Milan

October 11th-November 3rd 1816

Edited from B.L.Add.Mss. 56537

Their twenty-three days in Milan are formative for Byron and Hobhouse in a number of ways. Firstly, they meet nearly every man of literary note in North Italy – exceptions being the absent Ugo Foscolo, and Alessandro Manzoni; secondly, they find themselves – Hobhouse especially – taken seriously as political writers in a way to which they're unused; thirdly, they come to know at first hand what it's like for intellectuals to live under a whole-heartedly totalitarian regime, as opposed to a half-hearted one of the kind they know in England.

Byron's interest in the Italian struggle for freedom, expressed the following year in *Childe Harold* IV, and in his Carbonari activities at Ravenna in the years following, surely has its roots in these three weeks.

Hobhouse's admiration for the classical learning displayed by common Italian people at puppet-shows is offset by what he learns about their capacity to be led into mindless mob violence (see October 26 for both these things) and help lay the foundations of his future qualified Westminster radicalism. His need above all is to work out how Italy's freedom came to be mislaid for her at the Congress of Vienna.

The description, on October 25, of the evening spent watching the *improvvisatore* Sgricci, is one of his droll masterpieces: but Stendhal's (Henri Beyle's) anecdotes, on October 23 and 28, of the Russian campaign and the retreat from Moscow, have some memorable details too.

[This note continues at the end.]

Saturday October 12th 1816: Byron got up at four, I at six. A raining morning. Put a gendarme with a musket on each carriage, and, being all primed ourselves,

set out for this *dangerous* passage[1] at seven. The country at first did look most propitious to robbing – we said little, but looked through the bushes and behind the vineyard walks, as we trotted with Berger *en eclaircir*[2] on the grey before us. Springhetti was equally circumspect. We had to go up an acclivity through a wood of some continuance,[3] and only met one or two peasants on the whole way. Coming out of the woody [area] on a brushwood heath where four ways met, and passing the spot, Springhetti turned then round and said, pointing with his whip, "There the carriages were stopped." He wisely said nothing until we had passed.

From this place the country looked less likely, though anything might do for ten o'clock robbers, and we reached the small town of Somna, four miles from Sesto – beyond this there seemed no danger, for we met many peasants and the country was enclosures of vineyards and Turkey wheat, the road very good. We came to Gallarate four miles further, where the folks in the streets stared at our gendarmes, who were perched up, and who Springhetti's advice made us change for two horsemen, with whom we went on[4] in an English-looking country, most superabundantly safe. Six miles to Castellanza, a small town, where we baited and breakfasted – or dined – on fish and grapes and coffee.

We dismissed our swordsmen here, and at two o'clock set out for Milan, seventeen-and-a-half miles off. All we had heard of the plain of Lombardy certainly was not realized here – nothing could be more dreary. An ugly enclosed country of stunted orchards, Turkey wheat,[5] vineyards, common lands and brushwood. We both fell asleep, and did not begin to think much of the capital of Italy, until within half an hour of it – then we saw what we were told were the

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[1]**:** B. makes the reasons for their fear clearer: "What the thieves may look like – I know not – nor desire to know – for – it seems – they come upon you in bodies of thirty ("in buckram and Kendal green") at a time – so that voyagers have no great chance – it is something like poor dear Turkey in that respect but not so good – for there you can have as great a body of rogues to match the regular banditti – but here the gens d'armes are said to be no great things – and as for one's own people – one can't carry them about like Robinson Crusoe with a gun on each shoulder" – BLJ V 116.

[2]**:** As forward look-out.

[3]**:** H. reproduces this pompous phrase precisely at *Recollections* II 39.

[4]**:** "no" (Ms.)

[5]**:** "Turkey wheat" is maize. Also known as Indian corn.

spires of the cathedral, and some wooden building at the end of our long avenue, which we were told was the Porta Romana where Napoleon was to have erected his triumphal arch, one of the eight enormous columns of which we had seen on the Simplon road, near Isella, I think.[6] We met a few carts and carriages, but nothing looked like the entrance of a city containing 130,000 inhabitants.

A man opened the wooden enclosure, and we took a view of what was already prepared of the gate.[7] The sculptures on the bases of the headless column on each side of an exquisite workmanship are finished, the base of one column is also raised ready for the shaft. The whole of the lower part of the construction is finished, and in the outhouses, locked up, are the reliefs of the pediment, one of which four figures represents Napoleon, as also those of the frieze, of most beautiful execution by Marchesi[8] and others. Napoleon is then on horseback and on foot in a Roman general's habit – there are also some cornices and capitals, finished to the utmost precision and beauty. The whole work was to have been marble.

From the top of the scaffolding we had a fine view of the Campo Martio and its arena, where Napoleon initiated ancient games, which are still performed. The field is of great extent and a sullen *place d'armes* indeed. The shower added, "Bonaparte – il nostro Napoleone!" He told us 3,000 men were employed upon the work, and that Napoleon, being advised by the city to give away the expence of this building in a charity, said it was better to feed the industrious than the idle.

We drove round into the city by a gate where they took our passports, and we proceeded through dirty, narrow streets until we came to the square of the cathedral and the government house, which struck us to be worthy of a great city. We were, however, much disappointed in being driven to an hotel, l'ancien

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[6]**:** They pass Isella on 10 Oct 1816; but H. refers to no such thing.

[7]**:** *Recollections* (II 40) omits all reference to the Arch and its Napoleonic associations. B. writes to Augusta on October 13th: "Close to Milan is the beginning of an unfinished triumphal arch – for Napoleon – so beautiful as to make one regret its non-completion" – BLJ V 114.

[8]**:** Pompeo Marchesi (1790-1858) Lombard sculptor of the neoclassic school. Pupil of Canova.

Hotel de St Marco, where we were shown into very dirty rooms indeed, and my spleen was direfully moved. We resolved upon moving with all possible speed. I dined, Byron tea'd, and we went half grumbling to bed.

Sunday October 13th 1816: At breakfast, Dr Polidori called. Previously to this I had walked out to the great cathedral, the second largest church in Italy – all marble – and mounted besides its dome with many minute spires, whose niches and summits are adorned with statues. A portion of the surface edifice had been scraped by Napoleon and on the whole the view of the outside of this immense marble structure, together with its courts and entrances (represented faithfully at Drury Lane)[9] produces a magnificent effect, although this Gotho-German stile is, as Forsyth says,[10] overloaded with ornaments.

I went into the church and saw a mass *pro defunctis* and others performing to several knots of devouts – apparently much in earnest. Going out I saw on the steps of the cathedral another crowd, who were surrounding a dwarf with a serpentine pigtail and painted face, who waltzed to the fiddles and music of three or four women, and then ballad singers. A little further on I saw a youth laying down his offering under the church window at what appeared the city privy – <over> on the other side of the church was a fellow crying "Chiese a la prova – a la prova!"[11] – and next to him a *banquier* with cups and balls. This was to me completely new, and completely Italian.

There was a considerable crowd in the open place of the cathedral in the dress of the country, which in the men is very like the English in every respect, and in the women, neither French nor English – black veils coming half over the face and down on each side worn by some women, others feathered hats, not high, others their own hair, fastened up behind with an instrument like a double

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[9]**:** Reference obscure: the Drury Lane Theatre, opened on 10 Oct 1812, was modelled on the Grand Théâtre at Bordeaux.

[10]**:** "In Rome ... the darling fault of architecture is excess of ornament; an excess more licentious in the sacred buildings than in the profane, and in those buildings it is most licentious in the very holiest part" – Forsyth / Crook 95 (see 11 Sep 16). Forsyth's description of Milan Cathedral is at Forsyth / Crook 192.

[11]**:** "Churches on trial! On trial!"

spoon with diverging rays. These the lower classes – the men are fine-made men, not very nor generally dark, the women plain.

The Doctor Polidori told us he had had a prosperous journey on foot across the Alps – we determined to go to the play tonight – the price of a box is seven livres in Milan, besides one-and-a-half francs entrance. I walked out to the public walk, which reminded me of the alleys of the Tuileries, and along the Corso – there were a good many people walking, but only a few carriages.

Came back and dined at eight o'clock went to Teatro della Scala,[12] which is indeed a magnificent house, divided into six circles of boxes and a large pit, the back of which is an open space for walking. We saw no lights, except in one or two boxes, which, we were informed, belonged to a *Société de juin*.[13] Some of the boxes had the curtains shut. The orchestra very roomy – the whole theatre larger than any in London, I think.

As there is very little society in Milan the theatre is the place of reunion, and this circumstance allows of the same opera, the same ballet and the same comic dance being given for a quarter of a year sometimes, every night but Friday. 300,000 livres were formerly allotted out of the tax on the ridotto rooms to this theatre, but now only 30,000 are allowed. There is no motto here[14] but instead of that an illuminated clock tells the hour every five minutes. The Empress' box is lighted up every night – when the Imperial family[15] are either of them in the theatre no hat is allowed to be worn. Count Saurau, the governor,[16] the other day went out of his box to a man who had his hat on before the Archduke Regnier[17] and struck him several times.

This same governor's policy is of a singular kind – he would with difficulty grant permission to a Count Porro[18] to make a voyage to Rome on business, and

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[12]**:** The Teatro alla Scala had been built in 1776-8.
[13]**:** Note on the Société de Juin pending.
[14]**:** No theatre motto over the proscenium arch.
[15]**:** The Austrian Imperial family.
[16]**:** Count Franz de Saurau (1760-1832) Austrian governor of Lombardy-Veneto.
[17]**:** Rainer Joseph, Archduke of Austria (1783-1853) Viceroy of Lombardy-Venetia; a much-disliked figure (my thanks to Chris Little here).
[18]**:** Count Luigi Porro Lambertenghi (1780-1860) employer and friend of Silvio Pellico.

when he granted it, made the Count give his word of honour that he would frequent none of the embassies – the Count remonstrated, and told him that he had given permission to so-and-so to be absent. "A propos" – said Saurau – "are they not come back yet? Oh, I am glad I know it!" – "Your conduct," said the Count," will make us all think you are afraid of us and that you know we do not like you". – "I do not care what you think," said the governor – "nor whether you like us or not – we have got you under now and we will keep you under". The gentleman who told me this story had it from Porro!!! The Germans[19] must need be liked. The Emperor's postillion broke his leg, and whilst writhing before his Imperial Majesty had not one conciliatory word – not one.

Whilst in our box, after Polidori and Carvella[20] the Greek came in, Monsignore Ludovico di Breme,[21] an Abbate, one of Napoleon's almoners for the Kingdom of Italy, whence his title – the son of a noble Piedomontese family, destined for the church, who has been offered two bishopric[22] by Napoleon, and one by these people, but wishes rather to unfrock himself than to put on the mitre. He is a young man, about thirty, with a thick sharp face, aquiline nose, arched eyebrows and a fine forehead. He wears his dark hair combed upright, which gives him a wildness of expression not unlike that of Alfieri. He is on the whole one of the most attractive men I ever saw – he gave Lord Byron a most warm reception, and, as Madame de Staël had introduced me to him in her letter in favourable terms,[23] was pointedly civil to me. As he opened upon us he appeared the very Pococurante of Italy,[24] but his severities had only the humour

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[19]**:** That is, the Austrians. Neither H. nor B. made the distinction.

[20]**:** Nikolas Karvellas, Ionian patriot, follows B. around Europe like a nemesis. B. and H. have already met him in Geneva (see 14 Sep 1816) and they are to meet him again at Pisa (see 19 Sep 1822).

[21]**:** H.'s meeting with Ludovico Arborio Gattinara dei marchesi di Breme (1781-1820) friend of Madame de Staël and Italian champion of Romanticism, initiates a new preoccupation, namely his critical interest in Italian literature, which is to bear fruit in *Illlustrations*, even though the section on it there is ghosted by Foscolo.

[22]**:** "bishopriks" (Ms.)

[23]**:** See entry for 3 Oct 1816.

[24]**:** Pococurante is the philosopher in Voltaire's *Candide,* with an definitive opinion on every literary topic.

not the malice of inter[ ]. He spoke with a certain degree of point on every subject, delivering his apothegms and ironies in the gravest tone and air, which made him quite irresistible.

He gave us a sketch of the theatre – he said the two first rows of boxes were the most polite and the most annoying – in the two next intrigues were arranged – in the fifth they were consummated – the sixth was open to anybody, like the pit – In the standing place of the pit the men talked commerce and news – in the seats they listened to the opera. Another time he told me, "I must let you into a little scandal – you see that box fifth from the stage in the second row? There is a Count Maruzi,[25] a chamberlain of the Emperor of Russia – he and his party meet there to tell the most lascivious tales of their amours, which they continue to detail till they rush out to fresh encounters. For my part I believe he is employed as a political agent – he has an infinitude of wit. In that box you see the handsomest woman of Milan – she sends her husband to Naples and keeps that young man whom she plays with as a lover and a fool – which he is both – there is a lady of whom I have a right to speak, for she is in some degree my sister-in-law – my brother made love to her."

Monsignore talked to us of Italian literature as in a deplorable state, and limited the poets of the day to Foscolo,[26] Monti,[27] and Pindemonte,[28] – but these, he said, were only put in the second order, and in some sort imitators. He spoke with the utmost contempt of the pedantry of those who assume to themselves the direction of Italian literature, some of whom are of the class of nobles and in high society, whilst the men of real merit, such as Monti, are scarcely received. It appears that the conduct of the *Biblioteca Italiana* is in the hands of the pedants, who have made a furious attack on Madame de Staël for what she has said of

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[25]**:** Marusi (could be "Marouzi") otherwise unidentified.

[26]**:** Ugo Foscolo (1778-1827) author of the *Lettere di Jacopo Ortis* and of *Dei Sepolcri,* is to play a major part in H.'s literary life on his return to London in 1818. His path and that of the English have crossed, for he left Milan for Zurich in Mar 1815, and left Zurich for London in Sept 1816. B. and he never meet.

[27]**:** Vincenzo Monti (1754-1828) whom they meet first on 17 Oct 1816.

[28]**:** Ippolito Pindemonte (1753-1828) lover of Madame Albrizzi, best known for his translations of Homer.

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<German> Italian literature,[29] and have damned all translation, of which, say they, the Italians have no need – they should follow thus no models, they say. Breme and a young friend of his[30] have both answered these journalists, and defended Madame de Staël – and in an essay entitled *Intorno all'Ingiustizia di alcuni Giudizi Letterari discorso di Lodovico Antonio Gattinara di Breme*,[31] and the other in a humourous pamphlet called *Literary adventures of a day* &c.[32] ...

Di Breme discanted to us on the pedantry of these slaves of La Crusca – and the Sei Cento[33] – one of them, Count Perticari of Pesaro, who has given the fine verses of Pandulfo Collenucio on death[34] (written whilst the executioners were waiting for him) in the *Biblioteca Italiana*, has actually made Cruscan critical notes on the licences in this poem – as if a man under the hangman was to think of the critical perfection of his verses, and correct them according to rules which were made some hundreds of years afterwards.

Breme spoke with contempt of Goldoni,[35] and said that, though the only comedy writer, it was better to have none than such as his. Of Alfieri[36] his countryman he spoke as almost the only writer of modern times – though he said he had seen a tragedy on the subject of Francesca da Rimini[37] by a young man,

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[29]**:** See 19 Oct 1816. The main "pedant" is Giuseppe Acerbi, whom they meet on 20 Oct.
[30]**:** Pietro Borsieri (1786-1852): he was to be imprisoned by the Austrians from 1822 to 1836.
[31]**:** A polemical essay published 1816.
[32]**:** *Avventure letterarie di un giorno* (1816) a manifesto of the Italian Romantic movement.
[33]**:** The words would associate the critical enemies of di Breme with those of B.'s idol William Gifford, when he wrote *The Baeviad* and *The Maeviad.*
[34]**:** The *Canzone alla Morte* of Pandolfo Collenucio (1444-1504) written before his execution on the orders of Giovanni Sforza of Pesaro. Actually Perticari exalts Collenucio as a poet-victim of tyranny, as B. does Tasso.
[35]**:** The comedies of Carlo Goldoni (1707-93) have survived anything di Breme (whose only comedy had failed) could say about them. See *Beppo,* 15, 5; 14 Nov 1817, and several others.
[36]**:** Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803) Italian poet and dramatist, admired by B., and an influence on his own strictly classical tragedies.
[37]**:** "di Rimeni" (Ms.)

his friend,[38] which though not a perfect work was very affecting. This poet had shown his tragedy to Foscolo, who advised him to burn it – afterwards he showed it to Breme, who was delighted and put it into the hands of a celebrated actress,[39] who played in it with great effect. Breme told his friend to write to Foscolo and advise of the success of his tragedy, instead of which he might burn his own wretched comedies.

Breme says "We have nothing left but our fine weather, which makes us extremely solicitous about it." The Austrians have forbidden the acting of Alfieri on account of the freedom of the sentiments. The Piedmontese, who are the most stupid of God's creatures, and attached to every old prejudice, so far from being proud, are ashamed of Alfieri, because he did not go to mass every day. The Countess of Albany[40] has just written to Breme to advise her whether she should leave Alfieri's second library to Turin or Milan – Breme has returned "Certainly no" to Turin. The Abbate Caluso, Alfieri's great friend,[41] died in Breme's arms. He was the best man living – he told Breme several singular [stories] of Alfieri, who left a letter for Caluso to be opened at his death – this Breme has got, and a great part of his correspondence which would not do for publication, nor do him any honour, as they showed the motive of his actions, and his aristocratical feelings which broke out when the King of Sardinia passed back to his throne in '99. Caluso told Breme that when he went to Lisbon to study astronomy, Alfieri came to him and asked to stay with him. Caluso advised him to travel – "No," said Alfieri, "pursue your studies – I will not interrupt you," and in fact whilst the Abbate was ciphering he lay like a spaniel under Caluso's table. This happened day after day, till the Abbate, having finished a happy calculation, took

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[38]**:** Silvio Pellico (1788-1854) whose most influential work is *Le mie Prigioni,* an account of his ten years' imprisonment by the Austrians. H. (with B. at first assisting) translated his *Francesca da Rimini,* a play published in 1818 but first performed by

[39]**:** the great actress Carlotta Marchionni, at the Teatro Re in Milan on 18 Aug 1815.

[40]**:** Louisa Stolberg, Countess of Albany (1752-1824) was the separated wife of the Young Pretender, and afterwards Alfieri's mistress.

[41]**:** Tommaso Valperga di Caluso (1737-1815) encyclopaedic writer and poet; teacher and close friend of di Breme; when Alfieri first met him he was Ambassador to Portugal. He wrote Alfieri's life.

up an ode of Giudici[42] and read it aloud – he missed Alfieri from his legs, and, looking about, saw him in convulsions near the door. When he had recovered the Count, he asked him what was the matter, and was told the effect was produced by the poetry. Caluso tried again – Alfieri was again dreadfully affected, and Caluso told him he was a poet. Alfieri owned this in a dedication to his friend, whom he loved like a mistress, says Breme.

Alfieri, when young, had very fine long hair which he wore *à l'Apollon*[43] – his manner in company was never to speak, but his silence was most eloquent.[44] He never sat down – one day at the Princess Carignani of the blood royal of Sardinia,[45] he was leaning on a marble step amidst a service of china, which he had done often without danger – his hair got entangled, and he broke a cup – Madame Carignani was much annoyed, and said, "You had better have broken the whole set" – on which Alfieri at once dashed all the china on the floor.[46]

Alfieri thought he should have lived till seventy – he intended to have finished his life in London – Breme's epithet for Goldoni was "parron Venetico".[47]

We were delighted with the ballet, which was magnificently got up and well danced. As a specimen of Milan manners must not be forgot La Coppanta, who will not suffer herself to be touched but is the Atalanta of every Meleager for a crown.[48] She is only sixteen – [and] La Rossa, a most perfect figure in man's clothes. In the opera of the *Brazen Head*[49] there were certain figurantes[50] which

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[42]**:** Count Carlo Alessandro Guidi (1650-1712): the poem was his *Ode to Fortune.*

[43]**:** So cut and brushed as to resemble the sun's rays. A cheap way of looking charismatic.

[44]**:** H. repeats this idea at *Illustrations*, 34.

[45]**:** Princess Carigiani unidentified.

[46]**:** H. uses this story at *Illustrations*, 32.

[47]**:** "A Venetian phoney".

[48]**:** In Ovid, men such as Meleager were only allowed by Diana's favourite Atalanta to worship her from afar.

[49]**:** *La Testa di Bronza ossia la Capannina Solitaria (The Bronze Head, or the Lonely Little Hut)* "melodramma eroi-comico" in two acts by Felice Romani; a treatment of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* may be suspected: see *Don Juan* I 217 5-6. Perhaps it was from this opera, and not Robert Greene's play, that B. got the idea.

[50]**:** Ballerinas. See *Don Juan* IV 85, 1. This last paragraph of the entry may be compared with Raucocanti's words to Juan at that point in the epic. Indeed, di Breme, who meets B.

were always vigorously applauded – with that exception the play and talking in the boxes were never interrupted.

We stayed until the whole closed and then came home – pleased with all, but most with Monsignore Breme.

