

**BYRON'S CORRESPONDENCE AND JOURNALS 04:
FROM LONDON AND OTHER PLACES IN ENGLAND, 1813**

Edited by Peter Cochran

Work in progress, with frequent updates [indicated]. Letters not in the seventeen main files may be found in those containing the correspondences *Byron / Annabella*, *Byron / Murray*, *Byron / Hobhouse*, *Byron / Lady Melbourne*, *Byron / Moore*, *Byron / Scott*, *Byron / Kinnaird*, *Byron / The Shelleys*, or *Byron / Hoppner*.

UPDATED June 2012. My thanks to Paul Curtis for several corrections and contributions.

Abbreviations

B.: Byron; Mo: Moore; H.: Hobhouse; K.: Kinnaird; Mu.: Murray

1922: *Lord Byron's Correspondence Chiefly with Lady Melbourne, Mr Hobhouse, The Hon. Douglas Kinnaird, and P.B.Shelley* (2 vols., John Murray 1922).

BB: *Byron's Bulldog: The Letters of John Cam Hobhouse to Lord Byron*, ed. Peter W.Graham (Columbus Ohio 1984)

BLJ: Byron, George Gordon, Lord. *Byron's Letters and Journals*. Ed. Leslie A. Marchand, 13 vols. London: John Murray 1973–94.

CMP: *Lord Byron: The Complete Miscellaneous Prose*. Ed. Andrew Nicholson, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

CSS: *The Life and Correspondence of the Late Robert Southey*, ed. C.C.Southey, Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 6 vols 1849-1850.

Dowden: *The Letters of Thomas Moore*. Ed. Wilfred Dowden, 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964.

Gross: *Byron's Corbeau Blanc: The Life and Letters of Lady Melbourne*, Ed. Jonathan David Gross, Rice University Press, 1997

LJ: *The Works of Lord Byron, Letters and Journals*. Ed. R. E. Prothero, 6 vols. London: John Murray, 1899-1904.

LJM: *The Letters of John Murray to Lord Byron*. Ed. Andrew Nicholson, Liverpool University Press, 2007.

NLS: National Library of Scotland.

Q: *Byron: A Self-Portrait; Letters and Diaries 1798 to 1824*. Ed. Peter Quennell, 2 vols, John Murray, 1950.

Smiles: Samuel Smiles. *A Publisher and his Friends: Memoir and Correspondence of the late John Murray with an Account of the Origin and Progress of the House, 1768-1843*. 2 vols. London John Murray 1891.

READER!

This edition gives you a raw version of Byron's correspondence. As far as can be done in linear print, it conveys what he wrote and how he wrote it, before any editor got to it to neutralise him. **FEEL FREE TO MAKE IT MORE ACCOMMODATING BY EDITING IT YOURSELF.** Once you've shaded and copied it, you can: run through his page-breaks; expand his contractions and ampersands; delete his deletions; regularise his interlineations ... would you? dare you? *modernise his spelling?* (I hope not!); *regularise his capitalisation, so that students feel less bewildered than usual?* (I hope not!) – P.C.

POSTAGE

The recipient, not the sender, normally paid the postage: but as a peer, Byron used a frank, so in England his recipients got his letters free. However, I believe several of his "letters" to Murray from St James's Street, the Albany, or Piccadilly Terrace, are notes taken round by servants (as are those of

Murray to him). He does not have the franking privilege when abroad, and as the cost of postage is calculated by weight, he only uses an envelope when he is enclosing a manuscript. The address is written on side four, the sheet is folded and the wax stamped (“wafered”), and then Fletcher takes it to the post office.

A letter from Byron is usually a bifolium, with the following shape:

<p>Sheet 1 side 4: Text continued from side 3, above address</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AD DR ES S [<i>written at right angles</i>]</p> <p>Text continued below address Signature [<i>sometimes</i>]</p>	<p>Sheet 1 side 1:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Address and Date</p> <p>Salutation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEXT</p>
<p>Sheet 1 side 2:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEXT</p>	<p>Sheet 1 side 3:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TEXT</p> <p>Signature [<i>sometimes</i>]</p> <p>P.S. [<i>sometimes</i>]</p>

Sometimes the letter goes on to a second or even third sheet, which is either enclosed in the first bifolium, or placed at last in an envelope. The longest Byron letter that I have encountered so far is the one to John Murray, from Ravenna, August 1st 1819, which is on five sheets.

If he has too little paper to write all that he wants, Byron writes around the margin of side 3, starting at the bottom right-hand corner, curling up the right-hand side, and sometimes continuing inverted across the top and down the left-hand side. Sometimes he adds messages parallel to the address, either above it or below. I have always indicated these things.

Not all letters from Byron are the linear communications previous editors have seemed to indicate, but contain several discrete bundles of text in different places and at different angles.

If Byron leaves much of a letter blank, it's often a sign that he's angry with his addressee.

I am very grateful to John and Virginia Murray for permission to quote texts from *Byron's Letters and Journals*, ed. Leslie A. Marchand (John Murray 1973-1994).

Codes: **Names of writer and recipient are in bold type, with location from which sent, and date.**

(Source is given in round brackets beneath the title: “text from” indicates that the actual source has been seen).

Where the manuscript is the source, the text is left-justified only.

Where the source is a book, the text is left- and right-justified.

[The address, if there is one, is given in square brackets beneath the source]

“1:2” and so on indicates a page-turn on the bifolium.

“1:2 and 1:3 blank” shows that not all the paper has been used.

If Byron goes on to a second bifolium, or a second sheet, it's an occasion.

The address, if there is no envelope, is normally in the centre of 1:4.

<Authorial deletion>

<xxxxx> Irrecoverable authorial deletion

<deleted> Infra-red and ultra-violet might reveal something interesting

{Interlineated word or phrase}

E[ditorial] A[dditio]n

[] Illegible

Hyphens: where Byron has split a word over two sides, and used a double hyphen, the effect has been retained. But, as the text is not transcribed on a line-for-line basis (except in the case of Susan Vaughan's letters (for reasons explained at January 12th 1812), hyphens are not used when he splits a word over two lines. See April 3rd 1819 for another letter transcribed line-for-line.

Underlining: sometimes Byron underlines a whole word, sometimes single syllables (for comical effect, as in "Quarterlyers"), sometimes an entire phrase, and sometimes part of a word (from haste). In all cases except the last, where the whole word is underlined, we have tried to keep to his usage, underlining with a single understroke, with two understrokes, with a heavy underlining, or with a decorative line.

Signatures: As time goes on, Byron's signature becomes less careful, but then recovers. Few of his ways of signing off can be conveyed in print.

"Byron" indicates a word whose second syllable is both underlined and overlined.

"BN" indicates those two letters with different degrees of dash-decoration around them. Sometimes they appear Greek.

"[swirl signature]" indicates a bird's-nest effect which can with charity be read as a capital "B".

"[scrawl]" is a long wavy line, often starting as "y^{ts}" but with no other letters decipherable.

After the death of Lady Noel, Byron regains pride in his name, and often signs "N. B." with a decorative underlining.

Byron's Most Important Correspondents in this Section

Annabella Milbanke (1792-1860), the future Lady Byron

Augusta Byron, now Augusta Leigh (1783-1851) Byron's half-sister; the most important woman in his life

Catherine Gordon Byron (1765-1811), Byron's mother; dies, August 1811

Charles Skinner Matthews (17??-1811), gay Cambridge friend of Byron; dies, August 1811

Edward Daniel Clarke (1769-1822), much-travelled Cambridge don

Elizabeth Massingberd (17??-1812), Byron's landlady who introduced him to moneylenders

Frances Wedderburn Webster (17??-18??), wife to James

Francis Hodgson (1781-1852), Cambridge friend of Byron

Henry Drury (1778-1841), another Harrow friend of Byron

Henry Fox (17??-18??) lame son of Lord Holland. Future lover of Teresa Guiccioli.

James Henry Leigh Hunt (1784-1859), radical journalist

James Wedderburn Webster (17??-18??), inept friend of Byron

John Cam Hobhouse (1786-1869), Byron's close friend and travelling companion

John Galt (1779-1839), Scots novelist and playwright

John Hanson (17??-1841), Byron's solicitor and surrogate father

John Murray II (1778-1843), Byron's publisher, 1812-23

Lady Caroline Lamb (1785-1828), briefly Byron's lover

Lady Melbourne (1751-1818), Byron's confidante

Lord Holland (1773-1840), leader of the Whigs in the Lords; nephew of Charles James Fox

Madame de Staël (1766-1817), French authoress

Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818), author of *The Monk* and *The Castle Spectre*

Mercer Elphinstone (17??-18??) London's richest heiress, daughter of Admiral Keith

Robert Charles Dallas (1754-1824), Byron's early literary adviser, who introduces him to John Murray

Robert Rushton (17??-18??), Byron's page

Samuel Rogers (1763-1855), English poet, friend of Byron

Scrope Berdmore Davies (1782-1852), close Cambridge friend of Byron who lent him money for his Mediterranean travels and is now regretting it

Susan Vaughan (17??-18??), maidservant at Newstead, briefly Byron's lover

The Marquis of Sligo (1788-1845), Cambridge friend of Byron

Thomas Moore (1779-1852), Irish poet, close friend of Byron

Walter Scott (1771-1832), the only British writer to rival Byron in fame during this period

William Clark (17??-18??), Cambridge don

William Gifford (1756-1826), Murray's principal literary adviser; Byron's "literary father"

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LONDON JOURNAL, BEGUN NOVEMBER 14th, 1813

THE CORRESPONDENCE

1813: From March to December, *The Giaour* is published in editions of increasing length. At the year's end Byron writes *The Bride of Abydos* and starts *The Corsair*. He is much in Whig society; he meets Madame de Staël. His liaison with his half-sister Augusta starts, he flirts with Frances Wedderburn Webster, and begins marriage overtures to Annabella Milbanke. *The Bride of Abydos* is published on December 2nd.

Byron to Anna Maria Barrow, January 1813 (?):

(Source: this text from BLJ III 5)

Mrs Barrow was the wife of Sir John Barrow, who would in 1815 suggest that Napoleon be sent to St Helena.

Thursday Noon

Ld. Byron will have the Honour of accepting Mrs. Barrow's' polite Invitation for Tuesday next.

Byron to the Earl of Clare,¹ January 1813 (?):

(Source: this text from BLJ III 5)

I hope—and indeed am not aware—that any *harm* has been or can be done on the subject which alarms you—but if any does exist the lame & the punishment (no slight one self reproach) both must be mine—for I cannot perceive how you can participate in either—unless you regret having wished in common with all the connections & even acquaintances of these untoward personages—that it could be made up between them if only for the comfort of their sisters & cousins to say nothing of themselves.—If in my eagerness upon a topic which has been a *Dragon* to me these last 7 years—I have by word or letter said or caused you to say anything which has given you a moment's uneasiness I shall not soon forgive myself—though I hope you will—and now My dearest C I lay aside all my plans & imaginations—& drop the subject altogether—trusting that time or chance will bring about a reconciliation between them.—My wish to have seen you before you went to Paris arose first because I don't see you very often and next because you are one of the few people with whom I could talk on the subject—& some other reasons not worth mentioning.—

The Marquis of Sligo to Byron, early 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4227)

Tuesday

My dear Byron,

There is in this town a Greek of the name of Janier who was formerly in the French Mamaluke Guard but who left it in consequence of a dispute with a superior officer. He has been since an agent of Government here but finding his salary so very uncertain and in short being now in state of poverty he

1: "As to friendship ... I do not know the *male* human being, except Lord Clare ... for whom I feel anything that deserves the name" (B. to Mary Shelley, November 6th 1822).

wishes very much to engage himself to any one who is going abroad: It has struck me that you might like such a person² he is about 30, very active, a native of Smirna, (his family I knew there) speaks English French German Spanish Italian, Greek, Arabic, & Turkish: He says he is ready to do anything to make himself servicable and in short he only wishes to be rewarded according as he is useful to you: He is a gentleman, has dined here very often, was confidential & private interpreter to Marshall Brun when he was Ambassador in Con[stantin]ople, but says he will do every thing & any thing he can to serve & accommodate any one he goes with. I have known him for three or four years & can answer for his being a very clever fellow: if therefore you should like to engage such a man to accompany you I will either send him to you to call on you or will make him dine here³ on Friday next if you will come & meet him: if you do not wish to have anything to say to him pray come along here at any rate to dine here: I have engaged a man of the name of Beechy a son of Sir W Beechy to accompany me as an artist: and have almost concluded an engagement for a Physician: he that was with Lady Hester has left her & is practising at Aleppo now: I think you will find my Greek of service to you, I am sure I should have never scrupled at taking him myself for one moment were it not that from having Ludolf an artist & Physician with me he would swell my party too much.

Yours very sincerely
Sligo

I get out on the 6th when I shall go to Ireland immediately & not return here till just before I set off in September so pray let me see you before then if you can not dine here on Friday.

Byron to Francis Hodgson, February 3rd 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ II 186-9; QI 160-1; BLJ III 6-8)

February 3, 1813.

My Dear Hodgson,—I will join you in any bond for the money you require, be it that or a larger sum. With regard to security, as Newstead is in a sort of abeyance between sale and purchase, and my Lancashire property very unsettled, I do not know how far I can give more than personal security, but what I can I will. At any rate you can try, and as the sum is not very considerable, the chances are favourable. I hear nothing of my own concerns, but expect a letter daily. Let me hear from you where you are and will be this month. I am a great admirer of the *R[ejected]. A[ddresses].*, though I have had so great a share in the cause of their publication, and I like the *C[hilde]. H[arold].* imitation one of the best. Lady Oxford has heard me talk much of you as a relative of the Cokes, etc., and desires me to say she would be happy to have the pleasure of your acquaintance. You must come and see me at K[insham]. I am sure you would like *all* here if you knew them.

The “Agnus”⁴ is furious. You can have no idea of the horrible and absurd things she has said and done since (really from the best motives) I withdrew my homage. “Great pleasure” is, certes, my object, but “*why brief, Mr. Wild?*”⁵ I cannot answer for the future, but the past is pretty secure; and in it I can number the last two months as worthy of the gods in *Lucretius*. I cannot review in the “*Monthly*,” in fact I can just now do nothing, at least with a pen; and I really think the days of Authorship are over with me altogether. I hear and rejoice in Eland’s and Merivale’s intentions.

Murray has grown great, and has got him new premises in the fashionable part of the town.

We live here so shut out of the *monde* that I have nothing of general import to communicate, and fill this up with a “happy new year,” and drink to you and Drury.

Ever yours, dear H.,
B.

I have no intention of continuing “*Childe Harold*.” There are a few additions in the “body of the book” of description, which will merely add to the number of pages in the next edition. I have taken Kinsham Court. The business of last summer I broke off, and now the amusement of the gentle fair is writing letters literally threatening my life, and much in the style of “Miss Mathews” in “*Amelia*,” or “Lucy” in the “*Beggar’s Opera*.” Such is the reward of restoring a woman to her family, who are treating her with the greatest kindness, and with whom I am on good terms. I am still in *palatia Circes*,⁶ and, being no Ulysses, cannot tell into what animal I may be converted; as you are aware of the turn of both parties, your conjectures will be very correct, I daresay, and, seriously, I am very much *attached*. She has had her share of the denunciations of the brilliant Phryne, and regards them as much as I do. I hope

2: With Sligo, B. is planning another trip to the Levant. It never happens.

3: “Here” is Newgate, where Sligo was held between December 1812 and March 1813.

4: “Lamb”.

5: The phrase is actually “But pray, Mr. Wild, why bitch?” Fielding, *Jonathan Wild*, III 8.

6: “... with Lady Oxford”.

you will visit me at K. which will not be ready before spring, and I am very sure you would like my neighbours if you knew them. If you come down now to Kington, pray come and see me.

Byron to the Princess of Wales, February 10th 1813:

(Source: this text from BLJ III 18)

Byron's only known letter to Royalty.

Fy. 10th. 1813

Madam—I had the honour of complying with your R[oyal] Highness's commands in a letter to Sir F[rancis] B[urdett] which I forwarded early this morning.—In this I stated to the best of my memory the substance of the conversation with which I was last night honoured.—From *myself* I presumed to offer no opinion whatever, conceiving that your R[oyal] H[ighness]'s wishes neither required nor could derive weight from any suggestions of mine.—If Sir F. B. condescends to consult me on the subject I shall undoubtedly state my sentiments in the same manner in which they were expressed to yr. R[oyal] Highness.—Of this for the present I have no opportunity —as Sir F. B. left town early this morning.—Your R[oyal] H[ighness]'s letter is forwarded by this Evening's post to Oxford.—I shall ever feel proud & happy in obeying any commands with which I may be honoured.—It is the smallest return I can make for many most obliging marks of your condescension.—I have the honour to be with the highest respect

yr. Royal Highness's most dutiful & humble St.
BYRON

To Her Rl. Hs.

The Princess of Wales &c. &c. &c.

Late March 1813: first (private) edition of *The Giaour* published.

Lady Melbourne to Byron, March 25th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4150A; Gross 140-1)

Lady Melbourne's handwriting is almost as impenetrable as Lady Bessborough's. Byron must have got used to it after a time.

25th March
1813

D^r L^d B.

As you say, C certainly prevents my dropping y^r. Acquaintance, tho' I beg once for all to state y^t if there was no Caroline in y^e World – it is y^e very last Acquaintance I should wish to drop – & never will unless I am drop'd –

She writes to me more reasonably to day, reproaches me with wishing to “leave her in the lurch”, as she can depend upon no one but me – this alludes to y^e Picture⁷ & the

1:2

Letters which she now says she will give up to me provided I will pledge my Word to have a copy taken of the Miniature – I have ans'd this by y^e post to day, first stating that I never left any one in y^e lurch in my life – (I am very tenacious of my honor – you see) & that if she chuses to give me the Picture on these conditions, they shall be fullfill'd before I trust it out of my possession – I neither ask'd for it nor seem'd anxious to have it, as y^t would certainly have prevented her giving it me – she then bids me recollect the Hair⁸ & this is ye purpose of my writing – do send me some for the little bits, I took by force

1:3

will not Satisfy her – & really when a Lady condescends to make Such a fuss, for such a trifle – it is not for a Gentleman to faire le difficile & really by y^r reluctance to have y^r Hair touched, or to part with any of it, – I am tempted to think there is some particular charm attached to it – & y^t some of y^r powers will be lessen'd, I will not say lost, if you granted all y^e requests of that sort made to you – something like Sampson She has sent me a copy of part of y^r Letter, you told me she had sent you. What a wicked Man!!!!

13th of August – What is rather odd is, y^t from a

7: Caroline Lamb had stolen B.'s picture from Murray. B. wants it back.

8: Caroline wanted a lock of B.'s hair in exchange for the picture; he sent her a lock, twined with one of Lady Oxford's.

1:4

particular circumstance not connected with you, I know where we were on y^e day – it was y^e Night you had the Spasm at M^f Dicks – & I now discover that was a punishment for y^f perjuries – but whether sent from Allah, or another person, – I can not pretend to determine – You must so often have taken them separately as y^f philosophy on Similar Occasions, y^f you may know, which punishes most Severely – next time take fever he'll do you no harm – what a fool I am, but let me have my laugh while I can – & all this nonsense will make me too late for Dinner

Y^{rs} ever E M**Byron to Lord Holland, March 25th 1813:**

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.51639 ff.125-6; BLJ III 30-1)

March 25th. 1813 –

My dear Lord –

I regret very much the cause of my yesterday's loss – & trust that it exists no longer. – I leave town on Sunday – it will not therefore be in my power to have the pleasure of meeting you {on Wednesday next} – but I will not leave this country without taking you by the hand & thanking you for many kindnesses. – The fact is I can do no good anywhere – & am too patriotic – not to prefer doing ill in any country rather than my own. – Where I am

1:2

going – I cannot positively say – & it is no great matter – “there is a world beyond Rome”⁹ and all parts of it are much the same to a personage with few friendships & no connections. – My affairs are also not in the most brilliant order – & the sins of my nonage sit heavy upon my majority – I thought the sale of Newstead would relieve these – but it has merely led me within gunshot of a lawsuit. – I have neither the verve nor the “copia fandi” to rival L^d. Ellenborough in Molochlike declamation {in the house} – & without occupation of some kind I cannot exist – travel therefore is the only pursuit left me – though I

1:3

have some notion of taking orders. – “Naxos” I may perhaps visit – but “Cyprus” – is an Island I have long been sick of. – I heard today that L^y. Holland is much better & need not say that I hope my information was correct – pray make my best respects acceptable to her. – Believe me y^f. ever obliged
& sincere S^t.

Byron

Byron to Samuel Rogers, March 27th 1813:

(Source: this text from BLJ III 33)

M[arc]h 27th. 1813

Dear Rogers—I send you some of my obscurities—one of which I should like to give to Moore & the other to Mr. R. P. K—I *dare* not write his name at length.—The others to any of your fair or bearded acquaintance you think proper.—If you think the picture you saw at Murrays worth your acceptance it is yours—& you can put a glove or a masque on it if you like.

ever yrs

B

Lady Oxford to John Murray, March 27th 1813:

(Source: NLS Acc.12604 / 4250)

[1813 March 2<9/>7th / Countess of Oxford / 1813 / Maidenhead March twenty ninth / Mr. Murray / Albemarle Street / London / **Byron**]

A rare glimpse of Lady Oxford's handwriting.

Sir,

As Lord Byron approved of having Childe Harold illustrated by an able Artist – I lost no time in speaking to M^f Westall on the Subject who will undertake the work with great pleasure.

The little fragment of the “Giaour” abounds with beautiful subjects for a painter, M^f Westall was delighted with it – and I promise myself much pleasure in having the imagery so ably delineated.

9: Shakespeare, *Coriolanus* III iii 137, (adapted).

We think also of adding two or three more portraits.

I am Sir /
yr sert.

J.E. Oxford & Mortimer

Salt Hill – Saturday night

Byron to Samuel Rogers, March 28th 1813:

(Source: text from UCL Library, Sharpe Papers 18 / 116-17; LJ II 195-6; BLJ III 29-30)

March 28th. 1813 –

My dear Rogers

I enclose you a draft for the usurious interest due to L^d. B's¹⁰ protégé. – I also could wish you would state thus much for me to his Lordship. – Though the transaction speaks plainly in itself for {the} borrower's folly & the lender's usury – it never was my intention to quash the <xxxxx/>demand as I legally might nor to withhold payment

1:2

of principal or perhaps even unlawful interest. – You know what my situation has been – & what it is – I have parted with an estate (which has been in my family for nearly three hundred years & was never disgraced by being in possession of a lawyer – a churchman – or a woman – during that period) to liquidate this & similar demands – & the payment of the purchaser is still

1:3

withheld – & may be perhaps for years. – If therefore I am under the necessity of making these persons wait for their money (which considering the terms they can afford to suffer) <the> it is my misfortune. When I arrived at majority in 1809 – I offered my own security on legal interest – & it was refused – now I will not accede to this. – This man I may have seen – but I have no recollection of the

1:4

names of any parties but the agents & securities. – The moment I can – it is assuredly my intention to pay my debts – this person's case may be a hard one – but under all circumstances what is mine? I could not foresee that the purchaser of my estate was to demur in paying for it – I am glad it happens to be in my power so far to accommodate my Israelite – & only wish I could do as much for the rest of the twelve tribes. – ever y^{rs}. dear R.

BN.

The Marquis of Sligo to Byron, March 31st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4227)

Private

London March 31st 1813

My Dear Byron

Edwards has this moment brought me your letter it having been opened as the seal was broke: I will shew him the coat but I would not hardly recommend you to get so gay a one I mean to leave mine at home and take out a plain one with a little gold lace round the button holes as that will suit much better. In Persia or India or Sicily or Sardinia we should meet English officers in which case it would not be pleasant to be seen in such a Gimcrack coat I am going to have a regular South Mayo {militia} Uniform made at Davidsons¹¹ and if you should on consideration prefer such a one I can give permission to you to wear it.¹² Your Sailor could see it there: I have found a Doctor Clarke; his father was an eminent Man at Newcastle and unfortunately shot a man of the name of Payne who was of Trinity and who seduced his sister: He is a most gentlemanlike man and I will conclude with him if you give me a commission so to do by return of post: I have seen the performance of a Mr Morton and as that is more difficult to judge of, taste being every thing I will leave him to call on you when you return to town: Pray let me hear from you when you have made up your mind about your departure for

10: Lord Borington.

11: On January 26th 1815 B. pays "Mr Davidson" £120.

12: Sligo was Lord Lieutenant of Mayo.

foreign parts: and let me hope & intreat that nothing may persuade you to remain as at present or rather with the present party.¹³ I shall be at Athens in November to a certainty and most sincerely hope to meet you there: Let me know also by return of post what I am to do about that Mr Janier the Greek who is anxious to hear from you and comes to me every day to learn

Yours very sincerely

Sligo

Byron to Lord Holland, from Eywood, April 3rd 1813:

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.51639 ff.131-2; BLJ III 34-5)

Eywood. April 3^d. 1813

My dear Lord –

As I must be in town (perhaps in a short time) to make many arrangements before my voyage I yet hope to see you before I go & trouble you with “more last words”. – The causes of my going I explained to you – indeed – they were of too little consequence to anyone but myself – for me to wish them to be kept secret. – There are also other reasons not worth mentioning that may induce me to hasten my expedition – in the meantime the snows of an English Spring now falling around

1:2

me add one more inducement to reconcile me to expatriation. – I feel not less sensible to the kindness of your letter than to every part of your conduct which preceded it – to thank you would be endless. – It pleases me much that you like “the Giaour” of which I had great doubts – the measure is by no means after my own heart but perhaps the fittest for such a thing – & if I erred in the adoption of it – it was the meeting between Cortes & Pizarro in the beautiful fragment in Rogers’s notes to Columbus – which led me astray – & it

1:3

is an unfortunate propensity of the rhyming genus to wish to imitate what they despair of equalling. – The story was too long in all its’ details to make anything of but the disjointed fragments you saw & I have neither the time nor the impetus to make a poem of it – the incidents are founded I believe on facts – & made an impression on my memory when I heard them – which at last in an idle evening broke forth into that rhapsody with all their Turkish & Arabesque accompaniments which crept in to the puzzlement I doubt not of the reader – for these I can offer no excuse – if they can be pronounced it

1:4

is more than my due. – – – –

If I push forward to Greece or Persia it is not improbable that the want of better employment may lead me on to further scribbling – if so your wishes for my success will be a spur to my Pegasus “where giant Kaff protrudes his granite toes”.¹⁴ But I think my migrations will be more circumscribed & of no long duration – & I am sufficiently grateful for the favour already shewn without drawing further on the purse & patience of the “gentle reader”. With the hope of soon seeing Lady Holland & yourself as well as I wish you believe me my dear Lord ever truly your

obliged & affectionate
&^c.

Byron

The Marquis of Sligo to Byron, April 5th 1813:¹⁵

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4227)

[Lord Byron / No 4 Bennet St / St James’s / Sligo]

April <6/>5th 1813

My Dear Byron

I have given Dr Clarke a letter of introduction to you; he lives at No 36 Craven Street Strand! Mr Mortozs drawing I have seen, he lives at No 15 {Lower} Eaton St Pimlico. You had better write to them when you reach town. Pray write me a line to Westport Ireland when you have made up your mind about going

Yours in Haste

Most truly Sligo

13: Caroline Lamb.

14: Quotation unidentified; compare DJ VI, 86, 8.

15: On April 10th 1813 Sligo’s mother married Sir William Scott, the judge who had sentenced him.

Some time before April 1813: Waltz published.**Byron to Lady Davy, from London, May 15th 1813:**

(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 48)

Evidence of Byron's reading of Maria Edgeworth, with whom Lady Davy (wife to Sir Humphrey) intends he should breakfast.May 15th. 1813.Dear L^y. Davy –

I will be punctual to the hour on Monday morn^g. but I fear I shall not be in town on y^e 23^d. which will deprive me of a great pleasure. – – My nerves will I trust be adequate to encounter this awful introduction – I have no apprehensions of the temper of “Griselda”¹⁶ but I

1:2

confess myself rather appalled by the wit of “L^y. Delacour”¹⁷ & the sense of “Miss Nugent”¹⁸ – though it is some consolation that in such company I shall at all events run no risk of “Ennui”. – – With my best compliments to Sir Humphry I have the honour to be

y^t. obliged
& faithful Sv^t.

Byron

To

The Lady Davy
&^c. &^c.

Byron to John Murray, May 23rd 1813:

(Source: text from B.L.Ashley 2623 f.18; BLJ III 51)

[J. Murray Esqr^e]May 23^d 1813

Dear Sir

I question whether ever author before received such a compliment – from his master – I am glad you think the thing¹⁹ is totally vamped & will be vendible. – Pray look over the proof again – I am but a careless reviser – & let me have 12 struck off &

1:2

one or two for yourself to serve as M.S. for the thing when published in the body of the volume. If L^y. –²⁰ sends for it – do not let her have it – till the copies are all ready & then send her one. –

y^{rs}. truly
μβαρον

P.S.

H's book²¹ is out – at last – I have my copy – which I have lent already.

[1:3 blank.]

Byron to John Murray, June 1813 (?):

(Source: text from B.L.Egerton 2075; BLJ III 54)

Dear Sir – Can you keep the proofs standing a day for the G^r? if so – I will send you a few more lines –
ever yrs

B

June 5th 1813: first public edition of *The Giaour* published; 684 lines.

16: From *The Modern Griselda*.

17: From *Belinda*.

18: From *The Absentee*.

19: The first, 453-line version of *The Giaour*.

20: “Caroline Lamb”.

21: *A Journey through Albania, and other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia, to Constantinople, during the years 1809 and 1810*, H.'s account of their Mediterranean adventures.

John Cam Hobhouse to Byron, from Gothenburg, June 4th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43441 f.31; BB 115-16)

[To, / The Lord Byron / 4 Bennet Street / S^t James S^t / London / England]**The first of only two letters Hobhouse writes to Byron from abroad.**

Gottenburgh – June 4.

My dear Byron /

After a week's passage, during which I was alarmed with a qualm of body from sea shaking and with one of mind from some suspected gun boats off the Skaw point in Jutland, I am arrived at this place of which I shall only say that as to the eye & the nose it much resembles one of the Lisbon wharfs – By some strange fatality a sail which spoilt our appetites for dinner on board the packet on Monday last, turned out to be the Woodlark brig, Cap^t. G– Byron whose voice I recognized, but he being just then in

1:2

chance of an unfortunate corn boat I did not hail him – Just now however he bounced into my grimy apartment & after a thousand convulsions of laughter has let me into all the particulars of his late life – He is going to dine with me – but he has not come. He wants you to come over here and so do I – I do indeed wish that you would change your plan and meet me at S^t Petersburg at any time which you may choose to appoint – Any scheme which you may choose to pursue for going to the East might be followed up to much greater advantage and without a long sea voyage by <going> going through Russia to Moscow & Constantinople, or through Russia to Astracan – I have made every enquiry here of more than one

1:3

person, and especially of a gentleman resident in S^t Petersburg for many years, and I learn that there is no postern of the Russian empire through which a traveller may not pass with the greatest security and comparative ease. I beg you to think of this – you will save going so far by sea, and you may return by the Levant. Nothing would make me so happy as to be your fellow traveller. I pant after it as the hart for water brooks (as Davies would say) – As for travelling here, it appears that the difficulties are trifling in comparison with those which we encountered you may bring what luggage you like – do not be charmed with Greece again – direct to me, Mess^{rs} Lowe and Smith, Gottenburgh – I am going on to Stralsund, and, if they do not run too fast after this battle of Bautzen (a sad affair) to the

1:4

Russian head quarters – You shall have another letter immediately – let me have a line from you – ever most truly & affect'ly yours

John C. Hobhouse –

Byron to Francis Hodgson, June 6th 1813:(Source: Ms. not found; text from *Memoir of the Rev. Francis Hodgson, B.D.* (Macmillan, 1878) I pp.275-6; LJ II 214-15; BLJ III 57)

My dear Hodgson,—I write to you a few lines on business. Murray has thought proper at his own risk, and peril, and profit (if there be any) to publish the 'Giaour'; and it may possibly come under your ordeal in the 'Monthly.' I merely wish to state that in the published copies there are additions to the amount of ten pages, *text* and *margin* (*chiefly* the last), which render it a little less unfinished (but more unintelligible) than before. If, therefore, you review it, let it be from the published copies and not from the first sketch. I shall not sail for this month, and shall be in town again next week, when I shall be happy to hear from but more glad to see you. You know I have no time or turn for correspondence(!) But you also know, I hope, that I am not the less

Yours ever,
ΜΠΑΙΡΩΝ.**Byron to Francis Hodgson, June 8th 1813:**

(Source: text from B.L.Ashley 2623; LJ II 215; BLJ III 59)

June 8th 1813

My dear Hodgson – In town for a night I find your card – I had written to you at Cambridge merely to say that Murray has thought it expedient to publish y^c. Giaour at his own risk (& reimbursement if he can) & that as it will probably be in y^r. department in y^c. Monthly – I wished to state that in the published copies there are additions to the tune of 300 lines or so towards the end – & if reviewed it should not be from the privately printed copy – So much for scribbling. – I shall manage to see you somewhere before I sail which will be next month – till then I am yours here – & afterwards any where & every where

dear H[odgson] tutto tuo
[swirl signature]

Byron to John Murray, June 12th 1813:

(Source: text from Bodleian Ms. Montagu d.17 f.15r.-v.; BLJ III 60-61, extended version)

June 12th. 1813 –

Dear Sir –

How does Hobhouse's wish go on, or rather off – for that is the essential part – In yesterday's paper, & immediately under an advertisement on "Strictures in the urethra" – I see most appropriately consequent – a poem with strictures on Lord Byron – M^r Southey and others – though I am afraid neither M^r Southey's poetical distemper nor mine, nor others is of the suppressive or stranguinary

1:2

kind – You may send me the prescription of this kill or cure physician – the medicine is compounded at <xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> White's Fleet Street – As I have nothing else to do, I may enjoy it, like Sir Fretful – or the Archbishop of Granada, or any other personage in like predicament – Recollect that my lacquey returns in the evening, and that I set out {for} Portsmouth tomorrow – – All here are very well and much pleased with your politeness

1:3

during their say in town –
Believe me
ever yours truly
Byron

[1:4 blank.]

Byron to Francis Hodgson, from 4 Bennett Street London, June 8th 1813:

[To / Francis Hodgson Esqr^c / 1 Searle Street / Lincoln's Inn / Bⁿ / June 1<6/>8th.

(Source: text from B.L.Ashley 2623 ff.20-1; BLJ III 59)

June 8th. 1813 –

My dear Hodgson –

In town for a night I find your <lett> card – I had written to you at Cambridge merely to say that Murray has thought it expedient to publish y^c. Giaour at his own risk (& reimbursement if he can) & that as it will probably be in y^r. department in y^c. Monthly – I wished to state that in the published copies there are additions to the tune of 300 lines or so towards the end – & if reviewed it should not be from the privately printed copy – So much for scribbling. – I shall manage to see you somewhere

1:2

before I sail which will be next month – till then I am yours here – & afterwards any where & every where

dear H tutto tuo
[swirl signature]

[side 3 blank.]

Byron to Edward Daniel Clarke, from 4, Bennet Street, London, June 17th 1813:

(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 62-3)

4 Bennet Street
St. James's –

June 17th.
1813

My dear Sir

On my return to town from Portsmouth I found your very kind letter. – If you knew how very vain your praise renders me I believe you would be less liberal of it – much less than you have said were enough (from you) to turn my head. – Ecce signum²² – I have ordered M^y. to send you three copies²³ in which you will find an addition towards the <lend> end of nearly 300 lines – M^y. has thought proper at his own peril (& profit if there be any) to

1:2

publish it – contrary to my original intention – the copy sent to you was the first sketch printed off like “the Curse” merely for the “benevolent few” the present copies are as published – two for yourself & any friend – & the other for M^f. Smyth – whatever his judgement may be – it will in no way detract from my esteem for his character & talents. – I trust your third will be out before I sail next month²⁴ – can I say or do anything for you in the Levant? I am now in all the agonies of equipment – & full of schemes some impracticable & most of them improbable – but I mean to fly “freely to the

1:3

green earth’s end”²⁵ though not quite so fast as Milton’s sprite – – My companion is a gentleman whom I should regard were it for nothing else but bearing your name²⁶ – so auspicious to travel – a name for which you have done as much {though} in a different department as the great suspected Arian who refused Archbishoprics.²⁷ – – Believe me ever

most truly

y^f. obliged & faithful S^t.

Byron

Byron to William Gifford, from 4, Bennet Street, London, June 18th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4246; LJ II 221-2; BLJ III 63-4)

June 18th. 1813 –

My dear Sir –

I feel greatly at a loss how to write to you at all – still more to thank you as I ought. – If you knew the veneration with which I have ever regarded you long before I had the most distant prospect of becoming your acquaintance literary or personal – my embarrassment would not surprize you. – Any suggestion of yours even were it conveyed in the less tender shape of the text of the

1:2

Baviad²⁸ or a Monk Mason²⁹ note in Massinger³⁰ would have been obeyed – I should have endeavoured to improve myself by your censure – judge then – if I shall be less willing to profit by your kindness. – It is not for me to bandy compliments with my elders & my betters – I receive your approbation with gratitude – & will not return my brass for your Gold by expressing more fully those sentiments of admiration which however

1:3

sincere would I know be unwelcome. – – –

To your advice on Religious topics I shall equally attend – perhaps the best way will be by avoiding them altogether – the already published objectionable passages have been much commented upon – but certainly have been rather strongly interpreted – I am no Bigot to Infidelity – & did not expect that

22: Shakespeare; Falstaff at *Henry IV* I II iv 160 app.

23: Of *The Giaour*, first edition.

24: The third volume of Clarke’s *Travels* did not come out until 1815.

25: Milton, *Comus*, l.1014.

26: William Clarke of Trinity College Cambridge. The expedition did not take place.

27: A very learned reference to Samuel Clarke (1675-1729) who was accused of Arianism.

28: G.’s satirical poem was published in 1791.

29: John Monck Mason had edited Massinger’s *Works* in 1779.

30: G. had edited Massinger’s *Works* earlier in 1813, taking issue with Mason’s editing.

because I doubted the immortality of Man – I should be charged with denying y^c. existence of a God. –
It was the com=

1:4

=parative {insignificance} of ourselves & our world when placed in competition with the mighty whole of which it is an atom that first led me to imagine that our pretensions to eternity might be overrated – –

This – & being early disgusted with a Calvinistic Scotch School where I was cudgelled to Church for the first ten years of my life³¹ – afflicted me with this malady – for after all it is I believe a disease of the mind as much as other kinds of Hypochondria. – – – –

2:1

I regret to hear you talk of ill health – may you long exist! not only to enjoy your own fame but outlive that of fifty such ephemeral adventurers as myself. –

As I do not sail quite so soon as Murray may have led you to expect (not till July) I trust I have some chance of taking you by the hand before my departure – & repeating in person how sincerely & affectionately I am

y^f. obliged Ser^t.
Byron

[2:2 blank.]

Byron to John Murray, from 4, Bennet Street, London, June 19th 1813:

(Source: this text from BLJ III 65)

Byron is expanding *The Giaour*.

June 19th. 1813

Dear Sir—You will perceive by the first lines of the enclosed of what part of the text it is a continuation—the 4th line is also altered from the published copy—the rest are all new—& will be printed accordingly

yrs. ever
[swirl signature]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from 4, Bennet Street, London, June 22nd 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 409; LJ II 223; BLJ III 66-7)

June 22. 1813.

Yesterday I dined in company with ‘[Madame de Staël], the Epicene,’ whose politics are sadly changed. She is for the Lord of Israel and the Lord of Liverpool—a vile antithesis³² of a Methodist and a Tory—talks of nothing but devotion and the ministry, and, I presume, expects that God and the government will help her to a pension.

Murray, the *avaç* of publishers, the Anac of stationers,³³ has a design upon you in the paper line. He wants you to become the staple and stipendiary editor of a periodical work. What say you? Will you be bound, like “Kit Smart, to write for ninety-nine years in the *Universal Visitor*?”³⁴ Seriously he talks of hundreds a year, and—though I hate prating of the beggarly elements—his proposal may be to your honour and profit, and, I am very sure, will be to our pleasure.

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

Yours, &c.

Early July 1813: second edition of *The Giaour* published; 816 lines.

31: B. writes for sensational effect. See Christine Kenyon Jones, ‘I was Bred a Moderate Presbyterian’: Byron, Thomas Chalmers and the Scottish Religious Heritage, in Stabler and Hopps (eds.) *Romanticism and Religion from William Cowper to Wallace Stevens* (2006).

32: Pope, *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, l.325.

33: Biblical; e.g., Numbers 13:33. A term of praise.

34: Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 1775: Aetat 66 (paraphrased).

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 4, Bennet Street, London, July 1st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470; 1922 I 162-3; BLJ III 70)

July 1st. 1813 –Dear L^y. M^c.

I will endeavour to be precise as if I were to meet a more than friend or an enemy. – –
 At last (at a pretty time you will say) I declared to C— my real sentiments about L^y.—³⁵ & I think they had a good effect. – Do you know I am Constancy in the abstract – & am much more faithful to people on the “high seas” than if they were on shore – I suppose from my natural love of contradiction & paradox. – Tomorrow the Newstead Cause comes on in Chancery –

1:2

but I shall not embarrass myself about such trifles – for I have got to stand for my picture – & to sit with my Sister – & to drive to you – all which are matters more to my taste & equally to my profit. – – I missed you last night – our party had all the refuse of the Regent & the Red book – – – Bedfords – Jerseys – Ossulstones – Greys & the like – but the sexes separated – the women were tied back to back upon half a dozen woosacks in the middle of the room hating each other & talking – & the Men were sprinkled round the corners in dull duets – Rogers fell

1:3

to my share – & we abused every body – Your Frederick (by the bye your introduction has done wonders for we never speak) followed the degenerate example – every body seemed to have lost an acquaintance – I never saw anything like it but a print from a scene in Dante’s Inferno – which I leave you to guess. – – – –

I want a she voucher for a ticket to the A. Masque³⁶ – tomorrow – it is for my Sister who I hope will go with me – I wish she were not married for – (now I have no house to keep) she would {have} been so good a housekeeper. Poor soul – she likes her husband – I think her thanking you for your

1:4

abetment of her abominable marriage (7 years after the <event> {event}!!) is the only instance of similar gratitude upon record. – However now she is married I trust she will remain so. –

ever y^{rs}. dear L^y. M^cBN**Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 4, Bennet Street, London, July 6th 1813:**

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470; 1922 I 164-5; QI 164-5; BLJ III 71)

Byron writes on paper smaller than usual, and shrinks his handwriting to accommodate.July 6th. 1813 –My dear L^y. M^c –

God knows what has happened – but at 4 in the morning L^y. Ossulstone looking angry (& at that moment ugly) delivered to me a confused kind of message from you of some scene – this is all I know – except that with laudable logic she drew the usual feminine deduction that I “must have behaved very ill”. – – –

If L^y. C is offended it really must be anger at my not affronting her – for one of the few things I said was a request to know her will & pleasure – if

1:2

there was anything I could say do or not do to give her the least gratification – she walked away without answering – & after leaving me in this not very dignified situation – & showing her independence to twenty people near – I only saw her dancing – & in the doorway for a moment – where she said something so very violent – that I was in distress lest L^d. Y.³⁷ or L^y. Rancliffe overheard her – I went to Supper – & saw & heard no more till L^y. Ossulstone told me your words & her own opinion – & here I am in stupid

35: Lady Oxford.

36: The masque at Almack’s.

37: Lord Yarmouth.

1:3

innocence & ignorance of my offence or her proceedings. – –

If I am to {be} haunted with hysterics wherever I go – & whatever I do – I think she is not the only person to be pitied. – I should have returned to her after her doorway whisper – but I could not with any kind of politeness leave L^y. Rancliffe to drown herself in wine & water or be suffocated in a Jelly=dish – without a spoon or a hand to help her – besides – if there was & I foresaw there would be something ridiculous – surely I was better absent than present. –

1:4

This is really insanity – & every body seems inoculated with the same distemper – L^y. W—³⁸ says “you must have done something – you know between people in your situation – a word or a look goes a great way” &^c. &^c. – so it seems indeed – but I never knew that neither words nor looks – in short – downright – innocent – vacant – indefinable **Nothing** had the same precious power of producing this perpetual worry. I wait to hear from you – in case I have to answer you – I trust nothing has occurred to spoil your breakfast – for which the Regent has got a fine day. –

Byron to Thomas Moore, from Bennet Street, London, July 8th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 410-11; LJ II 228-30; QI 165-6; BLJ III 72-3)

4. Benedictine Street, St. James’s, July 8. 1813.

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

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

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

Byron to Dr William Clark, from London, July 11th 1813:

(Source: text from Wren Library R2 40, Trinity College Cambridge; BLJ III 74)

[— Clarke Esqre / 36 Craven Street]

July 11th. 1813

Dear Sir

Our sailing day is the 30th & it will be proper we should be quite ready to leave London on the 25th. Pray let me see you as soon as convenient or I will call if it suits you better. –

ever y^{rs}.
B. –

Thomas Moore to Byron, from Mayfield Cottage, Derbyshire, July 11th 1813:

38: Lady Westmoreland.

(Source: NLS Acc.12604 / 4159; not in Dowden; my thanks to Jeffery Vail for his help)

Unpublished. Moore answers the last item but one.

Mayfield Cottage
Sunday Night

My dear Byron – I do not at all re[*Ms. tear*: “pe”]nt of my silence, as I think I am indeb[*Ms. tear*: “te”]d to it for your letter, which perhaps never [*Ms. tear*: “wo”]uld have come if it had been called for in [*Ms. tear*: “the”] regular course of answer, reply and re=[*Ms. tear*: “??”]der – for I rather think that, in every [*Ms. tear*: “??”]ion of life, you are one of those that like better to volunteer, than to serve regularly in the ranks – but the same time, I must give you warning that I do not intend to trust too much to this volunteering spirit of yours in our future correspondence, but I shall press you home with letter for letter, and shall at last, I fear, make you what the French call a “volontaire force” – all your re-scripts being reluctant conscripts – but, indeed, I ought not to talk this way – for nothing could be more unlike

1:2

a task than your last letter to me, and I speak honestly when I say that one of the very few pleasures, for which I do not depend upon myself, is that which you can give me by frequently writing such letters – Even the pestilential communications you threaten me with I shall be delighted to r[*Ms. tear*: “ead”] and (like Doctor Darwin’s lover enjoy[*Ms. tear*: “ing”] his mistress in the plague)

“I shall clasp the bright infection in my a[*Ms. tear*: “rms”]

You <were> {are} very wrong in thinking t[*Ms. tear*: “hat”] such a sore and skinless animal a[*Ms. tear*: “s I”] take offence in the vague and unconcern[*Ms. tear*: “ed”] manner you seem to fear I have done at [*Ms. tear*: “any”] =thing in your first letter – There was nothing in it but what was very delightful, and the only dissatisfaction it could produce was perhaps a little against myself for having used too strong language in what I said about Lady C. L. – but when I called it “misery of your own producing”, I merely meant that as you were <the> made the pivot upon which her poor whirligig brach was set a-going, it was impossible not to feel the shock when she flew to pieces, as she must do, sooner or later.

1:3

I greatly fear – This last tragi-comical circumstance I find she says is much misrepresented – that it was merely the breaking of a scent-bottle or laudanum bottle that cut some part about her, & the blood from which, falling on Lady Ossultone’s gown, gave rise to the story of her snick-or-snee work with the knife³⁹ – If this knife-work, however, be true, it clearly proves that she has no serious designs of suicide – for, in the first place, chusing a ball-room for the operation, has a little too much of Juvenal’s “aperté jugulat” and then again cutting & hacking is not the way to kill one’s self – The celebrated & desperate gentleman who gave himself a little <puncture> experimental incision with a pen-knife, and then, throwing up the window, cried out “Murder! Murder!” had <about> {nearly} as decided a taste for suicide as poor Lady C — It was merely a safe exhibition of temper – something like Campbell’s wilderness in Gertrude

Where transport & security combine –⁴⁰

(a line, by the bye, much more applicable to <xxxxxxx xxx xx xxxx xxxxxx> {the invention of the Bishop of Condom}⁴¹ than to any thing else)

1:4

I thought to have written much more, but have no more time – so I must reserve all my description of our little Cottage in the fields till my next –

Ever, my dear Byron, most
cordially yours

³⁹: This incident occurred on July 5th 1813.

⁴⁰: Campbell, *Gertrude of Wyoming* (1809: Canto III, 1-4), quoted DJ I 88, 1-4.

⁴¹: The last Bishop of Condom, south-east of Bordeaux, was Alexandre-César d’Anterroches, exiled to London on September 15th 1792 after the French Revolution. Mo.’s joke is obscure

T. Moore.

Don't go to Greece, I pray of you⁴² –**Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, July 13th 1813:**

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 411-12; LJ II 230-2; QI 166-7; BLJ III 75-6)

Byron answers the previous item at once.

July 13. 1813.

* * * * *

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

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

I want to get away, but find difficulty in compassing a passage in a ship of war. They had better let me go; if I cannot, patriotism is the word—'nay, an' they'll mouth, I'll rant as well as they.'⁴³ Now, what are you doing?—writing, we all hope, for our own sakes. Remember you must edite my posthumous works, with a Life of the Author, for which I will send you Confessions, dated, 'Lazaretto,' Smyrna, Malta, or Palermo—one can die any where.

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

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

Byron to Henry Fox, from London, July 22nd 1813:

(Source: text from Huntington HM 2240, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 78)

[To / H.C.Fox Esq^{re} / Blake's Hotel / Jermyn Street.]

Dear Fox

Will you part with one of your Toledo's⁴⁴ or so – pray tell me when & which – & what?
 ever y^{rs}

BnJuly 22^d. 1813 –**Byron to James Wedderburn Webster, from 4 Bennet Street London, July 25th 1813:**

(Source: text from photofacsimile, Литературное Наследство, 1952, p.987; BLJ III 81)

4 Bennet Street,
 St. James's July 25th.
1813

My dear Webster –

I have just heard of your present residence. –

Rushton tells me that you offered him a situation last Spring on your Agricultural establishment for which he is well adapted having been educated for that purpose. – If you still wish to have him – though it is eventually my intention to provide for him – it would be a very good thing for him for a few years – as I am now going abroad almost

42: B.'s planned excursion to the Levant in 1813 did not occur because of problems about bookings and plague.

43: Shakespeare, *Hamlet* V i 278 (adapted: in fact, "... as thou").

44: Swords.

1:2

immediately – & having parted with Newstead – & not quite arranged my Rochdale concerns, I am rather at a loss for his present employment. On this of course you will act as you think proper – his own statement led me to write to you on this subject. – He is honest – good tempered – & has had a very fair education – as far as a country school could give. Will you favour me with an answer when convenient. – – –

I have been very little in town this year & quite ignorant of all your movements – I hope however

1:3

that L^y F. has increased your happiness & family & have little doubt of your welfare which I wish you sincerely. – If I prolonged this letter I should only talk to you of myself a topic not very interesting & of which you have had too much already – my Egotism therefore shall briefly end in my begging you to believe that

I ever am
yours very truly
& affectly.
Byron

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, July 25th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 412-13; LJ II 233-8; QI 167-9; BLJ III 78-80)

July 25. 1813.

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

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

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

Is not this last question the best that was ever put, when you consider to whom? It nearly killed M[orris]. Perhaps you may think it stupid, but, as Goldsmith said about the peas, it was a very good joke when I heard it⁴⁵—as I did from an ear-witness—and is only spoilt in my narration.

The season has closed with a dandy ball;—but I have dinners with the Harrowbys, Rogers, and Frere and Mackintosh, where I shall drink your health in a silent bumper, and regret your absence till 'too much canaries'⁴⁶ wash away my memory, or render it superfluous by a vision of you at the opposite side of the table. Canning has disbanded his party by a speech from his * * * *—the true throne of a Tory. Conceive his turning them off in a formal harangue, and bidding them think for themselves. 'I have led my ragamuffins where they are well peppered. There are but three of the 150 left alive, and they are for the *Towns-end* (*query*, might not Falstaff mean the Bow Street officer? I dare say Malone's posthumous edition will have it so) for life.'⁴⁷

Since I wrote last, I have been into the country. I journeyed by night—no incident, or accident, but an alarm on the part of my valet on the outside, who, in crossing Epping Forest, actually, I believe, flung down his purse before a mile-stone, with a glow-worm in the second figure of number XIX—mistaking it for a footpad and dark lantern. I can only attribute his fears to a pair of new pistols wherewith I had armed him; and he thought it necessary to display his vigilance by calling out to me when ever we passed any thing—no matter whether moving or stationary. Conceive ten miles, with a tremor every furlong. I have scribbled you a fearfully long letter. This sheet must be blank, and is

45: Forster's *Life of Goldsmith* I 34.

