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London and Politics, 1818

[The start of 1818 is at Venice: the material below is from B.L.Add.Mss. 47234 / 5 and 56540.]

*My dear Mr Murray,
You're in damned hurry
To set up this ultimate Canto,
But (if they don't rob us)
You'll see M^r Hobhouse
Will bring it safe in his portmanteau. – (Lord Byron to
John Murray, Venice January 8th. 1818
(Scolar Press / John Murray, 1974).*

In the first section here, Hobhouse brings it safe.

On **January 8th** he is up at half-past seven and leaves Venice at a quarter past ten ...

... after having passed a very happy tranquil time here, with no drawbacks but my bad head, which is ringing at this present time of writing.

He sets off in a gondola to Mestri, where he finds the carriage he left there on July 31st 1817; then he goes via La Mira, where he ...

... took leave of Sartori and his family, looked at the house and little library where I used to sit in the morning.

He changes horses at Dolo, and goes to Padua, where he puts up at the Stella d'Oro for the third time in his Italian travels. He has with him a servant called Baptista, to whom he entrusts the finances, since strangers are charged exorbitantly in Italy. He debates whether to go on to Ferrara and Milan, and, partly because of the discouraging accounts he hears of the roads, decides not to go to Milan, but is not confident about going to Ferrara either, because "it is likely all of Tasso's Mss. have been published before". He retires at half-past nine.

Having had such a hard time of it getting to Helvoetsluys in January 1814, Hobhouse should know the difficulties of winter travel in Europe; but if he remembers them, he doesn't care.

On **January 9th** he sets out for Ferrara, where, despite his doubts, he intends to do some manuscript transcription. He travels in “cold driving white fog” across “miry” roads. He arrives by two at Rovigo and puts up at the Ponsetto, “a miserable inn, but the best”. The postmaster advises him to hire no fewer than six oxen for the next day’s trip, the roads are that bad. He dines at four, reads “Millin”, and retires again at nine-thirty.

With “six oxen at my little landaulet” he sets off through “*perfidie*” roads of “frozen mud” on **January 10th**. He walks, for fear of the carriage being overturned.

As we neared Polsella [we] were obliged to have peasants to help us. I [was] in a foolish rage with Baptista for his inactivity, that is, for his not making so much noise as myself.

The stage from Rovigo to Polsella costs him forty-nine francs. On the next stage, to Ferrara, he has “a good-natured postboy, for a wonder – he did his utmost – the road dreadful still in many places”. They approach the *ponte* ferry over “the majestic Po”.

I walked more than half[way] to the ferry – at last, by about four, got over this enterprise – wet frozen feet. Mistaken by a Westphalian (apparently) officer, who had left Rovigo at eleven, after me, and had come along in a two-wheeled car ... he was, or said he was, surprised at hearing me speak Italian so fluently, but damped his praise by adding, “Yet though you speak so well they do not understand you”. He subjoined, “The Italians hate strangers”. I might have said, “especially Germans”.

He has left Austrian territory, and entered Papal. He passes through the Pontifical customs house, and, with two horses now, but through “freezing fog”, reaches Ferrara at about five, and puts up at the Three Moors, his old inn. There a waiter tells him that Napoleon had left 280,000 francs for the upkeep of the road, but that the Austrians had taken it for the half-pay of some of their ex-employees. That night Hobhouse reads “... the first book of the *Aeneid*, and am happy to say I like it better than ever – went to bed about ten”.

January 11th is a Sunday, and Hobhouse does some sociological / anthropological research on the Sabbath customs of North Italy (his intention is to visit the university, but the “keeper” is dangerously ill). The sermons are extempore, and though the congregation is “of the lowest people”, Latin phrases

are thrown in. The *invito sacro* is performed, “per gli soli uomini”; Hobhouse asks why women are excluded, and is told that “women are not allowed after *Ave Maria* because they would make love”. In another church he sees “young men with iron heels to their boots, and coloured coats and clerical robes, officiating at the altar, laughing, and directed by a third person, kneeling and bowing out of time and place”.

In the Benedictine church, he visits Ariosto’s grave. An inscription records that Eugene Beauharnais had restored the church and made it parochial. This is the only inscription which Hobhouse has seen which has survived the departure of the French.

Going “home” (that is, back to the hotel), he reads Andreas Mustoxides on the origin of the horses of St Mark, and a number of the Lugarno Gazette which says that Tsar Alexander has been reproving his priests for ascribing the recent Russian successes to him, instead of to God – “modest man!”

Going out again, he sees the *Via Crucis* acted by the young men, who, he is told, are laity chosen by lot. He calls it “this farce”. Then he recounts another example of Italian egalitarianism:

[Baptista] was greeted with great glee last night by a Siennese marquis who had *seen him born*, and Baptista kissed his lady’s hand. This is the Italian kindness and polite familiarity so strange to us.

That night he sees “*Cinderella*” – presumably Rossini’s opera – at the theatre (“large and ornamental and tolerably filled”). He says nothing about the work, as usual, except that “the *nodo intruciato* which used to take so at Venice was received with indifference”. He had seen the opera previously on November 15th 1817. After the show there is a *tombolo* (in effect, a game of Bingo) on which Hobhouse expends far more ink than he does on Rossini’s opera.

The diary now records another “**January 11th**”, which date it insists is both a Sunday and a Monday. **January “11th” and 12th** are frustrating days for Hobhouse, thanks to the villainy of the Ferrarese librarians, who (a) seem to have sold some copies of Tasso letters, made for Hobhouse, to an Englishman called Orpen, and (b) give Hobhouse some letters by both Tasso and Ariosto to copy, which, by persistent detective work, he finds to have been published already. He had intended to give the Ariosto letters to Byron. Made suspicious early, he wastes very little ink on unnecessary transcribing, and saves the hundred francs he had been prepared to pay. One of the crooked librarians is the man whom he

had been assured was dangerously ill. Another attempts to curry favour by seeming liberal. The Italians, he says ...

... would have been glad to see [the English] masters of a good cut of Italy, and thus have had liberal masters – Napoleon a hundred times better – complained bitterly of taxes and imports on commerce.

Hobhouse leaves Ferrara (“much dissatisfied”) at a quarter past ten on January 12th, and arrives in Bologna at four, putting up at the San Marco, where his party had put up in 1817 (a rare glimpse of what might be in the missing diary). He goes book-shopping, and is still researching *Childe Harold IV* (which he has, as John Murray already knows, “in his portmanteau”):

At Guidi the bookseller’s, looked at Biancioni’s works, for the story of Arisoto’s iron crown, struck by lightning – saw nothing of it. He died in 1782 and wrote but few poems.

That night Hobhouse writes to Mezzophanti, Sophie, and re-writes a letter to Byron (which has not survived). He’s in bed by ten.

He strikes north-west for Modena on the morning of **January 13th**, having left Bologna at seven, and gets there by eleven. He wants to inspect some Tasso manuscripts in the Modena library, but the librarian is out, so at half-past eleven he sets out for Parma (where Maria Louisa is Archduchess), and arrives at half-past five. The Imperiale de la Porte is his hotel, as it had been when last he was there.

Yet again he spends the evening at the opera, where yet again he does not say what the piece is. However,

La Ballochi was prima donna and Veluti the soprano, a eunuch – his voice to me shocking and unnatural, but is reckoned one of the finest in Italy.

The Empress Maria Louisa, whom the people pertinaciously call by the title of “Her Majesty” ... came in with Neipperg [*Hobhouse spells his name Neuperg*], her one-eyed minister and favourite, and Mlle Carriani and an old chamberlain. The audience pulled off hats and clapped faintly. She sat in a corner, with a shade before her, and was enveloped in a bonnet which prevented me from seeing her so well as I had done at Mantua. Her presence prevented all applause. The ballet I thought execrable – came away cold,

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tired, and more snow since turning northwards from Bologna. I cannot recognize the beautiful country I passed only in July last – bed twelve.

Giovanni Battista Veluti is in fact the last of the great *castrati* – Hobhouse is witnessing the end of an epoch without realizing it.

He changes fifty pounds after breakfast on **January 14th** (“exchange 23 / 50 – bought Napoleons at 20 / 25”), and then, having bought some inscriptions, moves off for Placentia, where he arrives a little after five. That night, he goes to the opera again! And this time we do get the impression that he likes music after all, especially if he knows it well:

... large house, thinly attended – heard my favourite Marchesini again in *Tancredi*. Some chattering blockheads near me made so much noise I was obliged to speak to them – a young fellow next to me said one of them was a marquis and that the Piacentine nobility were the most consummate brutes in Italy.

This day Battista told me that two years ago four boys of ten and twelve were castrated in Sienna – that this event is a sort of *fête* – the hospital where the operation is performed gives the surgeon a hundred *scudi* a head – the nobility &c are particular in their enquiries how the patients go on – the boys are kept in bed fifteen days. Sienna is a great place for music – Senesini had the Palazzo Benardi left him, with 15,000 *scudi*, for singing a *Salve Regina* – he enjoys it at this day – a man supports a wife and twelve children off his fiddle ...

This is the sixth time Hobhouse has heard *Tancredi* (see also *Don Juan XVI*, 45, 4).

January “15th” / 16th (Hobhouse now corrects his dating error of January 12th) is spent travelling to Casteggio and Alessàndria, from Parma, and out of Italy into Piedmont. He is aiming, not north-west to Milan, but due west to Turin, wishing, perhaps, not to go again into Austrian territory. He goes via the site of Napoleon’s victory at Marengo (a short southerly detour), and arrives at Alessàndria by five, putting up at the New Inn, where the dinner is good and the waiter abuses the government as usual. He goes to bed early.

Via “the same road I had gone before, but now under thick snow”, he sets out on **January 17th** for Turin, where he arrives “over the great bridge of Napoleon” at five. At the bankers there, he is very distressed to find no letters waiting for him, and foresees (inaccurately) “some calamity”. He writes to Mirabeau of

Milan asking that all letters be forwarded to Paris, and two more to Kinnaird and to Charlotte, asking whether anything has happened. “I felt miserable,” he writes, “and conjured up a thousand horrors the whole evening”.

I am ashamed to say to bed at nine, after reading Fifth Book of the *Aeneid* – Aeneas makes the defeated Segisthenes a present of *Pholoe*, a slave with a couple of bastards.

The entry for **January 18th** starts with Hobhouse’s mature evaluation of *Letters*, which has been twice reprinted in the previous year, the third edition carrying a dedication (at last) to Byron:

... too long – too involved – too much of Pope in the prose – too ambitious at hits and references – but I shall not conceal that I see some eloquence – a great deal of warmth – just reasoning – generous sentiments and on the whole, such a book as, on the whole [*sic*], does me credit.

The rest of the entry is taken up with reports of the dinner-conversation of William Noel Hill, Our Man In Piedmont, with whom Byron is to become friendly when he moves to Genoa in 1823. Piedmont is part of the Kingdom of Sardinia. Hill is “very liberal indeed” for an English ambassador at such a time – one reason why Byron will get on so well with him five years later.

Hill is, writes Hobhouse, “a friendly, funny man”. Lord William Bentinck, often criticized for *not* freeing Italy,

... told him [*Hill*] that the Italians would not fight, and if he could have found such a combination as the French found in Ireland, he would have made Italy independent ... Hill owned that the government here was on a very illiberal footing ... the King of Sardinia had 70,000 men ready in 1815 ... Hill said that it was a great pity Milan &c should belong to Austria, who only came to suck Italy, and who had it on account of the seizure of Poland by Russia. Hill was loud in his abuse of the Emperor of Russia, and of our ambassador there ... unless England was prepared to say to the Emperor of Russia, “You shall not have Poland”, there was no resisting the claims of Austria and others ... he seemed to think that the House of Savoy would have Italy one day or the other ...

A prescient final statement, though not to come true until everyone at this dinner-table is dead.

That night yet another opera visit, and this time the show, which lasts from six to eleven, has definitely to take a back seat. Hobhouse – apart from saying how long it lasted, and conceding that it had “a handsome house, and quite full” – does not mention it at all, so fixated is he by the politics of the royal part of the audience, about the private lives of whom he has heard all there is to know from the lips of Lodovico di Breme on October 31st 1816. “Not only honour, but life seems to depend upon a place at court”; the “Queen [*her name is Clothilda*] in fact is nothing and it is therefore determined to make her appear everything – she is jealous to the extreme – does not like any of the nobles to have their circles ... the Prince of Carignano [*heir to the throne, father of the future King Vittorio Emmanuele*], is not there, nor is his Princess [*they were married the previous year*], because she was to be allowed only a *tabouret*.”

One English diplomat, a Mr Percy, jokes about having sent a box of white truffles to Carlton House as a means of currying favour, but of having gained nothing by the expense.

Hill gives Hobhouse a courier’s passport to facilitate his return home.

Hobhouse has better luck at the Turin Library on **January 19th** than he had at Ferrara or Modena. The librarian is “a stammering good-natured man”, and assures him that these letters – from Petrarch to Cola Rienzi – have never been copied; so, despite skepticism, Hobhouse gets them copied in part for a fee and does the rest himself, working through to five in the afternoon.

That night the royal family is not at the theatre, but the ballets, of which Hobhouse sees two, are “dreadfully tedious – dancing horrible – grotesque and ugly dances”. Could he have watched something experimental and avant-garde?

Much of **January 20th** is taken up with book-shopping, research and copying. He finds that Parini’s *Four Seasons of the Day* is a banned book, as are many of Alfieri’s works (Alfieri was from Turin). However, the publisher Pomba and Sons correspond with Longmans, and have ordered Byron’s works “among classics of England”. The stammering librarian is thrown into confusion by Hobhouse’s discovery that some of Petrarch’s letters to Rienzi have been published – at Liège. “It must be confessed,” says Hobhouse, “the librarians in Italy are not so learned as might be imagined”. He sends some books to di Breme in Milan – a short way off.

After dinner he reads Pascal’s *Pensées* for the first time, and is not impressed: “Of course [I] detect Pope – it is the most eloquent excuse for credulity” ... “yet he says the incredulous are only to be pitied, not persecuted”. At the Theatre

D'Argermes[??] that night ("a Prince there, so hats off") he learns that Pellico's *Francesca da Rimini* is on the next night, Pellico also being from Turin!

On the morning of **January 21st** he is asked "120 francs for a second edition of *La Cenerentola*, and a first edition of *The Barber of Seville*" – evidence perhaps that music means more to him than his diary indicates (though he doesn't say that he buys them). The stammering librarian insists at some length that the Piedmontese government is "no tyranny".

We are frustrated at finding that Hobhouse does not go to see *Francesca da Rimini* that evening. Instead he goes with Hill to an unnamed opera, and thus foregoes the only chance he will ever have of seeing the work he has translated. As is the case with Alfieri and Byron, tragedies are for the study. Staging them is an interesting experiment perhaps, but also a degradation. Hobhouse is in bed by twelve.

January 22nd sees him set off for Switzerland and thus for Paris. By way of Suza, he crosses Mount Cenis and arrives at Lanleberg at five. He then travels all night, and arrives at Chambéry at half-past nine on the morning of **January 23rd**. Here he breakfasts, and, we are glad to hear, washes. At half-past four that afternoon he crosses the Pont Beauvoisin, and is in France. The courier's passport, plus a letter from Hoppner, work miracles at the douane, and by half-past two the following morning he is in Lyons! He puts up at the Hotel de Milan.

In the morning of **January 24th** he rises at eleven, hires a lacquey de place, and goes to see the city – which reminds him of Bristol. He admires the squares, and the quai feu Bonaparte on the banks of the Rhone. He sees the confluence of the Rhone and Saone, his description of which confusing:

The Rhone is nine days rising and then drives the dirty Saone backwards – at present the muddy waters of the latter were dividing the bed of the other river for two or three miles below.

His lacquey de place tells him about the recent insurrection against the Bourbons, prefacing it with, "c'était comique":

The comedy was that the mayor and municipality were to have been murdered in a procession when carrying the host about – that a young man who had received 20,000 francs to distribute amongst [the] revolted betrayed the cause the day before the event, and his treachery being found out was waylaid returning from some baths in [the] neighbourhood and shot. That on this account the rising began too early in the communes – that the conspiracy was

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spread very far, but no-one knew for what purpose exactly, except the pillage of Lyons, which was settled. That the chiefs were a goldsmith, a man of 40,000 francs a year, and a half-pay officer who did not like to live on 250 francs a year – and that these two were beheaded at four in the morning the day after the intended revolt. That the tribunals tried the rioters by 30s, and guillotined them by twos at the different communes, to strike terror.

He told me everything was going on very badly at Lyons – no commerce – the King a good man with priests and bad counsellors ...

Hobhouse is very impressed by the museum, the chief curator of which is a M. Artaud. The Lyons exchange is held in the midst of the lapidary inscriptions, and the citizens recently fêted the duchesse d'Angoulême, the King's sanguinary sister, there. The bank, Veuve Guerin, won't change his money, though they are polite in their refusal.

That night he goes to the *opéra comique* ...

... of which I find my ears did not catch ten words together – very few people present, and those few almost all officers – men kissing in the pit – I saw today one man meet another in mourning. After [an] affectionate salute, he pointed to [the] crepe and said, "Eh! Qu'est-ce vous avez?" – "Mon beau frère", said the other. These manners are very different from ours.

To bed half-past ten.

He sets off for Paris at a quarter past eleven on the morning of **January 25th**, going as advised via Moulin, the road in that direction being paved, as he is told: but he finds very little *pavé* anywhere, and is soon deep in snow again. He finds the roads and posting bad. At Roanne "they were masquerading about the streets".

He travels "all night – without stopping", by which he must mean "without getting out of the carriage".

He takes great comfort on **January 26th** at noticing how like England the country looks. But the wind is cold and the frost is hard and breakfast at Moulin is "exorbitant and poor". Hobhouse does not, it is clear, wish to linger in France. Keeping "the Loire a long time on left", he stops nowhere. Coming out of Nevers, the postillion cracks his whip over the heads of some priests – "this I never saw in Italy".

North from Montagis on January 27th the road really is *pavé* – "I think the finest in Europe". He travels through Nemours, Fontainebleau, Chailly and

Ponthierry, reaches Paris in the evening, and puts up at the reassuringly-named Hotel de la Grande Bretagne, in the rue l'Honoré.

There, after dinner, Hobhouse, it seems, gets himself laid, though the code is cryptic:

... dined and went to a good bed. Chambermaid volunteered smut – asked after “Dulce Count”. I said, “Oui, tout ce que vous voudrez”. I was at this Hotel in 1815, but like a dunce had forgot the name [*see April 12th 1815: there it's called the “Great Britain Hotel”*]. Bed, twelve.

Hobhouse has many friends in Paris. On the morning of **January 28th** he writes notes to Madame de Souza, to Madame de Coigny, to Benjamin Constant, and to the previously unmentioned Madame la marquise de Dolomieu. He seems to visit the latter, where he reports “no g. with Madame Albrizzi's trinkets”.

Thence to Sir Charles Stewart's, where his passport is “after some little to do visa'd because a courier's”.

Thence to Perrégaux's the bankers, where he expects mail from his sisters and Kinnaird, but finds “no letters!! inconceivable – I am in a strange pucker”.

He dines with one John Lloyd, from whom he hears that ...

... the gay French women of St Germain have formed a coterie which they call the *château* – and that young Montague is the only Englishman admitted into it – he [*Lloyd*] told me the story of Captain Barrett shooting the Frenchman ...

... but we, alas, do not hear why he shot him.

That evening he meets Benjamin Constant at the Salon des Etrangers gambling house:

He told me that things were going on well in France – that the Ultras and the opposition had not joined, but that the latter could not refuse their support when offered. Constant has saved a man's life lately condemned to die – he is a confirmed gambler and seems always to be at the Salon from ten to twelve at night. He promised to send me his late productions, and mentioned that it is not true any have been stopped by the police.

Went home and to bed.

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He does not mention any meetings with Mesdames de Souza or Coigny. He leaves Paris “by the usual route, travelling all night”, on **January 29th**.

He arrives at Abbeville a little after ten on **January 30th**, breakfasts, and has his passport visa’ed again. Then ...

... a post from Boulogne met the Duke of Wellington with three carriages without any escort. Constant told me his staff was greater than that of any sovereign.

He is advised by a man on horseback near Boulogne that an attempt has been made to blow up the fortress at Calais and that he won’t be able to enter after nine. After some hesitation he puts up in Boulogne at the Hotel du Nord, where he “dined and was pestered by packet masters – bad dinner – bed.”

At Calais on **January 31st** he sees two packets standing out of the harbour. Cursing his luck, he books a passage on the *Sybil* (Captain Middleton) which may sail at five the next morning. He breakfasts, and sits with others in the coffee room at Quillac’s. Brummel, he hears, is still in a lodging hard by, as he had been in 1816. He does not visit him.

There was a young Maitland, son of General Maitland of the guards, who commanded one of the brigades in the Battle of Waterloo. He told me he had heard the Duke of Wellington praise in the highest terms the conduct of the French in the Battle of Waterloo.

He and his fellow travelers talk till ten, when he retires.

Getting his carriage on board the *Sybil* costs three francs early on the morning of Sunday **February 1st**. But although they leave at seven, they can’t cross, the wind is so heavy. They have to put about. Hobhouse is sick. The captain announces that even if they cross, they can’t land at Dover – so they put about again, and return to Calais. A French packet tries to put out as they enter, but is obliged to stand off. The *King George* packet does put out, but is driven on to the Downs. Another is lost in the Goodwins.

The exhausted Hobhouse tries at Quillac’s that night to read a French novel, but falls asleep over it. He dines, and is in bed again by eleven.

The weather is more favourable on **February 2nd**, and the *Sybil* arrives at Dover at three-fifteen p.m., and so Hobhouse (with the manuscript of *Childe Harold IV* in his portmanteau) ...

... landed in England after an absence of a year and a half – which is the longest period I was ever away from my country. Put up as usual at the Ship Inn – found Mr Cuthbert and family there – dined with them – went to bed ten.

He pays £1 10s 6d to get his books and Bologna sausages through customs on **February 3rd**. And at last ...

... received a letter from Charlotte which made me happy. My dear sister Harriet is alive and the rest well ... set out for London at half-past ten, in my carriage. My Battista was not so much struck with the superiority of England as I should have expected. I arrived in London a little before nine and drove to Batt's Hotel, Dover Street – put up – dined – went to bed after writing a letter to Murray the bookseller.

The question is, will his notes to *Childe Harold* IV be printed with, or independent of, the poem? Will they be published at all? If not, he will have wasted many hours and much ink and paper. It is a question soon answered:

February 4th. Sent my note to Murray, in which I referred the insertion of the notes to himself, that is, his friends. I thought this the only plan, especially as I am not certain they would do any credit to the poem, or me. I had a very handsome answer, which showed how glad he was of the opportunity of getting rid of my notes – it will not always be so, though perhaps he is right here.

He soon came. I read *Childe Harold* to him – he was in raptures. Henry came in, and I agreed to take him down in my carriage to Whitton. I handed over to Murray the poem and the notes – both are to be shown to Gifford.

I called on nobody, but went with Henry to Whitton – he told me by the way a plan of coming into parliament, and of poor Harriet's dreadful state.

Arrived after long, long absence at Whitton, and was most kindly received – I find this to be my natural retreat – everybody totally well but Harriet, whom I saw in her bed, where she has been since April. My fears tell me she will never rise, and yet her physicians have hopes. I dined and sat with my sisters till eleven.

I forgot to mention that I delivered the dispatches and letters with which I was charged today, from Hoppner and Hill.

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February 5th. My father took me to town in his carriage. Put up at Batts. Called on Douglas Kinnaird – saw him. He will be member for Bishop’s Castle in the next parliament, it seems. S.B.Davies has partially recovered himself. I called on him – dined with Douglas Kinnaird. Met S.B.Davies and embraced.

Frederick Byng dined with us – Mrs Kinnaird and the bastard there – the latter acts keen.

Went to Drury Lane and saw a thing with music and dancing in it called *The Bride of Abydos* – a *mélange* of Byron’s poetry – wretched stuff, much applauded. Walked away and spent half the night at Douglas Kinnaird’s, where I was introduced to Long Pole⁷ and saw Colonel Cooke⁸ – the former [“latter” (Ms.)] alluded politely to what I had said of him in my travels, and invited me to his house, saying he would make a better country gentleman than ambassador. Henry Pearce⁹ was there, little changed by eleven years absence I think.

Went to bed at half-past two.

Kinnaird does not stand for the Shropshire seat of Bishop’s Castle. The *Bride of Abydos* dramatization is by W. Dimond, with music by the famous Michael Kelly.

February 6th. Up late – called on Murray – Gifford says the Fourth Canto is Byron’s best effort – the notes he has not yet read.

I called on Mrs Kinnaird – find she has quarrelled with her friend Mrs Hodges¹¹ about H.Windham.

Went down to Whitton with my father – bed, &c.

Left *Francesca da Rimini* with Douglas Kinnaird today – wrote a letter to Lord Byron – removed to No 43 Clarges Street.

The letter to Byron seems lost.

5: See 20/11/14 n5. **7:** See 17/6/10 n5. **8:** Not to be confused with *Colonel Rooke* (see 2/7/10 n4). **9:** Unidentified. **11:** See 9/5/16 n9. **12:** See 7/8/17 n1.