Monday October 14th 1816: In the morning Lord Byron, Polidori, and I went in carriage to the Ambrosian Library, where we saw the galleries of pictures, and particularly admired the Luinis[51] – for a holy family of whom some English Duchess[52] offered 6,000 guineas and fifty guineas to the carriage. There saw the bust of Agnesi, the learned professor of Pavia,[53] very like Miss Bailey.[54] Then went into the library, of which there is no catalogue. The showman excused this to me by saying, "If there had been a catalogue the French would have *pilled* us of our books as they did of our pictures[55] – they would have known what to take". We saw the Ms. of Josephus on papyrus, the Virgil with Petrarch's notes, and portions of the Mss. from which Mai has lately published several inedited portions of the classics, particularly Diogenes Harlicarnassus. The monks to whom they belonged used to write their missals across these works, and we saw an oration of Cicero's so treated!!!

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at a time when his fortunes and sensibility are severely depressed (*Manfred* is being written secretly) may, with his non-stop conviviality and informed chat about all things operatic, social and literary, be seen as a general model for Raucocanti.

[51]**:** Bernardino Luini, Lombard painter (c.1480-c.1532).

[52]**:** English Duchess unidentified.

[53]**:** Maria Gaetana Agnesi (1718-99) mathematician.

[54]**:** Miss Bailey unidentified.

[55]**:** In 1797 many art treasures of the then Cisalpine Republic – created by the French and with its capital at Milan – had been taken to Paris. H.'s assertion that there was no catalogue is partly contradicted by B. in a letter to Murray of October 15th: "I have been to the Ambrosian Library – it is a fine collection – full of M.S.S. edited and unedited – I enclose you a little list of the former recently published. – These are matters for your literati – for me in my simple way – I have been most delighted with a correspondence of letters all original and amatory between Lucretia Borgia and Cardinal Bembo – (preserved there) ..." (BLJ V 116: quotation continues at 15 Oct 1816).

Generally speaking they seemed very ignorant of the treasures of this library – *palimpsests*.[56]

From this place we went to the Cathedral, and saw the pictures that were hung up in the church when Napoleon was crowned.[57] They sent for tapestries to all the neighbouring cities. We saw the body of St Charles Borromeo in its crystal case.[58] Those who were praying around the shrine which looks down upon the interior seemed more attentive to us than their prayers – the body is shocking. The sockets of the eyes show a sort of dish, looking like corruption. The picture of St Charles gives a most sensual physionomy.

We left the church. I and Polidori walked about looking for lodgings – saw none. Byron and I, after dinner at which Polidori dined with us, had a visit from Monsignore Breme, who amused us at this and a subsequent meeting with some most ridiculous stories of Schlegel and Madame de Staël.

Madame de Staël was one day saying that she was glad she published her *Allemagne* some time ago.[59] If she had done so now it would have been too late – nobody cares about Germany, literature was on the decline – "Quoi Madame, vous osez dire ça du pays de Frederick Schlegel devant William Schlegel?" – "Alas!" said Madame de Staël, throwing herself back in her chair, "Comme la vanité est bete!"

Schlegel was one day talking English to Miss Randall.[60] Breme said, "It seems to me that the English, for a man that does not understand it, is rather a harsh language". Schlegel went up to Madame de Staël and said, "I see Madame, that there is a conspiracy in your house against me. Everybody is resolved to offend me". Madame de Staël was writing. She threw down her pen – "Dites-moi donc, Monsieur de Breme, qu'avez-vous fait pour offenser à Monsieur

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[56]**:** A palimpsest is a mark or passage on manuscript which has been written over the previous mark or passage – as with the monks' missal and Cicero's oration here.

[57]**:** Napoleon had been crowned King of Italy in Milan Cathedral on 26 May 1805.

[58]**:** The body of San Carlo Borromeo (1538-1584) one of the most important figures of the Counter-Reformation, still lies in Milan Cathedral. For B.'s briefer description see BLJ V 125.

[59]**:** *de L'Allemagne* had been published in England, by Murray, in 1813.

[60]**:** Governess to Madame de Staël's daughter. See 12 Sep 1816.

Schlegel?" – Breme explained, but in vain – he said he did not know that Schlegel was hired defender of all nations. – "Sir," said Schlegel, "anyone could see you meant to laugh at my way of pronouncing English".

Schlegel says Italian is a dialect of the German – he is an excessive adulator of the great, and especially of German grandeur – he was shocked that Madame de Staël did not show more alarm at the Prince of Mecklenburg "Madame," said he, "ne connaissez-vous que c'est un prince de Mecklenburg *Schwerin*?"[61]

He would not allow Canova any merit. "Pray," said Breme "have you seen his group of filial piety?" – Schlegel rose up, and, coming close to Breme, "Avez-vous vu ma buste par Tieck"?[62] I wish I could give Breme's way of telling this story.[63] He added, "It were in vain to tell him that there was no imagination in the bust but a *verité affreuse*, &c."

Schlegel said that Locke was unsatisfactory – that he did not account for the phenomenon of the human mind. Breme said he accounted for it as well as reason would allow. "La Raison – je me moque de la Raison." – "Quoi!" said Breme, "voulez-vous donc que les hommes [ ][64] se frotter au professeur Schlegel pour s'informer[65] de la verité?" – "Quoi!" exclaimed Schlegel, rising, "du sarcasme?" and rapping the table stalked out of the room.

Rocca and Breme once calculated that he drew 36,000 francs a year from Madame de Stael – 6,000 in money. In his room he has a picture of three naked women showing their pugœ – Breme remonstrated with him – "Je vous dirai," said Schlegel, "il y a une grande difference – est ce que vous avez jamais lu Platon?" – "Que diable de rapport entre Platon et les feuses nus d'une fille?"

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[61]**:** See 1 Oct 1816.

[62]**:** There is no group by Canova called *Filial Piety;* and Johann Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853) was a writer, not a sculptor, who edited Schlegel's translations of Shakespeare but made busts of no-one. Breme tries to humbug Schlegel; Schlegel sees his game and tries to counter-humbug him; and Breme, whose gravity and affability has the Englishmen taken in, humbugs *them* by asserting Tieck's "bust of Schlegel" to be awfully true-to-life. In *Italy* (I 3) Lord Broughton repeats the joke – as does B. in *Detached Thought* 38 (BLJ IX 26) – but one still cannot tell whether either has got it.

[63]**:** Last sentence not in *Recollections.*

[64]**:** *Recollections* (II 43) has *doivent*.

[65]**:** *Recollections* (II 43) has *s'enfuir*.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

Schlegel has a habit of walking in with some great book and throwing it down with a great noise – also of leaving oriental books, and when he saw anybody leaning over the pages, to go up to him and say, "What, sir? Don't you know that oriental books always begin by the end?" – Breme got an Armenian book[66] and took him in. Schlegel made the same remark, only saying "It is odd that this book begins with the Finis." Breme exposed him.

Schlegel wanted Madame de Staël to marry him – he is now is a sort of treaty with a lady and, it is possible, will get Madame de Staël to receive her in her house.

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We went to Breme's box at the theatre. He had lighted two candles in it to our honour. We looked little, but had a deal of talk with a Mr Bonire[67] or some such name, another young man, and the Marquis Breme, the oldest brother of the Abbate's.[68]

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Heard some curious things with respect to this part of Italy – everyone discontent in Piedmont. The priests do not think that enough has been done for them by the restored government – the nobles are in the same persuasion, and if they begin to stir, it is thought that a commotion will ensue – the lower orders are starving amidst abundance, and see besides a restoration of all the old habits of the <Empire> most enslaved part of Europe. The schoolmasters are forbid to name Alfieri[69] – this Monti told me – and Metastasio is partly forbidden in Lombardy.[70] I could make very little out, except that the greatest discontent prevailed, and that no rational hope of bettering their condition remained. They

[66]**:** di Breme had studied Armenian with the monks on the Isola San Lazzaro in Venice – as B. was to.
[67]**:** Probably Pietro Borsieri (see 13 Oct 1816).
[68]**:** BLJ (V 124n) gives this man as the Abbate's *father*.
[69]**:** See previous day's entry, where it is reported that the acting of Alfieri's plays is also banned. Alessandro Guiccioli, Teresa's husband, had been a friend of Alfieri and had acted in hs plays.

(not Breme) seemed far from Napoleonists – on the contrary, they said that this party was more against liberty than any, that they gave in to the present government as easily as they gave in to the last, and so they could be the majority under any change, so they were most to be feared – they made any attempt dangerous. Of Prince Eugene[71] they said he thought only of himself and of making himself king – his great fear was of Murat.[72] Murat they never considered in any other light than that of a French general, though in 1814, if he had known how to manage with address, he might have done something for Italy – on the contrary he only employed the freemasons to prepare the way for his efforts, and as the spies of Eugene were also freemasons, the Prince contrived to frustrate all Murat's efforts by the same means which that Prince employed. The Italians felt no sympathy for either of them – and even Napoleon himself, who might have been their saviour, they only considered as having made the Kingdom of Italy a province of France. Besides, the Kingdom of Italy was but a small part of Italy.[73] They saw the French Emperor was resolved <only> to retain their army divisions in order to keep them more easily under his governor. It is not to be denied that he did give a military spirit to a certain portion of the Italians[74] – he made a large army of Italians, but then he never sent them to fight for Italy – they were aware they were fighting for France. Had Napoleon made himself King of all Italy, without being French Emperor, then indeed they would regard him as their benefactor, but they would not be a province of France. They considered the Masons still in activity, though forbidden – the lodge Carbonari at Naples,[75] which was against Murat, is now also in opposition to the present government, and tempers its ferocity. These gentlemen seemed to think that a

[70]**:** As Metastasio (1698-1782) had been court poet to the Austrian Emperor, this is extreme censorship.

[71]**:** Eugene Beauharnais: see 18 Oct 1816.

[72]**:** Napoleon's brother-in-law Joachim Murat (1767-1815) had been made by him King of the two Sicilies; reigning only in Naples, he was popular, and had, in part as a consequence, been shot in 1815.

[73]**:** The Kingdom of Italy consisted of Lombardy only.

[74]**:** Napoleon had given the Cisalpine Republic its own army, the Legion Italienne.

[75]**:** The Carbonari were patriots who organised themselves like the Freemasons; B. subsequently joined them. See entry for 15 Sep 1822.

spirit of instruction and intelligence had gone forth which had never before been disseminated in Italy[76] – this was their only hope – the King of Sardinia[77] was the natural liberator of Italy. If he would march with his 50,000 men, with whom he supports himself, against all his subjects, and whom he exclusively patronises.

The same gentlemen gave a most melancholy [account] of the state of society – literature was held in no sort of honour, and if a man knew a little Greek he was looked on as a prodigy provided he belonged to a certain class. A constitution seemed to be their great cry. Whilst they were talking very freely, Borsieri[78] got up and said "We may as well shut the door". For my own part, I thought the fact of such a conversation being held at all was a good sign.

Walking home, I tried to put them up to our state of politics, of which they were totally ignorant. I should not forget that Breme, talking with me, said that the Italians were unjust and foolish towards Napoleon – they heard the cry of his being a tyrant in France and a usurper in Spain [and] they adopted the same sentiments in Italy, forgetting that it was very possible for him to be very serviceable in one country, and very pernicious in another. Napoleon had certainly taught the Milanese that they could do something, and the conscription itself was not without its advantages. The mass was stagnant. He raised it up, put it in motion by the extreme activity of his government, and taught the Italians what it was to see and feel and act in an active government, which they had never had had before – indeed a Colonel Fitzgerald,[79] who has been a long time in this country, tells me that there were 18,000 employees[80] in Milan alone – the habit of activity, to whatever end, was new and useful to the Lombards.

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[76]**:** For B.'s comments on the Carbonari's moral aspirations, see entry for 15 Sep 1822.

[77]**:** Vittorio Emanuele I (1759-1824) King of Sardinia 1802-1821. Deprived by Napoleon of his lands in Savoy and Piedmont, they have been restored to him at Vienna. He did not liberate Italy.

[78]**:** H. has somehow learned Borsieri's name in mid-entry.

[79]**:** This is the Colonel Fitzgerald, the story of whose "incontinent fidelity" to the Marchesa Castiglione B. tells Moore at BLJ V 147: see 18 Oct 1816. Lady Frances Shelley describes him as "an Italianised, mad, but honest and hearty Irishman" – *(Shelley* I 385).

[80]**:** Civil servants: *Italy* (I 14-15) reduces the figure to 1,800.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

My politicians showed me [to] my home – I went to bed and read Matthison's letters[81] – his character of the French [ ] at the beginning of the revolution is inimitable. In a note is a singular anecdote about Boccaccio,[82] one of whose tales was translated by his friend Petrarch twenty-four years after it was written, Petrarch not knowing who was the author.

Sunday October 15th 1816: Went this morning to the Ambrosian Library and saw the autograph letters of Lucrezia Borgia to Pietro Bembo[83] – they seem full of regard, or perhaps more – one is subscribed "desiderova gratificatavi[84] – Lucretia, duchessa di Ferrara" – in some instances she makes this sign instead of her name: "FF".[85] She addresses him "caro mio" and "carissimo mio" (Mss. Bembo). There are some Spanish verses of hers also – a long lock of her bright yellow hair is preserved. Byron tried to get a copy of the letter and was half promised as much, but he failed. He has taken one hair however, which he says he will have this motto for: –

And beauty draws us by a single hair …[86]

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[81]**:** See 7 Oct 1816.

[82]**:** H. had himself translated one of Boccaccio's stories *(Decameron* III i) for his early miscellany *Imitations and Translations*. See BB 58.

[83]**:** Lucrezia Borgia (1480-1519) daughter of Pope Alexander VI, sister of Cesare Borgia, her private life, like B.'s, the subject of much rumour; Pietro Bembo (1470-1547) Italian poet. B. wrote to Murray on this day: "I have been to the Ambrosian Library – it is a fine collection ... I have been most delighted with a correspondence of letters all original and amatory between *Lucretia Borgia* and *Cardinal Bembo* – (preserved there) I have pored over them and a lock of her hair – the prettiest and finest imaginable – I never saw fairer – and shall go repeatedly to read the epistles over and over and if I can obtain some of the hair by fair means – I shall try – I have already persuaded the librarian to promise me copies of the letters – and I hope he will not disappoint me. – They are short – but very simple sweet and to the purpose – there are some copies of verses in Spanish also by her; the tress of her hair is long and as I said before – beautiful ..." (BLJ V 116)

[84]**:** "I wanted to please you".

[85]**:** Similar to the symbols which B. wrote on his letters to Augusta, and would write on those to Teresa.

[86]**:** Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, II 28: *And Beauty draws us with a single Hair*. At *Italy* (I 56) H. assures us that B. was only allowed to take *the smallest possible specimen* of hair.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

After this we went to the Brera Institution[87] and saw the gallery of pictures, which delighted us very much – most particularly a Guercino representing the putting away of Hagar[88] – the face of Hagar and the figure of Ismail are beyond all praise – the woman is at that point of distress which causes a distraction of the face, but the painter has contrived to show the minute before the eyes are to melt in tears, so that none of the beauty nor the reality is lost. A Raphael[89] representing the marriage of the Virgin Mary and Joseph[90] cost 100,000 francs – it represents Mary covering her lower body as if with child, which I apprehended she was not when first married – Byron said yes, Breme no.

There is a picture of Pope Gregory VIII giving his dinner to the XII pilgrims, at which the *bon dieu* came down and sat himself next to the Pope. Paul Veronese[91] has introduced his own person here, and makes a cardinal look[92] through an eyeglass at the newcomer.

We came home and talked in the evening. Breme came and talked most amusingly as usual – he told us that Beccaria[93] did his utmost to hang his servant for stealing his snuff-box.

He mentioned how Monti's daughter and Mustoxidthi the Greek[94] made a sentimental love which was the talk of all Milan.[95] They wrote fine letters – Mustoxidthi showed his signorina's correspondence to Breme. "Why," said

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[87]**:** Built in 1651 as a Jesuit college; since 1776, headquarters of the Accademia di Belle Arti.

[88]**:** B.'s letter to Murray continues: "... The Brera Gallery of paintings has some fine pictures; – but nothing of a collection – of painting I know nothing – but I like the Guerino – a picture of Abraham putting away Hagar – and Ishmael – which seems to me natural and goodly" (BLJ V 116). For Hagar, see Genesis 21, 14.

[89]**:** "Raffael" (Ms.)

[90]**:** Raphael's *Sposalizio* was painted in 1503.

[91]**:** Paolo Veronese (1525-88) Venetian painter.

[92]**:** "looking" (Ms.)

[93]**:** See 14 Sep 1816. In his letter to Murray, B. expands: "By the way I have just heard an anecdote about Beccaria who published such admirable things against the punishment of death: – as soon as his book was out – his Servant (having read it I presume) stole his watch – and his master while correcting the proofs of a second edition did all he could to have him hanged by way of advertisement" (BLJ V 117).

[94]**:** Andreas Mustoxides (1785-1860) Corfiote editor and writer, now resident in Venice. They first meet him on 12 Nov 1816.

Breme, "this appears to me all Clementina – this from Julietta – this from Héloïse!"[96] whereat Mustoxidhti was much shocked, and said she was the most natural of writers and truest of lovers. Shortly after, Mustoxidthi came to Breme in the greatest distress – Monti had given his daughter to Count Julian Perticari of Pesaro,[97] who thought he might become the son of a great poet by marrying his daughter, and demanded her hand by letter. "But," said Mustoxidthi, "I am sure she will die of anguish. I hope she will, poor thing!" In a day or two Mustoxidthi came again to Breme and threw a letter on the table. Breme took it up read it – "Ah!" said he, "there is no Clementina here – all her own – nothing more simple and easy and natural". And so it was, for she told Mustoxidthi that she was sure he would be happy to hear that she was most content with her choice and husband!!!

Breme let out his ethic. He said of St Paul's conversion that if God made it necessary to knock a man off his horse[98] and make him blind and open his eyes again, which man was a contemporary of the miracles and life and doctrine of Jesus Christ, how much more necessary should he think it to work individual miracles to make believers in this day, amongst those who have only books written 1,800 years ago, instead of ocular demonstration to induce this belief? I told Breme that Lord Lyttleton[99] made the conversion of St Paul the principal rational argument for Xtianity, but that it appeared the assuming Paul to be a fair trial of any doctrine was absurd, as he was not a wise man, for he was a persecutor – this of course fell in with Byron's notions – Byron[100] was against talking of these things to women and children, but he said he could no more be a

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[95]**:** Count Giulio Perticari (1790-1822) classicist. Monti's daughter Costanza (1792-1840) was unfaithful to him, though to marry him she had betrayed Mustoxides. She wrote poetry herself, including an Ode to Princess Caroline, with whom she and her husband were friends.

[96]**:** *Clementina:* heroine of Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison; Julietta:* Shakespeare's heroine; *Héloïse*: from Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse*.

[97]**:** They meet Perticari on Oct 17 1816.

[98]**:** "horses" (Ms.)

[99]**:** George, First Baron Lyttleton (1709-1773) wrote *The Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul* (1747).

[100]**:** *Recollections* (II 45) reads this manuscript "B" as Byron, not Breme.

Xtian[101] than he could be an atheist. His *sens intime* of a divinity, although he could not account for it, was as certain a proof to him that there was a cause for it as the influence upon the compass was a sign there was some cause for the direction of the magnetic needle to the pole.[102]

I concluded from this that theism was the present persuasion of the better instructed Italians.

Breme said he wished he could get Castlereagh's answer to the Italian deputies that went to him in 1814, asking him for a constitution[103] – the sum of it was that he had nothing to do with them – they must go to their Emperor of Austria. He added besides something about the policies of England. My Colonel Fitzgerald said since that Sir Robert Wilson was one of the chief causes of the deputation.[104]

After our own delightful Breme left us, we[105] wrote letters to Lady Hobhouse and Charlotte and Sophy – this morning I heard from her, and Harry and Baillie.

Wednesday October 16th 1816: Went this morning to see the *Last Supper* of Leonardo da Vinci, of which Breme had told us that the monks, against the wall of whose refectory it was painted in a fresco, had cut away eight <head/>legs of apostles in order to open a hole to a fireplace. The refectory is cleaned out and a stage of wood put up near the picture – which attention to the *beaux arts* of the

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[101]**:** *Recollections* (II 45) has *dogmatist*.

[102]**:** B. uses this idea in Julia's letter *(Don Juan* I 195, 7-8, written 1818) getting closer to the thought here in the transition from draft to fair copy:

"So shakes the Needle and so stands the Pole
"As vibrates my fond heart to my fixed Soul." (draft)
"As turns the Needle trembling to the Pole
"It ne'er can reach, so turns to you my Soul." (fair copy)

[103]**:** See 21 Oct 1816.

[104]**:** Wilson had served in Italy in the late phases of the war, and had sided with the Italian patriots..

[105]**:** H. seems to be using the royal plural here.

Provex Eugene is faithfully recorded, in large letters over the door of the hall. The fresco is terribly blistered, but the beauty of the St John is not lost.[106]

Called on a Colonel Fitzgerald,[107] whom Baillie had recommended me to, and who lives in the Casa Castiglione – a fine house apparently.

