

Don Juan Canto Tenth.
edited by Peter Cochran

1.

When Newton saw an Apple fall,¹ he found,
In that slight startle from his Contemplation,
'Tis *said* (for I'll not answer above ground
For any Sage's Creed or Calculation)
A mode of proving that the Earth turned round 5
In a most natural whirl, called "Gravitation";
And thus is the sole Mortal who could grapple,
Since Adam, with a fall, or with an Apple.² –

1: *When Newton saw an Apple fall:* the legend linking Newton's theory of gravity with so mundane yet mythical an event as the falling of an apple (compare *Genesis* 2, 16-17, and 3, 1-7) was put into circulation by Voltaire, who heard it from Newton's niece: *Un jour, en l'année 1666, Newton, retiré à la campagne, et voyant tomber des fruits d'un arbre, à ce qu'a raconté sa nièce, se laissa aller à une méditation profonde sur la cause qui entraîne ainsi tous les corps dans une ligne qui, si elle était prolongée, passerait à peu près par le centre de la terre. (Éléments de la Philosophie de Newton, III iii).* Notice that Voltaire, like *Genesis*, does not specify an apple.

2: ... *the sole Mortal who could grapple, / Since Adam, with a fall, or with an Apple:* Newton died a virgin, a fact of which Byron may or may not have been aware. Juan – who should still be in our thoughts – has fallen a long way from such an ideal. His first promiscuous carnal encounter (with Dudù) was accompanied by another relation concerning apples: see above, VI sts.75-7.

2.

Man fell with Apples, and with Apples rose,³
 If this be true; for we must deem the mode 10
 In which Sir Isaac Newton could disclose
 Through the then unpaved stars the turnpike road⁴
 A thing to counterbalance human woes;
 For ever since immortal man hath glowed
 With all kinds of mechanics, and full soon 15
 Steam Engines will conduct him to the Moon.⁵ –

3.

And wherefore this Exordium?⁶ why, just now,
 In taking up this paltry sheet of paper,⁷
 My bosom underwent a glorious glow,
 And my internal Spirit cut a caper; 20
 And though so much inferior, as I know,
 To those who, by the dint of glass and vapour,
 Discover Stars, and sail in the Wind's Eye,⁸
 I wish to do as much by Poesy.⁹ –

3: *Man fell with Apples, and with Apples rose:* compare above, IX ll.439-40: ... *how [man] falls and rises, / Since, thou hast settled beyond all surmises.*

4: *Through the then unpaved stars the turnpike road:* compare above, I l.42 (*Horace makes this the Heroic turnpike road*). See also below, this canto, l.617 and n.

5: ... *mechanics, and full soon / Steam Engines will conduct him to the Moon:* Edward Williams, in a diary entry for January 6 1822, nine months before work started on this canto, reports: *He [Byron] has received letters from a mechanic at Bologna signed by a number of Professors at the University there, calling upon him to lend his name and pecuniary assistance to the furthering of the projection of a machine, with which a man, by the aid of wings is to elevate himself to any heighth [sic] – in short to fly – the whole is to be worked by steam and the weight of the engine is not considered any impediment. A small body has already been raised by a similar mechanism and made to fly around the room.* (Maria Gisborne and Edward E. Williams, *Shelley's Friends, their Journals and Letters*, p.123). Thomas Medwin reports the following Byronic exclamation: **“Where shall we set bounds to the power of steam? ... Might not the fable of Prometheus, and his stealing the fire, and of Briareus and his earth-born brothers, be but traditions of steam and its machinery? Who knows whether, when a comet shall approach this globe to destroy it, as it often has been and will be destroyed [compare above, IX, sts.37-40], men will not tear rocks from their foundations be means of steam, and hurl mountains, as the giants are said to have done, against the flaming mass? – and then we shall have traditions of Titans again, and of wars with Heaven.”** (*Conversations*, ed. Lovell, p.188: Medwin suspected a joke). Byron's use of the idea should be linked with his ironic amazement at other modern inventions and impostures, above, CI sts.128-32.

