

WILLIAM HONE: *DON JUAN, CANTO THE THIRD* (1820)

Edited by Peter Cochran

William Hone (1780-1842) radical, satirist, and antiquarian, was born at Bath into a Congregationalist family, but moved at the age of ten to London, where he worked at first as a lawyer's clerk. By the age of sixteen he had joined the London Corresponding Society, and had become a sceptic in religion. He knew Francis Place and Major Cartwright. He moved into printing and bookselling, but made no great living from either (he had a wife – the daughter of one of his landladies – and twelve children). In December 1817 he became a national hero when he was tried three times for sedition and blasphemy, and acquitted in all three trials, defending himself in long and entertaining speeches. Wordsworth regretted the acquittal; Moore celebrated it.



Many of Hone's later satires were illustrated by his friend George Cruikshank. They include *The Maid and the Magpie* (based on *La Pie Voleuse*, the source also for Rossini's *The Thieving Magpie*), *The Political House that Jack Built* (which, written in response to the Peterloo Massacre, sold 100,000 copies), *The Queen's Showman*, and *The Man in the Moon*. He also published *The Apocryphal New Testament*. He was a friend of Charles and Mary Lamb. In later life he was heavily in debt, and Lamb tried to set him up in a coffee-house, but it failed. In his last years he returned to religion, and became a Congregationalist preacher. Dickens attended his funeral.

Where Caroline Lamb's *A New Canto*, having no plot, could never be mistaken for an authentic continuation of *Don Juan, Canto the Third* tries to pretend that it might be one; although the idea of Haidee having six sets of twins, and the idea of Juan setting up as a newspaper publisher in London, defeat credibility between them quickly enough. Neither bourgeois family life nor journalism were ever subjects Byron was famous for writing about. Like Caroline Lamb's, Hone's "continuation" is a London poem, but Hone pictures the metropolis as it he knows it to be, not as it may be when the world ends. Some of his London details resist annotation.

The action – what there is of it – takes place in the shadow of the Peterloo Massacre (August 16th 1819). The government is paranoid and oppressive; its servants, marshal and Lord Mayor, are bullies; its opponents, such as Burdett and Hobhouse, are full of magniloquent waffle. Anyone who tries to comment with either disinterest or embroidery on what's happening, as Juan does, is jailed with no regard to their rights.

Narrative takes second place, much of the time, to digression, although the digressions are well-placed at cliff-hanger moments within the narrative, so that we attend to them without forgetting the plot. Hone (if it is he) has studied *Don Juan* I and II with care. However, continual references to Lucius Junius Brutus, and seventeenth-century revolutionary heroes such as Eliza Gaunt, Russel and Hampden, should have made it impossible for anyone to think it a work of Byron, who would quite have liked a republic, as long as he could be its president.

The need to write in imitation of Byron makes it seem as if the poem is being written for an audience different from Hone's usual one. Here is the second section of *The Queen's Matrimonial Ladder* (1820). The future George IV pleads with George III:

The Prodigal Son, by his perils surrounded,
 Vex'd, harass'd, bewilder'd, asham'd, and confounded,
 Fled for help to his Father, confessed his ill doing,
 And begged for salvation from stark staring ruin;
 The sire urged—"The People your debts have twice paid,
 "And, to ask for the third time, even Pitt is afraid;
 "But she shall if you'll marry, and lead a new life,—
 "You've a cousin in Germany—make her your wife!"

The aim is to write not like Byron but like Moore, so that anyone with a crude ear for rhythm, an elementary grasp of politics and current events, and an ear for obvious irony, will be able to keep up. Here is the fiftieth stanza of *Canto the Third* (the words are Juan's):

O Betty! fare thee well, and if for ever,
 I must an exile part from Hunt and thee.
 Let not the Manchester *Occurrence* sever
 The tender bond of our Triumvirate:
 You'll find that Hunt as shrewd a cove, and clever,—
 I must be off to Palace Yard, and see
 If they intend to poke the Brighton lances
 Thro' Cartwright, Hobhouse, Walker or Sir Francis.

Its irony is much more subtle, and how exactly to take the tone and intention is hard to say. Anyone used to Hone's simpler style might be baffled. Perhaps it didn't sell so well, and that's why the author didn't fulfil his promise at the end of the poem, and write a Canto IV.

Hone went public with his opinion of *Don Juan* I and II, and of Murray's nerve in publishing them. In '*Don John, or Don Juan unmasked; being a Key to the Mystery, attending that remarkable Publication, with a Descriptive Review of the Poem, and Extracts ...*' (1819) he described it thus:

Don Juan is a Poem by Lord Byron, in which his Lordship's muse displays all his characteristic beauties and blemishes—soaring to the vastest heights, or creeping in the lowest depths—glancing with an eye of fantasy, at things past, at things present, and at things to come. Sometimes fixing her sight upon the shining radiance of the most effulgent glory, undazzled by its splendour, or directing her gaze to the microscopic observation of animated putrescence—grasping with one hand thunderbolts from Olympus, and groping with the other in a filthy jakes. The poem is constructed like the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream—of fine gold, silver, iron and clay. It abounds in sublime thought and low humour, in dignified feeling and malignant passion, in elegant wit and obsolete conceit. It alternately presents us with the gaiety of the ball-room, and the gloom of the scaffold—leading us among the airy pleasantries of fashionable assemblage, and suddenly conducting us to haunts or depraved and disgusting sensuality. It has the characteristic beauties and deformities of most of the noble author's other works, wherein we have scarcely time to be refreshed and soothed by the odours of flowers and bursting blossoms, the pensive silence of still waters, and the contemplation of beautiful forms, before we are terrified and horror-stricken by the ferocious clamour of tumultuous crowds, and the agonies of innocent and expiring victims (pp. 7-8).

Although we can see what Hone means – he makes *Don Juan* sound intriguing, almost Shakespearean, in its rich mixture of registers – he obviously disapproves of that very mixture; and we have to protest that there are no ball-rooms, no scaffolds, no bursting blossoms, no jakeses, neither shining effulgence nor animated putrescence, anywhere in it. Hone exaggerates the contrasts there are in the poem out of all recognition. Really to criticise a poem, you have to give evidence that you've read it. Our sense that Hone, like so many of

Byron's contemporary readers both in England and in Europe, has glanced at the poems, forgotten them almost at once, and then invented a mental substitute for them to criticise, is reinforced by what he writes next:

There are few varieties in man or mankind, which the author of *Don Juan* has not attempted in his productions, from the cavalier of the camp, and the high-bred courtier of the palace, with his pouncet-box and lute, to the ruffian chief of a band of robbers or pirates, who, in one breath, stabs with his dagger, and fires with his pistol; or the brawny bully of a brothel, full of strange oaths and brutal obscenity. But this poem has another character—it keeps no terms with even the common feelings of civilized man. It turns decorum to jest, and bids defiance to the established decencies of life. It wars with virtue, as resolutely as with vice (p. 8).

Again we protest, that Byron never portrays the types that Hone lists. Conrad in *The Corsair* comes nearest; but he never stabs and fires simultaneously – he's not that lurid: Hone is caricaturing something at which he seems never to have looked.

Hone goes on to write a description of the poem, with lavish quotations; and ends with a properly outraged section on John Murray's hypocrisy in publishing it, especially the stanzas which parody the Ten Commandments – a deed for which, as he reminds us, lesser men have been, and still are being, prosecuted.

To be a "radical" in the age prior to the 1832 Reform Act, you didn't have to be what we should call left-wing – all you needed was a mind which expected things to be ordered sensibly, with a modicum of fairness and commonsense. Lord Liverpool, Castlereagh and Wellington presided over a state of affairs so surreal in its disqualities that it turned middle-of-the-road Tories like Sir Francis Burdett, and reactionary chauvinists like J.C.Hobhouse, into supposedly firebrand agitators. Hone's defence of literary "decorum" and of "the established decencies of life" show how unprepared he is either to read *Don Juan* (a most civilised poem) or to write a convincing and effective imitation of it.

In fact, we have no guarantee that *Don Juan: Canto the Third* is by Hone, despite the fact that he published it. It is not referred to in *William Hone: his Life and Times*, by F.W.Hackwood (T. Fisher Unwin, 1912: a book with a substantial bibliography, in the writing of which the author was helped by Hone's grand-daughter); not mentioned in *Radical Squibs and Loyal Ripostes*, ed. Edgell Rickword (Adams and Dart, 1971) or in *The World of William Hone*, by John Wardroper (Shelfmark Books, 1997). It is, however, in the B.L. catalogue as Hone's.

I have taken the first (the only??) edition in the British Library as copy-text, and apart from lines 119 and 693 (see notes) my only alterations have been silently to uppercase some sentence-openers.

If R.E.Prothero is to be believed (see LJIV 370), a poem which he names *Don John, Canto the Third* was published on July 19th 1819 – four days after the real *Don Juan* I and II. To write, print, and publish a poem in 114 stanzas of ottava rima in such a short time seems impossible; and in any case, the poem below refers to the Peterloo Massacre, which occurred on August 16th, and to the Westminster Palace Yard meeting on September 2nd.

No less than two – THIRD Cantos of Don Juan have been advertised
(Murray to B., 15 Oct 1819 – JMA)

Murray sent me a letter yesterday – the impostors have published – two new third Cantos of Don Juan – the devil take the impudence of some blackguard bookseller or other therefor (B. to Hoppner, 29 Oct 1820 – BLJ VI 237)

TITLE-PAGE

DON JUAN

CANTO THE THIRD

There never was such times.

Radical Reflections.

LONDON:
WILLIAM HONE, LUDGATE HILL

1819

But in this kind, to come in braving arms,
Be his own carver, cutting out his way,
To find out right with wrongs – it may not be.

RICHARD II.

DON JUAN
THE THIRD CANTO*.¹

I.

Miss Haidee and Don Juan pleaded well;
At least my publisher² *of late* so tells me,
Although the world he does not chuse to tell,
Yet, every body knows 'tis he who sells me:
To sing what furthermore the *pair*³ befel,
(As he declines my book and thus compels me,
Because my “*guinea trash*” he will not own,)
I send this Canto in to Mr. Hone.

1: * Author's note: Envoi: To the Printer advertising a surreptitious Edition of my Third Canto.

Do you think you can bamboozle folks ---
Whatever merit lies in it,
You know, *your* Canto's all a hoax
So don't be advertising it.
But should you call---which Heaven forbid!
My Juan a nonentity,
He'll come as Blackwood's Welchman did,
To prove his own identity.

2: The poem is to be imagined as “narrated by Byron”.

3: *Don Juan* I 186, 8: *All likeness ends between the pair. The pair* are Juan and the Biblical Joseph.

II.

I don't know why Drab John⁴ so cavalierly,
 Should manifest at large his timid organ;⁵ 10
 I never baited women *too* severely,
 Just see the Quarterly on Lady Morgan;
 To call her 'worm' was using her but queerly,⁶
 They might as well at once have called her Gorgon:
 I'm sure no one can say I've treated Haidee
 As *Ultracrepidario*⁷ did that lady.

III.

John owes me much and need'nt have been ashamed
 To put his name upon the title page,
 Although he deemed my muse a little lamed,
 And fitter to be warbling from a cage; 20
 I'd have him know she is not yet so tamed,
 Although she scorns to shew it by a rage,
 As crouch to any one so ministerial:
 Was it not *I* that lent him wings ethereal?

IV.

You're witness here I don't get passionable,
 I never yet was cooler in my life;
 But all men know, Drab John was rendered fashionable
 When my son Harold⁸ took the Muse to wife:
 I flatter me I'm still dash-on-able,
 And so I scorn to lengthen out our strife: 30
 I am a decent judge of Nerve and Bone
 I'd rather *try* Drab John than Mr. Hone.

V.

They say as folk grow older they grow wiser,
 And Juan in his wisdom thought so too;
 But if his actions gave, or not, the lie Sir,
 Unto this axiom shall be left to you;
 He'd travelled in most lands^{*9} aneath the sky, Sir,

4: John Murray, who had earlier in the year published *Don Juan* I and II with neither author's nor publisher's name acknowledged.

5: Obscene, implying that Murray has a diffident dick.

6: Lady Morgan's *France* had been abused at length in the *Quarterly Review* for April 1817 (XXIII) pp 260-86. Lady Morgan is called "this audacious worm" on p. 284.

7: "Ultra Crepidarius" was a nickname given to William Gifford, editor of the *Quarterly*. "Crepidarius" means "shoe- or sandal-maker"; thus, "Every-Inch-a-Cobbler". In his youth Gifford had been an apprentice cobbler; the joke implies that he has mistaken his calling in being an editor and critic.

8: Harold as in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, all four cantos of which were published with great success by Murray in 1812, 1816 and 1818.

9: Author's note: Ανδρα πολυτροπον.....οσ μυλα πολλα
 Πλαγχθη.....
 Πολλών δ' ανθρωπων ιδεν αζεα
 Πολλα δ ογ EN ΠΟΝΤΩ (see my Second Canto) παθεν αγλα. Odys: Lib. I.

France, Italy and Spain had wandered thro',
 And Germany and Holland¹⁰ scrambled over –
 Until the packet landed him at *Dover*. 40

VI.

But not to spy the bareness of the land,
 Or quiz her laurelled Statesmen did he come;
 To steal our Daughters?—no—he'd some on hand;
 Or kiss our Wives? oh! no! he'd one at home:
 But occupations being at a stand
 Upon the Continent, he swore he'd roam,
 And find some folk so apt to cram a lie
 That he might feed his wife and family.

VII.