Came home, dined, Breme came in and cozed[108] for some time as usual – afterwards I wrote journal and read some of Breme's pamphlet in defence of Madame de Staël.[109]

This night wrote a letter for Polidori, who is going to try to make himself physician to the Princess of Wales – poor thing, she must be mad.. Her *scudiero*[110] "Baron" Bergami[111] – dressed like a harlequin – was hissed the other day in the streets of Milan. The Princess of Wales, at an entertainment she gave where was Count Borromeo, had an ass brought in to table, caressed it before the company, and crowned it with roses – she calls her palace "the Villa d'Este". She has ruined herself with the Italians.

Thursday October 17th 1816: Rain for the first day. Some time, went at past five, having sat in writing all day, to the Casa Roma[112] to dine[113] with Monsignor Breme, who lives in that large palace with his brother the Marquis. We found a large party of young men, some of whom we knew there, and Lord Byron as well as myself most gallantly received: indeed, the enthusiasm which[114] my poetical friend meets is something extraordinary.

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[106]**:** "lossed" (Ms.)

[107]**:** It is not clear when H. meets Fitzgerald first: see 14 Oct 1816.

[108]**:** "Chatted" (from *causer*).

[109]**:** *Intorno all'Ingiustizia di alcuni Giudizi Letterari discorso di Lodivco Gattinara di Breme.*

[110]**:** "groom".

[111]**:** See 11 Oct 1816.

[112]**:** The Milan palace of the di Bremes.

[113]**:** For Breme's account of this evening, see the P.S. to his letter to Giuseppe Grassi of 16 Oct 1816 (Camporesi 376) in which he refers to "… il dottissimo Hobhouse viaggator in Greci, ora compagno di Byron" (the extremely learned Hobhouse, traveller in Greece and now Byron's companion").

[114]**:** "with which" (Ms.)

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Mirabeau, the banker here,[115] came with his letters, merely to see *le célèbre poète,* and Breme says he thinks he is more like Petrarch than any other writer.[116] His encomiums to myself would make me blink in England, but here only serve to make me fancy that I shall be sure of a favourable and fair reception, and of having a just interpretation put upon what I say or do. This gives a facility of manner which I never remember to have before recognized, and makes me as yet like this place better than any other I have ever seen.[117] A persuasion that I am of the liberal English, and more than all here, a hater[118] of the Congress Castlereagh system, gives me a willing audience in this place, which is not elsewhere found, at least I have not found it.

There was a Monsieur de Beyle,[119] one of Napoleon's secretaries and *intendants de la militaire de la couronne* there, a little fat whiskered man – unfortunately I hardly had a word with him.[120]

A Colonel Finch was there,[121] who takes snuff and has been a long time abroad, and has a character for understanding Italian literature, but whom I found a very tiresome man, telling[122] me his feelings, which are selfish, and his information, which is confused – however, he is a democrat, though of a noble

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[115]**:** Mirabeau was Madame de Staël's banker.

[116]**:** Like Petrarch in the way he is publicly acknowledged and feted.

[117]**:** A strong reason for H.'s future writing about Italian politics and literature would be that he thought the Italians took him seriously in a way the English didn't.

[118]**:** "hatred" (Ms.)

[119]**:** "Bayle" (Ms.) H. confuses Pierre Bayle, the *philosophe,* with Henri Beyle, the future novelist.

[120]**:** Henri Beyle, later known as Stendhal (1783-1842). At *Italy* (I 54n) H. describes his experience in 1856 when, reading the *Edinburgh Review,* he "awoke" and "found [Stendhal] famous".

[121]**:** "The Reverend Colonel" Robert Finch (1783-1830: he was a deacon, but not a colonel) is variously described as a bum, a bore, a traveller, an antiquary, a scholar, and a Balliol M.A. The Shelleys called him "Calicot Finch", perhaps from the noise he made when angry, perhaps after Colonel Calicot in Moore's *The Fudge Family in Paris*: "A fine sallow, sublime, sort of Werterfaced man, / With mustachios that gave (what we read of so oft / The dear Corsair expression, half savage, half soft, / As Hyenas in love may be fancied to look, or / A something between ABELARD and old BLUCHER!" (I am indebted to Nora Crook for this idea).

[122]**:** "letting" (Ms.)

family, as he told me, and convinced that the Congress is a conspiracy against the liberties of mankind – he told me he should go back to England when one of his own family, the misery of his existence, should die – he said, "Mr Hobhouse, I regret I am not in England now – to read your *Travels*"[123] – I was bowing and thanking, when he said, "Nay – I didn't say I should like them".

There was at dinner the little Silvio Pellico, author of *Francesca da Rimini* – I did not hear him say a word – also an Italian who has translated Sterne.[124] Monti was expected, but was not [present] when we sat down. We were in a noble room – sat down to a very noble dinner in the true style – Byron and I on each side of Breme, who continued saying agreeable things, and recommended his dishes – we had no absurd womankind[125] with us.

In the middle of dinner Monsignore got up and brought in *il cavaliere* Monti,[126] and introduced him to Byron and to me – he sat between Byron and me[127] as he is very deaf of his left ear – his face is very expressive – and large shaggy eyebrows – a nose rather hooked at the end – a mouth rather projecting, but of a present mild expression – a curved but high forehead and shaggy greyish hair – a large form rather and a little bent. He was in boots. I looked at this man with a sort of blind admiration, as having read of his translation of Homer in the *Hermes Logios,*[128] and of his being the first poet of the day in Italy – there is certainly something very impressive and expressive in his whole appearance. He

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[123]**:** It is not clear whether *Journey* or *Letters* are being referred to, or even if Finch knows the difference.

[124]**:** Unidentified: Foscolo had translated *A Sentimental Journey.*

[125]**:** The phrase is from Scott's *The Antiquary:* see 8 Sep 1816.

[126]**:** Vincenzo Monti (1754-1828) translator of Homer, and author of *Aristodemo,* a play praised by B. in early 1814 (BLJ III 245) and often seen as one subtext for *Manfred,* a work unmentioned by H., but currently being written. See 29 Nov 1816. According to Stendhal (*HVSV* 197) it was at this dinner that Monti recited the opening of his poem *Mascheroniana;* but H. *(Italy* I 54n) says he noticed no such thing. For di Breme's letter of the previous day, inviting him to come and meet *l'illustre Byron,* see *Camporesi* 378.

[127]**:** "I" (Ms.)

[128]**:** The *Hermes Logios* was a Greek periodical published from Vienna.

said nothing during dinner that I can recollect – nor was anything said – the conversation ran upon going to Greece.[129]

We got up very soon after dinner and went into another room. Then talking commenced, and Monti had a violent harangue against everybody in the room – he was for imitating Homer, and the [ ] originality was impossible – nothing was left for the moderns but following the old models – he quoted Shakespeare in proof. We all thought very much to the contrary. Breme told me he was like a child in argument – "We revere him," he said, "like our papa – he is the best proof against his own theories, for even when writing on mythological subjects he is quite new and modern". The whole party seemed to delight in making him angry, and he poured forth torrents of dogma. When at last he had finished he talked quietly to Lord Byron and me. We remarked that Milton was a great reader of the Italians, and that he had been said to have stolen his *Paradise Lost* from them. Monti said there was not the least trace of it, and that it was like saying the artist who made the Venus was a thief because he had picked up the clay from somewhere. He then said he liked the cannon[130] in heaven[131] and the angels flinging hills at each other.[132] Here we saw what he meant, and broke up the conference with a laugh.

We went to the theatre, Breme with us. By the way he said Monti was no more the Monti of former times – "Je le révére comme son portrait," said Breme – which I thought beautifully said. He talked with enthusiasm of Monti's poetry, and repeated part of his ode on the death of Louis XVI,[133] which he said was enough to make a nation revolt – he tells the French that the royal blood sprinkled on the scaffold is the blood of their children.[134] Also, speaking of the

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[129]**:** Evidently still a theoretical objective for B. and H..

[130]**:** "cannons" (Ms.)

[131]**:** *Paradise Lost* VI 568-608; see also *The Vision of Judgement*, 52, 7-8.

[132]**:** *Paradise Lost* VI 639-66.

[133]**:** *Inno Cantato al Teatro della Scala in Milano il 21 Gennaio 1799 Anniversario della Morte di Luigi XVI*. Set to music by Ambrogio Minoia.

[134]**:** *Tingi il dito in quel sangue spietato,*
Francia, tolta alle indegne catene,
egli è sangue alle vene succhiato

flight of Ferdinand of Naples, Monti says that he dreamt of Brutus and thought his dagger cut his breast – but that he was not worthy of dying by the stroke of Brutus.[135] Breme said that Monti's real feeling was towards liberty – but that his extreme weakness made him the flatterer of every successive power – he could withstand nothing – a gold snuff box [ ][ ] *debolissimo*.

When we came to the play, after some little time, Monti, and Count Perticari his son-in-law, came into the box. Monti sat next to me – we had a deal of political talk – I found him in the same strain as all – he lamented that he was too old to hope to see a change – he should not live once more to sing the liberties of Italy. I told him now was the time for him to sing and rouse his countrymen – "Ah," said he, "it would be *vox clamantis in deserto*".[136] He mentioned that the Emperor of Austria had said that there was too much luxury, too much magnificence, too many schools – "Enough if my subjects know how to write and read". The same monarch had not desired to speak to a single man of the Italian Institution who had done any honor to the country – neither Volta,[137] nor any of the scientific or literary character – his minister, Count Saurau, said publicly that the Emperor considered the cultivation of the sciences and arts as having a revolutionary tendency. He lent over to Byron to tell him these thoughts in a low, earnest voice.

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de'tuoi figli, che il crudo tradi. - Inno, 11-14.

["Dye your fingers in this merciless blood, France, loosed from your unworthy chains; it is blood sucked from the veins of your sons, betrayed by this brute."]

[135]**:** *Su le regie sue bende profane*
fremon d'ira già l'ombre romane;
e di Bruto il pugnale già nudo
gli è sul petto, già chiede ferir.
Coro:Re insolente, re stolto, re crudo,
di tal ferro non merti morir. - Inno, 45-50.

["Blindfolded by his secular aims, the Roman shade trembles with wrath, and the bared weapon of Brutus is ready to penetrate his breast. Chorus: Insolent, foolish, brutal king, you do not deserve death from such a knife."]

[136]**:** "A voice crying in the wilderness" (Isaiah 40, 3).

[137]**:** Count Alessandro Volta (1745-1827) physicist whose name went into almost every language on earth.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

He told me that there was no way of getting at any account of the real grievances of the country – no-one dared to write, scarcely to think, politics – he hoped however that the English who travelled could tell truth at home. England was the only tribunal yet open for [*blot*] and complaints of Europe. He said that a certain portion of instruction had gone out among the people, which would not be put down, but must produce good fruits. Monti, on hearing me say, pointing to the Austrian soldiers in the pit, "There are your professors", took out his spectacles, looked through them and said, "Ah, yes. Ecco i nostri padroni". He rose to go away – we all rose with him – I observed my friend had kept his eye upon him a good while, and more than once pressed him to take his front seat[138] – certainly the respect due to great eminence in literature, especially poetry, was most of all helped out by his appearance and manner – Lord Byron says he is like a picture of Garrick.

After Monti and Perticari went, Breme came next to us and talked with his usual spirit – he said that the future bride of the Emperor of Austria, the rejected [bride] of the Prince of Würtemberg,[139] was so vulgar-looking and ugly that he turned her out of the court circle when on duty, and she obeyed with all *celerità*. The next day advanced Napoleon with the Queen of Bavaria[140] – the King of Bavaria with the Vice-Queen of Italy, and Prince Eugene with the vulgar, ugly woman – "Oh!" said Breme "Je suis perdu!" – he told this in his best style.

The audience hissed the dancing farce tonight as having been too often played. We went home with an Ms. of *Francesca da Rimini*. I read the account of Pandolfo Colloneio, and thought little of Perticari.

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[138]**:** By 1820 B.'s opinion of Monti would not have motivated such politeness, for he describes him as "quel Giuda di Parnasso" ("this Judas of Parnassus") perhaps associating his political changeability with that of Southey. For the whole passage, which involves Perticari too, see BLJ VII 150-2.

[139]**:** Wilhelm II, Prince of Würtemberg (reigned as King 1816-64).

[140]**:** Beauharnais' wife was Princess Amalia Augusta of Bavaria (1788-1851). di Breme was said to have written flattering verses to her.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

Friday October 18th 1816: This morning Colonel Fitzgerald called, and showed us the very double of Foote's Cadwallader.[141] His chief font and origin was Madame Castiglione of that noble house, with whom he lives.[142] This lady he was in love with twenty-five years ago. He went to the wars – she consoled herself – several parentheses, as Breme told us – then occurred – when lo! the peace happened, and my man crossed the sea and the Alps and falls blindly at her feet. Madame has a difficult [time] in recollecting, until mounting from reminiscence to reminiscence, she recognized her lover. Such virtue was never heard of – it should be rewarded: and the Colonel was established in her house where he has been three years, nearly, and where he shows off his hostess like one of the wonders of Milan.[143]

The Colonel told us that Eugene Beauharnais[144] was one of the richest individuals in Europe. The Milanese, never having been occupied by the

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[141]**:** Samuel Foote (1720-1777) actor and satirical dramatist, feared by Garrick and admired unwillingly by Johnson. His play *The Author* (1757) included a character called Cadwallader, and was so satirical it had to be withdrawn.

[142]**:** It is not clear to me what relationship if any she bears to the Duc de Castiglione (1757-1816) Marshal of France.

[143]**:** B.'s version of the story is fuller and funnier: 'Six-and-twenty years ago, Col. [Fitzgerald], then an ensign, being in Italy, fell in love with the Marchesa [Castiglione], and she with him. The lady must be, at least, twenty years his senior. The war broke out; he returned to England, to serve – not his country, for that's Ireland – but England, which is a different thing; and she – heaven knows what she did. In the year 1814, the first annunciation of the Definitve Treaty of Peace (and tyranny) was developed to the astonished Milanese by the arrival of Col. [Fitzgerald], who, flinging himself full length at the feet of Mad. [Castiglione], murmured forth, in half-forgotten Irish Italian, eternal vows of indelible constancy. The lady screamed, and exclaimed, "Who are you?" The Colonel cried, "What? don't you know me? I am so and so," &c.., &c.., &c..; till, at length, the Marchesa, mounting from reminiscence to reminiscence through the lovers of the intermediate twenty-five years, arrived at last at the recollection of her povero sub-lieutenant. She then said, "Was there ever such virtue?" (that was her very word) and, being now a widow, gave him apartments in her palace, reinstated him in all the rights of wrong, and held him up to the admiring world as a miracle of incontinent fidelity, and the unshaken Abdiel of absence' (BLJ V 147).

[144]**:** Eugene Beauharnais (1781-1824) Josephine's son by her first marriage, made in 1805 Napoleon's Italian Viceroy. At Vienna in 1815 he was demoted to the Duchy of Leuchtenberg in Bavaria. Fitzgerald's anecdotes about him depend in part for their effect on an understanding that the Marchese di Breme – the father of Ludovico – had been his Interior Minister.

Austrians in 1814 *en enemie*, had not been considered a conquered country, though the parts of Italy in possession of the Austrians had been confiscated and the properties not yet restored. When Eugene was shut up in Mantua there were only 400 troops in Milan, and at that time he made a forced loan of which one house in Milan had to pay 28,000. The Colonel said they prayed for the Austrians to enter, and wrote to Bellegarde,[145] who continued in great ceremony with Eugene, until the English arrived under Lord William Bentinck[146] and settled the affair. It was reported that the Senate were about to recall the Viceroy, the consequence of which was that the mob proceeded to the Senate and took down Eugene's picture – they then went in search of Prina,[147] the Minister of Finance. Him they found in the act of disguising himself to escape – he was rescued, but unfortunately put by [the absence of] any [place] of security into a coffee-house opposite their public place of meeting, for he was discerned again by the people, who burst in upon him and beat him to death with their umbrellas.[148] They tore down his palace which occupied one side of a square here. Then the persons of property began to apprehend a general sack by the mob, and after some hours of of fright, during which they improvidently left the town gates open, so that hundreds flocked in from the country, recovered Milan and to the number of about 4,000 armed and [ ] sentry overthrew [ ].

Such was the unpopularity of the Viceroy that great precautions were necessary in providing for the safe retreat even of the Vice-Queen.[8]

The Colonel said that the ordinary revenue of the state under Napoleon was 200 millions of francs, of which thirty were sent to France, and the remainder, by the management of Melzi, Duke of Lodi,[149] spent in the country, which gave an

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[145]**:** Heinrich Noyel de Bellegarde, the Austrian general in charge of the force occupying Venetia in 1814.

[146]**:** Lord William Cavendish Bentinck (1774-1839) helped expel the French from northern Italy in 1814.

[147]**:** Count Giuseppe Prina had been lynched on 20 Apr 1814, during the riots which heralded the end of the Napoleonic Kingdom of Italy. H. obtains a much fuller account of the affair on 26 Oct 1816.

[148]**:** They were forbidden to carry arms.

[149]**:** Melzi d'Eril, Duke of Lodi, Vice-President of Lombardy: much admired by Ludovico di Breme.

activity to the Kingdom, and especially the capital, before unknown to Italians – 18,000 were employed in Milan alone. The Colonel related that when the Emperor came here he was far from angry with the progress of things – said the late government had left many fine things, and he should use them – the country not being a conquest, a great many were left in employment who had served before.

The Colonel imputes the institution of the *Biblioteca Italiana* to the Austrians and the putting Acerbi[150] at the head of it. It had been before then thought necessary to confer some status on Acerbi for his literary labours, and they [had] sent him to Lisbon as Consul, where there was no salary and no honor.

The Colonel told [us] that Napoleon, when he came to Milan first, sent for all the young men and told them he would make something of them – he would make them soldiers. He added that he would take them in six months to the Tower of London. This he said on a balcony of a house opposite to the Casa Castiglione, and in hearing of one of the young Castigliones, who entered into the army and was drowned. It was before he went to Egypt. Madame Castiglione, seeing the way he treated his officers, said "That man will never be content with being General in Chief".

After the Colonel left us we went with young Carvella to the Mint, where we saw first the library and the collection of ancient and modern medals, including the Congress of Vienna. Also we saw the Chinese books of vases and Geography of their Empire – which are very singular. Lord Spencer[151] has them not – the workmanship of the vases is most minute and elegant – the maps are like the map I saw at Vienna of the Roman world at the time of Theodosius. Also saw a book on natural history with outlines of animals, very well executed – which,

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[150]**:** Giuseppe Acerbi (1773-1846) northern explorer and literary associate of Monti. Christened by di Breme "Tartuffe au chapeau plumé". He was asked by the Austrians to edit the *Biblioteca Italiana* in 1816, after Foscolo and Monti had turned the job down (see 21 Oct 16). Stendhal writes (*Rome, Naples et Florence*, 1865 Paris edition, p. 244n), "Voyez la *Biblioteca italiana*, de Milan, journal payé à M. Acerbi par le gouvernement Metternich: c'est tout dire".

[151]**:** George John, 2nd Earl Spencer (1758-1834) famous for the Althorp Library, which became the John Rylands Library at Manchester. He collected art treasures too.

together with the painting and the paper, gave me a new idea of the *perfection* of the arts in China – the paper was double; the printing therefore was only on one side – the collection of books seems very good, especially in what relates to monies and monuments – it was the work of the last government. The mint was exceedingly well-regulated, and the machinery, very neat, worked by water. We saw stamped some Maria Theresa dollars, and some five-franc Napoleons of silver of 1814, a coinage which still continues whilst the owner of the image is in an African island.[152] One of the stamping machines pushes off the struck coin to make way for the ensuing piece – in the one in which this is done by hand, 1,000 are struck in three-quarters of an hour, about.

We came homewards, and Carvella and I went to a bookseller, where there seemed a very good collection of classics, and where I bought a *Museius de populi Atticæ*[153] – at another, a sort of Paternoster Row place, I bought an *Atero Attica*[154] for eight francs – twelve being asked – the number of books exposed for sale even in the street at Milan is considerable. Home – dinner – writing journal, talking &c. till twelve.

Saturday October 19th 1816: Colonel Fitzgerald called – told anecdotes of the Princess of Wales – how she made Keppel Craven[155] get up and show her beefeater's uniform to him and James Grattan,[156] how she was found eating beefsteaks and drinking porter – how she wanted to have a fête given her in the Champ de Mars, and how, when she was present at one given at the Arena on the Emperor's name-day, all the quality of Milan left the place where she sat down on account of her having asked women of bad character – the Mesdames

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[152]**:** H.'s phrase for St. Helena.

[153]**:** Sixth century Latin poem about Hero and Leander by Musaeus Grammaticus. There are scores of editions.

[154]**:** Note on *Atero Attica* pending.

[155]**:** The Hon. Richard Keppel Craven, one of Caroline's chamberlains in 1814 and 1815. He was a friend of William Gell, her chamberlain at the same time. See LJ V 219, and 25 Sep 1820.

[156]**:** Henry Grattan jr., son of the Irish statesman. See 9 May 1814.

Flesches[157] – to her ball. She desired James Grattan to give her love to his father, and tell him she was spending her 35,000 a year all on her own countrymen.[158]

Polidori has not been preferred – he went to the Villa d'Este[159] with his letter, and was stopped in La Mira by two Austrian grenadiers – after he did get his letter delivered (after some helping from behind doors) issued out Baron Bergami,[160] some Englishmen, and Doctor Mochetti,[161] all very civil, and the last in the actual enjoyment of the place which Polidori sought. Polidori frankly told him he was sorry the Doctor had his appointment.