46: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV* II, II iv 26.

47: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV* I, V iii 35-8.

merely a wrapper, to preclude the tabellarians of the post from peeping. You once complained of my *not* writing;—I will ‘heap coals of fire upon your head’⁴⁸ by *not* complaining of your *not* reading. Ever, my dear Moore, your’n (isn’t that the Staffordshire termination?)

BYRON.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, July 27th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 414; LJ II 238-9; BLJ III 81)

July 27. 1813.

When you next imitate the style of ‘Tacitus,’ pray add, ‘de moribus Germanorum;’⁴⁹—this last was a piece of barbarous silence, and could only be taken from the *Woods*, and, as such, I attribute it entirely to your sylvan sequestration at Mayfield Cottage. You will find, on casting up accounts, that you are my debtor by several sheets and one epistle. I shall bring my action;—if you don’t discharge, expect to hear from my attorney. I have forwarded your letter to Ruggiero; but don’t make a postman of me again, for fear I should be tempted to violate your sanctity of wax or wafer.

Believe me ever yours *indignantly*,

BN.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, July 28th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 414-15; LJ II 239-41; BLJ III 82)

July 28. 1813.

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

P.S.—I am in training to dine with Sheridan and Rogers this evening. I have a little spite against R[ogers], and will shed his ‘Clary wines pottle-deep.’⁵⁰ This is nearly my ultimate or penultimate letter; for I am quite equipped, and only wait a passage. Perhaps I may wait a few weeks for Sligo, but not if I can help it.

Byron to Henry Fox, from London, July 29th 1813:

(Source: text from Huntington HM 2241, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 82)

[H.C.Fox Esq^{re} / Blake’s Hotel]

July 29th. 1812

My dear Fox

I must not take advantage of your munificence. – Pray tell me the pretium – or if that shocks you – allow me at all events to have the pleasure of easing my conscience by some exchange – <have> you have perhaps Manton’s pistols – if not I have some excellent – & an Albanian dress – & other sundries

1:2

wherewithal I shall endeavour to rob you as little as possible. – I have kept one & return the other – but you really must allow me either to pay or exchange – you are too royal in your gifts – & I have done nothing to deserve them though always

truly y^{rs}.

Byron

Byron to Dr William Clark, from London, July 31st 1813:

(Source: text from Wren Library R2 40, Trinity College Cambridge; BLJ III 83-4)

July 31st. 1813

Dear Sir

⁴⁸: Biblical; Proverbs 25:22 or Romans 12:20.

⁴⁹: This is the title of Tacitus’s book on Germania.

⁵⁰: Shakespeare, *Othello* II iii 54 (“potations pottle-deep”).

I am going out of town for a week (near Cambridge) we shall wait for Sligo – & if he returns within the period of my absence & you are still in town will you {be good enough to} tell him in answer to his proposal that we will join him & take part of his storeship. – Perhaps you may be down at Cambridge if so I will come over from Six Mile Bot^m. where I shall

1:2

be for some days. –

Hudson called here on you – I don't know what he wants but I hope he don't plague you – you cannot regret any delay in our departure more than I do but a few days or weeks for a comfortable passage will not I trust be thrown away. – Believe me truly yours

Byron

1:3

P.S. –

I have [E. D.] Clarke's⁵¹ letter safe & will return it to you when we meet. –

Byron to John Wilson Croker,⁵² from Bennet Street London, August 2nd 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 415; LJ II 243; BLJ II 84)

Bt. Str., August 2. 1813.

Dear Sir,

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

BYRON.

Byron to Dr William Clark, from London, August 2nd [??] 1813:

(Source: text from copy in Wren Library R2 40, Trinity College Cambridge; BLJ III 84)

Dear Sir,

We sail on board the Boyne, – & must be at Portsmouth on Saturday next. – I have only just heard this – could I see you now?

Ever y^{rs}.
Byron

Mid-August 1813: third edition of *The Giaour* published, two states; 950-1014 lines.

Byron to Henry Fox, from London, August 6th 1813:

(Source: text from Huntington HM 2242, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 85)

[No address.]

P.S. This must be my excuse – you know we could not discuss before a third person.

My dear Fox

You must pardon me for letting you go so abruptly – but the Gentleman who interrupted us was engaged in a quarrel with a friend of mine & I was acting the part of present peacemaker or future second – the business is now luckily settled. –

ever y^{rs}.
B

A^t. 6th. 1813 –

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, August 18th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.68; 1922 I 171-2; BLJ III 90-1)

51: Edward Daniel Clarke.

52: Secretary to the Admiralty. A very conservative figure, Croker was to write the review of Keats' *Endymion*, a review which, according to Shelley, was by Southey, and which "killed" the poet.

August 18th. 1813My dear L^y. M^c –

I am “a very weak person” & can only answer – your letter – I have already written & torn three to you – & probably may finish in the same way with y^c. present. —
L^d. S.⁵³ is in town & we are much embarrassed with y^c. plague which is it seems all over y^c. Levant – but having been both at a prodigious expenditure in large trunks – small clothes – & small arms <-> {for ourselves –} snuff boxes & Telescopes for the Mussulman gentry – & gew=

1:2

=gaws for such of the Pagan women as may be inclined to give us trinkets in exchange – why – lest so much good preparation should be thrown away – we are determined to go – God knows where – for he is bewildered & so am I. – His Balarina has presented him with a babe – & Malice says that he divides the honours of paternity with the Editor of the Courier – who – I suppose – published his trial & tried his fortune with the Lady – much about the time that Sir W^m. Scott passed sentence of matrimony upon his mother⁵⁴ – He is going to part with her – & is

1:3

right – those Opera house connections are not very creditable – besides the eternal chaldron of boiling suspicion into which a man must be plunged if he likes one of those women must be insufferable – at least for a permanency. – – –

Who is your pencil correspondent? – her query (for it looks like a female’s) is too lively for M^{rs} George – has too few words for L^y. Jersey – is not starch enough for your niece – nor patient enough for C – it is not L^y. Blarney’s for it is legible – it is <too> not ill=natured – so it can’t be L^y. Hollands – I have already named more people than I believe care where I am or what I am doing – or at any rate that would ask you the question – tell me & in re=

1:4

=turn I will tell – no I wont. – Of C – I know nothing – I hear very seldom from her – & then she sends me sermons & fruit – that if one don’t make me sick the other may – I have a letter (not from her) today – in which there is an enquiry – “tell me when did you see L^y. M^{rs}” – I will answer it – when my correspondent can reply to me “when I shall see L^y. M^{rs}.” – – I have scribbled on without saying a single thing I wished to say – this victory! – sad work – nothing but Conquest abroad & High health at home – only think what a disappointment – the Wapping <has tu> Plague – has turned out to be merely a vulgar <comfort> low – common place Typhus fever & wont

2:1

kill one of our acquaintance unless they go to Gravesend to smuggle. – Then the Congress – L^d. A⁵⁵ – is to my conception as empty a piece of Caledonian Coxcombry as ever wore a Thistle – & as fit to negotiate as I to dance a Bolero – or C – to sit still – or L^y. O. to lie still – or L^y. Anybody to be still – I don’t know him but merely judge from an air of <put> pretension about him which is generally the solemn cloak of Shallowness – I have heard him speak badly – on Spanish affairs – very likely he may do better with our own. – –

Write to me soon – & believe me ever

y^{rs}. most explicitly
[swirl signature]

[2:2 is blank; there are only two sides to 2]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, August 20th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.69; 1922 I 172-4; BLJ III 91-2)

August 20th. 1813 –My dear L^y. M^c –

53: The Marquis of Sligo.

54: Scott, who sentenced Sligo to Newgate, then married Sligo’s mother.

55: Lord Aberdeen.

When I don't write to you or see you for some time you may be very certain I am about no good – & vice versa – I have sent you a long scrawl & here be a second – which may convince you that I am not ashamed of myself – or else I should keep out of the way of one for whom I have so much regard. – C– has been a perfect Lake – a mirror of quiet – & I have answered her last 2 letters. – I hope they will neither ruffle the Lake nor crack the Mirror – but when she really & truly

1:2

{has} been behaving prettily – I could not write ferociously – besides I happened just then to be in exquisite good humour with myself and two or three other people. –

“Perhaps Prosperity becalmed his breast –

Perhaps the Wind just shifted from the East.”⁵⁶

Everything in this life depends upon the weather & the state of one's digestion – I have been eating & drinking – which I always do when wretched for then I grow fat & don't show it – & now that I am in very good plight & Spirits – I can't leave off the custom though I have no further occasion for it – & shan't have till – the next change of W</xxxx>eather.⁵⁷ –

1:3

I suppose or some other atmospherical reason. – – And now what are you doing? in this place we can only say what we are not doing – Town is empty but not the worse for that – it is a delight of a place now there's no one in it – I am totally & unutterably possessed by the ineffable power of Indolence – I see no one – I say nothing – I do nothing – and I wish for noth – oh yes – I wish to see you – & next to that – to hear from you – I have great hopes of sailing soon – for Cadiz I believe first – & thence wherever the Gods permit – I shan't be sorry to {see that} best & whitest of Sea port towns again – but all this depends upon the

1:4

weather – or my own caprices which are much more whimsical. – – –

How is your sole companion the Countess of Panshanger?⁵⁸ – I have now been a retainer of your house one year & sundry months & I know rather less of that illustrious Lady than I did the first moment of my introduction – yet I have thought as much about her as any of you – not the Gods know with any but the most profound reverence – but she puzzled me – (which is very easy) & furnished me with many an entertaining soliloquy upon a variety of topics – do you know I am an observer but my observations upon man – or rather woman kind like deep metaphysical researches lead only to doubt – & then I leave them – – or they me. – Is not this a laudable spirit of enquiry into things that don't concern myself? make my

2:1

2) best respects – & don't be angry with me – which you will however – first for somethings I have said – & then for others I have not said – you would not have me always talking Egotism though it is said to be allowable in a letter & only in a letter. –

I am now going to dine – where I shall be obliged to drink more than is prudent – & I congratulate myself & you on having written this before dinner instead of after – though it is stupid enough to make you believe that I have anticipated my Claret – yours ever my dear L^y. M. in sober sadness – or as a winebibber ought to say – in sad sobriety –

[swirl signature]

[2:2 is blank; there are only two sides to Sheet 2.]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, September August 21st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.70; 1922 I 174-6; BLJ III 92-3)

[1813 / London August twenty first / The Lady Melbourne / Cheltenham / Byron]

August 21st. 1813 –

My dear L^y. M^c –

⁵⁶: Pope, *Epistle to Cobham*, 111-12.

⁵⁷: There is an indecipherable monosyllable beneath “Weather”.

⁵⁸: B.'s nickname for Melbourne's daughter, Lady Cowper.

We are sadly bewildered – I ask you who was so good as to enquire after me – & you send me in reply some speculations upon a note in pencil you once saw – which came from a person you certainly never saw in your life – & who I am almost sure was never in London but once & then only for two months. – From or of that personage I have not heard since last March. – I do not know that anyone ever reproached me for illtreating C– as far as regarded my acquaintance with you – – Oh yes – there was one – but I know as little where she is as I do of the other – & we never were nor – I dare swear – ever will be in the least intimate. I have not said that any person objected at

1:2

present to the magical influence I will not deny that you possess not only over me but any one on whom you please to exert it – I never knew but three people who did object to it – & much good it did them. – – –

I am “sick & serious” am I? – then you must cure the one & laugh away the other – but I equally deny the malady & the melancholy. – Of C’s parcel & it’s contents I am in utter ignorance – to the picture I plead guilty – I thought I had already said to you as I did to C– that it was for Augusta – who took it with her I believe into the country. – She wants to go with me to Sicily or elsewhere – & I wish it also – but the intelligence of the

1:3

progress of the plague is really too serious – & she would take one of the children – now L^y. O. sickened me of every body’s children – besides it is so superfluous to carry such things with people – if they want them can’t they get them on the Spot? – After all I shall probably go alone – S.⁵⁹ wants to go to Russia – only to see a worse London at St. Petersburg – he prefers (as anyone in their senses would) the Mediterranean but is staggered by the pestilence. – – He is not I believe the least jealous of his precious appendage but tired of her – & I don’t much wonder – poor fellow – why should his “figure”⁶⁰ prevent him from jealousy – I think it would

1:4

be a very good cause – though he is less than the Prince – who I fancy did not find his figure in his way – Heaven knows what is to become of any <of us> or at least most of our Sex – if our masculine ugliness is to be an obstacle – it is fortunate that the caprice of your gender generally gets the better of their taste<?>. – – –

I am delighted to hear of your return to town – I shall then see you – you don’t know how much good your conversation does me – you must promise me – if I stay away two years – to send me an invitation to Brocket on my return – I hope there will then be no alarm – it is very hard to live in perpetual Quarantine —

ever dear L^y. M^c
[swirl signature]

2:1

P.S.

Scrope Davies & L^d. Foley were the Quarrelers you mention – & I was called in by the former – a second’s is a most inglorious & ungrateful office – & having as little desire to make others play the fool – as to quarrel myself – with a little management I made it up between them – as might be done nine times in ten if the <Combat> Mediator is not a bully or a butcher. – [inverted at top of sheet.] You say my handwriting is altered – I fear not for the better – it depends upon my pens & my humours – both as you know none of the best.

[2:2 has address.]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, August 22nd 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 419-22; LJ II 245-56; QI 169-71; BLJ III 94-7)

Bennet Street, August 22. 1813.

59: Sligo.

60: “figurante” (ballerina).

As our late—I might say, deceased—correspondence had too much of the town-life leaven in it, we will now, ‘paulo majora,’⁶¹ prattle a little of literature in all its branches; and first of the first—criticism. The Prince is at Brighton, and Jackson, the boxer, gone to Margate, having, I believe, decoyed Yarmouth to see a milling in that polite neighbourhood. Made. de Staël Holstein has lost one of her young barons, who has been carbonadoed by a vile Teutonic adjutant,—kilt and killed in a coffee-house at Scrawsenhawsen. Corinne is, of course, what all mothers must be,—but will, I venture to prophesy, do what few mothers could—write an Essay upon it. She cannot exist without a grievance—and somebody to see, or read, how much grief becomes her. I have not seen her since the event; but merely judge (not very charitably) from prior observation.

In a ‘mail-coach copy’ of the Edinburgh, I perceive The Giaour is second article. The numbers are still in the Leith smack—*pray, which way is the wind?* The said article is so very mild and sentimental, that it must be written by Jeffrey *in love*;—you know he is gone to America to marry some fair one, of whom he has been, for several *quarters, éperdument amoureux*. Seriously—as Winifred Jenkins says of Lismahago—Mr. Jeffrey (or his deputy) ‘has done the handsome thing by me,’⁶² and I say *nothing*.⁶³ But this I will say, if you and I had knocked one another on the head in this quarrel, how he would have laughed, and what a mighty bad figure we should have cut in our posthumous works. By the by, I was called in the other day to mediate between two gentlemen bent upon carnage, and,—after a long struggle between the natural desire of destroying one’s fellow-creatures, and the dislike of seeing men play the fool for nothing,—I got one to make an apology, and the other to take it, and left them to live happy ever after.⁶⁴ One was a peer, the other a friend untitled, and both fond of high play;—and one, I can swear for, though very mild, “not fearful,” and so dead a shot, that, though the other is the thinnest of men, he would have split him like a cane. They both conducted themselves very well, and I put them out of *pain* as soon as I could.

* * * * *

There is an American Life of G.F. Cooke, *Scurra*⁶⁵ deceased, lately published. Such a book!—I believe, since Drunken Barnaby’s Journal, nothing like it has drenched the press. All green-room and tap-room—drams and the drama—brandy, whisky-punch, and, *latterly*, toddy, overflow every page. Two things are rather marvellous,—first, that a man should live so long drunk, and, next, that he should have found a sober biographer. There are some very laughable things in it, nevertheless;—but the pints he swallowed, and the parts he performed, are too regularly registered.

All this time you wonder I am not gone; so do I; but the accounts of the plague are very perplexing—not so much for the thing itself as the quarantine established in all ports, and from all places, even from England. It is true, the forty or sixty days would, in all probability, be as foolishly spent on shore as in the ship; but one like’s to have one’s choice, nevertheless. Town is awfully empty; but not the worse for that. I am really puzzled with my perfect ignorance of what I mean to do;—not stay, if I can help it, but where to go?⁶⁶ Sligo is for the North;—a pleasant place, Petersburg, in September, with one’s ears and nose in a muff, or else tumbling into one’s neckcloth or pocket-handkerchief! If the winter treated Buonaparte with so little ceremony, what would it inflict upon your solitary traveller?—Give me a sun, I care not how hot, and sherbet, I care not how cool, and my Heaven is as easily made as your Persian’s.⁶⁷ The Giaour is now a thousand and odd lines. ‘Lord Fanny spins a thousand such a day,’⁶⁸ eh, Moore?—thou wilt needs be a wag, but I forgive it. Yours ever,

BN.

61: Virgil, Eclogue IV v 1 (“a somewhat loftier strain”).

62: Smollett, *Humphrey Clinker*, final letter.

63: Sir Fretful Plagiary at Sheridan, *The Critic* Act I. See also *Beppo*, 96, 5.

64: The quarrel was between Scrope Davies and Lord Foley.

65: “buffoon”.

66: **Moore’s note:** One of his travelling projects appears to have been a visit to Abyssinia;—at least, I have found, among his papers, a letter founded on that supposition, in which the writer entreats of him to procure information concerning “a kingdom of Jews mentioned by Bruce as residing on the mountain of Samen in that country. I have had the honour,” he adds, “of some correspondence with the Rev. Dr. Buchanan and the reverend and learned G.S. Faber, on the subject of the existence of this kingdom of Jews, which, if it prove to be a fact, will more clearly elucidate many of the Scripture prophecies; ... and, if Providence favours your Lordship’s mission to Abyssinia, an intercourse might be established between England and that country, and the English ships, according to the Rev. Mr. Faber, might be the principal means of transporting the kingdom of Jews, now in Abyssinia, to Egypt, in the way to their own country, Palestine.”

67: **Moore’s note:** “A Persian’s Heav’n is easily made— / ’Tis but black eyes and lemonade.”

68: Pope, *Imitations of Horace*, I 6.

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

I am now thinking of regretting that, just as I have left Newstead, you reside near it. Did you ever see it? *do*—but don't tell me that you like it. If I had known of such intellectual neighbourhood, I don't think I should have quitted it. You could have come over so often, as a bachelor,—for it was a thorough bachelor's mansion—plenty of wine and such sordid sensualities—with books enough, room enough, and an air of antiquity about all (except the lasses) that would have suited you, when pensive, and served you to laugh at when in glee. I had built myself a bath and a *vault*—and now I sha'n't even be buried in it. It is odd that we can't even be certain of a *grave*, at least a particular one. I remember, when about fifteen, reading your poems there, which I can repeat almost now,—and asking all kinds of questions about the author, when I heard that he was not dead according to the preface; wondering if I should ever see him—and though, at that time, without the smallest poetical propensity myself, very much taken, as you may imagine, with that volume. Adieu—I commit you to the care of the gods—Hindoo, Scandinavian, and Hellenic!

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

from Annabella Milbanke to Byron, August 22nd 1813:

(Source: text from Ethel Coburn Mayne, *The Life of Lady Byron*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1929, pp.57-9)

Annabella's first letter to Byron.

I have received from Lady Melbourne an assurance of the satisfaction you feel in being remembered with interest by me. Let me then more fully explain this interest, with the hope that the consciousness of possessing a friend whom neither Time nor Absence can estrange may impart some soothing feelings to your retrospective views. You have remarked the serenity of my countenance, but mine is not the serenity of one who is a stranger to care, nor are the prospects of my future years untroubled.

It is my nature to feel long, deeply, and secretly, and the strongest affections of my heart are without hope. I disclose to you what I conceal even from those who have most claim to my confidence, because it will be the surest basis of that unreserved friendship which I wish to establish between us—because you will not reject my admonitions as the result of cold calculation, when you know that I can suffer as you have suffered. Early in our acquaintance, when I was far from supposing myself preferred by you, I studied your character. I felt for you, and I often felt with you. You were, as I conceived, in a desolate situation, surrounded by admirers who could not value you, and by friends to whom you were not dear. You were either flattered or persecuted. How often have I wished that the state of Society would have allowed me to offer you my sentiments without restraint! ... My regard for your welfare did not arise from blindness to your errors; I was interested by the strength & generosity of your feelings, and I honored you for that pure sense of moral rectitude, which could not be perverted, though perhaps tried by the practice of Vice.

...

In a letter to Ly Melbourne (after I had informed you of my sentiments) you expressed a determination to render your conduct as conformable to my wishes, as if your attachment had been returned. I now claim that promise, and I do not fear that you will answer "You have no right." I have the right of a constant and considerate zeal for your happiness, and the right which you have given, and will not unreasonably withdraw. I entreat you then to observe more consistently the principles of unwearied benevolence. No longer suffer yourself to be the slave of the moment, nor trust your noble impulses to the chances of Life. Have an object that will permanently occupy your feelings & exercise your reason. Do good. Every human being has a circle of influence more expanded than would be conceived by one who has not systematically tried its extent. But to benefit man you must love him, and you must bear with his infirmities—that forbearance which is reckoned as the dictate of selfish prudence, is the more exalted dictate of philanthropy. Feel benevolence and you will inspire it—you will do good, for

to excite such dispositions is to bless. You have so frequently received the advice of those whose conduct was false to their doctrine that you will naturally doubt the agreement of mine with my principles. I confess they have often but ill accorded—yet imperfect as my practice is. I have enjoyed the happiness of giving, peace & awakening virtue on occasions which only this habitual direction of my thoughts could have enabled me to seize. Your powers peculiarly qualify you for performing these duties with success, and may you experience the sacred pleasure of having them dwell in your heart! Will you undertake this task, and will you lay aside the seeming misanthropy which repels the affection of your fellow creatures?

I have lately had very little information concerning you on which I could depend. On ill reports I never rely, for if I desire to be a Christian, it is more especially in the Charity which thinketh no evil. Need I say that such information from yourself would be received with gratitude? I request your secrecy as to this communication and its contents. Only my parents are aware of it. In particular I would not have it known to Ly Melbourne. I am indebted to her kindness, but we have little sympathy, and she is perhaps too much accustomed to look for design, to understand the plainness of my intentions. I trust them to your candour. You must be sensible of my great confidence in you, since I mention opinions which I should be very sorry to have repeated. Believe in the sincerity of a regard, which, though it never can change to love, deserves to be considered as more than worldly friendship.

Yours most faithfully

A. I. MILBANKE.

I shall be obliged to you at least to acknowledge the receipt of this letter, that I may not apprehend it has fallen into other hands.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, August 23rd 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.71; 1922 I 176-7; BLJ III 97-8)

August 23^d. 1813

My dear L^y. M^e.

Would that Luttrell⁶⁹ had travelled – or that one could provide him with a mattress stuffed with peachstones to teach him more philosophy in such petty calamities – I remember my friend Hobhouse used to say in Turkey that I had no notion of comfort because I could sleep where none but a brute could – & certainly where brutes did for often have the Cows turned out of their apartment butted at the door all night extremely discomposed with the unaccountable ejection. – Thus we lived – one day in the palace of the Pacha & the next perhaps in the most miserable hut of the Mountains – I confess I preferred the former but never quarrelled with

1:2

the latter – & as to eating (by the bye I have lately stuffed like Count Staremberg)⁷⁰ you know I am easily victualled. – – – – –

A pretty panegyric you have passed upon the Countess – “honourable & amiable” – God knows I have no reason to doubt either & never did – but methinks this is a marvellous insipid eulogium – “amiable” she must be because she reminds us very much of yourself – & “honourable” because she reminds one of nobody else – the fact is you love her better than anything in existence – & for that reason you don’t know how to praise her properly – so you must confine yourself to abusing me in which if you don’t succeed it is no fault of mine. – – You tell me I don’t know women – did I ever pretend to be an unraveller of riddles? – & was there ever any one more easily deceived & led by anyone who

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will take the trouble than myself? “Know them” – not I indeed – & I heartily hope I never may. – “Was my good humour from deceiving or being duped” the last of course – or how could I be so happy as you seem to think me. – My head is a little disturbed today – I have to write – first – a soothing letter to C – a sentimental one to X Y Z. – a sincere one to T. Moore – and one a mixture of all three to yourself with as much of the ludicrous as you like to find {in} it. – I ought to have said this in y^e. beginning for now I must end it. – Adieu ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

[1:4 is blank.]

⁶⁹: Henry Luttrell, Irish wit and poetaster. Present in 1824 at the burning of the Memoirs.

⁷⁰: Austrian Ambassador in London.

Byron to Annabella Milbanke, from 4, Bennet Street, August 25th 1813:

(Source: text from LJ III 397-9; BLJ III 98-9)

Byron's answer to the last item but one.

4, Bennet St. 25 Aug. 1813.

I am honored with your letter which I wish to acknowledge immediately. Before I endeavour to answer it, allow me—briefly if possible—to advert to the circumstances which occurred last autumn. Many years had occurred since I had seen any woman with whom there appeared to me a prospect of rational happiness. I now saw but one, to whom, however, I had no pretensions or at least too slight for even the hope of success. It was, however, said that your heart was disengaged, and it was on that ground that Ly Melbourne undertook to ascertain how far I might be permitted to cultivate your acquaintance, on the chance (a slender one I allow) of improving it into friendship and ultimately to a still kinder sentiment. In her zeal in my behalf—friendly and pardonable as it was—she in some degree exceeded my intentions, when she made the more direct proposal, which yet I do not regret, except in so far as it appeared presumptuous on my part. That this is the truth you will allow, when I tell you that it was not till lately that I mentioned to her that I thought she had unwittingly committed me a little too far in the expectation that so abrupt an overture would be received. But I stated this casually in conversation, and without the least feeling of irritation towards her or pique against yourself. Such was the result of my first and nearest approach to that altar, to which, in the state of your feelings, I should only have led another victim. When I say the first, it may perhaps appear irreconcilable with some circumstances in my life, to which I conceive you allude in part of your letter. But such is the fact. I was then too young to marry, tho' not to love; but this was the *first direct* or indirect approach ever made on my part to a permanent union with any woman, and in all probability it will be the last. Ly M. was perfectly correct in her statement that I preferred you to all others; it was then the fact; it is so still. But it was no disappointment, because it is impossible to impart one drop more to a cup which already overflows with the waters of bitterness. We do not know ourselves; yet I do not think that my self love was much wounded by the event. On the contrary, I feel a kind of pride even in *your rejection*—more I believe than I could derive from the attachment of another, for it reminds me that I once thought myself worthy of the affection of almost the only one of your sex I ever truly respected.

To your letter—the first part surprises me—not that you should feel attachment [but that it] should be “without hope.” May you secure that hope with its object! To the part of your letter regarding myself I could say much; but I must be brief. If you hear of me, it is probably not untrue, though perhaps exaggerated. On any point in which you may honor me with an interest, I shall be glad to satisfy you—to confess the truth, or refute the calumny.

I must be candid with you on the score of friendship. It is a feeling towards you with which I cannot trust myself. I doubt whether I could help loving you; but I trust I may appeal to my conduct since our *élaircissement* for the proof that, whatever my feelings may be, they will exempt you from persecution; but I cannot yet profess indifference, and I fear that won't be the first step—at least in some points—from what I feel to that which you wish me to feel.

You must pardon me and recollect that, if any thing displeases you in this letter, it is a difficult task for me to write to you at all. I have left many things unsaid, and have said others I did not mean to utter. My intended departure from this country is a little retarded by accounts of Plague, etc., etc., and I must bend my course to some more accessible region—probably to Russia. I have only left myself space to sign myself,

Ever your obliged servant,
BYRON.

Scrope Berdmore Davies to Byron, August 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4178A)

My dear Byron

A circumstance took place last night which I am desirous of laying before you, that I may know your opinion how I should act – and in the event of your sentiments coinciding with my own, I hope you will not be unwilling to attend me in that character {in} which <you have often seen> I should prefer you to any man breathing – <I hav> words have passed between Lord Foley and myself which I cannot sleep over – Pray let me see you at once⁷¹

71: The quarrel between S.B.D. and Lord Foley seems to have been over gambling. B. patched it up; see BLJ III 85-6, 93, to Lady Melbourne (“Scrope Davies & Ld Foley were the Quarrelers you mentioned – & I was called in by the former – a second's is a most inglorious & ungrateful office – & having as little desire to make others play the fool – as to quarrel myself – with a little management I made it up between them”), and 95.

ever most truly
Scrope Davies

Late August 1813: fourth edition of *The Giaour* published; 1048 lines.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, August 28th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 422-4; LJ II 252-3; BLJ III 100-2)

August 28. 1813.

Ay, my dear Moore, 'there *was* a time'—I have heard of your tricks, when 'you was campaigning at the King of Bohemy.'⁷² I am much mistaken if, some fine London spring, about the year 1815, that time does not come again. After all, we must end in marriage; and I can conceive nothing more delightful than such a state in the country, reading the county newspaper, &c., and kissing one's wife's maid. Seriously, I would incorporate with any woman of decent demeanour to-morrow—that is, I would a month ago, but, at present, * * * * *

Why don't you 'parody that Ode?'⁷³—Do you think I should be tetchy? or have you done it, and won't tell me?—You are quite right about Giamschid, and I have reduced it to a dissyllable within this half hour.⁷⁴ I am glad to hear you talk of Richardson, because it tells me what you won't—that you are going to beat Lucien. At least tell me how far you have proceeded. Do you think me less interested about your works, or less sincere than our friend Ruggiero? I am not—and never was. In that thing of mine, the 'English Bards,' at the time when I was angry with all the world, I never 'disparaged your parts,'⁷⁵ although I did not know you personally;—and have always regretted that you don't give us an *entire* work, and not sprinkle yourself in detached pieces—beautiful, I allow, and quite *alone* in our language,⁷⁶ but still giving us a right to expect a *Shah Nameh* (is that the name?) as well as gazels. Stick to the East;—the oracle, Staël, told me it was the only poetical policy. The North, South, and West, have all been exhausted; but from the East, we have nothing but S[outhey]'s unsaleables,—and these he has contrived to spoil, by adopting only their most outrageous fictions. His personages don't interest us, and yours will. You will have no competitor; and, if you had, you ought to be glad of it. The little I have done in that way is merely a 'voice in the wilderness'⁷⁷ for you; and if it has had any success, that also will prove that the public are orientalisising, and pave the path for you.

I have been thinking of a story, grafted on the amours of a Peri and a mortal—something like, only more *philanthropical* than, Cazotte's *Diable Amoureux*. It would require a good deal of poesy, and tenderness is not my forte. For that, and other reasons, I have given up the idea, and merely suggest it to you, because, in intervals of your greater work, I think it a subject you might make much of.⁷⁸ If you want any more books, there is 'Castellan's *Moeurs des Ottomans*,' the best compendium of the kind I ever met with, in six small tomes. I am really taking a liberty by talking in this style to my 'elders and my betters,'⁷⁹—pardon it, and don't *Rochefoucault* my motives.

John Murray to Byron, from Brighton, 1813:

72: Samuel Foote, *The Mayor of Garratt*.

73: Moore's note: The Ode of Horace, "Natis in usum lætitiæ," &c.; some passages of which I told him might be parodied, in allusion to some of his late adventures: "Quanta laboras in Charybdi! / Digne puer meliore flammâ!"

74: Moore's note: In his first edition of *The Giaour* he had used this word as a trisyllable,—"Bright as the gem of Giamschid,"—but on my remarking to him, upon the authority of Richardson's *Persian Dictionary*, that this was incorrect, he altered it to "Bright as the ruby of Giamschid." On seeing this, however, I wrote to him, "that, as the comparison of his heroine's eye to a 'ruby' might unluckily call up the idea of its being blood-shot, he had better change the line to "Bright as the jewel of Giamschid;"—which he accordingly did in the following edition.

75: Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, II i.

76: Moore's note: Having already endeavoured to obviate the charge of vanity, to which I am aware I expose myself by being thus accessory to the publication of eulogies, so warm and so little merited, on myself, I shall here only add, that it will abundantly console me under such a charge, if, in whatever degree the judgment of my noble friend may be called in question for these praises, he shall, in the same proportion, receive credit for the good-nature and warm-heartedness by which they were dictated.

77: Biblical; Isaiah 40:3.

78: Moore's note: I had already, singularly enough, anticipated this suggestion, by making the daughter of a Peri the heroine of one of my stories, and detailing the love adventures of her aerial parent in an episode. In acquainting Lord Byron with this circumstance, in my answer to the above letter, I added, "All I ask of your friendship is—not that you will abstain from Peris on my account, for that is too much to ask of human (or, at least, author's) nature—but that, whenever you mean to pay your addresses to any of these aerial ladies, you will, at once, tell me so, frankly and instantly, and let me, at least, have my choice whether I shall be desperate enough to go on, with such a rival, or at once surrender the whole race into your hands, and take, for the future, to Antediluvians with Mr. Montgomery."

79: Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, IV iii 55-6.

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles I 219, dated September 25th 1813; LJM 39)

5 Pavilion Parade
Sunday

My dear <Lord and> Lord

I inclose a Letter not without most serious compunctions which shall not be excited upon any similar occasion –

I rejoice to hear that your Lordship is yet making improvements upon the Giaour⁸⁰ – it is a series <of> of Gems that well deserve the finest polish.

We are rather dull here though the place is quite full for the Prince Regents appearance or behaviour either prevented from coming

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or drove away from the Place – all respectable people – he was more outrageously dissipated the short time he was here than ever – & has sunk into the vilest of his former associates – Lord Barrymore &c

Lord Sheffield has been so good as to invite me to pass some days at his house where I shall go on Wednesday, in case your Lordship has occasion to honour me with any Letter, which I shall be gratified by if it as-

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-sure me of your Lordship's health – & inform me of your address in the country – where I would like, if you please, to send the Proof of the small Edition of the Giaour

Your Lordship will see that I could not refrain from asking after you or from presenting my hasty compliments –

I dine today with three of my Authors – D'Israeli Prince Hoare – and Northcote –

I am ever

Your Lordships

Affectionate & grateful

humble Servant

John Murray⁸¹

My address is

Post Office

[pencilled: "Brighton"]

[1:4 blank.]

The Marquis of Sligo to Byron, August 31st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4227)

Sligo's last surviving letter to Byron.

[The Lord Byron / N^o 4 Bennett Street]

Byron's handwriting: **Ld. S's letter detailing what he heard at A in 1811 – on the circumstance which first suggested the idea of the G^r. –⁸²**

[*another hand*: A letter from Lord Sligo referring to the story of the Giaour]

Albany Monday

**August 31st
1813
receivd {by} Bn**

My Dear Byron

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

80: There were no additions to *The Giaour* after the seventh edition (December 1813).

81: Decorated underlining.

82: Anxious to dispel Caroline Lamb's stories of his homosexual adventures in Greece, B. had asked Sligo to provide evidence of his heterosexuality in the shape of the story of the Greek girl rescued from the sack, one mythical subtext for *The Giaour* (first published June 1813). For B.'s explanation see letter to Lady Melbourne, August 31st 1813 (the day B. received it: BLJ III 102 &n).

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

<Ten lines heavily erased: the only legible words are “upon being”.>⁸³

The New Governor unaccustomed to have the intercourse with Christians which his predecessor had, had of course the barbarous Turkish <Customs> {Ideas} with regard to Women. In consequence {&} in compliance with the Strict letter of the Mohammedan law he ordered her to be sowed up in a sack & thrown into the Sea, – as is indeed quite customary at Constantinople. As you were returning from Bathing in the Piræus you met the procession going down to execute the sentence of the Waywode on this unfortunate girl. Report continues to say that on finding out what the object of their journey was and who was the <unfortunate> {miserable} sufferer, you immediately interfered, and on some delay in obeying your orders you were obliged to inform the leader of the escort that force should make him comply <and> that on further hesitation you drew a pistol & told him that if he did not immediately obey your orders and come back with you to the Aga’s house you <should> would shoot him dead: On this the man turned about, & went with you to the Governor’s house: here you succeeded partly by personal threats & partly by bribery & entreaty, to procure her pardon on condition of her leaving Athens. I was told that you then conveyed her in safety to the Convent & despatched her off at night to Thebes, where she found a safe asylum: Such is the story I heard, as nearly as I can recollect it at present; Should you wish to ask me any further questions about it I shall be very ready & willing to answer them

I remain

My Dear Byron

Yours very sincerely

Sligo

I am afraid you will hardly be able to read this scrawl, but I am so hurried with <my> {the} preparations for my journey that you must excuse it.⁸⁴

Early September 1813: fifth edition of *The Giaour* published, at 1215 lines.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, August 31st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.72; 1922 I 177; BLJ III 102)

Byron sends Sligo’s letter to Lady Melbourne at once. This very important document is on smaller paper than usual: 22.3 x 18.6 cm. Byron shrinks his hand accordingly.

August 31st. 1813

My dear L^y. M^c.

Your kind letter is unanswerable – no one but yourself would have taken the trouble – no one but me would have been in a situation to require it. – –

I am still in town so that it has as yet had all the effect you wish. – – – –

I enclose you a letter from Sligo with his Giaour – which differs from our friend C’s as much as from mine – for that reason I send it you. – The part I have erased merely contained

1:2

some barbarous Turkish names of no consequence – & <x xxxxxaction or xxtxx xxll xxxtted> some circumstances not immediately relevant to the story.⁸⁵ – –

When you have read it I will thank you for it again – I think it will make you laugh when you consider all the poetry & prose which has grown out of it. – – ever my dear L^y. M. y^{rs}.

B –

P.S.

Do you go to L^y. Le D^c.’s⁸⁶ tonight – I am asked. —

⁸³: “I enclose you a letter from Sligo with his *Giaour* – which differs from our friend Caroline’s as much as from mine – for that reason I send it to you. – The part I have erased merely contained some barbarous Turkish names of no consequence – & [one line blotted out] some circumstances not immediately relevant to the story. – – When you have read it I will thank you for it again – I think it will make you laugh when you consider all the poetry & prose which has grown out of it.” (B. to Lady Melbourne, next item).

⁸⁴: This is the last known communication between Sligo and B.

⁸⁵: See Sligo’s letter to B., August 31st 1813. The decoding of this erasure might reveal much.

[1:3 and 4 are blank.]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, September 1st 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 424-6; LJ II 256-8; BLJ III 104-5)

August—September, I mean—1. 1813.

I send you, begging your acceptance, Castellan, and three vols. on Turkish Literature, not yet looked into. The last I will thank you to read, extract what you want, and return in a week, as they are lent to me by that brightest of Northern constellations, Mackintosh,—amongst many other kind things into which India has warmed him, for I am sure your *home* Scotsman is of a less genial description.

Your Peri, my dear M., is sacred and inviolable; I have no idea of touching the hem of her petticoat. Your affectation of a dislike to encounter me is so flattering, that I begin to think myself a very fine fellow. But you are laughing at me—'Stap my vitals, Tarn! thou art a very impudent person;'⁸⁷ and, if you are not laughing at me, you deserve to be laughed at. Seriously, what on earth can you, or have you, to dread from any poetical flesh breathing? It really puts me out of humour to hear you talk thus.

'The Giaour' I have added to a good deal; but still in foolish fragments. It contains about 1200 lines, or rather more—now printing. You will allow me to send you a copy. You delight me much by telling me that I am in your good graces, and more particularly as to temper; for, unluckily, I have the reputation of a very bad one. But they say the devil is amusing when pleased, and I must have been more venomous than the old serpent, to have hissed or stung in your company. It may be, and would appear to a third person, an incredible thing, but I know *you* will believe me when I say, that I am as anxious for your success as one human being can be for another's,—as much as if I had never scribbled a line. Surely the field of fame is wide enough for all; and if it were not, I would not willingly rob my neighbour of a rood of it. Now you have a pretty property of some thousand acres there, and when you have passed your present Inclosure Bill, your income will be doubled, (there's a metaphor, worthy of a Templar, namely, pert and low,) while my wild common is too remote to incommode you, and quite incapable of such fertility. I send you (which return per post, as the printer would say) a curious letter from a friend of mine,⁸⁸ which will let you into the origin of 'The Giaour.' Write soon. Ever, dear Moore, yours most entirely, &c.

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

From Robert Southey to Grosvenor Bedford, September 4th 1813:

(Source: text from Bodleian M.S.Eng.Letters c.25.32.)

Southey has become Poet Laureate.

My dear Grosvenor,

I have a letter from Scott, for which you will like him the better. You know I half expected this result,⁸⁹ & after what the Magister Rotulorum⁹⁰ told me yesterday, had had time to reflect upon it. So I have written to C. telling him (of course in a proper manner) that I will take the office if it be understood that I am at liberty to write upon great public events or to be silent as the spirit moves, — but not if the regular tribute be exacted. This is putting it upon the proper footing; & if it be given me upon these terms, whatever ridicule may be directed toward me <upon the> at present, the office will be redeemed from it for ever more ...

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, September 5th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.73; 1922 I 177-8; Q I 172; BLJ III 108)

Another small sheet, with half torn away, being now only 11 x 18.5 cm.

Sept^r. 5th. 1813 –

Dear Lady Melbourne –

86: Lady Despenser's.

87: Vanbrugh, *The Relapse* IV vi; Sheridan, *The Trip to Scarborough* V ii.

88: Moore's note: The letter of Lord Sligo, already given.

89: S. has been made Poet Laureate.

90: The Master of the Rolls.

I return you the plan of A's spouse elect of which I shall say nothing because I do not understand it – though I dare say it is exactly what it ought to be. – Neither do I know why I am writing this note as I mean to call on you – unless it be to try your “new patent pens” which delight me infinitely with their colours – I have pitched upon a yellow one to begin with –

1:2

Very likely you will be out – & I must return you the annexed epistles – I would rather have seen your answer – she seems to have been spoiled – not as children usually are – but systematically Clarissa Harlowed into an awkward kind of correctness – with a dependence upon her own infallibility which will or may lead her into some egregious blunder – I don't mean the usual error of young gentlewomen – but she will find exactly what she wants – & then discover that it is much more dignified than

1:3

entertaining. –

[the rest of 1:3 and all of 1:4 except for “... in town –” are torn out.]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, September 5th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 426-7; LJ II 260-2; BLJ III 106-8)

Sept. 5. 1813.

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

[Rogers] has returned to town, but not yet recovered of the Quarterly. What fellows these reviewers are! ‘these bugs do fear us all.’⁹¹ They made you fight, and me (the milkiest of men) a satirist, and will end by making [Rogers] madder than Ajax. I have been reading Memory again, the other day, and Hope together,⁹² and retain all my preference of the former. His elegance is really wonderful—there is no such thing as a vulgar line in his book.

What say you to Buonaparte? Remember, I back him against the field, barring Catalepsy and the Elements.⁹³ Nay, I almost wish him success against all countries but this,—were it only to choke the Morning Post, and his undutiful father-in-law, with that rebellious bastard of Scandinavian adoption, Bernadotte. Rogers wants me to go with him on a crusade to the Lakes, and to besiege you on our way. This last is a great temptation, but I fear it will not be in my power, unless you would go on with one of us somewhere—no matter where. It is too late for Matlock, but we might hit upon some scheme, high life or low,—the last would be much the best for amusement. I am so sick of the other, that I quite sigh for a cider-cellar, or a cruise in a smuggler's sloop.

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

Ever, &c.

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

Byron to Annabella Milbanke, September 6th 1813:

(Source: text from LJ III 399-401; BLJ III 108-10)

Sep^r. 6th. 1813.

Agreed—I will write to you occasionally and you shall answer at your leisure and discretion.—You must have deemed me very vain and selfish to imagine that your candour could offend—I see

⁹¹: Shakespeare, *Henry VI III V ii 2* (adapted).

⁹²: B. refers to Rogers' *The Pleasures of Memory* and *The Pleasures of Hope*.

⁹³: Bonaparte will soon be defeated at Leipzig (early October 1814).

nothing that “could hurt my feelings” in your correspondence—you told me you declined me as a lover but wished to retain me as a friend—now as one may meet with a good deal of what is called love in this best of all possible worlds—and very rarely with friendship I could not find fault—upon calculation at least.—I am afraid my first letter was written during some of those moments which have induced your belief in my general despondency—now in common I believe with most of mankind—I have, in the course of a very useless and ill-regulated life, encountered events which have left a deep impression. Perhaps something at the time recalled this so forcibly as to make it apparent in my answer; but I am not conscious of any habitual or at least long continued pressure on my spirits. On the contrary, with the exception of an occasional spasm, I look upon myself as a very facetious personage and may safely appeal to most of my acquaintance (L^y. M. for instance) in proof of my assertion. Nobody laughs more; and though your friend Joanna Baillie says somewhere that “Laughter is the *child* of Misery”⁹⁴ yet I do not believe her (unless indeed in a hysteric), tho’ I think it is sometimes the parent. Nothing would do me more honour than the acquaintance of that Lady, who does not possess a more enthusiastic admirer than myself. She is our only dramatist since Otway⁹⁵ and Southerne,⁹⁶ I don’t except Home.⁹⁷ With all my presumed prejudice against your sex, or rather the perversion of manners and principle in many which you admit in some circles, I think the worst woman that ever existed would have made a man of very passable reputation. They are all better than us, and their faults such as they are must originate with ourselves. Your sweeping sentence “in the circles where we have met” amuses me much when I recollect some of those who constituted that society After all, bad as it is it, has its *agrémens*. The great object of life is sensation—to feel that we exist, even though in pain. It is this “craving void” which drives us to gaming—to battle—to travel—to intemperate but keenly felt pursuits of every description, whose principal attraction is the agitation inseparable from their accomplishment. I am but an awkward dissembler; as my friend you will bear with my faults. I shall have the less constraint in what I say to you—firstly because I may derive some benefit from your observations—and next because I am very sure *you* can never be perverted by any paradoxes of mine. You have said a good deal and very well too on the subject of Benevolence *systematically* exerted; two lines of Pope will explain mine (if I have any) and that of half mankind—

“Perhaps Prosperity becalmed his breast;
Perhaps the Wind just shifted from the East.”⁹⁸

By the bye you are a bard also—have you quite given up that pursuit? Is your friend Pratt⁹⁹ one of your critics? or merely one of your systematic benevolents? You were very kind to poor Blackett¹⁰⁰ which he requited by falling in love, rather presumptuously to be sure—like Metastasio with the Empress Maria Theresa.¹⁰¹ When you can spare an instant I shall of course be delighted to hear from or of you—but do not let me encroach a moment on better avocations—Adieu

ever yours

B.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, September 7th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.74; 1922 I 178-9; BLJ III 110-12)

Another small sheet, 22.5 x 18.5 cm.

Sept^r. 7th. 1813 –

My dear L^y. M^c

A letter from A. – from you – & from Ali Pacha by D^r. Holland just arrived in which that amiable potentate styles me his “most excellent & dearest friend.” – What do you think was “dearest friend’s” last exploit? – Forty two years ago the inhabitants of a hostile city seized his mother & 2 sisters & treated them as Miss Cunegonde was used by the Bulgarian cavalry. Well – this year he at last becomes master of the a=

1:2

94: Baillie quotation untraced.

95: Thomas Otway (1652-85) author of *Venice Preserv’d*.

96: Thomas Southerne (1660-1746) author of *Oroonoko*, a dramatization of Aphra Behn.

97: John Home (1722-1808) author of the tragedy *Douglas*.

98: Pope, *Moral Essays* I, ll.111-12.

99: Samuel Jackson Pratt was a patron of ...

100: ... Joseph Blackett, cobbler-poet assisted by Annabella and mocked by B. (without being named) at *EBSR* 765-72.

101: B. is facetious; I find no record of Metastasio (=Blackett) being infatuated with Maria Theresa (=Annabella).

=foresaid city – selects all the persons {living} in the remotest degree akin to this outrage (in Turkey these are affronts) their children grand children – cousins &^c. to the amount of 600 – & has them put to death in his presence. – I don't wonder at it – but the interval of 42 years is rather singular. – this H^d tells me occurred in the present spring. – He writes to me to get him a gun made – & assures me of his tender remembrance & profound respect. –
I dine out & am afraid I shall

1:3

hardly be in time – but I will doubtless endeavour to have the pleasure of seeing you – I have a great many things to say – & some very good things to hear at any rate –
ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

[1:4 is blank.]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, September 8th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 427-8; LJ II 262-3; BLJ III 111-12)

September 8. 1813.

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

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

Yesterday I had a letter from *Ali Pacha!* brought by Dr. Holland, who is just returned from Albania. It is in Latin, and begins 'Excellentissime *nec non* Carissime,' and ends about a gun he wants made for him;—it is signed 'Ali Vizir.' What do you think he has been about? H[olland]. tells me that, last spring, he took a hostile town, where, forty-two years ago, his mother and sisters were treated as Miss Cunigunde was by the Bulgarian cavalry.¹⁰² He takes the town, selects all the survivors of this exploit—children, grandchildren, &c. to the tune of six hundred, and has them shot before his face. Recollect, he spared the rest of the city, and confined himself to the Tarquin pedigree,—which is more than I would. So much for 'dearest friend.'

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, September 8th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.75; 1922 I 179; BLJ III 112)

Another small sheet, 22.5 x 18.5 cm.

Sept^f. 8th. 1813

My dear L^y. M^c

I leave town tomorrow for a few days – come what may – and as I am sure you would get the better of my resolution – I shall not venture to encounter you. – If nothing very particular occurs you will allow me to write as usual – if there does – you will probably hear of but

1:2

not from me (of course) again. – Adieu – whatever I am – whatever & wherever I may be – believe me most truly your obliged

& faithful

[swirl signature]

[1:3 and 4 are blank.]

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, September 9th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 428; LJ II 263; BLJ III 112)

Sept. 9. 1813.

102: Voltaire, *Candide*.

I write to you from Mr. Murray's, and I may say, from Murray, who, if you are not predisposed in favour of any other publisher, would be happy to treat with you, at a fitting time, for your work. I can safely recommend him as fair, liberal, and attentive, and certainly, in point of reputation, he stands among the first of 'the trade.' I am sure he would do you justice. I have written to you so much lately, that you will be glad to see so little now.

Ever, &c. &c.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, September 9th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.76; 1922 I 179-80; BLJ III 112-13)

Another small sheet, 22.5 x 18.5 cm.

Sept^r. 9th. 1813

My dear L^y. M^c

I did not receive your note till Midnight – having gone out immediately on writing my own – or you may feel assured that I could have as little resisted your conjuraton – as any other spell you may think proper to cast over me. – Something has occurred which prevents my leaving town till Saturday perhaps till Sunday – later than that day I cannot well remain. – Without as A. says being in a state

1:2

of despondency – I am nevertheless very much perplexed – however that must end one way or the other – You say “write to me at all events” depend upon it I will – till the moment arrives <when> (if it does arrive) when I feel that you ought not to acknowledge me as a correspondent – in that case a sense of what is due to yourself – & a very grateful remembrance of all you have done to save one not worth preserving – will of course close our correspondence and acquaintance at once – the sincerest & only proof I could then afford

1:3

of the value I set upon your friendship. – –

ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

[1:4 is blank.]

Byron to George Thomson, from London, September 10th 1813:

(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 113-14)

[1813 / London September tenth / G.Thomson Esq^{re} / Turtees Office / Edinburgh / Byron.]

Thomson had published Moore's *Irish Melodies*. The modesty Byron displays here does not prevent him from writing the *Hebrew Melodies* within a year.

Sept^r. 10th. 1813

Sir –

M^r. Murray informs me that you have again addresses him on y^c. subject of some songs which I ought long ago to have contributed. – The fact is – I have repeatedly tried since you favoured me with your first letter (and y^c. valuable musical present which accompanied it) without being able to satisfy myself – judge then if I should be able to gratify you or others. – –

1:2

A bad song would only disgrace beautiful music – I know that I could rhyme for you – but not produce anything worthy of your publication. – It is not a species of writing which I undervalue – on the contrary Burns in your country – & my friend Moore in this – have shewn that {even} their <xxxx> splendid talents may acquire additional reputation from this exercise of their powers. – You will not wonder that I decline writing after men whom it were difficult to imitate –

1:3

& impossible to equal. – I wish you every success – & I have only declined complying with your request – because I would not impede your popularity. – Believe me your wellwisher

& very obed^t. Ser^t.