For I've forgot to tell you until now,
 That Miss Haidee (they're married by the bye,) 50
 Had brought him, somewhat strange as I allow,
 Six strapping boys as ever met the eye;
 And young Haidees as many, for somehow,
 Whether to tame his noted gallantry,
 Or in strict retribution for his Sins,
 For six successive years she'd brought him twins.¹¹

VIII.

And twins can't live on air;—and no reliance
 On life a moment can *exist* in Spain;
 Since the exertions of our grand alliance
 Have given the Spaniards their tenth plague again,¹² 60
 Who sets all calculations at defiance
 By the embroidery of his hand and brain:
 So, twins not feeding as I said on air,
 Thought Juan, "I must try my luck elsewhere".

IX.

And so he came to Dover in the Packet,
 Losing no time in getting up to town;¹³

[The note garbles the opening of the *Odyssey*: *Tell me, Muse, of the man of many ways, who was driven far journeys, after he had sacked Troy's sacred citadel. Many were they whose cities he saw, whose minds he learned of, many the pains (see my Second Canto) he suffered in his spirit on the wide sea, struggling for his own life and the homecoming of his companions.*]

10: Four of these five countries feature in Leporello's Catalogue Aria from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, listing Giovanni's conquests in *Italia ... in Allemagna ... in Francia ... ma in Ispagna son già mille e tre*. A sign that Hone assumed incorrectly that B.'s Juan would be modelled on the Juan of Mozart and da Ponte.

11: Implies (i) her fecundity (ii) his virility and (iii) a passionate marriage. It also gets her out of the plot at once and for good. Hone also had twelve children, but I don't know that they were six sets of twins.

12: King Ferdinand VII had been restored to the Spanish throne in 1814. Spanish liberals had, in March 1820, forced him to grant a constitution. This was revoked by him when the French, semi-supported by the Holy Alliance, invaded Spain two years later.

But left, as he was wont to leave, a racket
 Among the bright eyes black and blue and brown;
 I vouch the fact*,¹⁴ and Mrs. Payne¹⁵ will back it,
 Who told it me the last time I was down: 70
 Unless I'm sure of facts I ne'er advance 'em,—
 Besides she said he was so very handsome.

X.

Juan liked London well enough, 'twas winter;
 In summer weather London's rather dull,
 Unlike the brain, where hearty dinners centre,
 Becoming gayer as the streets get full.
 And forth he daily went that every inter-
 -Eating sight of London he might cull:
 A week or so all this was very well,
 But as his purse grew low his spirits fell. 80

XI.

He saw the Devil's Houses, great and small,
 Lounging to one or other every other night;
 He saw the Tower and Pidcocks¹⁶ and St. Paul,
 And wondered how the streets were made so light;
 And then he took to thinking after all,
 He might present her not so rare a sight,
 Yet one of greater Interest than any,
 A man in London streets without a penny.

XII.

One day he thought of taking to the Law,
 But that required both too much time and reading; 90
 And then the Church, for every where he saw
 Its followers exhibited high feeding;
 Then a thought struck his pericranium¹⁷—"Pshaw!
 For Church or Law I ne'er had College breeding,
 I don't see how my family to fix
 In London, better than Politics."¹⁸

XIII.

Now, Juan left a mort of debts behind him,
 In Judgement bonds and many a post obit,¹⁹

13: Compare B.'s own Don Juan's journey in Cantos X-XI.

14: Author's note: Νυμφη τῶν ἐρυκε Καλυψῶ δια θεῶν

Ἐν Σπεςσι γλαφυροῖσι λιλαιομενὸν ποσιν ἵνα

Ἐν Σπεςσι γλαφυροῖσι (quasi Bathing Machine) λιλαιομένη ποσιν εἶναι.

[The note garbles the *Odyssey*, I 14-16: *the queenly nymph Calypso, that beautiful goddess, kept him prisoner in her hollow caves* (quasi Bathing Machine) *yearning that he should be her husband*. The writer recognises at once that the *Odyssey* is an important subtext to *Don Juan*.]

15: Mrs Payne unidentified. Anyone got any ideas?

16: Pidcocks, or Pitcocks, was a menagerie.

17: The skull; strictly, the membrane enveloping the skull.

18: "Political journalism", not parliamentary politics.

And, if his Creditors should ever find him,
 He thought it equity, like William Cobbett,²⁰ 100
 To allow no Incumbrances to bind him:
 “As for my dear friend’s purse I’ll never rob it,”
 Quoth he—“but then my family so motly
 Must first be well established *à la Botley*.”²¹

XIV.

This was safe argument, let men deny it,
 So Juan boldly set himself to work
 At once, with all his might and main, to try it,—
 And if he wrote no parodies on Kirk,²²
 And only could prevail on folks to buy it,
 Himself a Pagan, Infidel or Turk, 110
 He knew it matter’d not a silver Groat²³
 Whate’er he printed, penned or said or thought.

XV.

He took an office, hard by the *Change Gate*,²⁴
 Which had been tenanted, time immemorial,
 By men who sit in all the pride of *State*,
 And daily place in even ranks before ye—all
 The scandal of the *Little*, or the *Great*,
 Both magisterial and senatorial
 But Seven²⁵ pence charge (if up you want to scrape any.)
 A short time since ’twas only Sixpence halfpenny. 120

XVI.

There lay the *Chronicle*,²⁶ and there the *Sun*,²⁷
 The *Globe*,²⁸ and once a week th’*Examiner*,²⁹
 The *Advertiser*,³⁰ the *Republican*,³¹
 The *Herald*³² and the *Statesman*³³ and the *Star*,³⁴

19: The phrase – with a theological joke – appears in Byron’s *Don Juan* I, 103, 8.

20: William Cobbett (1763-1835) famous radical. William Clement (see below, 129n) was one of many who discovered the unwisdom of lending him money.

21: Meaning of *à la Botley* untraced. Anyone got any ideas?

22: “No parodies on the Church”, as Hone had – and been prosecuted for – 1817.

23: A coin worth four pence.

24: Site of the old gate through the city wall, adjacent to the Royal Exchange. Famous for coffee-houses.

25: “7” (first edition, which is short of space at this point).

26: There were many London papers of this name at different times. H. writes in his diary (17 Feb 1819): “The *Chronicle* lying most outrageously, and scarce a single paper giving a tolerable representation of what passes at the hustings” – BL. Add. Mss. 56540 f.56.

27: A daily published between 1793 and 1871.

28: Published between 1804 and 1822.

29: Radical Sunday paper, owned by John and Leigh Hunt. Hazlitt, Lamb, and Shelley wrote for it.

30: Newspaper unidentified. Anyone got any ideas?

31: Journal edited by Richard Carlile (for whom see below, 144n).

32: There were several *Heralds* published around this time.

33: The *Statesman* was published between 1806 and 1824.

34: The *Star* unidentified. Anyone got any ideas?

The Courier too, enough to startle one,³⁵
 The greatest Liar of the whole by far;
 Besides the Times, and *sheeted* Evening Mail,
 That issues from it like a double tail.³⁶

XVII.

And Mr. Clement's Observer,³⁷ and
 A long string more, whose names I have forgotten, 130
 But mostly published in or near the Strand,
 Which were without them like a herring shotten.³⁸
 Juan however thought it second hand
 To deal in politics so rank and rotten,
 And being, as he deemed, as good a railer,
 He cut the Business of a News Retailer.

XVIII.

And sat up for himself as publisher
 Of Rubbish on Reform; and no bad hit
 Was this of Juan's, if, as I aver,
 He had been dubbed in *Scio*³⁹ for a Wit. 140
 Then, prythee, wherefore should not Juan stir
 About a Radical Reform a bit?
 As well as Dons, with Sculls no atom fuller,
 Sherwin,⁴⁰ or Watson,⁴¹ Hunt,⁴² Carlile,⁴³ or Wooler.⁴⁴

XIX.

Not but the last has certainly his Quantum
 Of Courage, Nerve and Game, as well as brain;
 And, tho' in ireful mood my Lord of Grantham,⁴⁵
 Once flourished over him a whanghee cane,⁴⁶
 The Dwarf's⁴⁷ a tightish little bit of Bantam:⁴⁸
 Herein I merely venture to maintain, 150
 That if he flock with birds of such a feather,
 He can't complain if they get shot together.

35: The *Courier* was a Tory paper, published between 1804 and 1837. Southey addressed letters to it.

36: The *Evening Mail* was a weekly supplement to the *Times*.

37: William Innell Clement (????-1852) took over the *Observer* and made it a success.

38: Shakespeare, *Henry IV I*, II iv 124. The phrase (*shotten herring*) is Falstaff's.

39: Chios, Greek island off the Turkish coast. There is no evidence in *Don Juan I* or *II* that B.'s Juan went there. The island on which he is shipwrecked is either on the Ionians (II, 150, 7) or one of the Cyclades (II, 127, 2).

40: William Sherwin was a partner of Richard Carlile (for whom see below, 144n). He published *Sherwin's Political Register*.

41: James Watson (1766?-1838) radical agitator, friend of Richard Carlile.

42: The Hunt brothers, Leigh and John, ran the *Examiner*.

43: Richard Carlile (1790-1843) much-imprisoned radical publisher of, for example, Tom Paine.

44: Thomas Jonathon Wooler (1786-1853) publisher of the *Black Dwarf* and the *British Gazette*.

45: Lord Grantham unidentified. Anyone got any ideas?

46: Cane made from a species of Chinese bamboo.

47: Wooler's *The Black Dwarf*.

48: A bantam cock: a tough fighter.

XX.

I'll tell you what were some of Juan's Qualities,
 (That are'nt possessed by every learned Editor,)
 He'd pen you Sonnets on *the day's realities*,
 Mislays the Contributions of *Proveditor*,⁴⁹
 Write poems on Italian immoralities,
 And mightily conceive himself your Creditor:⁵⁰
 Then if you blamed his muse, for morals damning her,
 He'd call his Wife, and bid you cross *Examine her*.⁵¹ 160

XXI.

Besides, I've reason to believe his Head
 Of Classicalities a perfect Storehouse;
 In very good Translations he had read
 Whole heaps of such old bucks as Tryphiodorus.⁵²
 Altho' he never was at college bred:
 For instance if he talk'd to you of *Moorhouse*,⁵³
 Carlile, or any other such reforming fellow,
 He'd drag in Cataline⁵⁴ or Massaniello.⁵⁵

XXII.

With means like these if Juan didn't succeed,
 And carry all before him like a charge 170
 Of Yeomanry,⁵⁶ it's very hard indeed.
 Suppose we then, careering and at large,
 Her anchor heaved, and from her mooring freed,
 The Vessel, or for Rhyming sake the Barge
 Of all his hopes upon the treacherous sea
 Of undisputed popularity.

XXIII.

It was the Time when England's robe was rent,
 And famine's curse was blistering on her tongue;⁵⁷
 When thro' her every limb strange shiverings went,
 And suffering had her every nerve unstrung; 180
 When passion vainly strove to find a vent,⁵⁸
 When helplessly her maniac arms were flung

49: Either a governor / inspector or a caterer / steward. Meaning here not clear.

50: See *Don Juan* I 210, 3: *I'm for a handsome Article his Creditor ...*

51: Pun ("Examine 'er").

52: Tryphiodorus was an Egyptian epic poet of the 3rd or 4th century AD, author of *The Taking of Ilios* (my thanks to Chris Little here).

53: Moorhouse unidentified. Anyone got any ideas?

54: Lucius Sergius Catalina (108-62 BC) Roman insurgent defeated by Cicero.

55: Tommaso Masaniello (1623-47), seventeenth-century insurgent against the Spanish Viceroy of Naples. His own associates killed him because of his cruelty. If Juan compares the Radicals with either Masaniello or Cataline, he's a scare-mongering reactionary.

56: Refers to the Peterloo Massacre (16 Aug 1819) carried out by the Manchester Yeoman Cavalry.

57: *Romeo and Juliet* III ii 90-1: *Blistered be thy tongue for such a wish!*

58: B.'s *Don Juan*, VI, 32, 7-8: *... an Italian Convent, / Where all the Passions have, alas! but one Vent.*

To Heaven, and Heaven allowed unscathed to go,
The monsters who had wrought such utter woe.

XXIV.

This was the hour our old friend Juan hit upon
To prop the pillars of a falling cause;⁵⁹
A cause degraded, hooted at, and spit upon
By all good subjects of our equal laws;
(That is by all who happen to have lit upon
Some good fat garbage for their hungry maws,) 190
And, tho' he had but little, chose to risk it
Upon a paper called *The Devilled Biscuit*.⁶⁰

XXV.

And Juan called it so, because concocted
Of every hot or savoury Ingredient;
Upholding principles the same as Locke did,
Who built a paper limit for the obedient;⁶¹
Besides, with *magisterial* views he stocked it,
The measures mercifully deemed expedient,
The cutting, maiming, stabbing, slashing, hacking,⁶²
—'Twas dedicated to their Worships' cracking. 200

XXVI.

Of old, when victories *the Continental*,
Arrived, and come they did I don't know how,
More regular than landlords get their rental,
The streets were in an uproar with the row
Of horns and roaring boys, and throats that spent all
Their breath to get a bit of bread,—but now
The newsman's voice is hoarse with thundering forth
Our *glory-covered* Heroes of the North.⁶³

XXVII.

But this was vulgar Juan thought, as was
Another scheme of modern innovation, 210
The sticking papers in the window glass
Of offices, in some conspicuous station,
To catch the eyes of travellers that pass,
Who'd otherwise ne'er think about the nation:
'Tis very well for common Grub Street Ballads,
But he disdained to pamper their rank palates.

59: Juan's politics are therefore radical.

60: "Devilled" would imply "made with hot and highly-seasoned ingredients".

61: "... a great part of mankind are, by the natural and unalterable state of things in this world, and the constitution of human affairs, unavoidably given over to invincible ignorance of those proofs, on which others build ..." *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, IV, XX, 2.