She was painted by Bossi[162] as a Venus "with scarce a rag upon her carcase", as Fitzgerald said. She has sent the Pope some Jerusalem relics.[163]

By the way, Monti told me that the government of the Pope was the most liberal in Italy.

Breme and Polidori came in – discussion about the merits of the *Improvvisatore*. My colonel lauded him to the skies – Breme said that if he was in England and talked so, he would be driven away [by] *coups de derrière*.[164]

Byron and I went to the Ambrosian Library and bought Mai's books[165] for 98 francs, then to the Brera Gallery, which was the work of the late government. Saw Idron Vernon and his wife[166] – admired the Hagar again.

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[157]**:** The Mesdames Flesches unidentified.

[158]**:** Whether Caroline speaks of Englishmen or Brunswickers is not clear.

[159]**:** The villa on Lake Como which Caroline had bought and renamed after the ancient Italian family.

[160]**:** More correctly Pergami: Caroline's "courier": see *Don Juan* V 61, 7.

[161]**:** Unidentified; one of Caroline's lacqueys (not doctors) was Teodoro Majocchi, who, much to her horror, testified against her at her trial in 1820, making himself famous with his repeated "non mi ricordo". Had Polidori obtained the post he would almost certainly have been a witness too.

[162]**:** Giuseppe Bossi (1777-1815) painted Caroline in Oct 1815. She underpaid him.

[163]**:** Caroline made her pilgrimage to Jerusalem on 11 June 1817, entering the city on a donkey to great acclaim.

[164]**:** Sgricci came to England a few years later. His performance is described by Harriet Arbuthnot.

[165]**:** Angelo Mai (1782-1854) the Cardinal who edited the Ambrosian manuscripts which B. and H. had seen on 14 Oct 1816.

[166]**:** Also unidentified at BLJ VII 154.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

Went after to the Casa Castiglione, where we were introduced to sundry, very inferior to Breme – a Roman defended the *improvvisatori* – at last came in Madame la Marquise,[167] exceedingly old indeed, and vastly polite, and apparently sensible – her face, however, hardly supposed a flame of twenty-five years.

The Roman today told me he heard of a certain celebrated English poet, "Pairon" – "He is there," said I – "Oh!"

Leaving Casa Castiglione and my dear Sir, we went to the the Marquis Cagnola's,[168] who showed us his plan for the triumphal arch here,[169] and also for the great building on the summit of Mont Cenis, which was to be erected in pursuance of a decree written on the field of battle at Wurtchen by Napoleon himself and sent to Paris immediately, where it was put into activity, and the academies of Paris, Amsterdam, Milan, Naples, and Rome invited to send in their designs for the execution. The Marquis Cagnola made a plan of his own, which was accepted – the building was to be capable of holding two thousand cavalry at a need – but as grandeur was to be cultivated more than utility, its dimensions were to be secondary to its beauty. The number of columns was to have been 146, their height eighty feet, their diameter ten, which would have made the building twice as big as the Cathedral of Milan. Over the porch of the principal front was to have been a six-horse car, carrying Napoleon, and on the frieze beneath the inscription, which was nothing more than the decree which Napoleon wrote on the field, and which expressed that "Napoleon, Emperor of the French, raised this monument to recognise his appreciation of his subjects of France and Italy who raised 1,200,000 men to the insure the integrity of the Empire and of its allies". The cost was to have been twenty-five millions – every article but wood was on the spot – the building was to have been of marble, all but the capitals, which were to have been of bronze. The battle of Leipzig stopped the whole proceeding.

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[167]**:** The Marchesa Castiglione, beloved of Colonel Fitzgerald.
[168]**:** Luigi Marchese Cagnola (1762-1833) architect.
[169]**:** The Arco della Pace, begun by Napoleon in 1806 to mark the end of the road from the Simplon. Finished 1833.

The Marquis showed us a plan which he had made for a building at Malmaison for the Empress Josephine.

We took leave of this artist Marquis,[170] and came home and dined – after dinner came in Monsignor Breme and Polidori – the former was as usual entertaining – he told us a story of Count Fersen[171] and Madame Castiglione[172] – the Count carried her off, half-reluctant, some distance – they came to an inn, and whilst at dinner heard some music – Count Fersen said, "Now, if these gentlemen in the next room have any politeness they will come into the room and play to us" – so saying he opened the door between the rooms and repeated the observation – when lo! at the head of the band, fiddle in hand, strutted in the Marquis Castiglione himself. Madame, being of ready wit, said she had come to meet her husband,[173] but Fersen said, "Ah, je ne prends pas les choses comme cela!"[174] – pushed the Marquis out of the room, locked the door and *attaccate i cavale subito*[175] – he was off, and carried Madame several days journey off.

Breme then told us all about his quarrel with Acerbi, which chiefly rose on account of Madame de Staël.[176] Acerbi <was found often with her whilst at> was a constant attendant at Milan and when she was Florence, joined in the abuse of her. Breme remonstrated with him publicly, and told him to take either one side or the other, when Acerbi shuffled very much. Afterwards, when Madame de Staël sent an article to the *Biblioteca Italiana*, in which there was just half-a-dozen words said of Breme, Acerbi put the article in and left out the praise.

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[170]**:** Two degrees of nobility above the mere "artist Baron" B.

[171]**:** "Pherson" (Ms.) Identified in B.'s telling of the story as "a Swede, Count Fersen (the same whom the Stockholm mob quartered and lapidated not very long since"). Axel, Count Fersen (1750-1810) had tried to save the French royal family in 1791: his behaviour in this anecdote seems characteristic.

[172]**:** For B.'s slightly shorter version of the tale see BLJ V 147-8.

[173]**:** Compare the climax of *Beppo.*

[174]**:** "That's not the way I do things!" B. omits this part of the story.

[175]**:** "Called for the horses quickly".

[176]**:** H. and B. have landed in the middle of the quarrel between the Italian *Romantici* and *Classicisti,* with di Breme, Foscolo, Borsieri and Pellico (supported by de Staël) on the one side, and Monti, Perticari, and Acerbi on the other. Their own instincts, the influence of de Staël, the proximity and charm of di Breme, and the sense that the classicism of Acerbi and Monti is politically tainted, decide whom they support.

Breme wrote to Acerbi, or went to him – he said Monti had left it out – Breme went to Monti – he denied it, and was in a great rage with Acerbi – then Breme gave his porter orders never to let Acerbi into his house, and indeed a dead cut ensued. Madame de Staël has since written to Breme to make it up with Acerbi, but he says it is of no use to attempt pacification with a rogue – he says he is Saurau's spy.[177]

When he admitted Madame de Staël's article, he gave a sort of invitation to answer it. It seems that the first offence given by Madame de Staël was in her essay *The Influence of Literature*,[178] many years ago, which some dramatic sayings of Lord Nelvil and Count Erfeuil from *Corinna*[179] have called into remembrance, and caused an alarm in Italy – Madame de Staël was attacked in the *Piedmonten Gazette* in an article on Romanes, afterwards copied into the 52nd paper of the *Milan Spectator* – Monsignor de Breme composed his essay in her defence, which he destined for the *Biblioteca Italiana*, and which Acerbi since told us he refused to put in – and this gave Breme offence. Borsieri also wrote his *Giorno*,[180] and the other side have replied by attacking him in the *Milan Gazette* in a mock *farce Italien*. The *Spectator* are assisted by the Aristarchi, or authors of a journal called *Dialogues of the Dead*, in which the course of Italian literature is defended against all foreigners, and all imitation is forbidden to Italians except of their own models – and many high praises are thrown out in favour of very insignificant, boring writers, put into[181] the mouths of the Dantes and Petrarchs in the shades.

Breme has answered in a dialogue written in the *Giornale di Litteratura e belle Arti,* published at Florence between a pretended Madonna, Messere, and

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[177]**:** That is, Acerbi is an Austrian agent. In *The New Monthly Magazine* of Sep 1826, Stendhal wrote, "*La Biblioteca Italiana*, a journal which comes out once a month from the government press, has as its principal editor Signor Acerbi, who is commonly held to be a government spy. It is looked on with great contempt throughout Italy, though it is of service to the Milanese and Venetians who can get no other. Occasionally it contains very good articles on medicine and natural history" *(Selected Journalism*, ed Strickland, 77).

[178]**:** de Staël's *Littérature et ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales* (1800).

[179]**:** In de Staël's *Corinne.*

[180]**:** See 13 Oct 16.

[181]**:** "of" (Ms.)

Cavaliere, that is Madame de Stael, the journalist, and di Breme, and called *Romanticomania*.[182]

A good and short view may be collected from the *Giorno* of Borsieri of the present literary squabble.

The right of the question I have not been able to see, but it appears to me that Breme is right in laughing at the complacency with which the Italians cry up their own writers – which in some measure puts them on a bench with the Greeks.[183] They seem to have hardly any translations – their present great writers are reduced to Botta[184] and Mai!! – the historian of the American War, and the editor of the Ambrosian Ms.

When di Breme went away I sat down and wrote a parody on the beginning of the article in the *Biblioteca Italiana* written on the *Halicarnassus* of Mai,[185] which is miserably done – up late – article in French.

Sunday October 20th 1816: Found Fitzgerald and Acerbi with Byron[186] – the latter a middle-aged, tallish man with black eyes, not polished manners, and something sly in his looks ... talking temperately, and casting around his eye to see if he was safe. Our Colonel could introduce the subject of the critique in the *Edinburgh Review* in which Acerbi was cut up[187] – "My dear Acerbi, they abuse you cursedly, till they come to what you said or thought of the North Pole." Byron and I died of laughing – Acerbi was unflushed. The Colonel then could talk of Breme, and Acerbi said he was a clever, excellent man but a shocking writer, and that Madame de Staël was glad his defence of her was not inserted in the *Biblioteca*. She had said so in the presence of him and Breme – when we said

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[182]**:** *La romanticomachia*.

[183]**:** Unfair, as the Greeks of this time have virtually no poetry.

[184]**:** Carlo Botta (1766-1837) author of *Storia della guerra dell'indipendenza degli Stati Uniti d'America* (Paris 1809).

[185]**:** *Avventure letterarie di un giorno*; see 14 Oct 1816.

[186]**:** Fitzgerald, even-handed Mercury, must have told Acerbi that his reputation was at stake in the English-speaking world if he did not show up at B.'s place that morning.

[187]**:** The reference is to Acerbi's *Travels through Sweden Finland and Lapland to the North Cape in the Years 1798 and 1799*, translated into English in 1802. It is reviewed at pp. 163-71 of the *Edinburgh Review* I (October 1802).

we knew Madame de Staël he drew in – [said] perhaps Breme had not heard it. We were convinced Acerbi lied.

Acerbi said that Breme had had a comedy hissed at Mantua[188] although he, Acerbi, had made a party in its favour – this was too much – we burst into a loud laugh.

"Why," said Acerbi, "Breme is an excellent man, a worthy man, but has a little too good opinion of himself so as to speak indecently of our best writers – he has called Goldoni a *parron Veneziani*,[189] and abused Castiglione.[190] He is a very worthy youth – there is no crime in not being able to write comedies!!" So he went on, taking him up and setting him down in the true Mr Sneer style.[191]

However, when we began to talk of Italian literature, he seemed to think as low of its present state as Breme. He said they were in terrible state of ignorance – he, as editor of the *Biblioteca*, had a great difficulty in his choice of articles – he was obliged to choose the best of bad – he had enough – but bad. Those who wrote well and had a name thought it beneath them to write in a journal. He was the first who gave money for the articles, and was thought a fool for it – he gave forty francs a sheet. He had thought of making the articles anonymous. He owned there were great difficulties as to the choice of sentiments – when Perticari sent him his life of Collenucio,[192] Acerbi showed it to Saurau – and sent it to a counsellor of state, who struck out several passages. Acerbi showed the thing to Saurau, who let it pass. This was reckoned a great liberality, "But," said Acerbi, "the counsellor was afraid of losing his place, which Saurau was not". Politics are totally excluded from the press, and physics, if they bear upon religion – thus Galli's system,[193] having a tendency to materialism, is not allowed to be introduced. Comedies cannot be written because any censure of high life would be stopped by the police. Thus Goldoni has confined himself to the

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[188]**:** di Breme's *behissed comedy* (BB 238) was *Ida,* which had failed in 1815, though at Modena, not Mantua.
[189]**:** "A Venetian phoney". See 13 Oct 1816.
[190]**:** The Renaissance writer, not the Marquis recently deceased.
[191]**:** See Sheridan, *The Critic,* Act I.
[192]**:** See 13 Oct 1816.
[193]**:** Galli untraced. H. may intend "Galileo".

Jocandas.[194] History, of course, is not likely to be written in a country where any sentiment or narrative unfavourable to governments would be at once put down. The Austrian government, however, began the *Biblioteca* and invites the prefects and commissioners to subscribe, which they do, and thus take off 800 copies of the 1,600 which are published every month and subscribed for – this Acerbi said was an unheard-of subscription for Italy, where 400 was reckoned a decent number. There were five journals – in Milan, his, the *Spectator*, the *Dialogues of the Dead*, and two medical journals – one medical at Padua, two journals at Florence, two at Naples – and one elsewhere.[195] None of these but his own sold more than 400, and his plan was quite new to Italy.

He said that the best encouragement given to a writer here was when a bookseller would take the risk and divide the profits – no man ever lives by literature here. We gave him a sketch of our own reviewing system and its dispersion of literature – he was thunderstruck when he heard of £800 per annum being given to the editors of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*[196] ... he allowed the *Spectator* and the *Dialogues* to be sad trash, and would soon close.

He told [us] that Gibbon and Hume are forbidden in Italy – Acerbi owned that there was more freedom as to past things in Napoleon's time, but less as to present – I told Acerbi that was merely saying that some things were allowed by Napoleon which were not by the Austrians, and vice-versa, as writing of past things belonged to the present exercise of liberty as much as anything else – Napoleon did not forbid Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, nor Locke, nor any book not written against his government.

Acerbi abused the King of Piedmont violently, and said it was thought he would break up the Simplon Road.[197] He thought any sovereign but his own fair game.

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[194]**:** As Goldoni has been dead for twenty-three years, it is hard to see how his case is relevant.

[195]**:** Eleven are listed.

[196]**:** The *Edinburgh Review* was edited by Francis Jeffrey; the *Quarterly* by William Gifford. I am unable to say whether B. and H. are accurate in naming their salaries.

[197]**:** See 9 Oct 16 for the source of this rumour.

When he went away we thought him a shabby fellow, most decidedly inferior to our Breme set, although he says[198] things with a certain precision, which gives a weight to his opinions. We dined and I wrote journal, besides reading *Il Giorno*.[199] Byron has advised me not to show Breme my parody[200] which gave me so much trouble, and I have *multi generosi concedat*.[201]

I am to be persuaded of anything – Joseph my servant last week made me buy a pair of horses for twenty-five louis – they are those which brought me down from Geneva, and have dragged me and Byron about the town. In yesterday's *Gazette of Milan* was an extract from the *Bologna Gazette* in which was a most glorious puff of Signor Sgricci the Improvvisatore, who is admired by Acerbi, and is, he says, to be crowned at Rome.[202] Indeed, they were going to crown him there before, but his friends wished to wait until he had the suffrages of all Italy!!!

Monday October 21st 1816: In the morning Monti called with Silvio Pellico, the author of *Francesca da Rimini,* and Borsieri, the author of the *Giorno*.[203] Monti and the others talked loudly in praise of Shakespeare. Monti said he was a great comic writer – he said there were three great geniuses since the world began: – Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare[204] – they had no tolerable translation in verse of Shakespeare, none so good as the French prose.[205] Monti mentioned that when he was young Dante was out of fashion – Cesarotti[206] was all for the French – and *his* (Monti's) master, Betinelli,[207] was for the scientists, and told him not to trouble himself with "that old fellow Dante". Monti repeated part of

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[198]**:** "saying" (Ms.)
[199]**:** Borsieri's *Avventure letterarie:* see 13 Oct 16.
[200]**:** Written only at the end of the previous day.
[201]**:** "Most magnanimously conceded"; macaronic Latin-Italian.
[202]**:** Just as Petrarch had been in 1341.
[203]**:** See 13 Oct 1816. H.'s Italian is rushed at this point.
[204]**:** This statement from Monti is quoted at *Illustrations* p. 439.
[205]**:** Note on French prose translation of Shakespeare pending.
[206]**:** Melchiore Cesarotti (1730-1808) poet who translated Homer and Ossian, and
[207]**:** Saverio Bettinelli (1718-1808: hence "old") critic and poet. Both were polemical foes of Monti. See *Illustrations* p. 447.

that satire of Dante's, in which he says of the pope and his mule covered by the pope's long cloak "due bestie sotta[208] una pelle".[209] This he quoted on occasion of showing us a snuff box on which was the picture of Pius VII, given him by the Pope himself.

After Monti went we went out sight-seeing. Went to the church of St Ambrosio – the cloisters are more inspiring than the church, and contain several ancient inscriptions. In the church we saw a small statue of St Maria, the sister of St Ambrose,[210] whose relics were removed there in 1812 after a procession round the city – the sculpture is very beautiful. Saw the stone chair in which St Ambrose sat – also his stone pulpit, with the Apostles carved round it at supper – each "up to his ankles in his own mess", as Forsyth says.[211] The brazen serpent I did not see, unless it was an eagle stuck under the pulpit – this church whither the [ ][ ] church.

Thence we went to the Porta Marengo, and in the way saw the old Corinthian columns, smoke-dried in a dirty street just before St Lorenzo's church, which are called Maximian's baths. No ruins in the midst of Constantinople could be more disregarded.[212] The church of St Lorenzo is of that singular brickwork faced with richly ornamented stucco which is so common in this country, but not I think to be met with elsewhere, at least not in England. The cupola seems universal in the old religious buildings of any size.

The gate of Marengo is simple and handsome but, not of marble – the inscription now is *Arc Privato Extructum Dedic 1815.*

We went hence on the outside of the town ditch and its green rampart, and entering another gate went to the church of St Celso, in the front of which with iron network, we saw two divinities – a Venus, and I should think a young Bacchus in marble, very beautifully sculptured. I thought them antique [but] they

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[208]**:** "sopra" (Ms.)

[209]**:** "Two beasts under one cloak"; a rare joke from the *Paradiso:* XXI, 134.

[210]**:** *Illustrations* corrects her name to Marcellina.

[211]**:** "The apostles carved round the marble pulpit are all matter-of-fact men, each intent on his own dish, and up to the knuckles in his own mess" – Forsyth / Crook 194.

[212]**:** H. recollects 21 May 1810, the Burnt Column in Constantinople.

are Adam and Eve – they are the work of one Laurenzo Stildo, so the church guide told us if I made him out. In the church of the Saint, we saw the altar on which the nail of the true cross, which hangs in the Cathedral,[213] was laid by St Charles when he appeased the pestilence, by making a procession of this nail round the city. There is a boat hung up in the cathedral now, and in this bottom the priest, or priests, are drawn round the top of the church to the spot where the nail is deposited and above they take it to show it. St Charles could not make himself respectable by all his virtues without pretending to the belief in the nail.[214] We saw some pictures by Julius Cæsar Procacci and his brother, and also some frescoes in the dome by Appiani, also the apparition of Mary and her child, such as it appeared in opening some part of the ground of the church.

This ride showed us a beautiful view of the whole range of the Alps covered with snow, which has fallen on them these few days – the great St Bernard towering high above all the rest. We agreed that this was one of the most striking views of these mountains which we had yet seen – they seemed near, although the Mount Cenis must be 120 miles off at least. It was very cold today and we had a fire.

After dinner we went to Breme's box with him and Colonel Finch – Breme told us some ridiculous stories of Schlegel, particularly of his being angry that his trunk was not carried up into his room as soon as Madame de Broglie's and Madame de Staël's, and when Madame de Staël said, "Well, I will go and see for it," actually let her go. Schlegel says that Dante had a divine spirit, really supernatural – Breme said he did not see anything so divine in Dante's putting his friends into the hell of the Sodomites.[215] – "Oh," said Schlegel, "there is a mystery in that."

Breme told me tonight, in presence of Colonel Finch, that Castlereagh had said to the Italian deputy who asked him for a constitution for Italy, "What is a constitution good for?" – "Why," said the Italian, "the English have found it

[213]**:** It hangs there to this day (2002).
[214]**:** H. can't believe that a man of the stature of Borromeo may actually have had faith in the nail.
[215]**:** Refers to *Inferno,* Canto XV.

some good". – "Pooh!" answered my Lord, "nous serons bien unies nous en defence".[216] Breme was afraid of this anecdote being put into print – there was only one deputy present and they may say he lied, and ruin him for speaking truth.