Biron

P.S. – You will not suspect me of caprice nor want of inclination – it is true you may say I have already made attempts apparently <xxxxx> as hazardous – but believe

1:4

me I have again & again endeavoured to fulfil my promise without success. – nothing but my most decided conviction that both you & I would regret it could have prevented me from long ago contributing to your volume.—

John Murray to Byron, from 50, Albemarle Street, London, September 20th–21st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles I 219-20; LJM 42-3)

Albemarle St.
Monday

My most dear Lord

Some time ago I mentioned that I had sent the fifth Edition of the *Giaour*¹⁰³ to M^r Gifford which I did not expect him to touch except for the purpose of sending it to our Reviewer, (who has totally disappointed us) –. I called today upon M^r G and as soon as a Gentleman was gone & he was ready to begin upon business he fell back in his largest Arm Chair and exclaimed – upon my honour Murray Lord Byron is – <x xxxxxxxxxxx>

1:2

a most extraordinary Man – the new Edition of his Poem contains passages of exquisite – extraordinary beauty^x – equal to any thing that I have ever read – what is he about will he not collect all his force <for> for one immortal Work – – His subject is an excellent one – we never had descriptions of eastern Manners before – all that has been hitherto attempted was done without actual knowledge – I told him that Moore was writing an

^x I <remem> recollect now that he said they astonished him –

1:3

Eastern Story – Moore said he will only do what has been already done – & he is incapable of writing anything like Lord Byron – M^r G – speaks too of the vigour of all your Additions – Speaking of Scott he said you did not interfere with each other but that he had completely settled in his mind your certain superiority – a Genius of a higher order – I told him how rejoiced <he/>I was to hear him speak thus of you

1:4

& added that I knew you cherished his Letter to you¹⁰⁴ – he again deplored your wandering from some great object & regretted that you would not follow his recommendation of producing something worthy of you for highly as he thinks of your Lordships talents in both poems¹⁰⁵ & I believe most particularly in the last, still he thinks you have by no means stretched your pinions to the full & taken the Flight to which they are equal –

I would apologise to your Lordship for detail

2:1

– what superficially appears mere praise but I am sure your Lordship will go deeper into it and see in it my anxiety after your Fame alone – In our next number there will be an able review of the Fifth Edition,¹⁰⁶ for the *Edinb. Review* had anticipated our extracts¹⁰⁷ –

At Mad. de Staëls yesterday, you were much the subject conversation with Sir Ja^s Mackintosh – Conversation Sharp & Sir Ja^s asked and was

103: The fifth edition, with 1215 lines, had appeared in early September 1813.

104: Perhaps the letter of January 13th 1813, above.

105: Only *CHP* I and II and *The Giaour* had been published so far by Mu.

106: See the *Quarterly Review*,

107: See the *Edinburgh Review*,

2:2

astonished at, the Number of Copies sold of the Giaour – a Lad<ay>y (another Lady) (not very young though) <xx> took away a Copy of the Giaour by the talismanic effect of the enclosed Card¹⁰⁸ –

Do me the Kindness to tell me when your Lordship proposes to return – I am At Home – for the remainder of the Season & until the termination of All Seasons

your Lordships
faithful Servant
John Murray¹⁰⁹

[2:3 and 2:4 blank.]

[?????? I have ventured to address at – rather than to your Lordship & if it find you I hope you will pardon my thus breaking in upon your retreat.

Murray

Tuesday??????]

Late September 1813: sixth edition of *The Giaour* published.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, September 21st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.77; 1922 I 180-2; QI 174-6; BLJ III 115-18)

Aston Hall Rotherham –
Sept. 21st. 1813

My dear L^y. M^c –

My stay at Cambridge was very short – but feeling feverish & restless in town I flew off & here I am on a visit to my friend Webster now married – & (according to y^e. Duke of Buckingham's curse –) “settled in y^e. country.” – His bride Lady Frances is a pretty pleasing woman – but in delicate health & I fear going – if not gone – into a decline – Stanhope & his wife – pretty & pleasant too but not at all consumptive – left us to day – leaving only y^e. family – another single gentleman & your slave. – The sister L^y. Catherine is here too – & looks very pale from a cross in her love for Lord Bury (L^d. Albe's son) in short we are a society of happy wives &

1:2

unfortunate maidens. – The place is very well & quiet & the children only scream in a low voice – so that I am not much disturbed & shall stay a few days in tolerable repose. – W. don't want sense nor good nature but both are occasionally obscured by his suspicions & absurdities of all descriptions – he is passionately fond of having his wife admired – & at the same time jealous to jaundice of every thing & every body – I have hit upon the medium of praising her to him perpetually behind her back – & never looking at her before his face – as for her I believe she is <inclined> {disposed} to be very faithful – & I don't think any one now here is inclined to put her to the test. – W. himself is with all his jealousy & admiration a little

1:3

tired – he has been lately at Newstead – & wants to go again – I suspected this sudden penchant & soon discovered that a foolish nymph of the Abbey – about whom fortunately I care not – was the attraction – now if I wanted to make mischief – I could extract much good perplexity from a proper management of such events – but I am grown so good or so indolent – that I shall not avail myself of so pleasant an opportunity of tormenting mine host – though he deserves it for poaching. – I believe he has hitherto been unsuccessful – or rather it is too astonishing to be believed. – He proposed to me with great gravity to carry him over there – & I replied with equal candour that he might

1:4

108: Lady unidentified; card not forthcoming.

109: Decorated underlining.

set out when he pleased but that I should remain here to take care of his household in the interim – a proposition which I thought very much to the purpose – but which did not seem at all to his satisfaction – by way of opiate he preached me a sermon on his wife’s good qualities concluding by an assertion that in all moral & mortal qualities she was very like “Christ!!! I think the virgin Mary would have been a more appropriate typification – but it <is> was the first comparison of the kind I ever heard & made me laugh till he was angry – & then I got out of humour too – which pacified him & shortened his panegyric – L^d. Petersham is coming here in

2:1

2) a day or two – who will certainly flirt furiously with L^y. F – & I shall have some comic Iagoism with our little Othello – I should have no chance with his Desdemona myself – but a more lively & better dressed & formed personage might in an innocent way – for I really believe the girl is a very good well disposed wife & will do very well if she lives & he himself don’t tease her into some dislike of her lawful owner. – –

I passed through Hatfield the night of your ball – suppose we had jostled at a turnpike!! – At Bugden I blundered on a Bishop – the Bishop put me in mind of y^c Government – the

2:2

Government of the Governed – & the governed of their indifference towards their governors which you must have remarked as to all parties – these reflections expectorated as follows – you know I never send you my scribblings & when you read these you will wish I never may. –

Tis said – Indifference marks the present time
Then hear the reason – though ’tis told in rhyme –
A King who can’t – a Prince of Wales who don’t –
Patriots who shan’t – Ministers who won’t –
What matters who are in or out of place
The Mad – the Bad – the Useless – or the Base?

—————
you may read the 2^d. couplet so if you like –

“A King who cannot – & a Prince who don’t –
Patriots who would not – ministers who won’t –”

2:3

I am asked to stay for the Doncaster races but I am not in plight – & am a miserable beau at the best of times – so I shall even return to town or elsewhere – and in the mean time ever am

y^{rs}. dear L^y. M^e
[swirl signature]

P.S.

If you write address to B^t Street. were I once gone – I should not wish my letters to travel here after me for fear of accidents. – – – –

[there is plenty of space left on 2:2, but Byron turns the page:]

There is a delightful epitaph on Voltaire in Grimm – I read it coming down – the French I should probably mis{s}pell so take it only in bad English – “Here lies the spoilt child of the {a} world which he spoiled.” –

It is good short & true. — — —

Byron to Annabella Milbanke, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, September 26th 1813:

(Source: text from LJ III 401-4; BLJ III 119-121)

Sept^r. 26th, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—for such you will permit me to call you—On my return to town I find some consolation for having left a number of pleasant people in your letter—the more so as I began to doubt if I should ever receive another. You ask me some questions, and as they are about myself, you must pardon the egotism into which my answers must betray me. I am glad that you know any “good deed” that I am supposed ever to have blundered upon, simply because it proves that you have not heard me *invariably* ill spoken of. If true I am sufficiently rewarded by a short step towards your good opinion. You don’t like my “restless” doctrines—I should be very sorry if you did – but *I can’t stagnate* nevertheless. If I must sail let it be on the ocean no matter how stormy—anything but a dull cruise on a level lake without ever losing sight of the same insipid shores by which it is surrounded.

“Gay” but not “content”—very true. You say I never attempt to “justify” myself. You are right. At times I can’t and occasionally I won’t defend by explanations; life is not worth having on such terms. The only attempt I ever made at defence was in a poetical point of view—and what did it end in? not an exculpation of me, but an attack on all other persons whatsoever. I should make a pretty scene indeed if I went on defending—besides by proving myself (supposing it possible) a good sort of quiet country gentleman, to how many people should I give more pain than pleasure? Do you think accusers like one the better for being confuted? You have detected a laughter “false to the heart”—allowed—yet I have been tolerably sincere with you and I fear sometimes troublesome. To the charge of pride I suspect I must plead guilty, because when a boy and a very young one it was the constant reproach of schoolfellows and tutors. Since I grew up I have heard less about it—probably because I have now neither schoolfellows nor tutor. It was however originally *defensive*—for at that time my hand like Ishmael’s was against every one’s and every one’s against mine.¹¹⁰ I now come to a subject of your enquiry which you must have perceived I always hitherto avoided—an awful one—“Religion.” I was bred in Scotland among Calvinists in the first part of my life which gave me a dislike to that persuasion.¹¹¹ Since that period I have visited the most bigotted and credulous of countries—Spain, Greece, Turkey. As a spectacle the Catholic is more fascinating than the Greek or the Moslem; but the *last* is the only believer who practices the precepts of his Prophet to the last chapter of his creed. My opinions are quite undecided. I may say so sincerely, since, when given over at Patras in 1810, I rejected and ejected three Priest-loads of spiritual consolation by threatening to turn Mussulman if they did not leave me in quiet. I was in great pain and looked upon death as in that respect a relief—without much regret of the past, and few speculations on the future. Indeed so indifferent was I to my *bodily* situation, that, tho’ I was without any attendant but a young Frenchman as ill as myself,¹¹² two barbarous Arnouts and a deaf and desperate Greek Quack—and my English servant (a man now with me) within two days journey—I would not allow the last to be sent for—worth all the rest as he would have been in attendance at such a time because—I really don’t know why—unless it was an indifference to which I am certainly not subject when in good health. I believe doubtless in God, and should be happy to be convinced of much more. If I do not at present place implicit faith on tradition and revelation of any human creed, I hope it is not from a want of reverence for the Creator but the created, and when I see a man publishing a pamphlet to prove that Mr. *Pitt* is risen from the dead (as was done a week ago), perfectly positive in the truth of his assertion, I must be permitted to doubt more miracles equally well attested; but the *moral* of Christianity is perfectly beautiful—and the very sublime of virtue—yet even there we find some of its finer precepts in earlier axioms of the Greeks—particularly “do unto others as you would they should do unto you”¹¹³—the forgiveness of injuries and more which I do not remember. Good Night; I have sent you a long prose, I hope your answer will be equal in length—I am sure it will be more amusing—You write remarkably well—which you won’t like to hear so I shall say no more about it.

Ever yours most sincerely
BYRON

P.S.—I shall post-scribble this half sheet. When at Aston I sent you a short note for I began to feel a little nervous about the reception of my last letter. I shall be down there again next week and merely left them to escape from the Doncaster Races—being very ill adapted for provincial festivities—but I shall rejoin the party when they are over. This letter was written last night after a two days journey with little rest and no refreshment (eating on the road throws me into a fever directly); you will therefore not wonder if it is a meagre performance. When you honour me with an answer address to

110: Biblical; Genesis 16:12.

111: B. writes for sensational effect. See Christine Kenyon Jones, ‘*I was Bred a Moderate Presbyterian*’: Byron, Thomas Chalmers and the Scottish Religious Heritage, in Stabler and Hopps (eds.) *Romanticism and Religion from William Cowper to Wallace Stevens* (2006).

112: His lover, Niccolò Giraud.

113: Biblical; Matthew 7:12.

London. Present my invariable respects to Sir R. and L^y. Mil^c and once more receive them for yourself. Good Morning.

Byron to J. Thomson,¹¹⁴ September 27th 1813:

(Source: text from Morgan Library MA 0062, 286952, Item 40; BLJ III 121)

Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

[To / J. Thomson Esq^{re}. / 25 Tenchurch Street]

Sep^r. 27th.1813

Sir

My absence from London prevented till yesterday the receipt & acknowledgement of y^c. volume of poems for which I now thank you. – I have derived considerable pleasure from y^c. perusal of parts of the book – {to} the whole I have not yet had time to do justice by more than a slight inspection. – Poetry has always been so unprofitable a pursuit – & the fame of our present race of bards depends so much upon the caprice of

1:2

y^c. public & y^c. fashion of y^c. day – that I hardly know if it be not injurious to a young man to encourage him to proceed – many however have succeeded with less claim to talent than your work indicates – but on this point you must judge for yourself. I like your D. L. Address very much (excepting the Phœnix) & see no reason why with a very little alteration

1:3

it might not have been spoken. You are not perhaps aware that I was not one of the candidates – the spoken address was written at the subsequent request of y^c. committee (which decided on the rejection of the poems transmitted –) on a very short & unexpected notice – & certainly without any interference or wish on my part to undertake the task – with y^c. consequent uproar you are doubtless well acquainted & I hope amused. – I will give orders to my bookseller to transmit the publication

1:4

you favour me by requesting – & wishing you every success with many thanks for y^f. volume I remain – Sir –

y^f. obliged
& humble Ser^t.
Biron

Byron to Thomas Moore, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, September 27th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 428-9; LJ II 266-8; BLJ III 122-3)

September 27. 1813.

Thomas Moore,

(Thou wilt never be called 'true Thomas,' like he of Ercildoune,¹¹⁵ why don't you write to me?—as you won't, I must. I was near you at Aston the other day, and hope I soon shall be again. If so, you must and shall meet me, and go to Matlock and elsewhere, and take what, in *flash* dialect, is poetically termed 'a lark,' with Rogers and me for accomplices. Yesterday, at Holland House, I was introduced to Southey—the best looking bard I have seen for some time. To have that poet's head and shoulders, I would almost have written his Sapphics. He is certainly a prepossessing person to look on, and a man of talent, and all that, and—*there* is his eulogy.

* * read me part of a letter from you. By the foot of Pharaoh,¹¹⁶ I believe there was abuse, for he stopped short, so he did, after a fine saying about our correspondence, and *looked*—I wish I could revenge myself by attacking you, or by telling you that I have *had* to defend you—an agreeable way which one's friends have of recommending themselves by saying—'Ay, ay, I gave it Mr. Such-a-

114: Unidentified, though Thomson evidently authored one of the rejected addresses for Drury Lane. He must have written again, for B. recorded in his journal on Dec. 6, 1813: "A Mr. Thomson has sent me a song, which I must applaud. I hate annoying them with censure or silence; – and yet I hate *lettering*."

115: Thomas the Rhymer.

116: Jonson, *Every Man in his Humour*, I iii et seq.

one¹¹⁷ for what he said about your being a plagiary, and a rake, and so on.' But do you know that you are one of the very few whom I never have the satisfaction of hearing abused, but the reverse;—and do you suppose I will forgive *that*?

I have been in the country, and ran away from the Doncaster races. It is odd,—I was a visitor in the same house which came to my sire as a residence with Lady Carmarthen, (with whom he adulterated before his majority—by the by, remember, *she* was not my mamma,)—and they thrust me into an old room, with a nauseous picture over the chimney, which I should suppose my papa regarded with due respect, and which, inheriting the family taste, I looked upon with great satisfaction. I stayed a week with the family, and behaved very well—though the lady of the house is young, and religious, and pretty, and the master is my particular friend. I felt no wish for any thing but a poodle dog, which they kindly gave me. Now, for a man of my courses not even to have *coveted*, is a sign of great amendment. Pray pardon all this nonsense, and don't 'snub me when I'm in spirits.'¹¹⁸

Ever, yours, BN.

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

When from the heart where Sorrow sits,¹¹⁹
Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o'er the changing aspect flits,
And clouds the brow, or fills the eye:
Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink;
My Thoughts their dungeon know too well—
Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
And bleed within their silent cell.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, September 28th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.78; 1922 I 182-4; BLJ III 123-5)

Sept^r. 28th. 1813 –

My dear Lady Melbourne –

I sent you a long letter from Aston last week which I hope has been received at Brocket. – The Doncaster races (as I foretold you) drove me to town but I have an invitation to go down again this week upon which I am pondering – I had reasons of my own some bad & others good for not accompanying the party to D^r – my time was passed pleasantly enough – & as innocently at Aston – as during the “week” of immaculate memory last autumn at Middleton. – If you received my letter you will remember

1:2

my sketch of the Astonian family – when I return I shall complete it – at present I doubt about the colours – I have been observing & have made out one conclusion which is that my friend W.¹²⁰ will run his head against a wall of his own building. – There <is/>are a Count & Countess – somebody – (I forget the name of the exiles) – the last of whom made a desperate attack on W. at L^d. Waterpark's¹²¹ a few weeks ago – & W. in gratitude invited them to his house – there I suppose they now are – (they had not arrived when I set out) to me it appears from W's own narrative – that he will be detected & bullied by the husband into some infernal compromise – & I told

1:3

him as much – but like others of our acquaintance he is deaf as an adder. – – I have known him several years & really wish him well – for which reason I overlooked his interference in some concerns of my own where he had no business – perhaps because also they had ceased to interest me – (for we are all selfish & I no more trust myself than others with a good motive) but be that as it may – I wish he would not indulge in such freaks – for which he can have no excuse – & the example will turn out

117: Shakespeare, *Hamlet* V i 83.

118: Tony Lumpkin at Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer*, II.

119: Moore's note: Now printed in his Works.

120: James Wedderburn Webster.

121: An Irish peer.

none of the best for L^y. F^y. – She seems pretty & intelligent – as far as I observed which was very little – I had & have other things to reflect upon. –

1:4

Your opinion of y^c. Giaour or rather y^c. additions honours me highly – you who know how my thoughts were occupied when these last were written – will perhaps perceive in parts a coincidence <with> {in} my own state of mind with that of my hero – if so you will give me credit for feeling – though on the other hand I lose in your esteem. – I have tried & hardly too to vanquish my demon – but to very little purpose – for a resource that seldom failed me before – did in this instance – I mean transferring my regards to another – of which I had a very fair & not discouraging opportunity at one time – I willingly would – but the feeling that it

2:1

2) was an effort spoiled all again – & here I am – what I am you know already. – As I have never been accustomed to parade my thoughts before you in a larmoyante strain I shall not begin now. <Axxx>
<xxxxxx>¹²² –

The epistles of your mathematician (A would now be ambiguous) continue – & the last concludes with a repetition of a desire that none but Papa & Mamma should know it – why you should not seems to me quite ludicrous & is now past praying for – but – observe – here is the strictest of S^t. Ursula's 11000 what do you call 'ems?¹²³ – a wit – a moralist – & religionist – enters into a clandestine correspondence with a personage

2:2

generally presumed a great Roué – & drags her aged parents into this secret treaty – it is I believe not usual for single ladies to risk such brilliant adventures – but this comes of infallibility – not that she ever says anything that might not be said by the Town cryer – still it is imprudent – if I were rascal enough to take an unfair advantage. – Alas! poor human nature – here is your niece writing – & doing a foolish thing – I lecturing Webster! – & forgetting the tremendous “beam in my own eye” no – I do feel <it> but cannot pluck it out.¹²⁴ – These various absurdities & inconsistencies may amuse you – but there is a fate in such small as well as great concerns or how came Moreau by his loss of legs?¹²⁵ I saw an extract from his last letter to his wife (in M.S not published) he says – that “Coquin de Bonaparte est toujours heurreux!” Good night. ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

[Sheet 2 has only two sides.]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, September 29th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.79; 1922 I 184-5; BLJ III 125-6)

Sept^r. 29th. 1813 –

My dear L^y. M^c

I have written you a long letter which I don't know whether to send or not – since I came to town – which I leave again on Sunday. – C's communication to y^c. Lady who inherits your eyes is quite a mistake – or what do I here? – in my way through Southwell (where I passed a year when eighteen –) I might have been liable to what she calls a “new attachment” or at any rate an old one or two – but the letter I have written you will not please you – as I think you will perceive from it's tone that I have no newer attachment. – – – –

I am asked again to Aston – & I think I shall go because – you shan't have the

1:2

real because (though it has nothing to do with W.'s family) but instead of it because – they gave me a poodle dog which I left there & want to bring away with me – L^y. Blarney's anomaly delights me

122: The second erased word may be “subject”.

123: “Virgins”.

124: Biblical: Matthew 7:5.

125: The French general Moreau died at the battle of Dresden after his legs had been amputated.

beyond every thing – I think I can guess C’s question – might it not be how far such a production was independent of “new attachments” – depend upon it she will never rest till she has obtained in a philosophical way all the information which can be seen or heard of such a phenomenon. – How Lady B– must delight in <be> my being in the secret – though I really don’t see any thing so astonishing – in C’s telling it to me – unless

1:3

her Ladyship – but no matter – and Grandmamma too – I suppose she will certainly find an hospital for the species – & appoint C– Canoness thereof. – If I write much more I shall run into repetition of my last letter – many thanks for all your own – I suppose the Sultan’s communication was about the L.’s & G. L.’s¹²⁶ embarrassments – I don’t think Ward is the reviewer of Fox¹²⁷ – though he was certain to be suspected – Rogers will never recover his – he harps on {it} yet. ———
Heigh ho – I have been signing my will today – & must do the same for this letter – ever y^{rs}. most affect^{ly}.

[swirl signature]

[1:4 is blank.]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from London, October 1st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.80; 1922 I 195-8; QI 176-9; BLJ III 185-8)

[1813 / London October first / The Lady Melbourne / Broomfield Hall / Welwyn / Hertfordshire]

Sept^r. – Oct^r. 1st. 1813My dear L^y. M^c.

You will have received two letters of mine to atone for my late portentous silence & this is intended as a further expiation – I have just been dining at Holland house – the Queen is grown thin & gracious both of which become her royalty – I met Curran¹²⁸ there who electrified me <by> {with} his imagination – & delighted me with his humour – he is a man of a million – the Irish when good are perfect – the little I have seen of him has less leaven than any mortal com=

1:2

=pound I have lately looked into. – Today I heard from my friend W. again – his Countess is he says “inexorable” what a lucky fellow! happy in his obstacles – in his case I should think them very pleasant – but I don’t lay this down as a general proposition. – – All my prospect of amusement is clouded – for Petersham has sent an excuse – & there will be no one to make him jealous of but the Curate & the Butler – & I have no thoughts of setting up for myself – I am not exactly cut out for the Lady of the mansion – but I think a stray Dandy would have a chance of preferment –

1:3

she evidently expects to be attacked – & seems prepared for a brilliant defence – my character as a Roué had gone before me – & my careless & quiet behaviour astonished her so much that I believe she began to think herself ugly – or me blind – if not worse. – They seemed surprised at my declining the races in particular – but for this I had good reasons – firstly – I wanted to go elsewhere – secondly – if I had gone I must have paid some attention to some of them – which is troublesome unless one has something in memory or hope to induce it – & then mine host is so marvelous greeneyed that he might have included me in his Calenture¹²⁹ – which

1:4

I don’t deserve – & probably should not like it a bit the better if I did – I have also reason for returning there on Sunday – with which they have nothing to do – but if C– takes a suspicious twist that way – let her – it will keep her in darkness – but I hope however she won’t take a fit of scribbling as she did to L^y. Oxford last year – though Webster’s face on the occasion would be quite a Comet – & delight me infinitely more than O.’s which was comic enough. –

126: Caroline and George Lamb.

127: Refers to a review of Wakefield’s correspondence with Fox in the *Quarterly* (July 1813).

128: John Philpot Curran, Irish lawyer and wit.

129: Nautical disease in which the sea is imagined to be a green field.

Friday Morn –

Yours arrived I will answer on the next page. —

2:1

2) So L^y. H^d. says I am fattening – & you say I talk “nonsense” well – I must fast & unfool again if possible. But as Curran <assured> {told} me last night that he had been assured upon oath by half the Court that “the Prince was not at all corpulent – that he was stout certainly but by no means protuberant – or obese “there’s comfort yet”¹³⁰ as to folly – that’s incurable. – –
 “See C! – if I should see C!” – I hope not – though I am not sure a visit would be so disagreeable as it ought to be – “I pique myself on Constancy” – but it is but a sensitive plant & thrives best by itself. – –
 Then there is the

2:2

story of L^y. B.’s¹³¹ novelty – which I am sure she longs to unravel – how your passage on “the kneeling in the middle of the room” made me laugh this morning – it certainly was not the centre of gravity – pardon a wretched quibble which I don’t often hazard. – I did not kneel in the middle of the room – but the first time I saw her this year – she thought proper to fix herself there & turn away her head – & as one does not kneel exactly for one’s own convenience – my genuflexions would have been all lost upon her if she did not perceive them. – – To return to the W’s – I am glad they amuse you – anything that confirms {or extends} one’s observations on life & character delights me even when I don’t know people –

2:3

for this reason – I would give the world to pass a month with Sheridan or any lady or gentleman of the old school – & hear them talk every day & all day of themselves & acquaintance – & all they have heard & seen in their lives. – – – W. seems in no present peril – I believe the woman is mercenary – & I happen to know that he can’t at present bribe her – – I told him that it would be known – & that he must expect reprisals – & what do you think was his answer? – “I think any woman fair game – because I can depend upon L^y. F’s principles – she can’t go wrong – & therefore I may – then why are you jealous of her? – – because – because – zounds I am not jealous – why the devil do you suppose I am? – I then enumerated some very gross symptoms which he

2:4

had displayed even before her face – & his servants – which he could not deny – but persisted in his determination to add to his “bonnes fortunes” – it is a strange being – when I came home in 1811 – he was always saying – B – do marry – it is the happiest &^c. – the first thing he said on my arrival at A. was “B – whatever you do don’t marry” which considering he had an unmarried sister in law in the house was a very unnecessary precaution. – – –

Every now & then he has a fit of fondness – & kisses her hand before his guests – which she receives with the most lifeless indifference – which struck me more than if she had appeared pleased or annoyed – her brother told me last year that she married to get rid of her family – (who are ill tempered) – & had not been out two months so that to use a foxhunting phrase she was “killed in covert”. –

You have enough of them & me for y^e present.

y^{rs}. ever

[swirl signature]

3:1 [vertically:] P.S. – I do not wish to know y^r. person’s name – but to whom is the likeness – to me or to her? –

[3:2 has the address.]

130: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, III ii 39.

131: Lady Bessborough.

Byron to Francis Hodgson, October 1st 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from *Memoir of the Rev. Francis Hodgson, B.D.* (Macmillan, 1878), I pp.277-8; BLJ III 130)

October 1, 1813.

My dear H.—I leave town again for Aston¹³² on Sunday, but have messages for you. Lord Holland desired me repeatedly to bring you; he wants to know you much, and begged me to say so; you will like him. I had an invitation for you to dinner there this last Sunday, and Rogers is perpetually screaming because you don't call, and wanted you also to dine with him on Wednesday last. Yesterday we had Curran there—who is beyond all conception!—and Mackintosh and the wits are to be seen at H. H. constantly, so that I think you would like their society. I will be a judge between you and the attorney. So B. may mention me to Lucien if he still adheres to his opinion. Pray let Rogers be one; he has the best taste extant. Bland's nuptials delight me; if I had the least hand in bringing them about it will be a subject of selfish satisfaction to me these three weeks. Desire Drury—if he loves me—to kick Dwyer thrice for frightening my horses with his flame-coloured whiskers last July. Let the kicks be hard, etc.

Byron to John Murray, October 2nd 1813:

(Source: text from the Berg Collection, NYPL; BLJ III 131)

Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

J. Murray Esq^{re} .

Dear Sir –

The lines are certainly lost there is no proof of them whatever.

y^{rs}. B.

There were 82 – sent on Wednesday.

Oct 2. 1813

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, October 2nd 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 430-1; LJ II 271-4; QI 179-80; BLJ III 130-1)

October 2. 1813.

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

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

The reputation of 'gloom,' if one's friends are not included in the *reputants*, is of great service; as it saves one from a legion of impertinents, in the shape of common-place acquaintance. But thou know'st I can be a right merry and conceited fellow, and rarely 'larmoyant.' Murray shall reinstate your line forthwith.¹³³ I believe the blunder in the motto was mine:—and yet I have, in general, a memory for *you*, and am sure it was rightly printed at first.

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

132: Note from *Memoir*: Aston Hall, near Rotheram, Yorkshire, now the property of Harry Verelst, Esq., brother-in-law to the writer of this memoir.

133: Moore's note: The motto to *The Giaour*, which is taken from one of the *Irish Melodies*, had been quoted by him incorrectly in the first editions of the poem. He made afterwards a similar mistake in the lines from Burns prefixed to the *Bride of Abydos*.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, October 5th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.81; 1922 I 188-90; QI 180-1; BLJ 132-3)

Aston Hall, Rotherham
Oct^r. 5th. 1813 –My dear L^y. M^c –

W. has lost his Countess – his time – & his temper – (I would advise anyone who finds the last to <advertise> {return} it immediately – it is of no use to any but the owner –) L^y. F^s. has lost Petersham for the present at least – the other sister as I said before has lost L^d. Bury – & I – have nobody to lose – here at least – & am not very anxious to find one. – Here be two friends of the family – besides your slave – a M^r. Westcombe very handsome but silly – & a M^r. Agar frightful but facetious – the whole party are out in carriages – a species of amusement from which I always avert & consequently

1:2

declined it today – it is very well with two – but {not} beyond a duet – I think being bumped about between two or more of one's acquaintance intolerable. – W. grows rather intolerable too – he is out of humour with my Italian books – (Dante & Alfieri¹³⁴ & some others as harmless as ever wrote) & requests that sa femme may not see them – because forsooth it is a language which doth infinite damage!! & because I enquired after the Stanhopes our mutual acquaintance – he answers me by another question – “pray do you enquire after my wife of others in the same way? – so that you see my Virtue is its' own reward – for never in word or deed – did I speculate upon his spouse – nor did I ever see much in her to encourage either hope or much fulfilment of hope – supposing I had any. – She is pretty but not surpassing –

1:3

too thin – & not very animated – but good tempered – & a something interesting enough in her manner & figure – but I never should think of her nor anyone else – if left to my own cogitations – as I have neither the patience nor presumption to advance till met halfway. – The other two pay her ten times more attention – & of course are more attended to – I really believe he is bilious & suspects something extraordinary from my nonchalance – at all events he has hit upon the wrong person. – I can't help laughing {to you} – but he will soon make me very serious with him – & then he will come to his senses again – the oddest thing is that he wants me to stay with him some time – which I am not much inclined to do – unless the gentleman transfers his fretfulness to some one else. – I have written to you so much lately – you will be glad to be spared from any further account of the “Blunderhead family”.

ever y^{rs}. my dear L^y. M^c.
[swirl signature]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, October 8th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.82; 1922 I 190-3; QI 181-3; BLJ III 133-6)

Oct^r. 8th. 1813 –

My dear L^y. M^c – I have volumes – but neither time nor space – I have already trusted too deeply to hesitate now – besides for certain reasons you will not be sorry to hear that I am anything but what I was. – Well then – to begin – & first a word of mine host – he has lately been talking at rather than to me before the party (with the exception of the women) in a tone – which as I never use it myself I am not particularly disposed to tolerate in others – what he may do with impunity – it seems – but not suffer – till at last I told him that the whole of his argument involved the interesting contradiction that “he might love where he liked but that no one else might like what he ever thought proper to love” a doctrine <with> which as the learned Partridge observed – contains a “non sequitur”¹³⁵ from which I for one begged leave as a general proposition to dissent. – This nearly produced a scene – with me as well as another guest who seemed to admire my sophistry the most of the two – & as it was after dinner & debating time – might have ended in more than wine shed –

1:2

134: Evidence that B. is studying Italian; yet no titles by Alfieri occur in his library sale catalogues.

135: Fielding, *Tom Jones*, IX 6.

but that the Devil for some wise purpose of his own thought proper to restore good humour – which has not as yet been further infringed. – – – – –

In these last few days I have had a good deal of conversation with an amiable person – whom (as we deal in letters – & initials only) we will denominate P^h.¹³⁶ – – well – these things are dull in detail – take it once – I have made love – & if I am to believe mere words (for there we have hitherto stopped) it is returned. – I must tell you the place of declaration however – a billiard room! – I did not as C— says “kneel in the middle of the room” but like Corporal Trim to the Nun – “I made a speech”¹³⁷ – which as you might not listen to it with the same patience – I shall not transcribe. – We were before on very amiable terms – & I remembered being asked an odd question – “how a woman who liked a man could inform him of it – when he did not perceive it – ” I also observed that we went

1:3

on with our game (of billiards) without counting the hazards – & supposed that – as mine certainly were {not} – the thoughts of the other party {also} were not exactly occupied by what was our ostensible pursuit. – Not quite though pretty well satisfied with my progress – I took a very imprudent step – with pen & paper – in tender & tolerably turned prose periods (no poetry even when in earnest) here were risks certainly – first how to convey – then how it would be received – it was received however & deposited not very far from the heart which I wished it to reach – when who should enter the room but the person who ought at that moment {to have been} in the Red sea if Satan had any civility – but she kept her countenance & the paper – & I my composure as well as I could. – It was a risk – & all had been lost by failure – but then recollect – how much more I had to gain by the reception – if not declined – – & how much one always hazards to obtain anything worth having. – My billet prospered – it did more – it even <lost>

1:4

(I am this moment interrupted by the <m/>Marito¹³⁸ – & write this before him – he has brought me a political pamphlet in M.S. to decypher & applaud – I shall content myself with the last – Oh – he is gone again) – my billet produced an answer – a very unequivocal one too – but a little too much about virtue – & indulgence of attachment in some sort of etherial process in which the soul is principally concerned – which I don’t very well understand – being a bad metaphysician – but one generally ends & begins with Platonism – & as my proselyte is only twenty – there is time enough to materialize – I hope nevertheless this spiritual system won’t last long – & at any rate must make the experiment. – I remember my last case was the reverse – as Major O’Flaherty recommends “we fought first & explained afterwards.”¹³⁹ – This is the present state of things – much mutual profession – a good deal of melancholy – which I am sorry to say was remarked by “the Moor” & as much love as could well be made considering the time place & circumstances. – –

2:1

I need not say that the folly & petulance of have tended to all this – if a man is not contented with a pretty woman & not <let> only runs after any little country girl he meets with but absolutely boasts of it – he must not be surprised if others admire that which he knows not how to value – besides he literally provoked & goaded me into it – by something not unlike bullying – indirect to be sure – but tolerably obvious – “he would do this – & he would do that – if any man &^c. &^c. – & he thought that every woman “was his lawful prize nevertheless – Oons! who is this strange monopolist? – it is odd enough but on other subjects he is like other people but on this he seems infatuated – if he had been rational – & not prated of his pursuits – I should have gone on very well – as I did at Middleton – even now I shan’t quarrel with him – if I can help it – but one or two of his speeches has blackened the blood about my heart – & curdled the milk of kindness – if put to the proof – I shall behave like other people I presume. –

2:2

136: “Ph.” – “F” – Frances Wedderburn Webster, wife to his host.

137: Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, VIII 22.

138: James Wedderburn Webster arrives conveniently at the page turn. B.’s pen really is “at the bottom of the page”.

139: Quotation untraced.

I have heard from A¹⁴⁰ – but her letter to me is melancholy – about her old friend Miss M^y.’s departure &^c. – &^c. – I wonder who will have her at last – her letter to you is gay – you say – that to me must have been written at the same time – the little demure Nonjuror! – – – –
I wrote to C— the other day – for I was afraid she might repeat the last year’s epistle – & make it circular among my friends. – – –
Good evening – I am now going to billiards. –

ever y^{rs}
[signature swirl]

P.S. – 6 o’clock –

This business is growing serious – & I think Platonism in some peril – There has been very nearly a scene – almost an hysteric & really without cause for I was conducting myself with (to me) very irksome decorum – her expressions astonish me – so young & cold as she appeared – but these professions must end as usual – & would – I think – now – had “I’occasion” been not wanting – had any one come in during the tears & consequent consolation all had been spoiled – we must be more cautious or less larmoyante. – – –

3:1

P.S. second – 10 o’clock –

I write to you just escaped from Claret & vociferation – on G – d knows what paper – my <Landf> Landlord is a rare gentleman – he has just proposed to me a bet “that he for a certain sum wins any given woman – against any given homme including all friends present – which I declined with becoming deference to him & the rest of the company – is not this at this moment a perfect comedy? – I forgot to mention that on his entrance yesterday during the letter scene – it reminded me so much of an awkward passage in “the Way to keep him” between Lovemore – Sir Bashful – & my Lady – that embarrassing as it was I could hardly help laughing – I hear his voice in the passage – he wants me to go to a ball at Sheffield – & is talking to me as I write – Good Night. I am in the act of praising his pamphlet. —

I don’t half like your story of Corinne – some day I will tell you why – If I can – but at present – Good Night. –

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Newstead Abbey, October 10th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.83; 1922 I 193-5; QI 184-6; BLJ III 136-8)

Newstead Abbey – Oct^r. 10th. 1813 –

My dear L^y. M^c.

I write to you from the melancholy mansion of my fathers – where I am dull as the longest deceased of my progenitors – I hate reflection on irrevocable things & won’t now turn sentimentalist. <W> alone accompanied me here (I return tomorrow to <Aston>) he is now sitting opposite – & between us are Red & white Champ^c. – Burgundy – two sorts of Claret – & lighter vintages – the relics of my youthful cellar which is yet in formidable number & famous order – but I leave the wine to him – & prefer conversing soberly with you. – Ah! if you knew what a quiet Mussulman life {(except in wine)} I led here for a few years – but no matter. – Yesterday I sent you a long letter & must now recur to the same subject which is uppermost in my thoughts, – I am as much astonished but I hope not so much mistaken <I hope> as Lord Ogleby at the denouement

1:2

or rather commencement of the last week – it has changed my views – my wishes – my hopes – my everything – & will furnish you with additional proof of my weakness. – Mine guest (late host) has just been congratulating himself on possessing a partner without passion – I don’t know – & cannot yet speak with certainty – but I never yet saw more decisive preliminary symptoms. – – –

As I am apt to take people at their word – on receiving my answer – that whatever the weakness of her heart might be – I should never derive further proof of it than the confession – instead of pressing the point – I told her that I was willing to be hers on her own terms & should never attempt to infringe upon the conditions – I said this without pique – & believing her perfectly in earnest for the time – but in the midst of our mutual professions or to use her own expression “more than mutual”

1:3

she burst into an agony of crying – & at such a time & in such a place as rendered such a scene particularly perilous to both – her sister in the next room – & □□□ not far off – of course I said & did {almost} everything proper on the occasion – & fortunately we restored sunshine in time to prevent anyone from perceiving the cloud that had darkened our horizon. – She says – she is convinced that my own declaration was produced solely because I perceived her previous penchant – which by the bye – as I think I said to you before – I neither perceived nor expected – I really did not suspect her of a predilection for anyone – & even now in public with the exception of those little indirect yet mutually understood – I don't know how & it is unnecessary to name or describe them – her conduct is as coldly correct as her still – fair – M^{rs}. L. like aspect. – She however managed to give me a note – & to receive another & a

1:4

ring before ——'s very face – & yet she is a thorough devotee – & takes <f/>prayers morning and evening – besides being measured for a new bible once a quarter. – The only alarming thing – is that —— complains of her aversion from being beneficial to population & posterity – if this is an invariable maxim – I shall lose my labour. – Be this as it may – she owns to more – than I ever heard from any woman within the time – & I shan't take ——'s word any more for her feelings than I did for that celestial comparison which I once mentioned. – I think her eye – her change of colour – & the trembling of her hand – & above all her devotion tell a different tale. – Good night – we return tomorrow – & now I drink your health – you are my only correspondent & I believe friend

ever y^{rs}.
[swirl signature]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, October 11th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.84; 1922 I 195-8; QI 186-8; BLJ III 139-41)

Oct. 11th. 1813

My dear L^y. M^c –

C– is angry with me for having written by the post not a very cold letter – but below (it seems) her freezing point – pray – say something – anything to prevent any of the old absurdities – her letter arrived during my absence at N¹⁴¹ – with a never sufficiently to be confounded seal – with C– at full length on the malignant wax – this must have been to answer the purpose it effected – at any rate – the person who opened the bag was the last I wished to see the impression – and it is not yet effaced – but it shall be – this is not to be endured – that my “chienne of a Star” as Captain Ragaddo¹⁴² says – should have produced such an incident – & at such a time! – – – –

I have written to you so much – & so frequently that you must be sick of the sight of my scrawls – –

1:2

I believe all the Stars are no better than they should be —— is on the verge of a precious scrape – his quondam tutor! & ally who has done him some not very reputable services since his marriage – writing I believe his billets – & assisting him to those to whom they were addressed – being now discarded – threatens a development &^c. – <&> ——consults me on the subject! – of this I shall take no advantage in another quarter however convenient – if I gain my point it shall be as fairly as such things will admit – it is odd enough that his name has never hitherto been taken in vain by her or me. – – I have told him that if the discovery is inevitable – his best way is to anticipate it & sue for an act of indemnity – if she likes him she will forgive – & if she don't like him it don't matter whether she does or no. – – – From me she shall never hear of it. – –

1:3

It is three in the morning – & I cannot rest but I must try – I have been at N– & between that & this – my mind is in a state of chaotic inaction – but you wont pity & I don't deserve it – was there ever such a slave to impulse? as

y^{rs}. ever

141: Newstead.

142: The only reference on Google to “Captain Ragaddo” is to this letter.

[swirl signature]

Monday – Afternoon –

I am better today – but not much advanced – I began the week so well that I thought the conclusion would have been more decisive – but the topography of this house is not the most favourable – I wonder how my father managed¹⁴³ – but he had it not till L^y. Carmarthen came with it too – we shall be at N. again the whole party for a week in a few days and there the Genii of the place will be perhaps more propitious – he haunts me – here he is again – and here are a party of purple stockings come to dine – Oh that accursed pamphlet! I have not read it what

1:4

shall I say to the author now in the room? thank the Stars which I yesterday abused he is diverted by the <m/>Mirror opposite – & is now surveying himself with great complacency – he is gone – Your letter has arrived – but is evidently written before my last three have been delivered. – Adieu for the present – I must dress – & have got to sheer one of those precious curls on which you say I set so high a value – & I cannot & would not play the same pass you may laughingly remember on a similar occasion with C. – My proselyte is so young a beginner – that you must wonder at these exchanges & mummeries – you are right – she is “very pretty” – & not so inanimate as I imagined – & must at least be allowed an excellent taste!! – – – –

2:1

10 o'clock –

Nearly a scene – (always nearly) at dinner – there is a Lady Sitwell a wit – & blue – & what is more to the purpose a dark tall fine looking conversable personage – as it is usual to separate the women at table I was under the necessity of placing myself between her & the sister – & was seated & in the <note> {agonies} of conjecture whether the dish before me required carving – when my little Platonist exclaimed “L^d. B. – this is your place” I stared – & before I had time to reply she repeated looking like C – when gentle (for she is very unlike that fair creature when angry) “L^d. B – change places with Catherine” I did & very willingly – though awkwardly – but “the Moor” (mine host) roared out “B – that is the most ungallant thing I ever beheld” – and

2:2

Lady Catherine by way of mending matters answered – did not you hear Frances ask him?” – he has looked like the Board of Green Cloth ever since – & is now mustering wine & spirits for a lecture to her – & a squabble with me – he had better let it alone – for I am in a pestilent humour at this present writing – & shall certainly disparage his eternal “pamphlet”. ———
Good Even – I solicit your good wishes in all good deeds – & your occasional remembrance. –

[Sheet 2 has only two sides.]

Frances Wedderburn Webster to Byron, undated, autumn 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604)

I open my letter to say – the picture is arrived, and safely in my possession, never to be separated from me – indeed it is like – Oh! Byron, how my heart thanks you for it – it seems to speak to me – it speaks comfort to my wounded Mind. – Oh! I will cherish thee, thou dear Image of my absent Byron – I cannot put it out of my sight – & yet I must go down Stairs – W. has sent for me – I fear he will remark my agitation – & yet I must go – Thank Heaven you have not been an eye witness to the Scene – indeed it is very like you – it is serious – it reminds me of that fatal Mor[ni]ng when I parted from all I love – & which is still as fresh in my mem’ry – so fresh – one<’s> moment’s recollection seems to break my <xxxxx/>Heart

Byron – dearest Byron never can I sufficiently thank you for it – – You will not hear from me again I {shall} have no opportunities of writing – but if I have will you receive my letters? Yes you will – for you promised me to love me – We shall meet in Spring – to that I cling – <a/>on that Rest[s] all my future Comfort – Adieu – I must away – “Thou art, the cherished madness of my Heart”¹⁴⁴ – I feel – I feel it is not love – it is adoration – I must be silent. –

143: It was at Aston Hall that B.’s father committed adultery with Augusta’s mother.

144: Byron, *The Giaour*, ll.1190-1.

Adieu! Adieu! Dearest Byron – let me know thro' W. – I mean by writing to him, when you return to town.

Que ta vie soit douce
Comme ton ame est belle –

My whole thoughts, Heart, & Mind are wrapt up in you, & you alone.

Thursday
2 oClock

Lady Melbourne to Byron, October 13th 1813:

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.45547 ff.65-7; Gross 146-8)
[The / Lord Byron / Ashton Hall / Rotherham / Yorkshire]

Mad^c de Stael says she has work'd two Miracles upon M^f. Ward – She has taught him to be civil to Women & to be devout

13th Oct 1813 /

Dear L^d B

L^y Holland call'd upon me this Mor^G to ask me if I knew the name of a Physician, whom you had engaged to go abroad with you, & on my saying I was quite ignorant about it, she beg'd me to write, or communicate with you by any means I might have, that if you had given up all thoughts of leaving England, she wish'd to know something about this person, & where he could be found, as some friends of hers were in distress – I suspect it was for the D^e & D^k of Bedford, but she would not tell – pray either let me know what to say, or write to her yourself I was happy to find you seated over a Table &c. with him, for when I saw the date of your Letter, I began to fear some catastrophe, as I did not expect you would have left A– just at that time, however it was perfectly right, – I have no doubt what he says about Ph– is quite true, but what of that

1:2

it only tells against himself – & y^e probability is, that S^t Brilliant may have the power to say to him some day, – Mon Ami – tout cela est changè, – for in so many words it is only saying, she does not like me. – Poor Soul, she seems very interesting {with} great Susceptibilities and quietness of feeling – I am very sorry for her, she must be so unhappy, yet still, I believe that that state when the mind is fully engross'd is preferable to the one of distaste and Nausea in which she has hitherto existed. – she must enjoy those petit soirs, which you will not detail & which I should say were indescribable if I did not recollect some lines I think so beautiful, perhaps you never read them

Pass too the glance none saw beside
The smile none else could understand;¹⁴⁵
&c &c &c &c &c &c

The exchange of papers seems to me what You would call the best Sign were it not for that circumstance I should think, she was what I once s^d C– was not – I ought to be able to form some judgment, for I was once in y^e same Situation – the same things said, the same resolutions taken, – You are inclined to laugh, & I don't wonder at it,

1:3

but were I to tell you how long it lasted, your Laughter would change into Sorrow – but no writing pass'd & it was a person not “fram'd to make Woman false”¹⁴⁶ – like the present pretendant – that's for your comfort, – what a Strange thing altogether, as you s^d of A–, these things happen when people think themselves infallible, where is it that someone says – “Villainous thoughts when these Mutualities marshall the way”¹⁴⁷ I could laugh – but I do not, it is too serious to indulge in that, – & I will just make one observation which prudence Suggests – it appears to me that the turn this must take is Serious, is Sir Brilliant prepared to go all lengths, if necessary? is he sure it is what he should like entirely? then proceed. – you can not misunderstand me – I think; I do not allude to the sorts of thing that might have arisen from a conversation you related to me, – it is always necessary to be prepared for what may happen –

¹⁴⁵: Byron, *To Thyrsa*, l.30 (“might understand”).

¹⁴⁶: Shakespeare, *Othello*, I iii 392.

¹⁴⁷: *Ibid.*, II i 258.

I have turned your Likeness into y^c Garden till I have finish'd my Letter, & he disturbs me every few Minutes to know if it is done so yⁱ I hardly know what I write, & it will

1:4

Shorten my Letter, so much the better for you :C– told me you had written very crossly, & wishing her much domestic happiness – I answer'd I supposed she had mention'd her feelings about her Husband She s^d Oh no, not a Word I thought you had! – no indeed I answer'd, if I write I say as little as possible about you, in fact I had not told you then, – she then s^d no Matter, once I should have been in fits, but now I shall take no Notice of it / I did not reply, & she really seems so much more at her ease, that I hope there is no danger of any of y^c Epistles you apprehended – though there is no answering for her, – if she hears any thing, which I hope she will not –

I went last Night to Drury Lane to see a New Operatic Drama,¹⁴⁸ very Stupid – by a M^r. Thompson,¹⁴⁹ they say, I see it is given out for to Night but so much dissatisfaction was shewn I think it will not be allowed to go on – the Jokes in y^c comic part worse than Lewis's The Ale Boy's patience quite exhausted and y^{rs} pretty well tried – So adieu Ever y^{rs} [*swirl signature*]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, October 13th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.86; 1922 I 198-201; QI 188-91; BLJ III 141-4)

Oct^r. 13th. 1813 –

My dear L^y. M^c –

You must pardon the quantity of my letters & much of the quality also – but I have really no other confidential correspondent on earth – & – much to say which may call forth that advice which has so often been to me of essential service. – Any thing you will allow is better than the last – & I cannot exist without some object of attachment – you will laugh at my perpetual changes – but recollect the circumstances which have broken off the last three¹⁵⁰ – & don't exactly attribute their conclusion to caprice – I think you will at least admit whatever C– may assert that I did not use her ill – though I find her own story even in this part of the world to be

1:2

the genuine narrative – as to L^y. O. that I did to please you – & luckily finding it pleasant to myself also & very useful to C– it might have lasted longer but for the voyage – I spare you the third. – I am so spoilt by intellectual drams – that I begin to believe that danger & difficulty render these things more piquant to my taste – as far as the former goes – C– might have suited me very well – but though we may admire drams – nobody is particularly fond of Aqua fortis – at least I should {have} liked it a little diluted – the liquid I believe which is now slowly mingling in my cup. – In the mean time let us laugh while we can – for I see no reason why you should

1:3

be tormented with sentimental or solid sorrows of your acquaintance – I think you will allow that I have as little of that affectation as any person of similar pursuits. – – – –

I mentioned to you yesterday a laughable occurrence at dinner – this morning he burst forth with a homily upon the subject to the two – & myself – instead of taking us separately (like the last of the Horatii with the Curiatii)¹⁵¹ you will easily suppose with such odds he had the worst of it – and the satisfaction <with> {of} being laughed at into the bargain. – Serious as I am – or seem – I really cannot frequently keep my countenance – yesterday – before my face – they disputed about their apartments at N– – she insisting that her sister should share her room – & he

1:4

very properly – but heinously out of place – maintaining & proving to his own satisfaction that none but husbands have any legal claim to divide their spouses' pillow – you may suppose notwithstanding the ludicrous effect of the scene I felt & looked a little uncomfortable – this she must have seen for of course I said <nothing> {not a word} & turning round at the close of the dialogue – {she} whispered

148: Gross identifies *Godolphin, The Lion of the North*, an “operatic drama”.

149: Could be “Thimton” or “Shrimpton”.

150: With Caroline Lamb, Lady Oxford, and Augusta.

151: In Livy (Bk I 24-6), the Horatii killed the Curiatii, despite being linked to them by marriage.