62: Refers again to the deaths at Peterloo.

63: Those who perpetrated Peterloo.

XXVIII.

This common editorial trick our Don,
 Disdaining puffularity,⁶⁴ avoided:
 He ne'er his Daily Journal pasted on
 His window, thus no idle man nor boy did 220
 Impede the passengers, who stepping on,
 Such *nonimpedimentum*⁶⁵ much enjoy did:
 For He like Coleridge would with ready club lick⁶⁶
 That million headed beast, a READING PUBLIC.

XXIX.

“Tis very well,” said he, “shut up in study,
 By Gas Light to be conning learned lore,
 Or reading papers to our dearest Judy,
 While she our breakfast from a teapot pour;
 But horrible indeed, when streets are muddy,
 To queer a mob *that paper* spelling o'er, 230
 With visages no doubt for wise and grave meant,
 And have to elbow them, or quit the pavement.”

XXX.

At that dread hour, the solemn hour of four,
 When forth the beating hearts ‘smoke dried and seared,
 And shrivelled up,⁶⁷ from counting houses pour,
 And change time comes desired by some, or feared;
 As thronged the countless hundreds past his door,
 Leaning against the door-post he appeared;
 And thus with light guitar genteely swung,
 His *Devilled Biscuit* to the mob he sung. 240

XXXI.

A second Orpheus⁶⁸ – there in mute amaze
 Around him Bears, and Bulls, and Asses came,
 And Ducks and Geese, to listen, or to gaze
 Upon the stranger with a Spanish name.
 He made a rare to-do for some few days,
 Despite the cries of “bravo,” “off,” and “shame,”
 From those who came to hiss, and those who cheered him:
 And, thus, he sung the only day *I* heard him.

64: Artificial popularity, relying on journalists and agents such as Mr Puff in Sheridan’s *The Critic*.

65: Absence of impediment; free passage.

66: “Coleridge” is here, at least, bisyllabic. “The purifying alchemy of education may transmute the fierceness of an ignorant man into virtuous energy – but what remedy shall we apply to him, whom plenty has not softened, whom knowledge has not taught benevolence? ...” *The Friend*, II, I, 16.

67: Quotation unidentified. Anyone got any ideas?

68: Hero who enters Hades to rescue his wife Eurydice, and charms the devils and beasts into silence with his music.

The Devilled Biscuit

XXXII.

ON Thursday last our hearts went pit à pat,
 Our feet sans pattens as the streets were clean, 250
 We found the west end of the town *quo stat*—⁶⁹
 (You know what such old Latin phrases mean,)
 Altho' the Radicals were meant to chat,
 And Government's old eye was glancing green
 With jealousy, yet gave them leave to talk,
 And kept the soldiers in the *Birdcage Walk*.⁷⁰

XXXIII.

Fine feathers make fine birds in any cage,
 And Government 'tis said have got a few:
 I hope the Coldstream wo'n't be in a rage,
 And set the Thames on fire at a review: 260
 I hope the Horse Guards will be cool and sage,
 So "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue!"⁷¹
 I quote that line from Mr. Southey's 'Madoc,'
 Wherein he writes about a dying haddock.⁷²

XXXIV.

So much for soldiers—I indeed ne'er saw them,
 And take the Courier's word for matter o' fact,
 I swear I never heard the rabble jaw them,
 So I suppose they'd no command to act;
 I saw no swords, or Yeomen sent to draw them,
 But I confess at window frame compact, 270
 High over-head I saw a noble nob—
 They said the owner's name was Irish Bob.⁷³

XXXV.

69: This phrase is not correct Latin; its rough meaning might be "just as it was".

70: Site, now, of Wellington Barracks, then the Foot Guards' Barracks. So-called because James I put his aviary there. Until 1828 only the Hereditary Grand Falconer and the royal family could drive up it. The Foot Guards were stationed in the Walk on September 2nd 1819, in case they were needed; but were not asked to interfere.

71: B. also uses this line (in quotation marks) at *Don Juan* IV, 110, 1. It comes from Southey, *Madoc in Wales*, I v 102:

... language cannot paint
 Their splendid tints; though in blue ocean seen,
 Blue, darkly, deeply, beautifully blue,
 In all its rich variety of shades,
 Suffused with glowing gold.

See also BLJ IV 325.

72: Southey never writes about dying haddocks, though he does about flying fish (see *Madoc in Wales*, I v 102).

73: Castlereagh (i) whose name was Robert, who (ii) was an Irish peer and (iii) who had suppressed the revolt of the United Irishmen in 1798.

I often wish this Bob, like Bobadil,⁷⁴
 (Who struts our stage the very prince of stormers)
 Upon *his* plan would just contrive to kill
 Some fifty thousand of these vile Reformers;
 Or sabre them into a Surgeon's bill,
 Your sabre is the best of all deformers:
 Mens' *felt* is soft, and so are women's *Dunstables*,⁷⁵
 Besides, he'd save the king some cash and constables. 280

XXXVI.

And here I would particularly urge on
 The circle grave to whom I sing aloud,
 That I observed a solemn looking surgeon
 Studying a book unjustled by the crowd;
 'Tis well thought I—I donned my best habergeon,⁷⁶
 When Doctors come, of their profession proud,
 And study '*Cross's Surgery*'*⁷⁷ on the spot!⁷⁸
 There's many a Radical will soon be shot.

XXXVII.

I'm not a RADICAL myself, but that
 Is neither here nor there; I've no ambition 290
 To have a brace of bullets thro' my hat,
 Or e'en adopt amphibious condition;
 And to avoid the sabre, or brick-bat,
 Swim the Thames river as a merry fish in,
 That *Palace Yard*, you know is no bad place
 For making *Tritons* of the populace.⁷⁹

XXXVIII.

I've heard that mobs are fickle, false and finical,
 But, tho' they be all that and radical
 To boot, I do confess a hideous sin I call
 The making them become so haddockal; 300
 And should from hall of Westminster's high pinnacle
 Be griev'd to hear them on their Daddie call
 For mercy, since the King or good, or bad, he
 In every nation is the people's daddie.*⁸⁰

XXXIX.

74: Comic bragadoccio in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*. Misnamed after the tragic Moorish hero Boabdil, referred to by B. at *Don Juan I*, 56, 6.

75: "felt" implies "skin". I can find "Dunstables" in no slang dictionary.

76: A habergeon is a coat of mail: see Chaucer, *General Prologue*, line 76.

77: Author's note: A fact.

78: Note pending on Cross's Surgery. Anyone got any ideas?

79: Westminster Palace was on the site now occupied by the Houses of Parliament. Its yard was between the palace and the Thames, so mobs could in theory be forced into the river.

80: Author's note: "_____ Or as a King
 Is styled, when most affectionately prais'd,
 The father of his people." *Excursion*.

[*The Excursion*, V, 102-4. Wordsworth refers to a parish priest.]

'Twas so at Rome, when Rome was giv'n to flattery,
 Whenever any of her bold he-roes
 Silenc'd the fire of Carthaginian battery,
 Or took an old Numidian by the nose,
 They dubb'd the darling villain PATER PATRIÆ,*⁸¹
 And Livy⁸² penn'd a long Gazette⁸³ in prose: 310
 So Julius Cæsar did arrive to be
 His father's and his mother's own *Daddie*.⁸⁴

XL.

The consequence of such a scheme is plain:
 The Daddy, well broke in by million slaughters,
 Had not acquired his stoicism in vain,
 But freely flogged unruly sons and daughters,
 Until the silly urchins roared again:⁸⁵
 And, sometimes, he prepared his axe and halters,
 Witness *Le Thiére's* splash of the first Brutus:⁸⁶
 We'll call at Bullock's⁸⁷ if the Guards don't hoot us. 320

XLI.

They stopp'd Lord Essex,⁸⁸ tho', the other day;
 But whether he was going to see that picture
 I can't affirm; it struck me, by the way,
 The guard that stopped him looked much like the Lictor:⁸⁹
 On which, I heard some angry people say
 "Altho' he'd been at Waterloo the victor,
 He was not fully justified to tread all
 People down, who did not wear a medal."

XLII.

81: "Father of his Country"; a Roman title given, for example, to Lucius Junius Brutus. **Author's note:** "The Ranting Dog, the Daddie o't"—Burns. (Charles 2nd, par Exemple. In the present Stanza I differ from Burns as to the accentuation, but I have as much occasion for the *last* syllable as he had for the first. I cannot lose this opportunity of remarking that *his* 'Ranting Dog' seems to resemble in most particulars the general Race of our Ranting Dogs *political*: who after courting the Republic and getting her most manfully into a *scrape*, resolve to stand by her to the last, through all difficulties; so that by hook or by crook, the Republic, poor thing, cannot help being much indebted to their notice or their generosity. [Hone refers to Burns' song *The rantin dog the Daddie o't*, sung by a woman made pregnant by a man who promised her everything, but who will not now acknowledge paternity. "Rantin" means "full of song, fond of merrymaking".]

82: Roman historian, 59 BC-17 AD.

83: Echoes B.'s scepticism about the veracity of history books and gazettes throughout *Don Juan*.

84: But both Caesar's parents were dead by the time he attained supreme power.

85: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* I ii 64-5: *Let him roar again, let him roar again.*

86: Guillaume Gillon Lethière (sic), French painter. His *Brutus condamne ses fils à la mort* was finished in 1811. David had painted the same subject. "Brutus" is Lucius Junius Brutus.

87: Bullock's unidentified.

88: George, Fifth Earl of Essex (1757-1839) was, with B., a member of the Drury Lane Theatre Sub-Committee. He had held B.'s proxy vote when B. went abroad in 1816.

89: Roman official whose job was to bear the fasces before the magistrate, and to pronounce the sentence. They figure in the David painting referred to at 324n above.

I'm but a man, but if I were a woman
 I should not be so much afraid of Guards, 330
 But like Eliza Gaunt⁹⁰ I dread a Yeoman,
 And think him as immaculate as 'pards;
 I don't say Leo-pards there's something Roman
 Sticks to the Lion expletive which bards,
 Or learned naturalists have given the beast
 Which Yeoman doth not copy in the least.

XLIII.

Now, that I'm musing on this Betty Gaunt,
 I wonder if she's lineally descended
 By Father, Mother, Brother, Uncle, Aunt,
 From him who Lusitanian Tower defended;⁹¹ 340
 O'er whom the scaling foe could never vaunt,
 But toppled down each rascal that ascended?
 I feel a thirst for Antiquarian Knowledge,
 And mean to call some day at Herald's College.

XLIV.

You used some *Centuries past* to have a phrase
 For neat expression of some trifle petty,
 I've often heard it in my younger days,
 If I remember right,—“My Eye and Betty!”
 Aye, “Betty Martin”⁹²—but Wordsworthian Rays
 Of Genius now afford us one as pretty, 350
 Foy*⁹³ for our Martin—“Pshaw, 'tis all my aunt,
 'Tis all my uncle's wife and Betty Gaunt!”

XLV.

O Betty! fare thee well, and if for ever,⁹⁴
 I must an Exile part from Hunt and thee.
 Let not the Manchester *Occurrence**⁹⁵ sever
 The tender bond of our Triumvirate:
 You'll find that Hunt as shrewd a cove, and clever,—
 I must be off to Palace Yard, and see
 If they intend to poke the Brighton lances
 Thro' Cartwright,⁹⁶ Hobhouse,⁹⁷ Walker⁹⁸ or Sir Francis.⁹⁹ 360

90: Elizabeth Gaunt (d. 1685) was the last woman to be executed in England for a political offence. She was burnt at the stake for sheltering a Monmouth follower named Burton, whom she had hidden after the battle of Sedgemoor. Burton had betrayed her. Her execution was witnessed by William Penn.

91: John of Gaunt (1340-99) Richard II's uncle. In 1386, allied with his son-in-law John I of Portugal (“Lusitania”), he led an unsuccessful expedition to make good his Castilian claims against John I.

92: “All my eye (and Betty Martin!)” meant “Nonsense!” though no-one knows who Betty Martin was.

93: Author's note: All my Eye
 And Betty Foy,
 And her idiot Boy. [Ridicules Wordsworth's *The Idiot Boy*, from *Lyrical Ballads*.]

94: Opening of B.'s 1816 poem to Annabella: *Fare Thee Well: Fare thee well! and if for ever – / Still for ever, fare thee well –*

95: Author's note: My friend, the celebrated Courier, furnished me with this *formula* for expressing the Manchester Event in the *best* terms. [See below, 780n.]

XLVI.

Resuming then;—as near as I remember,
 It was a day looked forward to by courtmen,
 Morning *but twice* had kissed her dear *September*—¹⁰⁰
 (The day before, they were disturbed by sportsmen)
 Upon the hustings, built of seasoned timber,
 Were gathered a rare knot of keen reportsmen,
 Prepared to note whate'er Sir F. should speak,
 In characters, that's all, resembling Greek.¹⁰¹

XLVII.

I saw, you're well aware I never lie,
 With my own polypheman,¹⁰² sharp as sickle, 370
 Their papers aspinate,¹⁰³ their pencils fly,
 And in the twinkling of a bedposticle,¹⁰⁴
 Catch words that lightened from the speaker's eye
 Before his teeth began his tongue to tickle:
 For, in your English, from the teeth and tongue,
 And the embrace of lips, is language sprung.

XLVIII.

'Tis fit I¹⁰⁵ tell you tho', all danger scorning,
 That I was there reporter for myself,
 And walked down with a friend on Thursday morning,
 Leaving Haidee with bread and cheese on shelf, 380
 A little milk to stay our childrens' yawning,
 And sixpence halfpenny in a copper pelf,
 Queen of our baking, boiling, stewing, hashing,
 And *shutter-up*, should guards that way be slashing.