Monti told us today that, wanting to print an edition of Virgil and Cornelius Nepos here, they were obliged to send the Ms. copy to the Aulic Council at Vienna for approbation. Learnt tonight that the conduct of the *Biblioteca Italiana* was first offered to Ugo Fosolo, who declined it, then to Monti, who would not also, then to Acerbi, who accepted it with Monti as nominal coadjutor. Monti, however, has only written three articles in nine numbers. Acerbi, so Breme said, stole the drawings of a certain Hildebrand and the [ ][ ][217] and used them in his northern travels. Hildebrand, or Skildolone, says he will cane Acerbi wherever he finds him. The Austrians here have a similar literary journal published at last – Monti and Pellico and Breme said today that Napoleon's government was dreadfully illiberal as to publications, and that they planned an edition of the classics leaving out everything in favour of liberty.[218]

Came home and went to bed after calling Finch a bore for saying he ought to be the Duke of Cleveland,[219] and was descended from Mr Fitzherbert son of Henry II[220] …

Tuesday October 22nd 1816: Finch went with Byron and me to Monza[221] today, ten miles off. Fine road, beautiful view of the Alps at the close of the

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[216]**:** The French here is severely cramped at the page bottom. My reading would translate "We'll combine easily to defeat that"; but *Recollections* (II 52) has *"nous saurons bien nous défendre"* (implying "We'll know how to deal with the likes of you").

[217]**:** Plagiarised explorer-illustrator unidentified.

[218]**:** Compare *Don Juan* I Stanzas 41-5; although in the case of their edition of the classics, the "Index" would have been a lot smaller, there being fewer liberal passages in the classics than there are sexual ones.

[219]**:** Perhaps he had cast a favourable eye on the Duchess, whom H. claimed that he B. and he had met in the Alps: see 27 Sep 1816, 28 Sep 1816, and the alteration in *Recollections.*

[220]**:** Finch is fantasising. The two illegitimate sons of Henry II were *said* to have been William Longsword and Geoffrey of York.

[221]**:** Where Charlemagne was crowned King of Italy in 773.

avenue leading to the chateau.[222] On the way, Finch told stories of Burghersh,[223] who has published a little ode humbly presented to the Countess Aprini[224] on her birthday by Count Giraud,[225] set to music by his excellency the Lord Burghersh, envoy from his Britannic Majesty &c. &c.[226]

Phelps, his secretary, was a querister,[227] or on the stage. Burghersh's poet is a rogue, a predicament in which most of his friends are said to be. He neglected a letter of recommendation from Mrs Wellesley Pole[228] presented by a respectable Dr Church and lived with a swindler, one Dick,[229] who was at the same inn with the neglected Church.

The same told us that it was Talleyrand's[230] plan to give Parma and Piacenza[231] to the King of Sardinia in lieu of two millions of francs yearly, to be given from France by an article of the Treaty of Worms.[232] This he had agreed upon with the minister, Signor Marzin,[233] a clever man who had been employed by the French, and was therefore dismissed and supplanted by Mr de Revel,[234] who, neglecting to attend Mr de Talleyrand one morning, was sent for in haste – he came by two o'clock and pleaded a headache. "Well," said Talleyrand, "your

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[222]**:** Known as the Villa Buonaparte: former residence of Eugene Beauharnais.

[223]**:** John Fane (1784-1859) known as Lord Burghersh until 1841, when he inherited his father's title of Lord Westmoreland. Aide-de-camp to Wellington in the Peninsula, English ambassador to Florence from 1814. A composer and violinist, he founded the Royal Academy of Music.

[224]**:** Countess Aprini unidentified.

[225]**:** Giovanni Giraud (1776-1834) comic writer.

[226]**:** Burghersh wrote several operas and cantatas. Hobhouse may merely be sneering at another aristocrat-artist.

[227]**:** Phelps unidentified. *Querister:* chorister.

[228]**:** Wife to a nephew of Wellington.

[229]**:** Church and Dick unidentified.

[230]**:** Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (1754-1838) French statesman of long continuance and versatile allegiance.

[231]**:** "Placentia" (Ms).

[232]**:** H. is confused. For "Treaty of Worms" read "Congress of Vienna" (1815), by the terms of which Parma and Piacenza were given to Napoleon's wife Maria Louisa, who became Grand Duchess of Parma. Unless anyone has a better idea.

[233]**:** Marzin unidentified.

[234]**:** de Revel unidentified.

headache has lost Parma and Piacenza". He then told Revel of the Treaty of Worms for the first time. Revel went to the King, who had never heard of it, and sent for Signor Marzin: "My dear friend, what is all this about Parma – two millions of francs – the Treaty of Worms?" said the King, in his bed-gown – "Why did you not tell me of all this before!!! – both Parma and the money are lost forever!"

We saw the viceregal palace, which was refitted by Beauharnais. It is a good nobleman's house, neatly furnished with a fine full room and theatre &c., in which the scene was left from the last play represented there to Prince Eugene. The six long corridors look like a convent or a barrack, which it was. The view of the ampitheatre of the Alps from the house is, however, well worth going to see. The gardens are poor, the park ten miles round, filled with game. Prince Eugene used to hunt, &c., three times a week there when at the house. It is situated in a dead flat of enclosures, out of which rise village churches with the square spires, and Mount Brianza with its villa.

We went to Monza – a small town – and were struck with the singular facade of its church, which contains the treasures, to see which Count Saurau, governor of Milan,[235] had given us a letter to the Archiprete, as he had to the keeper of the chateau. We found another party there, who were looking at the Iron Crown[236] – this Iron Crown we were a long time at a loss to distinguish, set as it is in the head of a large cross, and having hanging in the midst of it a piece of sponge rich with the blood of Jesus Christ. The Iron Crown is in fact a *bandeau* of gold set with precious stones, as represented on Napoleon's medals,[237] and the iron is one of the nails of the true cross, drawn out so as to set round the *bandeau*. In the arms of the cross are bits of the wood of the cross, and the [ ], and the scourge of Christ. The cross is as large as life, very richly set.

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[235]**:** Whether they obtained their letters from Northern Italy's leading oppressor with distaste or indifference, H. does not record.

[236]**:** With which Napoleon had been crowned King of Italy in 1805.

[237]**:** di Breme had been awarded the Order of the Iron Crown by Bonaparte.

We then went to the treasury, where we saw some utensils belonging to Queen Teodolinda of the Lombards,[238] chiefly presented to her by Gregory the Great.[239] A papyrus letter of his to her; some gold sculpture of a warrior in small size, singular for its work and costume; her shield or device in gold – a hen and some chickens as large as life; herself and the seven provinces of Lombardy; a bit of the true cross set in yellow precious stone; some tablets, said to be before the Christian era, in ivory with a fine relief on one side of [the] figures, with columns, one of which being spiral, Colonel Finch said could not be so old as alleged. The tablets were in small folio and not at all pocket companions. They must have been carried by a slave. We saw also a wallet belonging to Jesus Christ, and one of St Peter, also in a large silver case; a robe of the Virgin Mary's, which the priest observed was in four folds and proved that even in those days four- folded large mantles were in use. This he said *de bonne foi*,[240] and we all received it reverently. We saw the stone tomb of Queen Teodolinda also – also her fan and comb, which showed that all the essentials of those inventions were well-known in that early period.

Afterwards we were directed to ask to see the skeleton of Count Hector Visconti,[241] and we were shown it in a cupboard in the cloister. The Count was killed at the siege of Monza, fighting against the Emperor in 1412.[242] His body was found in the ruins of the old castle, which is mentioned on a paper in the case, and unconsumed – the flesh still sticks to many parts of him – the left leg which was broken off near the ankle by the shot of the balista[243] which killed him – his portrait was spattered, and seems to show the blood – his hands are covered

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[238]**:** Theodelinda, Christian Queen of Lombardy (sixth century A.D.) mediator between the Lombards and the Catholic Church, led by

[239]**:** Pope Gregory I (c.540-604) who *(inter alia)* sent Augustine to England.

[240]**:** "In good faith".

[241]**:** History records no Hector Visconti worthy of remark. The Visconti assassinated by the Ghibellines in 1412 was Giovanni Maria (born 1388) the mad and sadistic son of Gian Galleazo Visconti.

[242]**:** If only as a partisan of the Pope, Visconti should have been given Christian burial: the subtextual outrage in H.'s account is doubtless occasioned by this thought.

[243]**:** "balestra" (Ms.) A balista was a stone-throwing device in Roman and medieval siege warfare.

with flesh – there is a hole, accidental most likely, under his right breast – his sword, a short, very pointed weapon, is hanging in its sheath in the case with him – the last line of the short notice of him, says "Mori, gli Eroe si non respiro ta[ ]"[244] The beginning of the inscription is rather striking – "This skeleton once enclosed the soul of Count Hector Visconti," &c.

Cæsar himself would have looked like him.[245] I thought they should not show these sights at churches where they preach doctrines which the first sight of them most woefully shake.

We drove back in cold weather to Milan – dined – at night Byron and I translated part of *Francesca da Rimini*[246] – I till late.

Wednesday October 23rd 1816: Up half-past nine. Went out with Colonel Finch – bought a map of Italy for sixty francs – introduced, at his squalid rooms in the Albergo di Manno, to his travelling companion, an old gentleman of sixty-three who goes over these parts as he were once made a voyage to China and India to make sketches. His name is Wathen, a Herefordshire man,[247] in his appearance like a parish clerk of the old friendly school. Colonel Finch tells me he walks thirty-five miles a day with the best of them. Finch, he, and another are going with a *vetturino*[248] to Venice, who have agreed to furnish them with horses lodgings and food for fifteen francs a day each!!![249]

Afterwards we went to the Mint, and in the Library saw the *Travels in Albania*[250] – and Clarke's fourth volume[251] – several other oriental books. This noble collection was made under the direction of Prina, Minister of Finances,[252] who made it in five years what it is now – he gave the conductors *carte blanche*

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[244]**:** "Die. Heroes breathe no more …"
[245]**:** H. paraphrases *Hamlet* V i 205-10.
[246]**:** They have had their manuscript of Pellico's drama since the evening of Oct 17 1816.
[247]**:** Finch's travelling companions were James Wathen and Francis Lee.
[248]**:** A coachman / travel courier, similar to Springhetti.
[249]**:** Implies that they are being ripped off.
[250]**:** H.'s own book.
[251]**:** The author is Edward Daniel Clarke, excavator of the "Cambridge Ceres".
[252]**:** Lynched on 20 Apr 1814.

– now they have 100 francs a month. Prina was murdered by a mob, set on by men well-known and marked – Fitzgerald's account[253] was incorrect – the Austrians did not try to punish the murderers. The Senate was not ill-treated – only laughed at and their records thrown into the canal.[254]

Coming home, found the two Carvellas and poor Polidori[255] with Byron. Went out with him in carriage to the echo of Simonetta,[256] which is in an open court with three sides of a rectangle – I could only make thirty-six repetitions of the pistol shot, but the voice was signally clear.

Fine clear day – came home – dined – wrote journal – went, or going to, opera.[257]

At the opera in Breme's box, met Mr de Beyle, one of the *intendants de la mobiliare de la couronne* and secretary of Napoleon's cabinet.[258] He told us several extraordinary stories. The Emperor Francis, who is a maker of sealing-wax – when he received despatches from Napoleon, used to carefully cut off the seal and give the letter to his minister – whilst the one was reading, the other was looking at the seal; rubbing it against his breeches, smelling to it and giving it its due praise – the eagle was well done, the sword perfect, &c. Napoleon took care always to have his letters to his father-in-law well sealed. Beyle said he himself decyphered these details from the French minister at Vienna – also the account that Francis an employ in painting eyes at the bottom of ladies' chamberpots, to which he gave a *regard frippon*.[259]

Beyle was in waiting on Napoleon on the Russian expedition. After the affair of "Maristudovitch" (or some such name)[260] and when the cavalry was

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[253]**:** Given them on 18 Oct 1816.

[254]**:** As reported in the diary, Fitzgerald covered none of these points.

[255]**:** The "poor" seems added later, as if after Polidori has been forced to leave Milan by the Austrians.

[256]**:** The Villa Simonetta in Milan was the home of Ferrante Gonzaga; acoustic phenomenon unidentified (my thanks to Chris Little here).

[257]**:** The handwriting for the rest of the entry is neater, indicating that H. wrote the first part before, and the second after, the opera.

[258]**:** This seems to be their second, and most important, meeting with the future Stendhal.

[259]**:** "A naughty expression".

[260]**:** Malo-Jaruslawitz.

dismounted, Napoleon quite lost himself. He actually signed eight or ten decrees of advancement or some such things, "Pompée",[261] and when Beyle took the occasion afterwards to say, "Your Majesty has made a slip of the pen here", he looked with a horrid grimace, and said "Ah yes," and tore the decree and signed another. He would never pronounce the word "Kaluga"[262] but called it sometimes "Caligula", sometimes "Salamanca" – his attendants, who knew what he meant, went on writing or listening without making any remark. During the retreat he was always dejected – his horse not being able to stand on account of the ice, he was obliged to get off and walk with a white staff – there is a French saying, "When a man is in misfortune that he takes the white stick". One of the six or seven people close to him happened to say out loud "Ah, voila l'Empereur qui marche avec le baton blanc". Instead of taking this in good part – he said gloomily "Oui messieurs, voilà les grandeurs humains". Mr de Beyle walked close to him for three hours – then he never spoke a word.

It is not true the army cried "A bas le manteau!"[263] – on the contrary, everybody thought that his salvation depended on Napoleon – the whole army looked anxiously at him to see in [the] face what hopes he might form. Once or twice some soldiers cried as he passed, "Ce matin nous fait tuer tous!" He turned round and looked at the speakers – the soldiers burst into tears. The distress of the army was so great, that every man was half a fool – and many quite – even the bravest hearts gave way. Davout[264] cried like a child. In twenty-four hours eighty-four generals of brigade and division came to headquarters weeping and screeching, "Ah, ma division – ah ma brigade!"

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[261]**:** Napoleon identified momentarily with Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (106-48 BC). The memory-problem, and the other signs of Napoleon's depression in Russia reported here by Beyle, are described at *Letters* (3rd edn, 1817) II 73-5.

[262]**: "**Kaluga had played an important role during the Patriotic War of 1812. One of the first partisan groups have been formed in the Borovsk woods. During that days, when Napoleon's army had left charred ruins of Moscow, Kaluga had been the main base of the russian army and based on that the army under Kutusov's guide had defeated Napoleon near Tarution and Maloyaroslavets." (- from the Kaluga website.)

[263]**:** "Down with the flag!"

[264]**:** Louis Nicholas Davout (1770-1823) French Marshal.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

A dysentery seized on the army. The Prince Major-General Berthier,[265] having pulled down his breeches for his occasions, could not button them again. Excelmans,[266] who pulled off his gloves to do it, lost the use of one of his fingers instantly – the whole army which at Konigsberg amounted to 45,000 men who were half a day at stool – might have been taken by two regiments of the enemy, but the Russians suffered the French to remain eighteen days there listening to *La Clemenza di Tito,*[267] which was played there by a good company of singers. The same unaccountable neglect was shown by Tchitchagoff,[268] where the whole army expected to be cut off – they had a river to pass and twelve bridges over a marsh – if one bridge had been cut down, the whole was over. Beyle was riding in front of the staff – there was only a single Cossack looking at them as the army filed over the river and the marsh. Napoleon was a little inspirited by this, and almost laughed at the stupidity of the Admiral.

When he went Beyle waited on Murat, left Commander-in-chief.[269] Murat sat up in his bed and wept bitterly. Beyle's life was saved by Duroc, Marshall of the palace,[270] who gave him now and then a dish of coffee – this made all the difference to a man's life. When at Konigsberg the prescription was punch, of which he drank a dozen beakers a day. The change in the appearance of the army was so great that their nearest friends could not recognise them. Nicolai, a coadjutor of Beyle,[271] did not know him for two hours. Marshall Ney was the only man who preserved his presence of mind.

When Napoleon came back from Moscow there were found three letters, addressed by Talleyrand to Louis XVIII and commencing "Sire". The letters were read at council when Beyle held the pen. It seemed the opinion that

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[265]**:** Alexandre Berthier (1753-1815) French Marshal.
[266]**:** Remi Isidore Exelmans, cavalry commander.
[267]**:** "the Clemenza da Tito" (Ms.) An *opera seria* by Mozart, first performed 1791.
[268]**:** Tchichagoff had visited them at Geneva: see 11 Sep 1816.
[269]**:** Joachim Murat, cavalry commander, later Napoelon's brother-in-law, made by him King of Naples.
[270]**:** Michel Duroc, duc de Frioul (1772-1813) a colleague of Beyle's on Napoleon's staff.
[271]**:** Scipion de Nicolaï (dates unknown) another colleague of Beyle's on the Russian campaign.

Talleyrand must be punished, and Napoleon himself affirmed as much. Cambacères[272] said "Quoi? toujours du sang?"[273] This saved Talleyrand's life, and put a stop to the discussion – Napoleon did not say another word. Beyle observed that a Jury would have condemned Talleyrand. So far from being cruel, said Beyle, he [Napoleon] was not cruel enough – he had the Bourbons in his hands and would not make away with them. Beyle alluded to poison.

Beyle remembered that the duc d'Angoulême[274] when taken was in a great alarm, which was much augmented by the captain who took him, and who to play upon his feelings, said, "I answer for your life for two hours whilst I am with you – afterwards I cannot be responsible". The Duke sprung on his neck, embraced him, and said, "Ah, ne me faites pas perir!"

Madame Ney[275] is come to Milan – so she is called and designated on her passport, it is supposed. Beyle told that she put this on her husband's tomb: "Trente-cinq ans de gloire un jour d'erreur."[276] The police made her take out the inscription and forbade her to put any other not approved by them.[277] When Cambronne[278] was tried he was asked how he came to make a war against France with Napoleon in 1815 – he said he had not fired a shot – not a man that he had met was not of the same way of thinking as himself. How came he to receive the orders of Bonaparte to attack the town of Paris and destroy the National Guards? Cambronne drew from his bosom a piece of paper containing words to this effect: "Général, je vous confie le commandant de ma garde – en entrant a Paris vous aurez tous les soins possibles de ne pas faire de mal a personne, car je ne veux pas que mon retour coute a la France une goutte de sang – Napoleon".[279]

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[272]**:** See 31 Aug 1816.

[273]**:** "What? Must there always be blood?"

[274]**:** Louis Antoine de Bourbon, duc d'Angoulême (1775-1844) had been lieutenant-general of France when Napoleon returned from Elba in 1815.

[275]**:** To become the beloved of, among others, Michael Bruce (see 27 Dec 1818).

[276]**:** "Thirty-five years of glory, one day of error".

[277]**:** "by the police" (Ms.)

[278]**:** Pierre Cambronne (1770-1842) commanded Napoleon's forces on Elba.

[279]**:** "General, I give you command of the guard – when you enter Paris take all possible care to do no harm to anyone, for I do not wish my return to cost a drop of French blood / Napoleon."

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

"Voila l'homme,"[280] said Cambronne. The Marquis de ———,[281] one of the judges, started up, and with a frantic gesture exclaimed, "Il nous echapperait encore!"[282] – Breme told this.

I have every reason to think that Beyle is a trustworthy person – he is so reported by Breme – however he has a cruel way of talking and looks, and is, a sensualist. He said that about two years ago he heard the Marquis de Sade[283] at Charenton[284] cry out to poor men in the street, "Bonjour messieurs – bonjour – je vous ferai tous secreter vifs!"[285] just as if he had said, "I'll come and call on you!" – his lust was cruelty – he might have been beheaded a hundred times for the murder of women. He used to tie them down and make a wound in their thighs as near as possible to the great artery – as they expired his enjoyment was consummated. Napoleon did not choose to punish him except by putting him in a madhouse – and under the old regime he was accounted of too old a family for punishment. Mr de Duffond[286] mentions his being found with a woman covered with cuts – his excuse was that he was applying healing salve to her – and his salve was leaking – he debutted[287] by sending his brother out of the way, giving his brother's wife [ ] at a ball, and then carrying her off, after every violence, to Florence, where he sold her to the Grand Duke Leopold.[288]

Breme told of an Italian nobleman who kept a seraglio at Leghorn, and pointed out a lady in a box opposite who had escaped from it.

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[280]**:** "There's the man for you!"
[281]**:** Marquis unidentified.
[282]**:** "He will escape us yet!"
[283]**:** Born 1740, de Sade had died in 1814 at
[284]**:** the asylum in which he was finally locked.
[285]**:** The words implied that de Sade would give the men a good time.
[286]**:** Duffond ("Du Fond"?) unidentified.
[287]**:** Word unclear. It implies that this was de Sade's first venture into perversion.
[288]**:** Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany reigned, with Napoleonic interruptions, from 1790 to 1824. But the woman referred to, Anne-Prospère de Launay, a canoness, was Sade's wife's sister, not his brother's wife. He ran off to Italy with her in June 1772. He did not hand her over to Leopold when the affair ended.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

We came from the play – before going I heard all sorts of strange accounts of my servant Poisson. Amongst others – that he says he has lived twenty-two years with my family, and has £100 a year from my father for taking care of *me*!!

Thursday October 24th 1816: Up late. This morning called the two Carvellas, Scardeli, a Corfiote,[289] and Schinas of Constantinople.[290] The latter is a gentlemanly-looking young man – he studied two years in Paris under Corai and is now at Padua. he has a certain turn for drollery about him – he says that Corai does not speak Greek with the true accent, but like a Suliote. He mentioned that the Archbishop Ignatius[291] is now digesting a plan of education on Bell and Lancaster system[292] – also that he is writing an account of the Suliote wars,[293] which although at that time at Ioaninna, he was practically encouraging. Also that Ali Pacha had employed two Genoese to assassinate him. Ignatius is a good soldier, and a great judge of a horse. He is now studying the Italian and Latin – he is at Pisa. Schinas came from Pavia on purpose to see us. He purposes returning to Greece. There are about twelve[294] Greek students in Italy, not to mention the merchants of Leghorn.