The weekend of **February 7th** and **8th** is spent at Whitton. In a walk with Henry to Richmond Bridge, Hobhouse hears “a dreadful account of the apprehensions of the family about all the second stock, which I trust may never be justified by the event”. The details are not clear, but with so vast a number of

unemployable girls to settle, financial ruin would be a nightmare to the family. Hobhouse discovers that his horse has been lamed.

On **February 9th** he rides into town and calls on Augusta Leigh, at 46 Brompton Row:

Lady Byron has been very ill. She knew nothing of Brougham's reading Lady Byron's letter at Florence.

Unfortunately, neither do we.

Hobhouse goes to Tattersall's and buys a new horse for thirty guineas, then Davies takes him to dine with Frederick Byng, Henry Luttrell – whom he meets for the first time – and Colonels Cooke and Armstrong. Cooke tells him that Gentz and Metternich both believe positively in the *Manuscrit venu de St. Hélène d'une manière inconnue*, which Murray has published.

The ultra-well-connected Davies next takes him out for the evening, and into no mean circle. Present are the Dukes of Sussex and Cumberland, and a woman to whom Hobhouse refers as “*Lady*” Leach. Cumberland remembers his taking packets from Mr Thornton to him at Strelitz (see June 19th 1813). Sussex addresses him as “Hobhouse”.

He walks home in the fog.

On **February 10th** he goes to Murray's, with some trepidation, as we may imagine:

Saw Gifford and Barrow. Murray assured me that Barrow did not write the article in the Quarterly, so I shook hands with Barrow. Mr Thornton, whom I saw at Stralsund, introduced himself to me. Heard that Barclay the brewer and M.P. has shot himself, and that the Duchess of Devonshire in Rome has confessed [that] the present Duke is *her* son. The first is *not* true.

Satisfactory conversation respecting the notes. Gifford says they are good. He gave me some corrections of the poetry, which are *not* all good.

He rides back to Whitton on his new horse. He has heard from someone that the lawyers think they have incontrovertible evidence that Sir Philip Francis is / was Junius.

On **February 11th** he rides back to Clarge's Street, where his old friend from the Cambridge Whig Club, Lord Tavistock, calls, and regales him with the latest political gossip, to bring him up to date. Among other things Tavistock says that he “hated to speak to Lord Grey on politics – he was impracticable”. As Grey is the person most responsible for the 1832 Reform Act, we must assume that he

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improves over the next fourteen years. Tavistock also “approves my resting quiet about Cambridge, for fear of endangering Smyth”, and assures him with numerous details that Henry Brougham is vastly unpopular, and will not get into parliament.

Dined at the Literary Fund, where Henry Ellis of the British Museum told me one or two funny anecdotes – a receipt of Dr Butt’s papers by Henry VIII – for drying cooling and comforting the member – which proves he had the pox. Also an apothecary’s bill of Queen Elizabeth, all purges and emetics, charged to the maids of honour at two and sixpence each.

February 12th. Employed thinking about *Childe Harold* and the notes – rode down to Whitton – dined, and spent the evening.

February 13th. Rode up to London. Spent the morning with Murray looking over the proofs of *Childe Harold*, with Gifford’s corrections, which I sent with a letter to Byron.

Dined at Brothers with S.B.Davies and Burdett – the latter is as lively as ever about politics – sat up with him until half-past one, talking about Byron.

We lack the letter to Byron about Gifford’s corrections.

February 14th. Made a call or two and rode down to Whitton, and spent the evening.

End of B.L. Add. Mss. 47234, start of B.L. Add. Mss. 47235.

February 15th. Spent the day at Whitton – walked out and rode out – my sister Harriett in a very precarious state –

On **February 16th** Hobhouse discovers to his horror that “all the world had looked shy on me these few days”, and that everyone, including George Tierney and Lord Holland, is speaking of him as author of the rumour that the present Duchess of Devonshire (Elizabeth Foster) has confessed that the present sixth Duke is her son, and not son to her predecessor, the famous Georgiana. Either he had started the rumour, or brought the letter that started it. In vain he protests that he heard it at Murray’s from his brother Henry, who heard it at an M.P.’s dinner party (see February 10th).

He dines with Scrope Davies at the Piazza Coffee House, Covent Garden (soon to be made famous in *Beppo* (see *Beppo*, 5, 7-8); then he goes to bed, “out of spirits”.

On **February 17th** John Barrow of the Admiralty confesses that he started the rumour that Hobhouse started the rumour – but that as soon as he realized his error, he tried to correct it. He’s very apologetic.

He calls on Perry of the *Morning Chronicle*, who assures him that he had believed the rumour because it was so incredible! He then alludes to *Letters*, as evidence that Hobhouse tells tall tales! “This is another good lesson for me –” writes Hobhouse, “never to tell any story in writing which sounds strange, notwithstanding I know it to be true ...” Tom Moore is present. “*Lallah Rookh* is going into a seventh edition,” growls Hobhouse. “Heaven help us the while.”

Coming from Perry’s, he meets George Byron ...

... who, I see, is flat against Lord B. in the married concern, but unwittingly owned to me that he [*Lord Byron*] always treated Lady Byron with the greatest kindness in his presence. He assures me he knows not what was the cause of the separation, and yet he lived in the house at the time.

Hobhouse rides down to Whitton to escape it all. He reads pamphlets, and writes to Byron; though his letter, again, seems lost.

February 18th sees him back in town. In the evening he is at Holland House, with Lord Dungannon, Lord and Lady King, Lord Lauderdale (who next Christmas will emulate his recent feat by bringing *Don Juan* I and II back from Venice, and whom “Lady Holland sees ... twice a day”). Also present is the detested Henry Brougham, who “seems to have succeeded Horner at Holland House”. Lord Holland has two good tales:

... his uncle, George Stephen Fox, taking leave of some regiment, forgave a Scotchman a flogging. There were many Scots in the regiment, but not a word of approbation was heard. A year or two afterwards he received a letter from Glasgow signed by two or three hundred soldiers, now disbanded, who said that it did not become them when on duty to praise or blame their commander, but that now they took the occasion of thanking his honour for his lenity to their countryman.

Lord Holland said that when a boy he was in Mull, [and] a peasant gave him oatcake and milk to drink. He liked neither, but gave the man a crown – “Ye wounna drink my milk”, said the man, “and I wounna yere money”.

Hobhouse ends the day at Brooks's, where he sits a long time ...

... saw Bruce. Bed.

When he comes to write the entry for **February 19th** Hobhouse can't remember where he dined, but he does remember being at Perry's, where he met Moore, Rogers, and Sir John Steevenson. On **February 20th** he has a dull evening at Edward Ellice's, with Bruce to his right and "Hat" Vaughan to his left. Vaughan regrets "not having hanged the man who knocked him down the other day".

A Club has been formed. Its first meeting is at the Piazza Coffee House on **February 21st**, with Hobhouse, Burdett, Wilson, Davies, and Kinnaird. Bickersteth and Byron are named members in their absence. "Had a jolly but rather tipsy night". It's snowing hard on **February 22nd**. Hobhouse rides down to Whitton, and dines and sleeps there.

February 23rd is a very dramatic entry. Hobhouse is plunged into a world which is unfamiliar to him now, but with which he will become most familiar in less than two years' time:

Came up with my father. At twelve o'clock walked with Sir Robert Wilson to Newgate – found there a committee of the House of Commons and committee for the reform of the prison, employed in investigating the case of two boys of fifteen and seventeen, Spicer and Kelly, convicted for uttering forged notes. It appeared to me that they were decidedly drawn in by one Finney, who in combination with Limbrick, an officer, got the blood money for their conviction [*that is, Limbrick and Finney set them up so as to claim the reward*]. It was pleasing to see the interest taken by so many persons in their behalf – and the humanity of Mr Browne, Keeper or Governor of the jail.

Sir Robert Wilson had been to the Duke of Cumberland and had got him to promise to speak to the Regent – this man is indefatigable, whatever may be his motive in doing good – but such is the jealousy of others that he begged it might not be told that he had been so active, or that the Duke of Cumberland had been urgent, for fear of destroying his influence.

I went over the prison. It was very clean and airy. The women's apartments [were] too crowded, the women more vociferous and making demands upon us more than the men. Mrs Fry, a Quaker, has got a school and great authority in the prison. It was impossible to distinguish between the

condemned and the others. I saw about eleven in one room – all under sentence of death – and four of them for execution on Wednesday [*today is Monday*]: the two boys, and two Holloways for river stealing – they only nineteen and twenty-three. Wilson asked one if he had a boat of his own – “Ah no!” was his reply.

All the condemned stood up to receive us, except one who leant with his hand on the corner of the fire.

I saw in another room what they call “the school” – little boys, two of nine years old, condemned to die for stealing, and a third of the same age who will be, for stealing a muff. The Keeper said he did not know what to do with these boys. I said to him that I saw few male persons of any description above thirty – he said there were more under twenty than above that age.

It is clear that the seduced, &c., are taken – the pimps and bawds escape. The female prisoners seem older.

We saw the cells in which the convicts are shut up the night previous to execution. The Keeper said, “The man who suffered this morning came out of this” – he pointed out Bellingham’s cell, and one in which Vaty, a lad, had been confined. This man had written some Latin: the second line was

Cœli hade re vestibulum hic est locus ipse

... beneath which was a cross. He had been convicted for forging on someone, to enable him to settle at Douai for education, and his case had excited great compassion. He was hanged about four months ago. Hanging does not seem to discourage crime in the least. The two Holloways had a brother hung for the same crime for which they are to die on Wednesday.

Harmer, a solicitor of Newgate, seemed to think the applications would not save Spicer and Kelly – he had known so many applications fail in stronger cases – he had seen so many innocent people suffer – he had written a pamphlet to prove the innocence of Haggarty and Holloway, who were hanged for murdering Steele.

Browne the Keeper told us that much of the motion in the hanged which appeared convulsion to the mob was occasioned by the pulling the legs below. Jack Ketch, he said, was a little drunk the other morning when he hanged the two women so badly.

I learned today that murderers have not the benefit of the condemned sermon, but may have a parson in the cell with them. A good many of the prisoners seemed dressed like grooms. Newgate is a world of itself and the

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inmates seem reconciled even to that existence. I saw no more sign of discontent than in any other mixed society.

I thought it possible it might be useful to speak a word in favour of the boys to my cousin Henry Hobhouse, Under Secretary of State, so I hurried down to the Home Office, after the Committee of the House of Commons had been there. I saw my cousin, who was very kind, and told me that the convicts had obtained a respite of a week. I should say this must have been owing to the Duke of Cumberland's speaking to the Prince Regent, for the Commons had not been down in time. Lord Sidmouth received the committees – both of them with great kindness. The Solicitor to the Treasury, the Reform Committee, very early.

I rode down to Whitton on my new horse, whose knees one of my father's labourers continued to break.

Tuesday February 24th. Rode up to London. Dined at Brooks's today with S.B.Davies – reintroduced to Methuen, M.P. for Wiltshire, which county is thrown open by the retreat of Long – anybody might have it. I tried to persuade Robert Gordon to stand – he has no courage.

Went to Devonshire House, where Caroline Lamb seized me and made me sit next to her at supper, to my great horror – she insisted on sending me a ticket for Almack's the next day. I understand from Lord Holland today that the Duke of Devonshire had heard of the scandal respecting himself and me, and had taken this means of showing me his opinion. Lord Morpeth took an opportunity of coming up to say a word, though I know him not – this is very delicate and pleasant, because I have felt very much hurt indeed in having my name implicated in such a tale. Byron's *Beppo* is out – Caroline Lamb quoted it to me as Hookham Frere's – Croker of the Admiralty has found it out to be Byron's.

Went to Douglas Kinnaird's, and bed after three.

“All my time,” laments Hobhouse on **February 25th**, “is employed or rather lost in attending to the notes on *Childe Harold*”. He “drinks too much claret” at dinner with Denison, where Michael Angelo Taylor gives as his opinion that “in his long career as an M.P. he thought the House of Commons always pretty much the same – Fox, Pitt, and Burke all spoke too long, and for time”. He also meets a Mr Silvertop, who “agreed with me that a man who thinks liberally about Napoleon and France cannot find an audience”. He goes to Brooks's, where “Paul Methuen read some poetry of his”; and is in bed by one.

Thursday February 26th. Employed morning in selecting notes from Ms. for *Childe Harold* – a thankless task, from which I foresee much embarrassment. Walked out with Henry – dined at Piazza, with the Club as before, with John Fuller – stayed there until twelve – pleasant day – Douglas Kinnaird very good.

Friday February 27th. [*Sir Robert*] Wilson called. He tells me that the Emperor of Russia told him in 1814 that the affairs of the Allied army were desperate when Paris opened her gates, and they had agreed to fall back on Liège. They had no ammunition, and no communication, and had knowledge that Napoleon was close to them.

Hobhouse rides down to Whitton, where he stays on **February 28th**, doing nothing.

Sunday March 1st. Rode up to London and dined with Douglas Kinnaird. My brother and a large party there – two Cockerels – Frederick Byng – P. Bayning.

Walked up & down St James' Street with Douglas Kinnaird, who was about to take a strong domestic measure. I foresaw he would not, but still thought it my duty to advise him in the affirmative.

It looks as if Kinnaird is about to sever his relationship with Maria Keppel; but, to Hobhouse's annoyance and incomprehension, he doesn't.

On **March 2nd** Hobhouse dines with his brother "at 37 Half Moon Street". On **March 3rd** he reads Sir Robert Wilson's book on the Russian army, which he describes as "very curious". On **March 4th** he dines at the Eumelian, and goes to Holland House, where there are many of note, including Brougham and Lauderdale:

Lord Holland read a letter he had written to Major Cartwright [*the elderly radical, subject of Byron's third speech in the Lords*], who had expostulated with him for talking of his "elaborate blunders". It was kind and conciliatory. Brougham said Cartwright was a cunning man, and told me why.

Hobhouse, it goes without saying, does not tell *us* why. On **March 5th** he returns to Whitton, "after making many calls in the east end of the town". On

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March 6th he rides up to London again, corrects the proofs of *Illustrations*, and returns to Whitton. **March 7th** finds him dining at Longmans, the publisher, the rival of John Murray! Longman's partners Orme and Rees are present, as is William Godwin:

He the only man of note. He recollected that Porson had talked to him of the Cobbler of Messina. Said few words. Wore spectacles. A fine forehead.

So much for Godwin. There is more talk about Princess Charlotte's death in labour the previous year, and anecdotes of Lord Ellenborough. That night, to the play at Drury Lane,

... making use of the free admission sent me by the Committee, and saw Murphy's *Three Weeks After Marriage*. A vulgar thing – a woman says to her husband, "Come to bed", twenty times at least. What would a Frenchman think of it?

Rainy night.

Hobhouse is sufficiently struck by Wilson's book on the Russian army to be taking notes from it. On **March 8th** he calls on Edward Ellice, and hears from Ellice (an expert on Latin America) tales of the revolutions in progress there. Also,

Ellice told me that Lady Holland had heard Brougham and Mrs George Lamb abuse Byron violently – dined at the Club at the Piazza – not so pleasant a day as before – h.

"h" may signify *χαμαιτυπη*, "hamaitupay", Hobhouse's Greek signifier for "prostitute". On **March 9th** he rides to Whitton and dines with the Miss Byngs. **March 10th** finds him again in the metropolis, correcting proofs, and back at Whitton to see his young half-brother Isaac, "much grown". He is "ill at night" after dinner with his brother Henry on **March 11th**, and takes calomel. On **March 12th** he sits at home all day reading Bentham's *Fallacies*, "translated by Dumont and altered – a very extraordinary performance indeed". (On May 7th he will undertake to edit this work.) He dines at Lansdowne House.

Friday March 13th. Correcting and writing ... dined with Douglas Kinnaird. Went in evening to a[nother] party at Lansdowne House. *Beppo* is making a great noise.

Saturday March 14th. Ditto, ditto – dined at Mr Benyon’s – a caustic fellow there in a bag and sword – going to the Chancellor’s levy.

Sunday March 15th. Correcting proofs, and dined at the Piazza [*compare* *Beppo*, 5, 7-8] with the Club – indignant at Canning’s jokes on a prisoner whom he calls “revered and ruptured.”

Went in the evening to Holland House. Lady Holland told me that the letter quoted in Wilson’s book is Lord Holland’s, and that the consequence of that letter had been the Duke of Wellington’s coolness to Holland and her which had broken out at a party at Sir Charles Stewart’s at Paris – he feels Ney’s death is a blot.

Whether “he” in the last sentence refers to Welington, Holland, or Stewart, is not clear. On **March 16th** Hobhouse rides to Whitton; on **March 17th**, he returns, works on *Illustrations*, and dines at Lady Davy’s.

On **March 18th** he writes “a piece of a letter to Canning”, which, on **March 19th**, he reads aloud to the Club at the Piazza. The letter is to figure greatly in the diary for the next month. It is “much approved – it is sharp and violent, and may get me into a scrape, but I will print it”. On **March 20th** he tries to find a printer for the letter. One, called Millan, turns it down: and John Hunt is not at home. On **March 21st** Hunt is at home, but “could not put it in tomorrow [Hunt’s *Examiner* was a Sunday paper], so I took it back”. Hobhouse takes the letter home to Whitton, where on **March 22nd** he copies it, sitting up till two.

The next day he makes an important new acquaintance:

Monday March 23rd. Rode up to London – put the letter into Ridgway’s hands [*Ridgway had been jailed in the 1790s for publishing The Rights of Man*] – *Childe Harold* come back, with letters from Lord Byron [BLJ VI 19]. I am very busy and plagued.

Dined with Roger Wilbraham – present Sir Humphrey Davy, Heber, Dr Holland, Payne Knight, Combe, Secretary of Royal Society, a Mr *Cohen*, and Ugo Foscolo at my right – there was a good deal of Italian talked. Ugo Foscolo is very like his picture before *Jacopo Ortis* – a lively talking man – he is about to publish on Dante, and I offered him a *puff* in the notes to *Childe*

Harold. He made one fine observation: that in the age of Dante every man of genius did something to distinguish himself – fame acquired any way was the great object – for this reason Dante puts Francesca da Rimini, the daughter of his master Guido da Polento, in hell, and also his instructor, *il sodomita* to whom *chino il capo* [see *Inferno*, XV, 44]. Fame was the great object, and it was no comparative disgrace so [long] as Dante made these two persons known, [which is] what he did.

Hippocras, I learnt, is a sweet wine called so from being drunk through a doctor's sleeve – Hippocrates was so called. Roger Wilbraham, talking to me about Sotheby's giving Byron advice [see below, April 3rd], said that old Mr Davenport, who brought over Rousseau, was asked why he did not set his friend right – "God forbid", said Davenport, "that I should set anybody right!" Wilbraham said that he had his Rosinante in the stable but never saddled him.

Heber walked part of the way home with Foscolo and me.

On the night of **March 24th** Hobhouse is taken ill ...

... with a sort of vertigo in the head, about three o'clock. Got up, took rhubarb pills, went to bed again. Was obliged to get up again. Took calomel pill. Sat with my feet in hot water before the fire till past five. I thought I might die, so I wrote a memorandum of what I wished to be done with my papers, directing it to Henry.

I got a little better, and read the account of the Battle of Cannae in Livy. I observe that the Romans, to appease the gods, sacrificed Gallus and Galla, Graecus and Graeca [Livy XII 57], burying them in furo Boario alive. Also a vestal virgin was buried alive near the Porta Collina [Ibid.] – also the ranister [??] beat to death with rods in the Forum [Ibid.] – a cruel people ...

How Hobhouse's horrible reading assisted his seemingly terminal illness (though the vestal virgin was executed for sexual transgression) is unclear; but Hobhouse does get better. On **March 25th**, having risen at eleven, he sends for the physician Sir Henry Halford, who says he thinks it is "stomach", but will not bleed the patient until Sunday, four days off. Hobhouse goes out at five, walks about with Kinnaid and Burdett, and sits at Brooks's. Then he "sits" some more at his brother's, with Charlotte.

On **March 26th** he dines again with the "dolefully dull" Edward Ellice, and meets "Gregorio" MacGregor [*real name Sir Gregory*] an adventurer with the

South American insurgents who says frankly that he is only in it for the money, and will retire “when worth a million” [*he later tries to people the Mosquito Coast with Scotsmen*]. Also present is Lord Yarmouth, who is Commander of the Devon and Cornwall Miners and does not realize that Hobhouse was once an officer with them. Yarmouth appears not to know them very well, and gets all his facts wrong.

There is an excellent dinner at Sir Robert Wilson’s on **March 27th**; excellent in a Hobhousean sense, for there is much information to be gleaned from the company. Wilson has just been asked to stand for Southwark: one of his advisers is Sir Phillip (“Junius”) Francis. Present at the dinner are Michael Bruce (whose engagement to Sir Peter Parker’s widow has just been announced); Colonel Maceirone [*real name Francis Maceroni: former aide-de-camp to Murat, later an unsuccessful inventor*], who is about to be arrested for debt; and Admiral Cochrane, famed ally of Simon Bolivar! The latter hero is “a mild, very gentlemanly, agreeable man”. He tells them that when he was in Paris the servant at the hotel told him that he had orders to collect and pass on, not only any paper he threw into the fireplace, but “even those he used at the Close stool”. He thinks it was Sir Charles Stewart’s curiosity which had prompted the order. Wilson – no friend either to Tories or Bourbons – says that he too was spied on. Among many other tales of espionage, counter-espionage and treachery, we hear that ...

... Marshall [*a French spy in the pay of the English*] was ordered by Fouché to offer to Wellington to give up Bonaparte to him ... Fouché delayed Bonaparte’s escape as much as possible in hopes he would be taken – Savary in his memoirs says that Fouché would have assassinated Bonaparte had he not gone in disguise in another carriage from Malmaison ... Caulaincourt was certainly a traitor ...

... and so on. Maceirone (or Maceroni) has been to the very top of St Peter’s, Rome (“four inches of it is solid gold”), and also to that of the Certian pyramid – “he is an enterprising fellow with much information”; and therefore to be cultivated, particularly as he addresses Hobhouse as “my Lord”.

Later that night Hobhouse goes with Wilson and Bruce to the house of Bruce’s fiancée.

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Saturday March 28th. I could not sleep last night for thinking of a blunder in the Latin in the letter to Canning – the rascals have sent it to the press full of blunders, thirteen in Latin – partly my fault.

Notes. Rode down to Ugo Foscolo, who lives at Kensington – according to his own account. This truly clever man is in great distress – he told me he was worn with writing – he had spent £100 in employing a copyist – he had written an article for the Edinburgh Review, half of which had been lost between Mackintosh and Barrow franking it down, and so £60 were lost. He had two hundred louis a year from a mother who died in June, and he has now nothing. “Ah,” said he, “I am to begin life at forty – I am weary.” He said Lord Holland and Rogers were very kind, but they knew nothing of distress – they were too well off. He had a plan for a foreign literary journal – he had a plan for an essay – Dante – but Murray had cooled upon it, and said he was afraid he could not promise a thousand readers. He had had a disease in his urethra, and a fall from his horse, and now, a pain in his face – he seemed truly miserable, but when he read some of his own Mss. to me he brightened up, and was voluble. He told me he thought we had no critics except Campbell – he showed me some observations on Pope which he thought new, particularly on his *Iliad* – he thought it was a new observation that the greatest writers of poetry have never laid down rules for their art, [but] the secondary always have.

He promised me a few pages on the present state of Italian literature for my book. I was almost ashamed to accept of his time, nor would I have made the request had I known his condition – he is also to help me to facts for my memoir on the revolution. He offered General McFarlane at Milan to take 12,000 men to the Mount of Bergamo, and there hold out against the Austrians if they refused the constitution. McFarlane replied (this was just after Eugene’s surrender) McFarlane said the Austrians, if they behaved ill, were to be left to “remorse”. Foscolo wrote three discourses on that revolution, and printed the first in Switzerland. The Austrians drove him out.

The date of Dante’s first exile is 1302 – [that of] of his condemnation [is thought] to be about 1314, of his final banishment 1316.

I proposed speaking to Murray. “No” said Foscolo – “one must keep up one’s dignity – and besides, it would be of no use – if you want any thing you never should show it.” Poor fellow – here is certainly one of the first men of the age, dying by inches of real distress – he says he could live easily by his writings if he wrote English, but writing Italian – in the style of Tacitus,

Sallust and Machiavelli!!! he had no chance. He tried to read Cicero's *pro Caelio* this morning, and the pain would not suffer it.

I left Foscolo, 19 Edwards Square [*just off Kensington High Street, near Holland House*]. I forgot to mention he implored me in a note not to say anything about his *Jacob Ortis* in my puff – he does not wish his reputation to stand on that. Called on Wilbraham – dined at the Club – home – found the letter – corrected fifty copies with help of John Fuller.

Bed – slept well. [*Most of this entry is printed at BHF 13-14.*]

Foscolo's "few pages on the present state of Italian literature" metamorphoses into the *Essay on the Present State of Italian Literature at Illustrations* pp. 347-485: no payment is ever mentioned by Hobhouse, and it seems none was given.