XLIX.

We walked to Charing Cross with circumspection,
 As well became us, after what had happed

96: Major Thomas Cartwright (1740-1824) radical; subject of B.'s third and last speech in the Lords, 1 June 1813.

97: John Cam Hobhouse (1786-1869) B.'s best friend, radical Whig M.P. for Westminster.

98: Thomas Walker (1784-1836) writer on pauperism.

99: Sir Francis Burdett (1770-1844) rich radical Whig politician. Hobhouse's companion as M.P. for Westminster.

100: For the meeting in Westminster Palace Yard on September 2nd 1819, see Appendices A and B.

101: In shorthand.

102: There never was such a word as "polypheman". Its nearest equivalent is "polyphemian", the adjective derived from "Polyphemus", so the intended meaning may be, "sharp as the stake with which Odysseus put out the eye of Polyphemus" (see *Odyssey* Book IX).

103: There never was such a word as "aspinate". Its nearest approximation is "aspine", the adjective derived from "asp".

104: Author's note: Bedposticle, Dim. of Bedpost. See Blackwood's Magazine vol. 5, page 718. [The word does not appear on the page specified; however, the sentence "He went off in the twinkling of a bedpost" does.]

105: The narrative from here to LXXXII is first-person, with Juan telling his own story.

To certain stout Reporters, whom the affection
 Of Mother *Fame* had somewhat overpapped;
 We did not wish for fifteen hours reflection
 Within a prison, by constables kidnapped, 390
 We thought of **** the Courier's—not as sly as
 That Teucer-like-manœuvring Mr. Tyas.¹⁰⁶

L.

Arrived, we found the meeting rather small,
 But that in such a case is nothing strange;
 A mob in town is like a great snow-ball,
 Tho' not so clean about the centre range,
 And does not in a moment gather all
 Its rich ingredients; like a till of change,
 Moments elapse ere its dimensions round,
 Or ball becomes a heap—or till a pound. 400

LI.

I stood in Surry, on the bridge of Minster,^{*107}
 West of St. Paul's, and saw the mob assemble;
 Before me stood an interesting spinster,
 Against the balustrade, who leaned to tremble;
 Perceiving of her laboring breast the in-stir,
 I said "That mob in Palace Yard resemble
 Of harmless sheep th' innumerable flocks;"
 "Good heaven," said she, "how disappointment shocks."

LII.

"Then will it all pass off without a Riot?"
 Says I, "Miss, I believe in faith it will;" 410
 "Shall we not have some soldier play to spy at?"
 Says I, "The colonel, ma'am, is very ill!"
 Says she, "Excitement is the soul's high diet!"
 Says I, "To day you'll not enjoy your fill;
 And so adieu, poor trembler," then I bowed
 Of course, and sought the hustings thro' the crowd.

LIII.

My friend, meanwhile, had there procured a place,
 And when I had attained his side I threw
 My Spanish glance o'er all the populace,

106: Author's note: Once more bold Teucer in his Country's cause.

ILIAD Book XV.

Teucer betook himself to his shield, Mr. Tyas to a constable; but they both nevertheless waged *successive* battles with considerable effect. [John Tyas, a reporter for the *Times*, wrote an account of the Peterloo Massacre, at which he was arrested. Teucer is a brave archer in the *Iliad*.]

107: Parodies *Childe Harold* IV, line 1: *I stood at Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs*; also Wordsworth, *Sonnet composed upon Westminster Bridge*. **Author's note:** This is also a bridge of *size*, independent of the *sighs* which had it not been for my Παίοτατη Χαηδη this tête-à-tête on the bridge might have cost me.

Expanding in a broken square to view, 420
 The greater part genteel in *hat* and face,
 (My rule for judging what a mob will do,)

Which having glanced, I did address my friend,
 And prophesied to him how all should end.

LIV.

Then came the leader of our sports that day,
 OLD ENGLAND'S HOPE, AND WESTMINSTER'S PRIDE.¹⁰⁸
 Beside him *classic* Hobhouse held his sway,
 Whose Roman Stylum¹⁰⁹ hath so oft defied
 Of armed power the sabre's lightning play:
 And then a thousand acclamations vied 430
 To lighten the full heart, that like a flood
 Whelmed with its overthrow the Great and Good.

LV.

'Tis meet I here should give you timely warning,
 That all our newspapers have got a trick,
 Their speeches for our public men adorning,
 Of patching and of painting two inch thick,¹¹⁰
 The metaphors that fly at eve and morning,
 Until exaggeration makes you sick;
 For instance, there's the New *right-liner* Times,
 That might as well be all set up in rhymes. 440

LVI.

Even so that Evening Mail's eventful Ghost,
 That's sold by twenties and by thirties; or
 The Morning Chronicle or, Morning Post,
 Or Morning Herald, or Advertiser,
 Or Courier, that adorns, at England's cost,
Miss Constitution, and then dirties her,
 By stumbling into some confounded sink,
 And covering her with mud and printer's ink.

LVII.

There is no Salt of Lemons will discharge
 The iron-mould these cursed splashes leave; 450
 They eat into her petticoats, enlarge,
 And find their oily way up waist and sleeve;
 The *Blanchisseuse*¹¹¹ may work away in *barge*,
 But no Reforming Laundress can relieve
 That sullied hue, and there restore the true one,
 The Constitution then must buy a new one.

108: Refers to Sir Francis Burdett. The line wants a foot.

109: Instrument for inscribing and erasing letters on a wax tablet; here, "pen overrunning with classical learning".

110: *Hamlet*, V i 188-9: ... *tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come.*

111: A clear-starcher; a woman who whitens and stiffens linen after washing it.

LVIII.

You clearly comprehend my last long sentence,
 I'm cautious now of what Cockade I wear,
 I've just observed an Oliver who went hence
 To build *Reforming Castles* in the air; 460
 And, tho' for ever in a dungeon pent hence,
 He'd swear he saw me in St. James's Square
 With Jumping M'Gregor,¹¹² or Simon Bolivar,¹¹³
 And pike-armed Radicals—Oh Judas Oliver!¹¹⁴

LIX.

I've made a *Mem.* to call as I go by
 At Herald's College, and a moment hear
 Of Betty Gaunt the glorious ancestry;
 I'll fish out too there if this Olivier¹¹⁵
 Came in a right line from that noble fry,
 That fell with 'brave King Charles and every peer,'¹¹⁶ 470
 Of Olivers one wishes (barring malice)
 The last of them had fall'n at Roncesvalles.¹¹⁷

LX.

Then mind, I said, that Mad'm'selle Constitution,
 Would find it requisite to buy a garment,
 To lace her stays with tape of Resolution,
 And veil in muslin fresh her *appas charmants*;
 You may *construe* my sentence to confusion,
 But I on oath aver that I no harm meant;
 I did not say she should be brought to bed,
 And leave us Baby Governments instead. 480

LXI.

Well then, altho' I scorn to crow at ye,
 You'll not find my report so incorrect,
 The other papers deal in poetry,
 As you in every column may detect:
 When I my *Devilled Biscuit* throw at ye,
 Truth is the only seasoning I affect.—

112: Gregor M'Gregor, Scots soldier of fortune in the wars of South American liberation.

113: Bolivian liberator (1783-1830) much admired by radicals and by B., who named his boat after him.

114: Refers to Oliver Cromwell.

115: Hone intends the pronunciation "Oliveer"; his precedent is *Marmion*, 6, XXXIII, 10.

116: Author's note: *Marmion*, Canto 6. [The lines relate to the notes above and below: *O, for a blast of that dread horn, / On Fontarabian echoes borne, / That to King Charles did come, / When Rowland brave, and Olivier, / And every paladin and peer, / On Roncesvalles died!* – *Marmion* 6, XXXIII, 8-13. "King Charles" is Charlemagne.]

117: Culminating Pyrenean battle against the Moors in the medieval *Chanson de Roland*, in which the hero Oliver and his friend Roland both die. See *Don Juan*, Canto X, concluding couplet: *Just now enough – but by and bye I'll prattle / Like Roland's horn in Roncevalle's battle.*

Sir Francis doffed his hat, the people shouted,
And wide around flew every word he spouted.

LXII.¹¹⁸

“Hail, friends and *free-born* Countrymen, all hail!¹¹⁹
There’ll be no day on earth so dear to me 490
As this, on which already ’gin to pale
The ineffectual fires¹²⁰ of tyranny;
And broad and bright the People’s majesty
Upriseth as the sun from Ocean’s deep,
To gild the level flood of Liberty;
Or like a giant from his hour of sleep,
Prepared the Race to run, and the Reward to keep.

LXIII.

“Even with a glow so silent, soft, and calm,
May the true Majesty of England rise,
Chasing our island fogs, and shower her balm 500
Upon our land’s convulsive agonies,
Stilling ripe manhood’s groan, and orphan cries,¹²¹
That startle from their sleep the Burgher’s guard,
Where Justice to the stained tribunal flies,
With garments rent, and bosom idly bared,
To supplicate in vain for those the sword hath spared.

LXIV.

“‘Can such things be?’ and have we rightly heard
These pigeon rumours winging from the North?
Even by the Region where our Percy spurred
The gallant steed so conscious of his worth, 510
And o’er his castle drawbridge thundered forth
Into the strife of *men*—was’t there they drew—
Our modern Hotspurs,¹²² on their mother earth?
But bade the Hotspur’s heart a long adieu,
In woman’s gentle blood their falchions to imbrue!

LXV.

“Corruption woke;—there was a cry ‘they come¹²³
The trampling thousands in their banded might,’
With reedy music and irregular drum,
And banners glancing to the noonday bright;

118: Burdett’s speech is in Spenserian stanzas.

119: Echoes *Julius Caesar*, III ii 73: *Friends, Romans, countrymen! Lend me your ears!* which should therefore us on guard against Burdett’s imagined rhetoric. For Burdett’s actual speech, see Appendix B.

120: *Hamlet*, I v 90: *The glow-worm shows the matin to be near, / And ’gins to pale his uneffectual fire.*

121: *Macbeth*, IV iii 4-5: *Each morn new widows cry, new orphans howl ...*

122: Burdett makes an ironic comparison between the Manchester yeomanry and the heroic rebel of *Henry IV I*, who, however, came from east, not west, of the Pennines. See Appendix B for his actual use of the joke.

123: *Macbeth*, V v 2: *The cry is still, ‘They come!’*

Fair Freedom's mail—a consciousness of right, 520
 The only armour of defence they wear;
 But then, oh! God, it is a dreadful sight
 To see the *weaponshow* of man's despair,—
 Petition's fainting knee, and famine's faltering prayer.

LXVI.

“Alas! my Countrymen, to breathe at length
 That prayer for bread but little time is given;
 Ere yet the rising accents gain their strength
 Adown the throat again complaint is driven,
 And buried in the heart,—where long have striven
 Conflicting hopes, and pride that grapples woe,— 530
 Until the Godlike veil of Man is riven,
 And the immortal spirit, sinking low,
 Kneel at the Tyrant's taunt, and fawn upon his blow?”

LXVII.

“Even thus met Englishmen in peaceful guise
 Upon the firm earth of that saintly*¹²⁴ field;
 Their council-hall o'er-domed by rolling skies,
 That spread, they rashly deemed, an ample shield,
 For those that in the open day-light wield
 Petition's olive branch,—the freeman's tongue,—
 But ne'er to *Speech* did the oppressor yield, — 540
 Already to their steeds the Yeomen sprung,
 And note of maddening charge their hollow bugle rung.

LXVIII.

“A moment, and the sword hath done *it's* duty,
 And thro' unarmed thousands hacked a way;
 And changed to pallid corse our mortal beauty,
 And drenched in its own blood our mortal clay:
 Dispersion was a reed that could not stay
 The truster in his flight—again there rushed
 With desperate heel fresh Hotspurs to the fray:
 The sabre's edge hath every murmur hushed, 550
 And charger's iron hoof the cells of reason crushed.

LXIX.

“Fast fell defenceless manhood in that hour,
 And womanhood and childhood lost their charm,
 Humanity her sceptre,—thought her power;
 And justice was a bruised and broken arm,

124: Author's note: Like the Holy Alliance, Bellona seems grown,
 So fond of the Saints that events cannot cheat her,
 She ran off with the French from the field of St John,
 And was recognised last on the field of St Peter.

[*Bellona* is the goddess of war, *the field of St John* is Mont St Jean at Waterloo, and *the field of St Peter* is Peter's Field in Manchester, site of the Peterloo Massacre.]

Upon the rampant field of that *alarm*.
 On every side was heard a fiendish cry,
 Where slaughter's sickle reaped her crimson farm,
 Wreathing the dead ears round her temples high,
 As the REFORMER fell,—and saddening sank to die. 560

LXX.

“Sleep on—the stainless banner of Reform
 Shall never more to thy applauses wave;—
 THOU hast been wafted ere the rising storm
 Hath massed its thunders;—to a freeman's grave,
 To the repose that never pillowed slave:
 The pinions of thy children's prayer ascend
 Dabbled in blood—from the absorbing cave
 O'er which, in vengeful adjuration bend,
 Their weapons half-unsheathed,—the groupe that call *thee* friend.

LXXI.

“For Thee, thy hope—thy cause—thy cause and theirs, 570
 This day indignant thousands lift their voice,
 The children of reform and lineal heirs
 Of spirit at which the buried great rejoice,
 And, here confirm the unhesitating choice
 Of Freedom, who hath chosen their peerless bride,
 Unawed and unsexed by counterpoise
 Of heartless gold,—or exofficial pride,
 Even to the edge of doom¹²⁵ her fortunes to abide.”

LXXII.

