is suffered too much to increase – I do assure you I have rarely greater pleasure than when I am addressing you – unless it be when I am honoured by the favour of a Letter from your Lordship – Latterly I conceived that Mr Hobhouse had been so constantly in communication with yr Lordship that my omissions would not have been heeded – but I implore forgiveness & will be less remiss in future. – I wrote to yr Lordship about three weeks ago advising that I had paid into Morlands upon your Account One Thousand Guineas which they have engaged to remit by that days post & which has I hope ben safely & opportunely received – I have this day paid in the further sum of One Thousand Five Hundred Guineas – which yr bankers also promise to remit by this nights post and I shall rejoice if it anticipate any inconvenience – I had been incessantly expecting the Messenger of M’ Hanson your Solicitor until Month had melted into month without my being sufficiently aware of the delay – I have shipped for your Lordship – besides all the literary Novelties wch I thought interesting to you – Soda Powders – Tooth Powders – Tooth Brushes – Magnesia – Myrrh – Bark – 4 Cop’ Portrait &c &c which you will hear of at M. Missiaglias – and I shall take every other occasion of renewing the supply – I beg leave to assure your Lordship that the Success of the fourth Canto has been equal to either of the former, it is more desultory as Gifford said at first but the parts taken separately are each & all considered equal & in some instances surpassing, any thing preceding them. No Critique of note has yet appeared upon it but if any thing able

The Lord Byron

1:2

on the subject appear I shall instantly send it to you – Your Lordship will have read with surprise & regret an account of the death of yr friend Monk Lewis on his return from a second voyage to the West Indies – he sent me his MSS notes upon the Place to read and very curious indeed they were & I hope they will not be lost – Wilmot has positively succeeded at Newcastle under lyme – & is returned MP. – your Cousin George has another daughter lately – & your friend Lady William Russell has just lost one – I fancy that the chief reason for your not hearing from either Hobhouse or Kinnaird is that for the last four Months they have been compleatly absorbed in Politics though neither have got into parliament – they appear to have cut the Whigs & to have plunged head over ears into Burdettism – Annual Parliaments – & Universal Suffrage by Ballott!!! – Brougham has lost his election for Westmoreland.

May I hope that yr Lordship will favour me with some work to open my Campaign in November with – have you not another lively tale like Beppo – or will you not give me some prose in three Volumes – all the adventures that you have undergone, seen, heard of or imagined with your reflections on life & Manners – do tell me that I may at any rate expect something by the end of September – –

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269: Missiaglia.
270: The word “Hanson” is inked into a gap.
271: B. has started *Don Juan* already. His memoirs, also started at this time, may be response to a commission.
There will be three more Vols of Tales of my Landlord – this Month wch I will convey to you as speedily as possible – with Mad de Staels new work which has fallen almost stillborn from the press – it is by no means good – I called today upon M' Hobhouse before he came to town & he has just returned my visit – he declares that he always answers your Letters by return of post, does every thing that you desire him to do – that

1:3

Kinnaird sent you £2000 – three weeks ago – and that he As well as I has repeatedly told you that the success of Canto IV has been compleat – He promisses to call again upon your friend M' Hanson to accelerate his motions towards you – & I trust that his Clerk will set out immediately –

I saw young M' Hammond yesterday who told me that he had your Lordship in good health & he appears much delighted by your attention to him – he said he could stay all his life at Venice

I am proceeding with an edition of your Lordships Works printing them uniformly in 3 Vols & they are to be ready about Novmber next.

I hope soon to be gratified by a Letter from your Lordship of a more favourable aspect

In the mean time I remain

My Lord

Your Lordships
obliged & faithful Serv't

John Murray

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, July 10th 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.243; BLJ VI 58-9)
[To, / Jno Murray Esq / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre – / Inghilterra.]
Byron announces his Memoirs, and Don Juan, in the same letter. He answers Murray's of June 16th.

Venice July 10th. 1818.

Dear Sir –

I have received your letter & the <hi> credit from Morland’s & c. for whom I have also drawn {upon you} at sixty days sight for the remainder – according to your proposition. – I am still waiting in Venice in expectancy of the arrival of Hanson’s Clerk – what can detain him I do not know – but I trust that M'. Hobhouse & M'. Kinnaird (when their political fit is <sobered> {abated}) will take the trouble to enquire & expedite him – as I have nearly a hundred thousand pounds depending upon the completion of the Sale & the Signature of the papers. – – –

The <bills of exchange> {draft on you} – is drawn up by Siri & Willhalm – I hope that the form is correct. – I signed it two {or three} days ago – desiring them to forward it to Messrs. Morland & Ransom. –

1:2

Your projected editions for November had better be postponed – as I have some things in project or preparation that may be of use to you – though not very important in themselves. – I have {completed} an Ode on Venice; and {have} two stories – one serious & One ludicrous (à la Beppo) not yet finished – & no hurry to be so. – – – You talk of the letter to Hobhouse being much admired – & <talk> {speak of prose} – I think of writing (for your full edition) some memoirs of my life to prefix to them – upon the same model <(and possib> (though far enough I fear from reaching it) as that of Gifford – Hume – & c. and this without any intention of making disclosures or remarks upon living people which would be unpleasant to them – but I think it might be done & well done – however this is to be considered. –

1:3

I have materials in plenty – but the greater part of these could not be used by me – nor for three hundred years to come – however there is enough without these – and <a xxxx way> {merely as a

272: Sur la Révolution Française.
273: B. erases the acute accent from “a”.
274: B. refers to Don Juan I, which he started on July 3rd.
Byron to John Murray, from Venice, July 17th 1818:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.244; BLJ VI 60-1)

A week later, Byron is still answering Murray’s of June 16th. The Memoirs are already six or seven sheets long.

Dear Sir –

I suppose that Aglietti will take whatever you offer – but till his return from Vienna I can make him no proposal – nor indeed have you authorized me to do so. – The three {French} notes are by Lady Mary – also, another half=English french Italian – they are very pretty & passionate it is a pity that a piece of one of them is lost. – Algarotti seems to have treated her ill – but she was much his Senior – and all women are used ill – – or say so – whether they are or not. – – – – – – ——

I see the Mob have broken Lew Chew’s head – it must have been but a foolish one to show itself on the hustings – I do not see how a voyage to China is to qualify a man to represent Westminster – & can not pity him – for stepping off his quarter deck, – first he loses a ship – & then an election – and (then) nearly his life – he seems to be a rare fellow. – – – – –

I shall be glad of y’r. books & powders – I am still in waiting for Hansons’s Clerk – but luckily not at Geneva – all my good friends

1:2

write to me to hasten there to meet him – but not one had the good sense or the good nature to write {afterwards} to tell me that it would be time & a journey thrown away – as he could not set off for some months after the period appointed – If I had taken the journey on the general suggestion – I never would have spoken again to one of you as long as I existed. – – I have written to request Mr. Kinnaird when the foam of his politics is wiped away – to extract a positive answer from that knave or blockhead H & not to keep me <stewing> in a state of suspense upon the Subject. – I hope that Kinnaird who has my power of Attorney – keeps a look out upon the Gentleman – which is the more necessary – as I have a great dislike to the idea of coming over to look after him myself. – – –

I have <begun> several things begun – verse and prose – but none in much forwardness. – I have written some six or seven sheets of

1:3

a life – which I mean to continue – & send you when finished – it may perhaps serve for your projected editions. – If you would tell me exactly – (for I know nothing and have no correspondents except on business) – the state of the reception of our late publications & the feeling upon them – without consulting any delicacies – (I am too seasoned to require them) I should know how and in what manner to proceed, – I should not like to give them too much which may probably {have} been the case already – but a[M. tear: “s I”] tell you I know nothing. – I once wrote from the fullness of my mind – and the love of fame (not as [an] end but as a means) to obtain that influence over men’s minds – which is power in itself & in its’ consequences) and now from habit – & from avarice – so that the effect may probably be as different as the inspiration; I have the same facility and indeed necessity of composition – to avoid idleness – (though idleness in a hot country is a pleasure –) but a much greater indifference to what is to become of it – after it has served my immediate purpose. – – – – –

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275: Murray Maxwell, Tory candidate for Westminster, was a sailor who had written a book about the Chinese Lew Chew islands.
1:4 [above address:] However I should on no account like to – <but> but I won’t go on like the Archbishop of Grenada – as I am very sure that you dread the fate of Gil Blas²⁷⁶ – & with good reason.

[below address, inverted:] P.S. I have written some very savage letters to M’. Hobhouse – Kinnaird – to you – and to Hanson – because the silence of so long a time – made me <lose> tear off my remaining rags of patience.²⁷⁷ – – I have seen one or two late English publications – which are no great things – except Rob Roy. – – I shall be glad of Whistlecraft.

[parallel to address:] Does <the> Coxcomb Wilmot get into parliament? –

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, August 3rd 1818:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.245; BLJ VI 62)
[To, / Jno Murray Esq / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]

*A single sheet. The Memoirs are now twenty sheets long.*

Venice.
August 3rd, 1818. –

Dear Sir –

I beg you to forward ye. enclosed. – –

It is too hot and a Sirocco so that I cannot write at length. – Perhaps I shall have something for your November edition – about 20 sheets of long & a few of letter paper – are already written of “the Life” & I think of going through with it. We will see what sort of stuff it is & decide accordingly. – – – – – –

Tell young Hammond that his Dama – the Countess S. – fell into my hands after his departure – that the consequence was a violent quarrel between her & the Tarruscelli – {who finding us out} <who> has been playing the devil – setting Fangi by the ears with Melandri her Roman Admirer – and by means of espionage & anonymous letters doing a world of mischief – besides a row between herself & her Austrian – & finally between herself & me too. – She is gone to Padua – by the blessing of the Gods. – The Sp. came back today from Treviso. – *You* won’t understand all this – but Hammond will – so tell him of it. [scrawl]

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, August 26th 1818:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43489 f.246; BLJ VI 63-4)
[To, / Jno Murray Esq / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]

*The Memoirs are now forty-four sheets long.*

Venice. August 26th. 1818.

Dear Sir – You may go on with your edition – without calculating on the Memoir – which I shall not publish at present. – It <will> is nearly finished – but will be too long – and there are so many things which out of regard to the living cannot be mentioned – <&> {that} I have written with too much detail of that which interested me least – so that my <memoir> {autobiographical Essay} would resemble the tragedy of Hamlet at the Country theatre – recited “with the part of Hamlet left out by particular desire.” – I shall keep it among my papers – it will be a kind of <g/>Guide post in case of death – and prevent some of the lies which would otherwise be told – and destroy some which have been told already. – – – The tales also are in an unfinished state – and I can fix no time for their completion – they are also *not* in the best manner. – You must not therefore calcu=

1:3

=late upon any thing in time for this edition. The Memoir is already above forty four sheets of very large long paper – & will be about fifty or sixty, but I wish to go on leisurely – and when finished – although it might do a good deal for you {at the time} – I am not sure that it would serve any good purpose in the end to either – as it is full of many passions & prejudices of which it has been impossible for me to keep clear – I have not the patience. – – – – –

Enclosed is a list of books which Dr. Aglietti would be glad to receive by way of <a> price for his M.S. letters if you are disposed to purchase at the rate of fifty pounds sterling. – These he will be glad to

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²⁷⁶: One of B.’s favourite topoi. In *Gil Blas*, the Archbishop tells Gil to say when his sermons are deteriorating, and sacks him when he obeys.

have in part – and the rest I will give him in money – and you may carry it to the account of books &c., which is in balance against me – deducting it accordingly. – So that the letters are yours if you like them at this rate – and he and I are going to hunt

1:3

for more Lady Montague letters – which he thinks of finding. – – I write in haste – thanks for the Article – and bell[scrawl]

P.S. –
I shall write again in a few days – having something to say. – – –

September 6th 1818: Byron finishes Don Juan Canto I.

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, September 22nd 1818:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434895; Smiles I 397-8; LJM 260-1)

[Milord / Milord Byron / poste restante / Venise / Italie]

Murray answers the previous item (and one other).

London Sepr. 22nd. 1818.

My Lord

I was much pleased to find, on my arrival from Edinburgh on Saturday night your Lordships Letter of the 26th August – the former one of the 21st. I received whilst in Scotland – the Saturday & Sunday previous I passed most delightfully with Walter Scott who was incessant in his enquiries after your welfare – he entertains the noblest sentiments of regard towards your Lordship & speaks of you with the best feelings – I walked ten Miles with him I believe round a very beautiful estate which he has by degrees purchased within two Miles of <Abbots> his favourite Melrose – & he has compleated nearly the Centre & One Wing of a Castle on the banks of the Tweed where he is the happiness as well as pride of the whole neighbourhood & he is one of the most hospitable merry & entertaining of Mortals – he would I am confident do any thing to serve your Lordship and as the paper which I now inclose is a second substantial proof of the interest he takes in your Literary Character perhaps it may naturally enough afford occasion for a Letter from your Lordship to him – I sent you by M’ Hanson 4 Vols of a Second Series of Tales of my Landlord and four others are actually in the press – he does not yet avow them – but no one doubts his being their author – I should have much liked to see how you look in

1:2

a full suit of Prose – for the slight drapery wch you have occasionally put on – affords a very promising specimen. I regret, of course your procrastination of the Memoir but this is a subject of delicacy wch should be regulated entirely by your own feelings – but the Tales I yet hope the Spirit may move you to compleat. I return your Lordship my best thanks for the Italian books wch you were so kind as to send me by M’ Holworthy & which will prove a great literary service to me. – I have already actually sent off, with several novelties for your Lordship, all the books which M’ Aglietti ordered except one Vol of the Transac’ of the Royal Society wch is out of print – but which I will try hereafter to pick up – they are sent to M’ Missiaglia who has a friend just setting out, as soon as I know their Am’t I will Pay the Balance into Messrs Morlands hands for I have transferred my Account for Books to my present of Beppo – & it shall be made out & sent to your Lordship with my receipt – I hope in the Search for Lady Montague’s most interesting Letters the D’ may stumble upon some others of Value – Your Lordship told me some time ago that a Lady was writing the Life of Lady Montague as there may probably be some original anecdotes of that part of it which was passed in Italy I should be glad to be favoured with a Copy of it as soon as possible – I sent by M’ Hanson a number or two of Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine – & I have in

1:3

a recent parcel sent the whole – I think that you will find in it a very great Share of talent & some most incomparable fun & as I have purchased half the Copy right of it I shall feel very much obliged if you would occasionally send me some anonymous (if you please) fun to add to it – & Any news literary or

278: Perhaps a mistake for “3rd”; if B. did write to Mu. on August 21st, the letter is lost.
Scientific that may fall in your way – If any of your literary acquaintances are disposed to communicate interesting Articles you may insure to them Ten Guineas a Sheet & if there be any poor fellows to whom you would like to bestow such a trifle upon, you can direct me accordingly. John Wilson who wrote the Article on Canto IV on Harold (of which by the way I am anxious to know your Opinion) has very much interested himself in the Journal & has communicated some most admirable Papers – indeed he possesses very great Talents – & various –

I sent you a very well-constructed Kaleidoscope a newly invented Toy wch if not yet seen in Venice will I trust amuse some of your female friends – – In the recent parcel I have again inclosed Soda Powder & Magnetia – With unabated affection I remain My Lord

your obliged & faithful Servan

Jno. Murray

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, September 24th 1818:

Venice Sepr. 24th, 1818

Dear Sir – In the one hundredth and thirty-second stanza of Canto 4th. the stanza runs in the Manuscript

“Left the unbalanced scale – Great Nemesis

and not “lost” – which is nonsense – as what losing a scale means – I know not – but leaving an unbalanced scale or a scale unbalanced is intelligible. – Correct this – I pray – not for the public or the poetry – but I do not choose to have blunders made in addressing any of the deities – so seriously as this is addressed – –

yrs. [scrawl]

P.S. – In the Translation from the Spanish – alter

“In increasing Squadrons flew to

“To a mighty Squadron grew”

what does “thy waters wasted them” mean (in this Canto) that is not me. Consult the M.S. always. I have written the first Canto (180 octave stanzas) of a poem in the Style of Beppo – and have Mazeppa to finish besides. – – In referring to the mistake made in stanza 132 I take the opportunity to desire that in future all parts of my writings relating to religion you will be more careful – & not forget that it is possible that in addressing the deity a blunder may become a blasphemy – & I do not choose to suffer such infamous perversions of my words or of my intention. – – I saw the Canto by accident. – –

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, October 13th 1818:

London Octr. 13. 1818

My Lord

Your Letter of the 24th Sep. wch I have this instant received – has compleatly baffled all my faculties of recovering – I perceive that the sudden discovery of some error of the press annoys you – and that you are outrageous – – I shall try to make out the emendation – and will endeavour to avoid – Error – (particularly of the press) in future – presuming that you are hereby pacified – I proceed to thank you for the cheering notice – of the first Canto of a Poem in the style of Beppo – and of something else which you – have nearly finished about which I entreat your Lordship to be more particular – & to tell me moreover if I may hope for a Volume this winter – which would give me great intermediate spirits. I wrote to yr Lordship on my return from visiting Walter Scott – in whose attachment you may confide – I am anxious to learn your real opinion of the Edinburgh Review of Canto IV – about which the is some division of opinion – the more prevalent one being however that it is confused & unintelligible – though driving at some great object. John Wilson who wrote it is

279: See DJ II, 93, 8 (not yet written).
280: DJ I.
281: Mazeppa. B. names it in his letter of September 24th.
282: Edinburgh Review XXX, lix (June 1818), pp.87-120; see this website, Byron and Scott.
a man of powerful talents and very heartily your admirer – I think he told me he had the pleasure of
knowing your Lordship formerly
I was surprised to learn by the outside note of yr Lordships Letter to M" Leigh – that M' Hanson
has not yet arrived. I have sent you some books wch I think must amuse you particularly Evelyns
Diary – I lay aside any thing good & will send it by first occasion – – I am really astonished to find that
to this day M" Leigh believes you the Author of the Tales of my Landlord – & I still more wonder that
she is equally confident that you are the writer of the New Series also – and that your aunt Miss Byron
believes this no less – they tell me I keep the secret well!!
I am now preparing a compleat Edition of Sheridan’s Works & Moore is busy in writing his life –
as you once thought of assisting with M' Rogers in this office perhaps you will convey any ideas of his
character to M' Moore – M' Moore told me had suggested to you the joining with him in the
composition of a little volume of poetry, for the Winter – have you acceded? – I am proceeding with
the New Edition of your Lordships Works in 3 Vols 8vo – wch I will print beautifully & sell very cheap –
& you shall be universally read – if any other emendation occur to your Lordship perhaps you will do
me the favour to write me immediately.