6: *Exordium:* a term from rhetoric meaning the introductory part of a discourse.

7: *this paltry sheet of paper:* the paper on which the opening of Canto X is written is, in fact, not of good quality.

8: ... *sail in the Wind's Eye ... In the Wind's Eye I have sailed:* to sail in the wind's eye is to make head against the wind; to endeavour heroically and skilfully against the odds. As applied to here to scientists it would be more apt as a description of Galileo (see below, XVII st.8) than of Newton.

9: *Poesy:* for Byron's use of this word in relation to Keats, see above, I st.95.

4.¹⁰

In the Wind's Eye I've sailed – and sail – but for 25
 The stars, I own my telescope is dim;¹¹
 But at the least I've Shunned the common shore,
 And, leaving land far out of sight, would skim
 The Ocean of Eternity;¹² the roar
 Of breakers has not daunted my slight, trim, 30
 But *still* Sea-worthy Skiff,¹³ and she may float
 Where Ships have foundered, as doth many a boat.

5.

We left our hero Juan in the *bloom*
 Of favouritism, but not yet in the *blush*;
 And far be't from my *Muses* to presume 35
 (For I've had more than one Muse at a push)¹⁴
 To follow him beyond the drawing room;¹⁵
 It is enough that Fortune found him flush
 Of Youth, and Vigour, Beauty, and those things
 Which for an instant clip Enjoyment's wings:¹⁶ 40

10: As Andrew Nicholson points out (*Byron IX*), the nautical imagery here may very well relate satirically to Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*, which Byron has already derided above, III, sts.98-100:

*Up goes my boat among the stars
 Through many a breathless field of light,
 Through many a long blue field of ether,
 Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her:
 Up goes my little boat so bright! ... and so on.*

11: ... *but for / The stars, I own my telescope is dim*: compare *TVOJ*, ll.842-3: *The telescope is gone / Which kept my optics free from all delusion*. King George III often had need of a telescope to aid his failing sight, and was often shown in caricatures squinting through one.

12: ... *would skim / The Ocean of Eternity*: with perhaps a glance at Shelley's *Adonais* (1821) in which Byron is named (st.30 l.3) *the Pilgrim of Eternity*.

13: *the roar / Of breakers has not daunted my slight, trim, / But still Sea-worthy Skiff*: perhaps a recollection of the longboat of the *Trinidad* in II above: see especially st.104.

14: (*For I've had more than one Muse at a push*): muses Byron could lay claim to having "had" during the composition of *Don Juan* might be Calliope (epic poetry) Clio (history) Terpsichore (lyric poetry, *inter alia*) and Erato (hymns). He could claim indirect encounters too with Melpomene (tragedy) and Thalia (comedy).

15: *beyond the drawing room*: see below, this canto, l.643, for the full implications of this phrase.

16: *Of Youth, and Vigour, Beauty, and those things / Which for an instant clip Enjoyment's wings*: it is not clear in what way these qualities clip the wings of Enjoyment.

6.

But soon they grow again, and leave their nest;
 “Oh!” saith the Psalmist, “that I had a Dove’s
 “Pinions to flee away, and be at rest!”¹⁷
 And who that recollects young years and loves,
 Though hoary now and withering, with a breast 45
 And palsied Fancy which no longer roves
 Beyond its dimmed eye’s sphere, but would much rather
 Sigh like his Son, than cough like his Grand Father?¹⁸

7.

But Sighs subside, and tears (even widow’s) shrink,
 Like Arno in the Summer,¹⁹ to a shallow 50
 So narrow as to shame their wintry brink,
 Which threatens inundations deep and yellow;
 Such difference doth a few months make, you’d think
 Grief a rich field which never would lie fallow; *
 No more it doth – its ploughs but change their boys, 55
 Who furrow some new soil to sow for Joys. –

17: “Oh!” saith the Psalmist, “that I had a Dove’s / “Pinions to flee away, and be at rest!”: refers to Psalm 55, ll.6-8: *And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.* The Psalmist is in fact dreaming of escape from the revilings of his enemies.