The question of the authorship of this, the most interesting (the only interesting?) section of *Illustrations*, is complex. *Illustrations* pp. 452-5 are about *Ortis*, and incorporate some of Hobhouse's diary entry for 28th November 1816, which, as he indicates in his letter to Byron of July 3rd 1818 (BB 237-9) may include some of Byron's own criticism. The rest seems by Foscolo, and got him into trouble with Italian critics, including di Breme. He was anxious to keep his authorship a secret, but the Italians saw his hand in the passage.

Foscolo is not strictly accurate in attributing his departure from Milan to the Austrians. They had tried to cultivate him, and had (according to di Breme) offered him the editorship of the *Biblioteca Italiana*; see entry for 21st October 1816. He delayed a long time, and even bought himself an Austrian / Italian military uniform and paraded in it, before deciding that his conscience would not allow him to stay in Italy. He seems to have denied to Hobhouse that he ever thought of accepting the Austrian offer [see Camporesi 658-9].

On **March 29th** Hobhouse **writes his journal from the 16th**, and rides to Whitton for dinner. He rides back and dines, he can't remember where, on **March 30th**. On **March 31st** he dines with "Poodle" Byng, Davies, and Kinnaird, together with a Colonel Cooke and a Mr Drummond. All congratulate him on his letter to Canning, who, says Kinnaird, is a forger:

The story is this: Lord Strangford [*translator of Camoens*] had written a dispatch to Canning on the embarkation of the court of Portugal for the Brazils, giving an account of the difficulties and disgusts had had in the concern. The dispatch was hardly read at the Foreign Office, after some accidental delay, before Strangford appeared. The Secretary and Minister were closeted, the old dispatch was thrown into the fire, a new one "cooked

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up” between the two, in which all the merit was given to Strangford and taken away from Sir Sidney Smith, and young Wellesley Pole was the précis-writer employed to copy it – he told it to Kinnaird.

Wednesday April 1st. Think I went down to Whitton today – still employed about notes, and on some new materials with which Foscolo furnishes me.

On **April 2nd** Hobhouse rides up to London. On **April 3rd** he dines with Paul Methuen, after an interview with William Sotheby, who is upset by the jokes about him at *Beppo*, stanzas 72-6 (“No bustling *Botherby* have they to show ’em / That Charming passage in the last new Poem!”). Sotheby “swears he wrote no anonymous criticisms of Lord Byron”; but it is too late. As will happen later with Southey, Byron has ensured him an unenviable immortality.

On **April 4th** Hobhouse dines at the Piazza; on **April 5th** he rides to Whitton.

Monday April 6th. Rode up to London to breakfast. Dined at Club. Kinnaird bolted – Lady Melbourne dead. Byron tells me to rescue his letters at Melbourne House.

For Byron’s reaction to the death of Lady Melbourne, his closest confidante, see BLJ VI 34. The request to Hobhouse to save his most intimate letters to her does not survive, but what does is a letter from Caroline George to Lady Byron, saying “Hobhouse wrote ... a most disgusting letter, asking for L^d. B’s letters[.] ... I ... do not know that she kept any, indeed the probability is that they were all burnt” (Gross 59). The letters, of course, survive.

The “disgusting” letter is written on **April 7th**, on which date, also, Sir Henry Halford alters Hobhouse’s course of medicine – from what to what, we are not told, just as we are not told what his illness is. Hobhouse goes to ask for the letters – without success, fortunately for us, for he would have burnt them – on **April 8th**. Also on April 8th an officer who has cut his own penis off and then tried to get a pension on the strength of it, takes a potshot at Lord Palmerston in a fit of pique at his failure (it happened on the War Office steps. Palmerston was only nicked in the hip, and paid the defense costs of his crazed foe, whose name was Davis). That evening Kinnaird goes to Covent Garden to see Miss O’Neill in *The Apostate*: he reports, “her shriek of aversion at [the] proposed marriage is very fine indeed”. Plus,

Historical Illustrations advertised with my name today – against the pact.

Rumours abound on **April 9th**. At the Lansdownes' that night, Hobhouse hears that Castlereagh has told Stewart that the attempt on Palmerston's life is in consequence of Hobhouse's letter to Canning (which is circulating, even though it isn't published yet) and that it is the tip of a conspiracy involving three hundred people.

The episode which next develops is intriguing because it shows how active politically Byron's friends are by now, while he orgies non-stop in Venice (he has yet to meet Teresa Guiccioli properly, and is a long way from his engagement with the Carbonari). Were he present, how would he regard Hobhouse's adventuring, and the encouragement it receives from Davies and Kinnaird? Would he too encourage it? In 1822 he expresses great admiration for Canning, whose reputation and career his friends are, in 1818, trying to destroy. See his prose preface to *Don Juan*, VI, VII and VIII:

Canning is a genius, almost a universal one, an orator, a wit, a poet, a statesman; and no man of talent can long pursue the path of his late predecessor Lord Castlereagh. If ever man saved his country, Canning *can*; but *will* he? I, for one, hope so.

[**Not in diary:** Hobhouse's Letter to Canning. Text from *The Times*, April 14th 1818, p. 2. William Ogden was an old radical printer from Manchester, who had protested at the treatment he had received while in jail for agitation. Canning had joked about him in a Commons debate on the Indemnity Bill in March 1818. Burdett and Romilly had spoken against Canning. N.B., Ogden had been *cured* of his rupture while in prison.

Sir – I shall address you without ceremony, for you are deserving of none. Ask if people have any regard for a mountebank? Your jingling, and chattering, and balancing, were all inimitably performed and admirably becoming; perhaps some of the younger Senators, transported by low ambitions, envied, one instance, yourself. In plain words, there was not a member in the house, not a stranger, or doorkeeper, who had a higher opinion of you after than before your speech, or felt more inclined to change characters with Mr. George Canning: not one.

To what a state of degradation are we sunk, when a defendant is to be cheered into being a plaintiff; to be applauded when he insults the sufferings of the oppressed, and arraigns the motives of men of honour and of unsullied

reputation! You are yourself aware, Sir, that in no other assembly in England would you have been allowed to proceed, for an instant, in so gross a violation of all the decencies of life, as was hazarded by that speech, which found a patient, a pleased audience in the House of Commons. Can there exist in that body, composed as it is of men, who, in the private relations of life, are distinguished for many good qualities, an habitual disregard of decency, a contempt of public opinion, an absurd confidence, either individually or in mass, to which absolving themselves from the rules of common life, they look for protection against the censure of their fellow-citizens? Were it not for such a groundless persuasion, there is not a gentleman (for such a being is not quite extinct in parliament) who would not have thought himself compromised by listening to your insolent attacks upon the national character; and to a flashy declamation, which, from beginning to end, supposed an audience devoid of all taste, judgment, spirit, and humanity.

I am at a loss, Sir, to account for the insulting policy of your colleagues in office, who, though they take their full share with you in the public hatred, are far from being equal competitors for its contempt. Those worthies must have had some motive, deeper than their avowed designs, for intrusting their defence to such "inept hands". Were they afraid of your partially redeeming your character by silence? Were they resolved, that if you were yet not enough known, some decisive overt act should reduce you below the ministerial level? Did they suspect, that you were again willing to rebel or to betray? How was it, that you were selected for the odious and treacherous task of justifying the rigorous measures of the imbecile, but unfeeling Sidmouth, directed against the aged, the infirm, the powerless of his own countrymen? How was it that you were required to emerge from your suspected, though prudent silence, in behalf of him whom you had first insulted by your alliance, then by your coarse hostility, and, lastly, by the accepted tender of an insidious reconciliation?

"The revered and ruptured Ogden!!!" And this mad, this monstrous sally was applauded – was received with roars of laughter! and if there was a confession, from some more candid lips, that such allusions were not "quite in good taste," an excuse was drawn from the *warmth* of the debate: clear as it was, to those accustomed to your patchwork, that the stupid alliteration was one of the ill-tempered weapons coolly selected from your oratorical armoury.

“Certainly, Sir, you found the Legislative Assembly more tractable than your Sovereign, who has, more than once, repulsed your rude familiarity. His Majesty, were he now on the throne, would recognise the frontless upstart who placed the hand of his Sovereign upon the seat of the wound which had been inflicted upon him as the reward of his duplicity; and of him who had referred him to a brother Minister, with the indecent freedom of equal intimacy. When, Sir, *you placed the King’s hand upon your thigh*, when you told him you *would send to Pembroke*, you gave rise to a resentment, such as would have affected your honest interests, while the throne of England was filled by a gentleman. But, I presume, the silent rebuke of offended Majesty was not sharp enough to be felt by the coarseness of your texture; for the insult offered to those who should be the Representatives of the people, and to the people themselves, is equally rude and familiar, and is ten times more overbearing, in every respect, than that which before offended your Sovereign.”

* * * * *

“In the House of Commons alone you find yourself taken on your word, with no inquiries made; and when you display the whole deformity of a heart devoid of all just, and generous, and gentlemanly feeling; and when you show, by arts untried before, not only how despicable you are yourself, and how you despise all around you, you are not hissed to the ground (as you infallibly would have been had you ventured at such topics before a popular assembly); you are heard, you are encouraged, you are cheered; your inhuman taunts on the irons and infirmities of who demand reparations for the injuries they have endured from a bloody police: your ridicule of the prisoner and the oppressed are received *with shouts of laughter*, with *loud shouts of laughter!!!*

“Go on, Sir, I pray you; proceed with your pleasantries; light up the dungeon with the flashes of your merriment; make us familiar, make us pleased with the anguish of the captive; teach us how to look upon torture and tyranny as agreeable trifles; let whips and manacles become the playthings of Parliament; let patriotism and principle be preserved only as vain names, the materials of a jest; and, as you have convulsed the bed of sickness with your unhallowed mirth, with appropriate mockery, the long foretold approaching Euthanasia of the expiring Constitution.

“But confess your efforts to that assembly where they have been so favourably, so thankfully received. You will find no other hearers. You are nothing but on that stage. The clerks, the candles, the heated atmosphere, the mummeries and the decorations, the trained, packed, paper audience,

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confused, belated, and jaded into an appetite for the grossest stimulants; these are the preparations indispensable to your exhibition.

“Thank Heaven, however, the House of Commons is not the only tribunal; and it is possible, that, in spite of your extraordinary progress and probable success, there may still be, in this country, a body of men, now dispersed, but whom their common interests will one day collect and unite, for the defence of their rights, and the punishment of their oppressors.

“Believe me, Sir, not an echo of those shouts of laughter, which hailed your jests upon rebellious old age and traitorous disease, not an echo has been lost in the wide circumference of the British Islands. Those shouts still ring in our ears: they will never die away as long as the day of retribution is deferred; they will never die away until we are finally extirpated by your triumph, or you are annihilated by our indignation. Do not flatter yourself, that by securing the connivance of Parliament, you are safe from all national censure. Parliament does not represent the feelings any more than the interests of the British nation. It would be an insult upon the character of this great, this glorious people, to suppose that their representatives were sent to the House of Commons to encourage this hardened ferocity of a hardened politician. The nobler portion of the nation are certainly no members of either House: the better educated, and the more wealthy, at least the more independent, are to be found without the walls of Parliament. You are (and what dishonest man is not?) an enemy to Reform. But you shall be told, Sir, that the extreme necessity of Reform, and of choosing our representatives from some other classes of society, was never so decidedly shown as in the reception of your speech.” (*The Examiner*, April 5th 1818, pp. 218-9)]

In the *Examiner* of April 12th 1818, Canning replies (courtesy of Hobhouse, who takes John Hunt the text the previous day, with a short and polite introduction):

[Sir. – I received in the last week the Copy of your Pamphlet, which you (I take for granted) had the attention to send me.

Soon after I was informed, on the authority of your Publisher, that you had withdrawn the whole impression from him, with the view (it was supposed) of suppressing the publication.

I since learn, however, that the Pamphlet, though not sold, is circulated under blank covers.

I learn from this from (among others) the Gentleman to whom the Pamphlet has been industriously attributed, but who has voluntarily and absolutely denied to me that he has any knowledge of it or of its Author.

To you, Sir, whoever you may be, I address myself directly, for the purpose of expressing to you my opinion, that

You are a Liar and a Slanderer, and want courage only to be an Assassin.

I have only to add, that no man knows of my writing to you; that I shall maintain the same reserve so long as I have an expectation of hearing from you in your own name; and that I shall not give up that expectation till tomorrow (Saturday) night.

The same Address which brought me your Pamphlet will bring any Letter safe to my hands. – I am, Sir, your humble Servant, (Signed) GEO. CANNING.

For the Author of “A Letter to the Right Hon. Geo. Canning.”

[[Mr. RIDGWAY is requested to forward this Letter to its destination.]] (*The Examiner*, April 12th 1818, pp. 234-5)]

Hobhouse reads Canning’s reply on **April 10th** (two days before it is published), for Ridgway receives it, and brings it to him “with affright in his looks”, saying “the affair is getting serious”. “I own”, writes Hobhouse, “[it] put me off my balance at first”; but Kinnaird, to whom he goes for support ...

... clapped his hands and said, “Excellent – we have got him – publish the letter!” I asked him if I should go to Canning – “By no means – you would be as great an ass as he if you did”.

D.K. came home with me – sent for Ridgway – he came – brought letter – we read – and took it. D.K. and I set off for Lincoln’s Inn to find Bickersteth. Got there by eleven, but he not up. Debated about the *Chronicle*, but determined to wait till tomorrow.

Came home – went to look for Davies but could not find him.

Saturday April 11th: Up early – wrote a short letter to preface Canning’s – went to Douglas Kinnaird – he altered part and wrote out a copy. I went to S.B.Davies – found him with a girl. Showed him the affair – he said the very best thing was hit on. Walked to Bickersteth’s – he told me, as Davies had done, I could take no other course. Debate, whether should go to Statesman this evening or not. I had before been to the Examiner office and read the correspondence to John Hunt and left it for publication for the morrow.

Came home and dined with Douglas Kinnaird and Davies at his (Douglas Kinnaird’s). I was quite recovered, and in spirits, having seen what to do. It was resolved that should Canning send to me personally, to ask the question,

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“Are you the author?” I should knock him down, or do something tantamount. I feel I am naturally a coward, but I hope I should behave well on [such] an occasion.

I called on Lord Tavistock, and he told me there was nothing else to do.

Canning’s letter is duly published on Sunday **April 12th** (see above). Hobhouse does not wait to see what effect it has, but rides down to Whitton, with “a new letter to Canning”.

April 13th: Came up to London with my father. Lord Tavistock called – he told me that all the world approves the line taken by the author – that Sefton read the correspondence aloud at Brooks’s – the letter [is] said to be perfect. Lord Tavistock dined at Lord Bath’s – minister and all say the conduct of Canning is inexplicable. I went to Holland House – waited a long time – Payne Knight came – and Binder – Lady Holland came – she just said, “Well, what do you think of Canning’s letter? ...” when in came Lord Granville, one of Canning’s peers – and we shut up. Sat down to dinner late, soon went away – did not hear anything.

April 14th: Called on Bickersteth with a letter to Canning – walked with Tom Moore to Davison’s my printer [*for Illustrations*]. I think I dined with Lord Tavistock today, and went down with him to see Miss O’Neill in *The Apostate*. This is my second night of her – she was very fine in her expression of disgust at marrying someone in the play. Lord Petersham, with his beard, and Douglas Kinnaird, with us – no – dined at home.

April 15th: Bickersteth called on me, and we read my second letter together, which on the whole it was thought better not to publish – Canning is so low, the case stands so well, and the adoption of the Apologetic form would be bad after the tone of the other letter.

This day I dined with Lord Tavistock – see yesterday’s transactions.

On **April 16th** Hobhouse works hard at *Illustrations*, and goes with Kinnaird to see Kean in *Macbeth*. It is not clear from the diary when *Illustrations* is published, but it seems to be in the public domain by May 6th, when it is “praised”. On **April 17th** he rides to Whitton, and rides back on **April 18th**.

April 19th: *Illustrations*. Dined at Abercromby’s in New Street, Spring Gardens. Romilly there, Sir James Mackintosh, and others – Mr Cranstoun,

John Murray. Talked of letter to Canning. Romilly said it was a bad imitation of Junius. Others said it was good, and had good hits. That rascal Hunt has said, in his *Examiner* of today, that he knows the author, and thinks he ought to come forward. Mackintosh is a good talker. All agreed Canning was done and down. Hear Canning thought the letter written by a friend of his.

Canning is, of course, by no means “done and down”. On **April 20th** Hobhouse dines with Tavistock, and goes to Lady Jersey’s. On **April 21st** he dines at Lord Jersey’s (whatever the difference may be). There he finds that ...

... I am suspected of being the author – Howarth said he would take odds he dined with “him” at Lord Jersey’s today – talked to me about a borough. Brougham said, “Oh, the author is some old fellow”. Lady H. Ellice said to me yesterday at Lady Jersey’s, “La! Mr Hobhouse – is it true you are the author of the letter?”

Rather agreeable day at Lord Jersey’s. I went to Lady Davy’s and to Lady Tavistock’s this evening – met Hamilton, under secretary at Lady Davy’s – tells me the panorama of Athens has two or three faults.

Wednesday April 22nd. *Illustrations*. Between Foscolo’s house and mine, either today or yesterday, I lent Foscolo £150 on the strength of something he is to write on the revolution to help me. Dined at Joy’s with Davies and George Bankes. Went to Drury Lane and saw Kean in *Othello* – he was wonderful.

Hobhouse works at *Illustrations* on **April 23rd** and **April 24th**. On the latter date he dines with Davies, Kinnaird, and Sir Robert Wilson. Still hard at work on the book, he dines on **April 25th** at the Rota. On **April 26th**, he dines with Lambton and numerous Whigs, including the Duke of Sussex, Lord Grey, Ellice, and Bennett:

After dinner, Lambton showed me my own letter, and Ellice, &c., seemed to smell me [*could be “smoke me”*]. Certainly Perry does – yet no-one has told.

April 27th: Put the last finishing hand to *Illustrations* – hear a second edition is ordered – the *Childe* was distributed on Saturday [*that is, April 25th*]. Dined with Ellice. Met there Mr Lloyd, my father’s banker in the City, who was a dissenting minister, and is now worth a million – went to Lady Jersey’s.

At last the big day arrives:

Tuesday April 28th. *Childe Harold* published today – God knows what will be the fate of notes and *Illustrations* – I have worked like a horse and perhaps like an ass at them. **Journal since Thursday April 9th.** Dined with John Murray of Albemarle Street, to usher in the birth – poets Moore, Shiel, of *The Apostate*, Milman of *Fazio*, Dr Black of *Tasso*, Ellis of *China*, several others. Mrs Murray was at the head of the table – we had a most singular evening and sat up till near three in the morning drinking Murray’s Hock – our host very tipsy – Murray has sold between nine and ten thousand of the *Childe*. He said to me, “Moore is a good fellow, *but he can’t write* – *there is no man can like my man.*” He was drunk when he said this, and I was afraid would be overheard.

The guest-list shows an impressive array of notables and now-forgotten figures, at what we would call the book-launch for the fourth Canto of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (with, in its Preface, a huge acknowledgement of, and puff for, Hobhouse). “Shiel” is Richard Shiel, Irish barrister, and author both of the play, starring Miss O’Neill, which Hobhouse has now seen twice, and also of a novel called *Adelaide, or the Emigrants*. “Milman” is Henry Hart Milman, poet, dramatist and church historian. “*The poet-priest Milman / (So ready to kill man)*” is Byron’s phrase for him in *Who killed John Keats?* “Black” is John Black, a Scots journalist who wrote a *Life of Tasso*. “Ellis” is Sir Henry Ellis, a diplomat and Secretary in Amherst’s Embassy to China. He had written *The Proceedings of Lord Amherst’s Embassy to China* in 1817. Murray’s unexampled frankness, when in his cups, shows a proprietoriality over Byron which we often suspect, but to which we are rarely privy.

For Hobhouse’s later thoughts about his labours over *Illustrations*, see December 23 1820, last sentence.

Hobhouse’s social life, seldom empty, now overflows. On **April 29th** he dines with Riccardo the economist, and hears the preface to *Childe Harold IV* “much praised”. On **April 30th** he dines “with Maggridge at Warren’s Hotel”. He expects to meet William Godwin, but meets instead one *Goodwin*, who is “a whipper-in to the Whigs,” a man with the words “Jacobin” and “Reformer” in his mouth, who abuses Burdett. Later that evening he goes to hear music from Lady Tavistock, which saves the day. On **May 1st** he dines with Lord Kinnaird in a party which includes the admired Burdett. Lady Tavistock is clearly a cultivated

lady, for on **May 2nd** Hobhouse goes with her to her box, thus saving the day again, for earlier he has been to a “large stupid party at Sir M. M. Sykes”, where the Carnatic Commission is “abused as a job that would never end” (the Carnatic Commission, headed by Sir Benjamin, was set up in 1805 to investigate the debts of the Nabobs of the Carnatic in India). **May 3rd** sees him dining at the Rota, and providing Sir Robert Wilson with a “paper I had written for him to head his Lavalette speech in the borough” and correcting “Lord Kinnaird’s pamphlet”. He seems much in demand as a literary advisor (or drudge), doubtless assisted by the public knowledge that Byron values his talents in that area so highly.

After dining with his brother Henry on **May 4th**, he goes to the theatre:

... to the Lyceum, to hear Matthews’ mail coach adventure. His ventriloquism, or “guy”, as he calls it, struck me much, and his Old Scotch Woman’s story struck me too – as miraculous. It is a relation of Murray’s the bookseller.

I hired a groom today for £6. 6s 0d a month.

May 5th sees him at the Panorama of Athens, which he has already heard dispraised – he meets his friends the Smiths there, and passes no comment on the Panorama. He calls at Holland House, and then rides to Whitton, where he ...

... read *The Fudge Family* – Tom Moore’s – aloud. I can’t say I think much of it.

Wednesday May 6th. Rode up to London. Dined with Ellice – sat next to Lady Whitbread, [*Samuel Whitbread’s widow*] who became maudlin about her son and his *piece* [*see Sep 16, 21*]. Came to Brooks’s – my Illustrations are praised, and particularly that part in which I have the least concern [*that is, Foscolo’s essay on Italian literature*].

On **May 7th** Bickersteth, at Lincoln’s Inn, “confides” Hobhouse with the manuscript of Jeremy Bentham’s *Fallacies*, “for publication – ’twill be a vast labour, but I shall try it” [*he may ‘try it’, but the job is finally done by James Mill and Francis Place*]. He rides in the park with his brother, and dines at Lord Tavistock’s, with Burdett, the bearded Petersham, Kinnaird, Davies, and the Earl of Leicester:

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In the evening, music from Lady Tavistock and her sister – a fine girl indeed – charming evening ...

Historical insight into the perpetual unwisdom of investing money in Russia is provided by an interesting single-theme entry for **May 8th**:

This morning Mr Rally, whom I knew at Vienna [*could be Raleigh; though Hobhouse mentions no such name in his 1813 diary*], and who used to give magnificent dinners, called. He showed me his case, by which it appears the Russian government (and individuals) have cheated him out of £30,000. He concluded by showing me a letter written to myself, asking charity. The poor fellow has pawned his watch and a shirt, and is starving. He had a list of the great men who had dined with him at Vienna, and of subscriptions. It appears the Duke of Argyll has *twice* sent him £25, Lord Stewart only £10. Rally was turned out of Moscow at the intercession of two rascals to whom he had lent money – all his dinners have done nothing but involve him – he is now waiting for £40 to enable him to travel to Stuttgart, and so on to Russia.

I gave him £10, and took the liberty to tell him to keep a watch over his *virtues* for the future. He has been refused help from our government, because “we do not wish to disturb the *harmony* subsisting between the two courts”. “So,” said Rally, “they would wait for a *war* to do me justice”. He frightened Lieven by showing him two communications meant for the *Morning Chronicle* ...

On **May 9th** Hobhouse merely “dines at the Club”; but on **May 10th** he dines at Holland House, where Mackintosh leads the party in mocking Major Cartwright’s poor Latin, and where Hobhouse learns that Rogers “does not like my comparing him to Pindemonte”, not realizing that Hobhouse had not written that bit. Lady Holland also does not like Foscolo’s essay, saying, without knowing, that it is “hastily written”:

I know that there are not two people in England capable of appreciating the book – and she has hit on the best part.

Hobhouse also meets a Baron de Bossi (“a profound man – a poet *inter mediocres*”), who compliments him on *Illustrations*, “and said that Byron was a poet that would last”. Bossi agrees to help Hobhouse with “my projected work on the revolutions of Italy”.

On **May 11th** Hobhouse and Burdett ride down through Richmond Park to the Castle, send to Whitton for a copy of *Childe Harold IV*, “and spent the evening reading it together”. Whether they conclude, as do Shelley and Peacock, that it is a wicked poem which shows clear signs that its author is either mad or suicidally inclined, we do not learn; but may doubt it. On **May 12th** they ride out again, this time to Salt-Hill, and Burdett ...

... read aloud an extract of an officer’s journal written during the retreat of Massena – extraordinary fine writing ...

They dine and sleep at Whitton.

May 13th sees Hobhouse riding up in the rain to London and dining at Michael Angelo Taylor’s, where he decides that he doesn’t like Brougham’s jokes (they “are all *clickish*”) and that Brougham is a man for whom no-one cares. In the afternoon he has been to Holland House again, and seen Lady Holland, who had offered him anecdotes for his “essay” (perhaps the projected book on Italian revolutions) but who has in the event only a miniature of Alfieri to give him.