Thus far the Baronet, with patriot frown,—
 When, from St. Margaret's¹²⁶ railing to the wave, 580
 Uprose o'er Palace Yard a cry of “down,”
 Then ran the timid, and stood still the brave;
 And those who paid their halfpence, or half crown,
 For good positions, ready opening gave
 To the encreasing thousands, whose reproaches
 Fell fast and furious on the *line of Coaches*.

LXXIII.

And scarcely had attention bent to hear
 From every point of reassembling station,
 When music thrilled upon the general ear,¹²⁷
 And wands and banners with self-salutation 590
 Came waving on, renewing empty fear,
 Of agitation the reundulation.¹²⁸

125: Shakespeare, Sonnet 116, 12: *But bears it out even to the edge of doom.*

126: St Margaret's Church, Westminster, parish church for the House of Commons.

127: *Hamlet*, II ii 556: *And cleave the general ear with horrid speech ...*

(That phrase is like the one your Cicero thunder'd
On men's impatience)¹²⁹—Hail to the Two Hundred!

LXXIV.

And, thus, a stir of fresh confusion rose,
Just as Sir Francis did his speech retether;
And people for a moment deemed their foes
This *Committee*, who wore presumptuous feather,
But *I'm obliged*, and here abruptly close,
As it may seem, my notice altogether 600
Of this Harangue—you have the pith already
Of all his speech,—whatever further said he.

LXXV.

The usual Resolutions then were read,
Which Hobhouse¹³⁰ seconded with might and main:
“Is this,” he shouted, “England that we tread,
Or is it but the slavish soil of Spain?
Shall the petition for diurnal bread
Be answered here by sabre or by chain?
Commended to the GOD OF BATTLES be
Our hope of vengeance and of victory.” 610

LXXVI.

“Is liberty become a mere *Pretender*,
That Ministers insult her, downright flat?
As bully Falstaff did his worship,—‘Slender
I broke your head, I know, well! What of that?
I'll do it again because I find it tender!’¹³¹
(The mob thought this quotation very pat,—
A Frenchman near me whispered, nothing takes here
So well as low vulgarity from Shakespeare.)

LXXVII.

“And is our English pride beyond all hope,
Fled from her rock, her altar, and her home, 620
To pawn her honor for a hangman's rope,
And sign her warrant in Corruption's tome?
Must we like ministerial hirelings grope
Amid the dusty sepulchres of Rome,
To borrow for our Regent's hour mysterious

128: Refers to a group of demonstrators for Universal Suffrage and Peace and Goodwill, who, with a band of musicians, interrupted the meeting as the hackney carriages were being towed away. See Appendices A and B.

129: The reference is to Cicero, *Pro Murena* 35. Cicero compares the changeability of an electorate with the unpredictable fluctuations of the river Euripus at Negroponte on the coast of Attica. See Hobhouse diary, *Athens*, 8-9 Feb 1810. H. must have had Cicero's passage in mind when he visited.

130: For H.'s speech, see Appendix B.

131: Falstaff does not say this in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the only play in which a character called Slender also appears; but H. did say that he says it: see Appendix B.

The cast off domino of old Tiberius?¹³²

LXXVIII.

“Even at the moment of its wildest flood
 The ocean hath its limit, so hath power,
 ’Tis chartered for the universal good,
 And tho’ its ravage waste for one brief hour,— 630
 And tho’ it ebbs in waves of civil blood,—
 It is at length dashed back by some stern tower,
 On which our mortal energies uprear
 The streaming standard of its *future* fear.

LXIX.

“Come then! The furious flood hath reached its height,—
 The tower is undermined,—the standard fallen,—
 The tenth black wave that may o’erwhelm in sight,—
 The timid by its curling ridge appallen,—
 Come then! in harness to the battle dight,
 Come ye, who freedom’s knighthood have installen, 640
 The buttress of her crumbling fort repair,
 And raise Her banner to the kindred air.”¹³³

LXXX.

Hereon, a shout arose that soon subsided,
 And, as the stentor¹³⁴ read each resolution,
 A cautious concourse left the crowd, as I did,
 Aware in time of breaking up confusion;
 Tho’ quite as many in the crown abided,
 For there was spouting up to the conclusion;
 They said Gale Jones¹³⁵ was inkling to address them,
 But as they would’nt hear—he did’nt press them. 650

LXXXI.

Then as to Mr. Clarke¹³⁶ and Mr. Walker,

132: Depraved Roman Emperor (42 BC-37 AD).

133: Gray, *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, 56: *And waste her sweetness on the desert air*. Here is what H. actually said in the Commons about the Peterloo Massacre, on 15 May 1821: “The soldiers were not attacked. I defy all those around to prove that they were attacked. I defy them to show that any single proof can be given of an attack previously to the horrid assault made by the soldiers on the citizens. That resistance – at least some little resistance, too faint indeed and ineffectual, was made after the slaughter began./ It seems to be that the gentlemen opposite (Tories) are still resolved to believe that some attack was made by the people on the military previously to the charge of the yeomanry upon the crowd. I repeat: the Yeomanry attacked the people without warning, without provocation. I will take this opportunity to observe, that the abettors of this outrage (for so I must call it) have not replied to this charge. / On the contrary, though charged with the misstatements made in 1819, though called upon to give up those misstatements, or to show why they should not abandon those refuted errors, they have not been honest enough to retract. All those who have read the trial, must be aware that Mr. Hulton’s evidence was contradicted by a cloud of witnesses.” B. steals the last phrase at *The Vision of Judgement*, 58, 2.

134: “The man with the loud voice”. Stentor is a loud-voiced character at *Iliad* V, 785-6.

135: John Gale Jones (1769-1838) much-prosecuted radical.

And Watson, who was there—altho' that day
 He did not condescend to be a talker,
 I'd heard some fifty times what they could say,
 So I preferred at once to be a stalker,
 And with my friend marched manfully away,
 To get by *guess* their several speeches up,¹³⁷
 Before Haidee and I sat down to sup.¹³⁸

LXXXII.

Oh! it was great and glorious to behold,—
 As we beheld it from an eminence,— 660
 That mass of population, as it rolled
 In all its density of numbers *thence*;
 New vigor braced the sinews of the old,
 Warmed by the fire of that day's eloquence.
 And hope went dancing onward with the young—
 Thus Juan spoke—that is I mean, he sung.

LXXXIII.

And longer had he sung, but with a frown
 A City Marshalman impatient rose
 Who flung on either side the rabble down,
 And seized our street *Musician* by the nose. 670
 In vain did Juan tip him half a crown,
 He took the fee—and kept his prisoner close:
 Not suffering him to wash, or comb his hair,
 Until he'd carried him before the Mayor.

LXXXIV.

Think not that I intend with pen profane
 That civi-classic mansion¹³⁹ to define,
 Emerging darkly from Bearbinder Lane,¹⁴⁰—
 Be that reserved for worthier pen than mine:
 Tho' scarce my glowing spirit can refrain 680
 From entering on the task, it looks so fine,
 And for an annual residence to fit—all
 Cased in smoke, half-prison, half-hospital.—

LXXXV.

They say Stocks Market grew upon its site,—
 (Remember that I call no one blockhead,)
 I only say, that wishing to be right,
 I always carry Johnson¹⁴¹ in my pocket,

136: Clarke was a radical colleague of Burdett and Hobhouse.

137: Implies that as neither Burdett's nor Hobhouse's speech contain anything of substance, the way they're reported is irrelevant.

138: *Don Juan* I 179 8: *And then – and then – and then – sit down and sup.*

139: The Mansion House, home and headquarters of the Lord Mayor of London.

140: Bearbinder Lane (now George Street) went from the Mansion House east to St Swithin's Lane and Lombard Street (my thanks to Chris Little).

And think *Stocks* Market it may still be hight,
 Considering the way in which they *stock* it,
 Considering too, among its other oddities,
 'Tis mostly *stocked* with saleable commodities.¹⁴² 690

LXXXVI.

Be that however as it may, therein
 A silence all portentous reigned that day;
 The clatter of the cooks had ceased¹⁴³ its din,
 And every heart was trembling with dismay;
 For it was prophecied that men of sin
 In some old worsted stocking Plot would lay,
 Which o'er the city, e'er *to-morrow* broke,
 Would burst abroad in kindling fire and smoke.

LXXXVII.

And there was whispering low and swearing hard
 Of special constables, thro'out the long 700
 And weary day, until the civic guard
 Amounted to at least six thousand strong;
 From Candlewick they came, and Cornhill ward,
 A very worthy, tho' a motley throng,
 Prepared to stand a siege, or make a sally
 Up Lombard Street, and back thro' Pope's Head Alley.¹⁴⁴

LXXXVIII.

By these our presents be it amply known¹⁴⁵
 To England's ministers, and all whom most
 It may concern,—that there almost alone
 The pink of Magistrates¹⁴⁶ was at his post; 710
 Like eastern despot on his *worshipped* throne,
 His eye glanced widely joyous o'er the host
 Of loyalty, that round his musnud¹⁴⁷ pressed,
 Desirous to fulfil his high behest.

LXXXIX.

'Twas not yet dusk, but hark, what means that shout,
 As tho' to crack our very eardrums sent?¹⁴⁸
 "To arms!—to arms! The foe's already out,

141: Dr Johnson's Dictionary.

142: "Lord Mayors are easily bought".

143: "seized" (first edition).

144: Cornhill, Lombard Street, and Pope's Head Alley are all streets converging on the Mansion House, home of the Lord Mayor of London. Candlewicke Street is modern Cannon Street (my thanks to Chris Little); Anne Barton points out that there is a reference to in Thomas Heywood's play *The Four Prentices of London*.

145: *As You Like It*, I ii 108-9: *Be it known to all men by these presents* ... the opening phrase of a legal bill.

146: The Lord Mayor of London. In 1819 he was George Bridges.

147: Indian word for a seat made of cushions.

148: See CHP III 21, 9: *But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!*

Man every gallery and battlement,
 Some trusty spy go join the rabble rout,
 And if they're gone, observe which way they went, 720
 What damage they've already done the Town,
 And if the Tower's blown *up*, St. Michael's¹⁴⁹ *down*."

XC.

Thus spake the Magistrate, and as he spake,
 I only *sing* what those who saw him *said*,
 Like one afflicted with the belly ache,
 He shrugged his shoulders, and he shook his head,
 Then forward leaned, as tho' he wished to take
 The earliest glimpse of what he seemed to dread,
 When lo! no other popped before him than
 Our old friend Juan and the marshalman. 730

XCI.

I've given of Juan no description yet,
 Except the *Greek* one in my second Canto,
 So reader mind I'm something in your debt
 For that's too distant to refer a man to;
 Besides, since then, his thewes are much more set,
 And matrimony some time since began to
 Affix her claws upon his cheeks, and twist him
 With strange derangements of his nervous system.

XCII.

I shall *postpone* my picture of him that
 In case you happened to be in the court, 740
 You may not think my long description flat,
 But enter freely into all the sport;
 How gravely there Bashaw Majore¹⁵⁰ sat,
 And, like the Syracusan¹⁵¹ in his fort,
 Thought he could move whate'er he lay his hand upon
 Could he obtain a borough but to *stand upon*.

XCIII.

And then how self-possessed the Spanish Callant,¹⁵²
 (Whom I have just described so accurately,
 Exhibited that most annoying talent,
 Evinced by most *placarding* statesmen lately,
 Of treating with indifference *non chalant* 750
 The queries put by magistrates so stately,
 And then—(excuse me if I don't say why, Sir.)
 Turning the tables on his catechiser.

149: St. Michael's Church in Crooked Lane; vases from it were blown off in a hurricane in 1703.

150: Macaronic phrase (half Turkish, half Italian) implying "the great ruler".

151: "The Syracusan" could refer to Dionysius I or II, whom Plato attempted to advise.

152: "Young Spanish chap / Young Spanish fellow".

XCIV.

The warrant, like most warrants, was directed
 To all good subjects and to any true one,
 That he do bring—no matter how detected,—
 Before the Mayor a Spaniard called Don Juan,
 Of crimes and treasonous practices suspected,
 Securing thus the presence of the *buon*
Cavaliero,¹⁵³ and the marshalman:— 760
 When thus the city Solomon began.

XCV.

“Your name?”—“Don Juan”—“Well! your country?” “Spain,”—
 “A Spaniard, are you!—well, you must be taught here,
 What never seems to have disturbed your brain,
 How folks like you are treated when they’re caught here;
 Why *came* you here Sir?”—quoth the Mayor again,
 Quoth Juan coolly, “Wherefore was I *brought* here?”
 And *kept his countenance*—a sin so flagrant,
 ’Twas thought he’d been committed for a vagrant.

XCVI.

“We’ve heard enough already of your pranks, 770
 There’s not a town in Europe does not scout you;
 Expatriated first, the very Franks
 Have branded you, you bear the marks about you;
 To pour your venom thro’ our lower ranks
 You’ve now come here,—but they can do without you;
 Altho’ you think in London here to winter
 What’s your profession?—tell me Sir?” “A *Printer!*”—

XCVII.

“Know you of any plot to burn the City?
 “I’ve heard it said your Lordship’s self has heard of it.”
 “*You’ve* heard it said,—and that you mean for witty,
 There’s treason and reform in the full third¹⁵⁴ of it, 780
 And such as you are traitors,” “More’s the pity!”
 Said Juan, “but I don’t believe a word of it.”
 “But, *I* believe it sir,—and mean to save it.¹⁵⁵
 The information is on affidavit.”

XCVIII.

“My Lord, you’ll name th’informer if on oath,”

153: “The good knight”.