18: *And palsied Fancy which no longer roves / Beyond its dimmed eye’s sphere, but would much rather / Sigh like his Son, than cough ...* Andrew Nicholson (*Byron IX*) draws attention to the recurrence of the word palsy or palsied in Keats’ *The Eve of St. Agnes*; also an echo of Keats’ *Lamia* II 234 at l.40 here (*Philosophy will clip an Angel’s wings*); Keats’ *Fancy* opens, *Ever let the Fancy roam, / Pleasure never is at home ...* and this section may further echo the *Ode to a Nightingale*, st.3:

*Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs,
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.*

... *cough like his Grand Father* is, however, radically un-Keatsian.

19: *Like Arno in the Summer:* the Arno is the river on which Florence and Pisa stand. Byron had left Pisa, where Cantos VI-IX of *Don Juan* were written, for Genoa, on September 27 1822. Canto X was thus the first one to be written at Genoa – Byron’s last Italian base.

8.

But Coughs will come when Sighs depart,²⁰ and, now
 And then, before Sighs cease; for oft the one
 Will bring the other, ere the lake-like brow
 Is ruffled by a wrinkle, or the Sun 60
 Of life reach ten o'clock; and while a glow,
 Hectic and brief as Summer's Day nigh done,
 O'erspreads the Cheek which seems too pure for Clay,²¹
 Thousands blaze, love, hope, die – how happy they! –

9.

But Juan was not meant to die so soon; 65
 We left him in the focus of such Glory
 As may be won by favour of the Moon,²²
 Or ladies' fancies – rather transitory
 Perhaps; but who would scorn the Month of June,
 Because December with his breath so hoary 70
 Must come? much rather should he court the ray
 To hoard up warmth against a wintry day. –

10.

Besides, he had some qualities which fix
 Middle-aged ladies even more than young;
 The former know what's what, while new-fledged chicks 75
 Know little more of Love than what is sung
 In rhymes, or dreamed (for Fancy will play tricks)
 In visions of those skies from whence Love sprung;
 Some reckon women by their Suns, or Years –
 I rather think the Moon should date the Dears!²³ 80

20: *But Coughs will come when Sighs depart:* that is, old age and its pains will be upon us as soon as youth and its pains have left.

21: *... a glow, / Hectic and brief as Summer's Day nigh done, / O'erspreads the Cheek which seems too pure for Clay:* CPW refers to the deaths of Shelley and of Byron's daughter Allegra, which had occurred in mid-1822.

22: *such Glory / As may be won by favour of the Moon:* see the echo below at XI 1.109 (*the Moon's late Minion*) of *Henry IV i I ii 25*; though where there the reference is to Falstaff and his nocturnal depredations, here it is to women's cyclical fluxes.

23: *I rather think the Moon should date the Dears!:* refers offensively to the way in which the menstrual cycle affects women's judgement. Byron's thought echoes many others in *Don Juan* about the way bodily functions affect character and actions. See above, IX st.33.

11.

And why? because she's changeable and chaste;²⁴
 I know no other reason, whatsoe'er
 Suspicious people, who find fault in haste,
 May choose to tax me with – which is not fair –
 Nor flattering to “their temper or their taste”, 85
 As my friend Jeffrey writes with such an air²⁵ –
 However, I forgive him, and I trust
 He will forgive himself – if not, I must. –

24: *And why? because she's changeable and chaste*: disingenuous. Compare the reference to the moon above, I st.113.