“N’importe – this is all nothing” an ambiguous sentence which I am puzzled to translate – but as it was meant to console me I was very glad to hear it, though quite unintelligible. – –

As far as I can pretend to judge of her disposition & character – I will say – of course I am partial. – She is – you know – very handsome – & very gentle though sometimes decisive – fearfully romantic – & singularly warm in her affections

2:1

2) but I should think – of a cold temperament – yet I have my doubts on that point too – accomplished (as all decently educated women are) & clever though her style a little too German – no dashing nor desperate talker – but never – and I have watched in mixed conversation – saying a silly thing – (duet dialogues in course between young & Platonic people must be varied with a little chequered absurdity) good tempered – (always excepting L^y O.’s – which was outwardly the best I ever beheld –) and jealous as myself – the ne plus ultra of green eyed Monstrosity – seldom abusing other people but listening to it with great patience – these qualifications with an unassuming <manner> and <very particularly unexpected> sweet voice & very soft manner constitute the bust (all I can yet pretend to model) of my present Idol. – – You who know me & my weakness so well – will not be surprised when

2:2

I say that I am totally absorbed in this passion – that I am even ready to take a flight if necessary – & as she says – “we cannot part –” it is no impossible denouement – though as yet one of us at least does not think of it – W. will probably want to cut my throat – which would not be a difficult task – for I trust I should not return the fire of a man I had injured though I could not refuse him the pleasure of trying me as a target. – But I am not sure I shall not have more work in that way – there is a friend in the house – who looks a little suspicious – he can only conjecture – but if he lagonizes or finds or makes mischief – let him look

2:3

to it. – – To W. I am decidedly wrong – yet – he almost provoked me into it – he loves other women – at least he follows them – she evidently did not love him even before – I came here with no plan – no intention of the kind – (as my former letters will prove to you the only person {to whom} I care about proving it) <to (> & I have not yet been here ten days – a week yesterday on recollection – you cannot be more astonished than I am how & why all this has happened. – – – All my correspondences – & every other business are at a stand still – I have not answered A. – no – nor B – nor C – nor any initial except your own – you will wish me to be less troublesome to that one – & I shall now begin to draw at longer dates upon y^r. patience

ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

2:4

P.S. – Always P.S. –

I begged you to pacify C– who is pettish about what she calls a cold letter – it was not so – but she evidently has been too long quiet – she threatens me with growing very bad – & says that if so “I am the sole cause” this I should regret but she is in no danger – no one in his senses will run the risk till her late exploits are forgotten. Her last I shall not answer – it was very silly in me to write at all – but I did it with the best intention like the Wiseacre in “the Rovers” – “let us by a song conceal our purposes” you remember it in “the Antijacobin”.¹⁵² – – –

I have gone through a catechism about her without abusing or betraying her – which is not exactly the way to recommend myself – I have generally found that the successor likes to hear both of the last regnante. But I really did not – notwithstanding the temptation. – –

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, October 14th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.86; 1922 I 201-3; QI 191-2; BLJ III 144-5)

Byron puts no salutation.

Oct. 14th. 1813

But this is “le premier pas” my dear L^y. M^c. at least I think so & perhaps you will be of my opinion – when you consider the age – the country – & the short time since such a pas became probable. – I believe little but “l’occasion manque” & to that many things are tending. – He is a little indirect blunderer – who neither knows what he would have nor what he deserves – today at breakfast (I was too late for the scene) <but> he attacked both the girls in such a manner – no one knew why or wherefore – that on my arrival I found one had left the room – & the other had half a mind to leave the house – this too before servants & the other guest! – on my appearance the storm blew over – but the narrative was detailed to me subsequently by one of the sufferers. – You may

1:2

be sure that I shall not “consider self” nor create a squabble while it can be avoided – on the contrary I have been endeavouring to serve him essentially – (except on the one point & there I was goaded into it by his own absurdity) & extricate him from some difficulties of various descriptions – of course all obligations are cancelled between two persons in our circumstances – but that I shall not dwell upon – of the other I shall try to make an “affaire reglee” if that don’t succeed we shall probably go off together – but she only shall make me resign the hope – as for him he may convert his Antlers into powder=horns – & welcome – & such he has announced as his intention when “any man – at any time – &^c. &^c. “he would not give him a chance

1:3

“but exterminate him without suffering defence do you know – I was fool enough to lose my temper at this circuitous specimen of Bobadil jealousy¹⁵³ – & tell him & the other (there are a brace – Lion & Jackall) that I {– not their roundabout he –} desired no better than to put these “epithets of war” with which their sentences were “horribly stuffed”¹⁵⁴ to the proof – this was silly & suspicious but my liver could bear it no longer. My poor little Helen tells me that there never was such a temper & talents – that the marriage was not one of attachment – that – in short my descriptions fade before hers – all foolish fellows are alike – but this has a patent for his cap & bells. – – The scene between Sir B– & Lovemore I remember – but the one I alluded to was the letter of Lovemore to L^y. Constant¹⁵⁵ – there is no comedy after all like real life. –

1:4

We have progressively improved into a less spiritual species of tenderness – but the seal is not yet fixed though the wax is preparing for the impression. – There ought to be an excellent occasion tomorrow – but who can command circumstances? the most we can do is to avail ourselves of them. – –

Publicly I have been cautious enough – & actually declined a dinner where they went – because I thought something intelligible might be seen or suspected – I regretted but regret it less for I hear one of the Fosters was there – & they be cousins & Gossips of our good friends the D’s¹⁵⁶ – Good Night – do you fear to write to me? are these epistles or your answers in any peril here – I must remember {however} the advice of <an xxxxt> {a sage} personage to me while abroad – take it in their English – “remember – milor – that delicaci ensure every succés” y^{rs}. ever

[swirl signature]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Newstead, October 17th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.87; 1922 I 203-5; Q I 192-5; BLJ III 145-8)

Newstead Abbey – Oct^r. 17th. 1813 –My dear L^y. M^c. –

The whole party are here – and now to my narrative. – But first I must tell you that I am rather unwell owing to a folly of last night – About midnight after deep and drowsy potations¹⁵⁷ I took it into my head to empty my skull cup which holds rather better than a bottle of Claret at one

153: Bobadil is from Jonson’s *Every Man in his Humour*; but he is not jealous, Kately being the jealous character.

154: Shakespeare, *Othello*, I i 14.

155: Characters in the 1760 comedy *The Way to Keep Him* by Arthur Murphy.

156: Elizabeth Foster was the successor to Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.

157: Shakespeare, *Othello*, II iii 54.

draught – and nearly died the death of Alexander – which I shall be content to do when I have achieved his conquests – I had just sense enough left to feel that I was not fit to join the ladies – & went to bed – where my Valet tells me that I was first convulsed & afterwards so motionless that he thought “Good Night to Marmion.”¹⁵⁸ – I don’t know how I came to do so very silly a thing – but I believe

1:2

my guests were boasting – & “company villainous company hath been the spoil of me”¹⁵⁹ I detest drinking in general – & beg your pardon for this excess – I can’t do so any more. – –
To my theme – you were right – I have been a little too sanguine – as to the conclusion – but hear. –
One day left entirely to ourselves was nearly fatal – another such victory & with Pyrrhus we were lost – – it came to this – “I am entirely at your mercy – I own it – I give myself up to you – I am not cold – whatever I seem to others – but I know that I cannot bear the reflection hereafter – do not imagine that these are mere words – I tell you the truth – now act as you will – was I wrong? – I spared her. –

1:3

There was a something so very peculiar in her manner – a kind of mild decision – no scene – not even a struggle – but still I know not what that convinced me she was serious – it was not the mere “No” which one has heard forty times before – & always with the same event [BLJ has “accent”] – but the tone – and the aspect – yet I sacrificed much – the hour two in the morning – – away – the Devil whispering that it was mere verbiage &^c. – & yet I know not whether I can regret it – she seems so very thankful for my forbearance – a proof at least that she was not playing merely the usual decorous reluctance which is sometimes so tiresome on these occasions. – – You ask if I am prepared to go “all lengths” if you mean by “all lengths” any

1:4

thing including duel or divorce – I answer yes – I love her – if I did not and much too – I should have been more selfish on the occasion before mentioned – I have offered to go away with her – & her answer whether sincere or not is “that on my account she declines it” – in the mean time we are all as wretched as possible – he scolding on account of unaccountable melancholy – the sister very suspicious but rather amused – the friend very suspicious too but (why I know not) not at all amused – il Marito something like Lord Chesterfield in De Grammont¹⁶⁰ – putting on a martial physiognomy – prating with his worthy ally – swearing at servants – sermonizing both sisters – & buying sheep – but never quitting her side now – so that we are in despair –

2:1

2) I very feverish – restless – and silent – as indeed seems to be the tacit agreement of every one else – in short I can foresee nothing – it may end in nothing – but here are half a dozen persons very much occupied – & two if not three in great perplexity – & as far as I can judge – so we must continue. – – She don’t & won’t live with him & they have been so far separate for a long time – therefore – I have nothing to answer for on that point – poor thing – she is either the most artful or artless of her age (20) I ever encountered – she owns to so much – and perpetually says – “rather than you should be angry” – or – “rather than you should like anyone else I will do whatever you please” I won’t speak to this that or the other if you

2:2

dislike it – & throws or seems to throw herself so entirely upon my direction in every respect – that it disarms me quite – but I am really <with> wretched with the perpetual conflict {with myself.} – Her health is so very delicate – she is so thin & pale – & seems to have lost her appetite so entirely – that I doubt her being much longer – this is also her own opinion – but these fancies are common to all who are not very happy – – if she were once my wife or likely to be so – a warm climate should be the first resort nevertheless for her recovery. – The most perplexing – & yet I can’t prevail on myself to give it

158: Scott, *Marmion*, XXVIII, 26.

159: Shakespeare, *Henry IV I*, III iii 10.

160: De Grammont’s Memoirs picture the Earl of Chesterfield as insanely jealous.

up – is the caressing system – in her it appears perfectly childish – and I do think innocent – but it really puzzles {all} the Scipio about me to confine myself to the

2:3

laudable portion of these endearments. – – –

What a cursed situation I have thrust myself into – Potiphar (it used to be O.’s name)¹⁶¹ putting some stupid question to me the other day – I told him that I rather admired the sister – & what does he? <too> but tell her this & his wife too – who a little too hastily asked him “if he was mad”? which put him to demonstration that a man ought not to be asked if he was mad – for relating that a friend thought his wife’s sister a pretty woman – upon this topic he held forth with great fervour for a customary period – I wish he had a quinsey. – – – –

Tell L^y. H. that Clarke¹⁶² is the name – & Craven Street (N^o. forgotten) the residence – may be heard of at Trin. Coll. – excellent

2:4

man – able physician – shot a friend in a duel (about his sister) & I believe killed him professionally afterwards – L^y. H. may have him for self or friends – I don’t know where I am going – my mind is a chaos – I always am setting all upon single stakes – & this is one – your story of the Frenchman is Matta in Grammont & the Marquis¹⁶³ – Heigh ho! – Good Night – address to Aston. –

ever y^{rs}.
[swirl signature]

P.S. –

My stay is quite uncertain – a moment may overturn every thing – but you shall hear – happen what may – nothing or something.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Aston Hall, Yorkshire, October 19th 1813 (a):

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.88; 1922 I 206; BLJ III 148)

Byron is using the smaller paper, 22.5 x 19 cm.

Oct^r. 19th. 1813 –

My dear L^y. M^c –

In a day or two – probably before you receive this letter I shall be in town – so that if you write let it be to Bennet Street. –

This may perhaps surprize you after my yesterday’s epistle – but nevertheless nothing particular has occurred – at least sufficient

1:2

to alarm you – or disturb me – everything is nearly as it was – except our hopes & our spirits – many things interrupted – but nothing terminated. – –

Do you remember Matta’s complaint of the court of Turin – where a man could not be in love with the wife – without making love to the husband too – or do you rather recollect Hamilton’s expedition

1:3

to L^d. Chesterfield’s – with the result? mine is not exactly the same – for I have incurred no disgrace & encountered no peril – but I have thrown away the best opportunity that ever was wasted upon a spoiled child – & when it may occur again is not in my calculation. – – You shall hear more when we meet – at present I shall only say – that Matta & the Marquis de Senantes will

1:4

furnish you with a lively idea of me & my guest (late host) – I really can bear his humours no longer – no not for — with her I am ready & willing {to fly} to the “Green earth’s end” but of that anon. – –

161: Potiphar’s wife tried to seduce Joseph (Genesis 39); “O” is Lord Oxford.

162: Dr William Clarke (not Edward Daniel Clarke). B. is answering Melbourne’s query of October 13th.

163:

We are in despair – & he & I without coming to a downright quarrel – have yet subsided into a mortal coldness – for which he will be the first to be sorry – I hope to see you
 ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from Northampton, October 19th 1813 (b):

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.89; 1922 I 206-7; QI 195-6; BLJ III 148-9)

Northampton – Oct^r. 19th. 1813

My dear L^y. M^c –

— & I am thus far on my way to town – he was seized with a sudden fit of friendship & would accompany me – rather finding that some business could not conveniently be done without me – he thought proper to assume y^c. appearance of it. — He is not exactly the companion I wished to take – it is really laughable when you think of the other – a kind of pig in a poke. – Nothing but squabbles between them – for the last three days – and at last he rose up with a solemn & mysterious air – & spake – “L^y. ———

1:2

you have at last rendered an explanation necessary between me & L^d. B. which must take place – I stared – & knowing that it is the custom of country gentlemen (if Farquhar is correct) to apprize their moieties of such intentions – & being also a little out of humour & conscience – I thought a crisis must ensue – and announced very quietly that “he would find me in such a room at his leisure ready to hear & reply” “Oh! says he I shall choose my own time” I wondered that he did not choose his own house too – but – walked away – & waited for him. – All this mighty pickle led only to what he called an explanation for my satisfaction that whatever appearances were – he & she were on the very best terms – that she loved him so much – & he her – it was impossible not to

1:3

disagree upon tender points – & for fear a man who &^c. &^c. should suppose that marriage was not the happiest of all possible estates – he had taken this resolution of never quarrelling without letting me know that he was the best husband & most fortunate person in existence. — I told him he had fully convinced me – that it was utterly impossible people who liked each other could behave with more interesting suavity – and so on – yesterday morning – on our going – (I pass over the scene which shook me I assure you) “B – quoth he I owe to you the most unhappy moments of my life” I begged him to tell me how that I might either sympathize or put him out of his pain – “Don’t you see how the poor girl doats on me – (he replied) when

1:4

I quit her but for a week as you perceive she is absolutely overwhelmed – & you staid so long & I necessarily for you – that she is in a worse state than I ever saw her in before – even before we married! — — — —

Here we are – I could not return to A– unless he had asked me – it is true he did – but in such a manner – as I could not accept – what will be the end – I know not – I have left every thing to her – and would have rendered all further plots superfluous by the most conclusive step – but she wavered – & escaped – perhaps so have I – at least it is as well to think so – yet it is not over. — — — Whatever I may feel – you know me too well to think I shall plague my friends with long faces – or elegies. —

My dear L^y. M^c. ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

Byron to Francis Hodgson, October 20th (?) 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from *Memoir of the Rev. Francis Hodgson, B.D.* (Macmillan, 1878), I p.278; BLJ III 150)

Excuse haste and laconism. I am in town for a few days, and hurried with a thousand things.

Believe me ever yours most truly

BYRON.

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 4, Bennet Street, London, October 21st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.90; 1922 I 209-10; QI 196-8; BLJ III 151-2)

A long dash usually signifies “James Wedderburn Webster”.

“Ph.” Is Frances Wedderburn Webster.

[*letter concludes at top of first sheet:*] none will ever be so valued – & none ever was so trusted by y^{rs}.
ever. [*swirl signature*]

Oct^r. 21st. 1813

My dear L^y. M^c –

You may well be surprised – but I had more reasons than one or two either – —— had taken it into his notable head or wished to put it into mine – aye & worse still into y^e. girls also – that I was a pretendant to the hand of the sister of “the Lady whom I had nearly – but no matter (to continue Archer’s speech with the variation of one word) tis a cursed fortnight’s piece of work – & there’s an end.”¹⁶⁴ – This brilliant notion besides widening y^e. breach between him & me – did not add to the harmony of the two females – at least my idol was not pleased with the prospect of any transfer of incense to another altar. – – – –

1:2

She was so unguarded – after telling me too fifty times to “take care of Cate” “that she could conceal nothing &^c. &^c.” as to give me <the most> {a very} unequivocal proof of her own imprudence – in a carriage – (dusk to be sure) before her face – and yet with all this – & much more – she was the most tenacious personage – either from fear or weakness – or delicate health – or G – d knows what – that with the vigilance of no less than three Arguses in addition – it was utterly impossible save once – to be decisive – and then – tears & tremors & prayers – which I am not yet old enough to find piquant in such cases – prevented me from making her wretched – I do detest everything which is not perfectly mutual – and any subsequent reproaches – (as I know by one former long ago bitter experience) would heap

1:3

coals of fire upon my head. – – Do you remember what Rousseau says to somebody – “if you would know that you are beloved – watch your lover when he leaves you¹⁶⁵ – to me – the most pleasing moments have generally been – when there is nothing more to be required – in short the subsequent repose without satiety – which Lewis never dreamed of in that poem of his “Desire & Pleasure¹⁶⁶ when you are secure of the past yet without regret or disappointment – – of this there was no prospect with her – she had so much more dread of the **D — I** – than gratitude for his kindness – and I am not yet sufficiently in his good graces to indulge my own passions at the certain misery of another. – – Perhaps after all – I was her dupe – if so – I am the dupe also of the few good feelings I could ever boast of – but here perhaps I am my own dupe too in attributing to a good motive what may be quite otherwise.

1:4

—— is a most extraordinary person – he has just left me & a snuff box with a flaming inscription – after squabbling with me for these last ten days! & I too – have been of some real service to him which I merely mention to mark the inconsistency of human nature! – I have brought off a variety of foolish trophies (foolish indeed without victory) such as epistles – & lockets – which look as if she were in earnest – but she would not go off now¹⁶⁷ – nor render going off unnecessary – am I not candid to own my want of success – when I might have assumed the airs of an “aimable Vainquer” but that is so paltry & so common without cause too – and what I hear & see every day – that I would not – even to gain the point I have missed. I assure you not one knows but you one particle of this business – & you always must know everything concerning me – it is hard if I may not have one friend – believe me
[*letter concludes at top of first sheet*]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 4, Bennet Street, London, October 23rd 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.91; 1922 I 21013; QI 198-200; BLJ III 152-4)

Oct^r. 23rd. 1813 –

¹⁶⁴: Farquhar, *The Beaux Stratagem*, V.

¹⁶⁵: Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, I, Lettre lv.

¹⁶⁶: Matthew Lewis, *Pleasure and Desire*, last two lines.

¹⁶⁷: Shakespeare, *Henry IV II*, II iv 128.

My dear L^y. M^c. –

C– again! – will you pray tell her that I was only in town a day before she left it – & that if it were otherwise it must be long ago perfectly understood between her & me & everyone else – that it could have made no difference – I wrote to her a kind & a friendly letter – & regret that it has displeased her – I know no more & can say no further – but do most humbly hope she will leave me to my own reflections – & as a further inducement she may rest assured that they are by no means agreeable enough to make their disturbance a temptation. One of your A– letters has arrived – & the other I doubt not will follow – I wish he would open a letter of mine – but he dare not – I am not sorry for this business – were it only on account of your epistles – which I do think the most

1:2

amusing – the most developing – and tactiques in the world – come what may – I can hardly regret the untoward events which led to an intimacy productive to me of much instruction – & not less intellectual pleasure – you have preserved me from two – one eventually & the other had been immediately fatal – I cannot repay the obligation but I may at least acknowledge it – & as the world goes it is something not to hate you for having done me so much service. – If ——— is playing a part – he cannot I know long keep it up – his marrying scheme if premeditated had been an excellent way of turning the tables – but it was done too abruptly & awkwardly to succeed – there was no foundation for his edifice – & if there had I would have blown it up about his ears – I prefer – if in the regular way – – chusing my own moiety

1:3

though truth to tell he recommended a woman of Virtue – for I heard her say “that she never was in a warm bath in her life” a certain sign – the care of your truly good woman is always confined to her soul. – I don’t know if you ever saw her – she is very pretty – but petite – perhaps handsomer than the other – and I think – more mechante – but in all other respects like all other young ladies of the market. – My Seaham correspondence has ceased on both sides – & I shall not renew it – I am in great suspence – Marquis Tweedale¹⁶⁸ wants me to go with him to the army – like Corporal Nym “to wink & hold out mine iron”¹⁶⁹ I suppose – Madrid hath charms more than Glory – or mere curiosity – and a fit of ill humour or vanity might or may lead

1:4

me where “Honour comes unlooked for”¹⁷⁰ but unless when in love or out of temper – my chivalry is not the most Gothic – though a box on the ear from one sex – or a frown from the other might possibly call it into action. – – – A more pleasing expedition would be to Middleton¹⁷¹ – I am asked next month – so are you – shall we go? we – at {least I} shall have nothing to do – but probably something to observe & communicate. –

I send you (return it) the only notice since my departure – will you judge – & augur from it for me? it puzzles me – you have more insight – & are besides impartial – I have just sense enough left to know that I cannot be so myself. –

2:1

Your approbation of my Ethic on the subject gratifies me much – when we are happy we are too much occupied to be aware of its extent – it is {only} during the subsequent repose – the “abandon” that you can discover even to yourself if you have really loved – if your thoughts recur to your own {exclusive} situation – it is all over – but if still occupied by the other – I do not know whether the memory & the hope are not worth all the rest. – It is difficult & I have failed in expressing what I mean – no matter – let it go – You will be in town on Wednesday – a great consolation to me – I am in the horrors of a hundred schemes – of which I shall say nothing – till they are accomplished or useless. – <ever y^{rs}.> Perhaps you will write on Monday – ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

168: The Marquis of Tweeddale is the future father-in-law of J.C.Hobhouse.

169: Shakespeare, *Henry V*, II i 5.

170: Shakespeare, *Henry IV I*, V ii, final line.

171: The Jerseys’ country seat at Middleton Park, near Leeds.

[2:2 is blank.]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 4, Bennet Street, London, October 25th [??] 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.92; 1922 I 212-13; BLJ III 154-5)

Byron is again using the smaller paper, 22.5 x 19 cm.

Monday –

I had finished my letter – but tear half of it – today’s Post has been hard in bringing me more than I have yet had time to read twice – & your last Aston Letter safe – but your Brocket one is a little savage – you hint at my presumption – but after all the “vielle cour” when once people understand each other – is {it} not as well to come to the point? – yet you see (& I am glad you approved it) I did (and it is no trifle) sacrifice the selfish consideration to spare her self reproach. – I am going to be guilty of a breach of confidence in sending you the inclosed – though I cannot consider my trust in you as betraying her – if she is serious so am I – and as willing as ever to go through with

1:2

the business – the letter merely says – what you already know – and all women (except L^y. O & M^{rs}. S^r Sm^h)¹⁷² in that situation seem to have <been> much the same style – except that my little white penitent appears rather more bewildered & uses two words – “effusions” & “soul” rather oftener than befits out of the circulating library. – – You are not perhaps so just as usual in prophesying “not to the purpose” every thing a woman writes must be to the purpose – no – as much as yes – once put a pen into their hands – and then tell me when they will lay it down again? – – She mentions C – – but not one word of you – a proof at least – that she knows nothing of my extreme reliance & confidence in you – Perhaps you

1:3

will think worse of me for sending this – if I were not in earnest I should not – but I want your judgement about her – I can’t be impartial – & I again repeat but to you – her name is never breathed. – You are with “the illustrious” which makes me tremble – I know she thinks ill of me – & if you betray me she will think worse – I can possibly have no anxiety about her good opinion further than as I am aware of her natural & unbounded influence over your own. – I am wrong – but you really wrong me too – if you do not suppose that I would sacrifice every thing for Ph. – I hate sentiment – & in consequence my epistolary levity – makes you believe me as hollow & heartless as my letters are light. – Indeed it is not so – and I think

1:4

my unbounded reliance on you (my natural enemy) may prove it – I don’t fear you – no – notwithstanding all – & yet if I were reduced to the alternative of losing your friendship or any other person’s love – our Platonics would triumph. – ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

2:1

P.S –

Poor Robinson! it must be very ill=convenient to you – this fracture. – In your Aston Letter – you say the Jackall must be in love too – I did not think so – but nevertheless gave W. a hint about those “Joseph Surface gentlemen” and asked him what he should have thought of me – if after our long acquaintance – I had suddenly commenced talking moralist? – W. at last almost went down on his knees to prevent an <new> explanation between us – and now this odd expression – “if not for my sake for that of L^y. F. do not quarrel <with her> – I never will forgive you – nor will she if

2:1

172: Lady Oxford and Constance Spencer Smith.

there is any scene on what passed at N.¹⁷³ – these were nearly his last words – but if he renews his tricks or has views of his own – I will revenge or perish in the attempt. – “In love” how came I not to think so before? – but he has left A – if I am not even with him never trust me – a man too whom I did much to conciliate – & who dissembled to me with some success. –

Byron to Lord Holland, October 25th 1813:

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.51639 ff.142-3; BLJ III 155-6)

Oct^r. 25th. 1813 –

My dear Lord –

As I was quite convinced before I ever heard you say a syllable on the subject that you had probably been amused with some terrific narrative on the subject – which first led me to a certain composition – I am glad of an opportunity to present you with anyone’s testimony rather than my own – although that person’s assertion has turned out so unfortunate on his own account that probably it may do little good on mine. – –

1:2

However as he was the only Englishman who arrived there for a long time after my departure (Hob^c. left me a year before) and as these things in a country where tradition is the only record are soon forgotten – or perverted – I wish you to see this such as it is – only begging that unless you hear anything on the subject – it may rest with you & yours. – One part of the letter is expunged – it merely contained some uncouth Turkish patronymics – and some circumstances amusing

1:3

enough but neither singular nor edifying – the rest may amuse you as a Portrait of Mussulman Ethics.
– –

Believe me y^{rs}. ever
obliged & sincerely
[*swirl*]

Scrope Berdmore Davies to Byron, from Newmarket, October 27th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4178A)

Dear Byron

In a conversation which took place between us on the eve of my departure for Cheltenham I expressed a wish that you would honor a Draft on you for 1500£ should circumstances render such a proceeding on my part necessary – From my having advance 1500£ on your account to Capt: Agar¹⁷⁴ and from having experienced of late a series of losses, I was obliged to give a Draft on you for the above sum – I was sorry to find however that either from negligence or inability you had given no instructions <for> about the payment of the above sum
I am at present in serious distress from want of money, and shall be obliged in the course of the next week to pay all the remain<der>{ing sum} due on my bond to Capt: Agar – I do therefore hope and trust that you will give directions about the sum of 1500£ being immediately paid into the hands of Sir James Esdaile and C^o on my account – and I will send your Bond to you or to any person whom you may appoint – Pray write to me by return of post and [] in –
Scrope Davies¹⁷⁵

Mrs Bones’s
Newmarket October 27th 1813

I hope Mr Claughton¹⁷⁶ has not failed to stick to his bargain –
I also hope that the Bankers of Cheltenham have explained to you how perfectly innocent I was of the delay on the part of the Bankers in London honoring my draft of 100£

173: “Newstead”.

174: Captain Agar seems to be one of the money-lenders from whom S.B.D. borrowed the money to finance B.’s eastern trip.

175: Davies is paid £1,500 on November 10th 1812; £800 on August 3rd 1813; and £4,804 12s 4d on March 28th 1814.

176: Thomas Claughton had put in a bid for Newstead Abbey. He was never able to buy it.

I go to Edinburgh next week, *multum gemens*.
[Lockhart]

Byron to John Murray (c), November 1813?

(Source: text from the Berg Collection, NYPL; BLJ III 157)

Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

[To J. Murray Esqr^{re}. / 50 A¹. Street]

Dear Sir /

It is very odd that as fast as I correct one thing the Printer either omits or reblunders – look at page [72?]¹⁷⁷ which I now correct for I believe the 30th time in the same place. –

y^{rs}. ever
Bⁿ

P.S. – Don't trouble yourself to answer this – but you must at least acknowledge that <you> this perpetual fooling of Master Davison¹⁷⁸ is very vexatious. – – –

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 4, Bennet Street, London, November 4th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.93; 1922 I 214-; BLJ III 157-8)

Byron is using the smaller paper, 22.5 x 19 cm.

Nov^r. 4th. 1813

My dear friend –

I lose no time in assuring you that I not only am not – but never have been for {an} instant – in the least pettish about you – the other night at the play – I was merely “buffooning” & I really thought you knew me well enough to perceive this. – Angry – quotha! I am a pretty fellow to be angry with anybody – & least of all with you. –

In the last three days I have been quite shut up – my mind has been from late and later events

1:2

in such a state of fermentation that as usual I have been obliged to empty it in rhyme – & am in the very heart of another Eastern tale¹⁷⁹ – something of the Giaour cast – but not so sombre though rather more villainous¹⁸⁰ – this is my usual resource – if it were not for some such occupation to dispel reflection during inaction – I verily believe I should very often go mad. –

I have heard from Ph – she is very angry at me for not writing – (after telling me it was impossible without ruining her)

1:3

& supposes that I must have told everybody her adventures – {& is} particularly afraid that I I by myself I should confide it to W. W.!!! – Was there ever such a fancy? – tell a man that I wanted it is really laughable. –

C– has been playing the devil about some engravings & fooleries – will she never be quiet till she is in the roundhouse with the Sieur Henri – who it seems is a great villain & her particular protege – at least so you said to me. –

1:4

Good night – my dear L^y. M^e. – Buonaparte has lost all his allies but me & the King of Wirtemberg – do you remember Wolsey – “I and my king”¹⁸¹ no matter my alliance is quite as useful as that of Bavaria.

ever y^{rs}.

177: This probably refers to corrections for the seventh edition of *The Giaour* which was published towards the end of November. It contained 75 pages.

178: Thomas Davison was Murray's printer.

179: BoA.

180: Byron reverses the “i” and the “n”.

181: “Ego et rex meus”.

[swirl signature]

Walter Scott to Byron, from Abbotsford, November 6th 1813:

(Source: text from Grierson 1811-1814 pp.372-5)

[Right Honble / Lord Byron / &c &c &c / London]

My dear Lord

I was honored with your Lordship's letter of the 27 Sept. and have sincerely to regret that there is such a prospect of your leaving Britain without my achieving your personal acquaintance. I honestly wish your Lordship had come down to Scotland this season for I have never seen a finer and you might have renewed all your old associations with Caledonia & made such new ones as were likely to suit you. I dare promise you would have liked me well enough for I have many properties of a Turk – never trouble myself about futurity – am as lazy as the day is long – delight in collecting silver mounted pistols & ataghans & go out of my own road for no one – all which I take to be attributes of your good Moslem – Moreover I am somewhat an admirer of royalty and in order to maintain this part of my [] I shall take care never to be connected with a court but stick to the ignolum pro mirabile.

The author of the *Queen's Wake*¹⁸² will be delighted with your approbation. He is a wonderful creature for his opportunities, which were far inferior to those of the generality of Scottish peasants. Burns for instance (not that their extent of talents is to be compared for an instant) had an education not much worse than the sons of many gentlemen in Scotland. But poor Hogg literally could neither read nor write till a very late period of his life & when he distinguished himself by his poetical talent could neither spell nor write grammar. When I first knew him he used to send me his poetry & was both indignant & horrified when I pointed out to him parallel passages in authors whom he had never read but whom all the world would have sworn he had copied. An evil fate has hitherto attended him & baffled every attempt that has been made to place him in a road to independence. But I trust he may be more fortunate in future.

I have not yet seen Southey in the Gazette as Laureate. He is a real poet such as we read of in former times with every atom of his soul and every moment of his time dedicated to literary pursuits in which he differs from almost all those who have shared publick acclaim with him, your Lordships habits of society for example and my own professional and official avocations must necessarily connect as much more with our respective classes in the usual routine of pleasure or business than if we had not any other <business> {pleasure} than *Vacare Musis*. But Southey's ideas are all poetical and his whole soul dedicated to the pursuit of literature.¹⁸³ In this respect as well as in many others he is a most striking and interesting character.

I have not yet got the copy of the letter from Murray I am very much interested in all that concerns the *Giaour* which is universally approved of among our mountains. I have heard no objection except by one or two genius's who run over poetry as a cat does over a harpsichord and they affect to complain of obscurity. On the contrary I hold every real lover of the art as obliged to you for condensing the narrative by giving us only those striking scenes which you have shown to be so susceptible of poetic ornament & leaving to imagination the "says I's & says he's" and all the minutiae of <narrative> detail which might be proper in giving evidence before [a]¹⁸⁴ court of justice. The truth is I think poetry is most striking when the mirror can be held up to the reader and the scene kept constantly before his eyes for it requires most uncommon powers to support a direct and downright narrative nor can I remember many instances of its being successfully maintained even by our greatest bards.

As to those who have done me the honor to take my rhapsodies for their model I can only say they have exemplified the ancient adage "One fool makes many" nor do I think I have yet had much reason to <think> suppose I have given rise to any thing of distinguished merit. The worst is it drawz on my letters and commendatory verses to which my sad & sober thanks in humble prose are deemd a most unusual and ungracious reply. Of this sort of plague your Lordship must ere now have had more than your share but I think you can hardly have met with so original a request as concluded the letter of a bard I this morning received who limited his demands to be placed on his due station on Parnassus & invested with a post in the Edinburgh Custom House.

What an awakening of dry bones seems to be taking place on the continent!¹⁸⁵ I could as soon have believed in the resurrection of the romans as in that of the Russians – yet it seems vivid and active

182: James Hogg.

183: But B. writes at *Beppo* (1817), 75, 1-4: *One hates an Author that's all Author; fellows / In foolscap Uniforms turned up with Ink; / So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous, / One don't know what to say to them, or think ...*

184: Page turn.

185: The battle of Leipzig, which led to the abdication of Napoleon, was in mid-October 1813.

renovation of national spirit. It will certainly be strange enough if that tremendous pitcher¹⁸⁶ which has travelled to so many fountains should be at length broken on the banks of the Saale but from the highest to the lowest we are the fools of fortune. Your Lordship will probably recollect where the oriental tale occurs of a Sultan who consulted Solomon on the proper inscription for a signet ring requiring that the maxim which it conveyed should be at once proper for moderating the presumption of <prosperity> prosperity and comforting the pressure of adversity – the apothegm supplied for both purposes being comprehended in the words “And this also shall pass away”

When your Lordship sees Rogers will you remember me kindly to him. I hope to be in London next Spring & renew my acquaintance with my friends there. It will be an additional motive if I could flatter myself that your Lordship’s stay in the country will permit me the pleasure of waiting upon you I am with sincere respect & regard Your Lordship’s truly

Honoured & obliged humble

Serv

Walter Scott

Abbotsford

6 <Edin> November

[pencilled: 1813]

I go to Edin.b. next week multum gemens

November 1st-8th 1813: Byron drafts *The Bride of Abydos*, which is fair-copied by November 11th.

Byron to Annabella Milbanke, November 10th-17th 1813:

(Source: text from LJ III 404; BLJ III 158-61)

Nov^r. 10th. 1813.

A variety of circumstances and movements from place to place, none of which would be very amusing in detail, nor indeed pleasing to any one who (I may flatter myself) is my friend, have hitherto prevented me from answering your two last letters—but if my daily self-reproach for the omission can be any atonement, I hope it may prove as satisfactory an apology to you—as it has been a “compunctious visiting”¹⁸⁷ to myself.

Your opinion of my “reasoning powers” is so exactly my own that you will not wonder if I avoid a controversy with so skilful a casuist, particularly on a subject where I am certain to get the worst of it in this world, and perhaps incur a warmer confutation in the next. But I shall be most happy to hear your observations on the subject, or on any subject. If anybody could do me much good, probably you might—as by all accounts you are mistress of the practice as well as theory of that benevolent science (which I take to be better than even your Mathematics); at all events it is my fault if I derive no benefit from your remarks. I agree with you quite upon Mathematics too, and must be content to admire them at an incomprehensible distance—always adding them to the catalogue of my regrets. I know that two and two make four, and should be glad to prove it too if I could; though I must say if by any sort of process I could convert 2 and 2 into five it would give me much greater pleasure. The only part I remember which gave me much delight were those theorems (is that the word?) in which after ringing the changes upon A—B and C—D &c. I at last came to “which is absurd—which is impossible”¹⁸⁸ and at this point I have always arrived and I fear always shall through life—very fortunate if I can continue to stop there.

I perceive by part of your last letter that you are still a little inclined to believe me a very gloomy personage: those who pass so much of their time entirely alone cannot be always in very high spirits; yet I don’t know—though I certainly do enjoy society to a certain extent, I never passed two hours in mixed company in my life without wishing myself out of it again. Still, I look upon myself as a facetious companion, well respected by all the wits, at whose jests I readily laugh, and whose repartees I take care never to incur by any kind of contest, for which I feel as little qualified as I do for the more solid pursuit of demonstration. I am happy so far in the intimate acquaintance of two or three men with whom for ten years of my life I have never had one word of difference, and, what is rather strange, their opinions, religious, moral and political, are diametrically opposite to mine—so that when I say “difference” I mean of course serious dispute—coolness—quarrel—or whatever people call it. Now for a person who began life with that endless source of squabble—satire—I may in this respect think

¹⁸⁶: Ecclesiastes 12, 6: *Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.*

¹⁸⁷: Shakespeare; *Macbeth*, I v 42.

¹⁸⁸: Compare DJ XVI, 5, 8.

myself fortunate. My reflections upon this subject qualify me to sympathize with you very sincerely in the departure of your friend Miss Montgomery; the more so as, notwithstanding many instances of the contrary, I believe the friendship of good women more sincere than that of men, and certainly more tender—at least I never heard of a male intimacy that spoils a man's dinner, after the age of fifteen, which was that when I began to think myself a mighty fine gentleman, and to feel ashamed of liking anybody better than oneself. I have been scribbling another poem, as it is called—Turkish, as before—for I can't empty my head of the East—and, horrible enough, though not so sombre quite as the *Giaour* (that unpronounceable name) and for the sake of intelligibility it is not a fragment. The scene is on the Hellespont, a favourite *séjour* of mine, and if you will accept it I will send you a copy—there are some Mussulman words in it which I inflict upon you in revenge for your Mathematical and other superiority.

When shall you be in town? By the bye, you won't take fright when we meet will you? and imagine that I am about to add to your thousand and one pretendants?—I have taken exquisite care to prevent the possibility of that, though less likely than ever to become a Benedick—indeed I have not seen (with one exception) for many years a Beatrice—and she will not be troubled to assume the part. I think we understand each other perfectly, and may talk to each other occasionally without exciting speculation. The worst that can be said is that I would—and you won't—and in this respect you can hardly be the sufferer—and I am very sure I shan't. If I find my heart less philosophic on the subject than I at present believe it, I shall keep out of the way; but I now think it is well shielded. At least it has got a new suit of armour, and certainly it stood in need of it. I have heard a rumour of another added to your list of unacceptables, and I am sorry for him, as I know that he has talent, and his pedigree ensures him wit and good humour. You make sad havock among “us youth”¹⁸⁹ it is lucky that Me. de Stael has published her *Anti-suicide*¹⁹⁰ at so killing a time—November too! I have not read it, for fear that the love of contradiction might lead me to a practical confutation. Do you know her? I don't ask if you have heard her? Her tongue is “the perpetual motion.”

ever yrs.
B.

P.S. Nov. 17th.—The enclosed was written a week ago and has lain in my desk ever since—I have had forty thousand plagues to make me forget not you but it—and now I might as well burn it—but let it go and pray forgive ye. scrawl and the Scribe

ever yrs.
B.

If you favour me with an answer, any letter addressed here will reach me wherever I may be, I have a little cousin Eliza Byron¹⁹¹ coming—no—going to some school at Stockton—will you notice her? it is the prettiest little blackeyed girl of Paradise, and but 7 years old.

Byron to William Gifford, November 12th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4246; LJ II 278-9; BLJ III 161-2)

Nov^r. 12th. 1813 –

My dear Sir –

I hope you will consider when I venture on any request that it is the reverse of a certain dedication – and is addressed not to the “Editor of the Quarterly Review” but to M^r. Gifford. – You will understand this and on that point I need trouble you no further. – You have been good enough to look at a thing of mine in M.S. – a Turkish story¹⁹² – and I should feel gratified if you would do it the same favour in it's probationary state <of proof> {of printing.} – It was written – I cannot say for amusement nor “obliged by hunger and request of friends” – but in a state of mind from circumstances

189: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV* I, II ii 85; compare Jan 17 1813 (to H.); Nov 12 1813 (to Gifford); Mar 15 1814 (London Journal); May 1814 (to Moore) July 15 1818 (to K.); Aug 4 1819 (to H.); and Nov 19 1820 (to Mu.).

190: de Staël, *Réflexions sur le Suicide* (1813).

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

192: *BoA*.

which occasionally occur to “us youth”¹⁹³ that rendered it necessary for me to apply my mind to something – any thing but reality – and

1:2

under this not very brilliant inspiration it was composed. – Being done – and having at least diverted me from myself – I thought you would not perhaps be offended if M^r. Murray forwarded it to you – he has done so – & to apologize for his doing so a second time is the object of my present letter. – I beg you will not send me an answer – I assure you very sincerely – I know your time to be occupied – and it is enough <you should> {more than enough if you} read – you ought not to be bored with the fatigue of answers. – – –
A word to M^r. Murray will be sufficient – and send it – either to the flames – or “a hundred hawkers’ load

On wings of winds to fly or fall abroad – – ¹⁹⁴
it deserves no better than the first, as the work of a week, and scribbled “stans pede in uno” (by the bye the only foot I have to stand on) and I promise never to trouble you again under forty cantos and a voyage between each. – Believe me ever y^r. obliged

& affectionate Ser^t.
Biron¹⁹⁵

[1:3 and 4 blank.]

Byron to John Murray, November 12th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore’s Life I 481-2; LJ II 279-81; BLJ II 162-3)

Nov. 12. 1813.

Two friends of mine (Mr. Rogers and Mr. Sharpe) have advised me not to risk at present any single publication separately, for various reasons. As they have not seen the one in question, they can have no bias for or against the merits (if it has any) or the faults of the present subject of our conversation. You say all the last of ‘The Giaour’ are gone—at least out of your hands. Now, if you think of publishing any new edition with the last additions which have not yet been before the reader (I mean distinct from the two-volume publication), we can add ‘The Bride of Abydos,’ which will thus steal quietly into the world: if liked, we can then throw off some copies for the purchasers of former ‘Giaours;’ and, if not, I can omit it in any future publication. What think you? I really am no judge of those things, and with all my natural partiality for one’s own productions, I would rather follow any one’s judgment than my own.

P.S. Pray let me have the proofs I sent *all* to-night. I have some alterations that I have thought of that I wish to make speedily. I hope the proof will be on separate pages, and not all huddled together on a mile-long ballad-singing sheet, as those of The Giaour sometimes are; for then I can’t read them distinctly.

Byron to W. J. Baldwin,¹⁹⁶ November 14th 1813:

(Source: text from Morgan Library MA 2036; BLJ III 164-5)

Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

Nov^r. 14th. 1813.

Sir

It is with considerable regret that I repeat – the shortness of the notice (even if I remained in town which I hardly believe I can accomplish at present) would not permit me to do more than present the petition.¹⁹⁷ Upon the principle itself – the question at issue on the confinement of debtors – as far as

193: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV* I, II ii 85; compare Jan 17 1813 (to H.); Nov 10 1813 (to Annabella); Mar 15 1814 (London Journal); May 8 1814 (to Mo.); Apr 27 1816 (to H.); July 15 1818 (to K.); Aug 3 1819 (to H.); and Nov 19 1820 (to Mu.).

194: Pope, *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, ll.217-18.

195: The signature actually looks like “Brion”.

196: W. J. Baldwin was a debtor in King’s Bench prison, who sent a number of pathetic letters to B. describing the inhuman treatment of the prisoners and asking for prison reform.

197: Baldwin had asked B. to present his petition to the House of Lords. B. gave his reasons for not being able to do so, but he was full of self-reproaches. “Ah, I am as bad as that dog Sterne, who preferred whining over ‘a dead ass to relieving a living mother’”, he wrote in his journal (December 1st 1813). Lord Holland presented the petition.

regards the rights of humanity and the social compact – my mind is fully made up – but the minor grievances – the various though I doubt no – well grounded subjects of complaint which

1:2

I conjecture <f> { will } form a considerable portion of the petition – I have not had leisure to examine – nor opportunity to collect – I confess to you that I have not the “copia fandi” nor quickness of comprehension sufficient to enable me at a few hours notice to do justice to a subject which I regard as of <suff> too much importance to hazard the interests of the petitioners by a premature & precipitate pressure of the question upon the legislature – if I were indifferent to the interests of others – or confident <of> { in } my own powers – I should hold a different language. – I have read your address – and I have read it with a hope almost for the sake of those to whom it is uttered – that their situation is less grievous than it would <xxx> { lead } me to believe – not that I have any reason to doubt the statement – except the wish that in this – or in any country – such oppression had never existed. – – – – I have the honour to be

very sincerely
y^r. obed^t.
& very h^{le} Ser^t.
Byron

To –
W. Baldwin Esqr^e.
&^c. &^c. &^c.

Byron to Lord Holland, November 16th 1813:

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.51639 ff.144-5; BLJ III 166)

[To / The Lord Holland / S^t. James’s Square / Bn]

P.S. – I should not
have bored you with this (and
Nov^r. 16th. 1813
never did before) but you told me you liked this same
scanning & proving. – – –

My dear Lord

I send you two proofs (of my regard if you please) – one the enlarged & yet unpublished “Giaour” – in which you may – if you will – find in the last 20 pages about 200 additional lines – The other – eye hath not yet seen (except 2 pair – of Hodgson – & another) it is Turkish too – and will not – both Cantos (of which the last is the least bad) take you half an hour’s reading – If you could let me have them tomorrow morning again – you wou<l>ld oblige me – and (if you will accept) they shall be sent in a few days in a less questionable shape. – –

ever y^r. obliged & sincere
Biron

[1: 2 and 3 blank.]

Lord Holland to Byron, from Holland House, November 16th 1813:

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss. 51639 ff.146-51)

Holland’s dislike of Turkish words and his preference for heroic couplets over octosyllabics causes Byron to modify his style in the Turkish Tales.

Sunday night – Nov 16

All proof of your regard My Dear Lord must be gratifying to me & all proofs of your poetry interesting & delightful – Thank you for both – The additional lines to the Giaour¹⁹⁸ seem to me worthy of a place in that very beautiful poem & I do not think it possible to say more of verses however good – If you add any more { now } to the fragment I think it should not be to the Giaour’s last speech

1:2

as the proportion it bears already to the rest of the poem is if any thing too great –

198: Holland has a copy of either the fifth or seventh edition of *G. B.* sends it on this date: BLJ III 166.

Now for the bride of Abydos¹⁹⁹ – the story is excessively interesting & the poetry like all I have seen of yours full of beauties of thought & expression & of harmony – In short I never read a poem more to my taste in irregular verse – but

1:3

you know I believe that I am oldfashioned or pedant enough to worship Musarum severiorem – especially to a person so qualified as yourself to shine in the strictest metres from your great command of language really poetical & <your> of rich harmonious versification – Walter Scott the great model of irregular poetry or all but the most fashionable seducer of Modern Bards to that practice, is by no means your equal in those

1:4

difficult attainments – Indeed they are far from being his most shining qualifications & among good poets he is rather below than above par in majesty of diction & richness of versification – They are unquestionably less missed in <an> <poem> { a poem of } irregular measure than in any other & his motive for chusing to write in <such> so loose a measure may be prudence rather than choice or idleness – but the grandeur of your verse & the richness of your expressions make me, I own, regret that you so seldom write in heroick verse²⁰⁰ or

2:1

regular stanzas & that you should be in this last beautiful & interesting work have adopted the irregularity of Walter Scott – It is not to the variety of { metre } that I object but to those (such as the 3^d stanza in 1st Canto & 27th in last) of which a Common reader can from 20 previous models expect the rhyme or foresee the measure – I am not however intolerant in any religion & I can <that> enjoy & do enjoy such a beautiful poem as the Bride of Abydos²⁰¹ even though not entirely composed in the measures <that> to which my beau ideal of

2:2

a perfect {English} poem is confined – of Inferior criticisms I have few to make – Perhaps the dialogue in first canto with Zuleika in which Selim alludes to his not being her brother may puzzle a reader who has but had a previous hint & though it is fully explained afterwards I am not clear that the reader is not entitled to a clearer disclosure of the fact <after> { immediately upon } his quarrel with his Uncle than <he actually can obtain> you have favoured him with – There are two or three other passages which in my very

2:3

cursory perusal of the poem, seemed a little obscure – There is somewhere a expression of a sword which sunk keener²⁰² – It may cut keener or it may sink deeper – but can it sink keener? – I am not sure that my objection is well founded but it struck my ear <as [] it> <as> { to be } incorrect & I <thought> therefore mention it for you to judge – If you think it right I dare say it is – The word Blench²⁰³ I never recollect & as I have no dictionary here I cannot say whether it is correct { or not }, nor can I, truth to say, tell what is the meaning of it – but this

2:4

is most likely my ignorance & is a matter easily <designed> decided by authority – the sound of some of your Turkish words is not calculated to remove my aversion to them – Wulwulhey²⁰⁴ is the devil of

199: *BoA* was fair-copied by B. on November 11th; Holland may have that ms.

200: B.'s next poem, *The Corsair*, started on December 18th 1813, is written in heroic couplets.

201: *BoA* is dedicated to Holland.

202: *BoA* 107-8: *every word / Pierced keener than a Christian's sword ...* B. took Holland's advice.

203: *BoA* 353: *But blench not thou ...* the word occurs at *Hamlet* II ii 592.

204: *BoA* 1108-9: *Can he not hear / The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant ear?* B.'s note says, *The death-song of the Turkish women.*

a word & even in reading your obliging note on my kinder opinions about the nightingale's song²⁰⁵ I could not help regretting that Philomena had so inharmonious a name in the East as Bulbul²⁰⁶ – You will think me very independent to criticize at this note I should not do so unless I could say as I can with perfect sincerity that I am delighted

3:1

with the poem, The descriptions the thoughts the story the language {the characters} & the versification wherever your Moslem predilections allow you to adhere to a Christian metre – do you mean Selim's turning round when he is wounded to be a last look at Zuleika²⁰⁷ – ? – The Costume (as the affected critics call it) of the East seems to me perfectly preserved but after all I know little of it but what you have told me –
Yours ever V^{ll} Holland²⁰⁸

[3:2 and 3:3 blank.]

Byron to Lord Holland, from London, November 17th 1813:

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.51639 ff.152-3; BLJ III 167-9)

Nov^r. 17th. 1813 –

My dear Lord –

Many thanks for your troubles & kindness – you don't know how sensible I am to both. – The fact is that I adopt that measure as the Duke of Norfolk takes the oaths – there is no voting or even franking on Parnass. in these days without. – C^e Harold I could not continue unless on the spot – and the first run is perilously against the popularity of the sequel the most I have been able to do is to sprinkle about 15 stanzas here & there in the 2^d. C^o. principally – which cost me more time & pains & pleasure too than scribbling forty such things as y^e. Bride & Giaour – the popularity of which last really surprised – & (you may think it affectation) but certainly did not raise my opinion of the public taste. –

1:2

My head is full of Oriental names & scenes – and I merely chose that measure as next to prose to tell a story or describe a place which struck me – I have a thorough & utter contempt for all measures but Spencer's {stanza} and Drydens couplet – the whole of the Bride cost me four nights – and you may easily suppose that I can have no great esteem for lines that can be strung as fast as minutes. – I have here & there risen to the couplet when I meant to be vastly fine – but it is my story & my East – (& here I am venturing with no one to contend against – from having seen what my contemporaries must copy from the drawings of others only) – that I want to make palpable – and my skull is so crammed from having lived much with them & in their own way (after Hobhouse went home {a year before me}) with their

1:3

scenes & manners – that I believe it would lead me to S^l. Luke's if not disgorged in this manner – particularly as my cursed affairs – and fevers abroad & foolishness at home – won't allow me a chance of seeing them before Spring. – Besides I was a short time ago in a very larmoyante way – and at those moments I generally take refuge in rhyme – and so far imagination is a relief as I have often found it – for as L^y. H. well said yesterday – thinking {much} of those from whom we are absent is an useless proof of regard and as painful as it is vain. – – – –

Hodgson my oldest acquaintance and most rigid critic says it is more correct (that is with fewer sins against grammar) than anything of mine before – and likes it better than the G^t. which by the bye he never did like – from its ferocity – I have altered Sunk to Cut – “blench” is to grow pale – to shrink – but is a vile word nevertheless. – <It>

205: BoA, B.'s note to 288: *It has been much doubted whether the notes of this “Lover of the rose” are sad or merry; and Mr Fox's remarks on the subject have provoked some learned controversy as to the opinions of the ancients on the subject. I dare not venture a conjecture on the point, though a little inclined to the “errare malle,” &c., if Mr Fox was mistaken.* See CPW III 438.

206: None of the remaining four Turkish Tales have the same amount of “Turkish” phrases as G and BoA.

207: BoA II, 563-4.

208: B. answers this letter on November 17th: BLJ III 167-9.