154: **Author’s note:** I fear the Manchester ‘*Occurrence*’ has tended to reduce our Reforming fractions into whole numbers---that word ‘*Occurrence*’ strikes me as being very apposite. Thus we may say the flights of Bonaparte were ‘*Recurrences*’---the Russian campaign an ‘*Accident*’---or the Battle of the Grancius a ‘*Transaction*.’ [It is Sir Francis Burdett who uses these words – see Appendix B.]

155: **Author’s note:** O, bone Custos, salve! *Ter.* [“Good day, master!” (Terence, *Phormio*, line 287). The situation features a slave, forbidden by law to argue his own case in court.]

And 'ere the Mayor, recovering from the pop,
 Of such an apparition asked the reason,
 The *Butcher* cried, "Deserving *Newgate* drop,
 Is every fool that circulates such *treason*!" 820
 Here have I been, your Worship, in my shop,
 Arguing these three hours, in this melting season,
 With half a dozen butchers who declare
 There is a fool that fills a civic chair."

CIII.

"“A fool, a fool, we met a fool,”¹⁵⁹ said they,
 (With senseless clamour to the charge returning)
 ‘A motley fool,’ that swore the other day
 He smelt the brimstone some Guy Fawkes was burning;
 Beneath the street gunpowder puncheons lay,
 That would to heaven Bow steeple soon be spurning. 830
 Besides a *million* pikes, with double edges,
 Hid up for Radicals in Shoreditch hedges.

CIV.

“At which, your Worship, with a Belcher stride,
 I just stept up to one, and on my block
 Pummelled his *ORGANS*,¹⁶⁰ telling him he lied;
 That I would answer for your noble stock,¹⁶¹
 That in a drove of such would be my pride;
 But then because I fib, my hearty Cock,
 Don't think of cooler argument I shy am,—
 I say the Mayor's no more a fool than I am. 840

CV.

“And so I said, as loud as I could bellow,
 And tell your Worship, to your Lordship's face,
 I think you are by far the cleverest fellow
 That ever occupied your Worship's place.
 I told them so, the Raffs! with faces yellow,
 Like their own tallow, a degenerate race!
 They blustered about Russel,¹⁶² Hampden,¹⁶³ Sidney,¹⁶⁴
 Say what you like, says I, the Mayor's a Lad of Kidney.”¹⁶⁵

CVI.

Up rose the Mayor with gratulating phiz,

159: *As You Like It*, II vi 12-13: *A fool, a fool! I met a fool in the forest!*

160: Author's note: This must have rather *galled* the Radical.

161: It's not clear how the report of insurrection impugns the Lord Mayor's judgement.

162: William, Lord Russel (1639-83) opponent of Charles II and James II. Executed for high treason. A joiner named William Hone had been executed for the same offence the previous day.

163: John Hampden (1594-1643) patriot and parliamentarian, one of Charles I's principal opponents.

164: Algernon Sidney (1622?-83) extreme republican, beheaded for alleged complicity in the Rye House plot. Friend of William Penn; believed in universal suffrage.

165: An alexandrine ends an ottava rima stanza!

“Butcher! we thank thee for thy kind defence; 850
 We thank thee¹⁶⁶ that thou didst exhibit Wis-
 -Dom and disinterested Eloquence;
 But prithee, *as our advocate*, dismiss
 The force of English blows for English sense;
 In one word (misinterpretation barring)
 Be bold *my friend*,—but, mitigate your sparring!”

CVII.

Thereat, the noble Butcher’s eyes struck fire,
 Flashing like powder-pan both right and left,
 And rose his leg of mutton fist in ire,
 As if he would the Mayor in twain have cleft. 860
 “Fought I for you!” quoth he, “and called a liar,
 The scoundrels who your character bereft?
 I s’pose from *Gratitude* as much you’d winced,
 Had I the Radicals *by wholesale minced!*”

CVIII.

Then forth *the Champion* rushed—the Mayor uprose,
 And for the day his myrmidons¹⁶⁷ dismissed;
 And went to seek the Mayoress I suppose,
 The while a few disloyal varlets hissed;
 I longed to see, I must confess it, *those*
 With each a trusty handcuff on his wrist, 870
 Awaiting quiz from that theatric jester
 And pattern of humanity Sylvester

CIX.

Daggerwood¹⁶⁸ as played by Mr. Kean,¹⁶⁹
 Who had it for his benefit at Drury,
 And hacked and slashed away thro’ every scene
 Upon our muscles risible like fury;
 These hissing ragamuffins had they been,
 As I was, in the pit that night I’m sure he
 Would not have left one hissing symptom visible,—
 I saved my life by being anti-risible. — 880

CX.

Meanwhile what happened in the night, and what
 Became of all the bustle and the stirrage,

166: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* V i 264-5: *Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams; I thank thee, moon, for shining now so bright ...*

167: Minions; henchmen. From Achilles’ followers in the *Iliad*.

168: Sylvester Daggerwood was the comedy role taken by Edmund Kean on 8 June 1818 in *Sylvester Daggerwood, or New Hay at the Old Market* (premiered 9 June 1795) by George Colman the Younger. It was afterpiece to a play about Alexander the Great. Sylvester Daggerwood is a provincial actor (from Dunstable) who quotes Shakespeare constantly, whether awake or asleep. The play is only thirty-two pages long, and he appears only in its first scene.

169: Edmund Kean (c.1789-1833) greatest actor of his generation, much admired by B.

To counteract the mischief of the plot,
 That had aroused such lots of zeal and courage,
 And whether ever brought to light, or not,
 I only know 'twas cause of much demurrage,
 When gravely wiser men, and baldermen¹⁷⁰
 Discussed it in the learned Court of Aldermen.

CXI.

But Juan soundly slept within his cell,
 Whereto the despot's mandate had consigned him; 890
 I only hope his Lordship slept as well,
 Who in the teeth of usage had confined him,
 But being married, 'tis not fit I tell
 What harrowing regrets he left behind him,—
 And whether much he took the day in dudgeon—
 I rather thought he did—but there's no judging. —

CXII.

However, there he lay. And now suppose,
 While Juan tranquilly his nap is taking,
 We gently draw this Canto to a close—
 (I think we need not dread his early waking) 900
 I feel besides that I begin to prose,
 My eyes being tired and my fingers aching—
 Which (be we Cantabrigians, or Oxonians,)
 Is very fatal to us Heliconians.¹⁷¹

CXIII.

But should not our 'Lieutenant of Police,'
 With hand irreverent disturb my leisure,
 And send the instruments of his caprice,
 On Canto Three to make illegal seizure,
 It's possible that I may still increase
 With Canto Four your literary treasure; 910
 That is, if Juan should'nt *die* in jail
 Whilst the Lord Mayor's *considering* his bail.

CXIV.

Now, should the reader ask me in what age
 This Juan lived, when all these things befel him,
 And who were those I brought upon the stage,
 If he can't find it out I won't compel him;
 But, pondering deeply over every page,
 I think he'll find—at least I that can tell him—
 'Twas when Alfonso filled the Spanish throne,¹⁷²
 And in the Mayoralty of Whittington.¹⁷³ 920

170: Balder was a Norse god; but the writer wishes to signify "more bald, and therefore more wise".

171: Drinkers from the spring of Helicon on Mount Parnassus: poets.

172: There had in 1820 been no Spanish (as opposed to Castilian) kings called Alfonso.

END OF CANTO III.

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APPENDIX A: HOBHOUSE'S DIARY FOR THE MEETING IN NEW PALACE YARD, THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 2ND 1819

A fine day. Up early, looking at what I was to say. Walked to Henry's, 43 Clarges Street. We hear that Government will not interfere – but we know that every preparation is made by the soldiers. Burdett and [I] had a conversation whether it would be better to offer himself up at once lest the ministers should serve the warrant on him at the hustings – after some debate it was resolved he should not take any step.

Went with Burdett in a hackney coach to Palace Yard. Henderson's Coffee House. An immense crowd at the back door. Cheering found in the Committee Room. Major Cartwright. I was introduced to him by Barrie and shook hands. Burdett and he shook hands. Burdett had before written to him a kind letter when he heard the Major was prosecuted – to which the Major returned a “querulous” answer. We had, even in the Room, some discussion about the Bill, and were obliged to promise the Major another meeting before we could get rid of it.

At one o'clock we went out of the window upon the hustings. A magnificent spectacle indeed – such as I had never seen at the same place before. The whole area and quite beyond were full of people. The hackney coaches at first interrupted a little, but they were walked off by ye people crying “Off and off!” – this was the only interruption to Burdett's speaking, or to anybody's, for never was so orderly a meeting.

I was on Burdett's right hand, Clarke¹⁷⁴ and Major Cartwright on his left. No *Whigs* present!!! Seven reporters for the *Times* there, five for the *Chronicle* &c. The wretched band of universal suffrage people with their two banners and white sticks, which did not amount to twenty-five people, instead of Thistlewood's 70,000, made no impression whatever.

There was cheering. We were nobly received. The papers give a very fair account of the proceedings of the day. Hunt certainly was the most cheered, but then the signal was given from the hustings by the man who had proposed him at the last election but one.

Burdett spoke very ably. Familiarly, but ably. He said not one word of reform. His speech was repeated almost verbatim in every paper. The *Chronicle* gave the best account of mine.¹⁷⁵ Cartwright held up his hand *alone* against the Resolution about Reform – he did not speak, but Walker¹⁷⁶ spoke of him. Thelwall¹⁷⁷ spoke.¹⁷⁸ Some attempts were made by Mr Gale Jones,¹⁷⁹ but he was kept back, and chiefly by Tyas¹⁸⁰ of the *Times*.

Everything was over by half-past three. Richter lent over and cried, “Home! Home!” and the word was repeated by the crowd, which dispersed in floods most tranquilly. Burdett and I mounted horses and rode off amidst loud shoutings which pursued us as far as Pall Mall. We then rode in Hyde Park.

Burdett remarked that the people were much changed. He recollected that it would have been useless to speak to them as we spoke today. Fox and Sheridan used to joke and talk *down* to them. As for myself, I certainly, according to my humble power, try to speak my best at all times – I quoted Tacitus and Montesquieu by name today.¹⁸¹ Certainly *I* am the most popular man in Westminster after Burdett – but what of that? Though I do not think the

173: The famous Richard (“Dick”) Whittington (1358-1423) Lord Mayor of London 1398, 1406 and 1419.

174: See above, line 651.

175: See Appendix B.

176: See above, lines 360 and 651.

177: John Thelwall (1764-1834) a reformer rarely mentioned by H.

178: “de more saw” (Ms.)

179: See above, line 649.

180: See above, line 392.

181: Neither writer is mentioned by name in H.'s speech as reported in the *Morning Chronicle*.

people so mutable as they are said to be, yet change they may – and if a better man [than] I should arise, they would be right to go to him.

Burdett, my brother, and Bickersteth dined at Scrope's ordinary. In the evening I went and prepared my speech for the papers. It was too late for the *Times*, and went to the *Statesman* and the *Star*, very near as I spoke out.

Came back, drank tea &c.

APPENDIX B: THE MEETING IN NEW PALACE YARD (as reported in the *Morning Chronicle*, September 3rd 1819)¹⁸²

WESTMINSTER MEETING.

The proceedings of yesterday in Palace-yard, must make a considerable impression throughout the United Kingdom. Since it has been our duty to record the proceedings of such Meetings, we never witnessed one that from the character and conduct of those who attended, combined with the awful consideration which convened them, was so calculated to give a tone and a direction to the current of the popular feeling. When we proceed to state the probable numbers that attended, we feel the difficulty of making an accurate statement. Persons whom we consulted, and amongst others, those who were accustomed to see military bodies in close column, computed them at least 30,000 persons. The number was stated by others to amount to 50,000. We never witnessed so numerous or so respectable an assemblage.

So early as eleven o'clock, crowds of persons began to assemble in front of the hustings, which was erected in the usual place, before the King's Arms Tavern, and at twelve o'clock the whole of the Palace-yard was thronged, and the roofs of a few hackney-coaches, which remained on the stand in front of Westminster-hall, covered with people, among whom we observed several well-dressed females. The conduct of this great multitude was calm and decorous; nor did any of the people of whom it consisted, and many of whom, from their appearance, were of the labouring classes, manifest the slightest irritation at the occasional appearance of the soldiers of the Horse Guards, who traversed Parliament-street, on their way over Westminster-bridge to Astley's,¹⁸³ which was understood to be their station, there to remain in readiness, in case their assistance might be required by the Civil Power, to quell any tumult in the course of the day. The windows in Palace-yard were crowded with persons of respectability, and even the space as far as the rails of St. Margaret's Church, was covered with people, who silently awaited the commencement of the business of the day. The public-houses in the neighbourhood were entirely filled with constables.

At one o'clock it was impossible to conceive any thing more imposing than the view from the hustings. The immense multitude extended itself down towards St. Margaret's Church on that side, and to the River, near Westminster-bridge, on the other, in so close and compact a body, that the change of position of one set the whole in motion.

At ten minutes past one o'clock, Sir Francis Burdett made his appearance on the hustings, accompanied by Mr. Hobhouse, Major Cartwright, Mr. Clarke of Middlesex, and a number of other Gentlemen, who usually take a part in the business of the Westminster Meetings. The worthy Baronet, the venerable Major, Mr. Hobhouse, and the other Gentlemen who accompanied them, were in succession loudly cheered;¹⁸⁴ and we never remember to have seen so imposing a scene as the immense crowd which filled the area of Palace-yard presented, when at this moment, as if by one accord, they stood uncovered.

As soon as the shouts of applause subsided—

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT (the Chairman) opened the business of the day in the following manner:—

182: I have introduced paragraphing where the *Morning Chronicle* has none.

183: Astley's was a circus, with an amphitheatre near Westminster Palace Yard, suitable for housing cavalry on standby.