25: *Nor flattering to “their temper or their taste” / As my friend Jeffrey writes with such an air*: On December 19 1821 Murray had published B.'s *Cain, Sardanapalus and The Two Foscari*; the last-named contained, in an appendix, an attack on Southey, inspired in part by Southey's attack on B. and Shelley, in the Preface to *A Vision of Judgment*, as leaders of a “Satanic School” of poetry. He had written, among other things: *Mr. S., with a cowardly ferocity, exults over the anticipated “death-bed repentance” of the objects of his dislike; and indulges himself in a pleasant “Vision of Judgment,” in prose as well as verse, full of impious impudence. What Mr S.'s sensations or ours may be in the awful moment of leaving this state of existence neither he nor we can pretend to decide. In common, I presume, with most men of any reflection, I have not waited for a “death-bed” to repent of many of my actions, notwithstanding the “diabolical pride” which this pitiful renegado in his rancour would impute to those who scorn him. Whether upon the whole the good or evil of my deeds may preponderate is not for me to ascertain; but, as my means and opportunities have been greater, I shall limit my present defence to an assertion (easily proved, if necessary) that I, “in my degree,” have done more good in any one given year, since I was twenty, than Mr. Southey in the whole course of his shifting and turncoat existence. There are several actions to which I can look back with an honest pride, not to be damped by the calumnies of a hireling.* Francis Jeffrey, editor and first-line contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, wrote, in a review of the three plays, *We think the abuse of Mr. Southey, both here and in some of Lord B.'s recent poetry, by far too savage and intemperate. It is of ill example, we think, in the literary world – and does no honour either to the temper or the taste of the noble author. For the Laureate's opinion on any question of politics or principle, no person certainly can entertain less respect than we do. But we conceive that the inconsistencies of his life, and the extravagance of his contradictory tenets, have long ago deprived him of all authority with reasonable men – and render his present personalities as insignificant as the earlier ones with which they may now be contrasted.* (*Edinburgh Review*, February 1822, p.445). B. is about to attack Southey again (see below, next stanza but one, and ll.291-2) and here offers Jeffrey a defiant olive-branch before demonstrating such indifference to his opinion. On June 8 1822 B. wrote to Moore: **“I have read the recent article by Jeffrey ... I suppose the long and the short of it is, that he wishes to provoke me to reply. But I won't, for I owe him a good turn still for his kindness by-gone. Indeed, I presume that the present opportunity of attacking me again was irresistible; and I can't blame him, knowing what human nature is”** (BLJ IX 170). The passage relating to Jeffrey is in part a way of drawing attention away from the controversial statement which B. has just made about women's menstrual cycles.

12.

Old Enemies who have become new friends
 Should so continue; 'tis a point of honour, 90
 And I know nothing which could make amends
 For a return to Hatred; I would shun her
 Like garlic, howsoever she extends
 Her hundred arms and legs, and fain outrun her;²⁶
 Old flames, new Wives, become our bitterest foes; 95
 Converted foes should scorn to join with those. –

13.

This were the worst desertion; renegadoes –
 Even shuffling Southey, that Incarnate Lie –
 Would scarcely join again the “reformadoes”
 Whom he forsook to fill the Laureate’s Sty;²⁷ 100
 And honest men from Iceland to Barbadoes,
 Whether in Caledon or Italy,²⁸
 Should not veer round with every breath,²⁹ nor seize
 To pain, the moment when you cease to please.

* “Reformers”, or rather “reformed”: the Baron Bradwardine in *Waverley* is authority for the word.

26: *Hatred ... howsoever she extends / Her hundred arms and legs, and fain outrun her:* the monster Briaereus had a hundred hands and fifty heads; no mythological creature is gifted with a hundred legs as well. B. is coining a new figure of hatred on the spur of the moment.