I beg your Lordship to do me the favour to offer my remembrance to M' Hoppner – whom you have
enchanted as well as young Hammond – but there is no enjoyment in life they say after quitting your
Society.
With best wishes for your happiness
I remain
My Lord
Your Lordships
obliged & faithful Ser' John Murray

I saw M' S. Davies – who brought Lady Frances Webster to see me – that is – my Portrait – M'
Hobhouse in the Country – M' Kinnaird – arranging for a New Banking House – Gifford always asks
for you as do a Billion of others – from friendship or wonder
We hear of the Rumpus with Countess Albrizzi

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, November 24th 1818:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ IV 271-5; BLJ VI 82-4)

Byron has, via Lauderdale, sent Don Juan I not to Murray, but to Hobhouse.

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283: Hanson arrived on November 11th, with the Newstead sale papers and a report of Southey’s rumour-
mongering.
284: The “Rumpus” related to di Breme’s letter about H.’s Illustrations.
You may make what I say here as public as you please – more particularly to Southey, whom I look upon, and will say as publicly, to be a dirty, lying rascal; and will prove it in ink – or in his blood, if I did not believe him to be too much of a poet to risk it. If he had forty reviews at his back – as he has the Quarterly – I would have at him in his scribbling capacity, now that he has begun with me; but I will do nothing underhand. Tell him what I say from me, and everyone else you please.

You will see what I have said if the parcel arrives safe. I understand Coleridge went about repeating Southey’s lie with pleasure. I can believe it, for I had done him what is called a favour. I can understand Coleridge’s abusing me, but how or why Southey – whom I had never obliged in any sort of way, or done him the remotest service – should go about fibbing and calumniating is more than I readily comprehend.

Does he think to put me down with his canting – not being able to do so with his poetry? We will try the question. I have read his review of Hunt, where he attacked Shelley in an oblique and shabby manner. Does he know what that review has done? I will tell you. It has sold an edition of the Revolt of Islam, which, otherwise, nobody would have thought of reading, and few who read can understand – I for one.

Southey would have attacked me, too, if he durst, further than by hints about Hunt’s friends in general; and some outcry about an “Epicurean system,” carried on by men of the most opposite habits, tastes, and and opinions in life and poetry (I believe), that ever had their names in the same volume – Moore, Byron, Shelley, Hazlitt, Haydon, Leigh Hunt, Lamb – what resemblances do ye find among all or any of these men? and how could any sort of system or plan be carried on, or attempted amongst them? However, let Mr. Southey look to himself – since the wine is tapped, let him drink it. I got some books a few weeks ago – many thanks; amongst them is Israeli’s new edition. It was not fair in you to show him my copy of his former one, with all the marginal notes and nonsense made in Greece when I was not two-and-twenty, and which certainly were not meant for his perusal, or for that of his readers. I have a great respect for Israeli and his talents, and have read his works over and over repeatedly, and have been amused by them greatly, and instructed often. Besides, I hate giving pain unless provoked; and he is an author, and must feel like his brethren; and although his liberality repaid my marginal flippancies with a compliment – the highest compliment that don’t reconcile me to myself, nor to you – it was a breach of confidence to do this without my leave. I don’t know a living man’s books I take up so often, or lay down more reluctantly, as Israeli’s; and I never will forgive you – that is, for many weeks. If he had got out of humour I should have been less sorry, but even then, I should have been sorry; but, really, he has heaped his “coals of fire” so handsomely upon my head, that they burn unquenchably.

You ask me of the two reviews – I will tell you. Scott’s is the review of one poet on another – his friend; and Wilson’s the review of a poet, too, on another – his idol; for he likes me better than he chooses to avow to the public, with all his eulogy. I speak, judging only from the article, for I don’t know him personally.

So Sir Samuel Romilly has cut his throat for the loss of his wife. Three years ago (nearly), when, after a long and general retainer, he deserted to Miss Milbanke, and did his best, or his worst, to destroy me, or make me destroy myself, did he dream that in less than thirty six months a domestic deprivation would level him in a cross – road, but for a lying verdict of lunacy?

There would have been some excuse for such a fit at twenty-seven – but at sixty-four! Could not the dotard wait till his drivelling did it? You see that Nemesis is not yet extinct, for I had not forgot Sir S. in my imprecation, which involved many. I will not dissemble – it may be very fine to forgive – but I would not have forgiven him living, and I will not affect to pity him dead. There are others of that set (of course I except the women, who were mere instruments – all but one) who have throats; but whether they will be cut by their own hands, or no, is yet to be shown. There is much to be done; and you may yet see that what ought to be done upon those my enemies will be. Here is a long letter – can you read it?

Yours ever,
BYRON

December 13th 1818: Byron starts Don Juan Canto II.

1819: Byron’s English associates advise against publishing Don Juan I, supposedly because of its portrait of Annabella in Donna Inez. On the night of April 1st/2nd, the day on which he sends Don Juan II to John Murray, Byron meets and falls in love with Teresa Guiccioli. He follows her to Ravenna. Mazeppa is published on June 28th, and Don Juan I and II (anonymously and with

no publisher’s name) on July 15th. Teresa comes with him to Venice, then returns to Ravenna with her husband. On December 24th, Byron arrives in Ravenna. *Don Juan III and IV* are written.

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, January 20th 1819:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 275-6; BLJ VI 94)

[To, Jno., Murray Esq / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]

The second Canto of Don Juan is finished in 206 stanzas. – Venice January 20th. 1819;

Dear Sir –

I write two lines to say that if you publish Don Juan – I will only have the stanzas on Castlereagh omitted – and the two concluding words (Bob-Bob) of {the two last lines of} the third Stanza of the dedication to S. – I explained to Hobhouse why I have attacked that Scoundrel & request him to explain to you the reason. – – The opinions which I have asked of Mr. H. & others were with regard to the poetical merit – & not as to what they may think due to the Cant of the day – which still reads the Bath Guide Little’s poems – Prior – & Chaucer – to say nothing of Fielding & Smollett. – – – – <If>

If published – publish entire – with the above mentioned exceptions – or you may publish anonymously – or not at all – in the latter event print 50 on my account for private distribution.

Yours ever,

B

I have written by this post to Messrs. K. and H. to desire that they will not erase more than I have stated. –

[1:2 and 1:3 blank.]

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, January 25th 1819:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 277-8; BLJ VI 94-5)


Dear Sir – You will do me the favour to print privately – (for private distribution –) fifty copies of “Don Juan” – the list of the men to whom I wish it to be presented I will send hereafter. – – The other two poems had best be added to the <rest> collective edition – I do not approve of their being published separately. – – – Print Don Juan entire {omitting of course the lines on Castlereagh as I am not on the spot to meet him.} – – – I have a second Canto ready – which will be sent by & bye. – – By this post I have written to Mr. Hobhouse – addressed to your care. Yrs [scrawl signifying “yours ever truly”]

[scrawl]

P.S. –

I have acquiesced in the request – & representation – & having done so – it is idle to <prot> detail my arguments in favour of my own Self=love & “Poeshie;” but I protest. – – –

If the poem has poetry – it would stand – if not – fall – the rest is “leather & prunella,” – and has never yet affected

1:2

any human production “pro or con.” – – –

Dullness is the only annihilator in such cases. – As to the Cant of the day – I despise it – as I have ever done all it’s other <xxxxxxxxx> {finical fashions, –} which <xxxxx xxxxx> {become you} <like>

{as} paint <upon> {became} the Antient Britons. – If you admit this prudery – you must omit half Ariosto – La Fontaine – Shakespeare – Beaumont – Fletcher – Massinger – Ford – all the Charles second writers – in short Something of call> {most} who have written <since> {before} Pope – and are worth reading – and much of Pope himself – read him – most of you don’t – but do – & I will forgive you – though the inevitable consequence would be that you {would} burn all I have ever written – and all your other wretched Claudians of the day (except {Scott &} Crabbe) into the bargain.

– – I wrong Claudian who was a poet by naming him with such fellows – but he was the “ultimus Romanorum” the
tail of the Comet – and these persons are the tail of an old Gown cut into a waistcoat for Jackey – but being both tails I have compared one with the other – though very unlike – like all Similies. – I write in a passion and a Sirocco – and was up till six this morning at the Carnival; but I protest – as I did in my former letter.

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, February 1st 1819:**
(Source: NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 278, BLJ VI 98-9)

[To, Jno. Murray Esq / 50. Albemarle Street / London. / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]

Venice. February 1⁰. 1819.

Dear Sir –

After one of the concluding stanzas of the first Canto of “Don Juan” – which ends with
– (I forget the number)

“To have
– – – – – when the original is dust
Insert the
following stanza.
What are the hopes of Man? Old Ægypt’s King
Cheops erected the first Pyramid
And largest, thinking it was just the thing
To keep his Memory whole, and Mummy hid,
But Somebody or Other rummaging
Burglariously broke his Coffin’s lid,
Let not a Monument give you or me hopes,
Since not a pinch of dust is left of Cheops.”

I have written to you several letters – some with additions – & some upon the subject of the poem itself which my cursed puritanical committee have protested against publishing – but we will circumvent them on that point in the end. I have not yet begun to copy out the second

1:2

Canto – which is finished; – from natural laziness – and the discouragement of the<ir> milk & water they have thrown upon the first. – I say all this to them as to you – that is for you to say to them – for I will have nothing underhand. – If they had told me the poetry was bad – I would have acquiesced – but they say the contrary – & then talk to me about morality – the first time I ever heard the word from any body who was not a rascal that used it for a <Mantle> {purpose. –} – – – – I maintain that <the> it is the most moral of poems – <if> but if people won’t discover the moral that is their fault not mine. –
I have already written to beg that in any case you will print fifty for private distribution. I will send you the list of persons to whom it is to be sent afterwards. – – – – –
Within this last fortnight I have been rather

1:3

indisposed with a rebellion of Stomach – which would retain nothing – (liver I suppose) and an inability – or phantasy not to be able to eat of any thing with relish – but a kind of {Adriatic} fish called “Scampi” which happens to be the most <indigestible> indigestible of marine viands. – However within these last two days I am better – and very truly yours [long vertical scrawl]

**Byron to John Murray, from Venice, February 22nd 1819:**
(Source: NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 280; BLJ VI 99-100)

[To, Jno. Murray Esq / 50. Albemarle Street / London. / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]

Venice. Feb. 22⁰. 1819.

287: DJ I st.219.
Dear Sir – Within these last two months or rather three – I have sent by letter at different times – several additions to “Don Juan” to be inserted in the places specified. – Have any or aught or none of these been received? I write in haste – it is the last day but one of the Carnival and I have not been in bed till seven or eight in the morning for these ten days past. – – It is very probable that I shall decide on the publication of Don Juan – the second canto I have not yet begun to copy – but the first might proceed without.

yrs. [double scrawl]

I have written several times – there was also a note in answer to Hazlitt – to be placed with Mazeppa. –

[1:2 and 3 blank.]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, March 19th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 267-8)
Murray wants to publish Don Juan, but claims to be afraid of the scandal.
[Milord / Milord Byron / Poste Restante / a Venise / en Italie // stamp illegible]

Albemarle Street
March 19 – 1819

My Lord

I am very much afraid that you will be sadly out of humour with all your advising friends here – Mr Hobhouse – Mr Kinnaird & I have consulted & unite in entreaties that you will let us publish one magnificent Canto of Don Juan – about which the greatest expectations prevail & which I long to realize – further it is decreed that Hazlitt’s – should not be associated with your Lordships name – & if <ct> the note upon him be printed perhaps you will call him a certain lecturer – I shall have completed this month a mot beautiful edition of your works and the appearance at this time of a popular original work from you would render me the greatest possible service – & as I say every one is expecting & asking for something from you – Here is Foscolo at my side – deploring that a Man of your genius will not occupy some Six or Eight years in the composition of a Work & Subject worthy of you – & this you have promised to Gifford long ago & to Hobhouse & Kinnaird – since – Believe me there is no Character talked of in this Country as yours is – it is the constant theme of all classes & your portrait is engraved & painted & sold in every town throughout the Kingdom – I wish you would suffer Yourself to be fully aware of this high estimation of your Countrymen & not to run even a Slight or doubtful chance of injuring what is to be the noblest inheritance of

1:2

a decendant who promises to be so attractive – Let me have the Second Canto of Don Juan & suffer Gifford who never swerves in his admiration of your talents – to prepare what he thinks worthy of you – This I will instantly Set up in Proof & send out for your final alteration & completion & there will yet be time to bring it out in May –

Mr Hobhouse promises to write by this Nights Post
With the sincerest attachmement
I remain My Lord
your grateful &
faithful Servant,
Jno Murray

[1:3 blank.]

Byron to John Murray, April 1819? [fragment]:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ; BLJ VI 104)

... [Impostor?] to the name of Southe.
He is besides a notorious renegade of the same species as your own Kotzebue and deserving of the same kind of Criticism as that which was published by Sandt 288 – were he not too despicable for an honourable man’s indignation – and too powerless to require a “vigour beyond the law” for his chastisement. – Kings and Conquerors might at times be thus swept from the earth over which they tyranize – but it is a waste of life to forfeit it by shortening the days of a paltry Scribbler – and lending

288: Karl Ludwig Sand had assassinated August von Kotzebue on March 23rd 1819.
a lustre of compassion to his memory which <elevates it from?> [softens?] away the contempt due to his life.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 3rd 1819:
(Source: authentically-lined text from letter bound in with fair copy of Don Juan I, II and V, private collection; LJ IV 281-2; BLJ VI 104)
The night after sending this (with Don Juan II), Byron falls in love with Teresa Guiccioli.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 6th 1819 (??) (a):
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; BLJ VI 105)
[To, John Murray Esqre / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra]
Written in the margin of the programme of a benefit concert for Josephine Fodor-Mainvielle.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, April 6th 1819 (b):
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 282-6; BLJ VI 105-6)

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289: LJ and BLJ both have “have had”.
Byron answers Murray’s of March 19th.

Venice April 6. 1819

Dear Sir,

The Second Canto of Don Juan was sent on Saturday last by post in 4 packets – two of 4 – & two of three sheets each – containing in all two hundred & seventeen stanzas octave measure. – But I will permit no curtailments except those mentioned about Castlereagh & the two “Bobs” in the introduction. – You sha’n’t make Canticles of my Cantos. The poem will please if it is lively – if it is stupid it will fail – but I will have none of your damned cutting & slashing. – If you please you may publish anonymously; it will perhaps be better; – but I will battle my way against them all – like a Porcupine. – So you and M’. Foscolo &c. want me to undertake what you call a “great work” an Epic poem I suppose or some such pyramid. – I’ll try no such thing – I hate tasks. – and then “seven or eight years!” God send us all well this day three months – let alone years – if one’s years can’t be better employed than in sweating poesy – a man had better be a ditcher. – – – – –

And works too! – is Childe Harold nothing? you have so many “divine” poems, is it nothing to have written a Human one? without any of your worn out machinery. – Why – man – I could have spun the thought of the four cantos of that poem into twenty – had I wanted to book=make – & it’s passion into as many modern tragedies – since you want length you shall have enough of Juan for I’ll make 50 cantos. – – –

And Foscolo too! why does he not do something more than the letters of Ortis – and a tragedy – and pamphlets – he has good fifteen years more at his command than I have – what has he done all that time? – proved his Genius doubtless – but not fixed it’s fame – nor done his utmost. – Besides I mean to write my best work in Italian – & it will take me nine years more thoroughly to master the language – & then if my fancy exists & I exist too – I will try what I can do really. – – As to the Estimation of the English which you talk of, have let them calculate what it is worth – before they insult me with their insolent condescension. – – –

I have not written for their pleasure; – if they are pleased – it is that they chose to be so, – I have never flattered their opinions – nor their pride – nor will I. – Neither will I make “Ladies books” “al dilettar le feminine e la plebe” – I have written from the fullness of my mind, from passion – from impulse – from many motives – but not for their “sweet voices.”

I know the precise worth of popular applause – for few Scribblers have had more of it – and if I chose to swerve into their paths – I could retain it or resume it – or increase it – but I neither love ye – nor fear ye – and though I buy with ye – and sell with ye – and talk with ye – I will neither eat with ye – drink with ye – nor pray with ye. – – – They made me without my search a species of popular Idol – – they – without reason or judgement beyond the caprice of their Good pleasure – threw down the Image from it’s pedestal – it was not broken with the fall – and they would it seems again replace it – but they shall not. – – – – – – – – –

You ask about my health – about the beginning of the year – I was in a <great> state of great exhaustion – attended by {such} debility of Stomach – that nothing remained upon it – and I was obliged to reform my “way of life” which was conducting {me} from the “yellow leaf” to the Ground with all deliberate speed. – – I am better in health and morals – and very much y’. ever,

[scrawl]

\[290\]: B. omits Foscolo’s Dei Sepolchri, which he knows well.

\[291\]: “to please the women and the common people”.

\[292\]: Shakespeare, Coriolanus, II iii 109.

\[293\]: Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, I iii 31-4.

\[294\]: Shakespeare, Macbeth, V iii 22-3.
P.S. – Tell Mrs. Leigh I never had “my Sashes” and I want some tooth – powder – the red – by all or any means. – – –

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, April 27th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 269-70)
[Milord / Milord Byron / poste Restante / Venise / a en Italie // stamped: 13 MAG]
Murray answers the previous item.

London April 27 – 1819

My Lord

I have now the pleasure of inclosing the first proof of a certain poem, the remainder of which will follow in one or two posts – it is printed literatim for your own free determination –

Amongst an assortment of new books which I forwarded to your Lordship through the kindness of M’ Hamilton of the Foreign Office, was a Copy of a thing called the Vampire which Mr Colburn has had the temerity to publish with your Lordships name as its author – it was first printed in the New Monthly Magazine, from which I have taken the Copy wch I now inclose. The Editor of that Journal has quarrelled with the publisher & has called this morning to exculpate himself from the baseness of the transaction – He says that he received it from – D’ Polidori – for a small sum – Polidori averring that the whole plan of it was your Lordships & merely written out by him – the Editor inserted it with a short statement to this effect – but to his astonishment Colburn cancelled the leafs on the day previous to its publication; & connaretry to & direct hostility to his positive order, fearing that this statement would prevent the sale of this work in a separate form which was subsequently done – He informs me that Polidori finding that the Sale exceeded his expectation and that he had sold it too cheap went to the Editor and declared that he would deny it – he wrote to Perry to say that it was not written by your Lordship – & the next day told him to suppress the Letter – he is now preparing a sort of Boswell diary of your Lordships Life – I have now before me a long letter from the said Editor which I shall inclose to M’ Hobhouse – who will probably see the said Doctor & then forward the Letter to your Lordship –
– I am glad to find that your Lordship is well. Your Stomach may be weak but upon my soul the Intellects are in full vigour – for I never read a more powerful Letter in my life than the last with which your Lordship so obligingly favoured me – I wish you would send me One A Week & make the fortune of your Lordships poor servant ever

Jno Murray

[1:2 and 3 blank.]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, April 29th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 271)
[Milord / Milord Byron / Poste restante / a Venise / en Italie // stamped 19 MAG]
A single sheet.