1:4

The Bride is to be appended to the G^r. and I hope to lay the two at your feet in a short time. – If the public will read things written in that debauched measure – that is their own fault – and if they begin in the present instance – to dislike it – I shall be more happy in curing them – than in adding {one} to their Philistine Idols. – The very wild Stanzas are more like Southey or King David – “By the waters of Babylon” &^c. than anything English – but that is thoroughly Eastern – & partly from the Koran. – – – – Depend upon it the whole present generation of Bards are not for the next – they will not live 20 years – but how is it now? – see how they treated Columbus? – whom I take to be by far the best regular left us – and worth all us Cossacks in fair fighting. – ever my dear Lord

y^{rs}. faithfully
Biron

John Murray to Byron, from 50 Albemarle Street, London, November 18th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles I 221-2; LJM 48-9)

Nov^r. 18th. 1813.
Thursday

My Dear Lord

I am very anxious that our business transactions should occur frequently, and that they should be settled immediately – for short accounts are favourable to long friendships –

I restore the Giaour to your Lordship entirely, and for it – the Bride of Abydos – and the miscellaneous Poems, intended to fill up the volume of the small edition – I beg leave to offer your Lordship the sum of One Thousand Guineas – and I shall be happy if your Lordship perceive that my estimation of your talents in my character <as> {of} a man of business – is not much under my admiration of them, as a man.²⁰⁹

I do most heartily accept the offer of your Lordships Portrait, as the most noble mark of friendship with which your Lordship could, in any way, honour me – I do assure your Lordship that I am truly proud of being distinguished as your publisher – and that it will be my anxious endeavour to preserve, through life, the happiness

The Lord Byron

1:2

of your Lordships steady confidence.

I shall ever continue,
your Lordships faithful servant
John Murray²¹⁰

[1:3 and 1:4 blank.]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 4, Bennet Street, London, November 22nd 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.94; 1922 I 214-17; QI 198-200; BLJ III 170-2)

Nov^r. 22^d. 1813 –

My dear Lady M^e –

C. has at last done a very goodnatured thing – she sent me Holmes’s picture for a friend leaving England – to which friend it is now making the best of its way. – You do not go to M.²¹¹ till 28th. and I shall procrastinate accordingly. – Yesterday the Lady Ossulstone sent for me to complain of you all – we had met at L^d. Hollands’ the night before – and she asserted that the “extreme gravity of my countenance” made her & L^d. O. believe that I had some whim about that slip of the pen=knife of C’s and the consequent rumours &^c. &^c. – and some resentment about her in particular – to all which I pleaded ignorance & innocence. –

1:2

209: In this paragraph, Smiles’ pencilled emendations are visible, changing “your Lordship” to “you”.

210: Decorated underlining.

211: The Jerseys’ country seat at Middleton Park, near Leeds.

She says Lady Blarney²¹² is a very noxious person & hates her – and that none of you have taken the least notice of her since – that she is the most discreet of women – to prove which she produced an epistle of L^y. Somebody's wondering (it was but three hours after) she had not already written a full & true account of it to her – !! I thought I should have laughed in her pretty black face – and – in short we are all very repulsive sort of persons and have not behaved well to her nor any body else. – Remember all this (like all our thises) is entre Nous – and so there is an end of the matter. – We had had a kind of squabble at the Argyle – which I could not help tormenting her a little by reminding her not of that but that Evening – when we were

1:3

all wrong-paired – she wanted to sit by Mildmay at Supper – and I wanted to have been next that Kashmeer Butterfly of the “Blues” L^y. Charlemont – or in short any body but a person who had serious concerns to think of – every body else was coupled much in the same way – in short Noah's Ark upset had been but a type of the pairing of our supper table. – L^y. Holland & I go on very well – her unqualified praises of you proving their sincerity! – she is the first woman I ever heard praise another entirely. – L^y. B. had better let us remain undisturbed – for if L^y. H. thinks that it annoys her there will be no end to y^c. intimacy. – I have taken the half weeks (3 days in each) of Lord Salisbury's box at Covent Garden – and there when C– is in town we can always talk for an hour on Emergency. –

1:4

The occasional oddity of Ph's letters have amused me much – the simplicity of her cunning – & her exquisite reasons²¹³ – she vindicates her treachery to — thus – after condemning deceit in general & hers in particular – she says – “but then remember it is <but> to deceive “un Marito” and to prevent all the unpleasant consequences &^c. &^c. and she says this in perfect persuasion that she has a full conception of the “fitness of things” & the “beauty of virtue” and “the social compact” as Philosopher Square has it²¹⁴ – Again – she desires me to write to him kindly – for – she believes he cares for nobody but me! besides – she will then hear of when she can't from me. – Is not all this a comedy? – next to L^y. Ossuls.'s voucher for her discretion – it has enlivened my ethical studies on the human mind beyond 50 volumes – how admirably we accommodate our reasons to our wishes!²¹⁵ – – –

2:1

She concludes by denominating that respectable man “Argus” a very irreverent appellation – if we can both hold out till Spring – perhaps he may have occasion for his Optics. – After all – “it is <but> to deceive un Marito” does not this expression convey to you the strangest mixture of right & wrong? – a really guilty person could not have used it – or rather they would but in different words – I find she has not the but and that makes much difference – if you consider it – the experienced would have said it is “only deceiving him” – thinking of themselves – she makes a merit of it on his account & mine. – – The Dutch have taken Holland & got Bernadotte & Orange – the Stork & King Log at once²¹⁶ – in their Froggery
ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

[2:2 is blank.]

[BLJ GIVES THIS P.S., NOT YET FOUND:] I must quote to you correctly – “– how easily mankind are deceived – May he be always deceived! and I – alas – am the base instrument of deception – but in this instance concealment is not a crime – for it preserves the peace ‘d'un marito’ the contrary would &^c. I have been arguing on wrong premises – but no matter – the marked lines are quite as good.

John Murray to Byron, from 50 Albemarle Street, London, November 24th 1813:

²¹²: Lady Bessborough.

²¹³: Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II iii 134.

²¹⁴: In Fielding's *Tom Jones*, III 3.

²¹⁵: Compare Donna Julia in D.J. I (written five years later).

²¹⁶: In Aesop's fable, the frogs asked Zeus for a king; they were dissatisfied with the log which he sent, so he sent them a stork, who ate them all.

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4161A; Smiles I 221; LJM 56)

My dear Lord – & Master

I am so very anxious to procure the best criticism or opinion upon the Bride²¹⁷ – that I ventured last night to introduce her to the protection of – M^r Frere – He has just returned – delighted – he is quite delighted – he read several passages to M^r Heber as exquisitely beautiful he says there is a simplicity runs through the whole that reminds him of the Ancient Ballad – He thinks it equal to anything your Lordship has produced – I asked if it was equal to the Giaour – he said that the Giaour contained perhaps a greater number of Splendid Passages – but that the mind carries something to rest upon after rising from the Bride of Abydos – it is more perfect – He made one or two remarks – He says that such words as Gul – & Bulbul,²¹⁸ though not unpoetical in them

1:2

selves – but that it is in bad taste, and ought not to receive the Sanction of yr Lordships example – on the same plan our language might be stripped to the Pronoun –

& scarcely in the chace could cope
with Timid Fawn –

Cope is to meet in conflict

In the passage Stanz IX p 12-13 – wch M^r F though particularly fine he thinks that the dimness of sight occasion by abstraction of mind is rendered less complete by defining the Sabre Stroke as right Sharply dealt.²¹⁹

At page 38 the Parenthesis renders the sense less intelligible

He don't like the arrangement of
and one was red – perchance of guilt –
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?

it is easily changed
one was red, with Guilt no doubt
ah how could blood be spilt without

[Ms. ends: 1:3 and 1:4 blank.]

Byron to Lady Melbourne, from 4, Bennet Street, London, November 25th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Ms.43470 f.95; 1922 I 217-19; BLJ III 173-5)

[*letter concludes at top of first sheet:*] people – and are the only person who can trace & I want to see whether you think my writings are me or not.

y^{rs}. ever

[*swirl signature*]

Nov^r. 25th. 1813

My dear L^y. M^c.

217: *The Bride of Abydos* would be published on December 2nd 1813.

218: For “Gul”, see for example *TBoA* 8; for “Bulbul”, see for example 288.

219: Frere is speaking of two separate sections of *TBoA*:

170 *et seq:*
Who hath not proved – how feebly words essay
To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly ray?
Who doth not feel – until his failing sight
Faints into dimness with its own delight –
His changing cheek – his sinking heart confess
The might – the majesty of Loveliness?
Such was Zuleika ...

and 246 *et seq:*
Nor even his Pacha's turbaned band
Mix in the game of mimic slaughter;
Careering cleave the folded felt
With sabre stroke right sharply dealt –
Nor marked the javelin-darting crowd,
Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud –
He thought but of old Giaffir's daughter!

Thanks by the thousand for y^f. letter. – I have lately been leading a whimsical life – Tuesday I dined with Ward & met Canning & all the Wits – and yesterday I dined with the Patrons of Pugilism & some of the professors – who amused me about as much. – – – I wrote to C– a very earnest but not *savage* letter – I believe the obnoxious sentence was – “if after this you refuse I hope you will forgive yourself for I fear I cannot – all the rest was merely entreaty <T> – The Picture is however – God knows where – they have now that is four (the Mussulman legal allotment)²²⁰ one picture apiece – and as many Originals of other people as they please in the interim. – I had no idea C– would have restored it but it was very kind and I am very much obliged to her. – It is strange that Ph’s greatest dread appears to be discovery – & yet she is perpetually as it were contriving everything to lead to it – she writes – makes me answer through an address to a 3^d person – whom she has not trusted – – of course their curiosity will not be the least excited by being made an involuntary Post-office! –

1:2

Then she would not rest till she had this picture sent – in the same way – and the odds are – particularly with such a person as ——— that he has – or will in some manner stumble on something incontrovertible – & out of which she cant “conceal” herself (as she calls it) that is in other words invent an excuse. – – – To say the truth I am not very unwilling that this should be the case – as it will hasten a crisis of some kind or other. – His first impulse will be probably Martial – but if I have a motive <and> I don’t mind <xxxx/>that – it will at least leave her for the Survivor – & the Survived won’t feel the want of her – besides in my case it would be so dramatic a conclusion – all the sex would be enamoured of my Memory – all the Wits would have their jest – & the Moralists their sermon – C. would go wild with grief that – it did not happen about her – L^y. O^d.²²¹ would say I deserved it for not coming to Cagliari – and ——— poor ———²²² she would be really uncomfortable – do you know? I am much afraid that that perverse passion was my

1:3

deepest after all. – Well – suppose he should not take the angry road – at least with me – it then comes to a point between her & him – “Give him up or part with me” – no one wants’ spirit – particularly the spirit of contradiction with that they dislike (she swore to me she never would give me up – but that is nothing –) <&> {yet} I don’t know that she would not take him at his word – & send to me; but at all events the superiority this advantage would give him – and the additional distrust & ill agreement between them must increase soon so far that our union must be the Event. – – The 3^d. course is her getting the better – & his finding (as he has partly found) that my friendship is not inconvenient – and our all “being happy ever after” – to one of these conclusions we must come²²³ sooner or later – & why not now? – We shall have forty other things to think of before Spring – merely from the irritation of Hope deferred – the most annoying of discordant feelings – “Have patience” in the mean time – you say – so

1:4

I will – if I can have nothing else. – – –

The Duchess’s verses are beautiful – but I don’t like her a bit the better – I send you in return some not of mine as you will see by the hand – but I am not certain they are hers (Ph’s) though from the cast of thought – it is very like her. – I hope I am not doing what Lord Grey did – He showed some letters of a woman as the most exquisite &^c. &^c. till some sagacious person pointed them out either in Rousseau’s Eloise – or the Portuguese letters! – I received these this morning – & think them pretty – pray tell me if they are – for seriously I am a very erring Critic – one may write – and yet not be able to judge – and the reverse. – return them on your return to town. – My new Turkish tale²²⁴ will be out directly – I shall of course send you a copy – Frere & Canning & the Hollands have seen & like it – the public is another question – but it will for some reasons interest you more than anybody – these I leave you to discover – (I mean totally independent of Criticism – for you may not like it a bit the better) – you know me better than most

220: Compare *Beppo*, 70, 7-8.

221: “Lady Oxford”.

222: Augusta.

223: Shakespeare, *Hamlet* V i.

224: BoA.

2:1

When I speak of this tale & the author – I merely mean feelings – the characters & the costume & the tale itself (at least are very like it I heard) are Mussulman. – This no one but you can tell. –

[2:2 is blank.]

Lady Melbourne to Byron, after November 25th 1813:

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.45547 f.68; Gross 149)

[The / Lord Byron / Bennett Street]

The first sheet of this letter, with the date, is missing.

[*Ms. tear removes a phrase*] – Canning is not pleasant in my Eyes – his countenance is false & he always looks Suspicious, & a sort of imitation of Sheridan, but so inferior, that with me it loses all its effect – I long to see y^r Tale, I make no doubt it is beautiful not from y^e opinion of L^d & L^y H^d have given for I think neither of them have any taste in Poetry – she never judges for herself – but is guided by the opinions of some one whom she thinks good authority – Canning & Frere's judgment is not to be disputed – & tho' they write themselves they will not abuse what they think is really good – I hope you'll come very soon, do you hear? Or rather do you heed? Y^{rs} Ever [*swirl signature*]

Byron to Dr William Clark, from London, November 27th 1813:

(Source: text from Wren Library R2 40, Trinity College Cambridge; BLJ III 176)

[1813 / London Nov^r. twenty-seventh / To Dr. W.Clarke / Trin. Coll. Cambridge / Byron]

Novr. 27th. 1813

My dear Sir,

I hope you will have no objection to keep our engagement – and do me the favour of accompanying me to Holland next week – Fevers – plagues – & everything <is/>are against the Mediterranean which we will exchange for the Zuyder Zee – and if affairs go on well – Germany & even Italy are within our range. – – Pray let me hear from you – ever dear Sir

yrs. truly
Byron

Byron to Dr William Clark, from London, November 29th 1813:

(Source: text from Wren Library R2 40, Trinity College Cambridge; BLJ III 180-1)

Nov^r. 29th. 1813. –

Dear Sir –

I have just seen M^r. Ward who tells me that it will be as well we should be prepared – but that at present till G^{en}. Graham is gone & the communication more regulated we must not set off upon Speculation. – All this we shall know in a week – and if you will have the goodness to be ready I will send you notice in time for every thing as there is nothing I should

1:2

regret more than the dissolution of our partnership. – Excuse the hasty letter I sent under the notion that we should embark this week – I trust every thing will be practicable the next – at all events I am decided to go somewhere – & I believe you are Citizen enough of the world to feel as few partialities for particular parts of it – as myself. – If you come to town I shall of course be very glad to see you – but I lose no time in saying

1:3

that my exceeding hurry was a little premature – an anxiety I trust you will excuse when you know the motive. – I shall write again in a day or two – – do not quit C^e at any inconvenience to yourself – but still do not be surprised if I send another impatient epistle – as every thing depends upon the news of the next week. – ever my dear Sir.

y^r. very faithful S^t.
Biron

Byron to Annabella Milbanke, November 29th 1813:

(Source: text from LJ III 406-8; BLJ III 178-80)

Nov^r. 29th. 1813.

No one can *assume* or *presume* less than you do, though very few with whom I am acquainted possess half your claims to that “superiority” which you are so fearful of affecting. Nor can I recollect one expression since the commencement of our correspondence, which has in any respect diminished my opinion of your talents,—my respect for your virtues. My only reason for avoiding the discussion of *sacred* topics was the sense of my own ignorance and the fear of saying something that might displease—but I have *listened*, and will listen to you with not merely patience but pleasure. When we meet—if we do meet—in Spring—you will find me ready to acquiesce in all your notions upon the point merely personal between ourselves—you will act according to circumstances—it would be premature in us both to anticipate reflections which may never be made—and if made at all—are certainly unfounded. You wrong yourself very much in supposing that “the charm” has been broken by our nearer acquaintance—on the contrary, that very intercourse convinces me of the value of what I have lost, or rather never found. But I will not deny that circumstances have occurred to render it more supportable.

You will think me very capricious and apt at sudden fancies. It is true I could not exist without some object of attachment, but I have shewn that I am not quite a slave to impulse. No man of tolerable situation in life who was quite without self command could have reached the age of twenty-six (which I shall be—I grieve to speak it—in January) without marrying and in all probability foolishly.—But however weak (it may merit a harsher term) in my disposition to attach myself (and as society is now much the same in this as in all other European countries it were difficult to avoid it) in my search for the “ideal,”—the being to whom I would commit the whole happiness of my future life,—I have never yet seen but two approaching to the likeness. The first I was too young to have a prospect of obtaining, and subsequent events have proved that my expectations might not have been fulfilled had I ever proposed to and secured my early idol. *The second*—the *only* woman to whom I ever seriously pretended as a wife—had disposed of her heart already, and I think it too late to look for a third. I shall take the world as I find it, and I have seen it much the same in most climates. (A little more fiery perhaps in Greece and Asia—for there they are a strange mixture of languid habits and stormy passions.) But I have no confidence and look for no constancy in affections founded in caprice, and preserved (if preserved) by accident, and lucky conformity of disposition without any fixed principles. How far this may be my case at present, I know not, and have not had time to ascertain.

I can only say that I never was cured of loving any one but by the conduct—by the change—or the violence of the object herself—and till I see reason for distrust I shall flatter myself as heretofore—and perhaps with as little cause as ever. I owe you some apology for this disquisition—but the singularity of *our* situation led me to dwell on this topic—and your friendship will excuse it. I am anxious to be candid with you though I fear sometimes I am betrayed into impertinence. They say that a man never *forgives* a woman who stands in the relation which you do towards me—but to *forgive*—we must first be offended—and I think I cannot recall—even a moment of pique at the past to my memory—I have but two *friends* of your sex—yourself and L^y. Melbourne—as different in years as in disposition—and yet I do not know which I prefer—believe me a better-*hearted* woman does not exist—and in talent I never saw her excelled and hardly equalled—her kindness to me has been uniform—and I fear severely and ungratefully tried at times on my part—but as it cannot be so again—at least in the same manner—I shall make what atonement I can—if a regard which my own inclination leads me to cultivate—can make any amends for my trespasses on her patience. The word *patience* reminds me of the book I am to send you—it shall be ordered to Seaham tomorrow. I shall be most happy to see any thing of your writing—of what I have already seen you once heard my favourable and sincere opinion. I by no means rank poetry or poets high in the scale of intellect—this may look like Affectation—but it is my real opinion—it is the lava of the imagination whose eruption prevents an earth-quake—they say Poets never or rarely go *mad*—Cowper and Collins are instances to the contrary (but Cowper was no poet) it is however to be remarked that they rarely do—but are generally so near it that I cannot help thinking rhyme is so far useful in anticipating and preventing the disorder. I prefer the talents of action—of war—or the Senate—or even of Science—to all the speculations of these mere dreamers of another existence (I don’t mean *religiously* but *fancifully*) and spectators of this. Apathy—disgust—and perhaps incapacity have rendered me now a mere spectator—but I have occasionally mixed in the active and tumultuous departments of existence—and on these alone my *recollection* rests with any satisfaction—though not the *best* parts of it.—I wish to know your Joanna—and shall be very glad of the opportunity—never mind *ma cousine* I thought Stockton had been your Post town and nearer Seaham.—M^r. Ward and I have talked (I fear it will be only talk as things look undecided in that quarter) of an excursion to Holland—if so—I shall be able to compare a Dutch canal with the Bosphorus.—I never saw a Revolution transacting—or at least completed—but I arrived just after the last Turkish one—and the *effects* were visible—and had all the grandeur of desolation in their aspect—Streets in ashes—immense barracks (of a very fine construction) in ruins—and above all Sultan

Selim's²²⁵ favourite gardens round them in all the wildness of luxuriant neglect—his fountains waterless—and his kiosks defaced but still glittering in their decay.—They lie between the city and Buyukderé on the hills above the Bosphorus—and the way to them is through a plain with the prettiest name in the world—“the Valley of Sweet Waters”. But I am sending a volume not a letter.

ever yours most truly
B

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, November 30th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 431-2; LJ II 292-3; QI 201; BLJ III 183-4)

November 30. 1813.

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

However, ‘Richard’s himself again,’²²⁶ and except all night and some part of the morning, I don’t think very much about the matter.

All convulsions end with me in rhyme; and to solace my midnights, I have scribbled another Turkish story²²⁷—not a Fragment—which you will receive soon after this. It does not trench upon your kingdom in the least, and if it did, you would soon reduce me to my proper boundaries. You will think, and justly, that I run some risk of losing the little I have gained in fame, by this further experiment on public patience; but I have really ceased to care on that head. I have written this, and published it, for the sake of the *employment*,—to wring my thoughts from reality, and take refuge in ‘imaginings,’ however ‘horrible;’²²⁸ and, as to success! those who succeed will console me for a failure—excepting yourself and one or two more, whom luckily I love too well to wish one leaf of their laurels a tint yellower. This is the work of a week, and will be the reading of an hour to you, or even less,—and so, let it go * * * * *

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

Madame de Staël to Byron, from Argyll Street London, November 30th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from LJ III 354-5)

[The / Lord Byron]

argyll’s street, N^o. 31.

je ne saurais vous exprimer mylord, à quel point je me trouve honorée d’être dans une note de votre poème et de quel poème! il me semble que pour la première fois je me crois certaine d’un nom avenir et que vous avez disposé pour moi de cet empire de reputation qui vous serez tous les jours plus soumis – je voudrais vous parler de ce poème que tout le monde admire mais j’avouerais que je suis trop suspecte en le louant – et je ne cache pas qu’une louange de vous m’a fait éprouver un sentiment de fierté et de reconnaissance qui me rendait incapable de vous juger mais heureusement vous êtes au dessus du jugement –

donnez moi quelquefois le plaisir de vous voir – il y a un proverbe français qui dit *qu’un bonheur ne va jamais sans d’autre*.

N. de Staël

Translation: I shall never be able to explain to you, my Lord, how honoured I am to be in a note to your poem,²²⁹ and what a poem! It seems to me that for the first time I feel certain of a name in the future and that you have put aside for me a part of that empire and that reputation under which you will be forever. I want to speak to you about this poem which everyone admires, but I admit that I am suspected for praising it, and I shall not disguise the fact that praise from you has caused me a feeling of pride and of recognition which makes me unable to judge you; fortunately, however, you are above judgement.

Allow me the pleasure of seeing you; there is a French proverb which says that *one happiness never arrives without another*. N[ecker] de Staël.

225: Sultan Selim III, reformist Sultan who had been bowstrung the year before B. visited Constantinople.

226: Shakespeare, *Richard III* (line added by Cibber).

227: Moore’s note: The Bride of Abydos.

228: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I iv 6-7.

229: See *BoA*, 179, B.’s note, in which he quotes her book *de l’Allemagne*.

Byron to Madame de Staël, November 30th 1813:

(Source: MS. Facsimile, V.T de Pange, *Madame de Staël and her English Correspondents*, II, 412-14, Bodleian Library MS. D.Phil, d.1441-2; BLJ III 184-5)

Novr. 30th. 1813

Dear Madam – I shall not apologize for answering your very kind letter in my own language with which you are so well acquainted. I should be fearful of replying to you in yours – even had I been born and educated a native of France. – My knowledge of French is superficial yet sufficient to comprehend the beauty & originality of thoughts which belong to no particular country or quarter of the globe – but must strike to the hearts of all who inhabit it. – In referring to your recent work in the note with which you are obliging enough to be pleased – I was but too happy to avail myself of your authority for a real or fancied confirmation of my own opinion on a particular subject. – My praise was only the feeble echo of more powerful voices – to yourself any attempt at eulogy must be merely repetition. – Of the work itself I can only say – that few days have passed since it's publication²³⁰ without my perusal of many of it's pages – & that I should be sorry for my own sake to fix the period when I should not recur to it with pleasure – The tale – which you have honoured by your notice – was written hastily – & published I fear injudiciously – and has moreover the disadvantage of being composed in some of those moments when we are forced by reality to take refuge in Imagination – I am much more obliged to it than I ever can be to the most partial reader – as it wrung my thoughts from selfish & sorrowful contemplation – & recalled them to a part of the world to which I am indebted for some of the brightest and darkest but always the *most living* recollections of my existence. – My time is passed so irregularly that you will not mistake my omissions in the etiquette of visiting – for want of respect for your talents – nor neglect of your society: with all the world at your feet; you can neither miss nor regret the absence of a solitary and sometimes a sullen individual. – My friends – at least my acquaintances – who are most of them your friends – and all your admirers – could or might tell you that this carelessness is habitual – I do not say it is excusable – & certainly is not so in the present instance. But your Goodnature will forgive my negligence & perhaps some of my faults – amongst which however cannot be numbered any deficiency in *real* respect & sincere admiration on the part of

your obliged & very faithful humble servt. Byron

Byron to Francis Hodgson, December 1st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4184; BLJ III 187)

Nov^r. – Decr. 1st. 1813

I have just heard that Knapp is acquainted with what I was but too happy in being enabled to do for you – now – my dear Hⁿ. – you or Drury must have told this – for upon my own honour – not even to Scrope – nor to one soul – (D^y knew it before) have I said one syllable of the matter – so don't be out of humour with me about it – {but} you can't be more so than I am. – I am however glad of one thing – if you ever conceived it to be in the least an obligation – this disclosure most

1:2

fairly & fully releases you from it –

“To John I owe great obligation
“But John &^c.

and so there's an end of the matter. –

Ward wavers a little about the Dutch till matters are more sedative – & the French more sedentary – The Bride will blush upon you in a day or two there <are> {is} much at least a little addition – I am happy to say that Frere & Heber and some other “good men & true” have been kind enough to adopt the same opinion that you did. – Pray – write

1:3

when you like & believe me

ever y^{rs}.
[swirl signature]

230: *BoA*'s official publication date was December 2nd 1813: de S. must have seen an advance copy.

P.S.

Murray has offered me a thousand guineas for the 2 (G^f & B^c) and told M^c. de Stael that he had paid them to me!!²³¹ I should be glad to be able to tell her so too – but the truth is – he would – but I thought the fair way was to decline it till May & at the end of 6 months he can safely say whether he can afford it or not – without running <the> {any} risk by Speculation – if he paid them now & lost by it – it would be hard – if he

1:4

gains – it will be time enough when he has already funded his profits – but he needed not have told “la Baronne” such a devil of an uncalled for piece of – premature truth perhaps – but nevertheless a lie in the meantime. –

December 1813: seventh edition of *The Giaour* published; the poem is now complete at 1334 lines. *The Bride of Abydos* published.

Leigh Hunt to Byron, from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, December 1st 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4132)

Leigh Hunt’s first known letter to Byron.

Surrey Jail – 1st. December 1813.

My dear Lord,

Your very acceptable present has doubly obliged me, – first, for it’s own sake, and secondly, by the opportunity <of> {it} gives me of telling you how often I have turned my head round to the door, hoping that the knock might be your’s. I should have sent to you long before this to ask for a renewal of your visit, but I did not know on what engagements or occupations I might be trespassing. Will you let me see that I may be bolder next time, by an early look in? I know not what right I have to take you from other society, on the score of the agreeable; but there are points about you, if you will allow me to say so, with which I feel myself heartily inclined to grapple on the score {of} mutual feeling, & I trust, not disadvantageously to either of us. – I heard from Moore not long ago. He had got into a new residence, & was

1:2

outrageous enough to talk to me of his groves & his moral prospects; – but I pardoned an overflow so natural in a poet, as I hope your Lordship will pardon me, though of a different description, from, my dear Lord,

Your sincere & obliged servant,

Leigh Hunt.

Lord Byron,

&c. &c.

[1:3 and 4 blank.]

Byron to Leigh Hunt, from 4 Bennet Street, December 2nd 1813:

(Source: text from V&A Forster, 48.G.22 ff. 2/1-2; LJ II 296-7; BLJ III 188-9)

Byron answers the previous item at once.

4.Bennet Street

Dec^r 2^d. 1813 –

My dear Sir –

Few things could be more welcome than your note – & on Saturday morning I will avail myself of your permission to thank you for it in person. – My time has not been passed since we met either profitably or agreeably – a very short period after my last visit an incident occurred with which I fear you are not unacquainted (as

1:2

report in many mouths & more than one paper was busy with the topic) that naturally gave me much uneasiness. – Then – I nearly incurred a lawsuit on the sale of an estate – but that is now arranged – but

231: This idea is the source of discord between B. and Mu. See their correspondence, Feb 25-6 1813.

why should I go on with a series of selfish & silly details? – I merely wish to assure you that it was not the frivolous forgetfulness of a mind occupied by what is called pleasure (not in the {true} sense

1:3

of Epicurus) that kept me away but a perception of my then unfitness to share the society of those whom I value & wish not to displease. – I hate being larmoyant – & making a serious face among those who are cheerful. – – –

It is my wish that our acquaintance or – if you please {to accept it} friendship may be permanent – I have been lucky enough to preserve some friends from a very early period – & I hope as I do not (at least now) select them lightly I shall not lose them capriciously

1:4

I have a thorough esteem for that independence of spirit which you have maintained with <enough> {sterling} talent and at the expense of some suffering. – You have not I trust abandoned the poem you were composing when Moore & I partook of your hospitality in y^e. Summer? – I hope a time may come when he & I may be able to repay you in kind for the latter – for the rhymes – at least in quantity you are in Arrear to both –

Believe me very truly

& affetc^{ly}
Byron

Leigh Hunt to Byron, from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, December 2nd 1813:

(Source: text from NLS, Acc.12604 / 4132)

Hunt replies on the same day.

My dear Lord,

I need not tell you how much your second letter has gratified me, for I am apt to speak as sincerely as I think (you must suffer me m talk in this way after what you have been kind enough to say of my independence) & it always rejoices me tot find that those whom I wish to regard will take me at my word. – But I shall grow egotistical upon the strength of your Lordship’s good opinion. – I shall be heartily glad to see you on Saturday morning, & perhaps shall prevail upon you to take a luncheon with us at our dinner time {(3).} – The nature of your letter would have brought upon you a long answer, filled perhaps with <something of> an enthusiasm that might have made you smile; but I am

1:2

keeping your servant in the cold, & so, among other good offices, you see what he has done for you. However, I would not make a light thing of so good a matter as I mean my enthusiasm to be, and intend, before I have done, that you shall have as sound a regard for it, as I have for the feelings on your Lordship’s part that have called it forth.

Your’s, my dear Lord,
Most sincerely & cordially,
Leigh Hunt.

Surrey Jail – 2^d. Dec^r. 1813.

[1:3 and 4 blank.]

Byron to John Murray, December 3rd 1813 (a):

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604 / 4160A; LJ II 298; BLJ III 190-1)

Dec. 3. 1813.

Look out in the Encyclopedia article Mecca whether it is there or at Medina the Prophet is entombed²³² – if at Medina the first lines of my alteration must run –

“Blest – as the <strain> {call} which from Medina’s {dome}

Invites Devotion to her Prophet's tomb

&c.

if at "Mecca" the lines may stand as before. – Page 45. C^o. 2^d. –
Bride of Abydos.

y^r.

[swirl signature]

You will find this out either by Article – Mecca – Medina – or Mohammed – I have no book of reference by me. –

[2:1 has "1813 Dec^r 3^d / Byron. Lord"]

Byron to John Murray, December 3rd 1813 (b):

(Source: NLS Acc.12604 / 4160A; LJ II 298; BLJ III 191)

Did you look out? is it Medina or Mecca that contains the holy sepulchre? – don't make me blaspheme by your negligence – I have no book of reference or I would save you the trouble I blush as a good Mussulman to have confused the point.

y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

[1:2 and 1:3 blank. 1:4 has "1813 Dec^r / Byron – Lord // To J. Murray Esq^{re}."]

Byron to Lord Holland, December 7th 1813:

(Source: NLS Acc.12604; BLJ III 190-1)

Dec^r. 7th. 1813

My dear Lord

Will you have y^e. goodness to present y^e. petition which accompanies this billet for me – you will think it an odd thing after the impudence with which I supported Cartwright's & the variety of impudencies I have uttered in our august house – but I really have not nerves even to present a petⁿ. far less say a word

1:2

upon it – at this moment – I can't tell why but so it is – either indolence – or hippishness – or incapacity – or all three. –

Pray pardon me this & all other intrusions (past at least) from

y^{rs}. very truly

[swirl]

(Source: text from B.L.Add.Mss.51639 ff.156-7; BLJ III 193)

December 8th 1813: Byron writes *The Devil's Drive*, and fair-copies it on December 9th.

Byron to Thomas Moore, from London, December 8th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life I 432-4; LJ II 300-4; QI 201-3; BLJ III 193-5)

December 8. 1813.

Your letter, like all the best, and even kindest things in this world, is both painful and pleasing. But, first, to what sits nearest. Do you know I was actually about to dedicate to you,—not in a formal inscription, as to one's *elders*,—but through a short prefatory letter, in which I boasted myself your intimate, and held forth the prospect of *your* Poem; when, lo! the recollection of your strict injunctions of secrecy as to the said poem, more than *once* repeated by word and letter, flashed upon me, and marred my intents. I could have no motive for repressing my own desire of alluding to you (and not a day passes that I do not think and talk of you), but an idea that you might, yourself, dislike it. You cannot doubt my sincere admiration, waving personal friendship for the present, which, by the by, is not less sincere and deep rooted. I have you by rote and by heart; of which 'ecce signum!'²³³ When I was at [Aston Hall], on my first visit, I have a habit, in passing my time a good deal alone, of—I won't call it singing, for that I never attempt except to myself—but of uttering, to what I think tunes, your 'Oh breathe not,' 'When the last glimpse,' and 'When he who adores thee,' with others of the same minstrel;—they are my matins and vespers. I assuredly did not intend them to be overheard, but, one

²³³: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV I*, II iv 160.

morning, in comes, not La Donna, but Il Marito,²³⁴ with a very grave face, saying, ‘Byron, I must request you won’t sing any more, at least of *those* songs.’ I stared, and said, ‘Certainly, but why?’—‘To tell you the truth,’ quoth he, ‘they make my wife *cry*, and so melancholy, that I wish her to hear no more of them.’

Now, my dear M., the effect must have been from your words, and certainly not my music. I merely mention this foolish story to show you how much I am indebted to you for even your pastimes. A man may praise and praise, but no one recollects but that which pleases—at least, in composition. Though I think no one equal to you in that department, or in satire,—and surely no one was ever so popular in both,—I certainly am of opinion that you have not yet done all you can do, though more than enough for any one else. I want, and the world expects, a longer work from you; and I see in you what I never saw in poet before, a strange diffidence of your own powers, which I cannot account for, and which must be unaccountable, when a *Cossac* like me can appal a *cuirassier*. Your story I did not, could not, know,—I thought only of a Peri. I wish you had confided in me, not for your sake, but mine, and to prevent the world from losing a much better poem than my own, but which, I yet hope, this *clashing* will not even now deprive them of.²³⁵ Mine is the work of a week, written, *why* I have partly told you, and partly I cannot tell you by letter—some day I will.

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

This last thing of mine *may* have the same fate, and I assure you I have great doubts about it. But, even if not, its little day will be over before you are ready and willing. Come out—‘screw your courage to the sticking-place.’²³⁶ Except the Post Bag (and surely you cannot complain of a want of success there), you have not been regularly out for some years. No man stands higher,—whatever you may think on a rainy day, in your provincial retreat. ‘Aucun homme, dans aucune langue, n’a été, peut-être, plus complètement le poète du coeur et le poète des femmes. Les critiques lui reprochent de n’avoir représenté le monde ni tel qu’il est, ni tel qu’il doit être; *mais les femmes répondent qu’il l’a représenté tel qu’elles le désirent.*’²³⁷—I should have thought Sismondi had written this for you instead of Metastasio.

Write to me, and tell me of *yourself*. Do you remember what Rousseau said to some one—‘Have we quarrelled? you have talked to me often, and never once mentioned yourself.’²³⁸

P.S.—The last sentence is an indirect apology for my own egotism,—but I believe in letters it is allowed. I wish it was *mutual*. I have met with an odd reflection in Grimm; it shall not—at least the bad part—be applied to you or me, though *one* of us has certainly an indifferent name—but this it is:—‘Many people have the reputation of being wicked, with whom we should be too happy to pass our lives.’ I need not add it is a woman’s saying—a Mademoiselle de Sommery’s.²³⁹

* * * * *

Byron to Thomas Phillips, from London, September 9th 1813:

(Source: text from Huntington HM 20077, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 113)

234: Frances and James Wedderburn Webster.

235: **Moore’s note:** Among the stories intended to be introduced into *Lalla Rookh*, which I had begun, but, from various causes, never finished, there was one which I had made some progress in, at the time of the appearance of “The Bride,” and which, on reading that poem, I found to contain such singular coincidences with it, not only in locality and costume, but in plot and characters, that I immediately gave up my story altogether, and began another on an entirely new subject, the Fire-worshippers. To this circumstance, which I immediately communicated to him, Lord Byron alludes in this letter. In my hero (to whom I had even given the name of “Zelim,” and who was a descendant of Ali, outlawed, with all his followers, by the reigning Caliph) it was my intention to shadow out, as I did afterwards in another form, the national cause of Ireland. To quote the words of my letter to Lord Byron on the subject:—“I chose this story because one writes best about what one feels most, and I thought the parallel with Ireland would enable me to infuse some vigour into my hero’s character. But to aim at vigour and strong feeling after *you* is hopeless;—that region ‘was made for Cæsar.’”

236: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I vii 60.

237: Sismondi, *De la Littérature du Midi de l’Europe* (1813), II 436.

238: Rousseau quotation unidentified.

239: Grimm, *Correspondance Littéraire* (1813), II 126.

[No address by Byron.]

This letter seems written in a mixture of hands. Changes of font indicate the different calligraphies.

Sept^r. 9th. 1813 –

Dear Sir

I send you the biography of one of your Sitters & I hope you will derive some amusement from the singular anecdotes contained in the volume. – When you can spare time and inclination I confess it would gratify me to see the half-length finished as M. wants it for an engraving – I dont care what becomes of the arms so that pens [*Ms. tear: “e”*] books are not upon y^e. canvas [*Ms. tear: “hav”*]ing left every thing else to your own better judgment with which [*Ms. tear: “T”*] have every reason to be more than satisfied – I shall only beg you to follow your own taste as before. – When y^e. copy

1:4

or y^e. original is finished have y^e. goodness to let me know – if I leave town it will be only for a few days – and I do not expect to sail before October. –

y^{rs}. very truly
Biron

[*in another hand: – Phillips Esq^{re} 8 George Street*]

Byron to John Murray (c), December 3rd 1813:

(Source: from Morgan Library MA 0062, 286952, Item 41; unpublished?)

Transcription by Paul Curtis, modified

[*in another hand: “Lord Byron to John Murray 7”*]

Dec. 3 – 1813

Dear Sir –

I send you back the copy – that – when the <xx> alteration is printed from page 45 (to which I request you to turn) you may perceive another insertion of 2 lines <of two xxxx lines> – tho 4 are in the margin – you will be good enough to attend to this as soon as possible – either in the Errata page – or the leaf itself – as you please

y^{rs}.
B

Byron to John Galt, from London, December 10th 1813:

(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 195)

Galt was a traveller and writer whom Byron had met in his Mediterranean tour.

Dec^r. 10th. 1813

My dear Galt –

The coincidence I assure you is a most unintentional & unconscious one nor have I even a guess where or when or in what manner it exists – it is rather odd there is a M^r. Semple who I have since heard wrote a prose story like it – but on it’s being pointed out to me the resemblance was so slight as to become almost imperceptible at least in my eyes – further than that <were/>there were 2 lovers who died. –

1:2

Be that as it may I certainly had read no work of his or yours when this story was written that at all contained the likeness – or suggested the idea – I had a living character in my eye for Zuleika – but what is still more extraordinary a living poet writes to me – that I have actually anticipated a tale he had ready for the press – & which he admits it is impossible I could ever have seen or heard of in its details. – –

1:3

Raymond has heard from me – & has promised an answer – he shall be jogged again – if this wont do. – –

Anything I can do in accelerating your pursuits shall be done readily & with pleasure, by
ever y^{rs}.

[swirl signature]

Byron to John Galt (with context), December 11th 1813:(Source: Ms. not found; text from John Galt, *Life of Lord Byron*, Colburn and Bentley, 1830, pp.178-80; BLJ III 196)

Galt writes: When I had read *The Bride of Abydos*, I wrote to him my opinion of it, and mentioned that there was a remarkable coincidence in the story, with a matter in which I had been interested. I have no copy of the letter, and I forget the expressions employed, but Lord Byron seemed to think that they implied that he had taken the story from something of mine.

The note is:

“Galt says there is a coincidence between the first part of ‘The Bride’ and some story of his, whether published or not, I know not, never having seen it. He is almost the last person on whom any one would commit literary larceny, and I am not conscious of any witting thefts on any of the genus. As to originality, all pretensions are ludicrous; there is nothing new under the sun.”

It is sufficiently clear that he was offended with what I had said, and was somewhat excited. I have not been able at present to find his answer to my letter, but it would appear by the subjoined that he had written to me something which led me to imagine he was offended at my observations, and that I had in consequence deprecated his wrath.

Dec. 11, 1813

My dear Galt, – There was no offence – there *could* be none. I thought it by no means impossible that we might have hit on something similar, particularly as you are a dramatist, and was anxious to assure you of the truth, viz., that I had not wittingly seized upon plot, sentiment, or incident; and I am very glad that I have not in any respect trenched upon your subjects. Something still more singular is, that the *first* part, where you have found a coincidence in some events within your observations on *life*, was *drawn* from *observations* of mine also, and I meant to have gone on with the story, but on second thoughts, I thought myself *two centuries* at least too late for the subject; which, though admitting of very powerful feeling and description, yet is not adapted for this age, at least this country, though the finest works of the Greeks, one of Schiller’s and Alfieri’s in modern times, besides several of our *old* (and best) dramatists, have been grounded on incidents of a similar cast. I therefore altered it as you perceive, and in so doing have weakened the whole, by interrupting the train of thought; and in composition I do not think *second* thoughts are the best, though *second* expressions may improve the first ideas.

I do not know how other men feel towards those they have met abroad; but to me there seems a kind of tie established between all who have met together in a foreign country, as if we had met in a state of pre-existence, and were talking over a life that has ceased: but I always look forward to renewing my travels; and though *you*, I think, are now stationary, if I can at all forward your pursuits *there* as well as here, I shall be truly glad in the opportunity.

Ever yours very sincerely,

B

P.S. – I believe I leave town for a day or two on Monday, but after that I am always at home, and happy to see you till half-past two.

Galt continues: This letter was dated on Saturday the 11th of September, [sic] 1813. On Sunday the 12th, he made the following other note in his memorandum book:

“By Galt’s answer, I find it is some story in *real life*, and not any work with which my late composition coincides. It is still more singular, for mine is drawn from *existence* also.”

Byron to J.Ascham, December 14th 1813:

(Source: Newstead Abbey Collection RB E15 ALS; BLJ III 198)

Dec^r. 14th. 1813 –

Sir /

I regret very much that I have not time for the purpose of sitting to M^r. D. of whose talents I think very highly. – M^r. Westall’s objection seems to me very strange – but there are 2 also at M^r. Phillips’s from either of these or from M^r. Westall’s the engraving you require can be obtained but it is not in my power to devote the proper time to M^r. D. at present & I should regret very

1:2

much that his talents should be thrown away on a restless & impatient subject – as a hurried sitter must naturally be. – I cannot but be sorry for the trouble you are taking on so trifling an occasion – but remember it was not my seeking though I <cannot but> {must} feel obliged by your anxiety – & certainly wish to relieve it.

y^f obliged
& obed^t. Ser^t.
[swirl]

J. Asham Esq^{ce}
Cornhill

Byron to Edward Daniel Clarke, December 15th 1813:

(Source: most of text from B.L. Egerton 2869 ff.11-12; LJ II 308-11; QI 204-5; BLJ III 199-200)

Dec^r. 15th. 1813

My dear Sir –

Your very kind letter is the more agreeable because – setting aside talents – judgment – & y^c. “laudari a laudato” &^c. you have been on y^c. spot – you have seen & described more of the East than any of your predecessors – I need not say how ably & successfully – and (excuse the Bathos) you are one of y^c. very few who can pronounce how far my costume (to use an affected but expressive word) is correct. – As to poesy – that is – as “Men Gods & Columns” please to decide upon it – but I am {sure} that I am anxious to have an Observer’s – particularly a famous observer’s testimony on y^c. fidelity of my manners & dresses – and as far as Memory and an Oriental twist in my imagination have permitted – it has been my endeavour to present to the Franks –

1:2

a sketch of that with which you have & will present them a complete picture. – It was with this notion that I felt compelled to make my hero & heroine relatives – as you well know that none else could {there} obtain that degree of intercourse leading to genuine affection – I had nearly made them rather too much akin to each other – & though the wild passions of the East – & some great examples in Alfieri – Ford – & Schiller (to stop short of Antiquity) might have pleaded in favour of a copyist – yet the times & the North (not Frederic but our Climate) induced {me} to alter their consanguinity & confine them to cousinship. – I also wished to try my hand on a female character in Zuleika – & have endeavoured as far as y^c. grossness of our masculine ideas will allow – to preserve her purity without impairing the ardour of her attachment. – As to Criticism – I have been reviewed about 150

1:3

times – praised & abused – I will not say that I am become indifferent to either eulogy or condemnation – but for some years at least I have felt grateful for the former – and have never attempted to answer the latter. – For success equal to the first efforts – I had & have no hope – y^c. novelty was over – & y^c. “Bride” – like all other brides – must suffer or rejoice for & with her husband. – By the bye – I have used Bride Turkishly as affianced not married – & so far it is an English bull – which I trust will be at least a comfort – to all Hibernians not bigotted to Monopoly. – You are good enough to mention your quotations in your 3^d. vol. – I shall not only be indebted to it for a renewal of the high ratification received from y^c. 2 first – but for <preferably> preserving my relics embalmed in your own spices – & ensuring me readers to whom I could not otherwise have aspired. –

1:4

I called on you as bounden by duty & inclination when last in your neighbourhood – but I shall always take my chance – you surely would not have me inflict upon you a formal annunciation – I am proud of your friendship – but not so proud of myself as to break in upon your better avocations. – I trust that M^{rs}. Clarke is well – I have never had y^c. honour of presentation – but I have heard so much of her in many quarters – that any notice she is pleased to take of my productions is not less gratifying than my thanks are sincere both to her & you – by all accounts I may safely congratulate you on y^c. possession of a “Bride” whose personal & mental accomplishments are more than poetical. –
ever y^{rs}. most truly

Byron

P.S. Murray has sent – or will send a double copy of the *Bride & Giaour* – in y^c. last one some lengthy additions – pray accept them according to old custom “from y^c. Author” to one of his better brethren. – Your Persian or any memorial will be a most agreeable – & it is my fault – if not an useful present. –

[*B.L.Egerton 2869 ends here.*]

I trust your third will be out before I sail next month; can I say or do anything for you in the Levant? I am now in all the agonies of equipment, and full of schemes, some impracticable, and most of them improbable; but I mean to fly “freely to the green earth’s end,” though not quite so fast as Milton’s sprite.

P.S. 2^d. – I have so many things to say. – I want to show you Lord Sligo’s letter to me detailing, as he heard them on the spot, the Athenian account of our adventure (a personal one) which certainly first suggested to me the story of The Giaour. It was a strange and not a very long story, and his report of the reports (he arrived just after my departure, and I did not know till last summer that he knew anything of the matter) is not very far from the truth. Don’t be alarmed. There was nothing that led further than to the water’s edge; but one part (as is often the case in life) was more singular than any of the Giaour’s adventures. I never have, and never should have, alluded to it on my own authority, from respect to the ancient proverb on Travellers.

December 18th-31st 1813: Byron writes and fair-copies *The Corsair*.

Byron to Henry Drury, from London, December 18th 1813:

(Source: text from Wren Library R2 40^a, Trinity College Cambridge; BLJ III 202)

Dec^r. 18th. 1813

My dear Drury –

“But why Bitch M^r. Wild?”²⁴⁰ but why “Lord” M^r. Drury? – I wish when you write you would not call names – unless you think to use a pugilistic phrase that “the conceit has not been taken out of me.” – Take care that you don’t find a “false concord” in or about other brides – I use the word in a foreign sense as affianced not actually spliced – & refer of course to our friend H[odgson]. who talks about hope as if it meant despair. – Every day confirms my opinion on the superiority of a vicious life – – and if Virtue is not it’s own reward I don’t know

1:2

any other stipend annexed to it – but I fear H[odgson]’s impatience savours rather cardinally – curtail him of his meals – or of anything else that may cool his pulsations – look you – – I shall send the order or reserve it for Thursday next – – but it grieves me that I cannot dine with you tomorrow as I leave town (for a day only) – the order you may depend upon. – Burns’s nauseousness shall be kept for our next after=dinner – or for you & I on the eve of Hodgson’s happiness (as people call it delicately) that we may have both ethics & practics at the same time. – Pray make my respects acceptable to your friend M^r. Heber

1:3

who is a patron of mine for whom I have great reverence – remember me in one cup of “Canaries” and believe me ever my dear

Rev^d. M^r. Drury
ever yours
B

Leigh Hunt to Byron, from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, December 22nd 1813:

(Source: text from NLS, Acc.12604 / 4132)

[To the / Rt Hon. Lord Byron, / Bennet Street, Saint James’s.]

Surrey Jail –
Wednesday 22^d. Dec. 1813.

240: Fielding, *Jonathan Wild*, III 8.

My dear Lord,

As you are now fairly in my debt, you must learn what it is to become my creditor. M^f. Brougham takes his coffee with me tomorrow evening as early as seven; and I have the conscience, in spite of short notices & six o'clock dinners, to ask your Lordship to meet him. – At the same time, I must mention, that I am not so inexorable, but what, upon good & austere grounds, such as a previous engagement or an absence from town, I shall let you off. – From this request which I make, & what is more, from the tone of forgiveness which I assume <already>, you may judge how much you have incurred in accepting the friendship of, my dear Lord,

Your Lordship's affectionate servant,
Leigh Hunt.

[remaining three sides blank.]

Leigh Hunt to Byron, from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, December 23rd 1813:

(Source: text from NLS, Acc.12604 / 4132)

[The / Lord Byron / &c &c / Bennet Street / London]

Surrey Jail. 23^d. Dec. 1813.

My dear Lord,

I need not say I am sorry to lose your society this evening, & still more that I cannot bring two minds into collision, like your Lordship's and M^f. Broughams, which I am sure would enjoy each other; for Brougham, though he appears to the world as a politician only, is something still more, & has a fine taste & a hearty relish of poetry, or rather, I should say, he is a true politician, who has a taste for every thing that makes us social as well as free. – Since you acknowledge <this> however this debt of yours, I console myself with reflecting that the longer the payment is delayed, the interest is accumulating, & that when I fairly get you into prison, I shall not easily let you go.

Your Lordship's affectionate serv^t.
Leigh Hunt.

[remaining three sides blank.]

Byron to Leigh Hunt, December 22nd 1813:

(Source: text from V&A Forster, 48.G.22 ff. 3/1; LJ II 311-12; BLJ III 203)

[To – / Leigh Hunt Esq^{re} / Br^o.]

Dec^r. 22^d. 1813 –

My dear Sir /

I am indeed “in your debt –” and what is still worse am obliged to follow royal example (he has just apprized his Creditors that they must wait till y^e. meeting) and entreat your indulgence for I hope a very short time. – The nearest relation and almost y^e. only friend I possess – has been in London for a week & leaves it tomorrow with me for her own residence – I return immediately – but we meet so seldom – & are so minuted when

1:2

we meet at all – that I give up all engagements – till now – without reluctance – On my return I must see you to console myself for my past disappointments – I should feel highly honoured in M^f. Brougham permission to make his acquaintance – & there you are in my debt – for it is a promise of last summer which I still hope to see performed. – Yesterday I had a letter from Moore – you have probably heard from him lately – but if not – you will be glad to learn that he is the same in heart = head – & health.

Byron to R.C.Dallas, from London, December 28th 1813:

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Dallas, *Correspondence of Lord Byron, with a Friend*, Galignani 1825, III p.55; BLJ III 202-3)

DEC. 18TH, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

If you wish to do me the greatest favour possible, which I am soliciting for another, you will let Mr. Murray (who is in despair about it) have the publication of the S. F.²⁴¹ if not absolutely impracticable. By so doing you will return *good* for evil; and, in the true gospel spirit, «heap coals of fire upon his head»—pray do. I am sure he will now *deal* liberally by you, and I see him so anxious on this subject, that I quite feel for him, and *so* will you. You shall have it all your own way. I have really

241: *Correspondence* explains that “[The Lay of the] S[coth].F[iddle].” was an American burlesque of Scott’s *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. See LJM 62-3, where the nephew of R.C.Dallas is said to have brought it.

no other motive whatever than to assist Murray, and certainly *not* to injure you. This will not only be a *triumph* to yourself, but will set all right between you and him, and I hope be of eventual service to both. Pray pardon my importunity, and, if you can, comply with it.