27: *Even shuffling Southey, that Incarnate Lie – / Would scarcely join again the “reformadoes” / Whom he forsook to fill the Laureate’s Sty:* a complex and obscure reference. B.’s uneasy disgust with Southey’s seemingly opportunistic changeability, from radical to Tory, from pantisocrat to Poet Laureate (representative of all the race – see above, Dedication, l.2) is a recurring theme in *Don Juan*. Reformadoes would imply in this context radicals, or left-wing revolutionists. But in Scott’s *Waverley* (Chapter 44) the word is applied by the antiquarian pedant Bradwardine to Jacobite officers who have debauched themselves in Edinburgh before the Battle of Prestonpans, and are having difficulty in catching up to take their place in the advancing columns. They are men who have (temporarily) forsaken, rather than those who have been forsaken, and whose companies have been “re-formed” (disbanded and reconstituted) in their absence. The radicals in England (including John Hunt, publisher now of *Don Juan*) were indeed very different from the Jacobins of Southey’s youth – it remains a dark reference nonetheless.

28: *honest men from Iceland to Barbadoes, / Whether in Caledon or Italy:* B. seems to have had no acquaintances in either Iceland or Barbados: but Jeffrey lived in “Caledon” (Caledonia – Scotland) while he (B.) lived in Italy.

29: *... And honest men ... / Should not veer round with every breath:* see, for example, B. himself, who sails *In the Wind’s Eye* (above, this canto, l.25).

14.

The lawyer and the Critic³⁰ but behold 105
 The baser sides of literature and life,
 And nought remains unseen, but much untold
 By those who scan those double vales of Strife
 While common men grow ignorantly old;
 The Lawyer's brief is like the Surgeon's knife, 110
 Dissecting the whole inside of a question,
 And with it all the process of digestion.

15.

A legal broom's a moral chimney-sweeper,³¹
 And that's the reason he himself's so dirty:
 The endless soot bestows a taint far deeper 115
 Than can be hid by altering his shirt; he³²
 Retains the sable stains of the dark creeper,
 At least some twenty-nine do out of thirty,
 In all their habits: – Not so *you*, I own;
 As Cæsar wore his robe you wear your gown.³³ 120

* Query, *suit?* – PRINTER'S DEVIL.

16.

And all our little feuds, least all *mine*,
 Dear Jeffrey, once my most redoubted foe,³⁴
 (As far as rhyme and Criticism combine
 To make such puppets of us things below)
 Are over; here's a health to "Auld Lang Syne!"³⁵ 125
 I do not know you – and may never know
 Your face³⁶ – but you have acted on the whole *
 Most nobly, and I own it from my Soul. –

30: *The lawyer and the Critic ...*: Jeffrey was a barrister as well as literary man.

31: *A legal broom's a moral chimney-sweeper*: B. puns on the name of Henry Brougham, for whom, see above, I, rejected stanzas (unpublished in B.'s lifetime). His elaborately-expressed detestation there is here skilfully condensed.

32: ... *a taint far deeper / Than can be hid by altering his shirt*: for a previous joke about Brougham's shirt, see Brougham Stanzas ll.35-6 (above, Canto I).

33: *As Cæsar wore his robe you wear your gown*: in fact, ambiguous. The line means either that Jeffrey wore his barrister's gown as stylishly as Caesar did his toga, or that Jeffrey hid his critical face behind his barrister's gown as Caesar hid his face in his toga when he was assassinated.

34: *Dear Jeffrey, once my most redoubted foe*: B. never learned who really had harshly reviewed his early volume *Hours of Idleness* in the *Edinburgh Review* for January 1808, and always assumed that it had been Jeffrey. Ironically in the present context, it had in fact been Brougham.

35: "*Auld Lang Syne!*": Scots song (the phrase means literally "Old Long Since") attributed inaccurately to Burns.

36: *I do not know you – and may never know / Your face*: B. and Jeffrey never met.

17.