My Lord

I inclose another Proof – M’ Hobhouse tells me that he has written to your Lordship fully – and he has taken Polidori in hand, with equal propriety & Judgment.

Missiaglia has sent me another Cargo of Books – many of old date, of no value – I merely want any thing very new and attractive.

With best Compliments

I remain

My Lord

most faithfully yours

Jno Murray

London

April 29 – 1819

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, May 3rd 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; Smiles I 402; LJM 272)

London May 3

295: Mu.’s ink becomes fainter at this point.
296: Polidori’s diary survives only in a mutilated form.
297: Shakespeare, Hamlet, I ii 162; except that Horatio does not expect to make a fortune out of Hamlet’s letters.
My Lord

I find that Julia's Letter has been safely received – & is with the printer – the whole remainder of the Second Canto will be sent by Fridays Post – the enquiries after its appearance are not a few – pray use your most tasteful discretion <in/> an wrap up or leave out certain approximations to indelicacy.

Jno Murray

[No address: 1:3 and 1:4 blank.]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, May 6th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 289; BLJ VI 122-3)

Venice. May 6th. 1819.

Dear Sir – Yours of the 17th. and 20th. are arrived. I recopy the “Julia’s letter” as the former copy sent in Winter seems to have miscarried, by your account. – Let me hear of the arrival of the enclosed. There are also three other stanzas for insertion in Canto first – in the earlier part referring to the character of Donna Inez. – – – You seem in a fright – remember, you need not publish, if you don’t like it. – I am sorry my letter seemed “Cynical.” It was not meant so to you personally – as to my general opinions – they are the same. – – I will not forget your request about Missiaigla and the books. – About the 20th. I leave Venice – to take a Journey {into Romagna} – but shall probably return in a month. – Address to Venice as usual – and pray let me hear of the arrival of this packet. –

1:2

Methinks I see you with a long face about “Don Juan” anticipating the outcry – and the Scalping reviews that will ensue; all that is my affair – <if you> do you think I do not foresee all this as well as you? – – – – Why – Man – it will be Nuts to all of them – they never had such an opportunity of being <fa> terrible; – but don’t you be out of sorts. – I never vex you wi<flfully – as you may imagine – but you sometimes touch a jarring string – as for instance one or two in <my> {your} last letter. – <Yours [scrawl]> You are right about publishing anonymously – but in that case we will omit the dedication to Southey – I won’t attack the dog {so fiercely} without putting my name – that <would be> {is} reviewer’s work – so you may publish the poem without the dedicatory stanzas. –

[1:3 is on larger paper, 19.5 x 24cm.]

With regard to Mazeppa and the Ode – you may join – or separate them – as you please from the two Cantos. – – – Don’t suppose I want to put you out of humour – I have a great respect for your good & gentlemanly qualities – & {return your} personal friendship towards me; – and although I think you a little spoilt by “villainous company” – Wits – persons of honour about town – authors – and fashionable – together with your “I am just going to call at Carlton House are you <going> {walking} that way?” I say notwithstanding your “pictures – taste – Shakespeare – and the musical glasses” – – you deserve and possess the esteem of those whose esteem is worth having – and of none more (however useless it may be) than y’.

[scrawl signifying “truly very”]

298: DJ I sts. 192-8. The first Ms. had been lost (but is now found).
299: If B. is accurate, these two letters are missing.
300: B. signs off, then changes his mind.
301: “that” underlined three times.
302: Shakespeare, Henry IV I, III iii 9-10.
P.S. – Make my respects to M'. Gd – I am particularly aware that “Don Juan” must set us all by the ears – but that is my concern – & my beginning – there will be the “Edinburgh” and all too against it – so that like “Rob Roy” – I shall have my hands full. – – – – – – –

[1:4 has the address.]

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, May 15th 1819:
(Source: text from B.L.Ashley 4740; QII 448-51; BLJ VI 125-6)

Byron answers another missing Murray letter. He makes his only reference to Frankenstein.

Venice. May 15th. 1819. –

Dear Sir –

I have received & return by this post <in> under cover – the first proof of “Don Juan.” – Before the second can arrive it is probable that I <should> {may} have left Venice – and the length of my absence is so uncertain – that you had better proceed to the publication without boring me with more proofs – I sent by last posts <some> an addition<ss> & a new copy of “Julia’s letter” perceiving or supposing the former one in Winter did not arrive. – – – M'. Hobhouse is at it again about indelicacy – there is no indelicacy – if he wants that, let him read Swift – his great Idol – but his Imagination must be a dunghill with a Viper’s nest in the middle – to engender such a supposition about this poem. – For my part I think you are all crazed. – What does he mean about “G—d damn” – there is “damn” be sure – but no “G—d” whatever.303 – And as to what he calls “a p—ss bucket” – it is nothing but simple water304 – as I am a Sinner – pray tell him so – & request him not “to put me in a phrenzy” as Sir Anthony Absolute says – “though he was not the indulgent father that I am.”305 – – – I have got y'. extract, & the “Vampire”. – I need not say it is not mine – there is a rule to go by – you are my publisher (till we quarrel) and what is not published by you is not written by me. – The Story of Shelley’s agitation is true – I can’t tell what seized him – for he don’t want courage. – He was once with me in a Gale of Wind in a small boat right under the rocks <of> Meillerie {& S'. Gingo} – we were five in the boat – a servant <&> two boatmen – & ourselves. – The Sail was mismanaged & the boat was filling fast – he can’t swim. – I stripped off my coat – made him strip off his – & take hold of an oar – telling him that I thought (being myself an expert swimmer) I could save him if he would not struggle when I took hold of him; – unless we got smashed against the rocks which were high & sharp with <a devil of> {an awkward} Surf on them at that minute; – we were then about a hundred yards from shore – – & the boat in <great> peril. – He answered me with the greatest coolness – “that he had no notion of being saved – & that I would have enough to do to save myself, and begged not to trouble me”. – Luckily the boat righted & <we> {baling we} got round a point into St. Gingo – where the In=

1:2

=habitants came down and embraced the boatmen on their escape – the Wind having been high enough to tear up some huge trees from the Alps above us as we saw next day. – – And yet the same Shelley who was as cool as it was possible to be in such circumstances – (of which I am no judge myself as the chance of swimming naturally gives self=possesion when near shore) certainly had the fit of phantasy which P. describes – though not exactly as he describes it. – – The story of the agreement to write the Ghost=books is true – but the ladies are not Sisters – one is Godwin’s daughter by Mary Woston
craft – and the other the present M'. Godwin’s daughter by a former husband. So much for Scoundrel Southey’s Story of “incest” – neither was there any promiscuous intercourse whatever – both are an invention of the execrable villain Southey – whom I will term so as publicly as he deserves. – Mary Godwin (now M'). Shelley wrote “Frankenstein” – which you have reviewed thinking it Shelley’s – methinks it is a wonderful work for a Girl of

1:3

303: DJ I, 14, 8.
304: DJ I, 24, 8.
305: Sheridan, The Rivals, III i.
nineteen – not nineteen indeed – at that time. – –
I enclose you the beginning of mine – by which you will see how far it resembles M'r. Colburn's
publication. – If you choose to publish it in the Edinburgh Magazine (Wilson's & Blackwoods) you may
– stating why, & with such explanatory preem as you please. – I never went on with it – [as] you will
perceive by the date. – I began [it] in an old account=book of Miss Milbanke’s which I kept because it
contains the word “Household” written by her twice on the inside blank page of the Covers – being the
only two Scraps I have in the world in her writing, except her name to the deed of Separation. – Her
letters I sent back – except those of the quarrelling correspondence – and those being documents are
[placed] in possession of a third person (M'r. Hobhouse) with copies of several of my own, – so that I
have no kind of memorial whatever of her but these two words – and her actions. – – – –
I have torn the leaves containing the part of the tale out of the book & enclose them with this sheet. – –

Next week – I set out for Romagna – at least in all probability. – You had better go on with the
publications without waiting to hear farther – for I have other things in my head. – “Mazeppa” & “the
Ode” – separate – what think you? – Juan anonymous without the dedication – for I won’t be shabby –
& attack <Sig> [Southey] under Cloud of night. – – – –
What do you mean? – first you seem hurt by my letter? & then in your next you talk of it’s “power” &
so forth – this is a d—d blind Story [pencilled: “J”] B<o/>eck – but never mind – go on.” You may be
sure I said nothing on purpose to plague you – but if you will put me “in a phrenzy, I will never call
you Jack again.” 306 – I remember nothing of the epistle at present. – – –
What do you mean by Polidori’s diary? – why – I defy him to say any thing about me, – {but} he is
welcome – I have nothing to reproach 307 me with on his score – and I am much mistaken if that is not
his own opinion.

2:2
but why publish the names of the two girls? & in such a manner? – what a blundering piece of
exculpation! – He asked Pictet & C. to dinner – and of course was left to entertain them. – I went into
Society solely to present him (as I told him) that he might <get> {return into} good company if he
chose – – it was the best thing for his youth & circumstances – for myself I had done with Society – &
having presented him – withdrew to my own “way of life.” 308 – It is true that I returned without
entering Lady Dalrymple Hamilton’s – because I saw it full. – It is true – that Mrs. Hervey (She writes
novels) fainted at my entrance <at> into Coppet – & then came back again; – on her fainting – the
Duchesse de Broglie [exclaimed:] “This is too much – at Sixty five years of age.” – – I never gave “the
English” an opportunity of “avoiding” me – but I trust, that if ever I do, they will seize it. –
I am yr’s very truly

from Douglas Kinnaird to Byron, from London, May 18th 1819: … Murray has receiv’d Julia’s
letter & the [ ] four Stanzas – He told me he was going over to you immediately thereby to make his
vow to you – Credat Judaeus …

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, May 18th 1819:
(★Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 301-4; QII 453-5; BLJ VI 133-4) Venice. May 18th. 1819.
Dear Sir – Yesterday I wrote to M'. Hobhouse and returned the proof under cover to you. Tell M'
Hobhouse that in the Ferrara story I told him, the phrase was “Vi riveresco Signor Cognato” and not
“Cognato mio” as I stated yesterday by mistake. – – I write to you in haste and at past two in the
morning – having besides had an accident. – – In going about an hour and a half ago to a rendezvous
with a Venetian Girl (unmarried and the daughter of one of their nobles) I tumbled into the Grand
Canal – and not choosing to miss my appointment by the delays of changing – I have been perched in a
balcony with my wet clothes on ever since – till this minute that on my return I have slipped into my
dressing gown. – – – My foot slipped in getting into my Gondola to set out (owing [to] the cursed
slippery steps

1:2
306: Sheridan, The Rivals, II i.
307: Some of the underlinings recorded in BLJ are bleedings-through from the opposite side of the paper.
308: Shakespeare, Macbeth, V iii 22-3.
of their palaces) and in I flounced like a Carp\textsuperscript{309} – and went dripping like a Triton to my Sea=nymph – and had to scramble up to a Grated window

\begin{quote}
“Fenced with iron within and without”
\end{quote}

She is a very dear friend of mine – and I have undergone some trouble on her account – for last winter the truculent tyrant her flinty=hearted father – having been informed by an infernal German Countess Vorsperg \{their next neighbour\} of our meetings – they sent a priest to me – and a Commissary of police – and they locked the Girl up – and gave her prayers and bread and water – and our connection was cut off for some time – but the father hath lately been laid up – and the brother is at Milan – and the mother falls asleep – and the Servants are naturally on the wrong side of the question \{<so> \} – and there is no Moon at Midnight \{just now\} – so that we have lately

\begin{enumerate}
\item been able to recommence; – the fair one is eighteen – her name Angelina – the family name of course I don’t tell you. \ldots
\item She proposed to me to divorce my mathematical wife – and I told her that in England we can’t divorce except for \textit{female} infidelity – “and pray, (said she), how do you know what she may have \{been\} doing these last three years!” \textit{I answered that I could not tell – but that the status of Cuckoldom was not quite so flourishing in Great Britain as with us here. – But – She said – “can’t you get rid of her?” – “not more than is done already” (I answered) – “you would not have me poison her?” – would you believe it? She made me \textit{no answer} – is not that a true and odd national trait? – it spoke more than a thousand words – and yet this is a little, – pretty, – sweet tempered, – quiet, feminine being as ever you saw – but the Passions of a Sunny Soil are paramount to all
\end{enumerate}

\begin{enumerate}
\item other considerations; – an unmarried Girl naturally wishes to be married – if she can marry \& love at the same time it is well – but at any rate She must love; \textit{I am not sure that my pretty paramour was herself fully aware of the inference to be drawn from her dead Silence – but even the unconsciousness of the latent idea was striking to an Observer of the Passions – and I never \{strike out\} a thought of another’s or of my own – without trying to trace it to it’s Source. – I wrote to M’. H. pretty fully about our matters – in a few days I leave Venice for Romagna – excuse this scrawl – for I write in a state of shivering \{from\} having sat in my dripping drapery – and \{from\} some other little accessories which \textit{affect} this husk of our immortal Kernel – \textit{Tell – Augusta that I wrote to her by yesterday’s post – addressed to your care  – let me know if you come out this Summer – that I may be in the way – and come to me – don’t go to an Inn – I do not know that I can promise you any pleasure “our way of life”\textsuperscript{310} is so different in these parts, but
\item (insure to myself a great deal in seeing you, and in endeavouring (however \textit{vainly}) to prove to you that I am very truly y”. ever
\end{enumerate}

\begin{flushright}
\textit{[swirl signature]}
\end{flushright}

P.S. – I have read Parson Hodgson’s “Friends” in which he seems to display his knowledge of the Subject by a covert Attack or two on Some of his own. He probably wants another Living – at least I judge so by the prominence of his Piety – although he was always pious – even when he was kept by a Washerwoman on the New road. I have seen \{him\} cry over her picture which he generally wore under his left Armpit. \textit{– But he is a good man – and I have no doubt does his duties by his Parish. – As to the poetry of his new fangled Stanza – I wish they would write the octave or the Spenser – we have no other legitimate measure of that kind. – He is right in defending Pope – against the bastard Pelicans of the poetical winter day – who add insult to their Parricide – by sucking the blood of the

\textsuperscript{309}: Beckford, \textit{Vathek} (“no sooner did the outcry of his guards reach him, than he flounced from the water like a carp”).

\textsuperscript{310}: Shakespeare, \textit{Macbeth}, V iii 22-3.
<true> parent of English real poetry – poetry without a fault – and then spurning the bosom which fed them. – – –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, May 21st 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.43490; BLJ VI 138)

Byron answers yet another missing Murray letter.

Venice, – May 21st, – 1819.

Dear Sir –

I should be glad to know why M*. Hobhouse has not yet seen ye second Canto? – and why youook no notice – nor gave any answer to M*. Kinnaird, when he read to you a passage from my letter to him – <upon> requesting him to adjust with you some business? – – –

Let me know the precise time of your coming here that I may be in the way to receive you, and pray bring me some “Macassar –” or “Russia Oil”, as I begin to get venerable. –

You talk of “approximations to indelicacy” – this reminds me of George Lamb’s quarrel at Cambridge with Scrope Davies – “Sir – said George – he hinted at my illegitimacy.” “yes,” said Scrope – “I called him a damned adulterous bastard” – the approximation and the hint <are> not unlike. – –

What think you of Canto second? there’s a Gale of Wind for you! all nautical – and <is> true to the vocabulary; – Ask the “Navy List”. –

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, May 25th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; BLJ VI 139-40)

Venice. May 25th. 1819.

Dear Sir –

I have received no proofs by {the} last post and shall probably have quitted Venice before the arrival of the next. – – There wanted a few stanzas to the termination of Canto 1st. in the last proof; – the next will I presume contain them and the whole or a portion of Canto 2nd. – but it will be idle to wait for further <new> answers from me – as I have directed that my letters wait for my return (perhaps in a month and probably so) – therefore do not wait for further advice from me – you may as well talk to the Wind 311 – and better for it will {at} least <be> convey your accents a little further than they would otherwise have gone, whereas I shall neither echo nor acquiesce in your “exquisite reasons”. 312 – –

You may {omit} the note of reference to 1:2

Hobhouse’s travels in Canto second – and you will put as Motto the Whole,

“Difficile est proprie communia dicere” – 1:3
Horace.

I have requested M*. Kinnaird to settle with you – and whatever he may say is authorized by me. – I mention this as you took no notice when he spoke to you before. – –

I am also not a little surprized that M*. Hobhouse has not yet seen Canto second. – – – –

A few days ago I sent you all I know of Polidori’s Vampire; – he may do, say, or write what he pleases – but I wish he would not attribute to me his own compositions; – if he has anything of mine in his possession the M S. will put it beyo nd Controversy – but I scarcely think that any one who knows me would believe the thing in the Magazine to be mine – even if they saw it in my own hieroglyphics. – – – –

1:3

I write to you in the agonies of a Sirocco which annihilates me – and I have been fool enough to do four things since dinner which are as well omitted in very hot weather – 1st. – to take a woman – 2ndly. to play at billiards from ten to twelve under the influence of lighted lamps that doubled the heat – 3rdly. to go afterwards <to a hot> {into a red=hot} Conversazione – <and

311: Compare Whiskerandos at Sheridan, The Critic, Act III.
312: Shakespeare, Twelfth Night, II iii 134-5.
4thly. of the Countess Benzone’s – and 4thly to begin this letter, at three in the morning. – But being begun it must be finished. – ever very truly & affect[ly]. yrs.