Ever most truly yours,
BYRON.

P.S. – You can easily dispose of Cawthorn, if he has already arranged with you; don't be *embarrassed* about that. I will settle it, or ensure your doing so.

Frances Wedderburn Webster to Byron, from the Grampians, December 28th 1813:

(Source: text from NLS Acc.12604)

Written at the foot of the
Grampians – Dec^{br} 28th

At length the time is arrived for which I have unnecessarily watched, since the Day I left home – I am now for one hour free – for that little space I may pour out the weight of grief which swells my almost bursting heart before you – who is not changed – frightful idea! horrible – as I'm sure 'tis unjust! – yet what claim have I to your constancy? claim! only this – “That oath, Tho' sworn by one, has bound us both.”²⁴² Zuleika perhaps thy Fate may ere long be mine. – Dearest Byron – art thou my Selim? You know not the various torturing Thoughts which tear my Mind – but did I not tell you my temper – did I not confess my weakness to you before we parted – Great God! so many terrifying thoughts rush up on my Mind – I dare not continue least I should betray my folly – and yet I will write – for if you are changed – if – oh! if you are another's now – it matters little how I expose myself – still less what becomes of me – each other is alike indifferent to me – Would that I could see you – but for one Day – even one hour – I could – Alas! what? Methinks I hear you say – “Why Fanny wish to meet – is parting so sweet – that you wish for a pleasing repetition? – I cannot answer you – I feel more than I can express – – I am melancholy – and sullen – but did I not promise to forbear complaint – I did – They tell me I am to go to Edinbro' this Winter for some time. – gaiety has lost all charm for me – all places are alike indifferent to me but London – such are my constant answers – to my host of tormentors – – She – who who was an eye witness to all that passed at home – during that unfortunate – tho' unhappy time we were together – writes me long Lectures about my Conduct to him – <xxxxxx xx xxxxx> – little does she know – that I am dead to all but one – that I hate the whole sex – but one – to whom my every feeling is devoted – Byron – Will you not write to me once? Yet how shall I receive it – I know not how I shall ever be able to send this – for all Letters here – pass thro' the Hands of — — and M^r. and M^{rs}. W – therefore I can scarcely avoid the questions – and if they arise – I shall betray myself – for I am not quite dead to shame – – By a letter just now received from C. – I am informed you think of visiting Holland – Is it true? Dearest Byron – I must hear from you – Will you tell me if I still preserve a place in that heart – you once flattered me I solely possess – Oh! tell me if you will carry with you the remembrance of her – who cannot change – who is and ever must continue – how great so e'er the distance which separates us – constant to a spontaneous attachment – to an eternal affection – Your picture dearest Byron is my constant Companion – I gaze upon it – till every feature seems to speak. – it recalls to my Mind many – many Scenes – when we were together – when I was happy – in the looks of love – Will you tell me your real sentiments now towards me – I mean will you candidly say if you still continue to love me – will you openly declare if you suspect any body is the least acquainted with what has passed between us – or if you have breathed it to a Creature – my peace – happiness – all is lost – it wants but my Character to make my destruction perfect – Yet Byron remember whate'er may be my Fate – remember my last words are a repetition of my former Vows – dearest Byron – I am yours and only yours. – What do you do with my Letters? How did you send those to Miss R.? beware of Serv^{ts} – Save me if possible for the sake of my family – Tis then only I ask you to remember her whose first Sin originated in you – who you have deceived – But how dare I accuse – Have I not deserved it? Have I not brought it upon myself? I bow in silence – He leaves this on Thursday next. – He will see you – and I – miserable Being – shall remain in all the agony of fear – despair – and destruction. – Forgive me my Byron – and believe me – you have yet to learn the Character of the Woman, who is not dead to Virtue – and who (if not betrayed) will endeavour to atone for her follies

Adieu – you shall not hear – you shall not receive a line from me – You know what I wish and expect – I shall not repeat – I do not ask you to think of me even – but will it be any pleasure to you to be desired to send over my first Letter – & to be assured that I now feel all – & more than – in these expressed? Alas! I cannot help it – Remember all I have written, – & in pity consent to accord my

request – or grant me some tie – even your Word (which you have never yet done) that I am secure – I shall not incoach believe me – for I am humbled – I am not what I was – Once I was gay and innocent. Now – what am I? Oh! I will not say – But am I guilty? Oh! no – Farewell! Who has made me what I am? Who has rob'd me of health peace & Joy? He – who I now petition not to expose me to the ridicule of the World – and who forces me to say farewell! forever.

My Biron – farewell – & oh! remember me!

Byron to John Murray, from London, late 1813:

(Source: Harry Ransom Center, Texas, photocopy from microfilm; BLJ III 156)

[To – / J^{no}. Murray Esq^{re}. / 50 Albemarle Street]

The corrections Byron refers to here may be to *The Giaour*.

Dear Sir –

Pray attend to the corrections they are slight – but important – and remember the Bride.

yr[scrawl]

[scrawl signature]

JOURNAL, BEGUN NOVEMBER 14th, 1813.

(Source: Ms. not found; text from Moore's Life 435-75 and 498-514; LJ II 313-412; BLJ III 204-58)

If this had been begun ten years ago, and faithfully kept!!!—heigho! there are too many things I wish never to have remembered, as it is. Well,—I have had my share of what are called the pleasures of this life, and have seen more of the European and Asiatic world than I have made a good use of. They say “virtue is its own reward,”—it certainly should be paid well for its trouble. At five-and-twenty, when the better part of life is over, one should be *something*;—and what am I? nothing but five-and-twenty—and the odd months. What have I seen? the same man all over the world—ay, and woman too. Give *me* a Mussulman who never asks questions, and a she of the same race who saves one the trouble of putting them. But for this same plague—yellow fever—and Newstead delay,²⁴³ I should have been by this time a second time close to the Euxine.²⁴⁴ If I can overcome the last, I don't so much mind your pestilence; and, at any rate, the spring shall see me there,—provided I neither marry myself, nor unmarry any one else in the interval. I wish one was—I don't know what I wish. It is odd I never set myself seriously to wishing without attaining it—and repenting. I begin to believe with the good old Magi, that one should only pray for the nation, and not for the individual;—but, on my principle, this would not be very patriotic.

No more reflections.—Let me see—last night I finished “Zuleika,”²⁴⁵ my second Turkish Tale. I believe the composition of it kept me alive—for it was written to drive my thoughts from the recollection of —

“Dear sacred name, rest ever unreveal'd.”²⁴⁶

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

quæque ipse . . . vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui.²⁴⁷

To-day Henry Byron²⁴⁸ called on me with my little cousin Eliza. She will grow up a beauty and a plague; but, in the mean time, it is the prettiest child! dark eyes and eyelashes, black and long as the wing of a raven. I think she is prettier even than my niece, Georgina,²⁴⁹—yet I don't like to think so neither; and though older, she is not so clever.

243: Bubonic plague in the Eastern Mediterranean (see BLJ III 176), plus a stalemate over the sale of Newstead Abbey, had frustrated B.'s plans to travel abroad again, perhaps with Augusta.

244: The Black Sea. Compare *Don Juan*, V 5 7-8.

245: *The Bride of Abydos*.

246: Pope, *Eloisa to Abelard*, 1.9. Refers to Augusta. The protagonists of *TBoA* were at first to be brother and sister; see BLJ III 199.

247: Virgil, *Aeneid*, II 5-6: *I myself saw all this in its horror, and took a great part in it*. Aeneas speaks.

248: The Rev. Henry Byron was B.'s father's first cousin. His daughter Eliza was seven.

249: Augusta's eldest child.

Dallas²⁵⁰ called before I was up, so we did not meet. Lewis,²⁵¹ too,—who seems out of humour with every thing. What can be the matter? he is not married—has he lost his own mistress, or any other person's wife? Hodgson,²⁵² too, came. He is going to be married, and he is the kind of man who will be the happier. He has talent, cheerfulness, every thing that can make him a pleasing companion; and his intended is handsome and young, and all that. But I never see any one much improved by matrimony. All my coupled contemporaries are bald and discontented. W[ordsworth]. and S[outhey]. have both lost their hair and good humour; and the last of the two had a good deal to lose. But it don't much signify what falls off a man's temples in that state.

Mem. I must get a toy to-morrow for Eliza, and send the device for the seals of myself and * * * * *²⁵³ Mem. too, to call on the Staël and Lady Holland to-morrow, and on * * *,²⁵⁴ who has advised me (without seeing it, by the by) not to publish “Zuleika;” I believe he is right, but experience might have taught him that not to print is *physically* impossible. No one has seen it but Hodgson and Mr. Gifford. I never in my life *read* a composition, save to Hodgson, as he pays me in kind. It is a horrible thing to do too frequently;—better print, and they who like may read, and if they don't like, you have the satisfaction of knowing that they have, at least, *purchased* the right of saying so.

I have declined presenting the Debtors' Petition,²⁵⁵ being sick of parliamentary mummeries. I have spoken thrice; but I doubt my ever becoming an orator. My first was liked; the second and third—I don't know whether they succeeded or not. I have never yet set to it *con amore*;—one must have some excuse to one's self for laziness, or inability, or both, and this is mine. “Company, villainous company, hath been the spoil of me;”²⁵⁶—and then, I “have drunk medicines,”²⁵⁷ not to make me love others, but certainly enough to hate myself.

Two nights ago I saw the tigers sup at Exeter 'Change. Except Veli Pacha's lion in the Morea,²⁵⁸—who followed the Arab keeper like a dog,—the fondness of the hyæna for her keeper amused me most. Such a conversazione!—There was a “hippopotamus,” like Lord Liverpool²⁵⁹ in the face; and the “Ursine Sloth” had the very voice and manner of my valet—but the tiger talked too much. The elephant took and gave me my money again—took off my hat—opened a door—*trunked* a whip—and behaved so well, that I wish he was my butler. The handsomest animal on earth is one of the panthers; but the poor antelopes were dead. I should hate to see one *here*:—the sight of the *camel* made me pine again for Asia Minor. “Oh quando te aspiciam?”²⁶⁰

* * * * *

[November 15th missing.]

Nov. 16th.

Went last night with Lewis to see the first of *Antony and Cleopatra*. It was admirably got up and well acted—a salad of Shakspeare and Dryden. Cleopatra strikes me as the epitome of her sex—fond, lively, sad, tender, teasing, humble, haughty, beautiful, the devil!—coquettish to the last, as well with the “asp” as with Antony. After doing all she can to persuade him that—but why do they abuse him for cutting off that poltroon Cicero's head? Did not Tully tell Brutus it was a pity to have spared Antony? and did he not speak the Philippics? and are not “*words things*?”²⁶¹ and such “*words*” very pestilent “*things*” too? If he had had a hundred heads, they deserved (from Antony) a rostrum (his was stuck up there) apiece—though, after all, he might as well have pardoned him, for the credit of the thing. But to resume—Cleopatra, after securing him, says, “yet go—it is your interest,” &c.—how like the sex! and the questions about Octavia—it is woman all over.

250: R.C.Dallas, another cousin of B., to whom he gave the copyrights of *CHP* I and II and *The Corsair*.

251: Matthew Gregory Lewis, author of *The Monk*.

252: The Rev. Francis Hodgson, one of B.'s old friends from Trinity. He punctuated the manuscript of *TBoA* (BLJ III 166) and preferred it to *The Giaour*.

253: Marchand guesses “Augusta”.

254: Could be one of several people who had, from rumour, disliked *TBoA* in its early version.

255: See BLJ III 134-5 for B.'s letter to the debtor W.J.Baldwin. Lord Holland presented the petition.

256: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV* I, III iii, 9-10.

257: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV* I, II ii 22.

258: Veli Pacha was the son of Ali Pacha. His HQ was at Tripolitza, where it seems he had a zoo.

259: The Tory Prime Minister for most of B.'s adult life.

260: Hor. Sat. II, vi 60: “Oh, when shall I see you again?”

261: *Words are things*: a Shakespearean-sounding phrase which is, however, a quotation from the Comte de Mirabeau, revolutionary writer, demagogue, debauchee, grocer, and *illuminatus*. B. was fond of the assertion: see BLJ IV 74 (where he attributes it to Mirabeau), *CHP* III Stanza 114 (line 1061), *Don Juan* III 88, 1, *PoD* II 2, and *MF* V i 288.

To-day received Lord Jersey's invitation to Middleton²⁶²—to travel sixty miles to meet Madame * *²⁶³ I once travelled three thousand to get among silent people; and this same lady writes octavos and *talks folios*. I have read her books—like most of them, and delight in the last,²⁶⁴ so I won't hear it, as well as read. * * * * *

Read Burns to-day.²⁶⁵ What would he have been, if a patrician? We should have had more polish—less force—just as much verse, but no immortality—a divorce and a duel or two, the which had he survived, as his potatoes must have been less spirituous, he might have lived as long as Sheridan, and outlived as much as poor Brinsley. What a wreck is that man! and all from bad pilotage; for no one had ever better gales, though now and then a little too squally. Poor dear Sherry! I shall never forget the day he and Rogers and Moore and I passed together; when he talked, and *we* listened, without one yawn, from six till one in the morning.

Got my seals * * * * *. Have again forgot a plaything for *ma petite cousine* Eliza; but I must send for it to-morrow. I hope Harry will bring her to me. I sent Lord Holland the proofs of the last "Giaour," and the "Bride of Abydos". He won't like the latter, and I don't think that I shall long. It was written in four nights to distract my dreams from * * *²⁶⁶ Were it not thus, it had never been composed; and had I not done something at that time, I must have gone mad, by eating my own heart,—bitter diet!—Hodgson likes it better than the *Giaour*, but nobody else will,—and he never liked the Fragment.²⁶⁷ I am sure, had it not been for Murray, *that* would never have been published, though the circumstances which are the ground-work make it * * * heigh-ho!

To-night I saw both the sisters of * * *²⁶⁸ my God! the youngest so like! I thought I should have sprung across the house, and am so glad no one was with me in Lady H[olland]. 's box. I hate those likenesses—the mock-bird, but not the nightingale—so like as to remind, so different as to be painful.²⁶⁹ One quarrels equally with the points of resemblance and of distinction.

Nov. 17th.

No letter from * * *²⁷⁰ but I must not complain. The respectable Job says, "Why should a *living man* complain?"²⁷¹ I really don't know, except it be that a *dead man* can't; and he, the said patriarch, *did* complain, nevertheless, till his friends were tired and his wife recommended that pious prologue, "Curse—and die;"²⁷² the only time, I suppose, when but little relief is to be found in swearing. I have had a most kind letter from Lord Holland on "The Bride of Abydos", which he likes, and so does Lady H[olland]. This is very good-natured in both, from whom I don't deserve any quarter. Yet I *did* think, at the time, that my cause of enmity proceeded from Holland-house, and am glad I was wrong, and wish I had not been in such a hurry with that confounded satire,²⁷³ of which I would suppress even the memory;—but people, now they can't get it, make a fuss, I verily believe, out of contradiction.

George Ellis²⁷⁴ and Murray have been talking something about Scott and me, George pro Scoto,—and very right too. If they want to depose him, I only wish they would not set me up as a competitor. Even if I had my choice, I would rather be the Earl of Warwick than all the *kings* he ever made! Jeffrey and Gifford I take to be the monarch-makers in poetry and prose. The *British Critic*, in their Rokeby Review, have presupposed a comparison, which I am sure my friends never thought of, and W. Scott's subjects are injudicious in descending to. I like the man—and admire his works—to what Mr. Braham²⁷⁵ calls *Entusymusy*. All such stuff can only vex him, and do me no good. Many hate his politics—(I hate all politics); and, here, a man's politics are like the Greek *soul*—an *ειδωλον*,²⁷⁶ besides God knows what *other soul*; but their estimate of the two generally go together.

Harry has not brought *ma petite cousine*. I want us to go to the play together;—she has been but once. Another short note from Jersey, inviting Rogers and me on the 23d. I must see my agent to-

262: The Jerseys' country seat at Middleton Park, near Leeds.

263: Madame de Staël.

264: *de l'Allemagne*, published in 1813 by Mu..

265: Compare B. to Hodgson, BLJ Supp. 31, and to Henry Drury, BLJ III 202.

266: Almost certainly "Augusta".

267: "the Fragment" is *The Giaour*.

268: Marchand guesses "Frances Wedderburn Webster".

269: Mo. quotes *The Giaour*, 1184-7: *Earth holds no other like to thee, / Or, if it doth, in vain for me – / For worlds I dare not view the dame / Resembling thee, yet not the same.*

270: Marchand again guesses "Frances Wedderburn Webster".

271: Biblical. In fact, Jeremiah, at *Lamentations* 3, 39: *Wherefore doth a living man complain?*

272: Biblical. This, on the other hand, is from *Job*: see 2, 9.

273: *EBSR*. See lines 519, 521, 540 and so on.

274: George Ellis had written for the *Anti-Jacobin* and now reviewed for the *Quarterly*.

275: John Braham, famous tenor. Colleague of Isaac Nathan.

276: "an image", or "a vision".

night.²⁷⁷ I wonder when that Newstead business will be finished. It cost me more than words to part with it—and to *have* parted with it! What matters it what I do? or what becomes of me?—but let me remember Job’s saying, and console myself with being “a living man.”²⁷⁸

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

Not a word from * *.²⁷⁹ Have they set out from * *?²⁸⁰ or has my last precious epistle fallen into the Lion’s jaws? If so—and this silence looks suspicious—I must clap on my “musty morion”²⁸¹ and “hold out my iron.”²⁸² I am out of practice—but I won’t begin again at Manton’s²⁸³ now. Besides, I would not return his shot. I was once a famous wafer-splitter; but then the bullies of society made it necessary. Ever since I began to feel that I had a bad cause to support, I have left off the exercise.

What strange tidings from that Anakim²⁸⁴ of anarchy—Buonaparte!²⁸⁵ Ever since I defended my bust of him at Harrow against the rascally time-servers, when the war broke out in 1803, he has been a “Heros de Roman” of mine—on the continent; I don’t want him here. But I don’t like those same flights,—leaving of armies, &c. &c. I am sure when I fought for his bust at school, I did not think he would run away from himself. But I should not wonder if he banged them yet. To be beat by men would be something; but by three stupid, legitimate-old-dynasty boobies of regular-bred sovereigns—O-hone-a-rie!—O-hone-a-rie!²⁸⁶ It must be, as Cobbett says, his marriage with the thick-lipped and thick-headed *Autrichienne* brood.²⁸⁷ He had better have kept to her who was kept by Barras.²⁸⁸ I never knew any good come of your young wife, and legal espousals, to any but your “sober-blooded boy” who “eats fish” and drinketh “no sack.”²⁸⁹ Had he not the whole opera? all Paris? all France? But a mistress is just as perplexing—that is, *one*—two or more are manageable by division.

I have begun, or had begun, a song, and flung it into the fire. It was in remembrance of Mary Duff,²⁹⁰ my first of flames, before most people begin to burn. I wonder what the devil is the matter with me! I can do nothing, and—fortunately there is nothing to do. It has lately been in my power to make two persons (and their connexions) comfortable,²⁹¹ *pro tempore*, and one happy, *ex tempore*,—I rejoice in the last particularly, as it is an excellent man.²⁹² I wish there had been more inconvenience and less gratification to my self-love in it, for then there had been more merit. We are all selfish—and I believe, ye gods of Epicurus! I believe in Rochefoucault about *men*,²⁹³ and in Lucretius (not Busby’s translation)²⁹⁴ about yourselves. Your bard has made you very *nonchalant* and blest; but as he has excused us from damnation, I don’t envy you your blessedness *much*—a little, to be sure. I remember, last year, * * *²⁹⁵ said to me, at * * *²⁹⁶ “Have we not passed our last month like the gods of Lucretius?” And so we had. She is an adept in the text of the original (which I like too); and when that booby Bus[by]. sent his translating prospectus, she subscribed. But, the devil prompting him to add a specimen, she transmitted him a subsequent answer, saying, that “after perusing it, her conscience would not permit her to allow her name to remain on the list of sub-scribblers.” * * * * *

Last night, at Lord H[olland].’s—Mackintosh,²⁹⁷ the Ossulstones,²⁹⁸ Puységur,²⁹⁹ &c. there—I was trying to recollect a quotation (as *I* think) of Staël’s, from some Teutonic sophist about architecture.

277: B.’s “agent” is Hanson, the solicitor.

278: Biblical. Again B. confuses Job with Jeremiah. See *Lamentations* 3, 39.

279: Probably Frances Wedderburn Webster.

280: Aston Hall, the estate the Websters had leased in Yorkshire.

281: A morion is a helmet; reference unidentified.

282: Shakespeare, *Henry V*, II i, 8-9. Corporal Nym speaks.

283: Joe Manton was a top London gunsmith who ran a shooting-gallery.

284: “Giant” (should be *Anak*, the singular). See *Numbers* 13, 22, *Deuteronomy* 9, 2, and so on.

285: Napoleon had been defeated at Leipzig (October 16th-18th), and was now retreating towards Paris.

286: Marchand identifies “an expression of lament” from Scott’s ballad *Glenfinlas* – see first and last verses.

287: Refers to Napoleon’s marriage with Maria Louisa, daughter of the Austrian Emperor.

288: Refers to Josephine, who had been the mistress of the revolutionary Paul Jean Barras.

289: Shakespeare, *Henry IV* II, IV iii, final speech.

290: Mary Duff was B.’s Scots cousin, and his first love.

291: Refers to Augusta and her husband, and Francis Hodgson, to both of whom B. had given money.

292: Refers to Hodgson.

293: Rochefoucault wrote that all men were at heart self-interested.

294: Lucretius had been translated (as *The Nature of Things*) by Thomas Busby in 1813.

295: Lady Oxford, who had been B.’s lover in 1812 and 1813.

296: Eywood, the Oxfords’ country house.

297: Sir James Mackintosh, Whig MP and philosopher.

298: The Ossulton[s] were the Earl of Tankerville and his French wife, daughter of the duc de Gramont.

“Architecture,” says this Macoronico Tedesco, “reminds me of frozen music.”³⁰⁰ It is somewhere—but where?—the demon of perplexity must know and won’t tell. I asked M[ackintosh], and he said it was not in her: but P——r said it must be *hers*, it was so *like*. * * * * *

H[olland]. laughed, as he does at all “De l’Allemagne”,—in which, however, I think he goes a little too far. B.,³⁰¹ I hear, contemns it too. But there are fine passages;—and, after all, what is a work—any—or every work—but a desert with fountains, and, perhaps, a grove or two, every day’s journey? To be sure, in Madame, what we often mistake, and “pant for,” as the “cooling stream,”³⁰² turns out to be the “*mirage*” (criticé, *verbiage*); but we do, at last, get to something like the temple of Jove Ammon, and then the waste we have passed is only remembered to gladden the contrast.

* * * * *

Called on C * *, to explain * * *.³⁰³ She is very beautiful, to my taste, at least; for on coming home from abroad, I recollect being unable to look at any woman but her—they were so fair, and unmeaning, and *blonde*. The darkness and regularity of her features reminded me of my “Jannat al Aden.”³⁰⁴ But this impression wore off; and now I can look at a fair woman, without longing for a Houri. She was very good-tempered, and every thing was explained.

To-day, great news—“the Dutch have taken Holland,”³⁰⁵—which, I suppose, will be succeeded by the actual explosion of the Thames. Five provinces have declared for young Stadt,³⁰⁶ and there will be inundation, conflagration, constupration, consternation, and every sort of nation and nations, fighting away, up to their knees, in the damnable quags of this will-o’-the-wisp abode of Boors.³⁰⁷ It is said Bernadotte³⁰⁸ is amongst them, too; and, as Orange will be there soon, they will have (Crown) Prince Stork and King Log in their Loggery at the same time. Two to one on the new dynasty!³⁰⁹

Mr. Murray has offered me one thousand guineas for the “*Giaour*” and the “*Bride of Abydos*”. I won’t—it is too much, though I am strongly tempted, merely for the *say* of it.³¹⁰ No bad price for a fortnight’s (a week each) what?—the gods know—it was intended to be called Poetry.

I have dined regularly to-day, for the first time since Sunday last—this being Sabbath, too: All the rest, tea and dry biscuits—six *per diem*. I wish to God I had not dined now!—It kills me with heaviness, stupor, and horrible dreams;—and yet it was but a pint of bucellas,³¹¹ and fish.³¹² Meat I never touch,—nor much vegetable diet. I wish I were in the country, to take exercise,—instead of being obliged to *cool* by abstinence, in lieu of it. I should not so much mind a little accession of flesh,—my bones can well bear it. But the worst is, the devil always came with it,—till I starved him out,—and I will *not* be the slave of *any* appetite. If I do err, it shall be my heart, at least, that heralds the way. Oh, my head—how it aches!—the horrors of digestion! I wonder how Buonaparte’s dinner agrees with him?³¹³

Mem. I must write to-morrow to “Master Shallow, who owes me a thousand pounds,”³¹⁴ and seems, in his letter, afraid I should ask him for it,³¹⁵—as if I would!—I don’t want it (just now, at least,) to begin with; and though I have often wanted that sum, I never asked for the repayment of £10 in my life—from a friend. His bond is not due this year, and I told him when it was, I should not enforce it. How often must he make me say the same thing?

299: The Marquis de Puységur, specialist in “magnetic” cures for hypertension.

300: “Erstarrte Musik” is a phrase used by Friedrich von Schlegel to describe architecture (not by Goethe, as both Prothero and Marchand write).

301: “B.” unidentified.

302: Biblical. See Psalm 42: “As the hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my soul for thee, O God!”

303: Both unidentified.

304: Reference untraced.

305: Refers to the dethronement of Louis Bonaparte, Napoleon’s brother, puppet King of Holland.

306: The Hereditary Prince of Orange.

307: B. had never been to Holland.

308: The Crown Prince of Sweden was not in Holland at this time.

309: Compare B. to Lady Melbourne, BLJ III 172.

310: Mu. finally paid B. a thousand guineas for *The Giaour* and *TBoA* on October 25th 1815.

311: Portuguese white wine.

312: Moore’s note: “He had this year so far departed from his strict plan of diet as to eat fish occasionally”.

313: B. turns this joke against Louis XVIII at *AoB*, 502-11.

314: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV* II, V v, 74. B. refers to Wedderburn Webster.

315: Moore’s note: “We have here another instance, in addition to the munificent aid afforded to Mr. Hodgson, of the generous readiness of the poet, notwithstanding his own limited means, to make the resources he possessed available for the assistance of his friends”.

I am wrong—I did once ask ³¹⁶ to repay me. But it was under circumstances that excused me *to him*, and would to any one. I took no interest, nor required security. He paid me soon,—at least, his *padre*.³¹⁷ My head! I believe it was given me to ache with. Good even.

[November 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st missing.]

Nov. 22d, 1813.

“Orange Boven!”³¹⁸ So the bees have expelled the bear that broke open their hive. Well,—if we are to have new De Witts and De Ruyters,³¹⁹ God speed the little republic! I should like to see the Hague and the village of Brock,³²⁰ where they have such primitive habits. Yet, I don’t know,—their canals would cut a poor figure by the memory of the Bosphorus; and the Zuyder Zee look awkwardly after “Ak-Degnity.”³²¹ No matter,—the bluff burghers, puffing freedom out of their short tobacco-pipes, might be worth seeing; though I prefer a cigar or a hooka, with the rose-leaf mixed with the milder herb of the Levant. I don’t know what liberty means,—never having seen it,—but wealth is power all over the world; and as a shilling performs the duty of a pound (besides sun and sky and beauty for nothing) in the East,—*That* is the country. How I envy Herodes Atticus!—more than Pomponius.³²² And yet a little *tumult*, now and then, is an agreeable quickener of sensation;—such as a revolution, a battle, or an *aventure* of any lively description. I think I rather would have been Bonneval, Ripperda, Alberoni, Hayreddin, or Horuc Barbarossa, or even Wortley Montague,³²³ than Mahomet himself.

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

* * * * *

I remember the effect of the *first* Edinburgh Review on me.³²⁴ I heard of it six weeks before,—read it the day of its denunciation,—dined and drank three bottles of claret, (with S. B. Davies, I think,—neither ate nor slept the less, but, nevertheless, was not easy till I had vented my wrath and my rhyme, in the same pages, against every thing and every body. Like George, in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, “the fate of my paradoxes”³²⁵ would allow me to perceive no merit in another. I remembered only the maxim of my boxing-master,³²⁶ which, in my youth, was found useful in all general riots,—“Whoever is not for you is against you—*mill* away right and left,” and so I did;—like Ishmael, my hand was against all men, and all men’s anent me. I did wonder, to be sure, at my own success—

And marvels so much wit is all his own,

as Hobhouse sarcastically says³²⁷ of somebody (not unlikely myself, as we are old friends);—but were it to come over again, I would *not*. I have since redde³²⁸ the cause of my couplets, and it is not adequate to the effect. C * ³²⁹ told me that it was believed I alluded to poor Lord Carlisle’s nervous disorder in one of the lines. I thank Heaven I did not know it—and would not, could not, if I had. I must naturally be the last person to be pointed on defects or maladies.

Rogers is silent,—and, it is said, severe. When he does talk, he talks well; and, on all subjects of taste, his delicacy of expression is pure as his poetry. If you enter his house—his drawing-room—his library—you of yourself say, this is not the dwelling of a common mind. There is not a gem, a coin, a book thrown aside on his chimney-piece, his sofa, his table, that does not bespeak an almost fastidious

316: Mo. says this is a gap in the original. The name omitted may be “Hobhouse”.

317: Sir Benjamin Hobhouse.

318: *Orange Boven* was the title of a play announced for Drury Lane on December 8th; but it was not performed because no license had been obtained for it.

319: Seventeenth-century Dutch republican leaders.

320: In fact, “Broek”. H. is to visit it on January 26th 1814.

321: Ak-Denkiz (“White Sea”) is the Turkish name for the Mediterranean (BLJ XI 224).

322: Herodes Atticus was a wealthy Greek; Pomponius a wealthy Roman.

323: French, Dutch, Italian, Algerian, and British soldiers of fortune and adventurers.

324: The first *Edinburgh Review* came out in October 1802. B. was fourteen then, so he must be mistaken. He had not yet met Davies in 1802. He probably means the issue in which *ESBR* was attacked, which was February 1808.

325: Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, 12: “the learned world said nothing to my paradoxes; nothing at all, Sir”.

326: Gentleman John Jackson.

327: H., *From Boileau*, in *Imitations and Translations*. In fact, *A wonder so much wit was all his own*.

328: Moore’s note: “It was thus that he, in general, spelled this word”.

329: Probably Campbell.

elegance in the possessor. But this very delicacy must be the misery of his existence. Oh the jarrings his disposition must have encountered through life!

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

* *³³⁰ is a *Littérateur*, the Oracle of the Coteries, of the * * s, L*W* (Sydney Smith's "Tory Virgin,"³³¹ Mrs. Wilmot (she, at least, is a swan, and might frequent a purer stream), Lady B * *,³³² and all the Blues, with Lady C * *³³³ at their head—but I say nothing of *her*—"look in her face and you forget them all,"³³⁴ and every thing else. Oh that face!—by "te, Diva potens Cypri,"³³⁵ I would, to be beloved of that woman, build and burn another Troy.

M * * e³³⁶ has a peculiarity of talent, or rather talents,—poetry, music, voice, all his own; and an expression in each, which never was, nor will be, possessed by another. But he is capable of still higher flights in poetry. By the by, what humour, what—every thing, in the "Post-Bag!"³³⁷ There is nothing M * * e may not do, if he will but seriously set about it. In society, he is gentlemanly, gentle, and, altogether more pleasing than any individual with whom I am acquainted. For his honour, principle, and independence, his conduct to * * * * speaks "trumpet-tongued."³³⁸ He has but one fault—and that one I daily regret—he is not *here*.

Nov. 23d.

Ward—I like Ward.³³⁹ By Mahomet! I begin to think I like every body:—a disposition, not to be encouraged;—a sort of social gluttony that swallows every thing set before it. But I like Ward. He is *piquant*; and, in my opinion, will stand *very* high in the House and every where else,—if he applies *regularly*. By the by,³⁴⁰ I dine with him to-morrow, which may have some influence on my opinion. It is as well not to trust one's gratitude *after* dinner. I have heard many a host libelled by his guests, with his burgundy yet reeking on their rascally lips.

* * * * *

I have taken Lord Salisbury's³⁴¹ box at Covent Garden for the season; and now I must go and prepare to join Lady Holland and party, in theirs, at Drury Lane, *questa sera*.

Holland doesn't think the man is *Junius*;³⁴² but that the yet unpublished journal throws great light on the obscurities of that part of George the Second's reign.—What is this to George the Third's? I don't know what to think. Why should Junius be yet dead? If suddenly apoplexed, would he rest in his grave without sending his *ειδωλον* to shout in the ears of posterity, "Junius was X. Y. Z., Esq., buried in the parish of * * *. Repair his monument, ye churchwardens! Print a new Edition of his Letters, ye booksellers!" Impossible,—the man must be alive, and will never die without the disclosure. I like him;—he was a good hater.

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

Tuesday morning.

330: The poet William Sotheby. Compare *Beppo*, stanzas 72-77.

331: Lydia White, Irish bluestocking; "Miss Diddle" in *The Blues*. At a dinner-party given by her, Sydney Smith suggested the sacrifice of "A Tory Virgin" to improve the Whigs' chances.

332: Lady Beaumont, whose husband was co-founder of the National Gallery. She wrote tragedies.

333: Lady Charlemont, another Irish intellectual.

334: Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, II 18.

335: Hor. Od. I iii i: "May the goddess who rules over Cyprus ..."

336: Mo., the Journal's editor, modestly asterisks his own name out.

337: Mo.'s *Twopenny Post-Bag* was a satire published in 1813.

338: *Macbeth*, I vii 19. Jeffery Vail suggests that B. means Lord Moira, from whom Mo. had refused to accept favours for fear of compromising himself as a critic of the government.

339: J.W. Ward, Later Lord Dudley. B. had planned a trip to Holland with him. See BLJ III 180 and 184.

340: But B. always wrote "by the bye". See BLJ III 168.

341: James Cecil, seventh Earl and first Marquis of Salisbury. A Tory. See BLJ III 171.

342: Junius was the anonymous eighteenth-century pamphleteer whom B. used as an alter ego in *TVoJ*. He wrote against George III. He is thought to have been Sir Philip Francis.

I awoke from a dream!—well! and have not others dreamed?—Such a dream!—but she did not overtake me. I wish the dead would rest, however.³⁴³ Ugh! how my blood chilled,—and I could not wake—and—and—heigho!

Shadows to-night

Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard,
Than could the substance of ten thousand * *s,
Arm'd all in proof, and led by shallow * *.³⁴⁴

I do not like this dream,—I hate its “foregone conclusion.”³⁴⁵ And am I to be shaken by shadows? Ay, when they remind us of—no matter—but, if I dream thus again, I will try whether *all* sleep has the like visions. Since I rose, I've been in considerable bodily pain also; but it is gone, and now, like Lord Ogleby, I am wound up for the day.³⁴⁶

A note from Mountnorris³⁴⁷—I dine with Ward;—Canning is to be there, Frere and Sharpe, perhaps Gifford.³⁴⁸ I am to be one of “the five” (or rather six), as Lady * * *³⁴⁹ said a little sneeringly yesterday. They are all good to meet, particularly Canning, and Ward, when he likes. I wish I may be well enough to listen to these intellectuals.

No letters to-day;—so much the better,—there are no answers. I must not dream again;—it spoils even reality. I will go out of doors, and see what the fog will do for me. Jackson has been here: the boxing world much as usual;—but the club increases. I shall dine at Crib[b]'s³⁵⁰ to-morrow. I like energy—even animal energy—of all kinds; and I have need of both mental and corporeal. I have not dined out, nor, indeed *at all*, lately: have heard no music—have seen nobody. Now for a *plunge*—high life and low life. *Amant alterna Camænæ!*³⁵¹

I have burnt my *Roman*—as I did the first scenes and sketch of my comedy³⁵²—and, for aught I see, the pleasure of burning is quite as great as that of printing. These two last would not have done. I ran into *realities* more than ever; and some would have been recognised and others guessed at.

Redde the Ruminator—a collection of Essays, by a strange, but able, old man (Sir E[ger]ton. B[ridges].),³⁵³ and a half-wild young one,³⁵⁴ author of a poem on the Highlands, called “Childe Alarique”. The word “sensibility” (always my aversion) occurs a thousand times in these Essays; and, it seems, is to be an excuse for all kinds of discontent. This young man can know nothing of life; and, if he cherishes the disposition which runs through his papers, will become useless, and, perhaps, not even a poet, after all, which he seems determined to be. God help him! no one should be a rhymer who could be any thing better. And this is what annoys one, to see Scott and Moore, and Campbell and Rogers, who might have all been agents and leaders, now mere spectators. For, though they may have other ostensible avocations, these last are reduced to a secondary consideration. * * *³⁵⁵ too, frittering away his time among dowagers and unmarried girls. If it advanced any *serious* affair, it were some excuse; but, with the unmarried, that is a hazardous speculation, and tiresome enough, too; and, with the veterans, it is not much worth trying, unless, perhaps, one in a thousand.

If I had any views in this country, they would probably be parliamentary. But I have no ambition; at least, if any, it would be “aut Cæsar aut nihil”.³⁵⁶ My hopes are limited to the arrangement of my affairs, and settling either in Italy or the East (rather the last), and drinking deep of the languages and literature of both. Past events have unnerved me; and all I can now do is to make life an amusement, and look on, while others play. After all,—even the highest game of crowns and sceptres, what is it? *Vide* Napoleon's last twelvemonth. It has completely upset my system of fatalism. I thought, if crushed, he would have fallen, when “fractus illabatur orbis,”³⁵⁷ and not have been pared away to

343: B. seems to have dreamed that his mother came back to life. Compare *Sardanapalus*, IV i, 148-65.

344: Shakespeare, *Richard III*, V iii 216-19, where the missing words are “soldiers” and “Richmond”.

345: Echoes Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II iii 6: “A false conclusion – I hate it as an unfilled can”.

346: Colman and Garrick, *The Clandestine Marriage*: “... he must have a great deal of brushing, oyling, screwing, and winding up, to set him a-going for the day”.

347: The Earl of Mountnorris was the father of Frances Wedderburn Webster. See BLJ Supp. 28.

348: George Canning; John Hookham Frere; Richard “Conversation” Sharpe; and William Gifford.

349: Unidentified.

350: Tom Cribb was sometime heavyweight champion of England.

351: Virgil, *Eclogues*, III 59: “Singing by turns the Muses' love”. See also BLJ III 17.

352: “Roman” – “novel”. No trace of either work remains.

353: *The Ruminator* was published in 1813. Brydges wrote an early life of B.

354: Unidentified.

355: Perhaps Sotheby.

356: “Either Emperor, or nothing”.

357: Hor. *Od.* III iii 7: “Were the vault of heaven to break and fall upon him”.

gradual insignificance; that all this was not a mere *jeu* of the gods, but a prelude to greater changes and mightier events. But Men never advance beyond a certain point;—and here we are, retrograding, to the dull, stupid old system,—balance of Europe—poising straws upon kings' noses, instead of wringing them off! Give me a republic, or a despotism of one, rather than the mixed government of one, two, three. A republic!—look in the history of the Earth—Rome, Greece, Venice, France, Holland, America, our short (eheu!) Commonwealth, and compare it with what they did under masters. The Asiatics are not qualified to be republicans, but they have the liberty of demolishing despots,—which is the next thing to it. To be the first man—not the Dictator—not the Sylla, but the Washington or the Aristides—the leader in talent and truth—is next to the Divinity! Franklin, Penn, and, next to these, either Brutus or Cassius—even Mirabeau—or St. Just. I shall never be any thing, or rather always be nothing. The most I can hope is, that some will say, “He might, perhaps, if he would.”³⁵⁸

12, midnight.

Here are two confounded proofs from the printer.³⁵⁹ I have looked at the one, but for the soul of me, I can't look over that “Giaour” again,—at least, just now, and at this hour—and yet there is no moon.

Ward talks of going to Holland, and we have partly discussed an *ensemble* expedition. It must be in ten days, if at all,—if we wish to be in at the Revolution. And why not? * * is distant, and will be at *³⁶⁰, still more distant, till spring. No one else, except Augusta, cares for me; no ties—no trammels—*andiamo dunque—se torniamo, bene—se non, ch' importa?*³⁶¹ Old William of Orange talked of dying in “the last ditch” of his dingy country. It is lucky I can swim, or I suppose I should not well weather the first. But let us see. I have heard hyænas and jackalls in the ruins of Asia; and bull-frogs in the marshes;³⁶² besides wolves and angry Mussulmans. Now, I should like to listen to the shout of a free Dutchman.

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

Wednesday, 24th.

No dreams last night of the dead, nor the living; so—I am “firm as the marble, founded as the rock,”³⁶³ till the next earthquake.

Ward's dinner went off well. There was not a disagreeable person there—unless *I* offended any body, which I am sure I could not by contradiction, for I said little, and opposed nothing. Sharpe (a man of elegant mind, and who has lived much with the best—Fox, Horne Tooke, Windham,³⁶⁴ Fitzpatrick,³⁶⁵ and all the agitators of other times and tongues,) told us the particulars of his last interview with Windham, a few days before the fatal operation which sent “that gallant spirit to aspire the skies.”³⁶⁶ Windham,—the first in one department of oratory and talent, whose only fault was his refinement beyond the intellect of half his hearers,—Windham, half his life an active participant in the events of the earth, and one of those who governed nations,—*he* regretted,—and dwelt much on that regret, that “he had not entirely devoted himself to literature and science!!!” His mind certainly would have carried him to eminence there, as elsewhere;—but I cannot comprehend what debility of that mind could suggest such a wish. I, who have heard him, cannot regret any thing but that I shall never hear him again. What! would he have been a plodder? a metaphysician?—perhaps a rhymer? a scribbler? Such an exchange must have been suggested by illness. But he is gone and Time “shall not look upon his like again.”³⁶⁷

I am tremendously in arrear with my letters,—except to * *,³⁶⁸ and to her my thoughts overpower me:—my words never compass them. To Lady Melbourne I write with most pleasure—her answers, so sensible, so *tactique*—I never met with half her talent. If she had been a few years younger, what a fool she would have made of me, had she thought it worth her while,—and I should have lost a valuable

358: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I v 176.

359: The proofs of *TBoA* (published December 2nd 1813) and of *The Giaour*, seventh edition (published December 1813).

360: *Perhaps* a reference to H., who is on the continent, and will be until February. B. has not had a letter from H. since June 4th 1813, and cannot know where he is.

361: “Let's go, then – if we return, good – if we don't, what does it matter?” (They don't go.)

362: B. did not hear jackals at Ephesus; but he's told the story so often that he probably by now believes he did. He did hear frogs, however. See *HfH*, preface; *SoC* 1024-5n; and later, *CHP* IV 153 4-6 and *Don Juan* IX 27 2-3.

363: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, III iv 22.

364: William Windham (1750-1810), politician, scholar, and amateur of cock-fighting and boxing.

365: Richard Fitzpatrick (1748-1813), army officer, politician, and poet who moved in Whig circles.

366: Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, III i 114. In fact, “aspire the clouds”. Windham died from a hip operation.

367: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I ii 188.

368: Perhaps Augusta.

and most agreeable *friend*. Mem.—a mistress never is nor can be a friend. While you agree, you are lovers; and, when it is over, any thing but friends.

I have not answered W[alter]. Scott's last letter,³⁶⁹—but I will. I regret to hear from others, that he has lately been unfortunate in pecuniary involvements. He is undoubtedly the Monarch of Parnassus, and the most *English* of bards. I should place Rogers next in the living list (I value him more as the last of the *best* school)—Moore and Campbell both *third*—Southey and Wordsworth and Coleridge—the rest, *οἱ πολλοί*³⁷⁰—thus:—

W.SCOTT.

ROGERS.

MOORE. – CAMPBELL.

SOUTHEY. – WORDSWORTH. – COLERIDGE.

THE MANY.

There is a triangular Gradus ad Parnassum!—the names are too numerous for the base of the triangle. Poor Thurlow³⁷¹ has gone wild about the poetry of Queen Bess's reign—*c'est dommage*. I have ranked the names upon my triangle more upon what I believe popular opinion, than any decided opinion of my own. For, to me, some of M * *e's last *Erin* sparks—"As a beam o'er the face of the waters"—"When he who adores thee"—"Oh blame not"—and "Oh breathe not his name"—are worth all the Epics that ever were composed.³⁷²

* *³⁷³ thinks the Quarterly will attack me next. Let them. I have been "peppered so highly" in my time, *both* ways, that it must be cayenne or aloes to make me taste. I can sincerely say, that I am not very much alive *now* to criticism. But—in tracing this—I rather believe that it proceeds from my not attaching that importance to authorship which many do, and which, when young, I did also. "One gets tired of every thing, my angel," says Valmont.³⁷⁴ The "angels" are the only things of which I am not a little sick—but I do think the preference of *writers* to *agents*—the mighty stir made about scribbling and scribes, by themselves and others—a sign of effeminacy, degeneracy, and weakness. Who would write, who had any thing better to do? "Action—action—action"—said Demosthenes: "Actions—actions," I say,—and not writing,—least of all, rhyme. Look at the querulous and monotonous lives of the "genus ;"—except Cervantes, Tasso, Dante, Ariosto, Kleist (who were brave and active citizens), Æschylus, Sophocles, and some other of the antiques also—what a worthless, idle brood it is!

12, Mezza notte.

Just returned from dinner with Jackson (the Emperor of Pugilism) and another of the select, at Crib[b]'s, the champion's. I drank more than I like, and have brought away some three bottles of very fair claret—for I have no headache. We had Tom * *³⁷⁵ up after dinner;—very facetious, though somewhat prolix. He don't like his situation—wants to fight again—pray Pollux (or Castor, if he was the *miller*)³⁷⁶ he may! Tom has been a sailor—a coal-heaver—and some other genteel profession, before he took to the cestus. Tom has been in action at sea, and is now only three-and-thirty. A great man!³⁷⁷ has a wife and a mistress, and conversations well—bating some sad omissions and misapplications of the aspirate. Tom is an old friend of mine; I have seen some of his best battles in my nonage. He is now a publican, and, I fear, a sinner;—for Mrs. * * is on alimony, and * *'s daughter lives with the champion. *This* * * told me,—Tom, having an opinion of my morals, passed her off as a legal spouse. Talking of her, he said, "she was the truest of women"—from which I immediately inferred she could *not* be his wife, and so it turned out.

369: Scott last wrote to B. on November 6th 1813.

370: "The mob".

371: Edward Thurlow edited Sidney's *Defence of Poetry*. B. parodied him.

372: All titles from Mo.'s *Irish Melodies*. Compare BLJ III 193

373: Prothero guesses "Rogers".

374: Valmont is the male protagonist of Laclos' *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. See Letter CXLI, where the line is written by the Marquise de Merteuil, the female protagonist. Perhaps B. could not imagine a woman saying it.

375: Tom Cribb; as the passage implies that he is living with his own daughter, Mo. must in 1832 have thought discretion the best approach. Cribb died in 1848.

376: "miller" – "aggressive fighter" ("one who mills").

377: B. uses the phrase ironically, as Fielding does in *Jonathan Wild*. Compare *Don Juan* XI 19 1.

These panegyrics don't belong to matrimony;—for, if “true,” a man don't think it necessary to say so; and if not, the less he says the better. * * * * is the only man except * * * *, I ever heard harangue upon his wife's virtue;³⁷⁸ and I listened to both with great credence and patience, and stuffed my handkerchief into my mouth, when I found yawning irresistible—By the by, I am yawning now—so, good night to thee.—Νωαίζων.³⁷⁹

[November 25th missing.]

Thursday, 26th November.

Awoke a little feverish, but no headache—no dreams neither, thanks to stupor! Two letters; one from * * * *,³⁸⁰ the other from Lady Melbourne—both excellent in their respective styles. * * * *s contained also a very pretty lyric on “concealed griefs;” if not her own, yet very like her. Why did she not say that the stanzas were, or were not, of her composition? I do not know whether to wish them *hers* or not. I have no great esteem for poetical persons, particularly women; they have so much of the “ideal” in *practics*, as well as *ethics*.

I have been thinking lately a good deal of Mary Duff ...³⁸¹

** ... How very odd that I should have been so utterly, devotedly fond of that girl, at an age when I could neither feel passion, nor know the meaning of the word. And the effect! My mother used always to rally me about this childish amour; and, at last, many years after, when I was sixteen, she told me one day, “Oh, Byron, I have had a letter from Edinburgh, from Miss Abercromby, and your old sweetheart Mary Duff is married to a Mr. Co^c.” And what was my answer? I really cannot explain or account for my feelings at that moment; but they nearly threw me into convulsions, and alarmed my mother so much, that after I grew better, she generally avoided the subject—to *me*—and contented herself with telling it to all her acquaintance. Now, what could this be? I had never seen her since her mother's faux-pas at Aberdeen had been the cause of her removal to her grandmother's at Banff; we were both the merest children. I had and have been attached fifty times since that period; yet I recollect all we said to each other, all our caresses, her features, my restlessness, sleeplessness, my tormenting my mother's maid to write for me to her, which she at last did, to quiet me. Poor Nancy thought I was wild, and, as I could not write for myself, became my secretary. I remember, too, our walks, and the happiness of sitting by Mary, in the children's apartment, at their house not far from the Plainstones at Aberdeen, while her lesser sister Helen played with the doll, and we sat gravely making love, in our way.

How the deuce did all this occur so early? where could it originate? I certainly had no sexual ideas for years afterwards; and yet my misery, my love for that girl were so violent, that I sometimes doubt if I have ever been really attached since. Be that as it may, hearing of her marriage several years after was like a thunder-stroke—it nearly choked me—to the horror of my mother and the astonishment and almost incredulity of every body. And it is a phenomenon in my existence (for I was not eight years old) which has puzzled, and will puzzle me to the latest hour of it; and lately, I know not why, the *recollection* (not the attachment) has recurred as forcibly as ever. I wonder if she can have the least remembrance of it or me? or remember pitying her sister Helen for not having an admirer too? How very pretty is the perfect image of her in my memory—her brown, dark hair, and hazel eyes; her very dress! I should be quite grieved to see *her now*; the reality, however beautiful, would destroy, or at least confuse, the features of the lovely Peri which then existed in her, and still lives in my imagination, at the distance of more than sixteen years. I am now twenty-five and odd months. . . .

I think my mother told the circumstances (on my hearing of her marriage) to the Parkynses, and certainly to the Pigot family, and probably mentioned it in her answer to Miss A[bercromby]., who was well acquainted with my childish *penchant*, and had sent the news on purpose for *me*,—and thanks to her!

Next to the beginning, the conclusion has often occupied my reflections, in the way of investigation. That the facts are thus, others know as well as I, and my memory yet tells me so, in more than a whisper. But, the more I reflect, the more I am bewildered to assign any cause for this precocity of affection (from Moore I 18-19). **

¶ In all other respects, I differed not at all from other children, being neither tall nor short, dull nor witty, of my age, but rather lively except in my sullen moods, and then I was always a Devil. They

378: One of the *s is James Wedderburn Webster.

379: Prothero and Marchand both change this to “Μπαίρων” (“Byron”).

380: Unidentified.

381: At this point Mo. (1832 p. 453) puts “&c. &c. &c. &c.” because he has used the passages (*-s and ¶-¶) already. He cuts down to “Lord Holland invited me ...”

once (in one of my silent rages) wrenched a knife from me, which I had snatched from table at Mrs. B.'s dinner (I always dined earlier),³⁸² and applied to my breast;—but this was three or four years after, just before the late Lord B.'s decease.

My *ostensible* temper has certainly improved in later years; but I shudder, and must, to my latest hour, regret the consequence of it and my passions combined. One event—but no matter—there are others not much better to think of also—and to them I give the preference....

But I hate dwelling upon incidents. My temper is now under management—rarely loud, and *when* loud, never deadly. It is when silent, and I feel my forehead and my cheek *paling*, that I cannot control it; and then but unless there is a woman (and not any or every woman) in the way, I have sunk into tolerable apathy (from Moore I 68). ¶

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

* * * * *

Saw * * * *³⁸³ looking very pretty, though quite a different style of beauty from the other two. She has the finest eyes in the world, out of which she pretends *not* to see, and the longest eyelashes I ever saw, since Leila's and Phannio's Moslem curtains of the light.³⁸⁴ She has much beauty,—just enough,—but is, I think, *méchante*.