And when I use the phrase of “Auld Lang Syne!”
 ’Tis not addressed to you – the more’s the pity 130
 For me – for I would rather take my wine
 With you, than aught (save Scott) in your proud City;³⁷
 But Somehow – it may seem a Schoolboy’s whine,
 And yet I seek not to be grand, nor witty –
 But I am half a Scot, by birth – and bred 135
 A whole one,³⁸ and my heart flies to my head,

18

As “Auld Lang Syne” brings Scotland, one and all –
 Scotch plaids, Scotch Snoods, the Blue hills, and Clear Streams,³⁹
 The Dee, the Don, Balgounie’s brig’s *black wall*,⁴⁰
 All my boy feelings – all my gentler dreams 140
 Of what I *then dreamt*, cloathed in their own pall;
 Like Banquo’s Offspring⁴¹ floating past me seems
 My Childhood in this Childishness of mine –
 I care not; ’tis a Glimpse of “Auld lang Syne.” –

* The brig of Don near the “auld toun” of Aberdeen, with its one Arch, and its black deep Salmon Stream below, is in my memory as yesterday. I still remember, though perhaps I may misquote, the awful proverb which made me pause to cross it, and yet lean over it with a childish delight, as being an only Son, at least by the mother’s side. The Saying as recollected by me was this, but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age:

“Brig of Balgounie – *black’s* your *Wa’*,
 “Wi’a wife’s *ae Son*, and a Mear’s *ae foal*,
 “Doun ye shall fa’!”

37: ... *for I would rather take my wine / With you, than aught (save Scott) in your proud City:* “Read ... “Tales of my Landlord”, – grand work – Scotch Fielding, as well as great English poet – wonderful man! I long to get drunk with him” (*Ravenna Journal*, January 5 1821: BLJ VIII 13).

38: *But I am half a Scot, by birth – and bred / A whole one:* B. had written to Scott on January 12 1822: “**To me those novels have so much of ‘Auld lang syne’ (I was bred a canny Scot till ten years old) that I never move without them ...**” (BLJ IX 86-7).

39: *Scotch plaids, Scotch Snoods:* the plaid is the outer article of the Highland costume; a snood is a distinctive hair-band worn by young unmarried women (both OED).

40: *The Dee, the Don, Balgounie’s brig’s black wall:* the Dee and the Don are the two rivers which flow into the sea to the south and north, respectively, of Aberdeen, where B. lived from the ages of three to ten. The tall, single-arched Bridge of Balgounie, built by Robert the Bruce in 1320, commands a view of the Don estuary. It has never fallen down, even under a load interdicted by curse.

41: *Banquo’s Offspring floating past me:* in this punctuation, the line compares his childhood with the triumphant apparition of Scots kings (descendants of the murdered Banquo) at *Macbeth* IV i 112-24. The comparison would make his maturity a period of guilty and sterile despair.

19.

And though, as you remember, in a fit 145
 Of wrath and rhyme, when Juvenile and Curly,⁴²
 I railed at Scots to show my rage and wit –
 Which, must be owned, was sensitive and surly,
 Yet 'tis in vain such sallies to permit –
 They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early; 150
 I “scotched, not killed” the Scotchman in my blood,⁴³
 And love the land of “Mountain and of Flood”.⁴⁴

20.

Don Juan, who was real, or ideal,
 For both are much the same,⁴⁵ since what men think
 Exists when once the thinkers are less real 155
 Than what they thought, for Mind can never sink,
 And 'Gainst the body makes a strong appeal;⁴⁶
 And yet tis very puzzling, on the brink
 Of what is called Eternity, to stare,
 And know no more of what is here than there.⁴⁷ 160

42: ... *in a fit / Of wrath and rhyme, when Juvenile and Curly*: a double reference, to his satires *English Bards, and Scotch Reviewers* (1809) and *The Curse of Minerva* (1811). Andrew Nicholson points out (*Byron IX*) a quotation from Moore's satirical *Horace, Ode XI Lib. II. Freely translated by G.R. from Trifles* (1814): *All gentle and juvenile, curly and gay*.