[swirl signature]

P.S.
I petition for tooth=brushes – powder – Magnesia – Macassar oil – (or Russia) the Sashes – and Sir N. Wraxall’s memoirs of his own times – – I want besides a Bulldog – a terrier – and two Newfoundland dogs – and I want (is it Buck’s?) a life of Richard 3rd, advertised by Longman long long long ago – I asked you for it at least three years since – See Longman’s advertisements. – – – – –

John Murray to Byron, from London, May 28th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 273)
[Murray answers a letter from Byron which is hard to date. He comments on Don Juan II, but Byron sent that on April 3rd.

London May 28 1819

My Lord

The best acknowledgment of the Agreeable letter and lines which I had the pleasure of receiving on Saturday last, is the inclosing of the verses in print. I think you may modify or substitute others for, the lines on Romilly 313 whose death should save him – – the verse in the Shipwreck – LXXXI the Masters Mates disease 314 – I pray you obliterate as well the suppression of Urine 315 – these Ladies may not read – the Shipwreck is a little too particular & out of proportion to the rest of the picture – but if you do any thing it must be with extreme caution – for it is exceedingly good – & the power with which you alternately make our blood thrill & our Sides Shake is very great – nothing in all poetry is finer than your description of the two females in Canto II – it is nature speaking in the most exquisite poetry – but think of the effects of such seductive poetry? – It probably surpasses in talent any thing that you ever wrote – – Tell me if you think seriously of compleating this work & if you have sketched the Story – I am very sorry to have occasioned you the trouble of writing again the Letter of Julia – but your Lordship is always very forgiving in such cases – I do assure you I was exceedingly gratified by the kindness of your Lordships last letter and I have had no greater pleasure than it afforded me since you went abroad – I beg you to do me the favour to believe that I remain My Lord

Your faithfully attached Sirvt

Jno Murray

[1:2 and 3 blank.]}

Byron to John Murray, from Bologna, June 7th 1819:
(Source: text from B.L.Ashley 4741 and NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 313-17; QII 456-7; BLJ VI 148-50)
[To, John Murray Esqre / 50 / Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghiterra]

Byron meditates on death in the Bologna cemetery, and curses Sir Samuel Romilly. He answers no Murray letter, and probably expects Murray to publish this one.

Bologna. June 7th.1819.

Dear Sir –

Tell M'r. Hobhouse that I wrote to him a few days ago from Ferrara. – It will therefore be idle in him or you to wait for any further answers – or returns of proofs from Venice – as I have directed that no English letters be sent after me. – The publication can be proceeded in without, and I am already sick of your remarks – to which I think not the least attention ought to be paid. – – –

Tell M'r. Hobhouse that since I wrote to him – that I had availed myself of my Ferrara letters – & found the Society much younger and better there than at Venice. – I was very much pleased with the little the shortness of my stay permitted me to see of the Gonfaloniere Count Mosti and his family and friends in general. – – – – –

1:2

313: Don Juan I, 15.
314: Don Juan II, 81, 7-8.
315: Don Juan II, 10, 7-8, changed in proof.
I have been picture=gazing this morning at the famous Domenichino and Guido – both of which are superlative. – I afterwards went to the beautiful Cemetery of Bologna – beyond the Walls – and found besides the Superb Burial Ground – an original of a Custode who reminded me of the grave=digger in Hamlet. – – He has a collection of Capuchin’s Skulls labelled on the forehead – and taking down one of them – said “this {was} Brother Desiderio Berro {who died at forty} – one of my best friends – I begged his head of his Brethren {after his decease} and they gave it me – I put it in lime and then boiled it – here it is teeth and all in excellent preservation – He was the merriest – cleverest fellow I ever {knew} wherever he went he brought joy,

1:3

and <then> when any one was melancholy the sight of him was enough to make him cheerful again – He walked so actively <that> you might have taken him for a Dancer – he joked – he laughed – Oh! he was such a Frate – as I never saw before nor ever shall again”. – – – –

He told me that he had [himself] planted all the Cypresses in the Cemetery – that he had the greatest attachment to them and to his dead people – that since 1801 – they had buried fifty three thousand persons. – In showing some older monuments there was that of a Roman Girl of twenty – with a bust by Bernini – She was a Princess Barberini – dead two centuries ago – <that on> he said that on opening her Grave they had {found} her hair complete – and “as yellow as Gold.” –

Some of the epitaphs at Ferrara pleased me more than the more splendid monuments of Bologna – for instance

“Martini Luigi Implora pace.”

“Lucrezia Picini Implora eterna quiete.”

Can any thing be more full of pathos! those few words say all that can be said or sought – the dead had had enough of life – all they wanted was rest – and this they “implore” there is all the helplessness – and humble hope and deathlike prayer that can arise from the <shroud> Grave – “implora pace” –. I hope, whoever may survive me and {shall} see me put in the <English> foreigners’ burying=Ground at {the} Lido within the fortress by the Adriatic – will see those two words and no more put over me –

2:1

2.) <and no more> I trust they wont think of “pickling and bringing me home to Clod or Blunderbuss Hall”316 I am sure my Bones would not rest in an English grave – or my Clay mix with the earth of that Country: – I believe the thought would drive me mad on my death=bed could I suppose that any of my friends would be base enough to convey my carcase back to <it> {your soil} – I would not even feed your worms – if I could help it. – –

So as Shakespeare says of Mowbray {the banished} Duke of Norfolk – who died at Venice (see Richard 24) that he after fighting

“Against black Pagans – Turks, and Saracens

“And toil’d with works of war, retired himself

“To Italy; and there, at Venice, gave

“His body to that pleasant Country’s Earth

2:2

“And his pure Soul unto his Captain Christ

“Under whose colours he had fought so long.”317

316: Sheridan, The Rivals, V iii.
317: Shakespeare, Richard II, IV i 95-100.
Before I left Venice – I had returned to you your late and Mr. Hobhouse’s sheets of Juan – don’t wait for further answers from me – but address yours to Venice as usual. – – – I know nothing of my own movements – I may return there in a few days – or not for some time – all this depends on circumstances – I left Mr. Hoppner very well – as well as his son – and Mrs. Hoppner. – My daughter Allegra was well too and is growing pretty – with her hair is growing darker – and her eyes are blue. – Her temper and her ways Mr. Hoppner says are like mine – as well as her features. – She will make in that case a manageable young lady. – – I never hear anything of Ada – the little Electra of my Mycenae – the moral Clytemnestra is not very communicative of her tidings – but there will come a day of reckoning – even if I should not live to see it; – I have at least seen Romilly shivered – who was one of the assassins. – – – – When that felon, or Lunatic – (take your choice – he must be one and might be both) was doing his worst to uproot my whole family tree, branch, and blossoms; when after taking my retainer he went over to them – when he was bringing desolation on my hearth – and destruction on my household Gods – did he think that in less

than three years a natural event – a severe domestic – but an expected and common domestic Calamity would lay his Carcase in a Cross road or (stamp) his name in a Verdict of Lunacy? – Did he (who in his drivelling sexagenary dotage had not the courage to survive his Nurse – for what else was a wife to him at his time of life? –) reflect or consider what my feelings must have been – when wife – and Child – and Sister – and name – and fame – and Country were to be sacrifice on his legal altar – and this at a moment when my health was declining – my fortune embarrassed – and my Mind had been shaken by many kinds of disappointment – while I was yet young and

3:2

[B.L.Ashley resumes:]

4:1

4.) might have reformed what might be wrong in my conduct – and retrieved what was perplexing in my affairs. But the wretch is in his grave, – I detested him living and I will not affect to pity him dead – I still loathe him as much as we can hate dust – but that is nothing. What a long letter I have scribbled yrs. [scrawl]

P.S.
Here as in Greece they strew flowers on the tombs – I saw a quantity of roseleaves and entire roses scattered over the Graves at Ferrara – – it has the most pleasing effect you can imagine. – – – – –

Byron moves to Ravenna, June 10th 1819.

June 18th 1819: Byron starts The Prophecy of Dante.

June 28th 1819: Mazeppa and Venice an Ode published.

Byron to John Murray, from Ravenna, June 29th 1819:
(Source: NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 319; BLJ VI 167-8)
[To, Jno. Murray Esq. / 50. Albemarle Street / London / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]

Byron answers another missing Murray letter.

Ravenna. June 29th. 1819.

Dear Sir – The letters have been forwarded from Venice – but I trust that you will not have waited for further alterations – I will make none. – –
You ask me to spare “Romilly” – ask the Worms. – His dust can suffer nothing from the truth being spoken – and if it could – how did he behave to me? – – – –
You may talk to the Wind – which will carry the sound – and to the Caves which will echo you – but not to me on the subject of a villain who wronged me – whether dead or alive.

I have no time to return you the proofs – publish without them. – I am glad you think the poesy good – and as to

1:2

“thinking of the effect” – think you of the sale – and leave me to pluck the Porcupines who may point their quills at you. – – – – – –

I have been here (at Ravenna) these four weeks having left Venice a month ago; – I came to see my “amica” the Countess Guiccioli who has been – & still continues very unwell – after her miscarriage which occurred in May [last] at Pomposa on her way here from Lombardy. – – She is only twenty years old but not of a strong constitution and I fear that neither the medical remedies – nor some recent steps of our own to repair at least the miscarriage – have done her any great

1:3

good – she has a perpetual cough – and an intermittent fever – but bears up {most} gallantly in every sense of the word. – – Her husband (this is his third wife) is the richest Noble of Ravenna – & almost of Romagna – he is also not the youngest – being upwards of threescore – but in good preservation. – All this will appear strange to you who do not understand Meridian morality – nor our way of life in {such} respects, and I cannot at present expound the difference. – But you would find it much the same in these parts. – At Faenza – there is Lord Kinnaird with an Opera Girl. – and at the Inn in the same town is a Neapolitan Prince who serves the wife of the

1:4

Gonfaloniere of that city. – – – I am on duty here = so you see “Cosi fan tutti” e tutte – – –

I have my horses here – saddle as well as Carriage – and ride or drive every day in the forest – the Pineta the scene of Boccaccio’s novel and Dryden’s fable of Honoria &c. &c. and I see my Dama every day at the proper (and improper) hours – but I feel seriously uneasy about her health which seems very precarious – in losing her I should lose a being who has run great risks on my account – and whom I have every reason to love – but I must not think this possible – I do not know what I should do – if She died – but I ought to blow my brains out – and I hope that I should. – – –

2:1

Her husband is a very polite personage – but I wish he would not carry me out in his Coach and Six – like Whittington and his Cat. – – – You ask me if I mean to continue D. J. &c. how should I know? what encouragement do you give me – of you with your nonsensical prudery? – – publish the two Cantos – and then you will see. – – – – I desired M’. Kinnaird to speak to you on a little matter of business – either he has not spoken or you have not answered. – You are a pretty pair – but I will be even with you both – I perceive that M’. Hobhouse has been challenged by Major Cartwright – is the Major “so cunning of fence?” – why did not they fight? – they ought. y’s. ever [scrawl signifying “truly”]

2:2 [below address:] Address your answer to Venice as usual.

William Gifford to John Murray, July 1st 1819:
(Source: text from old John Murray Archive; Smiles I 403-4)

318: Compare Whiskerandos at Sheridan, The Critic, Act III.
319: “pluck” is inked heavily over another word, perhaps starting with “m”.
320: Teresa was born in 1798.
321: Cartwright challenged H. on May 27th, then apologised.
322: Shakespeare, Twelfth Night III iv 271 (“cunning in fence”).
Lord B’s letter is shockingly amusing. He must be mad; but then there’s method in his madness — I dread however the end. He is or rather might be the most extraordinary character of his age. I have lived to see three great men — men to whom none come near in their respective provinces. Pitt, Nelson, Wellington — morality & religion would have placed our friend among them, as the fourth boast of the time; even a decent respect for the good opinion of mankind might have done much now — all is tending to displace him.

**July 9th 1819:** Byron writes the Wellington stanzas, which will open *Don Juan* Canto IX.

**July 15th 1819: *Don Juan I and II* published.

From Hobhouse to Byron, from Whitton Park Hounslow, July 15th 1819: And now I shall go to London this day to hear what the world say — you may depend upon a great sensation — It was announced thus — *Don Juan... to morrow.* There’s a way for you!! *To morrow The Comet, to morrow!* M’ Murray managed so well that Mazeppa was taken for Don Juan and greedily bought up like “that abominable book the scandalous magazine”. But *Don Juan tomorrow,* undeceived those who thought they had got their pennyworth to day — You shall hear what is said if what is said is handsomely said — and so now be satisfied that you have had your wicked will of your best friends —

**John Murray to Byron, from Wimbledon, July 16th 1819:**
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 275-6)

My Lord

*La Sort est jetté* – Don Juan was published yesterday, and having fired the Bomb – here I am out of the way of its explosion – its publication has excited a very great degree of interest – public expectation having risen up like the surrounding boats on the Thames when a first rate is struck from its Stocks – As yet my Scouts & dispatches afford little idea to public opinion – it certainly does not appear to be what they had chosen to anticipate a work of Satyr in which every man of note – it was hoped – would be abused – fathers forbid it their families – and its beauties may not be talked about – but as soon as these beratings find their way in words & vent in news papers & reviews – by the Lord you shall have them all – that you may repel them & those who are calling every half hour – I understand – sorry that M’ Murray has “had anything to do with it” – To you I look for protection against this & for a Mighty effort – and an early one too, that shall burst the fences of present disapprobation – and carry again the Castle of Admiran in which you have stood so long preeminent & alone – Gifford who never ceases his fatherly estimation of your Genius says323 that he has lived to see three Men equally great & unequalled in their line – Pitt – Nelson – Wellington – & that you are – or were – or may yet be the fourth – if you will not entirely break the feelings of a nation which are yet entirely with you – as to poor me through the most minute particle of the Comets Tale – yet I rise & fall with it – & my interest in your towering above the other Stars – & continuing to create wonder even in your aberrations – is past calculation – I wish you would let the

1:2 proofs of your next poem go out to you with M’ G’s confidential remarks – think of what he says of the Moral part – attend with liberality to his remarks upon the poetry – in many parts of Don Juan there is much that is prosaic and long – & the hint of such a critical friend would enable you to make it perfect. The parts of Juan which are masterly appear to me to be is the scene in wch Don Alfonso discovers surprises the Lovers until to Juans escape – in Canto 2 – the Shipwreck though of an unproportioned length – And lastly the Description of the two Women until it rises <to> into the most surpassing exquisiteness of beauty of Haidee’s seduction – this has probably never been surpassed – but as soon as I can gather opinions worth detailing I will send them – your Lordship’s unvarying confidence induces me to be thus bold.

323: See last item but one.
I sent you about three weeks ago by Sea a large Assortment – of Macassar Oil – Tooth Powder – Magnesia Soda & the like – with All our best New Publications – they go to the Apollo Library & Missiaglia will advise you of their Shipment & probable arrival.

Mr Kinnaird will I trust have advised your Lordship of my Arrangements with him & Mr Hobhouse for the Copyright of Mazeppa & Don Juan Cantos 1 & 2 – and as my proposal met with their approval I shall be happy if it receive yours.

There has been an Exhibition of Harlows Pictures & Drawings amongst them the small portrait he made of yr Lordship and Another of a Certain Lady – with your Autograph on both – – for others of the same size they asked.

Ten Guineas a piece but for these – they made me pay Forty Guineas each – but I would not part with them for ten times this sum – – The Marquis of Lansdowne wanted me very much to spare him the Lady – but I told him it was a family portrait & I could not – but any others he might have – & he took Mrs Siddons – will you give me some little Account of the Said Lady that I might append it.

I send you a very fair Account of Don Juan wth I received while writing this Letter – it is from a very sensible Man of Great Genius a friend of Jeffray & the author of several papers in the Edinburgh Review.

You gave me a most delightful Ep[Ms. tear: “istle”] from Bolognia as it contained an account of your Travels & yr Remarks on what you saw – that dated Ravenna arrived yesterday – I hope the catastrophe which you anticipate may not happen to the Countess and that your active attentions will be productive of Life.

Adieu! I expect all the Abuse & all the Commendation of Juan – which I can gather – I am very grateful for your Lordships kind Letters & you may rely on me remaining

My Lord
Your much obliged – & tolerably
old – & faithful friend & Servant
John Murray

with very near
Six Children

Francis Cohen to John Murray, July 16th 1819:
(Source: text from old John Murray Archive, 50 Albemarle St; LJM 279)

[postmark 16th July]

Dear Murray,

I am heartily sorry that I cannot (at least I fear that I cannot) eat my dinner at Wimbledon tomorrow; if I can dispatch a fellow with whom I have some business to transact, at an early hour I will come down. – Tell Mrs. Murray that if she presents you with a boy, you must christen him Don Juan, & if it is a girl; why then you must call her Mazeppa!

Don Juan is an outstanding performance indeed. I am sorry that Lord B. has published it. Not that I have any right to care about principles & morality, but as an admirer of his transcendent genius I fear it will do him a mischief. Don Juan won’t do any mischief, no, no mischief at all; it is a miserable piece of mock morality to cry out against such things. If a woman is inclined to be kissed otherwise than as the law directs, the devil cannot teach her more than she does know, nor can all the angels in heaven cause her to unlearn her lessons. – – The sins which will be imputed to the Don are less than venial, as far as regards the effort & tendency of the work. But Lord Byron is guilty towards himself, the abuse of his wife is cruel & unmanly. The bursts and touches of poetry of a <x> higher order are <xx> exquisite, his wit is <xxxx> graceful, elastic, nervous & supple. – Like Shakespeare he shows that his soul can soar well into the seventh heaven, & that when he returns into this body he can be as merry as if sublimity ne’er was known. – But Lord B. should have been grave & gay by turns; grave in one page & gay in

1:3

324: Of B. (Peach fig.65) and Margarita Cogni.
325: This request brings forth B.’s longest letter (August 1st below).
326: See next item.
the next; grave in one stanza & gay in the next; grave in one line, & gay in the next. And not grave & gay in the same page, or in the same stanza, or in the same line. – If he had followed Ariosto more clearly, he would have produced a masterpiece, & not a spurt of fancy. Nothing can be better calculated to display the labours of a great poet, than a composition admitting of a ready transition from fun & frisking to sublimity & pathos, but this thing must be interchanged, they must not be mixed up together: they must be kept distinct – though contemplated jointly. If we stand on a mountain we gladly view a storm breaking on one side of the horizon & dark clouds impending & the sun shining bright & calm in the other quarter of the heavens, but we are never drenched & scorched at the same instant whilst standing in one spot. Don Juan must sell; grave good people, pious people, regular people, all like to read about naughty people, & even

1:3

wicked words, such as I must not write, do not really offend many very modest eyes. Even D'Israeli has no objection to a little innocent bawdry. Shag is a main article in the tobacconist’s shop; it sells better than pig tail. – Let us have Casti by all manner of means.