Byron and I took a course with our grammars in the evening. Breme called and told us he was most miserable. The head of his distress was a Catholic – black coat – Italy – noble.[295] Byron offered to change places with him, and I

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[289]**:** Scardeli unidentified.

[290]**:** Demetrios Schinas was a colleague of Andreas Mustoxides, and with him in 1816 and 1817 edited five volumes of *Ambrosian Anecdotes.*

[291]**:** Archbishop Ignatius of Arta writes B. an important letter just prior to his 1823 embarkation for Greece.

[292]**:** The Anglican Andrew Bell (1753-1832) and the nonconformist Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838) pioneered a cascading educational system, economic on teaching staff.

[293]**:** *Exposé des faits qui ont précédé et suivi la cession de Parga* (1820). The wars were those of 1754.

[294]**:** Could be “62” or “92”.

[295]**:** We gather that di Breme is miserable at being an Italian nobleman who has taken the cloth. Either that or he is in love. *Recollections* (II 56) cuts all pertinent detail.

supported, against conviction, that everything[296] ought to be and most people are happy.

Friday October 25th 1816: Did nothing particular in the morning but <translated some of Pellico's tragedy – Byron and I to night [ ] the Impro> wrote letters.

After dinner Byron and I went to the Opera, to hear the famous Sgricci.[297] The theatre was very full, both pit and boxes, much more so than I had seen before. After some little time there was impatience manifested – nothing was seen in the stage but a table with a dirty green cloth covering it to the ground, and a candle at each corner. The band came into the orchestra and began to play – then appeared a candle snuffer who took off the dirty baize and placed a green stuff on the table, which Breme observed was the Countess Perticari's footcloth. The scandal is that Sgricci has been found by Madame Perticari, Monti's daughter, to improvise better than her husband.[298] When the music [ended], came in a man whom they clapped thinking it was Sgricci, but who was only a servant who carried a vase like an apothecary's black bottle, and placed it in the middle of the table. Then came the same, with a man in black, and a little boy, and placed themselves with great mystery at the table. The black man read aloud subjects for the *versi sciolti*,[299] the first of which was one I [had] suggested, and Polidori gave in a bit of paper as he entered, to a person put there to receive it:[300]

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[296]**:** *Recollections* (II 56) has *everybody;* in fact the phrase looks like *every twig.* I read a paraphrase of Pope, *Essay on Man* IV, 394: *WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.*

[297]**:** Tommaso Sgricci (1789-1836) the *improvvisatore.* For B.'s reaction to the evening, see letter to Moore, 6 Nov 1816: "There was a famous improvvisatore who held forth while I was there. His fluency astonished me; but, although I understand Italian, and speak it (with more readiness than accuracy), I could only carry off a very few commonplace mythological images, and one line about Artemisa, and another about Algiers, with sixty words of an entire tragedy about Eteocles and Polynices. Some of the Italians liked him – others called his performance "seccatura" (a devilish good word, by the way) and all Milan was in controversy about him" (BLJ V 124-5). For Breme's account of this evening, see his letter to de Staël, 30 Oct 1816 (Camporesi 386-9).

[298]**:** See 15 Oct 1816 and 17 Oct 1816.

[299]**:** Blank verse.

[300]**:** The suggestions have to be vetted politically before being read out.

"The Egg of Columbus".[301] Each subject being read and folded up was thrown into the vase, which the candle-snuffer took up, and shook ceremoniously, and presented it to the little boy, who, averting his head and holding up his hand like the blue coats at the Lottery,[302] drew out a subject, "The Attack of Algiers",[303] which was proclaimed aloud, and the trio withdrew.

The expectation of Sgricci was now very great – loud clappings were heard on both sides – Breme, Pellico, Guarco,[304] Borsieri, and Polidori, with ourselves, were rather inclined to titter,[305] though Byron and I agreed that it did not become foreigners ignorant of the language to judge everybody in Italy, much less to prejudge him.

At last Sgricci came in, with wild black hair, no cravat,[306] blue coat, white waistcoat, white pantaloons, and yellow Turkish slippers. He was received with shouts of applause, and after a bow began with great action. I caught but little except that he would not invoke the [Greek] muses but the muse of Mount Libanus,[307] and then heard a good deal about Amphitrite and Aurora[308] – "superbi legni" and "infame mai"[309] was caught by Byron. The slaves were found speaking in the end of the poem, but everybody agreed that every single distinctive circumstance of the action had been left out and that Sgricci had given nothing but commonplaces – our box was triumphant. However, at the close of the recitation, which lasted without the least hesitation for twelve or fifteen minutes, a good deal of clapping was heard, and Sgricci bowed withdrew,

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[301]**:** *L'Uovo di Columbo:* joke obscure; perhaps combines a pun on *Columbo* and *colomba* ("dove") and a reference to the United States.

[302]**:** *Italy* (I 44) has *our abolished lotteries*.

[303]**:** The "heroic" events of 26 Aug 1816, when the Europeans bombarded Algiers to free the Christian slaves: see 21 Nov 1817.

[304]**:** Carlo Guarco, an advocate friend of di Breme's and Beyle's.

[305]**:** Sgricci, being regarded as a creature of Monti and thus of the Austrians, is unlikely to get a good reception from anyone in di Breme's box.

[306]**:** The hair and absence of cravat quite Byronic.

[307]**:** A mountain in Syria, home perhaps of a suitably free ("liber") alternative muse, for Sgricci's supposedly unshackled improvising.

[308]**:** Names (i) of sea and dawn-goddesses (ii) of two of the English ships at the Algiers action.

[309]**:** "Superb vessels!" – "Never an atrocity!"

and gave place to The Three, who commenced operations as before, for the *terze rime*.[310]

The subject pulled out by the lad was "Artemisa at the tomb of Mausolus".[311] It should be mentioned that the reading of the paper gave rise to very unseemly tittering, especially when the reader gave out the "La *distributione* di Pompeanio",[312] as also that the subjects were most of them very bad, and laughed at. One was whether women were on the whole an advantage to society – the best was Polidori's on "The Art of Improvisation", which was clapped. Most of them were commonplace classical subjects.

On the whole it seemed a new thing to us to see so large an assembly of all classes, apparently entering into the interests of such an exhibition, and being as much "up" to the subjects as those persons who are to be found in our salons. The mouthful is certainly found here, for the admission being but thirty *sous* puts it into the power of all classes to come to the poet's show.

The "Artemisa" I did not understand one word of, but heard several rhymes in "ente" and "etto", which Breme said were the most vulgar in the language. Also I found that a "pargoletto"[313] of the Queen was introduced, and another Aurora rose over the weeping widow. The factions said that it was a complete failure, and that nothing was said of Artemisa swallowing the ashes,[314] nor of the name giving a name to all tombs.[315] The *signor* is not very much *au fait*. He called the Algerines "Turks", and either had not read the *Gazette*, or found it not

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[310]**:** The rhyme-scheme of the *Divine Comedy:* Sgricci's technical challenge is now much stiffer than mere *versi sciolti.*

[311]**:** Mausolus was King of Caria, defeated and killed by the Greeks in 353 BC: his widow / sister Artemisa erected a huge marble "Mausoleum" to him, which became one of the Seven Wonders of the World. As he died fighting imperialist expansion, a political motive may have been behind the prompt.

[312]**:** For *Distruzione* ("destruction"): though Pompey was "distributed", after decapitation.

[313]**:** "A little child".

[314]**:** "She [Artemisa] was so fond of her husband, that at his death she drank in her liquor his ashes after his body had been burnt ..." (John Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary*, entry for "Artemisa").

[315]**:** "Mausoleo" – "Mausoleum".

to square with his commonplaces. However, he never stopped for a rhyme or a word, and went on about the same time as when attacking Algiers.

Again he gave way to The Triumvirate, who performed their part again, and we heard a sort of transcript of the annual bills of mortality for the subjects of a tragedy[316] – the death of this man and that man sounded in our ears every moment. Polidori had given in "Jacopo Ortis", the Italian *Werther* of Foscolo,[317] but this was not read, because, said Breme, the police, who had the inspection of the subjects over-looked, most probably by Monti, who would not allow any chance of praising Foscolo, whom he *hates*.[318]

I forgot to mention that for the *terze rime* was heard "The Apotheosis of Vittorio Alfieri", which was received with a loud shout – in the very <theater> city where his plays are forbidden to be acted.[319]

"The Death of Socrates" was chosen – Sgricci came forth after some time, and, approaching the pit, made an apology, and begged the *benissimo publico* would consider "The Death of Socrates" was not "tragediabile", and entreated that the urn might again be applied to, which was complied with by a shout of "To the lots! – to the lots!".[320] In came The Three, shook, chose, and gave out "The Death of Montezuma" – Sgricci again came forward, and said he could not treat of Montezuma without offending the *costume* of the country,[321] and that if the public pleased he would try Socrates – some cried out "Montezuma!" – some "Socrates!"

Sgricci came forward again, amidst some hisses and whistling and clapping, and asked for a third trial of the urn, which, after some disturbance, was granted,

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[316]**:** Similar to the dozens of tragedies read and rejected annually at Drury Lane.

[317]**:** Read by H. the following month: see 28 Nov 1816.

[318]**:** "An Englishman wished, when at the Scala theatre at Milan in 1816, to give the Death of Ortis as a subject for an improvvisatore; but a friend said to him, 'It will not be chosen; Monti is behind the scenes, and will hear nothing in favour of Ortis or of Foscolo'" – *Illustrations,* 481. Foscolo had (i) criticised Monti's Homer and (ii) bedded Monti's wife, even using her name, Teresa, as that of the heroine of *Ortis.*

[319]**:** See 13 Oct 1816.

[320]**:** "Alla sorte! Alla sorte!"

[321]**:** The "manners" of the country. Like Mausolas, Montezuma, last King of the Aztecs (1466-1520) died defending his people against imperialist aggression.

and The Trio entered amidst great discourtesy. "Eteocles and Polinices" now turned up,[322] but the Signor did not recommence immediately, so that there was much shouting and hissing, and calling on the names of the several heroes – a loud shrill voice from the fifth circle called "*Socraté*!" in a tone which made the whole house resound and laugh, but at last Sgricci began in a low tone to tell us that he laid his scene in the palace of Thebes, and that the personages were Eteocles, Polinices, their sister,[323] Jocasta,[324] Tiresias, Manto (a messenger), and chorus of Theban Women. He then announced that he entered as one of those characters – I do not know which – and, tossing up his head and hands as usual, began – the table and chairs being first placed to the side to give room for the poet, who, when he changed his character walked to it and turned round in a new character.

All I could make out was that he copied Æschylus verbatim, nearly, in the description of the chiefs attacking Thebes,[325] and either three or four times ended his verse by "Intorno ... intorno".[326] He went on his knee once, in the character of the sister, and was excessively impassioned in that of Jocasta. Nevertheless, the pit began to thin, much to the delight of Breme, who cried out "Voyez les auditeurs qui filent!"[327] and the stage box emptied also. We began to yawn – I skipped the chorus[328] – the whole lasted nearly fifty minutes.

Sgricci was once or twice applauded, and had some praise at the end, but it was a dull affair, apparently, to the whole audience, and the faction triumphed completely. Monti was said to have been behind the scenes with Perticari,[329] and

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[322]**:** The sons of Oedipus both died – one, however, attacking, the other defending, his country – and not in an imperialist context: a safer theme politically for Sgricci.
[323]**:** But they have two sisters – Antigone and Ismene.
[324]**:** Jocasta was their grandmother as well as their mother; a source for the idea of her surviving them might be Euripides' *Phoenician Women.*
[325]**:** Aeschylus, *Seven Against Thebes,* 375-642.
[326]**:** He relied too frequently on an easy rhyme.
[327]**:** "Watch out! You're losing them!"
[328]**:** H. went for a stroll in the lobby behind the boxes.
[329]**:** If Sgricci was his wife's lover, Perticari's assiduity is striking.

to have given him his excuses for "Socrates", which, however, is *tragedy*[330] – for *me* Scævola[331] has made a tragedy of it.

Monti wishes to raise Sgricci, or any other *improvvisatori*, because he hates Gianni,[332] the great Roman *improvvisatore*, who is now at Paris in a state of imbecility writing religious poems. He was a real genius, and some of his improvisations have been printed and are beautiful. Breme says that La Bandettina[333] is a great genius compared with Sgricci – who to me, what with his yellow slippers and commonplaces, does seem a charlatan. The air with which he pulled off his white gloves and placed them on the table before he began the "Artemisa" reminded me of Lord Grizzle's death.[334]

Byron and I came home and laughed, but owned that speaking so rapidly was a strange talent.[335] – Forsyth seems to think that there are signs of improvisation in Homer's frequent repetition and eternal epithets.[336]

Saturday October 26th 1816: By this day's post sent letters to Melly, Harriett, Sophy and Henry – the latter directed to Perregaux at Paris,[337] where, by a letter received a day or two ago from dear Sophy, it is probable he and she are.[338]

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[330]**:** Underlined twice.

[331]**:** Luigi Scævola (1770-1818) tragic poet. His *Socrate* was performed in 1804. H. probably got the information from di Breme.

[332]**:** Francesco Gianni (1750-1822) a jacobinical *improvvisatore* favoured by Napoleon. He had competed with Monti in a poem called *La Morte di Giuda* (The Death of Judas). Suspected of preparation in advance.

[333]**:** Teresa Bandettini-Landucci (1763-1837) ballerina, writer and (part-) improvising poetess, admired by Monti, Alfieri, Parini *et al.*

[334]**:** But the death of Lord Grizzle at the hands of Princess Huncamunca in Fielding's *Tom Thumb* is over in a split second, sandwiched between his murder of the protagonist's ghost and Doodle's murder of Huncamunca. See BLJ II 23 and IV 248.

[335]**:** In a letter to Augusta written the following day (BLJ V 119) B. describes Sgricci's art as "not an amusing though a curious effort of human powers". But we may wonder whether he thought of him just under a year later, when he wrote most of the artfully a-political *Beppo* in two nights.

[336]**:** "Homer has often recourse to shifts of the moment, like other improvvisatori" – Forsyth / Crook 33 (and n).

[337]**:** H.'s Paris bankers.

[338]**:** Henry, Henry's unnamed wife, and H.'s half-sister Sophy, are embarked on a continental holiday. They join H. in Venice on 23 Nov 1816.

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

This morning a Mr Anelli[339] was introduced by Carvella the Younger. Mr Anelli pushed up to Lord Byron, and pulled a book out of his pocket, which he presented to him, and described without stopping for some time. The book is the *Chronicle of Pindus*,[340] a species of recensus[341] of Italian literature from the times of Tiraboschi,[342] I believe, up to the present day – satirical &c. It is quizzed in our friend Borsieri's *Giorno*.[343] Anelli talked with tremendous fluency on all sorts of literary subjects, and asked Lord Byron to give him an *esquisse*[344] of the state of English literature from the beginning of this century. Then he said that Monti was a great poet for the dexterity with which he used words, but no imagination, and had never finished anything – indeed, his political works he could not finish, for events succeeded so rapidly as to make him change his side and subject – this was the lot of his *Death of Basseville*[345] and his *Mascheroniana*.[346] His Homer was made from a literal translation in Italian, hence in one of the many epigrams written against him he is called "the Translator of the Translator of Homer".[347] He does not know one word of Greek. Anelli said that Foscolo had finished nothing in poetry, and I think he said the same of Pindemonte.

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[339]**:** Angelo Anelli (1761-1820) opera librettist and satirist; polemical foe of Borsieri.

[340]**:** *Cronache di Pindo* was a series of satires written by Anelli between 1811 and 1818.

[341]**:** "A review".

[342]**:** That is, from 1700 onwards.

[343]**:** See 13 Oct 1816.

[344]**:** "A sketch".

[345]**:** *Cantico in Morte di Ugo Basseville* is a 1791 anti-jacobin poem by Monti.

[346]**:** *Mascheroniana* (really *In Morte di Mascheroni)* is another anti-jacobin poem by him, in dialogue form, written 1800. The protagonists of both poems wander the earth after death, viewing the horrors of post-revolutionary Europe. At *Illustrations* 424 Foscolo writes, "... that prostitution of talents which would have rendered him [Monti] either odious or ridiculous in England, has been less contemptible in a country where there is more indifference, and less intelligence employed, in the view of political transactions". *Basseville* was adduced by William Taylor of Norwich as an ur-text for Southey's *A Vision of Judgement*.

[347]**:** *Illustrations* 440 (written by Monti's enemy Foscolo) reveals that Monti's prose crib was in fact a Latin one. He was assisted in his "translation" by Andreas Mustoxides.

Anelli then began to talk politics with me – he said the English were not liked because they had balked the wishes of the Italian nation.[348] Under Napoleon there was a determination on the part of the *liberales* in Italy to constitute the kingdom into an independent state – the plan was in the hands of 4,000 freemasons, each of whom was to furnish at least one armed man and some five or six – to complete the design by force if need be. It was calculated that Italy could better afford to pay 200 millions of livres, which was now raised for the government, to England for her protection by sea and land, than she could afford to pay it to the government of a French viceroy. The signs of the lodges were the same as in England, not as for France, and though Eugene[349] was Grand Master of the Lombardy Masons, yet there was a private Grand Master who was instructed with that secret of the independence which was not to be told to the Viceroy. At the same time, the Masons were not resolved not to choose Eugene – they were only positive as to throwing off the subjection of the Iron Crown.[350]

It was rumoured[351] that Napoleon had stated that he would declare Italy independent even at his return from Moscow, and it is certain that *before* the battle of Leipzig[352] he had written to Fontanelli, the Minister of the Interior here,[353] to state as much and to declare it – but that minister, and Melzis, Duke of

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[348]**:** From now on, H. finally tells us, his entry paraphrases a pamphlet published in Paris in 1814, with which – though he does not say – he was probably provided by Anelli. It gives a much fuller account than he could derive from the reminiscences of Fitzgerald on 18 Oct 1816, of the unsuccessful attempt, in Apr 1814, at asserting Italian independence – culminating in the Milan riots of 20 Apr 1814, the lynching of Prina, and the Austrian occupation, which was to last a generation and a half. The lynching of Prina is referred to in Stendhal's *La Chartreuse de Palme*, Chapter 2. This section is amplified by Lord Broughton at *Italy* I 16-34; I have spelled proper names according to the printed book rather than to the diary.

[349]**:** Eugene Beauharnais, Napoleon's stepson and Viceroy of his North Italian Kingdom.

[350]**:** That is, of the power of France as embodied in Beauharnais.

[351]**:** From this point until two paragraphs before the end of this entry, H. is paraphrasing a pamphlet.

[352]**:** The battle of Leipzig (16-18 Oct 1813) temporarily destroyed Napoleon's European domination and weakened all rulers – such as Beauharnais and Murat – who owed their positions to him.

[353]**:** General Achille Fontanelli (1775-1838).

Lodi,[354] the Chancellor of the Seals, Vice-President of Lombardy, did not choose to publish such a document until they conceived that the Viceroy's party was strong enough to put the Crown on his head. When Murat[355] came from Leipzig, he passed through Milan and went immediately to the house of Mr Berazon (or some such name),[356] a merchant, from whom he borrowed 1,000 *louis* to refit himself – for he was then almost without an *equipage* after the disastrous campaign of Saxony. He told this merchant, who was one of the Masons, that he would march into Lombardy at the head of 80,000 men and would declare the independence of Italy conjointly with the patriots. This communication, which was made to the Great Lodge, was betrayed by one ——[357] to the Viceroy's friends; in consequence of which a discord arose between Murat and Eugene and their respective partisans, which prevented any operations in earnest with the Neapolitans either in 1814 or 1815.

The battle of Hanau[358] was chiefly "gained", as they call it,[359] by the corps of Italians under General Zucchi,[360] who in returning to Milan communicated publicly that Napoleon had declared the independence of Italy, and that he left her her army to defend the country, and gave up the thirty millions which he drew to France. In proportion as the distresses of Napoleon increased, the complaints against the Viceroy increased also – Eugene's friends did not therefore declare the independence, fearful that the choice might not fall on him, and the patriot masons did not act, partly because they were aware of the divisions within their own body, and partly because they depended on the influence of England to assist their project of independence at a general peace.

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[354]**:** Francesco Melzi d'Eril, Duke of Lodi: in effect, Beauharnais' Prime Minister.
[355]**:** Joachim Murat, Napoleon's brother-in-law, made by him King of Naples.
[356]**:** Even though H. claims to be using a printed source.
[357]**:** Unidentified, even at *Italy* (1859) I 17.
[358]**:** Post-Leipzig battle of Hanau (30-31 Oct 1814) in which Napoleon defeated the Bavarians.
[359]**:** The French *gagné* ("won").
[360]**:** General Carlo Zucchi (1777-1863).