* * * * *

I have been pondering on the miseries of separation,³⁸⁵ that—oh how seldom we see those we love! yet we live ages in moments, *when met*. The only thing that consoles me during absence is the reflection that no mental or personal estrangement, from ennui or disagreement, can take place; and when people meet hereafter, even though many changes may have taken place in the mean time, still, unless they are *tired* of each other, they are ready to reunite, and do not blame each other for the circumstances that severed them. * * * *

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

I have missed a day; and, as the Irishman said, or Joe Miller³⁸⁶ says for him, “have gained a loss,” or *by* the loss. Every thing is settled for Holland, and nothing but a cough, or a caprice of my fellow-traveller's, can stop us. Carriage ordered,—funds prepared,—and, probably, a gale of wind into the bargain. *N'importe*—I believe, with Clym o' the Clow,³⁸⁷ or Robin Hood, “By our Mary, (dear name!) thou art both Mother and May, I think it never was a man's lot to die before his day.”³⁸⁸ Heigh for Helvoetsluys, and so forth!

To-night I went with young Henry Fox³⁸⁹ to see “Nourjahad”,³⁹⁰ a drama, which the Morning Post hath laid to my charge, but of which I cannot even guess the author. I wonder what they will next inflict upon me. They cannot well sink below a Melodrama; but that is better than a Satire, (at least, a personal one), with which I stand truly arraigned, and in atonement of which I am resolved to bear silently all criticisms, abuses, and even praises for bad pantomimes never composed by me, without even a contradictory aspect. I suppose the root of this report is my loan to the manager of my Turkish drawings for his dresses, to which he was more welcome than to my name. I suppose the real author will soon own it, as it has succeeded; if not, Job be my model, and Lethe my beverage!

382: Later, B. threw Annabella out of the dining-room, and Teresa Guiccioli could only dine with him by appointment. The detail here shows that his distaste for watching women eat started early.

383: Unidentified. Marchand guesses Frances Wedderburn Webster's younger sister.

384: Leila is the heroine of *The Giaour*; but this reference is untraced.

385: B. is thinking of Augusta.

386: Joe Miller was a popular eighteenth century comedian, who wrote a successful jest-book.

387: Clym o' the Clow unidentified.

388: Prothero quotes the *Ballad of Robin Hood*: “Ah, deere ladye, said Robin Hood, thou / That art both Mother and May, / I think it was never man's destinye / To die before his day”.

389: Henry Fox was the son of Lord and Lady Holland. He, like B., was lame. He had an affair with Teresa Guiccioli in the late 1820s.

390: Full title *Illusion, or the Trances of Nourjahad*.

* * * * has received the portrait safe,³⁹¹ and, in answer, the only remark she makes upon it is, “indeed it is like”—and again, “indeed it is like.” * * * With her the likeness “covered a multitude of sins;” for I happen to know that this portrait was not a flatterer, but dark and stern,—even black as the mood in which my mind was scorching last July, when I sate for it. All the others of me—like most portraits whatsoever—are, of course, more agreeable than nature.



Redde the E[dinburgh]. Review of Rogers.³⁹² He is ranked highly; but where he should be. There is a summary view of us all—*Moore* and *me* among the rest; and both (the *first* justly) praised—though, by implication (justly again) placed beneath our memorable friend. Mackintosh is the writer, and also of the critique on the Staël. His grand essay on Burke, I hear, is for the next number. But I know nothing of the Edinburgh, or of any other Review, but from rumour; and I have long ceased—indeed, I could not, in justice, complain of any, even though I were to rate poetry, in general, and my rhymes in particular, more highly than I really do. To withdraw *myself* from *myself* (oh that cursed selfishness!) has ever been my sole, my entire, my sincere motive in scribbling at all; and publishing is also the continuance of the same object, by the action it affords to the mind, which else recoils upon itself. If I valued fame, I should flatter received opinions, which have gathered strength by time, and will yet wear longer than any living works to the contrary. But, for the soul of me, I cannot and will not give the lie to my own thoughts and doubts, come what may. If I am a fool, it is, at least, a doubting one; and I envy no one the certainty of his self-approved wisdom.

All are inclined to believe what they covet, from a lottery-ticket up to a passport to Paradise,—in which, from the description, I see nothing very tempting. My restlessness tells me I have something “within that passeth show.”³⁹³ It is for Him, who made it, to prolong that spark of celestial fire which illuminates, yet burns, this frail tenement; but I see no such horror in a “dreamless sleep,”³⁹⁴ and I have no conception of any existence which duration would not render tiresome. How else “fell the angels,”³⁹⁵ even according to your creed? They were immortal, heavenly, and happy, as their apostate Abdiel³⁹⁶ is now by his treachery. Time must decide; and eternity won’t be the less agreeable or more horrible because one did not expect it. In the mean time, I am grateful for some good, and tolerably patient under certain evils—grace à Dieu et mon bon tempérament.

Sunday, 28th.

Monday, 29th.

Tuesday, 30th.

Two days missed in my log-book;—hiatus *haud deflendus*.³⁹⁷ They were as little worth recollection as the rest; and, luckily, laziness or society prevented me from *notching* them.

Sunday, I dined with the Lord Holland in St. James’s-square. Large party—among them Sir S[amuel]. Romilly and Lady R[omilly].—General Sir Somebody Bentham,³⁹⁸ a man of science and talent, I am told—Horner³⁹⁹—*the* Horner, an Edinburgh Reviewer, an excellent speaker in the “Honourable House,” very pleasing, too, and gentlemanly in company, as far as I have seen—Sharpe—Phillips of Lancashire⁴⁰⁰—Lord John Russell,⁴⁰¹ and others, “good men and true.”⁴⁰²

391: Marchand guesses that B. refers to his portrait by Holmes (Peach fig. 35). See illustration.

392: *Edinburgh Review*, October 1813.

393: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I ii 85.

394: “Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep” is from Wordsworth’s *The Prelude* (which is not published yet). B. may paraphrase “To be or not to be” (*Hamlet*, III iii 66: “in that sleep of death what dreams may come”).

395: Perhaps an echo of Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, IV iii 22: “Angels were bright still, though the brightest fell”.

396: See Milton, *Paradise Lost* V 896-7.

397: *hiatus haud deflendus* means roughly, “Either an accidental gap or a deliberate one”.

398: Sir Samuel Bentham, naval architect. Like his brother Jeremy, an advocate of reform.

399: Francis Horner, Scots advocate; co-founder of the *Edinburgh Review*.

400: George Phillips, future Whig MP for South Warwickshire.

401: Lord John Russell was to be the architect of the 1832 Reform Bill.

402: Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*, III iii 1.

Holland's society is very good; you always see some one or other in it worth knowing. Stuffed myself with sturgeon, and exceeded in champagne and wine in general, but not to confusion of head. When I *do* dine, I gorge like an Arab or a Boa snake, on fish and vegetables, but no meat. I am always better, however, on my tea and biscuit than any other regimen, and even *that* sparingly.

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

Saturday, I went with Harry Fox to *Nourjahad*; and, I believe, convinced him, by incessant yawning, that it was not mine. I wish the precious author would own it, and release me from his fame. The dresses are pretty, but not in costume;—Mrs. Horne's,⁴⁰³ all but the turban, and the want of a small dagger (if she is a Sultana), *perfect*. I never saw a Turkish woman with a turban in my life—nor did any one else. The Sultanas have a small poniard at the waist. The dialogue is drowsy—the action heavy—the scenery fine—the actors tolerable. I can't say much for their seraglio—Teresa, Phannio, or * * *,⁴⁰⁴ were worth them all.

Sunday, a very handsome note from Mackintosh, who is a rare instance of the union of very transcendent talent and great good-nature. To-day (Tuesday), a very pretty billet from M. la Baronne de Staël Holstein. She is pleased to be much pleased with my mention of her and her last work in my notes. I spoke as I thought. Her works are my delight, and so is she herself, for—half an hour. I don't like her politics—at least, her *having changed* them; had she been *qualis ab incepto*,⁴⁰⁵ it were nothing. But she is a woman by herself, and has done more than all the rest of them together, intellectually;—she ought to have been a man. She *flatters* me very prettily in her note;—but I *know* it. The reason that adulation is not displeasing is, that, though untrue, it shows one to be of consequence enough, in one way or other, to induce people to lie, to make us their friend:—that is their concern.

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

George⁴⁰⁶ is returned from afloat to get a new ship. He looks thin, but better than I expected. I like George much more than most people like their heirs. He is a fine fellow, and every inch a sailor. I would do any thing, *but apostatize*, to get him on in his profession.

Lewis called. It is a good and good-humoured man, but pestilently prolix and paradoxical and *personal*. If he would but talk half, and reduce his visits to an hour, he would add to his popularity. As an author he is very good, and his vanity is *ouverte*, like Erskine's,⁴⁰⁷ and yet not offending.

Yesterday, a very pretty letter from Annabella, which I answered. What an odd situation and friendship is ours!—without one spark of love on either side, and produced by circumstances which in general lead to coldness on one side, and aversion on the other.⁴⁰⁸ She is a very superior woman, and very little spoiled, which is strange in an heiress—a girl of twenty—a peeress that is to be, in her own right—an only child, and a *savante*, who has always had her own way. She is a poetess—a mathematician—a metaphysician, and yet, withal, very kind, generous, and gentle, with very little pretension. Any other head would be turned with half her acquisitions, and a tenth of her advantages.

[November 31st missing.]

Wednesday, December 1st, 1813.

To-day responded to La Baronne de Staël Holstein, and sent to Leigh Hunt (an acquisition to my acquaintance—through Moore—of last summer)⁴⁰⁹ a copy of the two Turkish Tales. Hunt is an extraordinary character, and not exactly of the present age. He reminds me more of the Pym and Hampden times⁴¹⁰—much talent, great independence of spirit, and an austere, yet not repulsive, aspect.

403: Mrs Horne played the wife of Nourjahad at Drury Lane. B. had lent some Turkish drawings for the costumes; see BLJ III 175.

404: Again unidentified. Perhaps names from his destroyed comedy, or novel.

405: "Thus from the beginning". See *TVoJ*, Preface. It's not clear how de Staël's politics have changed.

406: George Byron, B.'s cousin, who inherited his title in 1824. He was a sailor.

407: Thomas, Lord Erskine, famous liberal advocate.

408: But which side is which? Sadly prophetic whichever the case.

409: Leigh Hunt was still in jail for libelling the Prince Regent. See BLJ III 188-9.

410: B. was to transfer this sentimental epithet to Hunt's brother John when he became his publisher.

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

To-morrow there is a party of *purple* at the “blue” Miss * * *s.⁴¹¹ Shall I go? um!—I don't much affect your blue-bottles;—but one ought to be civil. There will be, “I guess now” (as the Americans say),⁴¹² the Staëls and Mackintoshes—good—the * * *s and * * *s—not so good—the * * *s, &c., &c.—good for nothing. Perhaps that blue-winged Kashmirian butterfly of book-learning, Lady * * * *,⁴¹³ will be there. I hope so; it is a pleasure to look upon that most beautiful of faces.

Wrote to H[odgson].—he has been telling that *I* <-- -->.⁴¹⁴ I am sure, at least, I did not mention it, and I wish he had not. He is a good fellow, and I obliged myself ten times more by being of use than I did him,—and there's an end on't.

Baldwin⁴¹⁵ is boring me to present their King's Bench petition. I presented Cartwright's last year; and Stanhope⁴¹⁶ and I stood against the whole House, and mouthed it valiantly—and had some fun and a little abuse for our opposition. But “I am not i' th' vein”⁴¹⁷ for this business. Now, had * * *⁴¹⁸ been here, she would have *made* me do it. *There* is a woman, who, amid all her fascination, always urged a man to usefulness or glory. Had she remained, she had been my tutelar genius.

Baldwin is very importunate—but, poor fellow, “I can't get out, I can't get out—said the starling.”⁴¹⁹ Ah, I am as bad as that dog Sterne, who preferred whining over “a dead ass to relieving a living mother”⁴²⁰—villain—hypocrite—slave—sycophant! but *I* am no better. Here I cannot stimulate myself to a speech for the sake of these unfortunates, and three words and half a smile of * * *⁴²¹ had she been here to urge it (and urge it she infallibly would—at least she always pressed me on senatorial duties, and particularly in the cause of weakness), would have made me an advocate, if not an orator. Curse on Rochefoucault for being always right! In him a lie were virtue,—or, at least, a comfort to his readers.

George Byron has not called to-day; I hope he will be an admiral, and, perhaps, Lord Byron into the bargain. If he would but marry, I would engage never to marry, myself, or cut him out of the heirship. He would be happier, and I should like nephews better than sons.

I shall soon be six-and-twenty (January 22d, 1814). Is there any thing in the future that can possibly console us for not being always *twenty-five*?

Oh Gioventu!
Oh Primavera! gioventu dell' anno.
*Oh Gioventu! primavera della vita.*⁴²²

* * * * *

[December 2nd, 3rd, and 4th missing.]

411: Prothero has “Berry’s”.

412: Compare *TVoJ*, 59, 8. B. was convinced that Americans said “I guess” all the time.

413: Prothero has “Charlemont”.

414: Mo. writes “Two or three words are here scratched out in the manuscript, but the import of the sentence evidently is, that Mr. Hodgson (to whom the passage refers) had been revealing to some friends the secret of Lord Byron’s kindness to him”. B.’s erasures are often easy to see through.

415: W.J. Baldwin was in the debtors’ prison, and wanted B. to petition the Lords about the plight of people there. See BLJ III 164-5.

416: Charles Stanhope, later Earl of Harrington. B. (and he) had presented Cartwright’s petition on June 1st 1813.

417: Shakespeare, *Richard III*, IV ii 120 and 122.

418: Lady Oxford. B.’s inability to take a responsible step without female bullying is characteristic.

419: Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey II, The Passport: The Hotel de Paris*. See *Don Juan*, IV 109, 4.

420: Sterne, op. cit., I, *The Dead Ass*. It is of course not “that dog” Sterne, but a character in Sterne. B. misremembers anyway: *I thought by the accent, it had been an apostrophe to his child; but 'twas to his ass, the very ass we had seen dead in the road ...*

421: Lady Oxford again.

422: “Oh Youth! / Oh Spring! the Youth of the Year. / Oh Youth! The Spring of Life.” Poem by Guarini.

Sunday, December 5th.

Dallas's nephew (son to the American Attorney-general)⁴²³ is arrived in this country, and tells Dallas that my rhymes are very popular in the United States. These are the first tidings that have ever sounded like *Fame* to my ears—to be redde on the banks of the Ohio! The greatest pleasure I ever derived, of this kind, was from an extract, in Cooke the actor's Life, from his Journal, stating that in the reading-room at Albany, near Washington, he perused English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. To be popular in a rising and far country has a kind of *posthumous feel*, very different from the ephemeral *éclat* and fêteing, buzzing and party-ing compliments of the well-dressed multitude. I can safely say that, during my *reign* in the spring of 1812, I regretted nothing but its duration of six weeks instead of a fortnight, and was heartily glad to resign.

Last night I supped with Lewis;—and, as usual, though I neither exceeded in solids nor fluids, have been half dead ever since. My stomach is entirely destroyed by long abstinence, and the rest will probably follow. Let it—I only wish the *pain* over. The “leap in the dark” is the least to be dreaded.

The Duke of * *⁴²⁴ called. I have told them forty times that, except to half-a-dozen old and specified acquaintances, I am invisible. His Grace is a good, noble, ducal person; but I am content to think so at a distance, and so—I was not at home.

Galt⁴²⁵ called.—Mem.—to ask some one to speak to Raymond⁴²⁶ in favour of his play. We are old fellow-travellers, and, with all his eccentricities, he has much strong sense, experience of the world, and is, as far as I have seen, a good-natured philosophical fellow. I showed him Sligo's letter on the reports of the Turkish girl's *aventure* at Athens soon after it happened.⁴²⁷ He and Lord Holland, Lewis, and Moore, and Rogers, and Lady Melbourne have seen it. Murray has a copy. I thought it had been *unknown*, and wish it were; but Sligo arrived only some days after, and the *rumours* are the subject of his letter. That I shall preserve,—*it is as well*. Lewis and Galt were both *horrified*; and L[ewis]. wondered I did not introduce the situation into “the Giaour”. He *may* wonder;—he might wonder more at that production's being written at all. But to describe the *feelings* of *that situation* were impossible—it is *icy* even to recollect them.

The *Bride of Abydos* was published on Thursday the second of December; but how it is liked or disliked, I know not. Whether it succeeds or not is no fault of the public, against whom I can have no complaint. But I am much more indebted to the tale than I can ever be to the most partial reader; as it wrung my thoughts from reality to imagination—from selfish regrets to vivid recollections—and recalled me to a country replete with the *brightest* and *darkest*, but always most *lively* colours of my memory. Sharpe called, but was not let in,—which I regret.

* * * * *

Saw * *⁴²⁸ yesterday. I have not kept my appointment at Middleton, which has not pleased him, perhaps; and my projected voyage with * *⁴²⁹ will, perhaps, please him less. But I wish to keep well with both. They are instruments that don't do in concert; but, surely, their: separate tones are very musical, and I won't give up either,

It is well if I don't jar between these great discords. At present I stand tolerably well with all, but I cannot adopt their *dislikes*;—so many *sets*. Holland's is the first;—every thing *distingué* is welcome there, and certainly the *ton* of his society is the best. Then there is M^{de} de Staël's—there I never go, though I might, had I courted it. It is composed of the * *⁴³⁰ and the * *⁴³¹ family, with a strange sprinkling,—orators, dandies, and all kinds of *Blue*, from the regular Grub-street uniform, down to the azure jacket of the *Littérateur*. To see * *⁴³² and * *⁴³³ sitting together, at dinner, always reminds me of the grave, where all distinctions of friend and foe are levelled; and they—the Reviewer and Reviewée—the Rhinoceros and Elephant—the Mammoth and Megalonyx⁴³⁴—all will lie quietly together. They now *sit* together, as silent, but not so quiet, as if they were already immured.

423: Alexander James Dallas was U.S. Treasury Secretary under Madison. His son was Vice-President.

424: Unidentified.

425: John Galt, Scots merchant and writer. Did a life of B., and wrote tragedies. See BLJ III 196.

426: Raymond was “Stage Manager” at Drury Lane.

427: The Marquis of Sligo wrote B. a letter on August 31st 1813, giving his version of the “Greek Girl in a Sack” story which was said to lie behind *The Giaour*.

428: Prothero conjectures “Rogers”.

429: Ward.

430: Unidentified.

431: Ibid.

432: Ibid.

433: Ibid.

434: Large sloth-like beast discovered via fossils in North America.

* * * * *

I did not go to the Berrys' the other night. The elder is a woman of much talent, and both are handsome, and must have been beautiful. To-night asked to Lord H[olland].’s—shall I go? um!—perhaps.

Morning, two o’clock.

Went to Lord H.’s—party numerous—*milady* in perfect good humour and consequently *perfect*. No one more agreeable, or perhaps so much so, when she will. Asked for Wednesday to dine and meet the Staël—asked particularly, I believe, out of mischief to see the first interview after the *note*,⁴³⁵ with which Corinne professes herself to be so much taken. I don’t much like it; she always talks of *myself* or *herself*, and I am not (except in soliloquy, as now) much enamoured of either subject—especially one’s works. What the devil shall I say about “De l’Allemagne”? I like it prodigiously; but unless I can twist my admiration into some fantastical expression, she won’t believe me; and I know, by experience, I shall be overwhelmed with fine things about rhyme, &c. &c. The lover, Mr. * *,⁴³⁶ was there to-night, and C * *⁴³⁷ said “it was the only proof *he* had seen of her good taste.” Monsieur L’Amant is remarkably handsome; but I don’t think more so than her book.

C * * looks well,—seems pleased, and dressed to *sprucery*. A blue coat becomes him,—so does his new wig. He really looked as if Apollo had sent him a birthday suit, or a wedding-garment, and was witty and lively. He abused Corinne’s⁴³⁸ book, which I regret; because, firstly, he understands German, and is consequently a fair judge; and, secondly, he is *first-rate*, and, consequently, the best of judges. I reverence and admire him; but I won’t give up my opinion—Why should I? I read *her* again and again, and there can be no affectation in this. I cannot be mistaken (except in taste) in a book I read and lay down, and take up again; and no book can be totally bad, which finds *one*, even *one* reader, who can say as much sincerely.

C[ampbell]. talks of lecturing next spring; his last lectures were eminently successful. Moore thought of it, but gave it up,—I don’t know why. * *⁴³⁹ had been prating *dignity* to him, and such stuff; as if a man disgraced himself by instructing and pleasing at the same time.

Introduced to Marquis Buckingham⁴⁴⁰—saw Lord Gower⁴⁴¹—he is going to Holland; Sir J[ames]. and Lady Mackintosh and Horner, G[eorge]. Lamb, with I know not how many (R[ichard]. Wellesley,⁴⁴² one—a clever man) grouped about the room. Little Henry Fox, a very fine boy, and very promising in mind and manner,—he went away to bed, before I had time to talk to him. I am sure I had rather hear him than all the *savans*.

Monday, Dec. 6th.

Murray tells me that C[roker]⁴⁴³ asked him why the thing was called the *Bride* of Abydos? It is a cursed awkward question, being unanswerable. *She* is not a *bride*, only about to be one; but for, &c. &c. &c.

I don’t wonder at his finding out the *Bull*; but the detection * * * is too late to do any good. I was a great fool to make it, and am ashamed of not being an Irishman. * * * * *

C—I last night seemed a little nettled at something or other, I know not what. We were standing in the ante-saloon, when Lord H[olland]. brought out of the other room a vessel of some composition similar to that which is used in Catholic churches, and, seeing us, he exclaimed, “Here is some *incense* for you.” C—I answered—“Carry it to Lord Byron,—*he is used to it.*” * * *

Now, this comes of “bearing no brother near the throne.”⁴⁴⁴ I, who have no throne, nor wish to have one *now*,—whatever I may have done,—am at perfect peace with all the poetical fraternity: or, at least, if I dislike any, it is not *poetically*, but *personally*. Surely the field of thought is infinite;—what does it signify who is before or behind in a race where there is no *goal*? The temple of Fame is like that of the

435: B.’s flattering note to *TBoA*, 179. See Appendix 1.

436: Madame de Staël’s lover was Albert Jean Michel de Rocca. B. and H. meet him again in Switzerland in 1816. He had written a book, *Into the Peninsula with a French Hussar*.

437: Thomas Campbell.

438: Madame de Staël, named after her novel *Corinne* (1807).

439: Unidentified.

440: The Marquis of Buckingham, formerly Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

441: Lord Granville Leveson-Gower (“Lewson-Gore”) one time ambassador to Russia.

442: Richard Colley Wellesley, brother to Wellington; formerly Governor-General of India.

443: John Wilson Croker, reviewer for the *Quarterly*.

444: Pope, *Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot*, l.198: *Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne.*

Persians, the Universe;⁴⁴⁵ our altar, the tops of mountains. I should be equally content with Mount Caucasus⁴⁴⁶ or Mount Anything; and those who like it, may have Mount Blanc or Chimborazo, without my envy of their elevation.

I think I may *now* speak thus; for I have just published a poem,⁴⁴⁷ and am quite ignorant whether it is *likely* to be *liked* or not. I have hitherto heard little in its commendation, and no one can *downright* abuse it to one's face, except in print. It can't be good, or I should not have stumbled over the threshold, and blundered in my very title. But I began it with my heart full of * * *,⁴⁴⁸ and my head of *orientalities* (I can't call them *isms*), and wrote on rapidly.

This journal is a relief. When I am tired—as I generally am—out comes this, and down goes every thing. But I can't read it over; and God knows what contradictions it may contain. If I am sincere with myself (but I fear one lies more to one's self than to any one else), every page should confute, refute, and utterly abjure its predecessor.

Another scribble from Martin Baldwin the petitioner; I have neither head nor nerves to present it. That confounded supper at Lewis's has spoiled my digestion and my philanthropy. I have no more charity than a cruet of vinegar. Would I were an ostrich, and dieted on fire irons,—or any thing that my gizzard could get the better of.

To-day saw W[ard]. His uncle is dying,⁴⁴⁹ and W[ard]. don't much affect our Dutch determinations. I dine with him on Thursday, provided *l'oncle* is not dined upon, or peremptorily bespoke by the posthumous epicures before that day. I wish he may recover—not for *our* dinner's sake, but to disappoint the undertaker, and the rascally reptiles that may well wait, since they *will* dine at last.

Gell⁴⁵⁰ called—he of Troy—after I was out. Mem.—to return his visit. But my Mem. are the very land-marks of forgetfulness;—something like a light-house, with a ship wrecked under the nose of its lantern. I never look at a Mem. without seeing that I have remembered to forget. Mem.—I have forgotten to pay Pitt's taxes, and suppose I shall be surcharged. “An I do not turn rebel when thou art king”⁴⁵¹—oons! I believe my very biscuit is leavened with that impostor's imposts.

L^y M^c returns from Jersey's to-morrow;—I must call. A Mr. Thomson⁴⁵² has sent a song, which I must applaud. I hate annoying them with censure or silence;—and yet I hate *lettering*.

Saw Lord Glenbervie⁴⁵³ and his Prospectus, at Murray's, of a new Treatise on Timber. Now here is a man more useful than all the historians and rhymers ever planted. For, by preserving our woods and forests, he furnishes materials for all the history of Britain worth reading, and all the odes worth nothing.

Redde a good deal, but desultorily. My head is crammed with the most useless lumber. It is odd that when I do read, I can only bear the chicken broth of—*any thing* but Novels. It is many a year since I looked into one, (though they are sometimes ordered, by way of experiment, but never taken) till I looked yesterday at the worst parts of the Monk.⁴⁵⁴ These descriptions ought to have been written by Tiberius at Caprea—they are forced—the *philtered* ideas of a jaded voluptuary. It is to me inconceivable how they could have been composed by a man of only twenty—his age when he wrote them. They have no nature—all the sour cream of cantharides.⁴⁵⁵ I should have suspected Buffon⁴⁵⁶ of writing them on the death-bed of his detestable dotage. I had never redde this edition, and merely looked at them from curiosity and recollection of the noise they made, and the name they have left to Lewis. But they could do no harm, except * * * *.

Called this evening on my agent⁴⁵⁷—my business as usual. Our strange adventures are the only inheritances of our family that have not diminished.

I shall now smoke two cigars, and get me to bed. The cigars don't keep well here. They get as old as a *donna di quaranti anni*⁴⁵⁸ in the sun of Africa. The Havannah are the best;—but neither are so pleasant as a hooka or chiboque. The Turkish tobacco is mild, and their horses entire—two things as they should be. I am so far obliged to this Journal, that it preserves me from verse,—at least from

445: Compare *Manfred* III i 109-110, or *CHP* III stanza 91.

446: Where Prometheus was punished by Zeus.

447: *The Bride of Abydos*.

448: Augusta.

449: Ward's uncle was William Bosville, a lieutenant in the Coldstream Guards.

450: William Gell, classical topographer. He had written about Troy. See *EBSR* 1034.

451: Falstaff might say this in *Henry IV*; but doesn't.

452: J. Thomson is otherwise unknown. He had tried a Drury Lane Address; see *BLJ* III 121.

453: Baron Glenbervie, First Commissioner of Land Revenue and Woods and Forests.

454: Matthew Lewis's novel.

455: Dried beetle used either as a diuretic or aphrodisiac.

456: Respected eighteenth-century French botanist. I know nothing of his writings when senile.

457: John Hanson, B.'s trusted but untrustworthy solicitor and agent.

458: “Forty-year-old woman”.

keeping it. I have just thrown a poem into the fire (which it has relighted to my great comfort), and have smoked out of my head the plan of another. I wish I could as easily get rid of thinking, or, at least, the confusion of thought.

Tuesday, December 7.

Went to bed, and slept dreamlessly, but not refreshingly. Awoke, and up an hour before being called; but dawdled three hours in dressing. When one subtracts from life infancy (which is vegetation),—sleep, eating, and swilling—buttoning and unbuttoning—how much remains of downright existence? The summer of a dormouse. * * *

Redde the papers and *tea*-ed and soda-watered, and found out that the fire was badly lighted. L[ord]. Glenbervie wants me to go to Brighton—um!

This morning, a very pretty billet from the Staël⁴⁵⁹ about meeting her at L[or]d. H[olland].’s tomorrow. She has written, I dare say, twenty such this morning to different people, all equally flattering to each. So much the better for her and those who believe all she wishes them, or they wish to believe. She has been pleased to be pleased with my slight eulogy in the note annexed to “The Bride”. This is to be accounted for in several ways,—firstly, all women like all, or any, praise; secondly, this was unexpected, because I have never courted her; and, thirdly, as Scrub⁴⁶⁰ says, those who have been all their lives regularly praised, by regular critics, like a little variety, and are glad when any one goes out of his way to say a civil thing; and, fourthly, she is a very good-natured creature, which is the best reason, after all, and, perhaps, the only one.

A knock—knocks single and double. Bland⁴⁶¹ called. He says Dutch society (he has been in Holland) is second-hand French; but the women are like women every where else. This is a bore: I should like to see them a little *unlike*; but that can’t be expected.

Went out—came home—this, that, and the other—and “all is vanity, saith the preacher,”⁴⁶² and so say I, as part of his congregation. Talking of vanity, whose praise do I prefer? Why, Mrs. Inchbald’s,⁴⁶³ and that of the Americans. The first, because her “Simple Story” and “Nature and Art” are, to me, *true* to their *titles*; and, consequently, her short note to Rogers about “The Giaour” delighted me more than any thing, except the Edinburgh Review. I like the Americans, because *I* happened to be in *Asia*, while the English Bards, and Scotch Reviewers were redde in *America*. If I could have had a speech against the *Slave Trade in Africa*, and an epitaph on a dog in *Europe* (i.e. in the Morning Post), my *vertex sublimis*⁴⁶⁴ would certainly have displaced stars enough to overthrow the Newtonian system.

[December 8th and 9th missing.]

Friday, December 10th, 1813.

I am *ennuyé* beyond my usual tense of that yawning verb, which I am always conjugating; and I don’t find that society much mends the matter. I am too lazy to shoot myself—and it would annoy Augusta, and perhaps * *, but it would be a good thing for George, on the other side, and no bad one for me; but I won’t be tempted.

I have had the kindest letter from M[* *]e.⁴⁶⁵ I do think that man is the best-hearted, the only *hearted* being I ever encountered; and, then, his talents are equal to his feelings.

Dined on Wednesday at Lord H[olland].’s—the Staffords, Staëls, Cowpers, Ossulstones, Melbournes, Mackintoshes, &c. &c.—and was introduced to the Marquis and Marchioness of Stafford,—an unexpected event. My quarrel with Lord Carlisle (their or his brother-in-law) having rendered it improper, I suppose, brought it about. But, if it was to happen at all, I wonder it did not occur before. She is handsome, and must have been beautiful—and her manners are princessly. * * *

The Staël was at the other end of the table, and less loquacious than heretofore. We are now very good friends; though she asked Lady Melbourne whether I had really any *bonhomme*. She might as well have asked that question before she told C[aroline]. L[amb].⁴⁶⁶ “c’est un demon.” True enough, but rather premature, for *she* could not have found it out, and so—she wants me to dine there next Sunday.

⁴⁵⁹: This *billet* seems not to have survived. See Appendix 1 for those who have.

⁴⁶⁰: In Farquhar’s *The Beaux’ Stratagem*. See *TVoJ*, Preface.

⁴⁶¹: Bland unidentified.

⁴⁶²: Biblical. Ecclesiastes 1, 2.

⁴⁶³: Elizabeth Inchbald, actress, novelist, playwright, and anthologist. Her praise to Rogers of *The Giaour* seems not to have survived.

⁴⁶⁴: Virgil, Georgics I 242: *vertex nobis semper sublimis*: “One pole is ever high above us”. Also Hor., Od. I i 36: *sublimi feriam sidera vertice*: “I shall touch the stars with my exalted head”.

⁴⁶⁵: “M[* *]e” is probably Mo. No letters to B. from Mo. survive from the latter part of 1813.

⁴⁶⁶: *May* be Charlotte Leveson, daughter of the Duke of Portland. But Caroline Lamb knew de Staël.

Murray prospers, as far as circulation. For my part, I adhere (in liking) to my Fragment.⁴⁶⁷ It is no wonder that I wrote one—my mind is a fragment.

Saw Lord Gower, Tierney, &c. in the square. Took leave of Lord G[ower], who is going to Holland and Germany. He tells me, that he carries with him a parcel of “Harolds” and “Giaours”, &c. for the readers of Berlin, who, it seems, read English, and have taken a caprice for mine. Um!—have I been *German* all this time, when I thought myself *oriental*? * * *

Lent Tierney⁴⁶⁸ my box for to-morrow; and received a new Comedy sent by Lady C. A.⁴⁶⁹—but *not hers*. I must read it, and endeavour not to displease the author. I hate annoying them with cavil; but a comedy I take to be the most difficult of compositions, more so than tragedy.

G[al]t says there is a coincidence between the first part of “The Bride” and some story of his—whether published or not, I know not, never having seen it. He is almost the last person on whom any one would commit literary larceny, and I am not conscious of any *witting* thefts on any of the genus. As to originality, all pretensions are ludicrous,—“there is nothing new under the sun.”⁴⁷⁰

Went last night to the play. * * * * Invited out to a party, but did not go;—right. Refused to go to Lady * *’s on Monday;—right again. If I must fritter away my life, I would rather do it alone. I was much tempted;—C * * looked so Turkish with her red turban, and her regular, dark, and clear features. Not that *she* and *I* ever were, or could be, any thing; but I love any aspect that reminds me of the “children of the sun.”

To dine to-day with Rogers and Sharpe, for which I have some appetite, not having tasted food for the preceding forty-eight hours. I wish I could leave off eating altogether.

Saturday, December 11.

Sunday, December 12.

By G—t’s answer, I find it is some story in *real life*, and not any work with which my late composition coincides. It is still more singular, for mine is drawn from *existence* also.

I have sent an excuse to M[adame]. de Staël. I do not feel sociable enough for dinner to-day;—and I will not go to Sheridan’s on Wednesday. Not that I do not admire and prefer his unequalled conversation; but—that “*but*” must only be intelligible to thoughts I cannot write. Sheridan was in good talk at Rogers’s the other night, but I only stayed till *nine*. All the world are to be at the Staël’s to-night, and I am not sorry to escape any part of it. I only go out to get me a fresh appetite for being alone. Went out—did not go to the Staël’s, but to L[or]d. Holland’s. Party numerous—conversation general. Stayed late—made a blunder—got over it—came home and went to bed, not having eaten. Rather empty, but *fresco*, which is the great point with me.

Monday, December 13, 1813.

Called at three places—read, and got ready to leave town to-morrow. Murray has had a letter from his brother Bibliopole of Edinburgh, who says, “he is lucky in having such a *poet*”—something as if one was a pack-horse, or “ass, or any thing that is his:”⁴⁷¹ or, like Mrs. Packwood, who replied to some inquiry after the Odes on Razors,—“Laws, sir, we keeps a Poet.”⁴⁷² The same illustrious Edinburgh bookseller once sent an order for books, poesy, and cookery,—with this agreeable postscript—“The *Harold* and *Cookery*⁴⁷³ are much wanted.” Such is fame, and, after all, quite as good as any other “life in others’ breath.” “’Tis much the same to divide purchasers with Hannah Glasse⁴⁷⁴ or Hannah More.⁴⁷⁵

Some editor of some magazine has *announced* to Murray his intention of abusing the thing “*without reading it*.” So much the better; if he redde it first, he would abuse it more.

Allen (Lord Holland’s Allen⁴⁷⁶—the best informed and one of the ablest men I know—a perfect Magliabecchi⁴⁷⁷—a devourer, a Helluo⁴⁷⁸ of books, and an observer of men) has lent me a quantity of Burns’s unpublished, and never-to-be published, Letters. They are full of oaths and obscene songs.

467: *The Giaour*.

468: George Tierney, prominent Whig politician.

469: Marchand suggests Lady Catherine Annesley, sister to Frances Wedderburn Webster.

470: Biblical. *Ecclesiastes*, 1, 9: “... there is no new thing under the sun”.

471: Biblical. The seventh commandment: *Thou shalt not covet* ... (Exodus 20, 17).

472: Packwood was a Soho razor-strop maker who employed a poet to write his advertisements.

473: Mrs Rundell’s *Domestic Cookery*. Mrs Rundell was, like B., one of Mu.’s best-selling authors.

474: Hannah Glasse wrote *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* (1755).

475: Hannah More was author of improving novels, including *Cæleb’s Wife* (see *Don Juan* I, 16, 4).

476: John Allen was the Hollands’ librarian, and a radical. He wrote for the *Edinburgh Review*.

477: Antonio Magliabecchi was Librarian to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. A virtuoso bibliophile.

478: A helluo is a gormandiser or glutton (Latin).

What an antithetical mind!—tenderness, roughness—delicacy, coarseness—sentiment, sensuality—soaring and grovelling, dirt and deity—all mixed up in that one compound of inspired clay!

It seems strange; a true voluptuary will never abandon his mind to the grossness of reality. It is by exalting the earthly, the material, the *physique* of our pleasures, by veiling these ideas, by forgetting them altogether, or, at least, never naming them hardly to one's self, that we alone can prevent them from disgusting.

* * * * *

December 14, 15, 16.

Much done, but nothing to record. It is quite enough to set down my thoughts,—my actions will rarely bear retrospection.

December 17, 18.

Lord Holland told me a curious piece of sentimentality in Sheridan. The other night we were all delivering our respective and various opinions on him and other *hommes marquans*, and mine was this:—"Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been, *par excellence*, always the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy (School for Scandal), the *best* drama (in my mind, far before that St. Giles's lampoon, the Beggar's Opera), the best farce (the Critic—it is only too good for a farce), and the best Address (Monologue on Garrick), and, to crown all, delivered the very best Oration (the famous Begum Speech) ever conceived or heard in this country." Somebody told S[heridan]. this the next day, and on hearing it he burst into tears!

Poor Brinsley! if they were tears of pleasure, I would rather have said these few, but most sincere, words than have written the Iliad or made his own celebrated Philippic. Nay, his own comedy never gratified me more than to hear that he had derived a moment's gratification from any praise of mine, humble as it must appear to "my elders and my betters."

Went to my box at Covent-garden to-night; and my delicacy felt a little shocked at seeing S * * * 's mistress (who, to my certain knowledge, was actually educated, from her birth for her profession) sitting with her mother, "a three-piled b—d, b—d-Major to the army," in a private box opposite. I felt rather indignant; but, casting my eyes round the house, in the next box to me, and the next, and the next, were the most distinguished old and young Babylonians of quality;—so I burst out a laughing. It was really odd; Lady * * divorced—Lady * * and her daughter, Lady * *, both *divorceable*—Mrs. * *, in the next the *like*, and still nearer * * * * *! What an assemblage to *me*, who know all their histories.⁴⁷⁹ It was as if the house had been divided between your public and your *understood* courtesans;—but the Intriguantes much outnumbered the regular mercenaries. On the other side were only Pauline and *her* mother, and, next box to her, three of inferior note. Now, where lay the difference between *her* and *mamma*, and Lady * * and daughter? except that the two last may enter Carleton and any *other house*, and the two first are limited to the opera and b— house. How I do delight in observing life as it really is!—and myself, after all, the worst of any. But no matter—I must avoid egotism, which, just now, would be no vanity.

I have lately written a wild, rambling, unfinished rhapsody, called "The Devil's Drive", the notion of which I took from Porson's "Devil's Walk".⁴⁸⁰

Redde some Italian, and wrote two Sonnets on * * *.⁴⁸¹ I never wrote but one sonnet before, and that was not in earnest, and many years ago, as an exercise—and I will never write another.⁴⁸² They are the most puling, petrifying, stupidly platonic compositions. I detest the Petrarch so much, that I would not be the man even to have obtained his Laura, which the metaphysical, whining dotard never could.⁴⁸³

[December 19th–January 15th missing.]

January 16, 1814.

479: Mo.'s note says "These names are all left blank in the original".

480: B. did not publish *The Devil's Drive*. Mo. appends some of its verses.

481: Marchand says that these were the "Ginevra" sonnets to Frances Wedderburn Webster.

482: In fact he wrote several, including the ones on Chillon and the Swiss notables.

483: Mo. notes, "He learned to think more reverently of 'The Petrarch' afterwards"; but see for example *Don Juan* V, 1, 7-8.

* * * * *

To-morrow I leave town for a few days. I saw Lewis to-day, who is just returned from Oatlands,⁴⁸⁵ where he has been squabbling with Mad[ame]. de Staël about himself, Clarissa Harlowe, Mackintosh, and me. My homage has never been paid in that quarter, or we would have agreed still worse. I don't talk—I can't flatter, and won't listen, except to a pretty or a foolish woman. She bored Lewis with praises of himself till he sickened—found out that Clarissa was perfection, and Mackintosh the first man in England. There I agree, at least *one* of the first—but Lewis did not. As to Clarissa, I leave to those who can read it to judge and dispute. I could not do the one, and am, consequently, not qualified for the other. She told Lewis wisely, he being my friend, that I was affected, in the first place; and that, in the next place, I committed the heinous offence of sitting at dinner with my *eyes* shut, or half shut. * * * I wonder if I really have this trick. I must cure myself of it, if true. One insensibly acquires awkward habits, which should be broken in time. If this is one, I wish I had been told of it before. It would not so much signify if one was always to be checkmated by a plain woman, but one may as well see some of one's neighbours, as well as the plate upon the table.

I should like, of all things, to have heard the Amabæan⁴⁸⁶ eclogue between her and Lewis—both obstinate, clever, odd, garrulous, and shrill. In fact, one could have heard nothing else. But they fell out, alas!—and now they will never quarrel again. Could not one reconcile them for the “nonce?” Poor Corinne—she will find that some of her fine sayings won't suit our fine ladies and gentlemen.

I am getting rather into admiration of * *,⁴⁸⁷ the youngest sister of * *.⁴⁸⁸ A wife would be my salvation. I am sure the wives of my acquaintances have hitherto done me little good. * * is beautiful, but very young, and, I think, a fool. But I have not seen enough to judge; besides, I hate an *esprit* in petticoats. That she won't love me is very probable, nor shall I love her. But, on my system, and the modern system in general, that don't signify. The business (if it came to business) would probably be arranged between papa and me. She would have her own way; I am good-humoured to women, and docile;⁴⁸⁹ and, if I did not fall in love with her, which I should try to prevent, we should be a very comfortable couple. As to conduct, *that* she must look to. * * * * * But *if* I love, I shall be jealous;—and for that reason I will not be in love. Though, after all, I doubt my temper, and fear I should not be so patient as becomes the *bienséance* of a married man in my station. * * * * * Divorce ruins the poor *femme*, and damages are a paltry compensation. I do fear my temper would lead me into some of our oriental tricks of vengeance, or, at any rate, into a summary appeal to the court of twelve paces. So “I'll none on't,” but e'en remain single and solitary;—though I should like to have somebody now and then to yawn with one.⁴⁹⁰

W[ard], and, after him, * *, has stolen one of my buffooneries about Mde. de Staël's Metaphysics and the Fog, and passed it, by speech and letter, as their own. As Gibbet says, “they are the most of a gentleman of any on the road.”⁴⁹¹ W[ard]. is in sad enmity with the Whigs about this Review of Fox (if he *did* review him);⁴⁹²—all the epigrammatists and essayists are at him. I hate *odds*, and wish he may beat them. As for me, by the blessing of indifference, I have simplified my politics into an utter detestation of all existing governments; and, as it is the shortest and most agreeable and summary feeling imaginable, the first moment of an universal republic would convert me into an advocate for single and uncontradicted despotism. The fact is, riches are power, and poverty is slavery, all over the earth, and one sort of establishment is no better nor worse for a *people* than another. I shall adhere to my party, because it would not be honourable to act otherwise; but, as to *opinions*, I don't think politics *worth an opinion*. *Conduct* is another thing:—if you begin with a party, go on with them. I have no consistency, except in politics; and *that* probably arises from my indifference on the subject altogether.

484: Mo. places these asterisks below the date, indicating that there is a large internal cut at the start of the entry for January 16th. Prothero has no asterisks; Marchand places them above the date. January 16th is one possible date for B.'s finishing correcting the proofs to *The Corsair*.

485: The Duke of York's estate in Surrey.

486: “Amabæan” undefined.

487: Lady Catherine Annesley.

488: Frances Wedderburn Webster.

489: Not in the case of Annabella Milbanke.

490: On the day following this B. takes Augusta to Newstead.

491: Gibbet, like Scrub, is from Farquhar's *The Beaux' Stratagem*.

492: Ward had written a review in the June 1813 *Quarterly* which contained some criticisms of Fox.

[Moore breaks off the Journal at this point (p. 475) and resumes it some pages later (p. 498). In the gap, starting the day after the last entry, Byron took Augusta and her children to Newstead for Christmas.]

[January 17th-February 17th missing.]

February 18.

Better than a month since I last journalized:—most of it out of London and at Notts., but a busy one and a pleasant, at least three weeks of it. On my return, I find all the newspapers in hysterics, and town in an uproar, on the avowal and republication of two stanzas on Princess Charlotte's weeping at Regency's speech to Lauderdale in 1812.⁴⁹³ They are daily at it still;—some of the abuse good, all of it hearty. They talk of a motion in our House upon it—be it so.

Got up—redde the Morning Post—containing the battle of Buonaparte,⁴⁹⁴ the destruction of the Custom-house,⁴⁹⁵ and a paragraph on me as long as my pedigree, and vituperative, as usual. * * *

Hobhouse is returned to England.⁴⁹⁶ He is my best friend, the most lively, and a man of the most sterling talents extant.

"The Corsair" has been conceived, written, published, &c. since I last took up this Journal. They tell me it has great success;⁴⁹⁷—it was written *con amore*, and much from *existence*. Murray is satisfied with its progress; and if the public are equally so with the perusal, there's an end of the matter.

Nine o'clock.

Been to Hanson's on business. Saw Rogers, and had a note from Lady Melbourne, who says, it is said that I am "much out of spirits." I wonder if I really am or not? I have certainly enough of "that perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart,"⁴⁹⁸ and it is better they should believe it to be the result of these attacks than of the real cause; but—ay, ay, always *but*, to the end of the chapter.

Hobhouse has told me ten thousand anecdotes of Napoleon, all good and true. My friend H. is the most entertaining of companions, and a fine fellow to boot.

Redde a little—wrote notes and letters, and am alone, which Locke says is bad company. "Be not solitary, be not idle."⁴⁹⁹—Um!—the idleness is troublesome; but I can't see so much to regret in the solitude. The more I see of men, the less I like them. If I could but say so of women too, all would be well. Why can't I? I am now six-and-twenty; my passions have had enough to cool them; my affections more than enough to wither them,—and yet—and yet—always *yet* and *but*—"Excellent well, you are a fishmonger—get thee to a nunnery."—"They fool me to the top of my bent."⁵⁰⁰

Midnight.

Began a letter, which I threw into the fire. Redde—but to little purpose. Did not visit Hobhouse, as I promised and ought. No matter, the loss is mine. Smoked cigars.

Napoleon!—this week will decide his fate. All seems against him; but I believe and hope he will win—at least, beat back the Invaders. What right have we to prescribe sovereigns to France? Oh for a Republic! "Brutus, thou sleepest."⁵⁰¹ Hobhouse abounds in continental anecdotes of this extraordinary man; all in favour of his intellect and courage, but against his *bonhomme*. No wonder;—how should he, who knows mankind well, do other than despise and abhor them?

The greater the equality, the more impartially evil is distributed, and becomes lighter by the division among so many—therefore, a Republic!

493: B.'s *Lines to a Lady Weeping* ("Weep, Daughter of a Royal Line") was reprinted in early February in the second edition of *The Corsair*, and was at once attacked by the *Morning Post* and *Courier*. See BLJ IV 51.

494: On February 11th Bonaparte had defeated Blücher at Champaubert; see letter to Annabella, BLJ IV 60.

495: The Custom-house burnt down on February 12th; see BLJ IV 60 and 62.

496: H. returned on February 5th 1814, having been away since May 27th 1813. He had traversed Europe from Sweden to Croatia, often near the war-zone. On February 10th 1814 he records in his diary, "In the evening I went to the play at Covent Garden, which was overflowing. There I saw and joined my dearest Byron in a private box. It is long since I have been so happy. I came home with him and sat till near four in the morning. He showed me several original letters of Robert Burns ..."

497: B. understates. *The Corsair* sold ten thousand copies on its first day of sale.

498: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V iii 45. Refers to guilt.

499: Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, last paragraph but one, before Latin quotation.

500: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II ii 173; II i 121 (with repetitions); and III ii 374.

501: Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, II i 46 and 48.

More notes from Mad. de * * unanswered⁵⁰²—and so they shall remain. I admire her abilities, but really her society is overwhelming—an avalanche that buries one in glittering nonsense—all snow and sophistry.

Shall I go to Mackintosh's on Tuesday? um!—I did not go to Marquis Lansdowne's, nor to Miss Berry's, though both are pleasant. So is Sir James's,—but I don't know—I believe one is not the better for parties; at least, unless some *regnante* is there.

I wonder how the deuce any body could make such a world; for what purpose dandies, for instance, were ordained—and kings—and fellows of colleges—and women of “a certain age”⁵⁰³—and many men of any age—and myself, most of all!

“Divesne prisco et natus ab Inacho
Nil interest, an pauper et infimâ
De gente, sub dio moreris,
Victima nil miserantis Orci

* * * *

Omnes eodem cogimur.”⁵⁰⁴

Is there any thing beyond?—*who* knows? *He* that can't tell. Who tells that there *is*? He who don't know. And when shall he know? perhaps, when he don't expect, and generally when he don't wish it.⁵⁰⁵ In this last respect, however, all are not alike: it depends a good deal upon education,—something upon nerves and habits—but most upon digestion.

Saturday, Feb. 19th.

Just returned from seeing Kean⁵⁰⁶ in Richard.⁵⁰⁷ By Jove, he is a soul! Life—nature—truth—without exaggeration or diminution. Kemble's⁵⁰⁸ Hamlet is perfect;—but Hamlet is not Nature. Richard is a man; and Kean is Richard.⁵⁰⁹ Now to my own concerns.

* * * * *

Saturday, Feb. 19th.

Went to Waite's.⁵¹⁰ Teeth are all right and white; but he says that I grind them in my sleep and chip the edges. That same sleep is no friend of mine, though I court him sometimes for half the 24.

February 20th.

Got up and tore out two leaves of this Journal—I don't know why. Hodgson just called and gone. He has much *bonhomme* with his other good qualities, and more talent than he has yet had credit for beyond his circle.

An invitation to dine at Holland-house to meet Kean. He is worth meeting, and I hope, by getting into good society, he will be prevented from falling like Cooke.⁵¹¹ He is greater now on the stage, and off he should never be less. There is a stupid and underrating criticism upon him in one of the newspapers. I thought that, last night, though great, he rather under-acted more than the first time. This may be the effect of these cavils; but I hope he has more sense than to mind them. He cannot expect to maintain his present eminence, or to advance still higher, without the envy of his green-room fellows, and the nibbling of their admirers. But, if he don't beat them all, why then—merit hath no purchase in “these coster-monger days.”⁵¹²

502: See Appendix 1.

503: Compare *Beppo*, 22, 1-3.

504: Hor., Od. II iii 21-5: “Whether you are rich and sprung from old Inachus, or live beneath Heaven's canopy, poor and of low birth, it makes no difference: you are Orcus' victim. / We are all being gathered into the same fold”.

505: Inspired by Falstaff at *Henry IV I*, V i, final speech – “Who hath it? – he that died o'Wednesday”, and so on.

506: The great actor Edmund Kean.

507: Richard III. Kean had opened as him on February 12th.

508: John Philip Kemble was the leading actor of the previous generation. He was Sarah Siddons' brother, and very slow, formal and statuesque, a tradition which Kean overturned.

509: B. may mean that Hamlet is “acting all the time”; but the same is true of Richard III.

510: Waite was a prominent London dentist. B. used his tooth-powder.

511: George Frederick Cooke was an actor of the previous generation, who hit the bottle (which Kean also did, despite B.'s aspiration for him here).

512: Shakespeare, *Henry IV II*, i 2 160: in fact, “these costermongers' times”.