Thursday May 14th. Breakfasted at near twelve at Holland House. Copied the inscription for Alfieri’s’s *miniature*. Lord Holland showed me two quotations from his speech on the Alien bill – one very happy from Sir William Temple on the “refuge” offered in the Low Countries

Rode back to town – employed walking to the printer’s, and in looking over Lord Kinnaid’s letter to the Duke of Wellington. I had before written a paragraph for Perry [*editor of the Morning Chronicle*], which he was afraid to insert, because the Duke of Wellington is going to prosecute him for something said about his drawing for rations for Wellesley Pole’s family at Paris. Lord Holland repeated to me an epigram on Kinnaid’s *memoir* which turned on the folly of listening to the Duke of Wellington’s guarantee:

To all the Duke could say,
You should have answered *Ney*.

Dined at Paul Methuen’s. Sat next to H. Joy and [next] but one to poet *Bowles*, who is sulky on account of what is said of him in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, all which he ascribes to me [*Hobhouse had indeed been responsible for part of the first edition of EBSR which dealt with Bowles*]. Went with Paul Methuen to the Duchess of Gloucester’s rout, where was all

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London – and such a sight as was never seen. The Duke of Wellington and three Lord Mayors there. Spent the evening hustling to get the Miss Byng's and Lady Tavistock to her carriage.

Lord Kinnaird's pamphlet to Wellington impugns the reliability of Wellington's word, as shown in the Marinet affair (see *Don Juan* IX 2, 1-2). The rhyme also gets into *Don Juan* IX, where it is improved:

Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,
Humanity would rise, and thunder "Nay!"

On **May 15th** Hobhouse rides to Whitton with his brother Henry, whose "wife has conceived a horrible jealousy against him". By way of compensation, on **May 16th** Henry is elected into Brooks's. Tavistock and Denison propose him. On **May 17th** Hobhouse does more work on Kinnaird's letter, and, with Scrope Davies, "added *annallium* from Congreve's *Double Dealer*" (whatever that may involve). That night he dines at Owen Williams's. **May 18th** sees Lady Holland making herself look foolish by giving Hobhouse an errata for *Illustrations* (for the phrase *sublime specchio di veraci detti*) which he has been given already, and, as it seems, by the same nameless person from whom *she* had it – which reveals that she has not read *Illustrations*. He is rough enough to send her an answer revealing that he has the information already. Burdett rides down with him to Whitton for dinner, and then rides back.

There is in prospect a vote among Cambridge M.A.s for the Woodwardian chair in Sciences (in fact, the Chair in Geology). Hobhouse spends **May 19th** (a) trying without success to get someone to pair off with him, so that he doesn't have to go; (b) looking over Lord Kinnaird's letter to Wellington yet *again*; and (c) reading *Childe Harold* IV aloud to his sister-in-law, "who has repented" her jealousy of Henry. Does the reward cause her to repent her repentance? We shall never know.

With Henry, Hobhouse sets off for Cambridge on horseback, at eight-fifteen on the morning of **May 20th**. Changing horses at Wades Mill (on what is now the A10), they reach their destination by half-past three. Putting up in Scrope Davies's room in Kings, they dine (at the Bull in Trinity Street) with one H. Pearce, who is reading for a degree at the age of thirty-three, having "run over all Europe and great part of Asia". Having dined at the Bull, Hobhouse sups in the Hall of Trinity, where "people vastly polite – but I saw nothing particular in their manner".

On **May 21st** Hobhouse's preferred candidate, Sedgwick, has a victory of 180 to 60 in the election for the chair of science. Hobhouse dines in the Hall of Trinity again, and Sedgwick says in his speech of thanks that his heart is "too full". Hobhouse is gloomy about his *alma mater*:

There is something dreadfully depressive in coming down to Cambridge and seeing the same pursuits by the next generation which engaged ourselves. The University is getting stricter, I hear. Walked out. Called on Dr Kaye – how the deuce can such a man be Theological Professor? Supped with George Adam Browne, who was full of civilities to me and my book.

On **May 22nd** he and Henry ride across country to Whitton, via Bull's Cross, Enfield Town, Finchley, Finchley Church, Hendon, Acton, and New Brentford.

There is sudden drama on the next day. The longest and most important chapter in Hobhouse's life starts now: but in the most confused and hesitant way.

Saturday **May 23rd**: Rode up to London with Henry.

Found on my table two letters, which I hardly read – they told me tidings of great glory – something about Westminster. I rushed to Bickersteth, from whom came one letter – he not at home. Saw Cullen.

Jeremy Bentham has directed the Westminster Committee to me, but wants to know whether I am for annual parliaments and universal suffrage. I came down framing – Burdett not at home. Came home – saw that the other note, which I thought was from Cullen, was from him, and explicitly asked me whether I would *be returned for Westminster*, and would pledge myself for annual parliaments and universal suffrage. I wrote a note to Burdett – called on him – found him at home – gave him my note.

Find that the communicants with Bentham wanted to have my answer so as to prepare something for the dinner of today. What if I should lose this by being absent yesterday from London!! "A tide in the affairs of men ..." – well

...

I hurried to Kinnaid, who had himself thoughts of this thing [*that is, standing for Westminster*], and told him. He said he would not stand in my way, and was most friendly and open. We went together to the Crown and Anchor – great crowd, but no crowding. No Whigs there. I was not called upon to say a word. Douglas K. spoke admirably, as did Wooller. Wilson ill.

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After the meeting I walked with Bickersteth and Cullen, and gave my assurance that I would pledge myself as required – I think. Cochrane may be returned, or Douglas Kinnaird.

(THE LAST PARAGRAPH COULD READ:

After the meeting I walked with Bickersteth and Cullen, and gave my assurance that I would pledge myself as required. I think Cochrane may be returned, or Douglas Kinnaird.)

It is never clear to me, and was never clear to anyone at the time, what franchise extension Hobhouse favoured, or whether he believed in annual parliaments, triennial parliaments, the status quo in parliamentary sessions, or what. We know that he believed in a fairer distribution of the franchise, and more regular parliaments: but how wide he envisaged the ideal franchise to be, and how frequent the ideal parliaments, were questions which I believe he never answered in his own mind. Here, "...gave my assurance that I would pledge myself as required" (not "pledged myself as required") is so guarded that it's not clear that he told Bickersteth and Cullen what he believed in, even in the excitement of such a dramatic day. He is so excited about being *perhaps* made a candidate that he can't even read the letters properly; but he is also – unlike Byron, whose puff for him in the Preface to *Childe Harold IV* has given him great literary eminence – such a natural politician, that he knows that to nail your colours to the mast may be political death. This may seem *realpolitik*, but is also risky: as we shall see, in the 1819 election, Hobhouse's seeming inability to be specific about his beliefs will bring him ridicule.

In fact his sponsors, Burdett, Bickersteth, and Bentham, do not have the power to create candidates – and Hobhouse is not (not this time) chosen as one of the two radical Whig nominees. Those chosen are Sir Samuel Romilly, and Burdett himself – but Hobhouse does not learn this until June 20th. The selection process is slow, confused, and dark, and gives one no favourable idea of the transparency, system, or accountability of radical Westminster politics in the early nineteenth century.

On **May 24th** Hobhouse **writes his journal for ten days**, and notes, "second edition out", but does not say if it is the second edition of *Childe Harold IV*, or of *Illustrations*. On **May 25th** he calls on Bickersteth, and dines at Lady Jersey's.

On **May 26th** the Rota Club meets; but because Sir Benjamin is present, ("the alleged objection"), Westminster is not discussed:

I begin to fancy that my nomination was merely between Bentham, Bickersteth and Burdett – if so, my opinions have been gotten at rather hastily – and I have something to say against the “B”s. I write something by way of speech, with opinions, &c., and an attempt to reconcile the people and the Whigs.

On **May 27th** Hobhouse rides down to Whitton. In contrast with his usual liberal milieu, on **May 28th** he dines with the other Henry Hobhouse – “Home Office Hobhouse”, his cousin, and future architect of the Cato Street Conspiracy! “Heber” is there (there are two Hebers, but we can’t tell which) and he praises *Illustrations*; as is “young Carr, son of Gauler”. In this Tory company, the diarist mutters ...

... the damn’d election keeps me in hot water – I hear nothing, but my suspicions are strengthened.

May 29th is used by Hobhouse in “writing letters of introduction for the Smiths” and in dining with Sam Crompton, “a very stupid dinner”, at which ...

... two or three Whigs have asked me why I do not stand for Westminster – I have always turned off the question.

These must be mainstream, as opposed to radical, Whigs. Hobhouse goes to Brooks’s. On **May 30th** he writes, and dines with Burdett, Wilson, Davy, Davies, “and a Mr Maxwell” (Murray Maxwell, one of his future electioneering foes) where a discussion about the war is enlivened by Wilson’s “tales of the campaign in Russia”. But still the Westminster question festers:

... great councils between Douglas Kinnaird and myself – we think Walter Fawkes, who is now named for Westminster, and fights shy, has been plotted for before – if so, great duplicity in a certain quarter.

May 31st finds Hobhouse still on painful tenterhooks:

Writing speech – rode with Burdett in the park. Thence went to Whitton. I heard Burdett try to persuade Fawkes to accept the seat. Strange, after what he said to me. Walking about, sputtering, with Cullen. Fawkes seems likely to

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be the man – my own chance brought to its original and true value – nothing – yet Burdett says not all over.

He comes up to town early on **June 1st**, to meet a Mr Rogers (“a rogue no doubt”), who *seems* to say that a parliamentary seat may be had for six thousand guineas. What else passes between them is not recorded. Kinnaird then tells Hobhouse that “it lies between him [*Kinnaird*] and Fawkes, and he has a good chance”. Despite this, both Burdett and Bickersteth assure Hobhouse that he is “not quite off the cards – the first meeting [is] this afternoon”. Henry Hobhouse (we assume his brother, not his Home Office cousin), with whom he dines, tells him (erroneously, as we find) that “Kinnaird was the man – Cartwright, Fawkes, rejected – Kinnaird the man”.

I resolved at once what face to put on my friend’s success, and really was not so vexed as I thought I should be. Went to Lady Jersey’s – to Lady Grey’s – to Mrs Fawkes – and back to Lady Grey’s. Bed at three o’clock. Called today at Holland House – Lady Holland begged me to let her write to Tierney [*leader of the mainstream Whigs in the Commons*] about a seat. I consented, and took the note.

Now Tierney’s Whigs would have heard no talk of universal suffrage, or of annual parliaments: it looks as if Hobhouse is prepared to put success before principles (in so far as he has any of a specific, constitutional nature).

The story becomes more confused on **June 2nd**, when Tavistock tells Hobhouse that “Brougham has *recommended me* to a seat, on what he has heard of me from Tavistock – insolent blockhead. I wrote an angry answer, which I did not send on Kinnaird’s and Lord Kinnaird’s advice”. Both Hobhouse and Burdett congratulate Douglas Kinnaird on his presumed success. Hobhouse, following the previous day’s lead, goes to see George Tierney, “who, I found, could do nothing”. Bickersteth calls with a message from the Westminster Committee asking Hobhouse to see them that afternoon, and “speak for Kinnaird’s private character – this is truly primitive, but I shall do it – forget where I dined – think at Brooks’s”. As Kinnaird spoke for him on May 23rd, it is the only thing he can do, to speak in turn in Kinnaird’s favour; but it must seem strange. On **June 3rd** he prepares a statement, and his diary entry for the day following reveals the Westminster selection procedure for the faction-ridden chaos it is. Sturch may be William Sturch (1753-1838) an Unitarian writer; John Gale Jones (1769-1838) is a much-prosecuted and loud-mouthed radical:

Thursday June 4th: Went to the meeting at the Crown and Anchor – the Committee in a room. Thence to the Great Room – walked in with Lord Cochrane. Sturch in the chair, owing to remissness on the part of those who were to propose and second Burdett and Kinnaird. Hunt's people got the preference, and Gale Jones finally succeeded in driving Sturch and all the peaceable men from the room – here was a riot. We withdrew to a private room and there agitated the question whether Kinnaird or Cartwright should be the man. The majority for the former, the pertinacity for the latter, until these latter seceded, and counter-statements were drawn up by each party, so that after all Douglas Kinnaird was only proposed in a private room. I said a few words about the ridicule attached to the Major's name.

All prophesied it would end in a government man standing. Sturch said he must go to the Isle of Wight.

Forget where I dined. Believe with Henry.

On **June 5th** Sir Samuel Romilly is put forward as candidate by Perry of the *Chronicle*, and the mainstream Whigs (“in a great rage”) try and put a spoke in the wheel by themselves pretending to a belief in universal suffrage, by way of protesting against Douglas Kinnaird, whom they had thought one of their number. Hobhouse dines at Brooks's with the Kinnaird brothers, and Douglas sets off for Bishop's Castle, where he has better hopes of standing than either Hobhouse or he have at Westminster (in fact he loses; but gets in in 1819). Also on June 5th Hobhouse writes a letter to Byron, to which, in the diary, he makes no reference (Byron is upset at how few letters Hobhouse is sending him – it's in June 1818 that he sends the pretend letter “from Fletcher”, announcing his own death):

London. June 5 [1818]

Dear Byron

You send me your missives [BLJ VI 39-41] on such cursed paper and in such a damn'd scrawl that I can't get through your questions and commands with any tolerable precision – However, I will send to or see Spooney and signify your orders to Murray. That Gentle flourishes exceedingly and the Canto sells prodigiously. The Illustrations go on & off so he tells me very well, 1000 about of the sec edit gone already – Beppo a fifth edition. I give you these items to calm your conscience. Don't be afraid, draw away – you have made the man's fortune.

Parliament positively dissolves on Tuesday next – this is Friday, and our world here is more mad and silly than ever[.] 6000 gs given for a seat, and not one to be had for 5000gs – argal I do not come in –Douglas Kinnaird was

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yesterday put in nomination for Westminster: his opponents are Orator Hunt and Major Cartwright: and it is my belief that he will certainly succeed – Sir R. Wilson has a very good chance for the Borough of Southwark – Here would be honours for the Club to turn out two members, one for West'r: and another for the Borough in six months – As to myself it matters not – plain prose must be my fate to the end of the Chapter. The famous Jeremy Bentham whom you may have read of in the Edinbro' Review has engaged me to put some political work of his into English. The original gibberish is very difficult but I shall try. Murray is to have the volume. William Spencer wrote to me the other day desiring me to transmit to you his *eternal gratitude* for the fourth canto, and yesterday I heard from Dr. Clarke not the organist but traveller who begged me also to transmit his opinion that the IVth is the finest of all. These are not opinions that come within the meaning of your prohibition, and are duties which I have to discharge.

The Scrope is occasionally amorous and has intrigues with Milliners who scratch his face and make him look unseemly – He was appointed one of the committee for managing Dug's election at Westminster – but took a solemn oath that he was going abroad in two days – I fear he has not been doing well lately, but no one can by searching find out Scrope.

Mr. George Adam Browne of Trinity College Cambridge has requested that I will make to you the following request – A Mr. John Bowes Wright is going into Albania – *read!!* he met at Naples with *un tale* whom I take to be the ψευδο Colonel Finch who mentioned what use your letter to Ali Pasha had been of to him – The said John Bowes Wright writes then to Mr. Browne and begs him to get a letter from your Lordship to his Highness. Hence the application to me. I have ventured then to say that if Mr. Wright goes to Albania via Venice he may wait upon you and will find that you have been warned of his wishes. You may do as you like – but I could not refuse a Cambridge voter. How the deuce came you to seduce young Albrizzi into sending me such an autograph you treacherous young man you? By god I have before me the satisfactory simper with which you sealed down his kakography. A year and a half have not enabled him to surmount the difficulties of “to do” and there he is where we first found him – I have transmitted to his mother a copy of the IVth C. cum notis, by the hands of one Mr. Smith who if he meets you is charged to convey my obeisances. He will stammer with any king of France [who] ever clapt his – on the lillies, but is an excellent man: so Palm be civil. I would not give him a letter of introduction knowing your “*fuga seculi*” –

I have just given your message to Lord Kinnaird who envies your roba and thinks her the best thing he saw on his travels – He has been writing a letter to the Duke of Wellington which I shall transmit with the tooth brushes. I shall also send you a letter to George Canning which made a monstrous noise this session: it has completely silenced G.C. who has never been heard to joke since. The glorious Burdett commends himself to you – he longs to see you. Devil go wid ye –why dont ye come among us – Curse your palace I wish you was in my garret.

When Spooney's man sets off you shall know – ever your's J.C.H.

(Byron's *Bulldog* 231-2)

Byron acknowledges receipt of this on June 25th (BLJ VI 54).

On **June 6th** occurs the diary's first mention of Francis Place, who "squibs" Perry of the *Chronicle* for comparing Kinnaird with "H.H." (presumably "Orator" Hunt). Place is a tailor, and a whole-hearted radical, as opposed to a gentleman-amateur. He will head Hobhouse's campaigns for parliament in 1819 and 1820. By the 1830s, however, having become aware of Hobhouse's innate conservatism, he will be describing him as "live lumber".

Romilly's friends are active on **June 7th**, and Hobhouse mutters,

The famous Committee do not seem to know what they are about, and I now see that had I followed my own devices, and got the support of the Whigs, and then gone to the Committee, I should have gone down without opposition – now all is splitting ...

Perry's anti-Kinnaird article is agreed, at an Edward Ellice dinner that night, to have been "shabby". Lord Grey, a guest, does "not seem to encourage the notion of Romilly's standing" – but what can he do about it? How *are* Westminster candidates selected? Afterwards, Hobhouse "went to Brooks's and had a violent argument" – but does not say with whom, or about what.

Monday June 8th: This day agreed that my brother should go down into Cornwall on a Borough scheme against Grampound. I am to pay £2,000 – no cure, no pay.

Bruce, my colleague, had the deuce to pay with his father, and, poor fellow, was obliged to shuffle sadly. I dined with Henry. Went to the Westminster Committee, and found nothing done. Nothing would have been done had I not got them going. Romilly has accepted the invitation, and every

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stir is making for him – we have done nothing. If the return is lost, false confidence is the cause.

Went to Lady Jersey's.

Grampond was the small constituency near Truro where votes were sold for £100 each. Sir Benjamin, radical though he supposedly was, had represented it from 1802 to 1806. Its corruption was too overt even for Liverpool and Castlereagh, and as a result of a parliamentary enquiry started in this year, 1818, in 1821 it was disenfranchised.

On **June 9th** Francis Place has a “long placard against the Whigs” ... “read and ordered to be printed”. Hobhouse dines with his brother, walks in the park with his sisters, and goes to a ball at Lady Grey's. On **June 10th**, exhausted by it all, he dines with Burdett and Bickersteth, and quotes *The Tempest*:

This vaunted Westminster Committee is dissolved into air, into thin air ... Romilly has a great start ahead.

He goes to the “dissolving” Committee again, however, on **June 11th**; then to the opera with his brother's family; to the Committee again; and converses with Michael Bruce. “Sir Murray Maxwell of the *Alceste* has started”, he notes [*Maxwell is standing as the token Tory*]. “Romilly's friends are ministers' men. Select vestry clerks, &c.”

The last phrase is prophetic: Hobhouse's Select Vestries Bill of 1831 will be an important step towards the establishment of representative local government, of which parish vestries were then the centre, rather than urban district councils or town councils. In so far as “ministers' men ... select vestry clerks”, central government controls local government. Hobhouse's 1831 Bill is a precursor of the Great 1832 Reform Act.

On **June 12th** Hobhouse hears that he and Michael Bruce have been termed “rats” by Lord Holland! We gather later that he thinks they wrote Place's pamphlet. If this is what Lord Holland thinks of him, what of Liverpool and Castlereagh? Hobhouse is creating for himself a public profile of sufficient monstrosity that by 1820 Wellington will be thinking of him as a candidate for President, should the Cato Street Conspirators triumph. “We must go on, however”, he writes.

On this day, also, Hobhouse makes his first speech! “Not good, but without fear” is his verdict. It is a speech to the Westminster Committee on the relative merits of Cartwright and Kinnaird.

June 13th sees Hobhouse recalling his brother from Grampond, and deciding himself to visit another borough in Dorset – to investigate corruption, as it seems, though he doesn't say that. He, Bruce, and Scrope Davies “canvas all the morning” – but he doesn't say for whom. The Whigs are “half mad” at Place's pamphlet of June 9th, and say that Burdett should disavow it. Ellice, Wilson, and Burdett all do disavow it, and Hobhouse writes exculpating Burdett from any knowledge of it.

That night he goes again to hear the comedian Matthews.

June 14th is a Sunday, but callers come and go. Hobhouse hears that “Bishop's Castle looks bad for Kinnaird”. Robert Knight, with whom he dines, tells him that “the place to go to was Milbourne Port – this astounded me, and I thought I should not go as it might injure Barrett and Sharpe, whom I know”. Sharpe is Conversation Sharpe, and Barrett the young man who shared part of his 1813 continental tour. Not wishing to rock the boat for them, corrupt as they may be, he is still resolved on his Dorset plan, and, after spending time with the Committee on the morning of **June 15th**, sets off for that county in the mail at ten.

He breakfasts at Salisbury on seven on the morning of **June 16th**. He is told that “Sharpe and Barrett would have” Milbourne Port, so he resolves not to go there, and travels on to Dorchester.

At Salisbury they pick up a man called Aldridge, “who had been purser on Sir Sidney Smith's ship at the Siege of Acre”; and he has stories to tell, which interrupt the narrative about Investigating English Borough Corruption:

[Aldridge] had lived a great deal with the famous Djeddar Pasha – he told us extraordinary stories of his ferocity. Djeddar used to bore out eyes and cut off noses for the slightest offence – his Chief Secretary had his nose cut off: Djeddar said he might be trusted now – “he was a *mauvais sujet* once, but he is good enough since I made a lion of him” (so he called those whose faces he had disfigured in this manner). Aldridge was present when a Turk was brought in for holding communication with the French. Djeddar, in the utmost rage, ordered him to be stretched out by four Janissaries – tore off his shirt – and deliberately beat a hole in the man's left side with his tomahawk, which he constantly carried. Aldridge one day found him smoking, with thirty bleeding heads of Frenchmen set around him. The Pasha smiled, and observed that one of the heads was powdered, like *R*. The Pasha was undoubtedly brave. Whilst the cannon and musketry were playing about him, he sat cutting watch-papers, which he did very beautifully [compare *Don*

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Juan VIII stanza 98]. Bonaparte sent out for a suspension of arms to bury the dead, and prevent pestilence – Djeddar replied the wind never blew towards Acre that time of the year.

The purser completely exculpated Bonaparte from all the crimes charged to him in Egypt – he praised the extraordinary courage and coolness with which the French entered the breach seventeen times.

Hobhouse arrives at Dorchester and finds a note telling him to go to Yeovil, and thence to Milbourne Port, after all. He coaches to Yeovil, and there finds his reputation has preceded him ...

... saw to my horror my name and Robert Knight's in a handbill, describing us as "possessors of £40,000 a year, great part of which we spent in charitable acts [*that is, in bribery*]; the friends of Brougham and Romilly, enemies of Oliver [*Liverpool*] and Castlereagh!"

This I tore down.

Just what is going on is not clear. Hobhouse prevents his "agent", Leveridge, from doing any more; continues on to "the miserable town of Milbourne [Port], fiddles and drums and colours and a mountebank spouting". He doesn't stop, but passes through, stops on the other side of town, sends for his old friend Barrett, "explain[s] the matter to him", and goes on to Shaftesbury, where he drinks a glass of wine and goes to bed.

On **June 17th** he achieves another first – "the first speech I ever made before a large mixed company". The occasion is the installation of a friend of his called Henry Shepherd – he is "chosen and chaired" as candidate for Shaftesbury. Hobhouse terms the event "this silly ceremony". Shepherd is a nominee of Lord Roseberry: Shaftesbury is a pocket borough, and Shepherd is Lord Roseberry's creature. Hobhouse does not repeat what he says in his dinner speech in praise of his prostituted friend, but concludes that "it took very much, and then ...

... Mr Morrill, Shepherd's colleague [*Shaftesbury returns two members*] proposed my health. The drunken electors added three times three. We sat boozing and roaring till near eleven. After Shepherd and I left them, fighting began. The Englishman is nowhere so degraded an animal as at a borough election. The franchise is the greatest curse that can befall a town.

At three on **June 18th** he sets off for London, nerve-centre of all this political depravity. He gets home to Whitton at six-thirty in the morning of **June 19th**, sleeps, and upon waking up reads that “Maxwell and Romilly had shot ahead many hundreds on yesterday’s poll for Westminster”. He has not revealed when they were chosen – Maxwell is the official Whig, with Kinnaird as his partner, and Romilly one of the two radical Whigs, the other being Burdett. He stays at Whitton on **June 20th** (a Saturday), and hears “after dinner” (teatime, in twenty-first century terms) that Burdett is 800 behind Romilly and Maxwell, with only 408 votes, and “Kinnaird about *eighty!!!*”

And so all this fine story about the committee has vanished. They cannot make a member. Had even I followed my own devices and, when Burdett sent me his first letter, applied to the Whigs and got their support, which I might easily have done, for Tavistock was with me – Tierney, Ferguson and others had mentioned it to me – Burdett had advised me to do so, and I was only prevented by Bickersteth – had I done as I thought fit and gone to the Committee with the permission of the Whigs in my hand – I should inevitably have been chosen.