Yrs truly

F.C.

William Gifford to John Murray, July 23rd 1819:
(Source: text from John Murray Archive, 50 Albemarle Street)

How goes on, or rather off, the Don? I read the second Canto this morning, & lost all patience at seeing so much beauty so wantonly & perversely disfigured. A little care, & a little wish to do right, would have made this a superlative thing – As it is, it is better than any other could have written – but this is poor praise for Lord Byron. What a store of shame & sorrow is he laying up for himself? I never much admired the vaunt of Drawcansir “And this I dare do, because I dared?” – yet what but this is Lord Byron’s plea?

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, July 23rd 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 280-2)

My Lord

I was so much frightened at the two or three Stanzas in Don Juan, which if omitted would have made the poem immaculate that I did not in my last dwell sufficiently on its unrivalled beauties. There appears to me no doubt but that you have infinitely surpassed all your former efforts and that this poem isolates you completely from anything that the age has produced – the plan of the poem is in itself an entire novelty in our language and if you Do but compleat it in the way you have begun – you need attempt nothing further for immortality – Since its publication I have read it Six times and always discover some new excellence. Every one laments therefore in a tenfold degree the few passages which merely in kindness to your friends it was hoped you would have suffered to be replaced by others in which you would have excited delight only – do I beseech you as the greatest mark of your Lordships continued favour to us – make the few slight alterations which we so anxiously

1:2

wish and you will confer upon me most particularly the greatest – of very many of my – innumerable – and delightful obligations to you – Gifford who admires even in his tears this splendid effort of Genius – says in a Letter “I read again this morning the Second Canto of Don Juan & lost all patience at seeing so much beauty, so wantonly & perversely disfigured. A little care & a little wish to do right would have made this a superlative thing – As it is it is better than any other could have written – but this is poor praise for Lord Byron” – “I never much admired the vaunt of Drawcansir

327: Buckingham, The Rehearsal, IV i.
“And all this I dare do, because I dare”328

Yet what but this is Lord Byrons plea”

Crabbe says – “I thank you for a very handsome & indeed splendid Work – which probably only one Man could write – but certainly only that one would be both able & willing – I know not which most to admire or regret these are both men who admire you & whose admiration is not undeserving of you – by no means fastidious – & who are steady in their regard for you – recall Giffords fatherly Letter to you & oblige his feelings – Stanza 129 – What opposite discoveries = the two last lines & the continuation of the allusion in 130 – 131 in the Shipwreck – the contribution of the Ladies – the Parody on the Ten

1:3

Commandments – fill up these & with something better & let us put forth the New Edition with your Lordships name – and proceed I entreat you we never can have enough of such delicious Stuff as this – it <is> resembles Child Harold – as Comedy does Tragedy329 – such prodigious power of Versification there is too and so much wit and excellent pleasantry – with some most magnificent Poetry – I declare to God I never felt so much delight as in the Second Canto – never – it is the very Soul of Poetry – tell me how long you were in framing this Second Canto – and will you let me have Any fragments of your first which I should like amazingly to see & keep.

Depend upon this – the Public are astonished – & the Wonderful powers displayed in this Poem – they are yet unable sufficiently to estimate – but you never did any thing greater.

I trust that your Lordship will not be offended at the remarks which I have made – for believe me I never felt more proud of any former Work even of yours – bating the few defects –

1:4 [above address:] Have you any Settled Plan for the continuation of this immortal work – which is so fully entitled to all your care – Pray live to finish it – it is the Battle of Waterloo. 330 I hope you will have made a pleasant tour & that you will [below address:] return in renovated health – Pitt – Nelson – Wellington – Byron 331 –

Most faithfully & gratefully
Your Lordships Servant
John Murray

Byron to John Murray, from Ravenna, August 1st 1819:
(Source: text from B.L.Ashley 4742; LJ IV 326-36; QII 471-8; BLJ VI 192-8)

On five sheets and with approximately 3,100 words, this is Byron’s longest letter. It answers a one-sentence request by Murray. Why does he send it, if not because he knows Murray wants some of his prose to publish?

[no address]

Address y’. answer to Venice however. – – –

Ravenna. August 14th. 1819

Dear Sir –

Don’t be alarmed. – You will see me defend myself gaily – that is – if I happen to be in Spirits – and by Spirits I don’t mean your meaning of the word – but the spirit of a bull=dog when pinched – or a bull when pinned – it is then [that] they make best sport – and as my Sensations under an attack are probably a happy compound of the united energies of those amiable animals – you may perhaps see what <Marall> Marrall calls “rare sport —”332 and some good tossing and goring in the course of the controversy. – But I must be in the right cue first – and I doubt I am almost too far off to be in a sufficient fury for the purpose – and then I have effeminated and enervated myself with love and the summer in these last two months. – I wrote to M’. Hobhouse the other day – <in which I> {and} foretold that Juan would either fall entirely or succeed completely – there will be no medium – appearances are

328: See previous item.
329: Mu. echoes a letter from Croker, who adds, “it seems to me a more innocent production than Childe Harold” (qtd. LJM 283).
330: Compare DJ XI st.56 (written three years later).
331: Mu. echoes, without quoting it all, the previous item.
332: Massinger, A New Way to Pay Old Debts.
not favourable – but as you write the day after publication – it can hardly be decided what opinion will predominate. – You seem in a fright – and doubtless with cause. – Come what may – I never will flatter the Million’s canting in any shape – circumstances may or may not have placed me at times in a situation to lead [the] public opinion – but the public opinion – never led nor [ever] shall lead me. – I will not sit on “a degraded throne” so pray put Mes’1. Southey – or Sotheby – or Tom Moore – or Horace Twiss upon it – they will all of them be transported with their coronation. – – – – –
You have bought Harlow’s drawings [of Margarita and me] rather dear methinks – but since you desire the story of Margarita Cogni333 – you shall be told it – though it may be lengthy. – – Her face is [of] the fine Venetian cast of the old Time – and her figure though perhaps too tall not less fine, – taken altogether in the national dress. – – – – – –

In the summer of 1817, Hobhouse and myself were sauntering on horseback along the Brenta one evening – when amongst a group of peasants we remarked two girls as the prettiest we had seen for some time. – About this period there had been great distress in the country – and I had [a little] relieved some of the people. – – Generosity makes a great figure at very little cost in Venetian livres – and mine had probably been exaggerated – as an Englishman’s. – – Whether they remarked us looking at them or no – I know not – but one of them called out to me in Venetian – “Why do you who relieve others – think of us also” – I turned round and answered her – “Cara – tu sei troppo bella e giovane per aver’ bisogno del’ soccorso mio”334– she answered – if you saw my hut and my food – you would not say so. – All this passed half jestingly – and I saw no more of her for some days. –

A few evenings after – we met with these two girls again – and they addressed us more seriously – assuring us of the truth of their statement. – They were cousins – Margarita married – the other single. – – As I doubted still of the circumstances – I took the business up in a different light – and made an appointment with them for the next evening. – Hobhouse had taken a fancy to the single lady – who was much shorter – in stature – but a {very} pretty girl also. – – They came attended by a third woman – who was cursedly in the way – and Hobhouse’s charmer took fright (I don’t mean at Hobhouse but at not being married – for here <nobody> {no woman} will do anything under adultery) and flew off – and mine made some bother – at the propositions – and wished to consider of them. – I told her “if you really are in want <I> I will relieve you without any conditions whatever – and you may make love with me or no just as you please – that shall make 2:1

2.) no difference – but if [you] <not> are not in absolute necessity – this is naturally a rendezvous – and I presumed that you understood this – when you made the appointment”. – – She said that she had no objection to <I> make love with me – as she was married – and all married women did it – but that her husband (a baker) was somewhat ferocious – and would do her a mischief. – In short – in a few evenings we arranged our affairs – and for two years – in the course of which I had <almost two th> more women than I can count or recount – she was the only one who preserved over me an ascendancy – which was often disputed & never impaired. – – As she herself used to say publicly – “It don’t matter – he may have five hundred – but he will always come back to me”. – – The reasons of this were firstly – her person – very dark – tall – the Venetian face – very fine black eyes – and certain other qualities

2:2

which need not be mentioned. – She was two & twenty years old – and never having had children – had not spoilt her figure – nor anything else – which is I assure you – a great desideratum in a hot climate where they grow relaxed [and doughy] and flumpity in a short time after breeding. – – She was

333: Mu. to B., July 16th: “... will you give me some little Account of the Said Lady that I might append it”
334: “Darling – You’re too beautiful and young to need my help.”
besides a thorough Venetian in her dialect – in her thoughts – in her countenance – in <either> every thing – with all their naïveté and Pantaloon humour. – Besides she could neither read nor write – and could not plague me with letters – except twice that she paid sixpence to a public scribe under the piazza – to make a letter for her\footnote{Margherita’s letters to B. are at \textit{Shelley and his Circle VII}. (ed. Reiman and Fishcer, Harvard 1986), pp.359-62 and 517-19.} – upon some occasion when I was ill and could not see her. – – In other respects she was somewhat fierce and “prepotente” that is – overbearing – and used to walk in whenever it suited her – with no very great regard to time, place, nor persons – and if she

2:3

found any women in her way she knocked them down. – When I first knew her I was in “relazione” (liaison) with la Signora Segati – who was silly enough one evening at Dolo – accompanied by some of her female friends – to threaten her – for the Gossips of the Villeggiatura – had already found out by the neighing of my horse one evening – that I used to “ride late in the night” to meet the Fornarina. – – Margarita threw back her <far shaw> veil (fazziolo) and replied in very explicit Venetian – “You are not his wife – I am not his wife – you are his <xxxx> Donna – and I am his donna, your husband is a cuckold – and mine is another; – for the rest what right have you to reproach me? – if he prefers what is mine – to what is yours – is it my fault? if you wish to secure him – tie him to

2:4

your petticoat=string – but do not think to speak to me without a reply because you happen to be richer than I am.” – – –

Having delivered this pretty piece of eloquence (which I translate as it was related to me by a byestander) she went on her way – leaving a numerous audience with Madame Segati – to ponder at her leisure on the dialogue between them. – When I came to Venice for the Winter she followed: – I never had any regular liaison with her – but whenever she came I never allowed any other connection to interfere with her – and as she found herself out to be a favourite she came pretty often. – But She had inordinate Self=love – and was not tolerant of other women – except {of} the Segati – who was as she said my {regular} “Amica” – so that I being at that time somewhat promiscuous – there was great confusion – and demolition of head dresses and handkerchiefs – and sometimes my servants in “redding the fray” between her and

3:1

3.) other feminine persons – received more knocks than acknowledgements for their peaceful endeavours. – – At the “Cavalchina” the masqued ball on the last night of the Carnival – where all the World goes – she snatched off the mask of Madame Contarini – a lady noble by birth – and decent in conduct – for no other reason but because she happened to be leaning on my arm. – You may suppose what a cursed noise this made, – but this is only one of her pranks. – – At last she quarrelled with her husband – and one evening <walk> ran away to my house. – I told her this would not do – she said she would lie in the street but not go back to him – that he beat her (the gentle tigress) spent her money – and scandalously neglected his <Oven.> Oven. – As it was Midnight – I let her stay – and next day there was no moving her at

3:2

all. – – Her husband came roaring & crying – & entreating her to come back, not She! – – He then applied to the Police – and they applied to me – I told them and her husband to take her – I did not want her – she had come – and I could not fling her out of the window – but they might conduct her through that or the door if they chose it. – – She went before the Commissary – but was obliged to return with (that) “becco Ettico” (consumptive cuckold), as she called the poor man who had a Ptsick. – In a few days she ran away again. – After a precious piece of work she fixed herself in my house – really & truly without my consent – but owing to my indolence – and not being able to keep my countenance – for if I began in a rage she

3:3
[always] finished by making me laugh with some Venetian pantaloonery or other – and the Gipsy knew this well enough – as well as her other powers of persuasion – and exerted them with the usual tact and success of all She=things – high and low – they are all alike for that. – Madame Benzone also took her under her protection – and then her head turned. – She was always in extremes either crying or laughing – and so fierce when angered that she was the terror of men women and children – for she had the strength of an Amazon with the temper of Medea. She was a fine animal – but quite untameable. – I was the only person that could at all keep her in any order – and when she saw me really angry – (which they tell me is rather a savage sight), she subsided. – – But she had a thousand fooleries – in her fazzioolo – the dress of the

lower orders – she looked beautiful – but alas! she longed for a hat and feathers and all I could say or do – (and I said much) could not prevent this travestie. – – I put the first into the fire – but I got tired of burning them before she did of buying them – so that she made herself a figure – for they did not at all become her – Then she would have her gowns with a tail – like a lady forsooth – nothing would serve her – but “1’abito colla coua” {or cua} (that is the Venetian for “la Coda” {the} tail or train) and as her cursed pronunciation of the word made me laugh – there was an end {of all controversy} – and she dragged this diabolical tail after her everywhere. – – In the mean time she beat the women – and stopped my letters. – I found her one day pondering over one – she used to try to find out

4:1

4.) by their shape whether they were feminine or no – and she used to lament her ignorance – and actually <learned> {studied} her Alphabet – on purpose (as she declared) to open all letters addressed <me> {to me} and read their contents. – – – –

I must not omit to do justice to her house=keeping qualities – after she came into my house as “donna di governo” the expences were reduced to less than half – and every body did their duty better – the apartments were kept in order – and every thing and every body else except herself. – – – That she had a sufficient regard for me in her wild way I had many reasons to believe – I will mention one. – – – In the autumn one day going to the Lido with my Gondoliers – we were overtaken by a heavy Squall and the Gondola put in peril – hats blown away – boat filling – oar lost – tumbling sea – thunder – rain in torrents – night co=

4:2

=ming – & wind increasing. – On our return – after a tight struggle; I found her <flashing> on the open steps of the Mocenigo palace on the Grand Canal – with her great black eyes flashing though her tears and the long dark hair which was streaming drenched with rain over her brows & breast; – she was perfectly exposed to the storm – and the wind blowing her hair & dress about her tall thin <figure> figure – and the lightning flashing round her – with the waves rolling at her feet – made her look like Medea alighted from her chariot – or <th> the Sibyl of the tempest that was rolling around her – the only living thing within hail at that moment except ourselves. – On seeing me safe – she did not wait to greet me as might be expected – but calling out to me – “Ah – Can’ della Madonna

4:3

xe esto <un> {il} tempo per andar’ al Lido?” (ah Dog of the Virgin! – is this a time to go to Lido?) ran into the house – and solaced herself with scolding the boatmen for not foreseeing the “temporale”. – – – I was told by the servants that she had only been prevented from coming <after> in a boat to look after me – by the refusal of all the Gondoliers of the Canal to put out into the harbour in such a moment and that then she sate down on the steps in all the thickest of the Squall – and would neither be removed nor comforted. Her joy at seeing me again – was moderately mixed with ferocity – and gave me the idea of a tigress over her recovered Cubs. – – – But her reign drew near a close. – She became quite ungovernable {some months after} – and a concurrence of complaints some true and many false –

4:4
“a favourite has no friend” – determined me to part with her. – I told her quietly that she must return home – (she had acquired a sufficient provision for herself and mother &c. in my service) and she refused to quit the house. – I was firm – and she went – threatening knives and revenge. – I told her – that I had seen knives drawn before her time – and that if she chose to begin – there was a knife – and fork also at her service on the table {and that intimidation would not do. – } – The next day while I was at dinner – she walked in (having broke open a glass door that led from the hall below to the staircase by way of prologue) and advancing strait up to the table snatched the knife from my hand – cutting me slightly in the thumb in the operation. – Whether she meant to use this against herself or me I know not – probably against neither – but Fletcher seized her

5:1

5.) by the arms – and disarmed her. – – –
I then called my boatmen – and desired them to get the Gondola ready and conduct her to her own house again – seeing carefully that she did herself no mischief by the way. – She seemed quite quiet and walked down stairs. – I resumed my dinner. – We heard a great noise – I went out – and met them on the staircase – carrying her up stairs. – She had thrown herself into the Canal. – That she intended to destroy herself I do not believe – but when we consider the fear women and men who can’t swim have of deep or even [of] shallow water – (and the Venetians in particular though they live on the waves) and that it was also night – and dark – & very cold – it shows that she had a devilish spirit of some sort within her. – They had got her out without much difficulty or damage

5:2

except the salt water she had swallowed and the wetting she had undergone. – I foresaw her intention to <cha> refix herself and sent for a Surgeon – enquiring how many hours it would require to restore her from her agitation, and he named the time. – I then said – "I give you that time – and more if you require it – but at the expiration of the prescribed period – if She does not leave the house – I will: – – –
All my people were consternated – they had always been frightened at her – and were now paralyzed – they wanted me to apply to the police – to guard myself – &c. &c. – like a pack of sniveling servile boobies as they were. – – –
I did nothing of the kind – thinking that I might as well end that way as another – besides – I had been used to savage women and knew their ways. –

5:3

I had her sent home quietly after her recovery – and never saw her since except twice at the opera – at a distance amongst the audience. – –
She made many attempts to return – but no more violent ones. – And this is the story of Margharita Cogni – as far as it belongs to me. – – – I forgot to mention that she was very devout – and would cross herself if she heard the prayer-time strike – sometimes – when that ceremony did not appear to be much in unison with what she was then about. – She was quick in reply – as for instance – one day when she had made me very angry with beating somebody or other – I called her a Cow (Cow in Italian is a sad affront and tantamount to the feminine of dog in English) I called her “Vacca” she turned round – curtsied – and answered

5:4

“Vacca tua ’Celenza” (i.e Eccellenza) your Cow – please your Excellency. – In short – she was – as I said before – a very fine Animal – of considerable beauty and energy – with many good & several amusing qualities – but wild as a witch – and fierce as a demon. – She used to boast [publicly] of her ascendancy {over me} – contrasting it with that of other women – and assigning for it sundry reasons physical and moral which did more credit to her person than her modesty. – – – True it was that they all tried to get her away – and no one succeeded – till her own absurdity helped them. – Whenever there was a competition, and sometimes – one would be shut in one room and one in another – to prevent battle – she had generally the preference. – – –

y³. very truly
and affectly

P.S. – The Countess G. is much better than she was. – – –
I sent you before leaving Venice – a letter containing the [real] original sketch – which gave rise to the
“Vampire &“ did you get it? –

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albermarle Street, London, August 6th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 283)
[Milord / Milord Byron / poste restante / a <Venise> / en Italie // stamped: VENEZIA 19 AGO //
redirected to: Sig[1] Cro Insom / Bologna 22 AGO]
A single sheet with most of the paper not used.