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

The war came into Italy – Eugene was in Mantua – the Austrians on the other side of the Mincio[361] – Bellegarde[362] did not choose to act offensively, because he was not sure of the conduct Murat would pursue, and when, on the news of the abdication of Napoleon,[363] Eugene proposed a suspension of arms until a deputation might be sent to the allies at Paris, Bellegarde agreed to it, and to stay on his side of the Mincio until the answer returned from Paris. The cessation of arms was on the 16th. The Duke of Lodi, [who] was then ill of the gout in the right foot in his villa, convoked an extraordinary meeting of the Senate on the 17th – and sent a message to them, in which, after entering into the state of the kingdom, he proposed to them a project by which the deputies to be nominated, namely Generals Fontanelli and Bertoletti[364] for the army and Counts Paradisi and Prina[365] for the nation, should propose to the Allies to require, through the Emperor of Austria, a cessation of hostilities, the independence of Italy, and the crown for Prince Eugene.

The Senate, in a committee of seven first, and then the whole house, addled the two first, but made no mention of the third[366] demand, and instead of the above deputies they named Count Louis Castiglione of Milan and Count Guicciardi[367] to represent the wishes of the Senate and people of Italy. These deputies sent out to Mantua, and had an audience of Eugene. In the meantime the Milanese nobles[368] had got intimation of the message of the Duke of Lodi even before the senators were convoked, and those who were determined to oppose

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[361]**:** The river separating Lombardy from Venezia. I have regularised H.'s spellings of its name.

[362]**:** Commander of the Austrian forces in north Italy, and thus the man most immediately to be feared by the Italians wanting independence. He was a Savoyard.

[363]**:** Napoleon abdicated on 11 Apr 1814.

[364]**:** General Antonio Bertoletti (1775-1846).

[365]**:** Count Giuseppe Prina, a description of whose lynching occupies the second half of this entry.

[366]**:** "2nd" (Ms.)

[367]**:** Guicciardi otherwise unidentified.

[368]**:** "... although the historian of this shameful day ascribes good motives to the patrician rioters and the motley multitude, the accounts I heard from some of the parties concerned were anything but creditable to the insurgents" – *Italy,* I 23.

the Viceroy, finding that only 400 troops of the line, commanded by General Pino, (who appears to have been [ ] [ ] to their views) were in Milan, spread every report disadvantageous to the Senate and its proceedings.

The patriots entered into their plan under the persuasion that England would take the part of Italian independence, and that they could make a show of popular power whilst Eugene was with the Italian army in Mantua and Bellegarde on the other side of the Mincio. These two sets of people – united under the name of revolutionists – understanding all the proceedings of the Senate, although their sitting was in private – chose notwithstanding to give out that the Duke of Lodi had given to the two deputies a different message from that decreed by the Senate. This, however, was perfectly false, as appears by the dispatch written by the Duke to be taken by the two deputies to Paris on the 18th of April. The deputies were blamed for having gone to Mantua at all, instead of taking the straight road to Paris, but they did, in concert with the orders of the Duke of Lodi and of Bellegarde, in order to procure passports. Count Guicciardi afterwards presented a memorial to the provisional regency, to justify himself. He had in fact been the chief person to oppose the request for the Prince Eugene in the secret sitting of the 17th. He was Chancellor of the Senate – the revolutionists, however, chose to suppose an intrigue in favour of Eugene, both on the part of the Duke of Lodi and the ministers, and also on that of the Senate.

On the 19th of April, a large body of Milanese Patricians and of the civic guard and the patriots signed a paper to the number of 141 which demanded the convocation of the Electoral Colleges, which was to be presented by Count Durini Podesta of Milan,[369] and was sent to the Senate the next day. This, however, was judged not sufficient, and the revolution of the 20th was determined on. The first step towards it was the demand of the Captain Adjutant Marini, of the Civic Guard, that the Senate should dismiss the *picquet*[370] of the troop of the line at their palace, and take a patrole of the civic guard – this was done – and from that moment the tumult without the Senate house became

[369]**:** Antonio Durini (1770-1850). A podesta is a Mayor.

[370]**:** The “picket” was the guard on duty: H. was familiar with the word from his own days with the English militia. See 24 July 1811.

alarming. Count Frederick Confalonieri and several other nobles were in the van of the mob,[371] and the Count cried out, "We desire the convocation of the Electoral Colleges and the recall of the deputation!"

In vain Marini desired him to enter the hall and not inflame the people – he still continued, and the people burt into the court – Count Verri[372] was almost the only Senator who retained his presence of mind – he spoke to the people, who had now mounted the steps of the hall of sitting. He returned, and told the Senate they had only two minutes to spare or all was lost – some officers of the Civic Guard, particularly the *chef de bataillon* Pietro Ballarbio,[373] entered the hall, pale and frightened even at their own projects. Captain Benigno Bossi[374] called out for the recall of the deputies and the convocation of the Electoral colleges – the President of the Senate[40] passed these two propositions at once, and being written down they were sent out to the people. Bossi then returned, and demanded the dissolution of the sitting. This was also decreed, and instantly executed by the evacuation of the hall by the senators, who were followed by the crowd, who immediately began their exploits,[375] which were ushered in by Count Confalonieri,[376] who drove his umbrella into the picture of Napoleon by Appiani.[377]

The Senate House was soon gutted – the mob then rushed to Prina's house, and his murder followed – he was warned the night before of his danger, but would not believe it – Baron de Regen,[378] general of division, tried to save him,[379] but the mob rushed into his house – found him – threw him out of the window – he was then followed by the crowd to the piazza of the Scala Theatre,

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[371]**:** Federico Confalonieri (1785-1846) was a friend of di Breme. The "mob" was composed chiefly of peasants from the landowners' estates.
[372]**:** Count Carlo Verri.
[373]**:** Ballarbio otherwise unidentified.
[374]**:** Benigno Bossi (1788-1870).
[375]**:** That is, they started to behave like the Roman mob at the end of *Julius Caesar* III ii. The event is used by Manzoni as material for Chapters 12 and 13 of *I Promessi Sposi.*
[376]**:** Confalonieri subsequently denied this in an 1815 pamphlet called *Lettera ad un amico.*
[377]**:** Andrea Appiani (1754-1817) Napoleon's court painter.
[378]**:** Regen otherwise unidentified.

and turned up a neighbouring street with Count Luigi da Porro.[380] A wine-merchant then took him into his house, but the mob menaced to burn the house, and Prina then presented himself, saying "Sfogatevi pure sopra di me – poichè son già immolata alla vostra rabbia – ma fate almeno che sia l'ultima questa vittima".[381]

These were his last words. The mob seized him and beat him with umbrellas, and it is supposed he was not dead for four hours, for on his body there was not even found a single mortal wound. He was dragged about by street-light till ten at night. His palace was quite gutted.

[On] the 21st the city was a prey to every alarm. The Municipal Council named a regency composed of General Pino, Carlo Verri, Giacomo Mellerio, Ghiberto Borromeo, Alberto Litta, Giorgio Giuliani, and Buzzetta[382] – Pino was declared Commander-in-chief and issued a proclamation – the Electoral Colleges were convoked for the 22nd – the mob, however, became every moment more dangerous, and a general sack was expected – the public offices were manned. At last the citizens armed – but it was only by accident that the military recovered their confidence – some men who had rusty armour could not unfix their bayonets, and flung stones. The patrole then charged, and the mob at once dispersed[383] – the arrival of a few cavalry protected the city and the palace of Monza,[384] which was also threatened, and the Electoral Colleges, to the number only of 120[385] out of 1153, met on the 22nd, and proceeded under the Presidence

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[379]**:** Ugo Foscolo was in Milan on this day, and saved the life of a General Peyri, who was mistaken for Prina by the mob – an incident perhaps used by Manzoni.

[380]**:** Count Luigi Porro Lambertenghi (1780-1860); he employed his friend Silvio Pellico as a tutor.

[381]**:** "Vent your anger on me, for I am already sacrificed to your fury: but at least I will be your last victim."

[382]**:** Patricians all.

[383]**:** Ordered by the rioters to disarm, the militia tried to do so; but the bayonet of one of them was rusted in; so, in lieu of surrender, they charged, and the rioters fled.

[384]**:** Eugene Beauharnais' country palace: see 22 Oct 1816.

[385]**:** Overlineated figure hard to read.

of Count Lewis Giovio,[386] Counsellor of State [ ] of the Iron Crown, to proclaim themselves a sovereign power, capable to treat with the Allies.

They made [a] resolution for the intercession with the Allies on behalf of an independent Italian state, extended beyond its present confines, with a liberal constitution of three estates, independent judiciary, and hereditary monarchy, with a prince whose origin and qualities might make them forget the evils of the former government[387] – a deputation was to be sent to the Allies, of six and a secretary – Marc Antonio Fè, Frederico Confalonieri, Giacomo Ciani, Alberto Litta, Giacomo Trivulzi, Pietro Ballarbio, and Giacomo Beccaria[388] secretary to[389] the deputation, and they set off immediately.

Counts Guicciardi and Castiglione returned to Milan, but Generals Fontanelli and Bertollini had already gone through Banzia towards Paris. But Prince Eugene, on the 23rd, made another convention with Bellegarde, in virtue of which General Sommariva[390] arrived in Milan on the 25th and took upon himself the Regency as Commissioner for the High Allies – the Electoral Colleges and the Civic Guard still continued to act and hope for independence – "Independence or death" was written up in the guard houses – and in the official journal it was said that the Austrian troops were well-received, but with that noble restraint becoming a nation whose first wish was independence. The Electoral Colleges continued to legislate until the 23rd of May, [when] Count Bellegarde proclaimed that Lombardy was taken possession of for the Emperor of Austria, and that the Electors were dissolved. The Marshal put himself at the head of the Regency.

This was the close of the interregnum, and those who had begun the revolution became now ashamed of it for having before boasted of the punishment of Prina, even so far as to make a picture of his exfenestration.[391]

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[386]**:** Giovio unidentified.

[387]**:** Not, evidently, Beauharnais.

[388]**: "**Individuals better known, names more illustrious, it would have been difficult to select" – *Italy* I 29.

[389]**:** "were" (Ms.)

[390]**:** General Annibale Sommariva (1755-1829).

[391]**:** The act of throwing Prina from the window of his house; normally "defenestration".

They published in the *Journal des Debats* that the Milanese had no hand in the disturbances.

This account is taken from an authentic pamphlet published at Paris in November 1814.[392] Anelli accursed the Prince Eugene – for the second convention, by which he allowed the Austrians to pass the Mincio and occupy Milan – the fate of the deputation has been mentioned before, and its reception by Castlereagh.[393] At the arrival of the Austrians the lodge of Masons was dissolved, and all those in the employment of government took an oath not to act or meet any more. Anelli is a professor – he has taken the oath – he seemed to say that the Austrian was a very mild government – the English were hated, as well they may be, by the Italians, and suspected by the Austrians.

I walked out dined and translated two acts of the *Francesca da Rimini,*[394] going on immediately to the Teatro Girolamo,[395] where puppets acted a play called "Prometheo" ... which began with his man and woman, and ended with his being chained to the rock and delivered by Hercules. Girolamo was the buffoon of Prometheus. The company in the theatre, who were admitted for eight *sous* each, seemed to be sufficiently familiar with the gods and goddesses to be interested in the drama – the scenery was very good and the voices seemed to come from the puppets. The Italian people have, as at the Improvvisatori,

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[392]**:** The pamphlet is *Sulla Rivoluzione di Milan seguita nel giorno 20 apr. 1814* by the senator L. Armaroli.

[393]**:** "Lord Castlereagh told them to address themselves to their master, the Emperor of Austria. His Imperial Majesty's answer was explicit enough, although somewhat ironical: 'Rispose, anche lui essere Italiano; i suoi soldati avere conquista la Lombardia: uddirebo a Milano quanto lore avesse a commandare;' and Humboldt told them the painful truth, that they 'should have brought their twenty-five thousand soldiers to negotiate for them" – *Italy* I 33.

[394]**:** The question, whether H. did the translation before or after he read the pamphlet exposing the internal native divisions, and treacherous English indifference, which deprived Lombardy and thus Italy of her freedom – and whether there was any connection in his mind between the two actions – is unanswered. Several patriotic passages in *Francesca* had to be cut before the Austrians let it be performed..

[395]**:** Note on the Teatro Girolamo pending.

appeared to me to have a certain classical information and feeling quite different from our lower classes. Girolamo's jokes are supposed very good, and are very low – Cupid told Vulcan that his beard hurt him when he kissed him.

Sunday October 27th 1816: Morning, idled as usual – already cold weather – no games at the circus – I rode out first, and then walked out on the Corso – dinner – went in the evening to the Teatro Re, where we saw *Le Convenianze del Teatro*, and *Le Inconvenianze del Teatro*, united in three acts. It was very laughable – the actors were, many of them, dressed like the spectators, and one of them at the end went into the orchestra and played. The acting seemed to us quiet and natural, and was very superior to the generality of what is to be found in England. Breme, however, says this is a bad company. A man in woman's clothes speaking Bolognese was the chief amusement, and the husband of a prima donna, who on all occasions said, "Cosi voglia madama la mia moglia".

We came home highly pleased. The price is a franc for each, and for a box, four francs ten sous. The house was full. In the box next to us was a woman in man's clothes, which we hear is not an unusual *travestie* for the German officers' wives – at the Scala Theatre was one of the attendants in Constantinople dressed in men's clothes.

Monday October 28th 1816: At the play of *Francesca*, of which translated a little more than an act today.

Walked and drove out – dined and went to the Opera[396] – whilst I was in the pit, Polidori came in with Borsieri. Polidori began to be indignant against the appearance of soldiers, and was silly enough to ask a grenadier officer to pull off his cap. The Captain, who was the officer on guard, turned round and said, "Vorrete?" – "Io voglio",[397] returned Polidori – the officer desired him to step out with him. Polidori called me to come out with him, thinking he was to fight,

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[396]**:** The opera showing at La Scala throughout B.'s and H.'s stay was *La Testa di Bronzo* (see 13 Oct 16). It was followed by a *ballo, Il Duca d'Alcantando, ossia Il Rimorso*, with choreography by P. Angiolini (*Gatti* II 170).

[397]**:** "Do you wish it?" – "I wish it."

but was soon undeceived by being ordered into the custody of two grenadiers into the guardhouse. At first he would not go, when the officer half drew his sword upon him, and was scarcely to be repressed by my intervention. Polidori was marched into the guardroom, and there began a lively altercation with the *deutscher*, whom he told that in the theatre he was equal to anybody, the officer replying that he was a "Verfluchter kerl",[398] and not equal to the meanest soldier. The officer [be]came very foul-mouthed – the doctor was very foolish and English, but not abusive. Down came Lord Byron, de Breme, Beyle,[399] Guarco, Borsieri; but the officer was not to be appeased. Breme referred to the Casa di Breme, which did nothing. An English nobleman had a little more power, but still the angry grenadier swore he would make out a *species facti* or *procès verbale*,[400] and piled us out of the room except except Byron and Breme.[401] We waited some time without, when at last came the Doctor followed by Lord Byron, who gave his card for the Doctor's appearance.

We returned to the box. Beyle told us that the finest hour of Napoleon's life was the battle of Borodino – he was sitting on the ground between two sandhills, tapping a drumhead – every now and then they brought a word – "Such-a-one is killed!" – "Well, go you." – "General Caulaincourt is killed."[402] – "Allez-vous" – looking about to his staff, and so on. The balls fled over the hill – this was in battle, but he had feelings when not in the height of action. He was sorry for those at the battle of Aspern or Wagram. Bernadotte[403] sent aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp for reinforcements, and to complain of the loss of his men. 2,000

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[398]**:** A "cursed wretch".

[399]**:** "de Beyle" (Ms., *passim*.)

[400]**:** A written report of the incident.

[401]**:** According to Stendhal, Monti was also in the group, and his solution was to cry "Sortiamo tutti; restino solamente i titolati" ("Everybody out; let only those with titles remain") so that those left to plead for Polidori were di Breme, Confalonieri, the Marquis de Sartirana and B.

[402]**:** A false alarm. General Caulaincourt (1772-1827) was not killed at Borodino, but was Napoleon's Foreign Minister during the Hundred Days.

[403]**:** Bernadotte was by 1812 virtual King of Sweden, and opposed to Napoleon; he was not present at Borodino on either side. H. is probably confusing him with Eugene Beauharnais.

were put out of action every half hour – at last he (Napoleon) was in the greatest fury, and said, "Let him take the batteries, and send aide-de-camps afterwards". At last Bernadotte came himself, and mentioned his increasing loss. Napoleon called him by all sorts of bad names – coward, &c., and sent him back to take the batteries, telling him if he lost 50,000 men he must do it – which he did.[404]

Bernadotte always had the same manners, and did not bow down before Napoleon, which he did not like. When Napoleon heard that Ney and his corps were saved after having been lost for four days in the Russian campaign, he jumped higher, Beyle says, than he ever saw a man before with joy; but still he did not make Ney a prince till he got to Paris, when he told someone, "Dites à Ney qu'il est Prince".

Beyle told us that Napoleon, for the latter years of his reign, signed and generally read at average eighty-five decrees a day – he made the calculation in order to get two more secretaries named, which Napoleon, after being told that his labour had increased from sixty to eighty-five signatures per day, assented to with a smile of satisfaction. He had a habit of scraping his tongue half an hour every morning, which habit he continued from his youth. He used to go to bed to all the ladies of his court in order to assure himself of their husbands, and when they were brought in, continued writing – "Deshabillez-vous – ôtez votre chemise"[405] – then would run and look at them in τερι ιων αιδοεων,[406] and say "Ah, très jolie," his pen in his hand – run to the table – again write – then unbutton himself in haste – leave his sword on, often – return to the lady – finish the affair in half a minute and instantly return to writing. Sometimes it happened to him to be obliged, on examination, to say, "Vous êtes brune pour demain?"[407]

At Toulon he commanded a gun, and served it some time alone after all the men were killed, much to the admiration of the Convention, who promoted him

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[404]**:** The successful attack on the Great Redoubt at Borodino was led by Beauharnais, Murat and Ney together.

[405]**:** "Get undressed – take your chemise off."

[406]**:** Note on rude Greek phrase pending.

[407]**:** Cramped at page-bottom; third and fifth words hard to decipher. The gist appears to be that Napoleon was unable to distinguish one wife from another, and easily lost interest.

thereupon. His manners were always the same – he is a decided fatalist. Beyle saw him, in Normandy somewhere, ride up to one of the great mortars which was taken to Cadiz[408] – nobody would fire it without a longer *fusée* – he asked what was the matter, and being told, got off his horse, took the short *fusée*, touched and fired this immense ordnance at once – he then turned round and told his creed of fatalism. It was the King of Würtemberg[409] who gave him the most cruel advice – he asked Napoleon why he did not have the old French nobles about his court – Napoleon mentioned their reluctance – "Ah," said the King, "in one week I would have them at my court or on a gallows". A new list of noble chamberlains came out directly, and there was no hanging, but all compliance. The King of Würtemberg, when the wind is east, is *constipé*, and then he would hang all the world[410] – his ministers never regarded the orders when the wind was east. Beyle said he deciphered despatches from the French minister to that amount.

Came home – wrote a little of *Francesca*, and to bed.

Tuesday October 29th 1816: Fitzgerald called. I told him to go to Count Saurau to exculpate Byron from all last night's *étourderie,*[411] and *par parenthèse* to get Polidori out of the scrape[412] – he brushed off, happy to have a commission.

Byron and I went with the Carvellas to the Chevalier Lunghi's[413] to see his engravings – he is engraving the marriage of Joseph, and has just finished Prince Eugene, the plate of which is taken by the police, because he is dressed in

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[408]**:** During the unsuccessful siege which began in 1810, within a year of B. and H. leaving.

[409]**:** Friedrich I, King of Würtemberg (1797-1816). Duke until 1801, when, via a secret treaty, he was given his regal title by Napoleon. Joined the Confederation of the Rhine and sent a contingent to Russia. Then changed sides again and had his Kingdom given him properly at Vienna. Died in October 1816 – which H. and company appear not to know yet.

[410]**:** Compare Nadir Shah at *Don Juan* IX Stanza 33.

[411]**:** "Foolishness".

[412]**:** H. (i) sees his job firstly as clearing B. from suspicion, secondly to help Polidori; but (ii) delegates both items.

[413]**:** Giuseppe Lunghi (sometimes "Longhi": 1766-1831) engraver.

Viceroy's robes, until Mr Metternich's[414] orders are known. This is engraved for the Prince alone, and Lunghi is to have 24,000 francs for it. He showed us an engraving which he made of and for Napoleon when General-in-chief – made some remarks on Rembrandt's observation of life, and seemed a lively man. Showing us a picture of his brother he said, "J'ai fai cela pour transformer le chagrin que j'ai eu pour sa perte", as easily as I write it.[415] Some people prefer Lunghi to Morghen[416] – I know nothing of the matter, but think his stroke very strong and efficient.

Coming home found Polidori, who told us he had been ordered off at twenty-four hours notice by the police. I went at once to Fitzgerald, and with him to the governor's – on the paper at his despatches, saw written, "Acerbi per far un dovere".[417] We were well received by the Count, who was covered with orders. He said twenty things to show that he did not believe Lord Byron had anything to do with the last night's affair, which he treated as an *étourderie*, but at the same time said that *la moindre chose*[418] was to send the young man elsewhere, and when I began to plead for him, always turned the thing off, saying he had heard the whole story from the Director of Police the same morning. He did he did not sit, and did something like very civilly push us out of the room, saying Lord Byron was very distinguished in the republic of letters. In short, it was clear that the thing was determined upon already; so that, without hearing anybody but the aggrieved party, this desiring a man to pull his hat off was to be followed by sending a man out of the city in twenty-four hours, and what is more, the said twenty-four hours dismission to be notified on his passport. I could not help thinking Polidori must have been talking foolishly in public somewhere.