On **June 21st** Hobhouse dines with Bruce (“I believe in some French house in Coventry Street”), and at last nails up *some* of his colours:

I wrote a letter to Lady Jersey, telling her I could [not??] come to her party on next Monday, as I was only come up “to congratulate some Whig friends on the happy prospect of returning Sir Murray Maxwell for Westminster”. This I knew would be a declaration of war on the Whigs, who have been terribly exasperated at Place’s placard against the “detestable faction”, and have traced the issue of it to Bruce and me. I found, however, that Lady Grey had asked me to one of her parties.

I am ashamed to record this nonsense, and I should not, did it not show the spirit of the times.

The following day finds three heroes canvassing. Here is the entire entry:

June 22nd: Bruce and myself set about canvassing with S.B.Davies – as hard as possible – now asking for Burdett alone. The weight seemed to be removed, and we got on wonderfully. Bruce and I went to a public house in Chandos Street, and paraded with drums, music, colours and ribbons, and at

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the head of some fifty voters crossed Berkeley Square and Bond Street, then stopped at another sub-committee room, and then marched on to the general committee room in Covent Garden. We here found everybody alive, and the poll going on admirably. The humours of the election had commenced by four o'clock, when the poll closed – we had polled 779 votes, and were considerably ahead of Romilly and Maxwell on the day's poll – great rejoicings.

Bruce spoke on the hustings today – Maxwell was spit at for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour. I went on the hustings – a strange scene. Hunt has lost himself by accusing a man in the crowd of belonging to the Vere Street Gang [*that is, that he's gay: see letter to Byron, below*] – the mob are evidently against him, or rather, for Burdett.

Bruce, S. B. Davies and I dined at Burdett's. He is far from indifferent – his letter in answer to the requisition for him to come forward has done wonders, and is really good, bating the quotations. We had some talk about going in a body and *forcing* him to come out and bear down all before him – he listened, and said, "Think well what you do – this is one of the things that stick to a man through life". But I am sure he would do it if we pleased. We agreed, however, to wait the issue of tomorrow's polls. We separated, went to the committee, appointed inspectors, &c. &c., and seemed organized.

The plan which Bruce, Hobhouse and Davies put before Burdett appears to be a version of that played out by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and the Lord Mayor of London, in *Richard III*; its Shakespearean precedents would stretch also to Mark Antony offering Caesar the crown. Perhaps Burdett is right to be cautious about it.

The poll continues on **June 23rd**, with Hobhouse and Bruce working all morning. By seven in the evening Burdett is "*two* ahead of Maxwell in the whole poll ...

... I ran upstairs, jumped on the table, and announced our victory in a short speech – never were people in greater glee – we had polled 908 in all in the day – 450 (about) more than Maxwell, and about 250 more than Romilly. We separated. <S.B.D>, Lord Kinnaird, Douglas Kinnaird (who has lost Bishop's Castle, and is now going to take a part) dined with me at the French house. In the evening I went as usual to the committee and to canvass, tiring myself completely down!

By one o'clock on **June 24th** Burdett has 608, which is 242 more than Maxwell, with Romilly still ahead of the whole field. Hobhouse writes,

Dined with Burdett. Kinnaird spoke today, and attacked the Whigs, who now do all they can to conciliate – they have printed and distributed to our voters going to poll cards [with] “Burdett and Romilly”. This is tricky and shabby.

Work hard in the evening – at the Committee as usual.

Though voting on **June 25th** is “slack”, they poll “above 400, and kept 244 ahead of Maxwell, [with] Romilly two under us in the day’s poll”. Hobhouse describes himself as “labouring in the vineyard in the evening, and going around to publishers”.

At some time about here, Sir Murray Maxwell is attacked and put temporarily out of action; Hobhouse gives no more details.

On this day, Hobhouse writes again to Byron, but, again, does not mention doing so in his diary:

Thursday, June 25, [1818]

Dear Byron,

Be assured “that shall be done that Dick doth say” and to day also. I beg you to be assured also that immediate application was made by me on the receipt of your last letter but one [*BLJ VI 49-51*], to the parties concerned – Murray told me he should immediately pay in part of the balance due to you, and Kinnaird instantly said that you might have whatever you liked. Although I write this without seizing him I will take upon myself to say that £1,000 shall go off by this post. C. Hanson has been seen and shall be now written to by me. – I again beg you to feel certain that I do not omit to do any thing that you wish me – I shall do so, though I am “mersus civilibus undes” [*Hor. Epis. I. 1. 16*] and have worn myself down to a mere stock fish in this cursed election –

Kinnaird in spite of all prognostics was mismanaged out of his chance of Westminster and gave up or rather was given up in three days – The Whigs played him a scurvy trick by starting Romilly against him. The Government thought any thing better than Burdett and helped Romilly and seeing itself so strong and the Burdettites so divided between Kinnaird and Cartwright, started Captain Sir Murray Maxwell fresh from the Lewchew islands [*Maxwell was a naval hero who had recently published a book on the Lew-Chew Islands*] – Romilly & Maxwell in three days were 800 ahead of

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Burdett, Kinnaird had hardly any votes – 80 I believe – It was resolved to withdraw Kinnaird – He was withdrawn – Cartwright who had till then been obstinate, also withdrew[.] Hunt remained but was reckoned for nothing. He had lost the mob by accusing a man of sodomy from the hustings. The remaining three proposed were Romilly Maxwell and Burdett – the latter, as I said before, 800 behind on Saturday last, the 3d day. Michael Bruce, S. B. Davies and myself were the only gentlemen on the Committee [*compare “There’s I and Burdett, gentlemen / And blackguard Hunt and Cobby, O!”*] – all things looked vastly serious for our patriot. Sunday however was employed in rousing the Electors – On Monday B pulled nearly 800 – on Tuesday 908, on Wednesday 612, and to day 448, which has put him on the whole 248 above Maxwell and only 220 beneath Romilly. We hope to have him in the head of the poll by Monday. He has, however, had a terrible squeak for his life. Kinnaird is our hustings orator since his resignation and really does admirably. He has lost Bishop’s Castle as well as Westminster but deserved both. Wilson has come in for the Borough – but has turned out to be no great things – Government has lost two members in the city – Ned Ellice will come in for Coventry – On the whole government will loose about 10 votes perhaps – I have been worn out and do not know how I shall possibly last until the end of the poll which Hunt swears he will keep open till the last – Scrope makes the Committee laugh and discomposes the staid intelligent ironmongers and curriers of our party – Captain Maxwell’s face is daily covered with saliva from the patriot mob – Scrope says it reminds him of *Spit-head!!* I shall send to Spooney to know what the devil detains his lawyer from commencing his journey – ever your’s

John Hobhouse (*Byron’s Bulldog*, 235-6)

The diary entry for **June 26th** shows us how the government is reacting to the Westminster poll – which it’s going to lose automatically, for no Tory will ever win in a constituency where all ten-pound householders are enfranchised:

The government [is] using every undue influence – threatening tradesmen, polling Bow Street officers, Yeomen of the Guard, and making every use of the blow which Maxwell received, and which, though Bruce, Kinnaird and I called to know how he did, the committee for Maxwell chose to call “assassination”. Maxwell is laid up at Richardson’s Hotel. There is no doubt he has gained votes, and many too, by this blow.

Next day is Hobhouse's birthday, but he is too preoccupied to give his normal Annual Review:

Saturday June 27th – *32! 32!*

In the hurry of the election I did not know that this was my birthday, therefore I did not make my usual melancholy moralisation upon it. I worked hard – walked about canvassing, and this was a melancholy day indeed – polled only 130. Maxwell headed us 85 on the day's poll. Romilly 20 (about). It appeared as if Maxwell would be the member, and the struggle lie between us and Romilly.

I rode down to Whitton – saw Henry, who told me the story of the Grampound failure.

We are not told the story of "the Grampound failure". There is no canvassing on **June 28th**, which is a Sunday. The Committee debates the idea of a coalition between Romilly and Burdett, but the idea is defeated, for, as Hobhouse notes, "We have a standing order against coalition". It's clear that Hobhouse's voice is getting more confident, and that he is being listened to at Westminster, at least at the Crown and Anchor. The mainstream Whigs are plotting:

Three honourables – Bennett, George Lamb, and Morton Eden, with an attorney – have asked the "unpolled electors" to a public breakfast tomorrow. We resolved to resist this bribery.

On **June 29th** the radical Whigs "begin to fear the event," for they have "only 309 [votes] on this, which was to have been our great day". However, on **June 30th** they are "12 ahead of Maxwell, [and] 35 ahead of Romilly – this was good by comparison, but very bad with what we had hoped".

At dinner with Burdett, Hobhouse meets ...

... Stephen Lushington ... this is Lady Byron's Dr Lushington – a nice fellow I thought ...

They also hear that ...

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... Monk Lewis is dead – he died on board ship – his servant told my servant that just before he died he wrote his will on his servant’s hat – he was returning from Jamaica.

Hobhouse discerns (in the electors, as it seems) “an extraordinary apathy, or wish to keep back – and many more talk openly of interest than I should have expected; but then, every engine is set to work”. The extent of the “engines” (that is, government interference, publicity stunts, and fixing) is made clear:

There was a riot last night in Covent Garden, first excited by Maxwell’s men, who made a large boat, and filled it with bludgeon men. These were turned out, and the boat torn to pieces. Our men began tearing down the Maxwell handbills at Richardson’s Hotel – constables rushed forth – an affray ensued – several were knocked down, chiefly by constables – the magistrates called out the military, and I found the Horse Guards parading Covent Garden with drawn swords – the Foot Guards then came to Richardson’s Hotel with drawn swords. I went down to let Burdett know – we drew up placards, &c.

Hobhouse “gets up late, in terribly bad spirits” on **July 1st**. He is “prognosticating defeat”. At the Committee, everyone looks “very blank”, and they even “draw up a new bill, acknowledging our defeat”. At dinner, Burdett is “very low”. But by midday on **July 2nd** they are 90 votes ahead on that day’s poll. Hobhouse escorts a blind man to vote; they dispense cards, and issue placards. Bennett and Bonham “give a public breakfast to ‘the friends of Sir Samuel Romilly and Sir Frances Burdett’ – this we thought[t] going beyond the laws of elections [*for it implies Romilly and Burdett to be on the same side*] and issued a placard which stopped it”.

As for Maxwell’s people, the most open bribery was resorted to – taxes paid – money given – tradesmen threatened – Sir B. Bloomfield canvassing – lords and ladies soliciting twenty times a day – breakfasts – luncheons – coaches and everything provided – but all would not do, and in many instances, after voters, particularly Irishmen, took the bribes, they came to our committee, told the story, and voted for Burdett next day.

That evening Hobhouse ...

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... dived into the depths behind Tothill Street, and went to the Red Lion, Old Pye Street, where were none but rogues and whores, publicly joking about Maxwell's bribes.

The feeling seems alive again.

Notice how broad the franchise is in Westminster. Even rogues (though not whores) have the vote, as long as they pay rates.

On **July 3rd** Hobhouse concedes, in an overlineation, that he "wrote to Byron". Here is what he wrote:

July 3, 1818

Dear Byron,

I shall be exceedingly mortified if by this time you have not received the remittances. Letter after letter has been written to tell you to draw for the life and soul of you – Kinnaird's bank shall be as exhaustless as the horn of Odin – Circular letters have been also sent – Murray has disbursed – but even if he had not you might draw to any amount – I have Kinnaird's authority for telling you this – and he tells me he has sent a credit of two thousand pounds to Siri et Wilhalm for you – You cannot be more angry with Hanson than I am for the unaccountable request to force you to migrate – It was impossible to suppose that when he gave me a solemn assurance of the day and hour he would have his Mercury at Geneva he did not intend to be ready with the papers until July –

I have stolen a moment from the horrors of the Westminster election to write to him, Hanson. We are still in the hottest water – on yesterday the 13th day of the poll, the numbers were Burdett .. 350. Romilly .. 333. Maxwell .. 266. and the total numbers were Romilly .. 4789. Burdett .. 4648. Maxwell .. 4324. Hunt .. 81. You see that Romilly by having the second votes of Maxwell in the beginning of the election, and of Burdett, now, is at the head of the poll by 141 – almost all Burdett's votes are plumpers – Maxwell is still too near to make us feel quite safe – The story is too long a one to tell you now but such a scene of iniquity on the part both of Tories and Whigs was never in your imagination brilliant as it is and fruitful, as the Morning Post says, of horrors – Kinnaird has played a most distinguishedly obnoxious part in the eyes of both factions and is our great hustings orator. The poll closes to morrow and if no sham votes are made up by the court candidate, Burdett is, I think, safe. But we have every thing to dread from the bold profligacy of these fellows who go about buying votes openly – Burdett bears up gallantly, but I see is far from indifferent to the event. If we beat the two parties, for there has been a complete coalition, the triumph will be very glorious

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although Burdett should not be at the head of the Poll – Did I tell you that Wilson is come in for Southwark?

What do you mean by saying that you have heard nothing of the IVth Canto – What does Murray write about? Now you have barred his dinner histories, he can only talk of your poeshies – As for the Illustrations, di Breme may be damned – I have not said a word about the Romantic except that the dispute was an absurd one and as for Foscolo I have done nothing but quote from Italian reviews, and put down a criticism which you and I once made at Venice on his *Ortis*. It ill becomes me to talk, but ask Murray what is said of the Illustrations & notes, and Murray that's all – No Sir if you do not say that the essay &c is a masterpiece I will consent to be flayed and let you write a criticism on my skin – Breme is vexed because I have ventured to tell some disagreeable truths about poor dear Bonaparte, and because I have said nothing about his behissed comedy. You had better tell him so and then you will succeed to your heart's content in making him hate me as much as you have made me hate him – Lewis is dead – the poor fellow went off very tranquilly after a fit of sickness at sea and calmly wrote his will on his servant's hat – he said nothing about White Obi.

(*Byron's Bulldog*, 237-8)

Byron refers to details in this letter on July 15th (BLJ VI 59-60)

Canvassing on horseback, Hobhouse has a fall on July 3rd, and hurts his shoulder. The final day for voting is tomorrow. The Committee “thought ourselves safe, but I still recommended caution”, saying there are still seven hundred unpolled votes in St George's parish, to say nothing of “the 750 bad votes which Sheridan polled on the last day of the election in 1807” – we suddenly realize that he's an expert.

They discuss whether or not Burdett should speak on the hustings the following day. Burdett seems for it, as are Lord Kinnaird and Bruce; but “Bickersteth, Captain Halliday [*previously unmentioned*] Davies, Kinnaird and myself [were] against it”. For a candidate not to speak on the last day of a campaign might seem foolhardy: Hobhouse gives us no details of the argument. Back at the Committee Rooms even Place is against it. They agree to ask Burdett whether he will consent to a chairing (that is, being pulled through the streets in triumph): “after what had happened at the Tower [*Place and his associates*] would not commit themselves to a chairing without a written consent from Burdett”. In 1809, Place had arranged a chairing on Burdett's release from the

Tower, but the publicity-disdaining Burdett had had himself taken home by water, and Place hadn't spoken to him again for years.

July 4th is the climax of the tale. Burdett appears to change his mind about speaking, perhaps on hearing that Romilly is going to; but in the event he does not. George Lamb turns up from the Romilly camp "with great buff and blue favours", and requests politely that Ellis be allowed to speak on behalf of the defeated candidate" – "But I," writes Hobhouse, who knows his *Julius Caesar* as well as his *Richard III*, "suspected a trick"; and the Burdettites make sure that their colours do not get mixed up on the hustings with those of Romilly. The Committee prepare for triumph:

Our friends crowded to the great room with laurel leaves. The thronging became great, the congratulations loud. We continued to send plumpers to the last [*a plumper is when two votes are given to one candidate when one has the right to vote for a second: so-called because it gives a "plumper" – a heavy blow – to the candidate neglected*]. A sick man rose from his bed during the last half-hour, and voted. We sent out a written placard announcing that Burdett's charring would take place next week.

At last came the poll – I mounted the table, and made a long speech – rather too long, but well-received. Kinnaird followed – paid me many a compliment – and so closed this extraordinary scene, amidst the squeezings and pattings and huzzahs of five or six hundred electors whose extraordinary efforts had thus been crowned with victory, in spite of every effort of the court and of the party.

The poll was as follows:

[This day]:	Burdett	253
	Romilly	221
	Maxwell	200
	Hunt	2
Total:	Burdett	5238
	Romilly	5339
	Maxwell	4808
	Hunt	84

... so that in spite of all, Burdett polled more than in 1807. He had six times as many plumpers as Romilly, who was assisted with Maxwell's second vote to the last, being, as he was called in my hearing, "the quiet member".

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I came away, and, stopping in Pall Mall, saw Romilly's charring, which was very elegantly attended by Whig nobles and their horses and carriages and wives, with Brooks's balcony filled with ladies, &c., but very little popular applause. Lord Tavistock, Lord Darlington, Mr Charles Fox, Sir Robert Wilson, Lady Darlington, wore the blue with their buff and blue [*compare Don Juan Dedication, 17, 4: 'I still retain my "Buff and blue"'*] – I saw no other signs of coalition with the people – I had my own unmixed blue, and so had Davies, and so had Bruce, and so had my brother – I saw no other except Halliday and Kinnaird.

Lady Holland cut me. This is not the only sign of social proscription with which my constancy has been rewarded [*compare Macbeth II ii 68-9: "Your constancy hath left you unattended"*].

Dined with Burdett, where my friends joked on my speech, which was certainly better than I thought I could make.

Took a short walk with Cullen and went to bed at eleven.

[*Thorne comments, "The result was a considerable tactical triumph for the Whigs over the reformers and a bad blow to Burdett's prestige" (p.277).*]

On Sunday **July 5th** and **July 6th** Hobhouse is at home at Whitton. In the evening of the 6th he goes out riding with Sophie. On **July 7th** he is in London again:

I received a letter today from Lady Holland – so I see that the rascally Whigs are determined not to make set at me, but at Kinnaird.

On **July 8th** he attends Burdett's charring committee, and dines with "Ned Ellice" and Peter Moore, who make him "sick" telling of their "Coventry exploits". It all makes him long for Whitton again, and on **July 9th** he returns there "with a bad cold". He stays there for **July 10th, 11th** and **12th**, coming back to town on the evening of the 12th with Henry.

On **July 13th** Burdett is chaired from Hyde Park Corner to the Crown and Anchor. The chair was, reported the *Times*, "covered with crimson velvet fringed with gold, and placed on a Roman car drawn by six horses"; but the immediate consequences of his triumph are unexpected:

Up at eight. Commenced operations at twelve. The weather appeared cloudy, with a little rain, but cleared up.

Attended the chairing of Burdett on horseback. The only gentlemen present were Halliday, Kinnaird, Bruce, S.B.Davies, my brother, and myself. The whole scene was the most beautiful and orderly I ever saw – immense crowds, well-dressed and decent. Great applauses: “Kinnaird for ever!” – “Bruce for ever!” – and, two or three times, “Hobhouse for ever!” from those to whom my face had been familiar in the Committee. There was no disturbance or accident, notwithstanding Lord Sidmouth [*the Home Secretary*] had ordered the High Constable not to attend. [*Sidmouth must have expected a riot, and to encourage one, must have withdrawn the police.*]

The procession started from Hyde Park Corner turnpike about two o'clock. Arrived at Crown and Anchor at quarter to six [*that's three and three-quarter hours to go about two miles*]. Here the disturbance commenced, when Burdett and his friends came in. Cries of “Burdett for ever!” – but “Damn the Committee!” We found the crowd had burst the doors – that dinner had not been provided, nor places for more than two-thirds of [the] guests. Someone got up and told Burdett “he was but a man”. All was uproar. Kinnaird spoke, unavailingly. Burdett made a joke of the event. They did not take his humour. The landlord was sent for – his apology would not do. It seemed that the meeting would break up – the music was pelted off. I desired Percy, our secretary, to make an apology – he hesitated – when, after an hour and a half[’s] disturbance, I got on the table and made a short loud appeal to the crowd, which, strange to say, had the desired effect – the noise subsided. The music was introduced – the toasts proceeded. Burdett’s health was drunk – then Kinnaird’s – then mine. I made another speech, which was much applauded, but was not very good – and ended with proposing “The Electors of Westminster!” This was at twelve at night. No-one was heard afterwards, and soon Burdett and his party went away.

I went to bed completely knocked up.

[Not in diary: Hobhouse’s impromptu speech at the Crown and Anchor, as reported in the *Times* the following day:

Mr. HOBHOUSE, in an address, of which from the late hour at which he spoke, we can give but a brief outline, declared his attachment to the principles the triumph of which they were assembled to commemorate. As the question of sincerity had been touched upon, he could only express a hope that his health would never be their disease, nor his life their death. Even this was, perhaps, promising much at the outset of a political life, for he hardly

knew one whose health, politically speaking, was not injurious to them, or whose death would not tend to their salvation. They came not there to consume the means of mistaken bounty, or to build up churches with one hand, and dilapidate the state with the other, or to celebrate or assist men who thought it a glory to uphold the system of the worst minister that had ever deceived or deluded the country. They came there to commemorate an event which he hoped would often recur, of electing the great man in the chair as their representative because, by fatal experience, they had found that he was the only man whom they could trust. His return, therefore, must always animate whatever sparks of liberty might yet remain in our expiring constitution. He confessed himself glad to meet an assembly of Jacobins. (*A laugh.*) The term was of no consequence, and he seldom heard it applied except to the enemies of corruption. (Mr. Hobhouse then alluded to some of the opinions maintained by Mr. Canning, who, he agreed with the worthy elector who had just done him the honour of interrupting him, was unworthy of the notice of a rational man, and who could only be respectable in their eyes, as having been animadverted upon by the chairman.) He could assure them, that on no other account would he have presumed to introduce for a moment the mention of that abandoned name. (*Loud applause.*) He concluded by giving the following toast, which was received amidst general cheers: —

“The honest and independent Electors of Westminster – not forgetting our 2308 plumpers.”

We understand that the following toasts were drank after we quitted the room, and that the company did not separate until a late hour: —

“The progress of public opinion.”

“Michael Bruce, Esq., the heroic deliverer of Lavalette.”

“Trial by jury; and may its suspenders be suspended.”

“The honest volunteer Counsel, whose gratuitous services were found so efficient during the election.”

“The liberty of the press; it is like the air we breathe – if we have it not, we die.” (*The Times*, July 14th 1818, p.2.)]

Tuesday July 14th: I hear that what I said was very violent. The *Morning Chronicle* extols me as “a most important acquisition to the cause of liberty”, and luckily for me does not give the speech. The *Times* gives both, but the latter only a little. The *Courier* of this evening says, “Who *can* this *Mr Hobhouse* be?”

I walked to the Committee – gave fifty pounds from Tavistock.

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Dined with Burdett, where was a large party.
Wrote to Byron.

Here's his letter:

July 16, 1818

Dear Byron

I have received a great many letters from you – all in the same strain and requiring only one answer – namely that what you require has been done long ago – The money has been sent and if you want any more you have only to specify the sum and the form in which you wish to have it conveyed. I have called twice on Mr. Hanson within these few days, and have received for answer that never was any business done so quickly and so satisfactorily as your's; and that when the messenger is ready to start he will let me know. That which has delayed every thing and every body, has, it seems, impeded the progress of the deeds – I mean the general election which caused Mr. Hoare of Durham to be a little tardy in his part of the survey – Lady Byron, as in duty bound, wrote to hasten and do the decent thing on the occasion –

All our turmoil has ended. Burdett has beaten the court candidate by four hundred and thirty, and though Romilly has by partaking the second votes of both parties come in 101 ahead in the poll, it is clear that the patriot has lost none of his popularity – He polled more votes than in the great election of 1807 – On the whole no body has been a gainer by the contests except Murray who has put forth another edition of the account of the Loo Chew islands with a portrait of Sir Murray Maxwell in frontispiece. The chairing of Burdett on Monday last was the finest sight I ever saw – it beat the Champ de Mai hollow. It is supposed that so large and orderly a crowd were never before assembled in London. The car was Kinnaird's taste – the horses were furnished by Scrope the Great – A slight confusion occurred at the dinner by reason of want of victual – for, when the doors were opened, some two hundred und fifty guests were found already at table very much to the detriment and disappearance of the various articles provided for the refec[tion] of the company – The question was how and why the devil they got there: and our short commons were seasoned by loud shouts of Burdett for ever but damn the Committee – Standing armies never put the cause of liberty in so much danger as these forerunners of ours at the dinner table. Tranquillity was not restored in less than two hours when we proceeded to the bad port and

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speeches of the day, and the sober part of the company separated about midnight – So you think of going to the Longman – Vorsignoria e padrone – but I think you will do ill. His beef and carrots which I have had the honor of tasting this year are very poor grub indeed. Murray is, as far as his words go, your most humble servitor – and faithfully delivers all the messages which your maliceship commands to be conveyed to me. I should recommend you to convey de Breme’s critique by the next post, and perhaps it may come in time for the Quarterly or at least to stop the pending arrangement for something that I have been prayed to write on the Italians. By the Lord you are an amiable fellow, and, all things considered, want nothing but a little encouragement to complete your social qualities – ever your’s

John Hobhouse

The corn-rubbers have been ordered. Any thing else? (*Byron’s Bulldog*, 240-1)

Hobhouse, Burdett, Davies, Bruce and Kinnaird (and “Mr Power”) dine on **July 15th** at a Dickensian-sounding inn, The Artichoke, Blackwall (well east of London, on the banks of the Thames):

Fish – excellent view of ships gliding up through the moonlight – gibbets ... charming expedition altogether.