My Lord
I send you the inclosed cut out of “My Grandmothers Review the British”337 No XXVII published
the 2nd of August – nothing can be more absurd & a better subject for fun you can not have – it is written by the Editor Roberts himself – I will send more in a day or two
most truly yours
J Murray
Aug 6 – 1819

Byron to John Murray, from Ravenna, August 9th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 336-9; BLJ VI 205-6)
Byron corrects the Italian in his last letter, anxious for the printed version to be accurate.

Ravenna. August 9th. 1819.

Dear Sir,
I wrote <you> a long letter in answer to yours of the 16th. July – the other giving you an
account of Margharita Cogni – as you wished. – But I omitted to tell you her answer when I
reproached her for snatching Madame Contarini’s mask at the Cavalchina. – I represented to
her that she was a lady of high birth – “una dama” & – She answered – “se Ella e dama {mi}
io son’ Veneziana” – “If she is a lady – I am a Venetian” – this would have been fine – a
hundred years ago – the pride of the nation rising up against the pride of Aristocracy – but
Alas! Venice – & her people – and her nobles are alike returning fast to the Ocean – and
where there is no independence – there can be no real self=respect. – – – –
I believe that I mistook or mistated one
1:2
of her phrases in my letter – it should have been – “Can’ della Madonna – c{osa vus’ tu?} 
esto non e tempo par andar’ a Lido” – I do not remember how I had worded it in my letter –
but have a general idea of having blundered. – – – – – – – –
Talking of blunders – reminds me of Ireland – Ireland of Moore – what is this I see in
Galignani – about “Bermuda – Agent – deputy – appeal – attachment &.” – what is the
matter? is it anything in which his friends can be of use to him? – Pray inform me.338 – – – – –
Of Don Juan I hear nothing further from you – you chicken=hearted – silver=paper Stationer
you? – But the papers don’t seem so fierce as the letter you sent seemed to anticipate, by their
extracts at least in Galagnani’s Messenger. – I never saw such a set of fellows as you are –
and then the pains taken to
1:3
exculpate the modest publisher – he had remonstrated forsooth! – I will write a preface that
shall exculpate you and Hobhouse & – completely – on that point – but at the same time I will
cut you all up (& you in particular) like Gourds. – You have no more soul than the Count de
Caylus339 (who assured his friends on his death=bed – that he had none, and that he must
know better than they – whether he had one or no) and no more blood than a Water=Melon. –

337: See DJ I 209, 8.
338: Moore’s Caribbean agent has been accused of fraud, and Moore is implicated.
339: Referred to in Grimm’s Correspondence.
Dear Sir –

I do not know how far I may be able to reply to your letter – for I am not very well today. – Last night I went to the representation of Alfieri’s Mirra – the two last acts of which threw me into convulsions. – I do not mean by that word – a lady’s hysterics – but the agony of reluctant tears – and the choking shudder which I do not often undergo for fiction. – This is but the second time {for anything under reality,} the first was on seeing Kean’s Sir Giles Overreach. – The worst was that the “dama” in whose box I was – went off in the same way – I really believe more from fright – than any other sympathy – but she has been ill – and I have been ill – and we are all languid & pathetic this morning – with great expenditure of Sal Volatile. – But to return to your letter of the 23d. of July. – You are right – Gifford is right – Crabbe is right – Hobhouse is right – you are all right – and I am all wrong – but do pray let me have that pleasure. –

Cut me up root and branch; quarter me in the Quarterly – send round my “disjecti membra poetae” like those of the Levite’s Concubine – make me – if you will – a spectacle to men and angels – but don’t ask me to alter for I can’t – I am obstinate and lazy – and there’s the truth. –

But nevertheless – I will answer your friend C.V. who objects to the quick succession of fun and gravity – as if in that case the gravity did not (in intention at least) heighten the fun. – His metaphor is that “we are never scorched and drenched at the same time?” –

Blessings on his experience! – Ask him these questions about “scorching and drenching.” – Did he never play at Cricket or walk a mile in hot weather? – Did he never spill a dish of tea over his testicles in handing the cup to his charmer to the great shame of his nankeen breeches? – Did he never swim in the sea at Noonday with the Sun in his eyes and on his head – which all the foam of Ocean could not cool? did he never draw his foot out of a tub of too hot water damning his eyes and his valet’s? did he never inject for a Gonorrhea? – or make water through an ulcerated Urethra? – Was he ever in a

Byron to John Murray, from Bologna, August 12th 1819:

Bologna. August 12th. 1819.

In a very famous letter justifying his new poetic style, Byron answers Murray’s of July 23rd.

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340: Moore, *The Legacy* (from *Irish Melodies*) l.3.
341: The actress playing Mirra was the eighteen-year-old Maddalena Pelzet, who had created Pellico’s Francesca da Rimini.
342: See Judges 19:29, in which the Levite sends one piece of the body of his violated concubine to each of the twelve tribes of Israel, urging them to vengeance.
343: “C.V” is Francis Cohen, whose letter to Mu. of July 16th is printed above.
Turkish bath— that marble paradise of sherbet and sodomy?— was he ever in a cauldron of boiling oil like St John?— or

1:4

in the sulphureous waves of hell? (where he ought to be for <asking> his “scorching and drenching at the same time”) did he never tumble into a river or lake fishing— and sit in his wet cloathes in the boat— or on the bank afterwards “scorched and drenched” like a true sportsman?— — — “Oh for breath to utter!”344 — — but <give> {make} him my compliments— he is a clever fellow for all that— a very clever fellow. — —

You ask me for the plan of Donny Johnny— I have no plan— I had no plan— but I had or have materials— <But if> [though if] like Tony Lumpkin— I am “to be snubbed so when I am in spirits”345 the poem will be naught— and the poet turn serious again. — If it don’t take I will leave it off where it is with all due respect to the Public— but if continued it must be in my own way— you might as well

2:1

2.) make Hamlet (or Diggory) “act mad” in a strait waistcoat346— as trammel my buffoonery— if I am to be a buffoon— their gestures and my thoughts would only be pitiable absurd— and ludicrously constrained. — Why Man the Soul of such writing is it’s licence?— at least the liberty of that licence if one likes— not that one should abuse it— it is like trial by Jury and Peerage and {the} Habeas Corpus— a very fine thing— but chiefly in the reversion— because no one wishes to be tried for the mere pleasure of proving his possession of the privilege. — — —

But a truce with these reflections; — you are too earnest and eager about a work never intended to be serious;— do you suppose that I could have any intention but to giggle and make giggle?— a playful satire

2:2

with as little poetry as could be helped— was what I meant— and as to the indecency— do pray read in Boswell what Johnson, the sullen moralist— says of Prior and Paulo Purgante.347 — — —

Will you get a favour done for me?— you can by your Government friends— Croker— Canning— or my old Schoolfellow Peel— and I can’t. — Here it is— will you ask them to appoint (without salary or emolument) a {noble} Italian (whom I will name afterwards)348 Consul or Vice Consul for Ravenna. — He is a man of very large property— noble too— but he wishes to have a British <protent> protection in case of changes — Ravenna is near the Sea— he wants no emolument whatever;— that his office might be useful— I know as

2:3

I lately sent off from Ravenna to Trieste— a poor devil of an English Sailor— who had remained there sick sorry and penniless (having been set ashore in 1814) from the want of any accredited agent able or willing to help him homewards. — Will you get this done?— it will be the greatest favour to me?— if you do— I will then send his name and condition— subject of course to rejection if not approved— when known. — — —

I know that in the Levant— you make consuls— and Vice Consuls perpetually— of foreigners— this man is a Patrician and has twelve thousand a year. — — —

His motive is a British protection in case of new Invasions. — Don’t you think Croker would do it for us? to be sure my interest is rare!! but perhaps a brother=wit in the “Tory line

344: Shakespeare, Henry IV Part II iv 238.
345: Goldsmith, She Stoops to Conquer, Act II.
346: Jackman, All the World’s a Stage.
347: “I mentioned Lord Hailes’s censure of Prior, in his Preface to a collection of Sacred Poems, by various hands, published by him at Edinburgh a great many years ago, where he mentions, ‘those impure tales which will be the eternal opprobrium of their ingenious author.’ JOHN. ‘Sir, Lord Hailes has forgot. There is nothing in Prior that will excite to lewdness. If Lord Hailes thinks there is, he must be more combustible than other people.’ I instanced the tale of Paulo Purganti and his Wife. JOHN. Sir, there is nothing there, but that his wife wanted to be kissed when poor Paulo was out of pocket. No, Sir, Prior is a lady’s book. No lady is ashamed to have it standing in her library.’”
348: Alessandro Guiccioli.
might do a good turn at the request of so harmless and long absent a Whig—particularly as there is no salary nor burthen of any sort to be annexed to the office. 349

I can assure you I should look upon it as a great obligation—but Alas! that very circumstance may very probably operate to the contrary—indeed it ought.—But I have at least been an honest and an open enemy. — — —

Amongst your many splendid Government Connections—could not you think you? get our Bibulus made a Consul?—Or make me {one} that I may make him my Vice.—You may be assured that in case of accidents in Italy—he would be no feeble adjunct—as you would think if you knew his property. — — —

3:1

3.) What is all this about Tom Moore? but—why do I ask?—since the state of my own affairs would not permit me to be of use to him—although {they are} greatly improved since 1816,—and may be—with some more luck—and a little prudence become quite Clear.——It seems his Claimants are American merchants.—There goes Nemesis.—Moore abused America.——It is always thus in the long run.——Time the Avenger.——You have seen every trampler down in turn from Buonaparte to the simplest individuals.——You saw how {they} {some} were avenged even upon my insignificance, and how in turn Romilly paid for his atrocity.——It is an odd World—but the Watch

3:2

has its mainspring after all.——So the Prince has been repealing {Lord Ed.} Fitzgerald’s forfeiture—“Ecco <xxx Xxxxxxttx> un’ Sonnetto!”

To be the father of the fatherless
To stretch the hand from the throne’s height and raise
His offspring, who expired in other days
To make thy Sire’s Sway by a kingdom less,
This is to be a Monarch, and repress
Envy into unutterable praise,
Dismiss thy Guard, and trust thee to such traits,
For who would lift a hand except to bless?—
Were it not easy, Sir, and is’t not sweet
To make thyself beloved? and to be
Omnipotent by Mercy’s means? <and> {for} thus
Thy Sovereignty would grow but more complete,
A Despot thou, and yet thy people free,
And by the Heart not Hand enslaving Us.

There you dogs—there’s a Sonnet for you—you won’t have such as that in a hurry from Mr. Fitzgerald.——

3:3

You may publish it with my name—an’ ye wool—He deserves all praise bad & good—it was a very noble piece of principality.——Would you like an Epigram? <upon a female>—a translation.

If for silver or for gold
You could melt ten thousand pimples
Into half a dozen dimples
Then your face we might behold
Looking doubtless much more smugly

349: Hoppner is approached, but as his writ does not run in Romagna the request fails.
Yet even then ‘twould be damned Ugly.

This was written on some French=woman, by Rulhieres – I believe. – –
“And so good morrow [t’ye] – good Master lieutenant.”350 – – –

yrs. [scrawl]

Byron to John Murray, from Bologna, August 23rd 1819:
(Source: NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 346; BLJ VI 215)
[To: Jno. Murray Esq. / 50. Albemarle Street. / London. / Angleterre / Inghilterra.]
A single sheet.

P.S. – If I had had time and been {quieter}
& nearer – I would have cut him
to hash – but as it is – you can judge for yourselves. – – –

Bologna. August 23rd, 1819.

Dear Sir –

I send you a letter to Roberts351 signed “Wortley Clutterbuck” – which you may publish in
what form you please in answer to his article. – I have had many proofs of man’s absurdity but he beats
all, in folly. – Why the Wolf in sheep’s cloathing has tumbled into the very trap. – We’ll strip him. – –
The letter is written in great haste and amidst a thousand vexations. – [Ms. tear: “Your”] letter only
came yesterday – so that [Ms. tear: “thou”] is no time to polish – the post [Ms. tear: “goes”] out
tomorrow. – The date is “Little Pidlington” – Let Hobhouse correct the proofs – he knows & can read
<my/> the handwriting. – – – Continue to keep the anonymous about “Juan” – it helps us to fight against
overwhelming numbers. – – –
I have a thousand distractions – at present – so excuse haste – and wonder I can act or write at all –
answer by post as usual y”[scrawl]

Byron to John Murray, from Bologna, August 24th 1819:
(Source: NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 348; Q II 485-6; BLJ VI 216-17)
[No address.]
Written the day following the previous item.

Bologna. August 24th, 1819.

Dear Sir –

I wrote to you by last post – enclosing a buffooning letter for publication addressed to the
buffoon Roberts – who has thought proper to tie a cannister to his own tail. – It was written off hand –
and in the midst of circumstances not very favourable to facetiousness – so that there may perhaps be
more bitterness than enough for that sort of small acid punch. – You will tell me. – Keep the
anonymous in every case – it helps what fun there may be – but if the matter grows serious about Don
Juan and you feel yourself in a scrape – or me either – own that [I am the author.] I will never shrink –
and if you do – I can always answer you in the question of Guatimozin to his minister352 – each being
on his own coals.

1:2

I wish that I had been in better spirits, but I am out of sorts – out of nerves – and now and then – (I
begin to fear) out of my senses. – – All this Italy has done for me – and not England – I defy all of you
& your climate to boot to make me mad. – – But if ever I do really become a Bedlamite – and wear a
strait waistcoat – let me be brought back among you – your {people} will then be proper compagny. –
– – – ——— –
I assure you what I here say and feel has nothing to do with England – {either} in a literary or personal
point of view. – All my present pleasures or plagues are as Italian as the Opera. – And after all they are
but trifles – for all this arises from my “dama’s” being in the country for three days (at Capo=fiume)
but as I

350: Shakespeare, Henry V. II i 2 (“Good morrow, Lieutenant Bardolph”).
351: Editor of “My Grandmother’s Review – the British”.
352: Aztec chief who, being roasted by the Spaniards, was appealed to by his followers and responded, “And am I
resting on a bed of flowers?”
could never live for but one human being at a time (and I assure {you} that one has never yet been myself – as you may know by the consequences, {for} the Selfish are successful in life) I feel alone and unhappy. – – I have sent for my daughter from Venice, – and I ride daily; – and walk in a Garden <within> under a purple canopy of grapes – and sit by a fountain – and talk with the Gardener of his <grievous> toils which seem greater than Adam’s – and with his wife – and with his Son’s wife – who is the youngest of the party and I think – talks best of the three. – Then I revisit the Campo Santo – and my old friend the Sexton has [two but one] the prettiest daughter imaginable – and I amuse myself with contrasting her beautiful and innocent face of fifteen – with the skulls with which he has peopled several cells – and particularly with that of one skull dated 1766. – which was {once} covered (the tradition goes) by the most lovely features of Bologna – noble – and rich. – When I look at these – and at this girl – when I think of what they were – and what she must be – why then my dear Murray – I won’t shock you by saying what I think. – – It is little matter what becomes of us “bearded men” but I don’t like the notion of a beautiful woman’s lasting less than a beautiful tree – than her own picture – her own shadow – which won’t change {so} to the Sun – as her face to the mirror. – – I must leave off – for my head aches consumedly – I have never been quite well since the night of the representation of Alfieri’s Mirra – – a fortnight ago. – –

Byron to John Murray, from Bologna, August 29th 1819:

Byron challenges a German.

Bologna. August 29th. 1819.

Dear Sir –

I have been in a rage {these two days} and am still bilious therefrom. – You shall hear. A Captain of Dragoons – Ostheid – Hanoverian by birth – in the Papal troops at present – whom I had obliged by a loan when nobody would lend him a Paul – recommended a horse to me on sale by a Lieutenant Rossi – an officer who unites the sale of cattle to the purchase of men. – – – I bought it. – The next day on shoeing the horse – we discovered the thrush – the animal being warranted sound. – – I sent to reclaim the contract, and the money – The Lieutenant desired to speak with me in person. – I consented. – He came. – It was his own particular request. – – – He began a story. – I asked him if he would return the money. – He said no – but he would exchange. – He asked an exorbitant price for his other horses. – I told him that he was a thief. – He said he was an officer – {&} a man of honour – and pulled out a Parmesan passport signed by General Count Neipperg.353 – I answered that as he was an officer I would treat him as such – and that as to his being a Gentleman – he might prove it by returning the money – as for his [Parmesan] passport – I should have valued it more if it had been a Parmesan Cheese. – He answered in high terms – and said that if it were [in] the morning (it was about eight o Clock in the evening) he would have satisfaction – I then lost my temper. – As for that I replied you shall have it directly – it will be mutual satisfaction I can assure you – you are a thief and as you say an officer – my pistols are in the next room loaded – take <the> {one of the} candles

{examine & make} your choice of {weapons}. – He replied that pistols were English weapons – he always fought with the Sword. – I told him that I was able to accommodate {him}, having three regimental swords in a drawer near us – and he might take the longest and put himself on guard. – – – All this passed in <prevents of> {presence} of a third person. – He then said No but tomorrow morning he would give me the meeting at any time or place. – I answered that it was not usual to appoint meetings in the presence of witnesses – and that we had best speak man to man – & fix time and

353: One-eyed Austrian lover of the former Empress Marie Louise, Napoleon’s wife.
instruments. – But as the Man present was leaving the room – the Lieutenant Rossi – before he could shut the door after him – ran out

1:4

roaring “help and murder” most lustily and fell into a sort of hysterics in the arms of about fifty people, who all saw that I had no weapon of any sort or kind {about me} and followed him asking what the devil was the matter {with him}. – Nothing would do – he ran away without his hat, & went to bed ill of the fright. – He then tried his complaint at the police – which dismissed it as frivolous. – – – – He is I believe gone away or going, – the horse was warranted – but I believe so worded that the villain will not be obliged to refund according to law. — — — He endeavoured to raise up an indictment of assault and battery – but as it was in a public inn – in a frequented street – there were too many witnesses to the contrary – and as a military man – he has not cut

2:1

2.) a martial figure even in the opinion of the Priests. – He ran off in such a hurry that he left his hat and never missed it till he got to his hostel or inn. – The facts are as I tell you – I can assure you he began by “coming Captain Grand over me” – or I should never have thought of trying his “cunning in fence”$^{354}$ – but what could I do? – he talked of “honour and satisfaction – and his commission” – he produced a military passport – there are severe punishments for regular duels on the continent, and trifling ones for rencontres – so that it is best to fight it out directly – he had robbed – and then wanted to insult me – what could I do? – my patience was gone – and the weapons at hand – fair and equal – besides it was

2:2

just after dinner when my digestion is bad – & I don’t like to be disturbed. – His friend Ostheid – is at Forli – – we shall meet on my way {back} to Ravenna – – the Hanoverian seems the greater rogue of the two – and if my valour does not ooze away like Acres’s – “Odds flints and triggers”$^{355}$ if it should be a rainy morning and my stomach in disorder – there may be something for the obituary. – – – – Now pray “Sir Lucius do not you look upon me as a very ill used Gentleman”$^{356}$ – – – – I send my Lieutenant to match Hobhouse’s Major Cartwright – “and so good morrow to you good Master Lieutenant”.$^{357}$ – With regard

2:3

to other things I will write soon but I have been f — g – incessantly for the last three months and Quarrelling – and fooling – till I can scribble no more.