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[414]**:** "de Metternich" (Ms.) Prince Clemens Lothar Wenzel Metternich (1773-1859) was the Austrian Castlereagh; the most repressive statesman in Europe.

[415]**:** "I did it to transform the grief I felt at his loss": a poignant thought for H., who had lost his own brother the previous year.

[416]**:** Raphael Morghen (1758-1833) Neapolitan engraver. He made a version of Leonardo's *Last Supper*.

[417]**:** The fragment would indicate the Austrian authorities to be indebted to Acerbi (see 18 Oct 1816) for having "done a duty".

[418]**:** "The least thing to be done".

Milan, October 11th-November 3rd 1816

I notified this bad news to him, and the poor fellow was much depressed. de Breme went to Bubna, commander of the troops here, who said it was impossible and he would speak to Saurau, but hearing my story says it is determined upon and will be done.[419]

After dinner we went to Breme's box (the improvvisatore Sgricci has been cut to pieces in the *Milan Gazette* of Sunday) then I came home and wrote a letter and did nothing.

Wednesday October 30th 1816: Rainy. Finished *Francesca da Rimini*.[420] Polidori went at half-past one today. Breme called twice at Count Bubna's[421] and was told he was gone to the Council of War and desired not to be followed, so he

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[419]**:** Polidori took with him a letter of recommendation from di Breme to Louisa, Countess Stolberg (*Camporesi* 386).

[420]: It has taken H. thirteen days to translate Pellico's *Francesca da Rimini,* from the receipt of the manuscript on 17 Oct. Seemingly encouraged by B., Pellico had high expectations of the translation. On 22 Nov he wrote to his brother, *Lord Byron non è autore delle* Bella Penitente; *non ha ancor fatto tragedie, ma l'Inghilterra ne aspetta da lui. Senti le obbligazioni che gli ho; non gli bastà di lodar molto la mia* Francesca; *si pose a tradurne un Atto e poi un altro, e poi si fermò nella risoluzione di farla conoscere al suo paese. Egli è Direttore del Teatro di Drurylane [sic] a Londra; l'ha dunque tradotta tutta (fra lui e Lord Hobhouse [sic] suo amico indivisibile) e la manderà quanto prima sulle scene di Shakespeare. Egli assicura che sebbene avvezzi a produzioni più complicate, i suoi compatriotti saranno colpiti della* bella semplicità *(come la chiama egli) di quella tragedia. Sarà preceduta da un Prologo, in cui Lord Byron informerà gli Spettatori di quanto è uopo che sappiano, cioè dell'essere produzione italiana, etc. e com'è uso su quei teatri, la chiuderà con un Epilogo – Questa lusinga al mio amor proprie dovrebbe farmi scrivere altri cose, eppure il tempo vola, e non fo niente ...* ("Lord Byron is not the author of *The Fair Penitent;* he has not yet written a tragedy, but England expects one of him, and he feels this obligation. He did not hesitate to praise my *Francesca* highly; and set himself to translate one act and then another, and then resolved to make it known in his country. He is Director of the Drury Lane Theatre in London; he has therefore, with his inseparable friend Lord Hobhouse, translated it all, and will send it as soon as possible to the stage of Shakespeare. He assures me that although they are accustomed to more complicated works, his countrymen will be struck by the "beautiful simplicity" (as he called it) of this tragedy. It will be preceded by a Prologue, in which Lord Byron will tell the audience what they need to know of Italian dramas, and, as plays are in their theatres, concluded with an Epilogue – This increase in my self-esteem should make me write more, but time flies, and I have done nothing ...") – *Lettere Milanese* (ed. Mario Scotti, Turin 1963) pp. 73-4. Nothing came of any of these plans.

[421]**:** The Austrian military commander.

could do nothing. Bought this day several books of memoirs of events since the revolution in Italy,[422] which were furnished for me by the advocate Guarco.[423] Read the account of the revolution in Milan, April 20th 1814.[424] Went after dinner to the Teatro Re, where we saw the *Capello Parlante*,[425] a sentimental comedy enlivened only by a curious old Baron. Byron observed that the chief wit of the Italian comedy seemed to be in telling home truths.[426] The people thought the play bearable, though to us it was a *seccatura*[427] nothing equal to our last night in this theatre – came home and went to bed.

Thursday October 31st 1816: Writing journal in the morning. Carvellas and an Athenian[428] called.

Went out with Byron in carriage and saw the Circus,[429] in which the shower told us the *figæ*[430] had ceased to run. It is oval – the granite steps are only since put where the Emperor and his court or the Viceroy was. Benches are placed on green slopes of steps in the other parts of the ampitheatre – a canal of water runs all round it and this is contrived so as to flood the arena to the height of a man, and give room for boat races. The whole comes up to my notion of an ancient stadium. The two rostra are miserable wooden columns of [ ] and we did not see them. We were shown Napoleon's velvet throne, and that in which the Queen of Barini[431] at one time, and the Vice-Queen sat. The view of the Champ de Mars is

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[422]**:** The books would have furnished material for his planned history of Italy since 1796, which was never written: see 2 Dec 1818.
[423]**:** A friend of di Breme's who was present at the expulsion of Polidori from La Scala on October 28th.
[424]**:** See 26 Oct 1816, an entry which must have been written on or after this day.
[425]**:** *The Speaking Hat:* play unidentified.
[426]**:** Perhaps this was the moment in which was born the impulse behind the ottava rima satires.
[427]**:** A thing which was *Seccatura* was boring, and normally theatrical – see *Beppo* 31, 8.
[428]**:** Athenian unidentified.
[429]**:** The Arena; built by Napoleon in 1805.
[430]**:** Note on *figae* pending.
[431]**:** Conjectural reading.

very noble – all done under Napoleon, who was present at the games a year after his last marriage. He was crowned King of Italy.

Came home – dined. Bremes called, and we foolishly argued Polidori's case till we told the truth about the man and might do him mischief.[432]

Went to the theatre. There told that Count Confalonieri was not the instigator of the mob,[433] that it was not he who put his umbrella through Napoleon's picture, but young Castiglione;[434] that he was brought into the Senate by Count Verri as a sort of protection, and that he only spoke when Verri asked him what the mob wanted, but being seen to enter the Senate with the crowd, was set down as one of the rioters. He has published a defence. He was one of those who signed for the calling together of the electors, and our party said there was nothing else to do, but that the thing ought to have been done before.

Prince Eugene was exceedingly unpopular, especially with the army, since the campaign of Moscow, and he went too straightforward in his proclamation from Mantua to take upon himself the crown of Italy, which after all the electors might have conferred upon him for want of a better. Then, in spite, he acted by Zucchi, signed the second convention of the 23rd with Bellegarde, by which the Milanese were yielded up to the Austrians, and 25,000 good troops ready to fight [were] disbanded, so much against their will that they threatened to imprison the Viceroy and act for themselves. When the deputation of the Italians arrived at Paris, Humboldt[435] observed, "It is a pity you have not your 25,000 men to back it".[436]

The disgust against the Viceroy did not begin until the Moscow campaign, in the retreat in which he was said to have vilified the Italian troops – before that he was much esteemed, especially for the good sense with which he listened to advice at council, and always extricated himself in all difficult affairs, such as

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[432]**:** They revealed Polidori's homosexuality.

[433]**:** "Gonfalonieiri" (Ms.) The liberal group are anxious to correct any impressions B. and H. may have derived from reading the pamphlet by Senator Armaroli, which Anelli gave them on 26 Oct.

[434]**:** Note on young Castiglione pending.

[435]**:** Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) the scientist and explorer.

[436]**:** His words are paraphrased at *Italy* I 33: see 26 Oct 1816.

that of the Pope.[437] He was not domestic, but always treated his wife with great decency.

Prina was a man born to run a great Empire to the greatest pitch – of great talents, presence of mind, and dissimulation; a heart of stone, intrepid and unfeeling, he was minister to the king of Sardinia to the Cisalpine republic and to Napoleon, and having no greater career than a viceroy, put all his genius to seconding Napoleon, of whom he was perhaps the most able minister. His finance plans were laid so as to prevent all collusion on the part of the subjects, and executed with the extremity of rigour – everything was stamped in so much that Mr de Breme once said to him, "You will put a stamp on our foreheads".[438] He used to propose his budget to Napoleon always something below what he wanted: say, "110 millions" – Napoleon said, "120" – they split the difference, and then Prina laid his scheme so as to get 15 millions more than he had promised, which when he knew he made him a present perhaps of 300,000 francs. He one day proposed at the Council of State a plan for stamps, which was rejected by Prince and Council; then went to the mint and ordered 3,000 stamps to be made out. His friend said, "How? Why? You have lost it in council!" – Prina pulled the decree of Napoleon from his pocket. He did not go to court again for eight days after this, and then advanced to the Prince as if nothing had happened. He laughed, however, with Breme, at the Seigneurs Milanais[439] – he seems to have been a terrible instrument of tyranny.

Our friends thought that the Masons at first meant well to Italy, but afterwards were corrupted, and got to be the meanest class of sycophants, spies, and debauchees – it is possible however they may have intrigued and formed plans for an alliance with England – they pretended that Masonry was powerful in England. The instigators of the rebellion were the Milanese nobles, who disliked all strangers – meaning those not of Milan – and created a disturbance to

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[437]**:** Beauharnais was able to keep on good terms with both Napoleon and the Pope.

[438]**:** di Breme recounts, in dialogue form, a conversation he had with Prina, in his 1817 pamphlet *Grand Commentaire sur un Petit Article;* but includes no ironical play with words.

[439]**:** He showed himself contemptuous of those who finally arranged his death. As di Breme is himself a *Seigneur Milanais* one remains sceptical.

keep things in alarm until the Germans came in. They armed their peasants and brought them in during the night – they were seen running about in the streets with nooses and rustic weapons. Breme pretends that some asked at the gates "Où est-ce qu'on pille?"[440] and said that they were paid three francs a day for pillaging.

Breme told us some inimitable stories. One of the Abbé de Pradt,[441] who was sent by Napoleon to persuade a bishop at Turin to give up his bishopric,[442] and when the bishop said he was married to his church, said, "How many husbands would be glad to be obliged to give up their wives?" The same told us that La Tour, bishop at Turin,[443] was so ignorant that he gave as a text "Gesta Dei per Francos"[444] as if out of the Bible. The same man, when Maury[445] passed on to Paris, told him that he had changed his way of thinking. Maury then said, "Je suis ami de la monarchie Française – quand cette couronne tombe sur une tête raionnante de gloire, ce n'est pas pour nous autres a en juger".[446] La Tour turned round – "Quelle eloquence!" and then said he also was an orator. Villarets,[447] who united four sees, was sent by Napoleon to organise the Piedmontese clergy. He arrived in jockey cap, nankeen pantaloons, [and] a carmagnole jacket. A bishop was waiting for him *in pontificatibus*, and he whisked him under the arm and took him to church, where [a] Te Deum struck up – someone saw a pretty girl go out of his house, and joked with him. He said, "J'étois homme avant d'être eveque".[448] He was going to give the priests powers of absolution for all the *casus reservati*,[449] until he was told it was only for the Pope to do so.

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[440]**:** "Where's the pillaging going on?"
[441]**:** Note on the Abbé de Pradt pending.
[442]**:** "bishoprick" (Ms.)
[443]**:** Note on La Tour pending.
[444]**:** "God's exploits on behalf of the French".
[445]**:** Jean Siffrein Maury (1746-1817) French cleric who initially supported the crown, but accepted Napoleon's appointment as Archbishop of Paris.
[446]**:** "I am a friend of the French monarchy; but when it falls upon the head of one shining with glory, it is not for us to judge."
[447]**:** Note on Villarets pending.
[448]**:** "I was a man before I became a bishop".

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We heard also of the royal family of Piedmont – inconceivable tales, which our narrator swore to. The late king[450] and his queen Clothida,[451] at the time when the French were about to seize the country,[452] used with a *holy mattress-maker* to examine the king's fæces immediately after council, to look for signs, which they fancied they saw, and acted on as in the entrails of pullets. Clothilda used to receive accounts of the dreams of a sister in a convent, then have them painted on a paper which she and a holy cobbler, the mattress-maker, and a Father Charles, used to examine together, and then send to the king with comments which he out before his council, and whatever was said always followed. When the French came Father Charles was made a captain, and was found to have been three years in their pay. He was the most notorious sodomite[453] in Piedmont. Breme saw a procession to the Madonna of Consolation at Turin – the King and Queen Clothilda threw themselves on the ground in the church in the greatest humiliation. The chemist and War Minister, de ——,[454] said to Breme's father, "God is very unjust if he does not work a miracle for these poor people – I ask for men and cannon and they talk to me of their holy cobbler and the help of heaven". The royal family were received by the monks of the convent, the most notorious brothel and tavern in Turin, and the Queen, retiring, called down their blessings on her. When Duke d'Aosta,[455] the present king commanded the left wing of the Piedmontese army under Vinsere,[456] or some such name. The battle with the French had begun, and Breme's eldest brother was sent by the commander-in-chief to ask the Prince to send him two regiments. Young Breme found the Duke walking down a mountain shivering and crying, and the moment

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[449]**:** The *casus reservati* are sins which only superior clergy can absolve (my thanks to Chris Little here).

[450]**:** King Victor Amadeus of Piedmont, father-in-law of the future Louis XVIII, was known as "King of the Dormice" from his torpid style. He revived and encouraged the Inquisition.

[451]**:** Note on Queen Clothilda of Piedmont pending.

[452]**:** Napoleon invaded Piedmont in April 1796.

[453]**:** "Zodomite" (Ms.)

[454]**:** Note on the War Minister of Piedmont pending.

[455]**:** One additional title held by Victor Emmanuel of Piedmont was Duca d'Aosta.

[456]**:** Note on Vinsere pending.

he made his request was answered in a sort of shrill scream of fright and rage: "Mon papa ne veut pas que je reste sans soldats!"[457] Old Victor Amadeus thought he was like Frederick the Great, because he wore a similar hat and cane. When he evacuated Piedmont he went on horseback – his aide-de-camps were carried in chairs with him, swords sticking out of the windows. The present King will not let the hereditary Prince Carignani,[458] who is eighteen, go near a woman, and he has ordered his doctor, who told it to Breme, to look at his shirts to see if there are signs of masturbation upon them.[459] Yet by the side of this horrible deterrent always were men of Genius – an Alfieri, a Lagrange,[460] a Denina,[461] a Bordoni,[462] a Caluso – of whom however the last is the only one who would live in his country.

Breme told us that Napoleon used sometimes to break out on subjects on which he had been thinking, and said once turning round to the Princesss of Baden,[463] "Ce general *Edidon*[464] n'a pas de coules ou queue"[465] – this was a favourite phrase of his when he wanted to abuse a man, and he thought Bertrand[466] or some such was sitting where the princess was. He was very fond of music, and gave a singer in Italy, a castrato, the Iron Crown one day on hearing him. He pushed his sister, Eliza Princess Borghese,[467] down on her knees

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[457]**:** "My daddy wouldn't leave me without soldiers!"

[458]**:** Carlo Alberto di Savoia-Carignano (1798-1849). In 1817 he married Maria Teresa, daughter of the Grand Duke of Tuscany: they were the parents of Vittorio Emmanuele, the first King of a united Italy.

[459]**:** Compare the education of Don Juan in Canto I.

[460]**:** Joseph Louis, Comte Lagrange (1736-1813) mathematician born at Turin. Napoleon gave him a professorship.

[461]**:** Carlo Denina (1731-1813) literary critic.

[462]**:** Giambattista Bodoni (1740-1813) printer.

[463]**:** Stephanie de Beauharnais, his step-daughter, who had married King Karl of Baden in 1811.

[464]**:** A mispronunciation of "Wellington".

[465]**:** "This General Wellington has neither balls nor arse".

[466]**:** Henri Gratien, Comte de Bertrand (1773-1844) general who shared Napoleon's stay on St. Helena.

[467]**:** Napoleon's sister, who married Prince Camillo Filippo Ludovico Borghese (1775-1832) the Governor-General of Piedmont, was called Pauline, not Eliza.

one day at mass, because she was not attending, and did it angrily; and young Breme mentioned that once, at Alexandria, finding he had not said mass at three o'clock p.m., had a priest sent for, an altar erected, and the service performed.

Wrote this night's journal this night till past two o'clock.

Friday November 1st 1816: Did nothing this morning but go to bankers Mirabeau and give him my draft for 3,684 francs twelve sous, which Hentsch of Geneva gave me for £150. Letter from Lady Melbourne.[468]

Walked out. This All Saints Day. Cathedral hung with pictures of adventures of St Charles Borromeo, whose account they cry [and] sell at the church door. Prose *improvvisatore* with pictures at the cathedral steps, referring occasionally to some of the statues in the niches – he seems always speaking. Plenary indulgence for all sins stuck up at the door of the cathedral – shops half shut.

After dinner we went to the Teatro Re, after receiving visit from the Bremes, Guarco, and Borsieri. Laughed very much at some good farce acting, very broad and low and smutty. &c.: [ ] man says of his wife, "Qualche volta? – non voglio piu — —!"[469] This had a wonderful effect.

Very cold.

Saturday November 2nd 1816: Wrote a letter to Lady Melbourne and Cullen, with notes for my *Letters*. Paid the confounded bill here – 123 francs for wax candles and fifty for wood fire – made them abate some 50 francs. Walked out.

After dinner Breme's called and took leave. They told us that a hundred persons were employed in the Ministry of the Interior under the old regime, 400 attached to the War Department, the Senate, the Council of State, the army, the prefecture – all opened a career to the young men. At present the conscription lasts, but the Italians are ruined with the Germans – the taxes last but the money is all sent to Vienna.

We took leave of these amiable brothers with true regret – never such short acquaintance left such traces in me.

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[468]**:** See Jonathan Gross (ed.) *Byron's Corbeau Blanc*, (Rice University Press 1997) 331-3.
[469]**:** "How many times? I don't want any more — —!"

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We went to the Teatro Re – saw *Bachio Deputato*,[470] and took leave of Guarco. Pimps in number in the street.

Sunday November 3rd 1816: Left Milan with Byron, in the former plan, at eleven o'clock …[471]

[Note continued from start …]

The Milanese writers with whom Byron and Hobhouse make friends do not forget them. In 1818 Pellico, perhaps by way of reciprocating their gesture in translating, and promising to stage, *Francesca da Rimini*, himself translates *Manfred* – a work which has not been completed when he meets Byron, and of which Hobhouse seems to know nothing. In the same year, Ludovico di Breme publishes, first in the *Spettatore* and then as a separate pamphlet, a polemic in which he argues that innovative verse narratives such as *The Giaour* show the way forward in exploring the depths of the human soul, and in restoring a moral and political dimension which contemporary Italian verse lacks. Breme praises the fractured narrative of the poem, which he knows from Pellegrino Rossi's translation, published in Milan in 1818. He is not blind to the way in which Byron's Greece can readily be read as a parallel for Italy.

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[470]**:** *The Kiss Deputed*. Play otherwise unidentified.

[471]**:** When, on 31 Aug 1822, Hobhouse comes back to Milan, after the failed revolutions of 1821, he has sad news to report: "... went to a bookseller's shop – heard something about the present state of the Milanese – heard that all the society in which I used to live in Milan was now dispersed – some fled – some in prison. The bookseller said di Breme was happy in being dead – he would have been compromised. The Abbate's elder brother was drowned last year passing the Ticino – Borsieri is in prison – de Tracey is in prison – Confalonieri is in prison or dead. The nobles are completely down – the clergy are equally discouraged. I find that the great part of Lord Byron's works are prohibited, and so are Tom Moore's – and yet, both Moore and Byron are found in English. Lady Morgan's *Italy* is under peculiar odium. It is true that she compromised many liberals here, who received her in their houses and gave her information, which she published. There is scarcely any trade in books, for no foreign books are admitted without the *Vienna* censor looking at them – this requires three months delay ..." and so on (BL. Add. Mss. 56546 72v-73r).

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Breme, Pellico, and Lambertenghi found a journal, *Il Conciliatore*, in which Pellico reviews *Childe Harold* IV over two essays, impressed by its celebration of Italian nationhood. He also reviews Luigi Castiglione's 1819 translation of *The Corsair*. The second *Childe Harold* essay runs foul of the censor, and *Il Conciliatore* is forced to close in December 1819.

Michele Leoni's translation of *Childe Harold* IV appears in 1819, re-titled *Italia*. It, too, is banned by the Austrians.

Ludovico di Breme dies in 1820. Silvio Pellico is arrested in the same year and condemned to death, a sentence commuted to fifteen years imprisonment with hard labour, of which he serves ten. Three years after his release, his health ruined, he publishes his account of the ordeal, *Le mie Prigioni*, which establishes him as one of the most respected writers of nineteenth-century Italy, and in its Christian meekness does more harm to the Austrians than any military defeat could.

***Francesca da Rimini* is never staged at Drury Lane, and no-one really knows what happened to Hobhouse's translation of it.**