The two patrician radicals Hobhouse and Burdett have evidently hit it off, for Burdett has invited the younger man to his manor at Ramsbury in Wiltshire (“six miles from Hungerford, in the Vale of Kennet”), where he loves to hunt (though not in July). On **July 16th**, calculating, it seems, that he’ll not be spending much time in London from now on, Hobhouse winds up his establishment there (having written to Byron, though he doesn’t say so: BB 240-1) and goes to Whitton, where, on **July 17th**, Burdett joins him. Hobhouse rides with Henry and Sophy, dines with his father at Roger Wilbraham’s, and goes in the evening to Colonel Espinance’s. On **July 18th** he rides with Henry to Moulsey, where they visit Ugo Foscolo at his cottage, “Digame”, which Hobhouse, who may know that Foscolo can’t afford such a place, describes as “a pretty cottage – much prettier than Bard beseems”. He dines at home in Whitton.

On Sunday **July 19th** he reads John Herman Merivale’s Pulci-imitation *Orlando in Roncesvalles*, but passes no comment on it. That night at the luxurious establishment of Colonel Hughues (sic), “Burdett went away on a scheme to prevent Bruce from marrying Lady Parker against his father’s

consent". As the energetic Bruce has already been through Lady Hester Stanhope, Caroline Lamb, and the widow of Marshal Ney, we may feel it's about time he settled down; and indeed Burdett's "scheme" fails, for Bruce does marry the widow of Byron's cousin, Admiral Sir Peter Parker. Burdett makes an excellent impression on the initially sceptical company at Hughues':

General Fitzroy, a brother of Lord Southampton's, said, "Indeed I think him a very gentlemanly, good-natured man" – just as if it was a wonder Burdett had not hoof and claws. Scrope was there, but said nothing.

Scrope may either be unlucky in love, or experiencing a bad spell at the tables. On **July 20th** Hobhouse rides to Whitton with Burdett.

On **July 21st** Hobhouse and Burdett set off on horseback for Ramsbury, via Reading. They traverse Windsor Forest, and everywhere they go Burdett engages people in conversation. He is recognized by all, including "a mechanic of the most *liberal* principles", who says that meeting Burdett constitutes "the greatest honour he had ever had in his life". They look at some of Canning's recent speeches at Liverpool, and conclude them "poor stuff indeed – he talks of 'the Muses and Graces,' and Lord Chesterfield".

They reach Ramsbury on **July 22nd**, and Hobhouse stays there until **August 8th**. On **July 28th**, Kinnaird and Davies turn up ("to Burdett's great delight – I suppose he found me heavy on hand"). Kinnaird leaves on **August 2nd**.

Ramsbury is a splendid establishment, and Burdett "is completely lord" of everywhere about. On first seeing the place on July 22nd, Hobhouse writes that it is a

... beautiful place, formerly in the old avenue style, but modernised very well by the late Lady Jones, Burdett's aunt, at £60,000 expense. The house is not large but the rooms are good. The woods are extensive, with paths cut in them, as well as at the sides of all the fields – a great convenience. The water is the Kennet, widened to look like a lake, abounding in trout, more, I believe, than [in] any [other] stream in England. There should be a vast quantity of game, but there is little care taken of it.

Burdett has five manors here, and he has a right of free warren, which makes him send his keeper once a year to shoot up at Littlecoat House. He has also a right to have venison from Marlborough Forest whenever he chooses, of which he does not know exactly the origin.

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On **July 23rd** Hobhouse, having written “something about the Westminster election”, meets the Burdett family, which includes two young females to whom he will, at different times, propose. They are a far-upmarket version of the Bennetts from *Pride and Prejudice*:

Lady Burdett and her family arrived. [*She is the daughter of the millionaire banker, Coutts.*] Lady Burdett’s health being very bad, and her temper, I should think, being none of the best, she does not make the most agreeable of wives, or of hostesses. Her eldest daughter, Sophia, is a nice, good girl. The next, Susan, a very pretty girl, rather pimply, clever and accomplished rather, and given to quizzing. Joanna, Clara and Angela, all pretty girls, are hardly out of the nursery. The last is a little thing, four years old – the pet [*Angela is the future multi-millionairess Angela Burdett-Coutts.*]

Burdett loves all his daughters and they love him. He said he should like to dine with them always *en famille*. He is truly delightful with his girls, and very attentive to his shy, silent wife [*Hobhouse later describes her as “a damper”*]. A Dr Sigmond, a young physician, attends Lady Burdett constantly and is one of the family. Burdett treats him with great kindness and respect. He seems a clever young man, but odd. He contested with us that Adam was only father of the Jews, and that men and women are created in the first chapter of Genesis before Adam – it may be so, but St Paul talks of Adam as “the father of mankind”.

I took up Boswell’s *Tour to the Hebrides*, and read it again.

On **July 24th** Hobhouse goes fishing, with his usual quota of failure (see *Don Juan* XIII, stanza 106, and Byron’s note). Also,

A Mr Lawson, an Irish gentleman, dined with us today. He is come on a scheme of setting up a paper in London for Irish politics. Burdett could not make him understand that under a reform of parliament Ireland would be as integral a part of the British dominions as Yorkshire. Mr Lawson seemed to doubt if the English people generally would ever regard the Irish fairly and without jealousy – if so he has no objection to perpetual union, but if not, I suppose the real object of all Irish patriots to be nothing less than separation.

Saturday July 25th. I begin to admire Susan Burdett and catch myself looking at her more than beseems. I fished, and strolled and did nothing, and rode in the forest, and read Boswell a little.

Sunday July 26th. Read a little. Strolled about, and went upon the downs on horseback.

A Mr Arthur Meyrick turns up on **July 27th**, and lends Hobhouse some “red palings flies”, which improve Hobhouse’s game. Meyrick “throws a fly to a very picturesque and useful effect”. Burdett tells them that at the late Wiltshire election he had all the Ramsbury promises until Wellesley Pole arrived and gave the voters 130 gallons of punch, whereupon all but two switched allegiance. Some had thought they could vote for all three candidates. It’s clear that the English electorate needs educating.

In Wiltshire, any man with two or more children can have poor relief – “the young fellows never marry a girl until they know she is a breeder”.

Burdett “went to a-cudgelling at Auburn today, and gave a specimen of it after dinner, to the great delight of all his family”.

On **July 28th**, Kinnaird and Davies arrive, and that evening Susan sings. The “Epicurean life” continues with “fishing, riding, dining and talking” on **July 29th**. On **July 30th** Hobhouse picks up Fortescue, *de laudibus legum Angliæ*, with Selden’s notes – “which I find a great textbook with Burdett for constitutional law”. Fortescue, he notes, writes of the English that they are “people ... of acknowledged superiority”. On **July 31st** they visit General Popham, the owner of Littlecote, and discuss antiquities, including the tale of Darrell who, in Elizabeth’s time, was the father of his sister’s child. Walter Scott mentions the ballad about this in *Rokeby* – see *Rokeby* Note LVII.

On **August 1st**, Hobhouse rides and fishes (“as usual”, whatever that may mean now, under the tutelage of Meyrick). On **August 2nd** Kinnaird leaves, after a day of riding in the forest with Burdett, Hobhouse and Davies. “Fishing or lounging” sums up **August 3rd**. Two schoolmasters and a physician from Ramsbury dine on **August 4th**; they are, it seems, “sensible people” – not too radical, perhaps. On **August 5th** they dine in the forest, and Susan Burdett quizzes Hobhouse about his saying “I beg your pardon’ at every word”, which, he admits, “is a folly”. Meyrick the fisherman is there, and a Mr Clarke:

Burdett is completely loved here – he and Mr Clarke leant against each other’s back for support.

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On **August 6th**, a less agreeable scion of the house arrives:

I fished, caught two brace of the usual size, about a pound. Robert Burdett came – he is not deficient in ability, but has dandy manners and dress, and talks slang and is fond of drinking, and laughs at his father's politics. I hear Lady Ellenborough made a set at him for one of her daughters. It was funny to see him with his high neckcloth, and Burdett dining in his shooting jacket. He does not talk before his father, nor does his father much regard him – he could not help noting Robert's spurs.

The following anecdote, from a letter of 28th October 1817 from Lady Melbourne to Frederick Lamb, gives some idea of Robert Burdett's indifference to his father's politics (and of his luck):

I must add a Story about ye King of France which I think almost better as being more liberal than most things one has heard of ye last – Sr. F. Burdett's son in a drunken frolick went into ye Streets of Paris calling out vive l'Empereur & other abuse of ye present – he was taken up and put in prison, & this made prodigious noise – & told to ye King who sd Oh that's an unfortunate young man who has lately had a Severe blow to his Head, it must be in consequence of that; he must be liberated – & this was done Accordingly – & no mention has been made of it, in ye French papers – (Gross 352-3)

August 7th finds Hobhouse determined to leave, though "Burdett most kindly tried to detain me". The family dine at Littlecoat, a place with historical resonances:

I sat between the sisters, Susan on my left. She looked beautiful. The armory hall at Littlecoat is adorned with armour worn by the lobster regiment commanded by Colonel Popham, of whom there is a full length portrait on horseback. There is here a standard of Oliver Cromwell's with his figure in a small plate at the top of the lance. Popham was his colonel and one of the Council of Officers.

Here is a pair of finger-stocks where disorderly servants' thumbs were screwed when the family dined in the hall altogether, master and servants –

that custom was discontinued in Selden's time, who, I find, regrets the loss of it.

Home. Bid Burdett adieu.

It was the habit of dining together, not the thumb-stocks, which Selden regretted.

On **August 8th** Hobhouse returns to Whitton, via Hungerford, Newbury, Reading, and Windsor Forest ("where Pope sang to Egham"). At Whitton on **August 9th** he passes the day "doing nothing". Much business has piled up during his Ramsbury idyll, and many personalities and issues are glanced at in the entry for **August 10th**:

Part of the family set off for Brighton. Henry and I rode to London – called on Bruce, whom I found collected and cool on the eve of a marriage which will ruin him. I said not a word, having had too much to do with *gli affair d'altrui* already.

Called at Priestley's about Baillie's books – at Hanson's about Lord Byron's affairs. Old Hanson is going soon to Venice – so they say at last. Went to Ker the bootmaker's, who tried to *knock in* Bruce and me for Grampound, and now has turned out a swindler. Saw Brougham – he bowed, but I looked away. The fellow is a rogue. Found at No. 43 Clarges Street a long letter from di Breme abusing *my Illustrations*, and one from Tavistock attacking the Committee, and Burdett for attacking the Whigs.

Rode down to Whitton. Sent my groom and a horse to Reigate. Dined, and to bed!!!

Mr Julius, the apothecary of Richmond, breakfasts with them on **August 11th**, and tells them of a scheme broached to Lord Sidmouth the Home Secretary "to send the letters through tunnels by steam in thirty-five minutes to Bristol". On the same day, Hobhouse and Henry set off on horseback for Brighton, via Reigate. At Reigate they overtake Harriet ("very sick and tired, poor girl"). Henry stays with her, and Hobhouse rides on to Brighton, where ...

... I find all changed since I was at No. 1 Marine Parade with Lord Byron in 1808.

That night, after tea with the family, he reads Selden, whom he finds "far superior to Johnson". On **August 12th** he replies to Tavistock's letter, walks,

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dines, and spends the evening with Harriet: "Selden at night". On **August 13th**, Cullen and the hitherto unmentioned Webster, turn up, and Hobhouse walks with them. On **August 14th and 15th** he starts reading Xenophon's Cyclopaedia, and is writing still about Westminster. On **August 16th** ...

... Cullen writes me a letter begging me to come to the radical reform dinner given at the Horns, Kennington, in honour of Cartwright – Douglas Kinnaird in the chair – I won't go. I write to Cleary, who has sent me the circular approving the cause of radical reform – it is as well to bind oneself by documents to principles.

As Hobhouse was famous for never "binding himself by documents to principles", we have to read the last sentence as irony.

From **August 17th to 21st** the new Brighton family idyll continues, with much walking, riding, and writing, in the "still, very dry weather". Hobhouse writes a letter to Byron on the 17th, though he does not mention it:

Brighton. August 17, 1818

Dear Byron,

I have been waiting for more than ten days to be able to announce to you that Spooney had sent his messenger or had set off himself with the papers to you – this was his last intention but how long it may have been his last I know not he weathercocks it with such ease and quickness – I trust, however, that he will not long delay. I have presented myself to Chancery lane so often as to be a nuisance and an eye sore to his retainers below stairs and the sweaty paw of Charles [Hanson] is moreover no such pleasant welcome after admittance – Thank heaven, however, my importunities have reduced it to three fingers – If old Spooney crosses the Alps I have promised to give him a march route; and considering the dance he has led me, have a good mind to send him round by the Caucasus. I anticipate the combing down he will get from you – although, to be sure, I must say that in propria persona you are a mighty mitigable devil, and do not at all answer to the Jupiter of your own distant storm – Having received no letters from you, I conclude the money is come safe to hand and may, I presume, count upon your silence until the approaches of exhaustion persuade you again to be clamorous. I am happy to hear from you at any rate so would rather be scolded than scorned. I have done my best that the messenger whether Hanson or Hanson's man shall leave nothing that you may want or lie may take behind – I have lately seen nothing of Murray – the rumor of his being a traveller not as usual by proxy but in person may be true

– If so you will know how to account for not hearing from him, if you do not hear. At any rate don't plot against his peace or pence – believe me he is your poor slave for ever. He swears you are the first of poets and he feels he is the most fashionable of booksellers – The Edinburgh is out – as I imagined and, if you recollect, foretold – the IVth is said to be the finest of all you have written and above any other production almost of any age. Of course it will make part of Hanson's baggage so I shall say nothing – The Edinburgh incites you to do something that shall raise [our] age to a level with any Augustan period of literature. The Morning Chronicle humbly requests you would come home and consent to save this sinking country – The poetry is but poor but the wish as good as any thing even I could indite. Sam Rogers says in his amiable way that “*Wayte* is our only *chance*.” Sam presumes to shake his wry vinegar-cruet neck at me for comparing him to Pindemonte – now this is the fate and folly of talking of these small poets at all. By the goles I meant him nothing but supreme honor. I have received the queerest letter from di Breme you ever saw – I will be judged by you, and if you do not say the essay on Italian literature is “*merum sal*,” I will burn it – I assure you I have had the unsolicited testimony of all the best judges (Hallam, Payne Knight, Wilbraham, Lord Glenbervie &c) which are very few for I flatter myself there are not three people in England capable of deciding on its merits – Seriously tell me what you think when you have read the articles, and tell me, as you wont, with sincerity – You know you promised not to make a fool of me except I wrote an oratorio – I am on the list of proscribed made out by Tierney Brougham & Co and the other cubs at H[olland]. House for my conduct at the Westminster Election – that is for doing my little most to put Burdett at the head of the poll – they wrote ballads against us, which were sung or said at Lady Jerseys – Oh how we sighed for you. If B was here said Scrope by god he would scalp them – The insolence of Brougham to all men increases daily and I foresee his want of wit will run him into a filthy Puddle. He was shamefully beat in Westmoreland, and talked over the mob to be against him –
Adieu – Your's

J. C. H. (*Byron's
Bulldog*, 242-3)

Foscolo is expected, but appears not to come. Instead Kinnaird comes on **August 22nd**, and on **August 23rd** he talks of reform with Sir Benjamin, who Hobhouse finds “is more liberal since out of parliament”. Hobhouse is insulted, by implication, on “reading the new *Edinburgh*” ...

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... which has *Childe Harold IV* [and] not a word on my notes – it is, independently, a miserable performance, written, Kinnaird tells me, by one Wilson, author of *The City of the Plague*. I own myself infinitely vexed by the omission.

On **August 24th** Kinnaird goes, and Hobhouse resumes his “little labours”, as well as riding with Harriet on the downs: “the Devil’s Dyke a noble prospect”. His labours are lightened on **August 25th** when he reads one volume of Moore’s *Zeluco*, “which I like better than I did once”. On **August 26th** there is a discussion about who Junius was. He packs up on **August 27th**, and leaves for London with Henry on **August 28th**, where, dining at Kinnaird’s, he hears a rumour from the Attorney General’s son that “we should have a reform”. Needless to say, they do not. **August 29th** finds him at Manton’s, the gunsmith (for he’s about to return to Ramsbury for some shooting), on Priestley the bookseller, and on John Hanson ...

... who is not gone yet to Byron but is said to be going. Went into Brooks’s. Brougham there, [and] would speak in spite of my dead and repeated cut – the rogue. Dined at Kinnaird’s, and slept.

On **August 30th** he goes to Whitton and cleans his gun, and on **August 31st** rides down to Ramsbury again, via Reading. There he meets “Mr and Lady [sic] Charlotte Fitzgerald”, who, despite their irreconcilable titles, are “very agreeable people”. Fitzgerald “told many horrors of the Irish rebellion”. Lady Charlotte, who is Lord Hastings’ sister, tells of ...

... a guest at Lord Carrick’s who was shown up to bed by the butler, who laid a horsewhip on the bed, saying, “Your honour need only give one crack and they’ll all be gone” – meaning the rats.

Henry and Kinnaird arrive, and there is “great preparations made for opening the campaign against the birds tomorrow”. However, “the women [are] as odd and inanimate as ever”.

Their “campaign against the birds” is a failure. On **September 1st** Hobhouse reports, “we had no luck at all ... shot very few indeed – I was a wretched performer – Burdett left the ground – came home out of sorts”. On **September 2nd** he writes, “Burdett, I, and Kinnaird tried another beat – very little sport

indeed, but saw birds enough – home to breakfast, out again. The whole party in the evening – dined – evening as before. Music from Susan, who looks lovely.”

Idylls are made to be invaded and spoiled, and this (which is none too idyllic anyway) is no exception. Byron and di Breme spoil it, assisted by Scrope Davies.

Thursday September 3rd. We did not shoot today. S.B.Davies came, and found Henry and me out with our guns, without dogs. S.B.D. gave me a letter from Byron and one from Breme to Byron sent with it, which my friend Byron maliciously enclosed to Davies, because it attacks me violently for the Essay at the end of the *Illustrations*, which it attributes to Foscolo. Here, however, Breme is wrong, for the part about the Romantici was not suggested by Foscolo, it was all my own. I see not how Byron reconciles this with good faith – his letter to me is kind, however, and shows Breme’s folly.

Music at night.

For Byron’s covering letter to Davies, see BLJ XI 168. For Byron to Hobhouse, see BLJ VI 63:

Enclosed is Breme’s scrawl – answer him if you like but I have given him a Siserana I promise you in mine already – I have no notion of his airs – he has brought all Italy into a squabble about his damned doctrines – (like the old stag of the Seicentisti & the previous Cruscan quarrels – poor devils – they are like Moses in the Vicar of Wakefield too happy in being permitted to dispute about anything) – and then expect to be thanked for them by us Youth. – Row him – I say – he gives you devilish bitter words – and I long to see you by the ears – that I do.

Byron enclosed another letter, from di Breme to Hobhouse. BHF 21, Camporesi 663, and Ugo Foscolo Opere II 2116 n2 and 2118 n6, concur in saying that neither di Breme’s letter to Byron, nor that to Hobhouse, are any longer available. Byron’s letter to di Breme has also vanished.

The section of *Illustrations* to which Hobhouse refers is at pp. 484-5:

A great question at this moment divides the learned world in Italy into the partisans of classical poetry, and of the poetry of romance. The first, of course, range Homer in the front of their battle; and the others, who have adopted the division of Madame de Stael, and talk of a literature of the North, and a literature of the South, have still the courage to depend upon Ossian for

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their principal champion. The first would adhere solely to the mythology of the ancients; the other party would banish it totally from all their compositions. It would not be very difficult to state the true merits of this idle enquiry, on the decision of which may, however, depend the turn taken by the literature of the next half century.

Putting all this literary warfare aside, Hobhouse assists in another attempted shoot on **September 4th**, this time on two of Burdett's other manors, High Farm and Arganson. However, though Burdett is "much beloved" there, and though his "picture is in the farm houses", they declare it "hot – too hot for shooting". Hobhouse shoots "a little, but ill" and they return home, it seems, having given up on sport for the time being. **September 5th** sees rain, probably to their relief; they dine "at Hallett's, late candidate for Berkshire – a coarse vulgar man, with strange low company, I thought, and so did Burdett".

Kinnaird leaves them on **September 6th**; that night Susan Burdett plays billiards. **September 7th** shows a small improvement in the shooting: at yet another of Burdett's manors they bag "four brace of birds", and "two-and-a-half brace of hares".

Tom Moore turns up! He sings, records the disdainful Hobhouse (who envies him his relationship with Byron), "one or two of his own songs in his own peculiar style". Titles mentioned are *The Evening Bells* and *Strike the Loud Cymbal*. What Hobhouse feels when "Susan sang with him" we have to imagine, for Hobhouse does not record it. But the next day, Moore's charm wins over even the unmusical diarist:

Tuesday September 8th. Burdett, Davies, Moore and myself walked from twelve to six in the forest, and had a delightful day. Moore was everything – his Irish stories kept us in a constant roar – his anecdotes of Curran and others, perfect. He talked, however, too much of himself, made his dinner at Dublin lately given to him a test of Irish patriotism, and he confessed he could not repent enough he had ever lived with lords – there was not the parity he sighed for. He mentioned anecdotes of Lord Holland and Lord Lansdowne to prove it. He was angry with George Vernon for calling him, Crabbe and Bowles "three poets" – and with Lord Holland for using the words "one of us". He told us he had received £900 already from Longman for his Fudge Family – he talked of classical subjects, of Paris, of Payne Knight and others, equally well. He beat all three of us out of the field, and I saw Scrope was envious. I, who have no pretension to conversational powers,

was delighted. Amongst his stories was this: ‘An Irish chatenist[??] asked me, “How many gods are there?” – “Three.” – “May you never see one of them!” was her answer’.

We dined, had music in the evening, and were most charmed.

On **September 9th** Hobhouse goes out shooting with Robert Burdett, “a cool young fellow, clever, and good-natured, who owns he loves slang”. On **September 10th** Scrope Davies leaves (“he thinks to fight a duel”); Hobhouse’s aim – tutored perhaps by the omnicompetent Meyrick – improves a little; and that evening “all [the] family [are] vastly kind at parting with me”.

Hobhouse splits the next entry over two books.

Friday September 11th. Off from Ramsbury at six – rode to Whitton, by Hampton, where ...

End of B.L. Add. Mss. 47235, start of B.L. Add. Mss. 56540.

Friday September 11th (continued). ... I saw Foscolo at Maulsey. I there showed him Breme’s two letters – the one to me and that to Lord Byron – he stamped and laughed, and we vowed mutual vengeance on the Abate. Foscolo told me his affairs were in a very bad way and talked freely of some of his patrons – he called Lord Holland an *esprit foible*, which is or may be the truth – I left Breme’s letter with Foscolo, that he might answer what referred to himself. Came to Whitton about four. Dined – read some of Lord Macartney’s *Journal of the Chinese Embassy* – It is very entertaining – recollect that the Minister thought Barrow a liar and would not believe what he said except backed by somebody else. Read something which Lord Macartney wrote about Ireland – it is astonishing with what strength the prerogative Peer talks against the conduct of the English in Ireland.

Went to bed. Slept well.

The two books into which Hobhouse dips are George Earl Macartney, *An historical account of the Embassy to the Emperor of China* (1797 / 8) and *Some account of the public life, and a selection from the unpublished writings, of the Earl of Macartney*, ed. Sir John Barrow (1807).

On **September 12th** he rides from Whitton to Brighton via Reigate and “took up my quarters at Westcliff Lodge as before”. He does not remember what he did on **September 13th** – “probably nothing”; he passes his time “between

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Westcliffe Lodge” (where Henry lives) “and Westfield Lodge” (where Sir Benjamin lives). He sleeps at Henry’s until October 24th. On **September 14th** he believes he starts Richardson’s *Sir Charles Grandison*, which he finds ...

... a wonderful monument of minute labour, and I own tied me down by all the incidents as Gulliver was pinned to the earth by the hairs of the Lilliputians. Sir Charles did not seem to me so complete a coxcomb and stiff a fine gentleman as I had preconceived him to be. Miss Byron I infinitely prefer to Clementina, whose religious madness has no effect with me. Poor Richardson could find, and seems to say that his critics could find, one blot in his perfect man – namely that he consented his daughters by Clementina should be brought up in the Catholic persuasion.