184: See above, lines 430-2.

Gentlemen—The High Bailiff of Westminster not having thought fit to comply with a Requisition to convene this Meeting, which was presented to him, signed by a large number of respectable householders of Westminster—not having, I say, thought fit, and without assigning any reason to do that which I think it was his business to do, namely, to call, and preside at, this Meeting, I have, at the requisition of a number of Electors, come forward on this most important, as well as sorrowful and melancholy occasion, to fill that situation, which, as I think, it was the duty of the High Bailiff to have filled; and I trust and hope that I shall perform this duty, so important to the country at this moment, in a manner which will entitle it to consideration, and induce it to be followed, as I hope it will be followed, all over the United Kingdom, so as to shew those practically, who wish to suppress by violence the voice of Englishmen, what are their real feelings at this attempt to suppress the expression of the country assembled to state its grievances, as well as their sense of indignation and abhorrence at those proceedings which have recently occurred at Manchester.

The difficulty I feel on this important occasion is, how, with regard to the public peace of this immense assemblage, and under the influence of those feelings which such transactions¹⁸⁵ have excited, so to express myself, as to respect that preservation of the public tranquillity which is so congenial to the support of public freedom, and so far mitigate and subdue my own sentiments, as to keep within due bounds when I deliver my judgement on those transactions on which we have this day met to express our opinions [great applause].

[Here there was considerable noise and uproar on the skirts of the immense crowd, which was at length discovered to arise from the view of the hustings being obstructed by the line of hackney coaches on the stand, which were, as we have already observed, covered with people. The difficulty was hardly started when it was removed; the people on the coaches were obliged instantly to dismount, and with some difficulty the coaches were removed to the edge of the crowd.¹⁸⁶ A small party of individuals with white wands, preceded by a band of music and two flags, one inscribed “Universal Suffrage,” the other “Peace and Good Will,” took the opportunity of the interruption, and advanced to the front of the hustings. Their intrusion was more the subject of animadversion than approval].¹⁸⁷

Sir FRANCIS resumed—The question is not now, whether this or that measure—this or that principle—be proper for consideration or adoption: the question is not now, whether this or that party be in power; it is scarcely (at least in one point of view) a political question:—It is, on the contrary, the great paramount basis on which all political questions must rest—the question from which no honest man of any political party can dissent, and which, indeed, must unite all, whatever be their political bias, for it relates to no other than this—namely, the great, paramount, and imprescriptible right of the people of England to meet and express their opinions upon the political state of their country [great applause]. This, I trust and hope, is a question, in their view of which Whigs and Tories, as well as Reformers, must all unite and support by one common consent. Every true Englishman must now take his stand, and assert his undoubted right.

We are not now met to consider under what political modification the liberties of the country are now to be enjoyed, nor on what fundamental laws they are to be the best secured and protected; but it is whether that great essential principle of all liberty is to be suffered any longer to exist—whether the people are any longer to have the right of discussing, as their ancestors have done, public questions. This is the great principle we have met to assert, and I trust it is one on which Englishmen of every party will be ready to go hand in hand, even to death [great applause]. I hold that to be a right not only of Englishmen, but one inherent in man—one antecedent to all political institutions, and of which no political institution can justifiably deprive mankind.

It is to be discussed by us here to-day, whether Englishmen are any longer to meet according to law—whether the law shall protect them in the exercise of this undoubted right,

185: See comment on Author’s note to line 780 above. Burdett uses the word “transaction” six times to describe the Massacre.

186: See above, lines 580-6.

187: See above, lines 587-94.

against the madness and violence of their enemies—whether we are to submit lightly or arbitrarily to a military system—or whether ours is in future to be a Government of law, as it ought, or a Government of discretionary, an arbitrary, and military violence [cries of “never!”].

I trust your feelings this day will shew that abhorrence of the late proceedings at Manchester, which will set a proper example to the country—which ensure the support and co-operation of every man in the country, of every honest Englishman, who prefers a government of law to a government of the sword—of every man who abhors a cruel and unnecessary shedding of blood, and who prefers a rational law that ensures his liberty, to one which, by the application of violence and bloodshed, can only end in anarchy and despotism [loud shouts]. Every man who thus prefers to dominion of English law, must express his detestation of the late proceedings at Manchester—every man who regards his own interest and honour, must shrink from approving measures of such a nature as those lately resorted to by the Magistrates of Manchester, and must step forward and vindicate the outraged liberties of his country from the act that has been committed against them. If these things can be done with impunity, why, we shall have then to ask our masters, whether we are allowed to breathe the air, whether we are to be shut out from the free use of our own limbs, whether we are to consider the noses on our faces to be our own, and whether we, the people of England, are to be allowed to shew them when we please, without the previous permission of his Majesty’s Government [loud laughter and immense applause]?

I know there are men who think our Meeting premature—who think there is not evidence yet before the country, with due deliberation, to enable it judge of those sorrowful proceedings. I say there is evidence enough before us. Are not the facts before us [cries of “they are”]—the scandalous, the shameful, the undeniable facts, undenied even by the Party in Administration, which is at the bottom of all these proceedings, and which has, since their occurrence, had the folly as well as the wickedness to take the odium on their own shoulders [loud applause]? I say, that after these atrocious transactions, I, who have never in my life have been a great advocate for a change of Administration, consider now the time to have arrived, when from one end of the country to the other, the people should have come forward, and with a firm voice demand the dismissal of a Ministry, on whose heads rests the appalling charge of having wantonly and cruelly first encouraged, and subsequently applauded the shedding of the blood of the English people [continued applause]. It would have this beneficial effect. It would place the rights and liberties of the people on a rock of adamant, by exhibiting to future times the imposing and instructive example of a base, corrupt and sanguinary Administration being turned out from the offices they disgraced, for a daring violation of the liberties, and a flagitious sacrifice of the lives of British subjects [tumultuous applause].

Can any man reading the defence of these Ministers—the defence set up by their own venal scribes—can any man read this and not have, if there were nothing else before him, ample evidence to justify his condemnation of their proceedings? These writers have as stupidly as wickedly tried to eke out grounds to justify the indefensible arrest of Mr. Hunt. That warrant of arrest is illegal, and it is to be hoped, in the end, these Magistrates—these pre-eminently distinguished Manchester Magistrates [loud laughter]—will at length be taught to know the law [applause]. This arrest is justified on oath, too. These very wise defenders of Government have found out, that an oath!—what oath?—an oath to a fact, to something that a man can swear to?—No; but what think you to an oath of a man’s opinion? Did any body before ever hear of such an oath? At this very moment, for any thing I know, some wiseacre may be making the same oath regarding us before a magistrate just as wise, I think, as the Manchester Magistrates. I mean Lord Sidmouth, the third Secretary of State, as he is called, but, who in fact and in spirit exercised the functions of the Lieutenant of Police under the old regime of France—a Noble Lord, I believe, quite on a par in point of wisdom and feeling, with the Manchester Magistrates [“true, true” and continued applause].

Somebody, for aught I know, may now be swearing on his opinion, that our Meeting will, he thinks, end in the conflagration of Westminster.—By possibility, a most respectable witness may be swearing a similar oath before another sapient authority, a citizen, elevated,

no doubt, for his wisdom and feeling, to fill the Civic Chair of London [laughter].¹⁸⁸ Such events may now be passing before those wise men, and we may be the victims. If arrests are to follow opinions which find a place in other men's heads, there is an end to liberty—but there can be no end to the commission of infamous and illegal proceedings.

Some foolish and wicked writer in *The Courier*, has had the boldness to declare, that it was the pre-determination of the military, to assassinate Mr. Hunt at the Meeting in Manchester [cries of "shame"]. I trust and hope, that even the Manchester Yeomanry will wipe away this most foul imputation on the character even of bad men—above all. Let Englishmen bear in mind, that no real English soldier is implicated in this atrocious and cowardly accusation [loud applauses]. Let the merit rest with those who evinced the spirit in their gallant attack upon a defenceless throng of unoffending men, women and children!!!¹⁸⁹ But, as I before observed, I hope, for the character of man, that the Yeomanry of Manchester, if it be untrue, will not allow this foul and cowardly imputation to be palmed upon them, but institute a prosecution against the writer who had exhibited them to the world as premeditated assassins. There is something diabolical in the very idea of contemplating the assassination of an unarmed man, that the human heart shrinks from the belief of such an avowal, and leads one to hope that even the Manchester Yeomen will clear themselves from so foul an imputation [applauses]. Whatever be the spirit of those transactions, again I say, in God's name, let these Gallant Yeomen possess it whole and undivided. It does not, thank Heaven, belong to that high-spirited soldiery, who, throughout the world, have borne the honour and maintained the character of their country—whose name all over Europe is synonymous [sic] with an unconquerable and unsubduable feeling of valour, and who are not more spoken of in their own land for their heroism, than they are, as I know, in foreign nations for their humanity, forbearance and generosity, when the conflict has ended, and the enemy to whom they were opposed had ceased to resist [bravo, and continued applauses]. No; let those who plucked those bloody honours by the locks—let those modern *Hotspurs of the North*,¹⁹⁰ in their lust of slaughter, bear the insignia of their triumph without a rival [great applause].

Before I proceed to other parts of the subject, I must say, that I think Mr. Hunt, on that trying occasion, conducted himself with great propriety. I shall neither look backward or forward, to the right or to the left, I shall ever be found to praise the Englishman that does his duty—I think Mr. Hunt baffled, and defeated, and exposed, the Manchester Magistrates. I think he conducted himself with wisdom and propriety, and I am glad to give him the tribute of my applause for the conduct he pursued on the occasion to which I allude [loud applause].

But there is another circumstance which I am sorry I cannot equally express pleasure at, I mean the verdict of the Inquests at Manchester; it rivals in spirit and valour the acts of the Manchester Yeomanry and Magistrates. What! A verdict of Accidental Death for men killed, as the people were, in that crowd? surely, any verdict than that would accord with common sense and justice? [loud applause].—Gentlemen, let it not be supposed that I would be content with no verdict but one of *Wilful Murder*! No! Suppose the Jury had brought it in homicide—justifiable homicide if you will—I could comprehend that! But in this case, I cannot comprehend a verdict of *Accidental Death* [cheering]. I confess I do not understand a man's losing his nose accidentally, by the cut of a sabre! [cheering]. I can comprehend that there are circumstances where individuals might deem a resort to military violence necessary—I can conceive a plea being offered, that resistance was made, which obliged persons under arms to cut down those who were opposed to them—but I cannot comprehend how such a proceeding could be denominated accidental [cheers, and shouts of "Nor no one else!"]

But, Gentlemen, while we feel and express the necessity of vindicating the grossly violated laws of England—while we are anxious should be adopted to protect our persons—while, I say, we consider these points, I propose, at the same time, that means should be taken to enable individuals to apply to those violated laws for justice and redress, and that something should also be done to afford consolation to those women, and others, who have

188: Burdett refers to the Lord Mayor of London.

189: See above, lines 552-3.

190: See above, lines 514-6.

suffered by the infamous conduct of the Yeomanry of Manchester! [long-continued cheering].—Gentlemen, it is no longer a question of whether their's was or was not an illegal act, for on their own statement—on their own shewing—on their own defence—the act was illegal. An attempt has been made to defend it, grounded on the Riot Act, but the Riot Act, which is in itself a monstrous innovation on the Common Law of the Land, was not read, or, if read, was read in a corner, so that its conditions were not complied with [shame, shame!]. But even if it were read, the Act itself gives no power or sanction in any sense whatever to military execution. A soldier, as my venerable Friend near me (Major Cartwright) observes, is not mentioned or alluded to in the Act. A soldier was, in the days in the days in which that riot was passed, unknown to the Constitution of England [cheering]. He is not recognized, he is not spoken of in the Act. But if he were mentioned, no necessity existed for making use of him in the manner which the sapient Magistrates of Manchester seem to have contemplated. The Riot Act says, after an hour's notice has been given, and a tumultuous (not an orderly) meeting continues, then the Magistrate is to read the Act, to warn them of the penalties to which they render themselves liable by remaining together afterwards. But even the new laws of England, not to speak of the old [laughter], do not travel quite so fast as the yeomen cavalry of Manchester! [cheering and laughter]. Even if the people do not disperse, they are not to have their throats cut immediately [cheering]. No, but if a meeting be riotous and tumultuous, it is directed that the ringleaders shall be—what? Not knocked on the head?—no such thing—they shall be apprehended and punished according to due course of law [loud plaudits]. Why, then, Gentlemen, under this very Act, all the Magistrates could have legally done, supposing the meeting to have been disorderly and tumultuous was, to have taken the ringleaders into custody, after an hour's warning—to have brought them to trial—and, if convicted, they would have been subjected to punishment for a capital felony. But, whoever before heard of such a circumstance, as that of peaceable unoffending individuals being cut and trodden down by their fellow-countrymen [loud cheering]?—I therefore say, on their own shewing, without straining any point, that the whole of these proceedings were as unconstitutional, as strictly illegal, as they were cowardly and cruel [loud cheering].—I beg leave to say, then, that, in the same manner as I am anxious to separate the brave English soldier from the heroes who compose the Manchester yeomanry, so I am desirous to shew, as far as I can, my reverence for the law and the constitution—and actuated by that feeling, I ardently wish to screen the name of the first Magistrate of the country¹⁹¹ from the odium which cannot fail to cover every individual implicated in this infamous transaction [loud cheering].