43: *I “scotched, not killed” the Scotchman in my blood*: another *Macbeth* quotation (III ii 13-15) with a twisted ring: *the Scotchman* would, if placed accurately in context, be a thing he still wished to exterminate.

44: ... *the land of “Mountain and of Flood”*: B. quotes from a patriotic section of Scott's poem *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805: VI ii 1-4):

*O Caledonia! stern and wild,
 Meet nurse for a poetic child
 Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
 Land of the mountain and the flood ...*

45: *Don Juan, who was real, or ideal, / For both are much the same*: a casual contrast to the usually strong anti-Platonic bent of B.'s way of looking at the world. Compare above, II, ll.942-4, and 1685-18; or *Beppo*, st.13.

46: ... *Mind can never sink, / And 'Gainst the body makes a strong appeal*: another reversal of the normal Byronic mockery of mind as feeble in its struggle against body. Notice that B. at once contradicts himself at ll.163-4 below.

47: *And know no more of what is here than there*: an anticipation of the more ironical reference to Bishop Berkeley's idealism, above, XI st.1.

21.

Don Juan grew a very polished Russian –
 How, we won't mention, *why*, we need not say –
Few youthful Minds can stand the strong Concussion
 Of any slight temptation in their way –
But *His* just now were spread as is a Cushion, 165
 Smoothed for a Monarch's seat of Honour; Gay
Damsels, and dances, revels, ready Money,⁴⁸
Made Ice seem Paradise, and Winter sunny.⁴⁹

22.

The favour of the Empress was agreeable,
 And though the duty waxed a little hard, 170
Young People at his time of Life should be able
 To come off handsomely in that regard;⁵⁰
He now was growing up like a green tree; able
 For love, war, or ambition, which reward
Their luckier votaries, till old Age's tedium 175
Make some prefer the Circulating Medium.⁵¹

23.

About this time, as might have been anticipated,
 Seduced by youth, and dangerous examples,
Don Juan grew, I fear, a little dissipated,
 Which is a sad thing, and not only tramples⁵² 180
On our fresh feelings – but as being participated⁵³
 With all kinds of incorrigible samples
Of frail Humanity – must make us selfish,
And shut our Souls up in us like a Shell-fish.

48: ... *ready Money*: see above, IX 1.630 and n.

49: *Made Ice seem Paradise, and Winter sunny*: Andrew Nicholson (*Byron IX*) notes the echo of Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, 35-6:

*It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!*

50: ... *the duty waxed a little hard ... come off handsomely*: double-entendre.

51: ... *till Age's tedium / Make some prefer the Circulating Medium*: that is, till impotence and indifference makes people incline to Avarice rather than sex (*the Circulating Medium*: money). Compare above, I st.216.

52: ... *a little dissipated, / Which is a sad thing*: B. speaks from experience.

53: *On our fresh feelings – but as being participated*: scansion problematical.

24.

This we pass over; we will also pass 185
The usual progress of Intrigues between
Unequal Matches, such as are alas!
A young Lieutenant's with a *not old* Queen,
But one who is not so youthful as she was
In all the royalty of sweet seventeen; 190
Sovereigns may sway Materials, but not Matter,⁵⁴
And Wrinkles, the d—d democrats! won't flatter.

25.

And Death, the Sovereign's Sovereign, though the great
Gracchus of all Mortality, who levels
With his *Agrarian* laws the high estate 195
Of him who feasts, and fights, and roars,⁵⁵ and revels
To one small grass-grown patch (which must await
Corruption for its Crop) with the poor devils
Who never had a foot of land till now;
Death's a reformer, all men must allow. 200

54: *Sovereigns may sway Materials, but not Matter*: materials are here the accidental forms matter takes while under man's temporary control; matter is physical stuff itself.