He is still reading *Grandison* on **September 15th**, as well as riding with Harriet, who “certainly has received great benefit from sea air and bathing”. His groom, Jack Beale, has “broken my little horse’s knees sadly”. The perusal of *Grandison* continues on **September 16th**, except that Hobhouse reads in bed in the morning, and “I doze between pages and can recollect little or nothing – my memory [is] getting so bad I now give up without a struggle”. The novel, and rides with Harriet, occupy **September 17th**. **September 18th** sees a real break with habit for which we must feel relieved for those about him:

I bathe ... in a hot bath – a very luxurious recipe for many disorders and for an idle half-hour.

The newly-hygienic routine continues on **September 19th**, except that ...

... my ear [is] getting worse – my left ear nearly as bad as my right.

Sunday September 20th. It was this day, I believe, that a letter from Foscolo arrived with his notions on the way of answering Breme’s letter, in bad French. I set to work writing a letter myself, partly from his hints, partly from my own head – also in bad French.

My usual course of life continued.

Foscolo’s letter appears no longer to exist. Hobhouse’s letter to di Breme is in part at BHF 32-6 and complete at Camporesi 653-62.

Monday September 21st. Writing the letter to Breme – riding, dining, &c.

Tuesday September 22nd. The letter to Breme, and the usual course of this Brighton life – reading by fits, some of Hume’s two first volumes of his history.

On this date Hobhouse also writes a letter to Foscolo, which he doesn’t mention: BHF 30.

Wednesday September 23rd. I fancy that my letter was now finished and sent for correction to Madame Guy, my sister’s governess. I read, ride, &c.

We hear no more of Madame Guy. Did she follow Mlle. Butler, the girls’ governess of 1815, into Hobhouse’s bed, or wherever that liaison may have taken place?

Over the next few weeks several literary birds come home to roost. They had been set on wing earlier in the year by *Childe Harold IV*, by *Illustrations*, and by the section in *Illustrations* written by Foscolo. Foscolo finds them more embarrassing than does Hobhouse.

September 24th. Employed doing nothing – but I recollect that I tried before Breme’s letter came to put some of the State of Parties into verse, and employed several days thereupon – so I have begun three things on these reform politics, and shall finish neither [*sic*] – a dead loss of time – – – –

By “Breme’s letter” he means the letter intended *for* di Breme. The political satire “has not been forthcoming”; probably he destroyed it.

September 25th. Employed copying out my corrected letter, and wrote to Foscolo for an Italian letter for me to send, instead of his French performance.

We had very stormy weather.

This letter to Foscolo is at BHF 30-1.

September 26th. Copying my letter, which I got Charlotte also to copy, I doubting whether I should go shooting to Ramsbury or not. Kinnaird wrote to ask me to dine with him on the following Tuesday to meet a Scotch reformer

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and Burdett. The *Quarterly Review* out – IV Canto reviewed – the review good, the end attacks me, but in more civil terms – most shabbily, however, Gifford forgets that I was most moderate about politics in the notes, and actually cut something said violently about Bonaparte by Byron. The *Review* also contrives to insert the sentence about the “carnage of St Jean” as if I had said it, not Byron in his preface. There is no propitiating these rascals except by a pure sacrifice of all principles and honor – what could I expect from a fellow who being called a pimp retorted by calling his antagonist a sodomite? So Byron told me of Gifford’s quarrel with Woolcott.

Childe Harold IV is reviewed in the *Quarterly Review* for “April” 1818 (No. XIX) pp. 215-32. The main part of the review is by Scott; but Gifford may be responsible for the postscript dealing with *Illustrations*, which Scott either didn’t receive or couldn’t be bothered with. Gifford’s “civil terms” are illustrated by the following:

They [*the Illustrations*] contain of course many political sentiments of a class which have ceased to excite anger, or any feeling stronger than pity ... – *Quarterly Review* XIX, p. 231.

Here is Gifford’s deliberate misattribution:

... when, in bitterness of spirit, they term the great, the glorious victory of Waterloo the ‘carnage of Saint Jean,’ we can forgive that too, since, trained in the school of revolutionary France, they must necessarily abhor those ‘—— whose art was of such power / It could controul their dam’s God Setebos, / And make a vassal of him’ – *Quarterly Review* XIX, p. 232.

The reference is to *Childe Harold IV*, preface: ‘... the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns, over the carnage of Mont St. Jean ...’ (CPW II 124). Byron referred to Gifford’s quarrel with John Wolcot (the satirist Peter Pindar: 1738-1819), with whom Gifford had quarreled. Gifford had continued the quarrel in his own *Epistle to Peter Pindar* (1800). The two men exchanged blows publicly in Wright’s shop, Piccadilly, on August 18th 1800.

Sunday September 27th. I rather think I wrote to Burdett and Kinnaird today – indeed I know I did – and determined not to go to Ramsbury, but stay

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at Brighton until my brother Henry broke up his ménage. Today also I think I wrote to Lord Byron and sent him a copy of my letter to Breme by Missiaglia of the Apollo library, who sent to know if I had anything to send by him. Finished *Sir Charles Grandison*, and now piddling at Hume.

Why Henry should break up his ménage is not clear. Perhaps his wife's jealousy – the cessation of which Hobhouse had rewarded by reading *Childe Harold IV* aloud to her on May 19th – had recurred.

September 28th. At my usual idle occupations – chiefly the letter to Breme – which is not yet complete on account of the Italian letter, from Foscolo.

The idle occupations include a letter to Byron, to which he does not refer:

28 September [1818]

Dear Byron

I have received the letters which you sent to me through Davies – both your own and de Breme's and have edified highly by the perusal of both – I had before received a similar epistle from the unfrocked Abbe and was expounding the said when your own packet was delivered by the Scrope – The force of censure can no farther go, so to make a third I've joined the other two and considering them as one have made a reply in what I fatter myself is a becoming style – I take the liberty of sending you a copy of this letter, of which I do not say read and burn – but do not give yourself the trouble to read it, but send it to Rizzo or to Madame Albrizzi or to any one who will make it public – a translation in the gazette will please me most, the Lugano I recollect to be your favourite – When the Albrizzi has done with it perhaps you could contrive to send it to Acerbi who I am sure will swallow it with more glee than he ever did the small tit bit of blubber in his voyage towards the North Pole. I conjure you by all my coal mines in Cornwall to further this little piece of mischief. The Copy is written in a fair hand – some vengeance should be taken of this masturbator for calling poor dear Madame Albrizzi's *Ritratti* "*a list of her stallions*" – You may see that I have taken care to quote this in the letter in order to qualify it for the meridian of St. Mark's – It is, indeed, though I say it, as pretty a piece of malice as could well be hatched, and would become even your embroiling spirit – I have quoted de Breme's own words against Monti, so I am in hopes of a squabble even there whence the whole has originated – this makes me wish to see the thing in Acerbi's hands – I did not know how to send this packet when

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Missiaglia of the library at Venice came in, “sic me servavit Apollo” – What the deuce has kept you so long from Hasty? I trust you have not been setting up shop again – nothing but passades – no draughts on bankers ear rings and the like o’they – What a dreadful fright you have been in for fear some one should interpose to save you a few pounds in England – Were you on your death bed You Could not be more alarmed at the hideous prospect of leaving something unenjoyed. By this time, however, you may be assured that nothing has been done for you and your mind be at rest – I have been living since the beginning of August at Brighton, so have not seen the superb Murray who is speculating with an Edinburgh dealer for a magazine – Wilson the plague man, who he says is full as clever and ten times more hearty than Jeffery. A fortnight since I came to Brighton has been taken out and spent at Burdett’s Wiltshire house – There was Scrope and there also came Tom Moore. This latter you are quite right about – he is a most charming fellow and certainly one of the better brothers – Poor fellow, he has lately got a twist about the aristocrats, and cant forgive Lord H[olland] for saying “we will show Lord B that another of us can write verses” nor George Vernon for observing at Bowwood that “there were three poets in the room” – I dont know whether you ever observed this before in him – Moore told me that you were in alarm about the IVth Canto. Why so? and why did you let him know? I tell you again and again there is but one opinion about it. It is the “opt-max,” and in sober sadness I tell you that your influence in this country is what I should think without a parallel – you might positively do what you pleased – If Murray throws doubts or cold water he is a neger, but I can not imagine such perfidy in him – Your friends here, I mean England, are ceaseless in enquiries about your health and wealth and so forth and I feel secure I can report progress in both. But dont swim for four hours again – now dont. You can not think what serious harm these exertions bring about. Hanson’s folk are tired of my repeated visits and I myself am almost sick of asking for the fiftieth time if either father or son or company is set out with the papers. Mind you sign nothing except the mere deeds, no private papers, no releases acquittances or any thing but the bond, the bond. Pray be cautious – Dug. bid me tell you this and he is a clever fellow for all his speeches – The Scrope is well in Physics and still preserves the five points – His addresses have lately been divided between the Lady Anne Harley and Miss Susannah Burdett – He makes your poeshies pimp for him for I caught him ventre à terre under a beach tree expounding you to the latter – where

types fail he brings out an MS from a scented Morocco pocket book and a palpable hit egad – How his concerns go on no soul alive knows – his being in love looks Suspicious for he was never known to be so when in money. He is still, however, very grand and will not stir without his “*dormeuse*” Sir[.] I have left off my wig and my Whig principles together [–] had I a seat in the den I should have abjured them both by throwing the former on the table as Burke did his dagger – It is impossible to bear the arrogance selfishness and surliness of a party that has elected Bruffam for their bully. Lord Holland-House calls me a rat for asking for single votes for Burdett and disregarding that charming piece of perfection Sir S. Romilly – this is the head & front of my offending and has put me on the proscription list so my patriotism has brought me into a filthy puddle – ever your’s

J. C. H. (*Byron’s Bulldog*, 245-7)

September 29th. I believe Foscolo’s letter arrived today. He tells me he will not survive his debts beyond this year. I copy his Italian letter.

About this time I have a letter from one Miss Eliza Francis who desires me she may dedicate her works to me. The works to contain a defence of Lord Byron – I write begging she will leave the defence alone, and dedicate to someone else – ordering, or promising to order, twelve copies of her poems from Leigh, her bookseller.

We do not have Foscolo’s letter. He was denying to everyone that he had written the *Illustrations* section. On September 30th he had written to Silvio Pellico, saying among other things ... *l’abate accusò Hobhouse <<d’aver scritto sotto la mia dettatura>> – il che oltre al non essere vero, è anche facile a provarsi non vero* (“the Abate accuses Hobhouse ‘of having written under my dictation’ – which is not only not true, but easily proved not to be true” Ugo Foscolo *Opere* II 2117). He goes on to say that Murray had asked him to look over *Illustrations*, but that he refused on the grounds that there was a section about him in it.

Eliza S. Francis was authoress of *The Rival Roses a metrical Tale* (1813) and *Sir Wilbert de Waverley or the Bridal Eve* (1815). Byron had given her fifty pounds on October 25th 1814 in the middle of a conversation about the subscription for a volume of her poetry. See LBAR 486-7. Note Hobhouse’s desire not to be associated publicly with Byron.

The luxury of Brighton is starting to enervate Hobhouse. The entry for **September 30th** reads:

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Doing as before – little or nothing. Riding – dining at one house or the other – the mind grows clotted by contagion. I must have done with this kind of life.

With his deteriorating memory, Hobhouse claims not to remember what happened on **October 1st**, but he gives us several details from a dinner-party his father threw at Brighton. Among the guests were ...

... Sir W. Burroughs and daughter, Mr Newnham and wife. The gentleman I recollect at Lord Lansdowne's in 1814 at Bowe Wood [*he dined there on Feb 16 and 25, Mar 21, June 9 and 19, and July 11 1814*]. He has been made Commissioner for settling the claims of the English on the French – Lord Castlereagh gave it him without the least solicitation and he accepted it without the least hesitation – a very agreeable man notwithstanding. Miss Burroughs is the most ridiculous town-bred half-bred girl I ever saw – all pretension – and both she and her papa (I may say it here) evidently made up to me for the young lady. The father said his daughter composed Italian songs, and interrupted him with one while solving an astronomical problem!!! ... Mr Hamilton ... a most superior man indeed ... owned to Brougham's violence and unfitness for heading a party – also to the strength of the Tories arising from the weakness of the Whigs.

For my brother he [*Hamilton*] has a great regard, and paid him a pointed deference, which nettled me at first, although when I came to think of it I recovered, and, I flatter myself, without having annoyed anybody by my folly. I found myself in company with a man so much my superior in everything that having been lately used, I may say it, to inferiors, I was not easy. I believe I am and ever shall be reckoned *inter mediocres*. What is to be done?

The Hamilton in whose company Hobhouse feels so inferior is either Alexander Hamilton (1762-1824) Sanscrit expert, or Lord Archibald Hamilton (1770-1827) reformer and enemy of Castlereagh.

On **October 2nd** Hobhouse has “good sport” on his large horse with the Brighton Subscription Pack near the Devil's Dyke.

Hobhouse's fame as an antiquarian has spread, for **October 3rd** finds a Mr George Lackington calling on him with a proposal for a book about Roman Ruins, for which he has already dispatched his engraver, Mr Cory, to the Eternal City. Davison, Murray's printer, had recommended Hobhouse, and Murray, when

approached, had raised no objection (“!!!”). Hobhouse can make his own terms. He says he’ll think about it.

Also that day Mr Hammond (“once Secretary at the Foreign Office”) flatters Hobhouse “black and blue”, and assures him that ...

... the Americans [are] poor creatures. Jefferson [is] a man of no genius and only a fifth-rate scientific man. King [is] the only clever fellow in America.

Hammonds tells ...

... a good story of the Duke of Luxemburg frightening the old Duchess of Marlborough. They were playing whist – the Duchess showed her cards too much – the Duke got angry – said the Duchess, “Je puis montrer ce qui est à moi!” – the fine gentleman replied – “Vous pouvez montrer votre cul, mais pas vos cartes!” ... the horror of the Duchess and the surprise of everybody [was] inconceivable. Newnham mentioned a Frenchman who talked to him of the Black Prince being contemporary with Louis Quatorze. We played at Lotto – I won 3s 6d – a note came asking me to give Hewett the writer thereof letters of introduction to Italy. I returned for answer I would send him a packet for Milan.

Sunday October 4th. Employed preparing a packet for Milan – one the letter to Breme, another a copy of it for Colonel Fitzgerald at the Casa Castiglione – these I sent by Cornwallis Hewett, who is going to Italy. I wrote a note to Lackington, telling him if I undertook the work it must be all my own, and remodelled – I would not enter into partnership with Cory the Engraver – also that I must go to Rome. However I did not all encourage the hope of my undertaking the performance –

Dined at my father’s.

For Hobhouse’s letter to Breme, see Camporesi 653-62. On **October 5th** he dines with Tavistock (his old friend from the Cambridge Whig club – son of the Duke of Bedford), to whom he tells “some truth about the Westminster election”; together they abuse Henry Brougham, and Tavistock lends Hobhouse one of Brougham’s pamphlets. Lackington writes giving Hobhouse carte blanche over the book on Rome – obviously confident that with such a name beneath the title it will sell. From the entry for **October 6th** we glean that one of Hobhouse’s two servants is named Battista – he and Jack Beale the horse-spoiler have their

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contracts re-negotiated. The assiduous Lackington calls again, and is again left dangling. Horse-riding takes up all Hobhouse's day on **October 7th** – partly “with the harriers near the racecourse”, partly with his sisters.

From the entry for **October 8th** we find gratefully that Hobhouse still “bathe[s] occasionally”. He is tempted by Lackington's offer, “for I cannot live on my present income – but then I am concerned with Foscolo and with Bentham – and I must go to Rome to do this well”. The last two references are to his proposed book on Italian revolutions, and to Bentham's *Fallacies* (see March 12th and May 7th, above). In the event he writes none of the books. On **October 9th** he hunts with the harriers and dines with Sir Benjamin. A “pressing letter” from Lackington arrives on **October 10th**, but it's clear that Hobhouse is going off the idea, despite having written a prospectus: “to have my name going about for subscriptions [would be] a little *infra dig*. I fear”.

The latter thought is a scary one – what if no-one subscribed?

Sunday October 11th. Wrote a letter to Murray, asking advice about Lackington – one to Foscolo, asking about our history of the Revolutions of Italy – another to Lackington, enclosing my prospectus, and still holding off.

Dine with Henry and at dinner resolve not to ask Murray's advice, he being a Scotchman – Tavistock franked my letter.

On **October 12th** he hunts again, this time with the Lewes hounds, “knocking up” Henry's big horse in the process. He also sends a letter to “Francis Place, the political tailor of Charing Cross”, enclosing “ten pounds for Evans the Younger ... I know nothing of Evans the Younger, but suppose Place would not ask without reason ... politics will be too costly for me at this rate.”

A long conversation at Tavistock's on **October 13th** shows that though Hobhouse's purse may be with the Westminster radicals, his heart is still with the Whigs. Lord Grey had said that “Tavistock's wearing Burdett's colours was enough to sicken a man of politics”. Even so, Grey “would knock Canning down if he dared intrude upon his house”. Lady Jersey has (it appears) been asked by Sir Robert Wilson to send Hobhouse a pamphlet refuting charges in the Quarterly that “he had given false report of a victory gained by the troops under him in Spain”. Lady Jersey affects snobbish surprise at being given such an errand; Hobhouse sends her an ironically groveling apology (the irony in which she won't see, being “a good-natured prattling body”). She had taken “Lord Templeton publicly to task for turning off his tailor for voting for Burdett”, and thus has her heart in the right place.

On **October 14th** he sends the letter, and has “bad sport” with the Brighton hounds. With Henry and “young Kinnaird” (otherwise unidentified) he goes to the theatre in Brighton on the evening of **October 15th**. They see “*Rob Roy* – really amusing”. He finally sends the unhappy Lackington a negative on **October 16th**, having been out with the Lewes hounds. Thereby ...

... I sacrifice a considerable monied advantage to my dear imaginary reputation – for I might have had £2,000 or £3,000 pounds for the job.

On **October 17th** he starts perusing John Evelyn’s memoirs, having read about them in the *Quarterly*. Also “singular” in that publication is ...

... The review on the state of the miserable – and worthy of that canting rascal Southey, from whom they say it comes – gross flattery of the Regent in [the] quotation from Shakespeare.

It is one of very few references to Byron’s mortal enemy in his best friend’s diary.

Hobhouse calls on Lady Bessborough, Caroline Lamb’s mother, whom we had not gathered to have been in Brighton. This part of the entry is printed, bowdlerized, at *Recollections of a Long Life*. It may help to bear in mind when reading it that Sheridan was rumoured in some quarters to have been Caroline Lamb’s father.

Lady Bessborough ... told me of Sheridan that when she went to see him three days before his death, he put her to sit on a trunk, the only sitting-place in the room. Mrs Sheridan told her not to tell him he was dying. He asked what she thought of his looks – she said his eyes were brilliant still. He then made some frightful answer about their being “fixed for eternity”. He took her hand and griped it hard. Then he told her that he gave her that token to assure her that if possible he would come to her after he was dead. Lady Bessborough was frightened, and said that he had persecuted her all his life and would now carry his persecution into death – why should he do so? “*Because*”, said Sheridan, “*I am resolved you shall remember me*”. He said more frightful things, and she withdrew in great terror.

The house was in the hands of the bailiffs, who were smoking and playing cards in a room below. Mrs Sheridan was dying in another room. Lady Bessborough got in by following a bailiff. She told me she believed Sheridan

had more of the devil in him than any man ever had, but owned he was not shabby about money – he did not intend to swindle. He and Miss Linley had each fifty lovers, but were still very jealous of each other. When at Chatsworth they always intercepted the postbag and created the most comic confusion.

I should think from Lady Bessborough's way of talking the story of Sheridan ravishing her must be true.

Sunday October 18th. Employed this morning in writing a letter to Foscolo, containing a critique of *Orlando in Roncesvalles*. He has written to me telling me he is ready to begin the Revolutions when I like, and wanting my opinion of Merivale's poem.

I walked about a little before dinner – dined at home ... sent my letter to my father.

On **October 19th** he rides with the Lewes hounds, and has "excellent sport". That evening they see Miss Kelly in Garrick's *The Country Girl*. Miss Kelly is "good – the rest bad".

All of this volume up to this date is written, Hobhouse assures us, after he has risen at midday on **October 20th**. On **October 21st** he rides with the Brighton hounds; on **October 22nd** he recalls nothing interesting that he did. On **October 23rd** he rides his little horse, and Henry his large horse, with the Lewes pack, and has "good sport". On **October 24th** he moves from Henry's house to Sir Benjamin's, but does not say why. **October 25th** finds him dining with Lady Bessborough, where he meets Richard Wellesley, and Henry Luttrell – who will be there at 50 Albemarle Street in 1824 when Byron's memoirs are burnt. Luttrell is "most agreeable".

The inactivity is getting burdensome to Hobhouse. On **October 26th** he decides to return to Whitton on **October 27th**. On that day he "takes the Times coach" to London, arriving at one. He buys a new hat, and goes to Whitton, where Henry, his wife Mary, and Charlotte are.

He and Henry walk on **October 28th** to East Moulsey, but Foscolo is not in. Hobhouse leaves him a note.

October 29th. Foscolo breakfasted with me this morning – we had a great deal of talk on projected historic work, and about himself – he is, poor fellow, in a sad way, and has actually parted with his watch, but his wants are not

moderate – £600 he counts upon as necessary for him – he would not dine ... I dined alone, the party being in London.

October 30th. Foscolo breakfasted, dined, and slept at Whitton – he was inimitably ludicrous – talked of his state of body and mind, showed us calculations in œconomy, tending to show the enormous expense of England. Foscolo knew all the details of Holland House – Lady Holland was a great manager – kept an account of everything – told him that their table cost them £9,000 a year – Foscolo said that Lord Holland was “foible”. Foscolo told us that the best people to live with were “poor quality.” He complains that in England in a hundred years no man got upon such a footing in a family as to allow him to come to pass the evening in his boots when he chose. He told me of Murray the bookseller that he was false, that he epigrammatised his friends [*compare Murray’s conversation at 28/4/18 and 15/2/20*], and had a *mot* against everyone. He got drunk with Foscolo and showed himself. Foscolo told us a girl of twenty-two, with £2,400, wanted to marry him – we advised him so to do, as, said he, “je ne suis pas amoureux”. He was delightful all day. He left with me something he has written on Parga.

Despite his lack of amorousness in 1818, Foscolo proposes to Hobhouse’s sister Matilda in March 1823. See 22/3/23. Hobhouse is disgusted at the idea. A work on Parga is given to Hobhouse to translate in May 1820, but Foscolo published an essay on the town, and on Ionian politics and history in general, as the first article in the *Edinburgh Review* for October 1819. For Parga, which the English were to hand to Ali Pacha in 1819, see *Childe Harold II* 665 (Stanza 5 of the song “*Tambourgi! Tambourgi!*”) and above, 9/11/09 and 14/11/09. I have argued (*The Sale of Parga and The Isles of Greece, Keats-Shelley Review* 2000, pp. 42-51) that this article was read by Byron and forms an important subtext to *Don Juan III*.

October 31st. Foscolo went after breakfast. I sat at home reading his *Parga*, &c.

Dined at home.

Sunday November 1st. At home in the morning. Walked alone to Twitnam – fine setting sun – home dined, &c. Sent back Foscolo’s *Parga* to Moulsey.

Mary, Henry’s wife, weeps when Hobhouse leaves Whitton on **November 2nd**; however, having been to London, he is back that night. After dinner father

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and sons have “a discourse, somewhat too warm, about Whitton – my father talked of his being sent to prison if he launched into great expenses for Harriet, and said that in that case he should prefer his health to hers – now this was exaggerating the facts terribly – Henry and I made him worth £15,000 a year, of which he owns to spending £8,000.”

Tuesday November 3rd 1818 is a long entry; there is justice in the fact, for what happens on that date determines the remainder of Hobhouse’s life. From this day on, he is doomed to be a politician.

Henry’s party set off for Gloucestershire, my father and I in a chaise for London. Arrived at Kinnaird’s – set off walking to go to Hanson’s, intending to do some business there, and perhaps leave London that day. Walking opposite Northumberland House, I heard two fellows saying, “Then we shall have a new election at Westminster”. Instantaneously came and went a sort of thought that one day or the other I should be Member for Westminster – I walked on to Hanson’s, and there, in his clerk’s room, saw the *Chronicle*, with a black-edged paragraph. “What? the Queen dead?” – “No. Sir Samuel Romilly has cut his throat.”

I did not know Romilly hardly [*see March 15th 1816*] – I had no pleasant recollections of him – but the news made me sick instantly. I could scarcely stand or breathe. I went up to Charles Hanson, and could say nothing of what I came about. He killed himself under most dreadful circumstances, after three weeks of want of sleep, and a protracted agony for the death of his wife. It was a brain fever, and such as Roget, his physician and nephew, and Dumont, who came with him from the Isle of Wight, ought to have guarded [against]. So is the universal opinion. Dumont, at the inquest held this day [*the verdict was insanity: see Don Juan I, stanza 15, which is in an undated letter to Murray, not in the original Ms.*], said he never could have contemplated such a man doing such a thing; and yet Romilly was notoriously an irritable man, and his calmness was the effect or rational restraint – it appears his great fear was of going mad himself.

The deed certainly lessened my opinion of him. He was mad, yes, but his madness was brought on because he could not resist the attacks of grief for the death of his wife [*something with which Hobhouse has no patience*]. It is singular, as mentioned in the paper, that in St Bride’s church is a tomb to a Mr Romilly who died about 1753 for grief of his wife’s death.