I bring it as a charge amongst many others (for we cannot forget that great one of refusing to present the petitions of the people to the Sovereign) against the present Ministers, that they have, in a most wicked and cowardly manner, to answer their own base purposes, made use of the name of the Prince Regent on this occasion [cheering]. They have done so, Gentlemen, evidently to cover and screen their own responsibility for so base an outrage on humanity, for so dreadful a violation of the Laws and Constitution of the country [cheering]. Gentlemen, I am persuaded [sic] that the Prince Regent bears too noble, too generous, too manly a mind to return thanks for such an act, if a moment had been allowed him for consideration [cheering—a cry from one of the crowd, “That's true—he's not a bad fellow, but he's been humbugged”].—If, Gentlemen, you recollect where he was when the tragical event took place,—if you consider by whom the representation of the business was made—and, finally, the time at which the answer was returned—you will agree with me that the Prince Regent was not allowed a moment for consideration, when his Ministers thought fit to make him a party to this act of blood—an act which they well knew would not bear the test of examination. I therefore contend for it, that among other offences, the Ministers are liable to the charge of attempting to bring into contempt the name, person and Government of the King [laughter and applause].

I know, Gentlemen, that we are all liable to the attacks of power; but if the people continue to act with the same temper and forbearance by which they have been hitherto

191: Burdett refers to the Prince Regent.

distinguished; if they continue to give no ground of alarm to the timid, and no handle to the malicious; if they continue quietly and constitutionally to express their sentiments, every honest man in the country will be disposed at least to pay attention to their representations. I am not now giving my opinion of any particular measure; but this I do contend for, that whatever any of us think for the good of the country, we have a right to propose [applause]. We do not urge our arguments in secret; we invite our enemies to discussion; we call upon the sons and daughters of corruption to state their case. Let them prove, that what they do is the best that can be done for the country, and I will become a convert to their opinions; but if their arguments are not strong enough to convert me, I do not wish to have my throat cut because I am not convinced [applause].

I know it is often represented by some persons as dangerous and unnecessary to call Meetings on the subject of grievances which cannot be redressed. But the fact with respect to our grievances is this—that they have been so long endured, the great bulk of the people begin to open their eyes, and to see the cause from which they spring. It is not that troublesome and dangerous men express strong opinions of their own; but that what all men think, some men are bold enough to speak plainly [loud applause]. Such men, I hope, will always be found in this country. England, I trust, is never destined to see the day when she shall want a man to speak the truth in defiance of all power, and even at the peril of his head. Popularity, Gentlemen, is much decried in our times. I am willing to admit that nothing can be more wicked than to pursue popularity with a view to advance our own personal interests at the expence of the common good. He who does so is a villain.

I am willing to allow, that to pursue popularity merely from the love of praise, and without any endeavour to turn it to the advantage of the community, is the act of a fool. Popularity, in that sense, may be justly compared to the bell which jingles in the cap of folly [applause]. But when, on the contrary, it is made use of to benefit the people from whom it is derived, it becomes the freshest leaf in the laurel of patriotism and virtue. For myself, I will say, that if I thought you were wrong, I hope, and think, that I am capable of declaring my opinion. But that is not the case; I feel that you are right, and the idea of acting with you in the course which your humanity and zeal for the Constitution dictates, is one of the highest gratifications my heart can enjoy. To deserve, I say to obtain, the name of an honest Englishman, and a friend to freedom, in my estimation an higher title than any person, however exalted his situation in the Government, can have it in his power to bestow [loud applause]. To meet upon any public occasion the concurrent sentiments of my countrymen at large, upon any great and useful object is, and has always been, considered by me the best reward for public services; it is only second to that which depends upon myself, the consciousness of having deserved it.

Mr. RICHTER read the Resolution.

Mr. HOBHOUSE then came forward to read the Address, and spoke to the following effect: -

Gentlemen, I have been desired by a very respectable portion of your fellow-citizens, to address you upon this occasion, and to express, not only their sentiments, but yours, on the unfortunate and cruel transaction which has been so much the subject of public discussion. I feel it necessary to state thus much as an excuse for my appearance in a place which might have been filled by persons of greater significance and importance, and, as it affords me an opportunity of asking, in favour of those by whom I have been brought forward, what I am aware that I have no right to demand for myself. But, Gentlemen, it is not the persons who appear before you on this occasion, that are in need of apology. Those who are absent are most in need of excuse [applause]. The persons who present themselves boldly, in the face of power, to record their abhorrence of the atrocious act which we are assembled to deprecate, may fairly rely on the manly feeling by which they are actuated, but those who are absent cannot appeal to the same ground of justification.

At the same time, I am far from insinuating, nor would it be fair to think, that the friends of freedom who have supported the great cause upon other occasions, are purposely absent now; on the contrary, we are bound to give them credit for good intention, and to suppose that they are only waiting for the moment when they can exert themselves to the best effect, if not

here, in other places, before other auditors. It will be no disgrace to them to follow, where you have gone before. Westminster has always been the foremost in every bold and generous act, and is only in her proper place when she takes the lead in Liberty.—

This Meeting, Gentlemen, is not intended to discover public opinion, that is well known [applause]. Even if it was not distinctly declared, as it has been, it would be no difficult matter to foresee what Englishmen must think, and what they would dare to say, respecting the outrages at Manchester. Thank God! we are not yet reduced to such an abject state, as to witness those atrocious proceedings, by which not only the liberties and properties, but even the lives of our fellow-subjects, were endangered and outraged, in silent despair.

The free part of the press in this country has done its duty; the conductors of that powerful engine are entitled to our thanks upon this occasion, having employed it, as they always should, for the people [applause]. The pensioned press has also done its duty; the conductors of this branch of the machine have adhered with perfect consistency to their department; they have taken their usual place among the satellites of corruption, and we may thank them for having set the last seal to the cause of the People, which never can more clearly pointed out than by the anger and hostility with which they are always sure to encounter it.—

The people of this country could not be deceived by the miserable sophistries of the pensioned press,—neither were they surprised at the undertaking. You all know perfectly well, Gentlemen, from your intercourse with life, that if you can get a scoundrel to commit a base action, it is easy to find a knave to defend it [applause]. The pensioned press does not deny the shameful abominable affair at Manchester; they acknowledge it—they enter into its details—they dwell upon it with pleasure; the deaths and the mangling of their fellow-countrymen have no horror for them; they look upon their shattered limbs with exultation—they glory in the havoc which has been committed—and seem to exclaim, with exultation, “Look at our work, see what we have done, and what we will dare to do again” [loud applause]. Their remarks are not even entitled to the name of sophistry. They resemble the miserable casuistry of the Jesuits, who, professing to be the defenders of Kings, adopted measures which undermined their power, and threatened their authority throughout Europe. It is rather curious to observe how light they make of the calamity from which the feelings of the people revolt with so much horror. It reminds me, if it be admissible to adopt their levity for a moment on so painful a subject, it reminds of the language of Sir John Falstaff on the stage. Sir John says, with great indifference, “Slender, I have broke your head—what have you to say against me?”¹⁹² So they observe to the people—“It is true—the thing is done—but what matter for that” [applause].

But, Gentlemen, it is necessary the people should shew them that it is a matter of serious importance. I am sure they will not neglect to do so. I am sure the nation at large will feel it to be a duty incumbent on them to express their sentiments strongly and manfully on this unparalleled act of oppression. I am sure they will not suffer the fair fabric of English liberty, the purchase of so many struggles, the fruit of the toil of so many ages, to be overthrown without one effort to defend it. We must, all the youngest of us must feel, that something has been taken away from the liberties of England within our own experience. Consulting our own recollections, and comparing them with what we see at present, is it not natural for us to exclaim with a great writer, “Where is that free England in which I was born?”—At my age I feel the force of this sentiment. Every year has added something to our grievances, and taken something from our rights. Meetings are now prevented which were once considered legal and constitutional; and such has been the march of encroachment, that even the village reading room is subject to Ministerial Inspection [applause]. Nothing has been left untried to break down the free spirit of Englishmen, and reduce them to the condition of a mere clod, to degrade them from the dignity of their stature to the state of live stock upon the soil, and render them, as it were, “strangers in their own land” [applause]. All this has been done under the eye and with the sanction of the House of Commons—it has been done in that place over the way, where there are no less than 658 Gentlemen who are said to take care of our

192: See above, lines 613-15.

interests, but of whom only 14 were found to oppose the measures I have just been alluding to [applause].

One thing however remained, after all that has been done, and that was to upset by a single blow the right of meeting—a right which never can be surrendered but with the loss of liberty itself. It appears from history that the subtle Roman Tyrant, Tiberius,¹⁹³ felt he could not be safe until he had abolished the assemblies of the people—These assemblies he accordingly abolished, and the historian observes that the act was only resented by a few murmurs.—But the people of England will not submit to such an innovation.—They will not allow their feelings to escape in empty murmurs for the loss. If they have not Nobles among them to resist such an attempt, I hope they will do for themselves what England has done before, and that the God of Liberty will give the victory not to the strong, but to the just [applause]. Tiberius, Gentlemen, is the model selected by our Ministers for a gracious Prince. Overlooking the Henries of France, and the Henries and Edwards of England, they have selected a name which was not only a disgrace to the imperial purple, but also to humanity. Still, however, we may hope for better things.—We may hope that truth will reach the Royal ear, and that it will not be lost upon it. We may hope that the Prince Regent will come to know and feel, that the advice with which we approach him comes from his best friends, the People;—from those who have no interest in betraying him—who have every inclination to respect him,—but who will not be insulted, when they assemble to express their opinion on public measures, by drawn sabres, musquets, and cannon. We are sometimes described as fond of bloodshed. We, the people of England, fond of bloodshed! Are we not met to give utterance to our indignation against it, and against those who were the first authors and are now the defenders of such atrocities? The fact is, that those who perpetrated the act, thought we had as little English feeling as themselves—and what has been the consequence? They have performed their work of destruction, and while every eye is turned up to the state of mercy, without even a decent delay, so as to afford even the least appearance of deliberation, they obtain an approbation of what was done.—Nay, as if that were not enough, they affix the name of a gracious Prince, the descendant of a race of Princes who were never disgraced by any cruelty, the line to a throne derived from the people, they affix his name to an instrument from which even the slaves of oriental despotism would turn away with disgust. In former times, as history informs us, a noble of this country told a Prince of the House of Plantagenet, that William the Bastard had not conquered England for himself. So we may say in our turn, that the act of settlement was not made for the House of Brunswick alone [applause]. Our forefathers, when they expelled King James, and called King William to the throne, did not do so, as some writers had asserted, like children at play. They told William that they did so to obtain a free Parliament, and William told them in reply that they should have a free Parliament. If the subjects of this country took up arms against James to obtain a free Parliament, may not we be permitted to ask for the same advantage? Our Rulers seem to think not.—We assemble peaceably to ask for Reform in the Commons House of Parliament, and the answer is a charge of dragoons [laughter and applause].

A part of the press has stated, that the excesses of the Reformers afford an excuse for abridging the liberty of the subject; but what are these excesses? I know of none which the Reformers have committed, though I know of many that have been committed against them. But the liberty that can be abridged upon any excuse is not deserving of the name; it is a wretched and precarious state of society, and he who can feel himself satisfied under it may be compared to the foolish Grecians, who supposed that they were free, merely because the Romans thought fit to say so, and by saying so, to add the grossest insult to the most unfeeling oppression. Of one thing, Gentlemen, you may rest assured, that if the enemies of liberty have the power to abridge it, they will never want an excuse for following their own inclination. It is your business to prevent them. If they succeed in the attempt to suppress the meeting of the people, their object is accomplished, and your ruin complete. Their hostility to

193: See above, line 626. I do not find anywhere that Tiberius banned public assemblies. It was Nero who banned provincial governors from organising gladiatorial contests, and that for reasons of public good (see Tacitus, *Annals*, XIII and XIV).

your rights has been manifested in many instances. Major Cartwright brought more than a million of signatures before the House of Commons, all praying for Parliamentary Reform. Those signatures were obtained peaceably and in small numbers, each paper containing about twenty names. But to this there was an objection: the number in each was too small. What was then to be done? Recourse was had to public meetings—but they were too numerous, and the military was called in. All this is proof of the necessity of Reform; in fact, it was never more required than at the present moment. I have examined, with great attention, the Acts of Parliament passed over the way, and I find that out of 158 public Acts, there is not one that has any tendency to ameliorate the condition of or protect the liberties of the people. I find the same remark is applicable to another class of measures, called private public acts. There remains after this but ninety-seven real private acts, and they are so very private, that I am sure the public will never receive the smallest benefit from them [applause and laughter]. The only act which had even the appearance of taking the public welfare into consideration was that by which a sum of 50,000l. was voted to enable British subjects to transport themselves to Africa, under a burning sun, for the purpose of fighting the jackalls and tygers of that country [laughter]; or where they would have an opportunity of sharing with the Caffres the remnants of food left by the tygers along the coasts of the different rivers. I feel it my duty—I feel it to be the duty of this Meeting to address his Royal Highness the Prince Regent for the purpose of stating our determination not to allow our rights and liberties to be infringed upon by Ministers, and to assure his Royal Highness that the people are determined to be fully, fairly, and freely represented in Parliament [cheers]. Having said so much, I shall now proceed to read to you the proposed Address.

[Hobhouse reads the resolution, and a petition to the Prince Regent; the resolution is carried; John Thelwall speaks; Gale Jones tries to speak but is not given a place and has to retire; Walker speaks; another resolution, to open a subscription for the victims of Manchester, is passed; another, congratulating Hunt on his behaviour at Manchester, is passed; Hobhouse gives a vote of thanks; Clarke gives another. At this point the Persian Ambassador drives up in a “chariot” and observes the meeting with “mingled wonder and approbation”; he bows to Burdett, who returns the bow, then he leaves, to cheering. Burdett returns thanks, leaves the hustings, and the meeting disperses. Three pickpockets are arrested during the meeting.]