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, September 3rd 1819:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 284-5)

[Milord / Milord Byron / poste restante / Venise / Italie // stamped: VENEZIA 16 SEP]

Murray answers Byron’s of August 9th and 12th. 1,200 copies of Don Juan have gone.

London Sept’. 3. 1819

My Lord

I have been this moment favoured with your most obliging Letters – Ravenna Aug 9 – Bologna Aug. 12 – & last week I had the gratification of getting another entertaining Letter with the history of my portrait – I should have acknowledged this much sooner but it arrived at a time when I was in misery at the almost certain prospect of losing my wife – which with five young children would have been irreparable – She is now thank God out of danger.

I will apply instantly for the appointment which you desire for your noble friend.

354: Shakespeare, Twelfth Night III iv 271 (B. gets the preposition right this time).
357: Shakespeare, Henry V. II i 2 (“Good morrow, Lieutenant Bardolph”).
Upon my word I can not help acknowledging again your extensive patience of me in all that I have ventured to say & suffer to be done about Don Juan – I now inclose the leaves which have the Asterisks & beg you to fill them up as you list – all I petition for is the removal of allusions to a certain disease – Send me any preface or any thing else and the second edition which shall wait for your commands shall be published as you wish – but I wish you would revise for some parts are really heavy – M G. was speaking of this again yesterday & it requires only a few of your promethean touches to brighten all into flame again – there is a great outcry – but every body reads – I have 300 left out of 1,500 printed – it was published late in the season – pray set to work and let me have too more Cantos – to publish about February –

However much you may regret the occasion yet I know that you will rejoice in the news that Moore sets out on his way to Venice tomorrow – he has just been here & entreats you to give him the meeting or he shall lose the greatest Lion in Italy – respecting his case it is this – He forgot that he was in office – & allowed a cursed deputy to play the rogue – there is a defalcation of 6,000£ & he is obliged to fly – his friends think however that when the Creditors find that they are likely to get nothing otherwise they will be glad to compromise & will take a Third of that sum – which his friends will with ease advance – he travels with Lord John Russell whom he is to leave at Paris – but whom he thinks will easily be persuaded to accompany him to Venice

I am sending Gun Powder & sundries by Mr Knowles who will start for Italy next week – I sent you a Snuff-box by a friend of mine Mr Allan who deposited it with Mr Hoppener – Did you ever receive a parcel of Books & Magnesia &c &c &c wch I sent out by some Ship about 2 months ago to the care of Missiaglia?

Do me the favour to make every improvement that you can upon the two first Cantos of Don Juan & let me bring out the new Edition in great force in the winter – In the opinion of the best Critics the larger portion of them surpass all that you have written & the rest is deserving therefore of re-casting or at least of re-consideration – Pray tell me if you see any Newspaper published in England – for I would occasionally send them to you – Take care of your health

I remain My Lord
your faithful & attached friend
& Servant
John Murray

[1:3 blank]

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, September 14th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 288-9)

[Milord / Milord Byron / Poste restante / a Venise / en Italie // stamped: VENEZIA 27 SEP]

Murray answers Byron’s of August 24th and 29th.

My dear friend your Letters of the 24 & 29th Aug. received this moment have excited in me an alarm & uneasiness which I would I were within a moderate distance that I might fly to you for their explanation – But you have just suffered some vexation which your warm blood has occasioned you to feel with too great exasperation and I hope you will just take care of yourself for a few days and it will subside – Do consider that your mode of life requires occasional pauses and you should submit now & then to diet & medicine yourself, & if this were done rather in periodical anticipation of indisposition than when its accumulation renders it necessary, you would keep in very fair trim – M Hobhouse has received Letters from you last week, wch have made him very apprehensive that you are seriously ill & unless he has his doubts relieved he will I fancy set out for Italy – I wish if he did that you would think of returning to England with him, where your Lordships arrival would give a pleasure of an extent to will not allow yourself to believe – for your name is in the mouth of every School Boy – My eldest Son was lately at a Great School D Pearsons East Sheen – & now at the Charterhouse & at both the first enquiry was if his father was publisher to Lord Byron & he footed up to the first rank of estimation immediately – I declare upon

359: Mo. held a financial post in the West Indies which he had farmed out. He was now being prosecuted for the malfeasance of his deputy.
360: This gunpowder ends up in the Grand Canal.
my honour that your Lordship is the subject of conversation & your works also of admiration in every party that I am present at or hear of and if you would only condescend to keep in the line – every one will gladly yield to you the head of it – come I pray you & tantum patiatur amari – come & visit us – merely to have the means of taking your of leaving your Proxy – I have written to an Official friend, now out of town, in favour of your Italian one & if it is to be done I have no doubt but that it will be done – & on friday I shall be able to tell you – I received the Epistle & think it very good farce – as there is not a Soul in town at this time I propose to send it for your revision – in case Mr Hobhouse thinks it worth while – but at any rate I will send you a Copy of the Proof – if possible this night – too be sure it was the very thing one could have desired the Editor to fall into “If any one has personated the Editor of this Review”? An Ass – & then for his principles – why the Losses of his Review are paid by the Saints – Every One continues in the Same Mind as to the lavish display of talent in Don Juan – & its sale would been universal if some 20 Stanzas had been altered & wch by preventing the book from being shewn at a Ladies work table – have cut up my Sale – As to any fears for myself – I have never had the slightest – I did not want unnecessarily to give my name to a publication that I knew would be liable to such an outcry – but it does not follow but that I should have done so had you given yours & had your Lordship desired it – but it was not necessary – – I have just received the Letter wch I inclose observe Roberts is [not a Clergyman but] a Barrister – without business – a Commissioner of Bankrupts – nephew of D. Roberts of St Pauls School – a very respectable Man – but having too great an estimation nation of the powers of his own talents – He was the writer of the Looker-on – [x Perhaps you can notice this error in some drole way, in the postscript] I entreat you to let me hear from you by return of post – if you are ill [Ms. tear: “I”] will instantly set out & give you [Ms. tear: “all”] the personal care that I can – if [Ms. tear: “there”] is an English Physician pray induce him to remain with you night & day & administer & see the effect of his prescriptions – I owe my wifes life entirely to att ention of this kind – I will write again on friday – In the mean time I will hope for an early letter in better Spirits – pray rely upon my utmost attention to all your wishes & of my remaining ever My Lord

Kind Comp’ to

Your grateful & faithful friend

M’ Moore if he has arrived

Byron to John Murray, from Bologna, September 17th 1819:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ IV 353-4; BLJ VI 223)

Bologna, Sept. 17, 1819

Dear Sir, – I have received a small box consigned by you to a Mr. Allan with three portraits in it. Whom am I to thank for this? You never alluded to it in any of your letters. I enclose you an advertisement of Cognac brandy from Galignani’s Messenger; it runs – “in order to facilitate the consumption of that truly wholesome and agreeable article.” Is not this delightful? The gravity of the author; and the truly wholesome!

Yours ever truly, B

September 17th 1819: Byron starts Don Juan Cantos III and IV.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, September 27th 1819:
(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ IV 354-5; BLJ VI 224)

Venice, Sept. 27th, 1819

Dear Sir, – I enclose Roberts. You will be glad to hear that I am well. I never knew that I had written to say I was ill in health. I had a bad head, and nerves, owing to heat, and exhaustion, and plague with the

361: “bear being loved so much”.  
362: Letter to the Editor of the British Review.  
363: B. has yet to receive Ms.’s of September 3rd.
illness of another person, and other vexations at Bologna, but am right again now – at least for the present. These fits are the penalties of the life I have always led, and must be paid. I am not the less obliged by your and everybody’s good-nature. Thank Hobhouse, and say I shall write soon at full.

I write now merely to return Roberts. You must not mind me when I say I am ill; it merely means low spirits – and folly.

Yours ever truly,

BYRON

Byron to John Murray, from Ravenna, September 28th 1820 (a):
(Source: NLS Ms.434890; LJ V 80; BLJ VII 181)
[To, J° Murray Esq° / 50. Albemarle Street. / London / Angleterre, / Inghilterra.]
A single sheet.

Sept. 28th. 1820.

M’ J. Murray –

Can you keep a Secret? Not you – you would rather keep a w — e I believe of the two – although a moral man – and “all that – Egad —” – as Bayes says.364 – However I request and recommend to you to keep the enclosed one365 – viz – to give no copies – to permit no publication – [Ms. tear: “else”] you and I will <fall out> [be two.] – It was written nearly three years ago – upon the double[Ms. tear: “faced’’] fellow – it’s argument – in consequence of a letter <from Italy> exposing some of his usual practices. – You may show it – to Gifford – Hobhouse – D. Kinnaird and any two or three of your own Admiralty favourites – but don’t betray it, or me, else you are the worst of men. – – –

Is it like? – if not – it has no merit. –

Does he366 deserve it? – if not – burn it. –

He wrote to M. (so M. says) the other day saying on some occasion – “what a fortunate fellow you are! surely you were born with a rose in your lips, and a Nightingale singing on the

1:2 [above address:] bed=top” – M. sent me this extract as in instance of the old Serpent’s sentimental twaddle. – I replied – that I believed that “he (the twaddler) was born with [below address:] a Nettle in his a — e and a Carrion Crow croaking on the bolster”, a parody somewhat undelicate – but such trash puts one stupid – besides the Cant of it – in a fellow who hates everybody. [scrawl]

Is this good? tell me and I will send you one still better of that blackguard [text turns up right-hand side of page:] Brougham;367 – there is a batch of them. –

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, October 15th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 292)
[Milord / Milord Byron / poste restante / Venise / Italie // stamped: VENEZIA 28 OCT]
Murray answers Byron’s of September 27th.

My Lord

I have been very greatly relieved by the Letter dated Sep 27 – Venice wch I have just had the satisfaction of receiving – your former ones had left me in alarm & suspense – I am truly happy that your Lordship has recovered – and I hope you have determined to take some little care of yourself for the future – I wish I had found in this Letter the further pleasure of a hint even that your Lordship <pro> mediated a visit to England at the beginning of the year & I will yet hope that the notice of such an intention was rather an omission than a total want of <such> it – I have received Roberts wch is very good & will annoy the

1:2

party sufficiently – I hope b<y>efore you receive this that have been cheered by a visit from M’ Moore & wish he may assist in seducing you home –

May I expect something from you to open the Ball with?

With Compliments I remain My Lord

your faithful Servant

364: In Buckingham’s The Rehearsal.
365: Question and Answer, B’s vicious portrait of Rogers.
366: Rogers.
367: In Genoa on October 3rd 1826 H. is shown by Charles Barry “A character of Brougham in prose – unpublished – very savage – partly just”; it is at BLJ VI 86-7.
John Murray

No less than two – Third Cantos of Don Juan have been advertised

October 29th 1819: Byron starts translating Canto I of Pulci’s Morgante Maggiore; he finishes it on February 20th 1820.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, October 29th 1819:
(Source: text from B.L.Ashley 4752; LJ IV 367-70; BLJ VI 353)

Byron answers the previous item. Moore has the Memoirs, which are now 78 sheets long. This is the first Byron letter starting “Dear Murray” rather than “Dear Sir”.

Venice. Octr. 29th. 1819.

Dear Murray –

Yours of the 15th. came yesterday. I am sorry that you do not mention a large letter <received> addressed to your care for Lady Byron – from me at Bologna – two months ago. Pray tell me was this letter received and forwarded? – – –

You say nothing of the Vice Consulate for the Ravenna patrician – from which it is to be inferred that the thing will not be done. – – – – – – – – – – – –

I had written about a hundred stanzas of a third Canto to Don Juan – but the reception of the two first is no encouragement to you nor me to proceed. – –

I had also written about 600 lines of a poem – the Vision (or Prophecy) of Dante – the subject a view of Italy in the ages down to the present – supposing Dante to speak in his own person – previous to his death – and embracing all topics in the way of prophecy – like Lycophron’s Cassandra.

But this and the other are both at a standstill – for the present. – – – – – I gave Moore who is gone to Rome – my life in M.S. in 78 folio sheets brought down to 1816. – – But this I put into his hands for his care – as he has some other M.S. of mine – a journal kept in 1814 – & c. – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

Neither are for publication during my life – but when I am cold – you may do what you please. – – In the mean time – if you like to read them – you may – and show them to any body you like – I care not. – – –

The life is Memoranda – and not Confessions – I have left out all my loves (except in a general way) and many other of the most important things – (because I must not compromise other people) so that it is like the play of Hamlet – “the part of Hamlet omitted by particular desire”. – – But you will find many opinions – and some

fun – with a detailed account of my marriage and it’s consequences – as true as a party concerned can make such accounts – for I suppose we are all prejudiced. – – –

I have never read over this life since it was written – so that I know not [exactly] what it may repeat – or contain. – – –

Moore and I passed some merry days together – but so far from “seducing me to England” as you suppose – the account he gave of me and mine – was of any thing but a nature to make me wish to return; – it is not <such things as> such opinions of the public that would weigh with me one way or the other – but I think they should weigh with others of my friends before they ask me to return to a place for which I have no great inclination. – – –

I probably must return for business – or in my way to America – pray – did you get a letter for Hobhouse – who will have told you the contents. – I understood that

the Venezuelan commissioners had orders to treat with emigrants – now I want to go there – I should not make a bad South-American planter, and – I should take my {natural} daughter <Allegra> Allegra

368: The versions published by William Hone (“Canto the Third”) and by William Wright (“Don Juan: with a Biographical Account of Lord Byron”)

369: The London Journal, known only in Moore’s transcription.
with me and settle. – – – I wrote at length to Hobhouse to get information from Perry who I suppose is the best topographer and trumpeter of the new Republicans. Pray write –

yrs ever [scrawl]

P.S.
Moore and I did nothing but laugh – he will tell you of “my whereabouts” and all my proceedings at this present – they are as usual. – – –
You should not let those fellows publish false “Don Juans” but do not put my name because I mean to cut Roberts up like a gourd – in the preface – if I continue the poem.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, November 8th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 373-7; BLJ VI 238-40)

Byron has just discovered that one stanza in Don Juan II doesn’t rhyme properly. Life echoes Don Juan I memorably.

Venice, Nov'r 8th. 1819.

Dear Murray – Mr. Hoppner has lent me a copy of “Don Juan” Paris Edition – which he tells me is read in Switzerland by Clergymen and ladies with considerable approbation. – – – In the second Canto you must alter the 49th Stanza to

“Twas twilight, <for> [and] the sunless day went down
Over the waste of waters like a veil
Which if withdrawn would but disclose the frown
hate is masked but to assail
Of one whose <hatred fair would make you quail,>
Thus to their hopeless eyes the Night was shown
And grinely darkeld o’er their faces pale,
And the dim desolate deep;
<And dim and desolate,> twelve days had fear
Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

And in Stanza 208 – of the same canto – make the sixth line run

"newly a –
Strong palpitation rises, 'tis her boon, –”

otherwise there is a syllable too few. – –

1:2

on referring to the M.S. I found that I had stupidly blundered all the rhymes of the 49th. Stanza, – – – such as they are printed. – Cast your eye over you will perceive the necessity of the alteration. – – –

I have been ill these eight days with a tertian fever – caught in the country on horseback in a thunderstorm – – yesterday I had the fourth attack – The two last were very smart – the first day – as well as the last being preceded by vomiting. – – – It is the fever of the place – and the Season. – I feel weakened but not unwell in the intervals – except headache and lassitude. Count G. has arrived in Venice – and has presented his Spouse (who had preceded him two months for her health and the prescriptions of [D'r.] Aglietti) with a paper of conditions – regulations – of hours and conduct and morals – &c. &c. which he insists on her accepting – and She persists in refusing. – – I am expressly it should seem excluded by this treaty – as an indispensble preliminary, so that they are in high discussion – and what the result may be I know not – particularly – as they are consulting friends. – – –

370: Shakespeare, Macbeth II i 58.
371: The first two cantos of Don Juan were published together in a quarto on July 15, 1819. Four days later, says Marchand, William Hone’s Don Juan, Canto the Third appeared, which is impossible.
Tonight as She {Tonight as Countess G.} observed me poring over “Don Juan” she stumbled by mere chance on the 138th Stanza of the first Canto – and asked me what it meant – I told her – nothing but thy husband is coming” as I said this in Italian with some emphasis – she started up in a fright – and said “Oh My God – is he coming?” thinking it was her own who either was or ought to have been at the theatre. – – – You may suppose we laughed when she found out the mistake. – – – – –
You will be amused as I was – it happened not three hours ago. – – – – –

1:4

I wrote to you last week – but have added nothing to the third Canto – since my fever nor to “the Prophecy of Dante –” Of the former there are about 110 octaves done – of the latter about five hundred lines – perhaps more. – Moore saw the third Juan – as far as it then went. – I do not know if my fever will let me go on – with either – and the tertian lasts they say a good while. I had it in Malta in my way home – and the Malaria fever in Greece the year before that. – The Venetian is not very fierce – but I was delirious one of the nights with it for an hour or two – and on my senses coming back – found Fletcher sobbing on one side of the bed – and la Contessa G. {weeping} on the other – so that I had no want of attendance. – – I have not yet taken any physician – because though I think they may relieve in Chronic disorders such as Gout and the like &c. &c. &c.