The *Chronicle* set up great lamentations – the *Courier* hinted some drawbacks and could not pity without some reserve against suicide. The

foolish *Chronicle* next day rejoined – the *Courier* then came out openly, and said that Romilly was not a great man, and that thousands such as he were born in every age – barbarous, perhaps, but I think true.

From Hanson's I went down the Strand and called at Brook's, the glass man, and chairman of the Westminster Committee. He was not at home. I left word that "what he did should be done quickly", as the government would be on the alert directly. I walked on to Place's, the tailor's, at Charing Cross, and left the same message. I certainly thought that the choice of the Committee would at once be directed to Kinnaird. I cannot tell how it was, but at the same time I had a sort of idea that something would happen to call me forward. I went twice to Place, calling between whiles at Mrs Leigh's, and found him at last with a handbill drawn out in favour of Douglas Kinnaird.

I went with the handbill to Kinnaird at his bank – he did not quite approve of its being issued at once, and I, on second thoughts, thought it wrong immediately on Romilly's death. Place had done it consulting only Henry Brooks, but showing it afterwards to Bentham and to Bickersteth. I went back to Place and told him my opinion, but he chose to do it, and issued the handbills in envelopes with his name to them.

I went to Brooks's [*sic: the club, not the chairman*] – saw Bennett. Haworth, M.P. for Evesham, asked me why I did not start for Westminster. I answered with Woodhouse's joke – "That if [I] *started*, all the world would *start*". Sir Robert Wilson, who was present, said it would not be good taste for Kinnaird to start. Byng, who was present, declared that a young Whig lord would be the man.

Bennett walked away with me, and we talked about Westminster. I asked him if he thought I could get the Bedford interest for Kinnaird by writing to Tavistock, and whether the Whigs would support, or bear, Kinnaird. He talked very moderately, deplored all dissensions, and said it was no harm my writing to Tavistock.

I went to Douglas Kinnaird at his bank. He wrote a letter to Tavistock, which I copied almost verbatim [*he wrote a letter of his own to Tavistock – he didn't make a fair copy of Kinnaird's letter*], leaving out only that to support Kinnaird was the *only* chance. "Why?" said Kinnaird. "It is, is it not? There is nobody left but *you!*" – "Oh," said I, "that is quite out of the question". Place had before told me that *he* had hesitated only about me, but that Kinnaird was first on the list. Now I knew that Place had told Bickersteth that the Reformers had made a great blunder in taking Kinnaird instead of me.

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Well, I copied my letter to Tavistock and sent it.

Walked back to Brooks's, and there Bennett said to me that the handbill was premature. I had seen him go to Place's – for this good man is a Whig, and consequently a trickster – he certainly told me that he did not know he would not vote for Kinnaird.

I dined at Bidwell's of the Foreign Office [*see May 16th and 23rd 1810*]. Present – Poodle Byng, Colonel Cooke, Kinnaird, and myself. Nothing particular passed. We talked of [Hudson] Lowe – he owed his appointment to Colonel Bunbury, who spoke to Lord Bathurst for him. Colonel Cooke told me that the story narrated in Las Casas' *The Letters from St Helena* about young Napoleon's bust [*see AoB 65*] was true – Mrs Tom Sheridan was there at the time, and told him of it.

Hobhouse, having no London base, "takes up his quarters" at Douglas Kinnaird's. On **November 4th** Michael Bruce breakfasts with them. Later that day, Hobhouse calls on Bickersteth, but says nothing of what passed. He also, without acknowledging it, writes a letter to Byron:

[Not in diary: Hobhouse's letter to Byron, November 4th, 1818:
(Source: text from National Library of Scotland Ms.43443 f.79; BB 249-51)
[Pour, / Le Très Honorable Milord / Milord Byron / Pair d'Angleterre / Messrs
Siri et Wilhalm / à Venise]

[*letter concludes at top of first sheet:*] Lady F. W. – As they are in some measure de tiennes, I suppose he makes love to one and hate to the other with your poetry – If I hear any thing from Chancery or any other Lane worth telling, I will write again soon – farewell

always your's truly,
J. C. H. –

November 4

My dear Byron –

I have this instant come from Spooney the younger: with whom I had as many words as the surprise and horror consequent upon seeing the suicide of Sir Sam'l: Romilly in the paper would permit. He cut his throat in a paroxysm of madness at the death of his wife, a solitary instance of so dreadful an act in a sexagenary – I expressed my discontent to young Hanson at his father's unaccountable conduct – he told me that he presumed some means

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might be taken to forward the papers – he hinted that perhaps you might move. I told him never, and I do think you are quite right in not stirring – The fellow must be insane – Do not, however, come quite to blows with him – until your purchase is complete and the money all safe – When you do commence, you may depend upon being stoutly backed by all of us – I have seen Kinnaird – he is in a deadly rage against your courier – so is your sister whom I saw this morning and who is looking very well – She tells me the Typhus Fever is at Kirkby together with Lady N. The prudent daughter has removed the Child – I have heard of

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you and your long hair – I trust you are well and do not suffer this fellow to vex you more than needful to correct his vagaries – I saw Murray this morning – he has nothing to communicate – I believe, but has set me upon translating some Italian sent by you – I am pleased at your opinion of the Essay which I did think would hit your fancy – It is but a compilation indeed, but I think the style is good – I have sent over four copies by Messeaglia of the Apollo library – pray favor me by taking one – The same man carries you my letter to Breme – who is not to be pardoned – I have heard from Hoppner, and am very much obliged to him for his correction of my two blunders. I will take care that the

1:4 [*above address:*] errors shall not stand in the next – When I saw S^t Luke's it was filled with lamps, and I have some excuse for misconstruing Imbrenati for I asked an Italian the meaning of the word the other day and he could not tell me – I presume you [*below address:*] are at M^r Gibbon's work – pray it may be so and “write next winter more essays on man” – There is no literary intelligence of any kind at least not of any kind that has met my ear this morning. S. B. D. is got into the hands of Lady C. L. and is deep in with [*letter concludes at top of first sheet*]

On **November 5th** there is a Committee meeting at Brooks's, where Place's handbill is voted down and the consensus is “for a public meeting as the only way to prevent calumny against the Junta” (that is, against them). Hobhouse is ostentatiously for Kinnaird, although when he says so, “Every man said, ‘Ah, we wish you were in parliament’”. At the Committee's request, he writes to Burdett asking if he will chair the meeting. Hobhouse and Scrope Davies dine with Kinnaird, who insists that he will not stand as a third candidate.

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That night they go to see Kean as Sir Giles Overreach. In the Duke of Gloucester's box they see "a most lovely woman", but she remains unidentified.

It is now necessary for them to secure the support of the mainstream Whigs. On **November 6th** Hobhouse writes to Lord Holland, deprecating an attack by Perry in the *Chronicle* on "the extreme faction" – conciliation is the order of the day. He hears from Kinnaird that Tavistock says his father, the Duke of Bedford, will not support Kinnaird. Hobhouse hears indirectly from Perry that the Whigs will not support Kinnaird, but *will* support *him*. He meets Tavistock, and they agree that "the case [is] almost hopeless as to the Whigs"; Hobhouse is still favouring his friend, and wonders "what getting the *neutrality* of the Whigs *might* do for Douglas Kinnaird".

Cooke, Byng and Davies dine with Hobhouse at Kinnaird's. A note from Tavistock asks Hobhouse to meet him at the theatre, but doesn't say which one. Hobhouse goes first to Covent Garden, but Tavistock's not there. He finds him at Drury Lane, in his father's box. There the news is that the Whigs won't support Kinnaird, but that half of them will support Hobhouse, and the rest will remain neutral. Kinnaird's case being hopeless, Hobhouse agrees to deliver him the "bitter pill". Kinnaird at that point enters the box. Hobhouse takes him into the street and tells him. "He was flushed, but said he would do for me what he had promised to do for Lord William []":

We both owned it was strange that we two should be settling the representation of Westminster a year after we were rowing at Venice. I made him promise he would take no public step.

It is necessary that no-one at Westminster should know of the communications both potential nominees have had with the mainstream Whigs, or they will think them, in effect, double agents; so on **November 7th** they agree to say nothing and to write nothing. That day, Hobhouse and Tavistock travel in Tavistock's sulky to Brighton. Sulkies were one-passenger vehicles, so it's a good thing they're friends. They gossip:

Tavistock told me that Lady Holland had been angry at Woburn because she had not the best bedroom. [She] would not come down to dinner, &c. She is so stingy that her cooks won't live with her. Fox [*her husband's uncle*] hated her.

In Brighton on Sunday **November 8th** Hobhouse is “dreadfully frightened” for Harriet, who has a fall from her horse. He reads Las Casas’ *Letters from St Helena*. On **November 9th** he rides with the Lewes hounds, and the family moves house. On **November 10th** a letter comes from Tavistock saying that his father, the Duke, will positively not support Kinnaird, but will support Hobhouse. James Perry has already told Sir Benjamin that “... he, Perry, would work day and night for me – ‘tell your excellent son so’”. Lord Holland does not help by a letter which Hobhouse receives on **November 11th**, saying “the requisition was judicious and ‘dextrous’, but attacking the Reformers”. Lord John Russell is thinking of standing, but Holland does not want him to. Hobhouse writes,

I feel quite embarrassed about Kinnaird, feeling sure that were he not in the way I should propose myself, and go down without opposition. Kinnaird does not write.

On **November 12th** Hobhouse writes to Kinnaird “begging him *not* to retreat”. He writes another to Lord Holland, telling him “I am not dextrous but sincere”. Bickersteth writes to him, telling him to “beware of the Whigs – Kinnaird will be more popular from their dislike of him.” On **November 13th** he and Tavistock go out with the Lewes hounds – “found a fox and ran him to earth on the cliff”. There is a big surprise after dinner, when Henry lets slip that Kinnaird had told him two days previously ...

... that he, Kinnaird, had no thoughts of standing for Westminster – this astonished me greatly – why not let me know, in order to allow me to take up my ground? Kinnaird said he was going to write, so my brother did not – surprising. I resolve to go to town tomorrow – all my family most eager I should. The public meeting [is] fixed for Tuesday next, and Sir Francis Burdett comes – so far, so good. Our little state [is] up in arms against Kinnaird for keeping me back.

Kinnaird’s attitude is made odder when, on **November 14th**, Hobhouse drives to town, goes to Kinnaird’s place at 43 Clarges Street, and finds no admittance. He dines and sleeps at Wattier’s.

Kinnaird’s pettishness at being turned down becomes clear on **November 15th**:

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After breakfast, go to Kinnaird's – find him reading to Davies a letter which he has written to Burdett, declaring *he* will *not* stand. I start – and ask him why he did not tell me so before. He answers, “Why, you told me *not* to retreat” – “Very true, but I did not tell you that if you did retreat you were *not* to let me know it!” I see now clearly that Kinnaird would not bring his mind to let me have a chance which he has lost.

When they're alone, Davies tells Hobhouse that Place is now suspicious of his good faith towards Kinnaird. This, however, he learns from Bickersteth, has arisen from Kinnaird's telling Place that he'd thought the meeting on November 5th had been “insane” and “ridiculous”. Hobhouse is able, from the written evidence, to show Place that all his support for Kinnaird has always been sincere. Place is philosophical: many of the reformers prefer Hobhouse to Kinnaird anyway. Kinnaird had known this, and had told Henry Hobhouse that Westminster was not worth representing.

“Between hypocrisy and prudence,” Hobhouse does not know how to act; but ends by dining with Kinnaird – following, I suppose, both promptings. Kinnaird goes to Brooks the chairman, and announces his unwillingness to stand.

On **November 16th** the rascally Whigs try their hand again at influencing Hobhouse. A note summons him to Lord John Russell in Hamilton Place. Russell tells him ...

... that had I been the original candidate instead of Kinnaird, very many of the Whigs would have voted for me. I told him distinctly that I was no party man, but had not and did not intend to abuse the Whigs – he seemed to understand me perfectly.

Later, Hobhouse learns that Place ...

... is perfectly satisfied of my devotion to Kinnaird and of his unfaithfulness to me. What a sad alternative.

That night (the night of the committee meeting at the Crown and Anchor) Hobhouse dines with Kinnaird, who is sulky all the evening, and tells him that his letter to Burdett announcing his resignation has gone. Hobhouse does not know whether to believe him or not.

The entry for **November 17th** is worth reading in full because it shows what a chaotic way the Westminster radicals operate, how sad a figure Kinnaird now cuts, and how dependant Hobhouse has become on Burdett.

Later Hobhouse records that it was on November 17th that the Queen died.

At nine Bickersteth calls. He comes from Burdett, to whom he has told all, and who is delighted. The Committee were unanimous for me last night. They send Burdett to know whether I should object to becoming a candidate, and going to the meeting today and making a speech. I am to let them know by eleven o'clock, and am to consult Burdett. I go to Burdett. He receives me most kindly and sees no objection to my being a candidate and going to the meeting.

Kinnaird's letter has not come!!! but Kinnaird is gone for it, and Burdett says he will act upon it.

I leave Burdett and go to Bruce. Find his wife ill. He kindly consents to go [with me] to the previous [sic: means "imminent"] meeting of my friends. We set off in a hackney coach. Go first to [the] Crown and Anchor, then to Brooks's. There we found them all at sixes and sevens, with nobody to move the resolution proposing me – this was at twelve o'clock. Go to the private room at the Crown and Anchor, and find Burdett and a large party. It is supposed the Major [Cartwright] will be started. Hunt is haranguing already. Wring from Bruce an unwilling consent to propose the resolutions. Proceed to the room. Burdett and Bruce, Clarke and I [*Clarke unidentified*] struggle through, several people shouting out my name.

Get over, and find myself near old Wishart. Wishart told me that he should propose Lord John Russell. Brooks had been to Wishart to tell him Kinnaird had withdrawn and I taken up, and desiring him to make good his word and support me. Wishart denied everything. The two old fellows were near coming to loggerheads in the room.

After Burdett spoke, Bruce still hesitated, but got up, and proposed the resolutions – at my name there was great applause, but some hissing. This animated Bruce, and he overcame everything. Then Thelwall spoke. Then I got up and delivered a speech from a few notes which I had before shown to Burdett, who approved. I had complete success, and walked away amidst loud shouts.

I went to enquire about Lady Parker [*now Bruce's wife*] – went to Kinnaird's [who had] heard no news of what had happened. Kinnaird's letter had been read by Burdett, and there was not a single word said, good or bad.

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I walked about until dark to Hyde Park Corner, and then, at six, proceeded to Davies' – there I found Burdett, who congratulated me, and, full of glee, told me the good news: *I had been nominated almost unanimously*. Cobbett had ten hands, Lord John Russell about twenty-five, and I the remainder of the 1,500 who were said to be in the room. Hunt had withdrawn Cobbett, and had offered to support me. Wishart had declared beforehand he would not disturb the unanimity of the meeting. Everything had concluded peacefully and triumphantly. Burdett was in great delight. Bickersteth came with accounts of how wonderfully Burdett had tranquillized the meeting.

We dined, and condoled on the fall of *Kinnaird*. We all agreed to shut our eyes and say nothing.

We went in the evening to Lady Oxford's, and heard her wild and charming daughter [*Lady Jane Harley: see June 24th 1812*] sing in the Italian fashion. She is very old [*Lady Jane is seventeen on November 12th*]. *Kinnaird* came – looked so strange and sheepish, and seemed to know he had done for himself with us. Poor fellow, he is to be pitied.

The need Hobhouse has for Burdett's advice and approval is only natural, given that this is his first election and given Burdett's vast experience (which includes a spell in the Tower). On **November 18th** he writes, having had his nomination confirmed by the Committee ...

... I go to Burdett with an Address I had written to the electors. He alters and advises. I find by the papers that Burdett would undertake my defence and that of my father most nobly, and that nothing would be like his power. I take leave of him, he being very sanguine indeed.

He then writes to the Committee, thanking them, and "telling them I can pay for nothing but the hustings &c." He then dines with Henry at the Piazza Coffee House, immortalized by Byron earlier in the year in *Beppo*. At Bickersteth's that night ...

... he persuades me with Cullen to leave out [*from the address*] what I said about "following the footsteps of illustrious predecessors". We have high words – but I consent, and we part good friends.

Lord John Russell calls first thing on the morning of **November 19th**, opens with the prophecy "you will give the election to Maxwell", and tells Hobhouse he

is not known enough. Hobhouse retorts that no-one else believes that. Russell refuses to allow Hobhouse to repeat what he now tells him, which is that he will not be a candidate himself, since “I don’t say but if upon a canvas you find yourself weak, I may start”. He then leaves, and they “part well”, but it’s not clear to Hobhouse why he came.

Foscolo calls. Hobhouse has already lent him £200, and now promises him £300 more for the materials he will write for Hobhouse’s book on Italian revolutions (the book is never written). Kinnaid and Davies come, “criticise”, and go; Foscolo and Hobhouse then “settle the letter”, which is “capital”.

At Place’s, Hobhouse hears that Perry has now put a condition on his supporting Hobhouse in the *Chronicle*: Hobhouse must declare for triennial parliaments. Hobhouse (who is averse to declaring for anything), says he’ll see him damned first – not because he doesn’t believe in triennial parliaments, but because he objects to the way Perry has already shifted his ground since his seemingly unconditional offer of November 10th.

Hobhouse goes to bed on **November 20th** “much annoyed”. He has been subject all day to various petty and stressful signals. Cullen brings a message from Bickersteth, criticising Hobhouse for wanting to put in the bit about “illustrious predecessors” – even though he, Bickersteth, had persuaded him not to put it in! Cullen also says that he has heard Hobhouse described as a “faithless” man:

This is an epithet I never deserved. I may have done undesigned mischief by tattling, but the deliberate betraying of trust I am incapable of, and as to attachment to my friends am, I hope, approved in some difficult circumstances.

He refers to Byron’s separation, and to the evidence of the Preface to *Childe Harold IV*.

The Westminster address has not been printed, which is “provoking”; and Henry tells him that Bennett, his supposed ally, “had been declaiming on the horrors of having two Burdettite members for Westminster”. If these are his friends, what of his multitudinous enemies, not just in the Tories, but among the Holland House Whigs?

He goes on **November 21st** to Brighton (on the Irresistible coach). Basil Cochrane, a relative of the great sailor, is one of his companions (they all declare for him politically), and “completely disculpated” his namesake from all responsibility in the Hoax which had got him imprisoned in 1814. Hobhouse says

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he will raise the issue if he gets into parliament. At Brighton, where the family are now living at German House, all are well except Harriet (“Harry”) who has a bad cold.

On **November 22nd** he finds that yet another of his supposed friends has taken umbrage at him. Lady Tavistock says her husband is angry with him because in his speech at the Crown and Anchor he had denied being of any great family. He rides out with Lady Shepherd, with whom he has a “foolish conversation” on religion, and walks on the Steyne with a Mr Campbell, who tells him that King Ferdinand VII of Spain is not the fool he’s thought to be; “but he stands upon the priesthood, and Campbell thought the basis would fail”. That night Hobhouse sleeps ill.

The return trip from Brighton to London on **November 23rd** takes from nine until four. He seeks out Tavistock, who says his wife got it wrong – he assumed that Hobhouse’s saying he was not of a great family was a dig at Lord John Russell, who is – Hobhouse assures him he was not thinking of Lord John when he said it.

He also objected to Hobhouse saying he “awaited the *orders* of the people”. Tavistock being a Whig well-disposed to him, Hobhouse says it might be best not to ask for a Whig vote, and Tavistock allows that “the Whigs are very sore”, but does not say why, though it’s not hard to guess. To them, Hobhouse is a talented man who ought logically to be on their side. It’s comparable to the horror Moore and Murray express when in 1822 Byron allies himself with the radicals Shelley and Hunt over the *Liberal*. It’s class betrayal.

In fact, Hobhouse is in a weird position of his own creation. The Whigs think of him as a radical, and some of the more perspicacious radicals think of him as a Whig.

The problem almost comes into focus at the Crown and Anchor, where he goes after dining alone at the Piazza, and is greeted with “great acclamations”. He is then put on the spot by a Mr Bowie, who “asked my opinion as to reform”. By this term is meant such questions as franchise extension, more frequent parliaments, realignment of constituencies, and the secret ballot. Hobhouse is constitutionally unable to address these issues in detail, for to do so would reveal what he is, namely, a Whig, and a snake-in-the-grass. He answers Bowie:

I stated distinctly that I was a *radical* Reformer, and referred to the resolution of the public meeting and to my own speech. Mr Clairin [*name hard to decipher*] was against my giving any pledge – but I spoke out, and satisfied Mr Bowie. Everything in great order; and Place working like a hero.

In other words, he answers Bowie without answering him, and seems to have the support of at least one of those present in doing so. These middle-class reformers are afraid that if their candidate comes out in favour of triennial parliaments and the secret ballot the public will associate him with such real, Painite radicals as Orator Hunt or William Cobbett.

He spends the rest of the evening mending fences with Bickersteth and Cullen.

Late at night on **November 24th**, at Robert Knight's, "Kinnaird and Sir John [Throcmorton] had a quarrel about annual parliaments and universal suffrage" – which shows that these things were discussed amongst the radical Whigs, as long as, like Kinnaird, they weren't standing for parliament and stood to lose nothing. Hobhouse does not tell us which side Kinnaird took. **November 25th** is passed in "a constant fever" of work. Hobhouse, his father and his brother dine at the Parliament Coffee House.

The two-faced villainy of James Perry, editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, is further evidenced when, on **November 26th**, that paper carries "an insolent letter trying to trap me either for or against universal suffrage – I am told to give no answer – this is Perry's first slap in the face, and proof that he 'would work day and night like a horse for me'" [*see above, Perry's promise to Sir Benjamin on November 10th*]. He dines with Kinnaird – with whom he's never ceased to be on good terms – and then goes to an election meeting at The Gun, Pimlico, where he gives a speech and finds there's "considerable spirit abroad". At home, there's a letter from Foscolo asking for more money, and it and the election give him a bad night.

On **November 27th** he hears that Burdett is contributing £1,000 towards his expenses. He dines with Davies. A speech he gives to the St James's electors at the Brewer Street assembly rooms "pleased the folks pretty much"; and he goes to Lord Oxford's:

... saw and heard his five girls [*notice Hobhouse's polite assumption that all Lady Oxford's daughters are also Lord Oxford's.*] That fine funny Alvanley came in – it is a sin talking to the ladies Harley as he and others do.

George Tierney, leader of the Whigs in the Commons, starts Hobhouse thinking cynically on **November 28th** by shaking his hand ...

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... a sign that these shabby fellows either mean some treachery or are making advances.

In fact,

The Whigs now give out that they do not intend starting anyone for Westminster.

Soon, they “start” George Lamb, who will, on March 3rd 1819, beat Hobhouse. That night, reports Hobhouse, “drank too much wine”. He has spent the day with Scrope Davies. Articles appear favouring him in the *Champion* and the *Examiner* for Sunday **November 29th**, when, having walked to Holland House, written his name down, and ridden back, he dines with Kinnaird and goes again to the Oxfords’, where ...

... heard Italian music – Madame Belloch, from Italy, Ambrogetti and the young ladies.

There are two meetings on **November 30th**. One is in Greek Street, Soho, where he addresses the parish of St Anne’s, and the other at the Red Lion, Princes Street, Westminster, “to meet a club of independents”. An “insolent” letter comes from William Smith, M.P. – he who is later to call Southey “a rancorous renegade” – but who is now, it seems, “a vulgar dog”.

Odds are against Hobhouse winning, at 2:1.

Foscolo calls early on the morning of **December 1st**. He is desperately hard up, wants £250 before Christmas, and four pounds a week for his notes on the Italian revolutions. In effect, he’s begging. All Hobhouse writes is, “I have advanced him £200 this year already [*see April 22nd, where he lends him £150*] – I know not what to do for him”.

Hobhouse dines with Kinnaird, then goes with Bickersteth and Davies to the Shakespeare Tavern, Great Russell Street, to address the electors of the Parish of St Paul’s. In answer to the chairman, who says that “success is the first object,” Hobhouse declares that “success was not my first object – that the preservation of the principle was the first object”. No concrete principles are mentioned, other than Hobhouse’s “resolution to stand upon no other than the popular interest”. This, it seems, pleases mightily. A Mr Pitt, who seemed at first to be hostile, declares himself for Hobhouse. Thelwall speaks “like a mad prophet”, but about

conciliation with the Whigs (who, after all, have yet to announce that they're running, and could therefore still be at one with the Committee).

As Hobhouse leaves, he hears himself called "a Dandy Candidate".

I went to Lady Oxford's with Bickersteth, Davies, and Harry. There I heard that the Whigs now deny that the ministers said they would not oppose Lord John Russell – what petty rascals! They find such a fact would do them discredit, and now deny that which they before spread, and which Tavistock told me a friend of his had seen under Lord Melville's handwriting.

The next day he receives a letter from Byron, telling him that Lord Lauderdale will soon hit town, with the manuscripts of *Mazeppa* and *Don Juan* safe in his portmanteau. Hobhouse has moved on, and so has Byron.

*[THE RECEPTION AND PUBLICATION OF DON JUAN IS COVERED IN
THE 1819 SECTION.]*