I wish that I had a talent for the drama; I would write a tragedy *now*.⁵¹³ But no,—it is gone. Hodgson talks of one,—he will do it well;—and I think M[oore] should try. He has wonderful powers, and much variety; besides, he has lived and felt. To write so as to bring home to the heart, the heart must have been tried,—but, perhaps, ceased to be so. While you are under the influence of passions, you only feel, but cannot describe them,—any more than, when in action, you could turn round and tell the story to your next neighbour! When all is over,—all, all, and irrevocable,—trust to memory—she is then but too faithful.

Went out, and answered some letters, yawned now and then,—and redde the Robbers.⁵¹⁴ Fine,—but Fiesco⁵¹⁵ is better; and Alfieri[,]⁵¹⁶ and Monti's *Aristodemo*⁵¹⁷ *best*. They are more equal than the Tedeschi dramatists.

Answered—or rather acknowledged—the receipt of young Reynolds's poem, *Safie*.⁵¹⁸ The lad is clever, but much of his thoughts are borrowed,—*whence*, the Reviewers may find out: I hate discouraging a young one; and I think;—though wild and more oriental than he would be, had he seen the scenes where he has placed his tale,—that he has much talent, and, certainly, fire enough.

Received a very singular epistle;⁵¹⁹ and the mode of its conveyance, through Lord H[olland]. 's hands, as curious as the letter itself. But it was gratifying and pretty.

[February 21st–26th missing.]

Sunday, Feb. 27th.

Here I am, alone, instead of dining at Lord H[olland]. 's, where I was asked,—but not inclined to go any where. Hobhouse says I am growing a *loup garou*,—a solitary hobgoblin.⁵²⁰ True;—”I am myself alone.”⁵²¹ The last week has been passed in reading—seeing plays—now and then, visitors—sometimes yawning and sometimes sighing, but no writing,—save of letters. If I could always read, I should never feel the want of society. Do I regret it?—um!—”Man delights not me,”⁵²² and only one woman—at a time.

There is something to me very softening in the presence of a woman,—some strange influence, even if one is not in love with them—which I cannot at all account for, having no very high opinion of the sex. But yet,—I always feel in better humour with myself and every thing else, if there is a woman within ken. Even Mrs. Mule, my fire-lighter,—the most ancient and withered of her kind,⁵²³—and (except to myself) not the best-tempered—always makes me laugh,—no difficult task when I am “i' the vein.”⁵²⁴

Heigho! I would I were in mine island!—I am not well and yet I look in good health. At times, I fear, “I am not in my perfect mind;”⁵²⁵—and yet my heart and head have stood many a crash, and what should ail them now? They prey upon themselves, and I am sick—sick—”Prithee, undo this button—why should a cat, a rat, a dog have life—and *thou* no life at all?”⁵²⁶ Six-and-twenty years, as they call them,—why, I might and should have been a Pasha by this time. “I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun.”⁵²⁷

Buonaparte is not yet beaten; but has rebutted Blucher, and repiques S[ch]wartzenburg.⁵²⁸ This it is to have a head. If he again wins, “væ victis!”⁵²⁹

[February 28th –March 5th missing.]

513: B. writes several tragedies before his career ends.

514: Schiller's *Die Räuber* (1782).

515: Schiller's *Fiesco* (1783).

516: Comma added by Prothero, otherwise it looks as if there are two *Aristodemo* tragedies.

517: *Aristodemo* by Vincenzo Monti (1786). B. and H. see it at Venice on November 29th 1816. H. writes in his diary that it is “no drama”.

518: *The Eden of imagination. Safie. The Naiad* (1814) by Keats' friend John Hamilton Reynolds. See BLJ IV 68.

519: Epistle unidentified. B. may answer it on February 14th: see BLJ IV 58.

520: In fact, “a wolf that prowls at night”.

521: Shakespeare, *Henry VI III*, V iv 83; the line is said by Gloucester, the future Richard III.

522: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II ii 307.

523: See Appendix 2.

524: Shakespeare, *Richard III* IV ii 120 and 122 (again).

525: Shakespeare, *King Lear*, IV vii 63.

526: *Ibid.*, V iii 309 and 306-7; B. gets the animals out of sequence.

527: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V v 48.

528: The Austrian Prince Schwartzenburg was commander of the allied forces chasing Bonaparte.

529: “Woe to the vanquished!” (uttered by the Gallic chieftain Brennus at Livy, 5 49).

Sunday, March 6th.

On Tuesday last dined with Rogers,—Mad^c. de Staël, Mackintosh, Sheridan, Erskine, and Payne Knight,⁵³⁰ Lady Donegall and Miss R[andall].⁵³¹ there. Sheridan told a very good story of himself and M[adam]e de Recamier's⁵³² handkerchief; Erskine a few stories of himself only. *She* is going to write a big book about England, she says;—I believe her. Asked by her how I liked Miss * * 's thing, called * *,⁵³³ and answered (very sincerely) that I thought it very bad for *her*, and worse than any of the others. Afterwards thought it possible Lady Donegal, being Irish, might be a Patroness of * * ,⁵³⁴ and was rather sorry for my opinion, as I hate putting people into fusses, either with themselves or their favourites; it looks as if one did it on purpose. The party went off very well, and the fish was very much to my gusto.⁵³⁵ But we got up too soon after the women; and Mrs. Corinne always lingers so long after dinner that we wish her in—the drawing-room.

To-day C[ampbell]. called, and while sitting here in came Merivale.⁵³⁶ During our colloquy, C[ampbell]. (ignorant that M[erivale]. was the writer) abused the "mawkishness of the Quarterly Review of Grimm's Correspondence."⁵³⁷ I (knowing the secret) changed the conversation as soon as I could; and C[ampbell]. went away, quite convinced of having made the most favourable impression on his new acquaintance. Merivale is luckily a very good-natured fellow, or God he knows what might have been engendered from such a malaprop. I did not look at him while this was going on, but I felt like a coal—for I like Merivale, as well as the article in question. * * * * *

Asked to Lady Keith's⁵³⁸ to-morrow evening—I think I will go;—but it is the first party invitation I have accepted this "season," as the learned Fletcher called it, when that youngest brat of Lady * * 's⁵³⁹ cut my eye and cheek open with a misdirected pebble—"Never mind, my Lord, the scar will be gone before the *season*;" as if one's eye was of no importance in the mean time.

Lord Erskine called, and gave me his famous pamphlet with a marginal note and corrections in his handwriting. Sent it to be bound superbly, and shall treasure it.

Sent my fine print of Napoleon to be framed: It *is* framed; and the Emperor becomes his robes as if he had been hatched in them.

March 7th.

Rose at seven—ready by half-past eight—went to Mr. Hanson's, Berkeley Square⁵⁴⁰—went to church with his eldest daughter, Mary Anne (a good girl), and gave her away to the Earl of Portsmouth.⁵⁴¹ Saw her fairly a countess—congratulated the family and groom (bride)—drank a bumper of wine (wholesome sherris)⁵⁴² to their felicity, and all that—and came home. Asked to stay to dinner, but could not. At three sat to Phillips for faces.⁵⁴³ Called on Lady M[elbourne].—I like her so well, that I always stay too long. (Mem. to mend of that.)

Passed the evening with Hobhouse, who has begun a Poem,⁵⁴⁴ which promises highly;—wish he would go on with it. Heard some curious extracts from a life of Morosini, the blundering Venetian, who blew up the Acropolis at Athens with a bomb,⁵⁴⁵ and be damned to him! Waxed sleepy—just come home—must go to bed, and am engaged to meet Sheridan to-morrow at Rogers's.

Queer ceremony that same of marriage—saw many abroad, Greek and Catholic⁵⁴⁶—one, at *home*, many years ago. There be some strange phrases in the prologue (the exhortation), which made me turn away, not to laugh in the face of the surpliceman. Made one blunder, when I joined the hands of the happy—rammed their left hands, by mistake, into one another. Corrected it—bustled back to the altar-

530: Richard Payne Knight was a numismatist and antiquary.

531: Miss Randall was governess to Madame de Staël's daughter.

532: Madame de Recamier, famous French beauty. Painted by David.

533: Maria Edgeworth's novel *Patronage*. Published in 1814. See BLJ III 204.

534: That is, patroness of Maria Edgeworth.

535: "Taste."

536: John Herman Merivale, author of *Orlando in Roncesvalles*, a version of the *Morgante Maggiore*.

537: *Quarterly Review*, March 1813.

538: Daughter of Dr Johnson's friend Mrs Thrale.

539: Lady Oxford, whose multi-fathered children were known as The Harleian Miscellany.

540: Prothero corrects this to "Bloomsbury Square".

541: The marriage was annulled on the grounds of Portsmouth's insanity.

542: B. thinks he is quoting Falstaff in Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, but "excellent" and "fertile" are the only adjectives Falstaff uses to describe his favourite drink there. In the prose Preface to *Don Juan* B. has "right sherris". He feels proprietorial enough about Shakespeare to employ his idiom, even if he is inaccurate.

543: Thomas Phillips. See Peach fig. 38. This is the famous portrait of B. in his Albanian costume.

544: H.'s poem never sees the light of day.

545: In 1687.

546: I do not know where B. saw a Catholic wedding when abroad.

rail, and said "Amen." Portsmouth responded as if he had got the whole by heart; and, if any thing, was rather before the priest. It is now midnight and * * * * *

[*March 8th and 9th missing.*]

March 10th, Thor's Day.

On Tuesday dined with Rogers,—Mackintosh, Sheridan, Sharpe,—much talk, and good,—all, except my own little prattlement. Much of old times—Horne Tooke—the Trials—evidence of Sheridan, and anecdotes of those times, when *I*, alas! was an infant. If I had been a man, I would have made an English Lord Edward Fitzgerald.⁵⁴⁷

Set down Sheridan at Brookes's,⁵⁴⁸—where, by the by, he could not have well set down himself, as he and I were the only drinkers. Sherry means to stand for Westminster, as Cochrane (the stock-jobbing hoaxer)⁵⁴⁹ must vacate. Brougham⁵⁵⁰ is a candidate. I fear for poor dear Sherry. Both have talents of the highest order, but the youngster has *yet* a character. We shall see, if he lives to Sherry's age, how he will pass over the red-hot ploughshares of public life: I don't know why, but I hate to see the *old* ones lose; particularly Sheridan, notwithstanding all his *méchanceté*.

Received many, and the kindest, thanks from Lady Portsmouth, *père* and *mère*, for my match-making. I don't regret it, as she looks the countess well, and is a very good girl. It is odd how well she carries her new honours. She looks a different woman, and high-bred, too. I had no idea that I could make so good a peeress.

Went to the play with Hobhouse. Mrs. Jordan⁵⁵¹ superlative in Hoyden, and Jones well enough in Foppington.⁵⁵² *What plays!* what wit!—*helas!* Congreve and Vanbrugh are your only comedy. Our society is too insipid now for the like copy. Would *not* go to Lady Keith's. Hobhouse thought it odd. I wonder *he* should like parties. If one is in love, and wants to break a commandment and covet any thing that is there, they do very well. But to go out amongst the mere herd, without a motive, pleasure, or pursuit—'sdeath! "I'll none of it."⁵⁵³ He told me an odd report,—that *I* am the actual Conrad, the veritable Corsair, and that part of my travels are supposed to have passed in privacy.⁵⁵⁴ Um!—people sometimes hit near the truth; but never the whole truth. H. don't know what I was about the year after he left the Levant; nor does any one—nor—nor—nor—however, it is a lie—but, "I doubt the equivocation of the fiend that lies like truth!"⁵⁵⁵

I shall have letters of importance to-morrow. Which, * *, or * *? heigho!— * ⁵⁵⁶ is in my heart, * ⁵⁵⁷ in my head, * * in my eye,⁵⁵⁸ and the *single* one, Heaven knows where. All write, and will be answered. "Since I have crept in favour with myself, I must maintain it;"⁵⁵⁹ but *I* never "mistook my person,"⁵⁶⁰ though I think others have.

* ⁵⁶¹ called to-day in great despair about his mistress, who has taken a freak of * * *. He began a letter to her, but was obliged to stop short—I finished it for him, and he copied and sent it. If *he* holds out, and keeps to my instructions of affected indifference, she will lower her colours. If she don't, he will, at least, get rid of her, and she don't seem much worth keeping. But the poor lad is in love—if that is the case, she will win. When they once discover their power, *finita e la musica*.⁵⁶²

Sleepy, and must go to bed.

[*March 11th–14th missing.*]

Tuesday, March 15th.

547: Fitzgerald tried to lead the United Irishmen against the English; but was killed, in 1798.

548: A club for Whigs.

549: Thomas Cochrane, future nautical hero of South America.

550: Henry Brougham, Whig politician and one of B.'s worst enemies.

551: Dorothy Jordan, famous comic actress.

552: Roles in Sheridan's *The Trip to Scarborough*, a version of Vanbrugh's *The Relapse*.

553: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V iii 46: *Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it*.

554: Marchand suggests "piracy", which would fit; but B., as he now writes, was proud of the fact that few knew what he'd done in Greece in 1810-11 after H. had left.

555: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V v 42-4.

556: Augusta.

557: Frances Wedderburn Webster.

558: Lady Catherine Annesley.

559: Shakespeare, *Richard III*, I ii 259.

560: *Ibid.*, I ii 252.

561: Unidentified.

562: "The tune ceases".

Dined yesterday with R[oger]s, Mackintosh, and Sharpe. Sheridan could not come. Sharpe told several very amusing anecdotes of Henderson, the actor.⁵⁶³ Stayed till late, and came home, having drunk so much *tea*, that I did not get to sleep till six this morning. R[ogers]. says I am to be in *this Quarterly*—cut up, I presume, as they “hate us youth.”⁵⁶⁴ *N’importe*. As Sharpe was passing by the doors of some Debating Society (the Westminster Forum) in his way to dinner, he saw rubricated on the walls *Scott’s* name and *mine*—“Which the best poet?” being the question of the evening; and I suppose all the Templars and *would bes* took our rhymes in vain in the course of the controversy. Which had the greater show of hands, I neither know nor care; but I feel the coupling of the names as a compliment,—though I think Scott deserves better company.

* * * * *

W[edderburn]. W[ebster]. called—Lord Erskine, Lord Holland, &c., &c. Wrote to * * the Corsair report. She says she don’t wonder, since “Conrad is so *like*.” It is odd that one, who knows me so thoroughly,⁵⁶⁵ should tell me this to my face. However, if she don’t know, nobody can.

Mackintosh is, it seems, the writer of the defensive letter in the Morning Chronicle. If so, it is very kind, and more than I did for myself.

* * * * *

Told Murray to secure for me Bandello’s Italian Novels⁵⁶⁶ at the sale to-morrow. To me they will be *nuts*. Redde a satire on myself, called “Anti-Byron,” and told Murray to publish it if he liked.⁵⁶⁷ The object of the author is to prove me an Atheist and a systematic conspirator against law and government. Some of the verse is good; the prose I don’t quite understand. He asserts that my “deleterious works” have had “an effect upon civil society, which requires,” &c., &c., &c., and his own poetry. It is a lengthy poem, and a long preface, with an harmonious title-page. Like the fly in the fable, I seem to have got upon a wheel which makes much dust; but, unlike the said fly, I do not take it all for my own raising.

A letter from *Bella*,⁵⁶⁸ which I answered. I shall be in love with her again, if I don’t take care.

* * * * *

I shall begin a more regular system of reading soon.

[*March 16th missing.*]

Thursday, March 17th.

I have been sparring with Jackson for exercise this morning; and mean to continue and renew my acquaintance with the muffs.⁵⁶⁹ My chest, and arms, and wind are in very good plight, and I am not in flesh. I used to be a hard hitter, and my arms are very long for my height (5 feet 8 ½ inches). At any rate, exercise is good, and this the severest of all; fencing and the broad-sword never fatigued me half so much.

Redde the “Quarrels of Authors”⁵⁷⁰ (another sort of *sparring*)—a new work, by that most entertaining and researching writer, Israeli; They seem to be an irritable set, and I wish myself well out of it. “I’ll not march through Coventry with them, that’s flat.”⁵⁷¹ What the devil had I to do with scribbling? It is too late to inquire, and all regret is useless. But, an it were to do again,—I should write again, I suppose. Such is human nature, at least my share of it;—though I shall think better of myself, if I have sense to stop now. If I have a wife, and that wife has a son—by any body—I will bring up mine heir in the most anti-poetical way—make him a lawyer, or a pirate, or—any thing. But, if he writes too, I shall be sure he is none of mine, and cut him off with a Bank token. Must write a letter—three o’clock.

563: John Henderson, an actor praised by Mrs Siddons. Equally good as Hamlet and Falstaff.

564: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV I*, II ii 82. This quotation appears more often in B.’s letters than any other.

565: Probably “* *” is in this case Lady Melbourne.

566: Matteo Bandello’s *Novelle* provided the sources for *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, and *The Winter’s Tale*.

567: See BLJ IV 81 (letter of March 12th); also BLJ IV 93.

568: Annabella Milbanke.

569: Boxing-gloves. See *Don Juan II*, 92, 7-8.

570: Isaac Disraeli, *Quarrels of Authors*, 3 vols. 1814.

571: Falstaff at Shakespeare, *Henry IV I*, IV ii 43.

[March 18th and 19th missing.]

Sunday, March 20th.

I intended to go to Lady Hardwicke's, but won't. I always begin the day with a bias towards going to parties; but, as the evening advances, my stimulus fails, and I hardly ever go out—and, when I do, always regret it. This might have been a pleasant one;—at least, the hostess is a very superior woman. Lady Lansdowne's to-morrow—Lady Heathcote's⁵⁷² Wednesday. Um!—I must spur myself into going to some of them, or it will look like rudeness, and it is better to do as other people do—confound them!

Redde Machiavel,⁵⁷³ parts of Chardin,⁵⁷⁴ and Sismondi,⁵⁷⁵ and Bandello—by starts. Redde the *Edinburgh*, 44, just come out. In the beginning of the article on “Edgeworth's Patronage”, I have gotten a high compliment, I perceive. Whether this is creditable to me, I know not; but it does honour to the editor, because he once abused me.⁵⁷⁶ Many a man will retract praise; none but a high-spirited mind will revoke its censure, or can praise the man it has once attacked. I have often, since my return to England, heard Jeffrey most highly commended by those who know him for things independent of his talents. I admire him for *this*—not because he has *praised me* (I have been so praised elsewhere and abused, alternately, that mere habit has rendered me as indifferent to both as a man at twenty-six can be to any thing), but because he is, perhaps, the *only man* who, under the relations in which he and I stand, or stood, with regard to each other, would have had the liberality to act thus; none but a great soul dared hazard it. The height on which he stands has not made him giddy;—a little scribbler would have gone on cavilling to the end of the chapter. As to the justice of his panegyric, that is matter of taste. There are plenty to question it, and glad, too of the opportunity.

Lord Erskine called to-day. He means to carry down his reflections on the war—or rather wars—to the present day. I trust that he will. Must send to Mr. Murray to get the binding of my copy of his pamphlet finished, as Lord E[rskine]. has promised me to correct it, and add some marginal notes to it. Any thing in his handwriting will be a treasure, which will gather compound interest from years. Erskine has high expectations of Mackintosh's promised History. Undoubtedly it must be a classic, when finished.

Sparred with Jackson again yesterday morning, and shall to-morrow. I feel all the better for it, in spirits, though my arms and shoulders are very stiff from it. Mem. to attend the pugilistic dinner:—Marquis Huntley⁵⁷⁷ is in the chair.

* * * * *

Lord Erskine thinks that ministers must be in peril of going out. So much the better for him. To me it is the same who are in or out;—we want something more than a change of ministers, and some day we will have it.

I remember, in riding from Chrisso to Castri (Delphos) along the sides of Parnassus, I saw six eagles in the air.⁵⁷⁸ It is uncommon to see so many together; and it was the number—not the species, which is common enough—that excited my attention.

The last bird I ever fired at was an *eaglet*, on the shore of the Gulf of Lepanto, near Vostitza.⁵⁷⁹ It was only wounded, and I tried to save it, the eye was so bright; but it pined, and died in a few days; and I never did since, and never will, attempt the death of another bird. I wonder what put these two things into my head just now? I have been reading Sismondi, and there is nothing there that could induce the recollection.

I am mightily taken with Braccio di Montone,⁵⁸⁰ Giovanni Galeazzo,⁵⁸¹ and Eccelino.⁵⁸² But the last is *not* Bracciaferro (of the same name), Count of Ravenna, whose history I want to trace. There is a

572: Ladies Hardwicke, Heathcote and Lansdowne were all Whig society hostesses. B. receives no Tory invitations.

573: Chardin: B. sold his copy of Chardin's *Voyage en Perse* (Paris 1181) in 1816: see CMP 233 No 59.

574: Sismondi: B. did not sell his copy either of Sismondi's *Littérature du Midi de l'Europe* or of the same writer's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Ages*. H. may have bought them. See Appendix 3.

575: Bandello: B. sold his copy of *Bandello's Novelle* (9 vols Livorno 1791) in 1816: see CMP 233 No 55.

576: B. still thinks that Francis Jeffrey reviewed *Hol* in the 1808 *Edinburgh*.

577: George Gordon [*sic*] ninth Marquis of Huntley. A Tory.

578: On December 16th 1809. H.'s diary mentions no eagles. Like the jackals at Ephesus, they may just be a good idea.

579: On December 9th 1809.

580: For Braccio di Montone, see Appendix 3.

581: For Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, see Appendix 3.

582: For Eccelino, see Appendix 3.

fine engraving in Lavater,⁵⁸³ from a picture by Fuseli, of *that* Ezzelin, over the body of Meduna, punished by him for a *hitch* in her constancy during his absence in the Crusades. He was right—but I want to know the story.⁵⁸⁴

* * * * *

[*March 21st missing.*]

Tuesday, March 22d.

Last night, *party* at Lansdowne-house. To-night, *party* at Lady Charlotte Greville's—deplorable waste of time, and something of temper. Nothing imparted—nothing acquired—talking without ideas—if any thing like *thought* in my mind, it was not on the subjects on which we were gabbling. Heigho!—and in this way half London pass what is called life. To-morrow there is Lady Heathcote's—shall I go? yes—to punish myself for not having a pursuit.

Let me see—what did I see? The only person who much struck me was Lady S * * d's⁵⁸⁵ eldest daughter, Lady C. L.⁵⁸⁶ They say she is *not* pretty. I don't know—everything is pretty that pleases; but there is an air of soul about her—and her colour changes—and there is that shyness of the antelope (which I delight in) in her manner so much, that I observed her more than I did any other woman in the rooms, and only looked at any thing else when I thought she might perceive and feel embarrassed by my After all, there may be something of association in this friend of Augusta's, and whatever she loves, I can't help liking.

Her mother, the marchioness, talked to me a little; and I was twenty times on the point of asking her to introduce me to *sa fille*, but I stopped short. This comes of that affray with the Carlises.

Earl Grey told me laughingly of a paragraph in the last *Moniteur*,⁵⁸⁷ which has stated, among other symptoms of rebellion, some particulars of the *sensation* occasioned in all our government gazettes by the “tear” lines,—*only* amplifying, in its re-statement, an epigram (by the by, no epigram except in the *Greek* acceptance of the word) into a *roman*. I wonder the Couriers, &c. &c. have not translated that part of the *Moniteur*, with additional comments.

The Princess of Wales has requested Fuseli to paint from “the Corsair”—leaving to him the choice of any passage for the subject: so Mr. Locke⁵⁸⁸ tells me. Tired—jaded—selfish and supine—must go to bed.

Roman, at least *Romance*, means a song sometimes, as in the Spanish. I suppose this is the *Moniteur*'s meaning, unless he has confused it with “the Corsair.”

[*March 23rd-27th missing.*]

Albany, March 28.

This night got into my new apartments,⁵⁸⁹ rented of Lord Althorpe, on a lease of seven years. Spacious, and room for my books and sabres. *In the house*, too, another advantage. The last few days, or whole week, have been very abstemious, regular in exercise, and yet very *unwell*.

Yesterday, dined *tête-à-tête* at the Cocoa [Tree]⁵⁹⁰ with Scrope Davies—sate from six till midnight—drank between us one bottle of champagne and six of claret, neither of which wines ever affect me. Offered to take Scrope home in my carriage; but he was tipsy and pious, and I was obliged to leave him on his knees praying to I know not what purpose or pagod. No headache, nor sickness, that night nor to-day. Got up, if any thing, earlier than usual—sparred with Jackson *ad sudorem*,⁵⁹¹ and have been much better in health than for many days. I have heard nothing more from Scrope. Yesterday paid him four thousand eight hundred pounds, a debt of some standing, and which I wished to have paid before.⁵⁹² My mind is much relieved by the removal of that *debit*.

583: B. has seen Fuseli's picture of “Count Bracciaferro with his slain mistress”, in Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* (tr. Hunter, 1789-92), II 294. The book also contains four engravings by Blake. See Appendix 4.

584: See Appendix 4.

585: Lady Stafford.

586: Charlotte Leveson.

587: Leading Parisian newspaper.

588: William Locke, pupil and friend of Fuseli.

589: Number Two, The Albany. Owned previously by Earl Spencer, an ancestor of Princess Di.

590: The Cocoa Tree was a club in St. James's Street. Founded by Tories in Queen Anne's reign, it was later a Jacobite establishment. Famous for gambling. Gibbon had been a member, as was H now.

591: “Till I sweated”.

592: This was the loan which had enabled B. and H. to tour the Orient in 1809-11. The Hoare account shows that on March 28th B. paid Davies £4804 12s 4d.

Augusta wants me to make it up with Carlisle.⁵⁹³ I have refused *every* body else, but I can't deny her any thing; so I must e'en do it, though I had as lief "drink up Eisel—eat a crocodile."⁵⁹⁴ Let me see—Ward, the Hollands, the Lambs, Rogers, &c. &c.—every body, more or less, have been trying for the last two years to accommodate this *couplet* quarrel to no purpose. I shall laugh if Augusta succeeds.

Redde a little of many things—shall get in all my books to-morrow. Luckily this room will hold them—with "ample room and verge, &c. the characters of hell to trace."⁵⁹⁵ I must set about some employment soon; my heart begins to eat *itself* again.

[March 29th –April 7th missing.]

April 8th.

Out of town six days. On my return, found my poor little pagod,⁵⁹⁶ Napoleon, pushed off his pedestal;—the thieves⁵⁹⁷ are in Paris. It is his own fault. Like Milo,⁵⁹⁸ he would rend the oak; but it closed again, wedged his hands, and now the beasts—lion, bear, down to the dirtiest jackall⁵⁹⁹—may all tear him. That Muscovite winter *wedged* his arms; ever since, he has fought with his feet and teeth. The last may still leave their marks; and "I guess now" (as the Yankies say) that he will yet play them a pass. He is in their rear—between them and their homes. Query—will they ever reach them?

Saturday, April 9th, 1814.

I mark this day!

Napoleon Buonaparte has abdicated the throne of the world. "Excellent well."⁶⁰⁰ Methinks Sylla⁶⁰¹ did better; for he revenged and resigned in the height of his sway, red with the slaughter of his foes—the finest instance of glorious contempt of the rascals upon record. Dioclesian⁶⁰² did well too—Amurath⁶⁰³ not amis, had he become aught except a dervise—Charles the Fifth⁶⁰⁴ but so, so—but Napoleon, worst of all. What! wait till they were in his capital, and then talk of his readiness to give up what is already gone!! "What whining monk art thou—what holy cheat?"⁶⁰⁵ 'Sdeath!—Dionysius at Corinth⁶⁰⁶ was yet a king to this. The "Isle of Elba" to retire to! –Well—if it had been Caprea,⁶⁰⁷ I should have marvelled less. "I see men's minds are but a parcel of their fortunes."⁶⁰⁸ I am utterly bewildered and confounded.

I don't know—but I think *I*, even *I* (an insect compared with this creature), have set my life on casts not a millionth part of this man's. But, after all, a crown may be not worth dying for. Yet to outlive *Lodi*⁶⁰⁹ for this!!! Oh that Juvenal or Johnson⁶¹⁰ could rise from the dead! "Expende—quot libras in duce summo invenies?"⁶¹¹ I knew they were light in the balance of mortality; but I thought their living dust weighed more *carats*. Alas! this imperial diamond hath a flaw in it, and is now hardly fit to stick in a glazier's pencil:—the pen of the historian won't rate it worth a ducat.

593: Lord Carlisle had been B.'s guardian, and an amateur poet. They had fallen out on B.'s coming of age in 1811.

594: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, V i 170.

595: Thomas Gray, *The Bard*, 52.

596: Compare BLJ IV 90, 93, and *OtNB*, 26.

597: The "thieves" are the Allied armies of England, Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

598: Compare *OtNB*, 46. Milo was in Greek legend a strong man who attempted to rend an oak, which rebounded and trapped him, and he was eaten by wolves. See *OtNB*, st 6n.

599: Refers to England, Russia, and Austria / Prussia.

600: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II ii 173.

601: Lucius Cornelius Sulla, Roman tyrant who resigned and retired to his estate. See *OtNB*, st 7n.

602: Diocletian was a third century Roman emperor who abdicated.

603: Amurath II (Murad II) was an Ottoman Sultan who left his throne only to reascend it.

604: Compare *OtNB*, 64. Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor who is said to have become a monk on his retirement. See *OtNB* st 8n. B.'s gist is that both Charles V and Sulla knew when their time was up.

605: Otway, *Venice Preserved*, IV ii.

606: Compare *OtNB*, 125.

607: The island to which the Emperor Tiberius retired and orgied, only to return to Rome later.

608: Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, III xii 31-2. In fact, "men's judgements".

609: Napoleon beat the Austrians at the battle of Lodi in 1796.

610: Juvenal's tenth Satire, and Dr Johnson's imitation of it, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, are important subtexts for *OtNB*. B. wishes to be their avatar.

611: Juvenal, Satire X, 147-8: "Put Hannibal in the scales: how many pounds will that peerless / General mark up today?" – tr. Peter Green. B. uses the line as first of three epigraphs to *OtNB*.

Psha! “something too much of this.”⁶¹² But I won’t give him up even now; though all his admirers have, “like the Thanes, fallen from him.”⁶¹³

April 10th.

I do not know that I am happiest when alone; but this I am sure of, that I never am long in the society even of *her* I love, (God knows too well, and the Devil probably too), without a yearning for the company of my lamp and my utterly confused and tumbled-over library. Even in the day, I send away my carriage oftener than I use or abuse it. *Per esempio*,—I have not stirred out of these rooms for these four days past: but I have sparred for exercise (windows open) with Jackson an hour daily, to attenuate and keep up the ethereal part of me. The more violent the fatigue, the better my spirits for the rest of the day; and then, my evenings have that calm nothingness of languor, which I most delight in. To-day I have boxed one hour—written an ode to Napoleon Buonaparte—copied it—eaten six biscuits—drunk four bottles of soda water—redde away the rest of my time—besides giving poor * * a world of advice about this mistress of his, who is plaguing him into a phthisic and intolerable tediousness. I am a pretty fellow truly to lecture about “the sect.” No matter, my counsels are all thrown away.

[April 11th-18th missing.]

April 19th, 1814.

There is ice at both poles, north and south—all extremes are the same—misery belongs to the highest and the lowest only,—to the emperor and the beggar, when unsixpenced and unthroned. There is, to be sure, a damned insipid medium—an equinoctial line—no one knows where, except upon maps and measurement.

“And all our *yesterdays* have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.”⁶¹⁴

I will keep no further journal of that same hesternal⁶¹⁵ torch-light; and, to prevent me from returning, like a dog, to the vomit of memory, I tear out the remaining leaves of this volume, and write, in *Ipecacuanha*⁶¹⁶,—“that the Bourbons are restored!!!”—“Hang up philosophy.”⁶¹⁷ To be sure, I have long despised myself and man, but I never spat in the face of my species before—“O fool! I shall go mad.”⁶¹⁸

APPENDIX 1: Madame de Staël’s *billets* to Byron

The Bride of Abydos was published on December 2nd 1813, with the following note at line 179 (“The mind – the Music breathing from her face!”):

This expression has met with objections. I will not refer to “Him who hath not Music in his soul,” but merely request the reader to recollect, for ten seconds, the features of the woman whom he believes to be the most beautiful; and if he then does not comprehend fully what is feebly expressed in the above line, I shall be sorry for us both. For an eloquent passage in the latest work of the first female writer of this, perhaps of any age, on the analogy (and the immediate comparison excited by that analogy) between “painting and music,” see vol. iii. cap. 10, “De L’Allemagne.”⁶¹⁹ And is not this connexion still stronger with the original than the copy? with the colouring of Nature than of Art? After all, this is rather to be felt than described; still, I think there are some who will understand it, at least they would have done had they beheld the countenance whose speaking harmony suggested the idea; for this passage is not drawn from imagination but memory, that mirror which Affliction dashes to the earth, and looking down upon the fragments, only beholds the reflection multiplied.

⁶¹²: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III ii 81.

⁶¹³: Paraphrases Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V iii 49.

⁶¹⁴: Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V v 22-3.

⁶¹⁵: “Relating to yesterday”.

⁶¹⁶: Peruvian bark, used as an emetic. See *Don Juan* X 41, 5.

⁶¹⁷: Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, III iii 57. See *Don Juan* I, cancelled stanzas.

⁶¹⁸: Shakespeare, *King Lear*, II iv 285.

⁶¹⁹: Madame de Staël’s *de l’Allemagne* had been published by Murray earlier in 1813.

de Staël must have seen an advance copy, for she wrote to Byron on November 30th, and was extremely kind to him for the rest of their relationship, up until their parting in Switzerland in October 1816. These are three of her notes to him, all written during the period of the London Journal:

A) November 30th 1813:

[The / Lord Byron]

argyll's street, N^o. 31.

je ne saurais vous exprimer mylord, à quel point je me trouve honorée d'être dans une note de votre poème et de quel poème! il me semble que pour la première fois je me crois certaine d'un nom avenir et que vous avez disposé pour moi de cet empire de reputation qui vous serez tous les jours plus soumis – je voudrais vous parler de ce poème que tout le monde admire mais j'avouerai que je suis trop suspecte en le louant – et je ne cache pas qu'une louange de vous m'a fait éprouver un sentiment de fierté et de reconnaissance qui me rendait incapable de vous juger mais heureusement vous êtes au dessus du jugement –

donnez moi quelquefois le plaisir de vous voir – il y a un proverbe français qui dit *qu'un bonheur ne va jamais sans d'autre*.

N. de Staël

(LJ III 354-5)

Translation: I shall never be able to explain to you, my Lord, how honoured I am to be in a note to your poem,⁶²⁰ and what a poem! It seems to me that for the first time I feel certain of a name in the future and that you have put aside for me a part of that empire and that reputation under which you will be forever. I want to speak to you about this poem which everyone admires, but I admit that I am suspected for praising it, and I shall not disguise the fact that praise from you has caused me a feeling of pride and of recognition which makes me unable to judge you; fortunately, however, you are above judgement.

Allow me the pleasure of seeing you; there is a French proverb which says that one happiness never arrives without another. N[ecker] de Staël.

B) February 1814:

in Byron's hand: Received February 1814 / NB /

j'ai besoin de vous parler de votre dernière poème puisque tous ce qui l'admirent doivent vous flatter plus que moi – je ne juge que des images et des idées et des sentiments mais il y a de plus un style enchanteur que je sais mais que je ne puis juger – si vous avez le tort de ne pas aimer l'espèce humaine il me semble qu'elle fait ce qu'elle peut pour le raccommode avec vous pour un [] – et la destinée n'a pas maltraité celui qu'elle a fait le premier poète de son siècle et tout le reste – traitez ceux qui vous admirent avec un peu plus de bienveillance et sachez [] gré de pardonner à votre génie tout ce qui a du me déplaire en vous – je voudrais causer avec vous quand m'en trouverez vous digne?

N. de Staël Holstein

argyle street n^o 31

(BL.Add.Mss. 31037 f. 13)

Translation: I need to talk to you about your last poem⁶²¹ since all who admire it must flatter you more than I do – I do not judge the images and the ideas and the sentiments but there is besides these an enchanting style which I can see but of which I am no judge – if you are wrong enough not to love the human race it seems to me that they are doing all they can to recommend themselves to you for a [] – and destiny has not mistreated him whom she has made the first poet of his age and [of] all the rest – treat those who admire you with a little more benevolence and know [] taste to

⁶²⁰: See *BoA*, 179, B.'s note, in which he quotes her book *de l'Allemagne*.

⁶²¹: Murray published *The Corsair* on February 1st 1814.

pardon by your genius all who have had to displease you – I should like to chat with you when might you be free to see me? / Necker de Staël Holstein

C) February 1814:

[The / Lord Byron / St James]

Je renonce à vos visites, pourvu que vous acceptiez mes diners, car enfin à quoi servirait il de vivre dans le même tems que vous, si l'on ne vous voyait pas – dinez chez moi dimanche avec vos amis – je ne dirai pas vos admirateurs car je n'ai recontré que cela de tous parts.

à dimanche,

N. de Staël

Mardi –

je prends le silence pour oui –

(LJ III 384)

Translation: I renounce your visits, as long as you accept my dinners, because in the end, what is the point of living at the same time as you, if one never sees you? Dine with me on Sunday with your friends – I shall not say your admirers, for I have met none but them everywhere. Until Sunday. N[ecker]. de Staël – Tuesday. I shall take silence for assent.

APPENDIX 2: Moore's note on Mrs Mule

This ancient housemaid, of whose gaunt and witch-like appearance it would be impossible to convey an idea but by the pencil, furnished one among the numerous instances of Lord Byron's proneness to attach himself to any thing, however homely, that had once inlisted his good-nature in its behalf, and become associated with his thoughts. He first found this old woman in his lodgings at Bennet-street, where, for a whole season, she was the perpetual scare-crow of his visitors. When, next year, he took chambers in Albany, one of the great advantages which his friends looked to in the change was, that they should get rid of this phantom. But, no,—there she was again—he had actually brought her with him from Bennet-street. The following year saw him married, and, with a regular establishment of servants, in Piccadilly; and here,—as Mrs. Mule had not appeared to any of the visitors,—it was concluded, rashly, that the witch had vanished. One of those friends, however, who had most fondly indulged in this persuasion, happening to call one day when all the male part of establishment were abroad, saw, to his dismay, the door opened by the same grim personage, improved considerably in point of habiliments since he last saw her, and keeping pace with the increased scale of her master's household, as a new peruke, and other symptoms of promotion, testified. When asked, "how he came to carry this old woman about with him from place to place," Lord Byron's only answer was, "the poor old devil was so kind to me."

(Moore, 1830, I 502-3)

APPENDIX 3: Byron's reading in Sismondi

Byron possessed a copy of J. C. L. S. Sismondi's *Littérature de Midi de l'Europe*. It was probably on page 274 of its second volume that he discovered Filicaia's famous sonnet *Italia! Italia! O tu cui fe la sorte*, which he uses at *Childe Harold* IV, stanzas 42 and 43. But the book to which he here refers is Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen Age*, of which there are two editions. One, in four volumes, is dated Zurich, 1807-8; the second, in sixteen volumes, was published in Paris, and came out between 1809 and 1818. Byron had the second, larger one. Sismondi is a republican, and his history draws a horrible picture of the way the medieval Italian republics were betrayed and destroyed over and over by warlords, nobles, and politicians. Byron draws our attention (and, in a later letter, his future wife's attention) to three characters in it:

Braccio di Montone (1368-1424) was a famous condottiero, of a temperament with which Byron would have empathised: charming and generous to his friends, horrible to his enemies. An atheist and sworn enemy of Christianity. His death at the battle of Abruzzi was celebrated with festivities in Rome. Here is Sismondi's account of his death:

Dès que les habitans d'Aquila virent que leurs portes étoient demeurées libres, ils sortirent, au nombre de six mille, et vinrent fondre par derrière sur l'armée de Braccio. Tandis que celui-ci parcourait les rangs pour rendre le courage à ses soldats, il fut blessé d'un coup d'épée dans la gorge, et renversé de son cheval. Ses guerriers, en apprenant sa chute, s'enfuirent de tous côtés; lui-même, relevé par ses ennemis, fut conduit dans la tente de leur général; mais jamais il ne voulut répondre par un mot ou un signe à leurs offres, ou aux consolations qu'ils s'efforçoient de lui donner. Plusieurs de ses soldats étoient prisonniers avec lui; on leur permit de s'approcher de leur général, et de lui parler sans témoins; jamais ils ne purent obtenir de son ame altière qu'il leur donnât aucun signe d'attention après sa défaite, où qu'il prît quelque nourriture. Quoique les médecins eussent déclaré que sa blessure n'étoit point mortelle, lorsqu'il eut passé trois jours sans boire ou manger, ou articuler un seul son, il mourut dans la cinquante-sixième année de son âge, le 5 juin 1424. Les gémissemens et les sanglots de ses soldats retentirent dans le camp des vainqueurs; et la victoire, achetée par la mort d'un si grand homme, plongea ses ennemis mêmes dans le deuil. Son corps fut envoyé à Rome, où le pape le fit enterrer dans un lieu profane, comme étant excommunié. (Sismondi, *Républiques*, Paris 1809, VIII 362-3).

Translation: As soon as the inhabitants of Aquila saw that their gates were still free, six thousand of them came out, and fell on the rear of Braccio's army. As Braccio was running through the ranks, to give his soldiers courage, he was wounded by a sword-thrust in the throat, and knocked off his horse. His warriors, hearing of his fall, fled on all sides; he himself, taken up by his enemies, was carried into the tent of their general; but he never gave any indication, by word or signal, of wanting to answer their offers, or the consolations which they forced themselves to give him. Several of his soldiers were prisoners with him; they were allowed to approach their general, and to speak to him without witnesses present; they were never able to obtain indication from his haughty soul that he would give them any attention after his defeat, or that he would take any nourishment. Even though the doctors had declared that his injury was in no way mortal, after he had passed three days without drinking or eating, or making a single sound, he died in his fifty-sixth year, on June 5th 1424. The groans and sighs of his soldiers resounded through his vanquishers' camp; and victory, achieved by the death of such a great man, plunged even his enemies into grief. His body was taken to Rome, where the pope had it interred in unconsecrated ground, as being excommunicated.

Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti (1351-1402) was a soldier, politician, and patron of the arts. He extended his family's rule over much of north Italy, both by warfare and by diplomacy. He was a friend of Petrarch, and encouraged the foundation of Milan cathedral. He died of the plague while preparing to attack Florence. Sismondi ignores his cultural achievements, and at first describes him thus:

Jean Galeaz avoit un courage d'entreprise, qui contrastoit étrangement avec sa lâcheté personnelle. Le même homme qui ne se montra jamais à la tête d'aucune armée, qui se déroboit à tous les yeux dans le palais fortifié de Pavie, qui s'entouroit de triples gardes, et qui se mettoit encore en défense contre elles dans son appartement, comme s'il étoit sûr de leur trahison, cet homme n'hésitoit jamais un instant dans ses déterminations; jamais il n'étoit troublé par le danger, ou découragé par le mauvais succès. Supérieur à tous par le profondeur de sa politique, incapable de remords pour le crime, ou de honte pour la mauvaise foi, il tendoit avec ses vastes moyens, à soumettre toute l'Italie, et s'il en avoit achevé la conquête, il auroit trouvé peu d'obstacles à étendre sa domination sur les contrées voisines. Mais la liberté italienne fut sauvée quelque temps encore, parce que dans la carrière de son ambition, Jean Galeaz eut à combattre la vertu, le courage et la magnanimité de la république florentine, et la haine implacable de François de Carrare, qu'il avoit dépouillé. (Sismondi, *Républiques*, Paris 1809, VII 285-6).

Translation: Giovanni Galeazzo had an enterprising courage, which contrasted strangely with his personal cowardice. The same man who never showed himself at the head of any army, who hid himself from all eyes in the fortified palace of Pavia, who surrounded himself with triple guards, and then tried to defend himself in turn against them in his apartment, as if he were sure of their treachery, this man never hesitated an instant in his decision-making; he was never bothered by danger, or discouraged by lack of success. Superior to all in the depth of his politicking, incapable of remorse for crime, or of shame at breaking faith, he intended, with his vast means, to subdue all of Italy, and if he had achieved its conquest, would have found few obstacles in the way of his domination of the neighbouring countries. But Italian liberty was saved for a while longer, because in his ambitious career Giovanni Galeazzo had to fight against the virtue, the bravery and

the great-heartedness of the Florentine Republic, and the implacable hatred of Francisco de Carrara, which he had provoked and exposed.

Later Sismondi adds this, about the way Visconti destroyed all faith in words:

Mais ses négociations lui réussissoient mieux que les armes. Il avoit l'art de diviser et de dissoudre les ligues qui se formoient contre lui; et il endormoit, par de fausses promesses ou de vaines assurances d'amitié, ceux qu'il vouloit attaquer. Très-peu susceptible de colère ou de ressentiment, ce n'étoit jamais pour se venger qu'il entreprenoit la guerre; mais aussi, jamais l'amitié, jamais la reconnaissance pour des services passés ne l'arrêtoient quand il avoit dessein de nuire. Il ne rougissoit d'aucune perfidie, il ne ménageoit aucun mensonge, et il ne consultoit jamais que son ambition modifiée par sa timidité. Il semble que ses paroles auroient dû n'inspirer aucune confiance, et qu'à force de mentir il auroit dû ne plus pouvoir tromper; mais les hommes, surtout lorsqu'ils sont foibles, ne se désabusent jamais entièrement de l'illusion de la parole. Il faut trop de courage pour chercher une vérité fâcheuse qu'un ennemi puissant bien nous voiler; trop de résolution pour considérer toujours en face un danger imminent dont on peut détourner les yeux; enfin l'exclusion de toute vérité dans les rapports entre les hommes occasionne une trop désolante confusion pour qu'on puisse la supporter. Un imposteur n'est jamais assez décrié pour que sa parole ne fasse plus de dupes. (Sismondi, *Républiques*, Paris 1811, VII 376-7).

Translation: But he achieved greater success with negotiations than with arms. He possessed the art of dividing and dissolving the alliances which formed against him; and he pacified, by false promises or insincere assurances of friendship, those whom he wished to attack. Very little subject to anger or resentment, he never went to war to avenge himself; but at the same time, neither friendship, nor the recognition of past services, stopped him when he had a desire to inflict injuries. He blushed at no treachery, avoided no lies, and consulted nothing except his ambition, modified by his timidity. It seems that his words should have inspired no confidence, and that his lies should have left him no remaining power to betray; but men, especially those of feeble character, never quite lose their belief in good faith. Too much courage is needed to detect a deplorable truth which a powerful enemy can easily veil from us; too much resolution is needed to bear constantly in mind a danger from which one can avert one's eyes; finally, the exclusion of all truth from the traffic between men brings about a confusion too desolating to bear. No impostor can be found out so often that his word cannot create more dupes.

Eccelino Eccelino da Romano (1194-1259) was a Ghibelline leader, a supporter of the Emperor against the Pope. He married the Emperor's daughter, and was excommunicated. A notorious sadist (see *Inferno*, XII, 109-10), when finally captured he tore off his bandages and refused medical aid. Here is Sismondi's summing-up:

Eccelino étoit d'une petite taille; mais tout l'aspect de sa personne, tous ses mouvemens indiquoient un soldat. Son langage étoit amer, son déportement superbe, et, par son seul regard il faisoit trembler les plus hardis. Son âme, si avide de tous les crimes, ne ressentait aucun attrait pour les plaisirs des sens; jamais Eccolino n'aima les femmes, et c'est peut-être pourquoi, dans les supplices, il fut aussi impitoyable pour elles que pour les hommes. Il étoit dans la soixante-sixième année de sa vie, lorsqu'il mourut, et son règne de sang avoit duré trente-quatre ans (Sismondi, *Républiques*, Paris 1809, III 220).

Translation: Eccelino was of short stature; but everything about him, every movement, indicated a soldier. His language was bitter, his deportment proud, and he made the bravest tremble merely by looking at them. His soul, so greedy for all crimes, felt no attraction at all for the pleasures of the senses; Eccelino never loved women, which is perhaps why, on the scaffold, he was as pitiless to them as he was to men. He was in the sixty-sixth year of his age when he died, and his reign of blood had lasted thirty-four years.

Braccio di Montone appears admirable; but the last two Italian villains create a character which, in its innate untrustworthiness, may have reminded Byron uncomfortably of his own. Compare the curse at *Manfred*, I i, 232-51:

From thy false tears I did distill
An essence which hath strength to kill;

From thy own heart I then did wring
 The black blood in its blackest Spring,
 From thy own smile I snatched the Snake,
 For there it coiled as in a brake;
 From thy own lip I drew the charm
 Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
 In proving every poison known,
 I found the strongest was thine own.

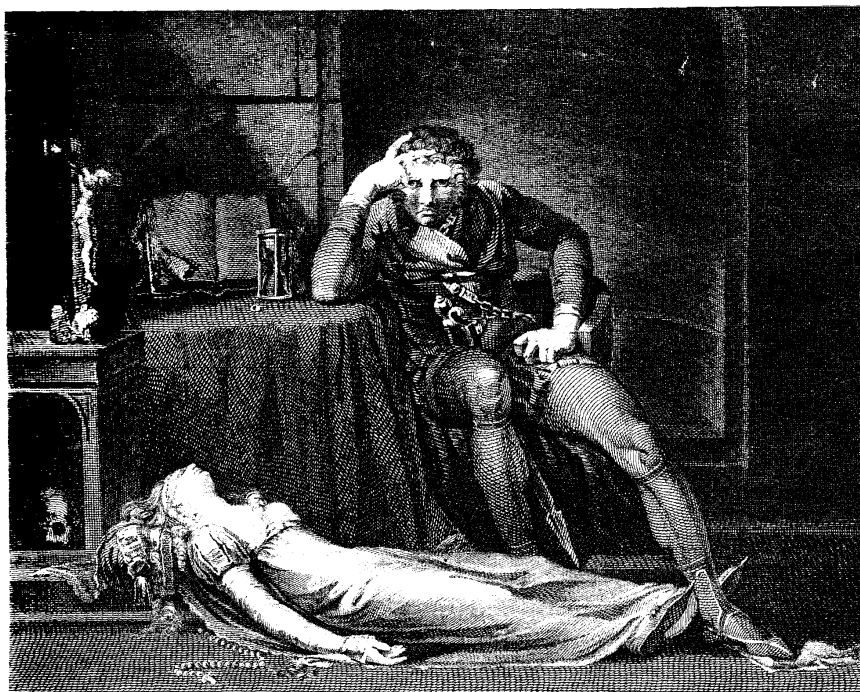
By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
 By thy unfathomed gulphs of Guile,
 By that most seeming virtuous eye,
 By thy shut soul's Hypocrisy,
 By the perfection of thine art
 Which passed for human thine own heart,
 By thy delight in others' pain,
 And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
 I call upon thee! and compell
 ThyselF to be thy proper Hell!

On August 25th 1814 he wrote to Annabella (soon to be his wife, and victim):

You can hardly have a better modern work than Sismondi's ... In his Italian Commonwealths [*B. avoids the word "Republic" as too subversive and shocking*] there are two characters which interested me much – Ezzelin, and Giovanni Galeazzo to say nothing of many others ... (BLJ IV 161)

But the hint was too light, and Annabella too trusting, for his meaning to be understood.

Appendix 4: "Bracciaferro (of the same name), Count of Ravenna". Byron's confusion here may be an excellent example of the Tricker Tricked. Here is the picture by Fuseli to which Byron refers:



Fuseli Pinx^d

Hallaway

Sculp^d.

Ezzelin Count of Ravenna surnamed Braccioferro or Iron arm, musing over the body of Meduna slain by him for infidelity during his absence in the Holy Land.

The richness of this composition takes nothing away from its simplicity. It is a Knight who has just assassinated his mistress. Fettered by remorse of conscience, accused by the presence of his victim, he deplores his madness, but repents it not; he detests it, and yet still applauds himself for it. A character of such force was capable of committing a premeditated crime in cold blood. Before giving himself up to it, he beheld it not in all its blackness: and even after the fatal blow, he does not feel it in all its enormity.
 (Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* (tr. Hunter, 1789-92), II 294).

Moore, however, writes:

Fuseli's picture of Ezzelin Bracciaferro musing over Meduna, slain by him for disloyalty during his absence in the Holy Land, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1780. Mr. Knowles, in his *Life of the painter*, relates the following anecdote: "Fuseli frequently invented the subjects of his pictures without the aid of the poet or historian, as in his composition of Ezzelin, Belisaire, and some others: these he denominated 'philosophical ideas intuitive, or sentiment personified'. On one occasion he was much amused by the following inquiry of Lord Byron: 'I have been looking in vain, Mr. Fuseli, for some months, in the poets and historians of Italy, for the subject of your picture of Ezzelin: pray where is it to be found?' 'Only in my brain, my Lord,' was the answer: 'for I invented it'" (Moore I 403).