2:1

2.) (though they can’t cure them) just as Surgeons are necessary to set bones – and tend wounds – yet I think fevers quite out of their reach – and remediable only by diet and Nature.

I don’t like the taste of bark – but I suppose that I must take it soon. – Tell Rose – that somebody at Milan – (an Austrian {M’} Hoppner says) is answering his book. – – William Bankes is in quarantine at Trieste. – – – – –
I have not lately heard from you – excuse this paper – it is long paper shortened for the occasion. – – – –
What folly is this of Carlile’s trial? – why let him have the honours of a martyr? it will only advertise the books in question. – – –

yours ever
[scrawl]

3:1

P.S.

As I tell you – that the Guiccioli business is on the eve of exploding in one way or the other – I will just add that without attempting to influence the decision of the Contessa – a good deal depends upon it. – – If she and her husband make it up – you will perhaps see me in England sooner than you expect – if not – I shall retire with her to France or America – change my name and lead a quiet provincial life. – All this may seem odd – <and almost> – but I have got the girl into a scrap scrape – and as neither her birth nor her rank – nor her connections [by birth or marriage] are inferior to my own – I am in honour bound to support her through – besides she is a very pretty woman – ask Moore – and not {yet} one and twenty.

If she gets over this – and I get over my tertian I will perhaps look in at Albemarle Street some of these days en passant to Bolivar. –

John Murray to Byron, from Wimbledon Common, November 9th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 293-5)
[Milord / Milord Byron / poste restante / a Venise / en Italie // stamped: VENEZIA 26 NOV.]
Murray assures the nervous Byron that there is no possibility of a revolution in England.
As Mr. Hobhouse was wandering about in search of perpetual (com)motion & in uncertainty of his address, I ventured according to your instruction to open your Letter addressed to him. There I found your plan of South America – but if you will reflect upon all that all that has yet transpired – you will be assured I think that there can be no security for property in that Country for this half Century to come – every account and the decided opinion of every well man well informed upon that subject here testifieth unto the truth of this – at to the ultimate result it is not the present question but for security of property there is not & can not be the least – With respect to this Country – you will never find another – for the thing is impossible – where you can be so enthusiastically admired – where so much regret is felt at the idea of your expatriation – or where your Lordships return would give so much universal Satisfaction – I had the pleasure of seeing your Lordships daughter Ada yesterday & it is impossible to speak in adequate terms of her promise in every respect intellectual & personal – She would interest all your feelings and deserve all your care – and

1:2

I earnestly hope that you will yet see her in time – but do not listen to the opinion of foreigners, who know nothing of the elasticity of the British constitution & its regenerating faculties would make you believe that we are upon the eve of revolution – it is much more probable that Italy will be overwhelmed with Lava – than that we shall have a revolution here – I only wish the funds were down below Zero – & I would sell every thing that I have & buy them up – the business was at first neglected & then Stupidly mismanaged by the Ministers in the first instance – or It would have ended in ridicule – wch will speedily absorb it – nor can I flatter you with the Chance of a total Change of Ministers – the Whigs with their inherent want of tact have again taken a part against the Country – instead of the Ministers – & the latter will be more strengthened than ever by the division of their Adversaries – I wish I were as sure of receiving two Cantos of Don Juan from yr Lordship this month as I am of the truth of what I have ventured to assure you on the political State of the Country – which I entreat your Lordship to come over & verify

1:3

But to my Leather

A Villain has had the Audacity to print the Whole of my Don Juan – selling it publicly at 4/6 & this he has done conceiving that the Lord Chancellor would decide as he did most absurdly & unjustly in the Case of Southeys Wat Tyler – that is to say on my application for an injunction he grants it – the next day the other party get up & certain passages wch his Lordship chooses to denominate – indelicate or blastphefous & he instantly tells me there can by no Copyright in Such things – I have got the opinion of two Counsellors – & they both tell me that Lord E. will decide in this way & I am afraid to mute the Question – this however I shall do if I can do it in any way likely to be successful – In the mean I wish to solicit a favour that your Lordship would give me some dozen new Stanzas wch will be enough to render my Edition the best – & will thus Secure to me in a certain degree the Copyright – I have published an Octavo Edition. There is no division of opinion as to the talent of this Poem – surpassing yourself and every other poet – I wish therefore you would make some few alterations because the circulation is stopped by certain passages of no use to the Poem – wch keep it out of families & this you see reduces it to a matter of business – I submit to you the interest of your Lordship & the latter will be more strengthened than ever by the division of their Adversaries – I wish I were as sure of receiving two Cantos of Don Juan from yr Lordship this month as I am of the truth of what I have ventured to assure you on the political State of the Country – which I entreat your Lordship to come over & verify

1:4

Will you I entreat – beg Missiaglia to desist from sending me so much trash as he yet persists in doing –

372: H. is with his sister and brother-in-law at Easton Grey in Wiltshire.
373: See B. to H., October 3rd 1819.
374: Mu. means “Letter”.
375: Mu. means “moot”.

It was from me that the Snuff Box was presented to yr Lordship –
I remain My Lord
your grateful, attached, & faithful
friend & Servant
If Mr Moore be with yr Lordship pray offer
my kind regards to him.

2:1

P. S.

Your Lordship will recollect that you anathematized my seal Head – are there not ingenious artists
in this line in Venice – or if not – could you not reach them in other parts of Italy – if you could &
would cause to be made for me an excellently cut portrait of yr Lordship, as a Seal no too large
(because it becomes less useful) cut in the best pebble that can be obtained – you will very much oblige
& gratify me – I paid £26 – for the stupid one wch I have – I would like also a Cameo Ring of <the>
Same if you know a good Artist – & I dont mind the price – Pray will yr Lordship tell me if the portrait
of you by Hayter is considered by yr friends as a good likeness.

J.M.

John Murray to Byron, from Wimbledon Common, November 14th and 16th 1819:
(Source: text from NLS Ms.434896; LJM 297-8)
[Mirol / Milord Byron / poste restante / a Venise / en Italie // stamp illegible]
Two letters sent together on the same paper, written within a week of the previous item, without
waiting for an answer. The second is written on receipt of Byron’s of October 29th.

Wimbledon Comm. Nov‘. 14 – 1819

My Lord

I am very anxious for the favour of a Letter from you, as the success of my winter Campaign will depend upon any thing with which you may be disposed to favour me. In my last I mentioned my dilemma with regard to the Copyright of Don Juan which a villain had invaded and as I fear, with the prejudices of the Chancellor, successfully. I am not however disposed to yield without a struggle. The opinion of one Counsellor is “considering the general nature of the subject the warmth of the description in some parts & the scriptural allusions in others I think in the present temper of the times a court will not afford its protection to this book” so sayeth John Bell – the leading man at the Chancery Bar. But another – Shadwell – has discovered “that one great tendency of the book is not an unfair one – it is to shew in Don Juans ultimate (mark that) Character, the ill effect of that injudicious maternal education which Don Juan is represented as having received & wch had operated injuriously upon his mind” – Here is an excellent moral and I will hope you will avail yourself of it – and send me over two other Cantos in wch the first approximation may be seen – If you would seriously send me thing in this way your admirers here would become your adorers & if added to this it be possible for you to sustain the same flight to wch the first & Second Cantos have carried you – your Immortality is fixed for ever.
It is really a vexation – to me particularly that any thing should have appeared in the first part to restrain its circulation – wch would have been otherwise unbounded – I do not in any

1:2

was affect to be squeamish – but the character of the Middling Class in the country – is certainly
highly moral – and we should not offend them – as you curtail the number of your readers – and for
the rest the subject of Don Juan is an excellent one – and nothing can surpass the exquisite beauties
scattered so lavishly through the first two Cantos – Go on in equal spirit and I shall be able to offer you

376: Mu. means “Cameo”.
377: Sir George Hayter’s portrait of B. has not been traced.
378: Mu. compares himself to Napoleon. See Beppo st.61.
379: Mu. means “way”.
380: B. never acknowledges the middle classes of England; he has certainly never written for them.
a Thousand Guineas for each Canto until your plan is sublimely compleated. Do me the favour to condescend (as the Scotch say) upon this subject & let me know yr Lordships intentions.

You have never told me if you received a Copy of Crabbes Tales of the Hall & what you thought of them, certainly one half that is admirable but as I know you to be an admirer of Crabbe I am anxious for your Lordships opinion – I have purchased With the Tales of the Hall – the Copyright of all his former works of whc I am preparing a uniform edition

Scott still goes on indefatigably two works by the author of Waverley are announced Ivanhoe a Romance & some other thing whose name I forget – nothing will persuade M. Leigh that you are not the Author of every Series of Tales of My Landlord –

M. Hobhouse promised me a Copy of your Lordships Bust by Torwalsten but none have yet arrived – could your Lordship obtain one for me

I hope to find by your next that your Lordship has finally determined to visit England in the Spring

With most unfeigned affection I remain

My Lord

your obliged & faithful Servant

John Murray

Best Comps to M. Moore

Albemarle Street

Tuesday Nov 16. 1819

My Lord

1:3

I brought what I have written to town with me today when I had the satisfaction, as far as its usual confidence & kindness goes, your Letter of the 29th. Oct. – the deduction from my satisfaction is that you give up so compleatly the notion of visiting England which I had calculated upon – M. Moore must have very different notions of all affairs in this country touching your Lordship if he has given a representation that prevents you from visiting us – – for your name is in every mouth – your writings in every hand and universal admiration is checked merely by your casting our grateful feelings from you – I am much ashamed at my negligence in not informing you of the safe arrival of your Letter to Lady Byron & of her ladyships receipt of it – the fact is that Lady B – was travelling at the time at it was a month before her Ladyship got it when she did me the favour to write & acknowledge it. For the Vice Consulship M. Croker instantly took it in hand but found that he is never appointed by the Gouvernment but by the Consul – Hopper is Consul General & if he will nominate your Lordships friend M. Croker will undertake to have the appointment confirmed. The cause of my not indulging myself in the favour of being allowed to write longer Letters to your Lordship whom I ever cherish as the most valuable & indulgent friend that I ever could venture to call so is – the distraction wch I have for two years under

1:4

gone from the numbers of people all of a certain name, but most of uncertain use to me, who have been introduced to my Drawing Room – until at length I can endure it no longer for it unhinges my mind so compleatly from all or any connected thought that I cannot carry on my business and I have this moment refitted my house & shall confine this meeting to some dozen persons with whom I have actual business – and your Lordship will find my first object will be to give you the largest portion of my mind & humble servies.

written neatly at ninety degrees, with the rest of the letter untouched and legible around: Milord / Milord Byron / Poste restante / a Venise / en Italie

It really is a mistaken notion that Don Juan has not been well received – the Sale has been lessened by an outrageous outcry against some parts of it but its estimation in point of Genius carries your Lordship higher than ever & its circulation will be every day increasing. I have this instant returned from a consultation with Shadwell & Horne the two most eminent Counsel at the Chancery Bar to know if they think that the Chancellor will grant me an injunction against the Villain who has printed

381: The Monastery.
382: In fact Hoppner cannot appoint a Vice-Consul in Ravenna.
my two first Cantos of Don Juan & they both agree that he will protect my property – & I am about to try it – but I am again in a dilemma about yr Lordships name as my Solicitors say that I must name the Author in my Affidavit – at wch rate a man has only to pirate Waverley &c to oblige the Author to declare himself – this I will try & if I must give up the Name I will not proceed further until I have Lordships pleasure on this point. I hope my recent letters

2:1

may have had the effect of inducing yr Lordship to compleat the Third Canto and if that be compatible with your preparations a Fourth – but upon my Soul you have a superhuman task to make these equal the two first – I tremble at but having done what you have done I might venture to feel confidence rather than apprehension – The Prophecy of Dante is a fine Subject – from the Character of Dante & from a similarity illicit in parts of yr writings of your power compleatly – I burn to hear more of these things

I will send you immediately the various recently published works upon Spanish America that your Lordship may form your own estimate of the probability of there being within half a century any fixed Stable Gouvernment or any Chance of security for property – the opinion wch is conveyed to yr Lordship by the Newspapers & particularly by those on the Continent of this Country is really erroneous There is apprehension of Revolution I assure you – Reforms of various Kinds we ought & must have – & Ministers can not stand more in their own light than by opposing themselves to the March of the Intellect – the progress of Society. – Hobhouse will make nothing of his politics I am afraid for he is a good hearted & able headed Man – & always so friendly to me that I am interested in what he undertakes – He wants to mount a Horse that will not carry double – & one wch the experience & Skill of Sir Francis Burdett – can scarcely manage – He tells me he will make every enquiry about New Spain – but he thinks ill of it at present – Well you will think me troublesome – I will write on friday about Don Juan

Believe that I ever am My Lord
your faithful Servant
John Murray

[2:2 has the address.]

November 30th 1819: Byron finishes Don Juan Cantos III-IV.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, December 4th 1819:
(Source: NLS Ms.434890; LJ IV 380; BLJ VI 252-3)
[No address.]
Byron answers Murray’s previous double letter. Don Juan III and IV (currently just “III”) is complete.

Venice. Dec‘. 4th. 1819.

My dear Murray – You may do as you please – but you are about an hopeless experiment – Eldon will decide against you – were it only that my name is in the record – You will also recollect that if the publication is pronounced against on the grounds you mention as indecent & blasphemous that I lose all right in my daughter’s guardianship and education – in short all paternal authority – and every thing concerning her – except the pleasure I may have chanced to have had in begetting her. – It was so decided in Shelley’s case – because he had written – Queen Mab – &c. &c. however you can ask the lawyers – and do as you like – I do not inhibit you trying the question – I merely state one of the consequences to me – – With regard

1:2

to the Copyright – it is hard that you should pay for a non-entity: – – I will therefore refund it – which I can very well do – not having spent it – nor begun upon it – and so we will be quits on that score – (it lies at my banker’s. – – –) Of the Chancellor’s law – I am no judge – – but take up Tom Jones & read him M³. Waters and Molly Seagrim – – – or Prior’s Hans Carvel – & Paulo Purganti – Smollett’s Roderick Random – the chapter of Lord Strutwell – & many others; – Peregrine Pickle the scene of the Beggar Girl – – Johnson’s London for coarse expressions – for instance the word “Clap” & “gropes his

383: He gave all that up when he left England.
breeches with a monarch’s air”—Anstey’s Bath guide—the “Hearken Lady Betty Hearken”—take up in short—Pope—Prior—Congreve—Dryden—Fielding—Smollett—and let the Counsel select passages—and what becomes of their copyright

if his Wat. Tyler—decision is to pass into a precedent?—
I have nothing more to say—you must judge for yourselves.

I wrote to you some time ago—I have had a tertian ague—my daughter Allegra has been ill also—and I have been almost obliged to run away with a married woman.—But with some difficulty—and many internal struggles—I reconciled the lady with her lord—and cured the fever [of] the Child with bark—and my own with cold water.—I think of setting out for England by the Tyrol in a few days—so that I could wish you to direct your next letter to Calais.—Excuse my writing in great haste—and late in the morning

or night—whichever you please to call it.—The third Canto of “Don Juan” is completed in about two hundred stanzas—very decent—I believe—but do not know—and it is useless to discuss until it can be ascertained if may or may not be a property.—My present determination to quit Italy was unlooked for—but I have explained the reasons in letters to my Sister & Douglas K.—a week or two ago.—My progress will depend upon the snows of the Tyrol—and the health of my child who is at present quite recovered—but I hope to get on well & am

P.S.—Many thanks for your letters to which you are not to consider this as an answer—but an acknowledgement.

Byron to John Murray, from Venice, December 10th 1819:

(from: NLS Ms. 434890; LJ IV 384; BLJ VI 256-8)

To J□ Murray Esq□ / 50. Albeinarle Street. / London. / Angleterre. / Inghilterra.)

Venice. 10□. l0□. □0□. 1819.

Dear Murray—

Since I last wrote I have changed my mind & shall not come to England—the more I contemplate—the more I dislike the place & the prospect.

You may therefore address to me as usual here—though—I mean to go to another city.

I have finished the third Canto of D. J.—but the things I have read & heard discourage all further publication—at least for the present.

You may try the copy question—but you’ll lose it—the cry is up—and cant is up—I [should] have no objection to return the price of the copyright—and have written to Mr. Kin□ by this post on the subject—Talk with him.

I have not the patience—or do I feel interest enough in the question—to contend with the fellows in their own slang.—but I perceive Mr. Blackwood Magazine and one or two others of your missives—have been hyperbolical in their praise—and diabolical in their abuse.

I like & admire Wilson—and he should not have indulged himself in such outrageous license—it is overdone and defeats itself—what would he say to the grossness without passion—and the misanthropy without feeling of <this> Gulliver’s travels?—when he talks of Lady Byron’s business—he talks of what he knows nothing about—and you may tell him that no one can more desire a public investigation of that affair than I do.

I sent home by Moore—for Moore only who has my journal too) my memoir written up to 1816.—and I gave him leave to show it to whom he pleased—but not to publish on <my/>any account.—You may

384: “Exalt each trifle, every vice adore,/ Your taste in snuff, your judgment in a whore,/ Can Balbo’s eloquence applaud, and swear,/ He groipes his breeches with a monarch’s air” (Johnson, London, 148-51).
read it – and you may let Wilson read it – if he likes – not for his public opinion – but his private – for I like the man – and care very little about his magazine. – – – –

And I could wish Lady B. herself to read it – that she may have it in her power to mark anything mistaken or misstated – as it will probably appear after my extinction, and it would be but fair she should see it – that is to say – herself willing – – –

Perhaps I may take a journey to you

1:4

in the Spring – but I have been ill – and am indolent – and indecisive because few things interest me. – – – – These fellows first abused me for being gloomy – and now they are wroth but I am or attempted to be facetious. – – –

I have got such a cold and headache that I can hardly see what I scrawl – the winters here are as sharp as needles. – Some time ago I wrote to you rather fully about my Italian <liaisons> {affairs} – at present I can say no more – except that you shall know further by and bye. – Your Blackwood accuses me of treating women harshly – it may be so – but I have been their martyr. – My whole life has been <their> sacrificed to them & by them. – – – I mean to leave Venice in a few days – but you will address your letters here as usual. – When I fix elsewhere you shall know. y [scrawl]

2:1

P.S.

Pray let my Sister be informed that I am not coming as I intended – I have not the courage to tell her so myself – [word covered by seal: "at"] least as yet – but I will soon – with the reasons – pray tell her so. – – –

[2:2 has the address.]