55: ... *the great / Gracchus of all Mortality, who levels / With his Agrarian laws the high estate / Of him who feasts, and fights, and roars, and revels*: Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus (168-133 BC); as Tribune of the People in his last year, he tried to revivify an existing law which took excess land from the wealthy and redistributed it among the poor. However, the poor were persuaded to turn against him, and he and three hundred of his followers were murdered. A classical Leveller, therefore – in ambition; part of his intention was to improve the quality of the Roman fighting man.

He lived (not Death, but Juan)⁵⁶ in a hurry
 Of Waste, and haste, and glare, and gloss, and glitter,
 In this gay clime of bearskins black and furry,
 Which (though I hate to say a thing that's bitter)
 Peep out sometimes, when things are in a flurry, 205
 Through all the "purple and fine linen", fitter
 For Babylon's than Russia's royal harlot⁵⁷ –
 And neutralize her outward Show of Scarlet.⁵⁸

56: *He lived (not Death, but Juan):* compare above, I 1.721: *He, Juan (and not Wordsworth) ...*

57: *... fitter / For Babylon's than Russia's royal harlot:* more apt for the pagan Semiramis than for the Christian Catherine. For Semiramis, see above, V ll.471-88 and nn. Catherine was commonly referred to as "the Semiramis of the North"; Juan, currently committing fornication with her (see third quotation in previous note) is damned, as surely as is Dives in the *Luke* parable (see second quotation in previous note).

58: *Through all the "purple and fine linen", fitter / For Babylon's than Russia's royal harlot – / And neutralize her outward Show of Scarlet:* DJV points out a cluster of Biblical references (and CPW appropriates the note without acknowledgement): firstly, Exodus, 25, opening: *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall make my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them: gold, and silver, and brass, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen ...;* secondly, Luke, 16 19: *There was a certain rich man [Dives], who was clothed in purple and fine linen ...;* thirdly, Revelations, 17 1-6: *Come hither; I will shew unto thee judgement of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication ... I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.*

27.

And this same state we won't describe;⁵⁹ we could,
 Perhaps, from hearsay, or from recollection, 210
 But getting nigh "grim Dante's obscure Wood",⁶⁰
 That horrid Equinox, that hateful section
 Of Human years – that half-way house – that rude
 Hut, whence wise travellers drive with circumspection
 Life's sad post-horses o'er the dreary frontier 215
 Of Age – and, looking back, to Youth give *one* tear.

28.

I won't describe – that is, if I can help
 Description;⁶¹ and I won't reflect – that is,
 If I can stave off Thought, which as a whelp
 Clings to its teat, sticks to me through the Abyss 220
 Of this odd labyrinth;⁶² or as the kelp⁶³
 Holds by the rock, or as a lover's kiss
 Drains its first draught of lips; but, as I said,
 I *won't* philosophize, and *will* be read.⁶⁴

29.

Juan, instead of courting courts, was courted, 225
 A thing which happens rarely; this he owed
 Much to his Youth, and much to his reported
 Valour, much also to the blood he showed,
 Like a race horse; much to each dress he sported,⁶⁵
 Which set the Beauty off which in he glowed 230
 As purple Clouds befringe the Sun;⁶⁶ but *Most*
 He owed to an Old Woman, and his Post.⁶⁷ –

59: ... *we won't describe*: compare above, V, st.52, and IX ll.333-4.

60: ... *getting nigh "grim Dante's obscure Wood"*: see *Inferno*, I, 2: *Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura*. As CPW points out (with a slight inaccuracy) B. was at the time of writing thirty-four, one year younger than Dante was when he imagined himself descending into Hell.

61: *I won't describe – that is, if I can help / Description*: by now an obsessive idea: see last note but one.

62: ... *this odd labyrinth*: either life, or the writing of *Don Juan*.

63: ... *kelp*: a large seaweed which when burnt provided iodine, useful in the manufacture of soap and glass.

64: *I won't philosophize, and will be read*: only in part disingenuous.

65: ... *much to each dress he sported*: for Juan's dress, see above, IX, sts.43-5.

66: *As purple Clouds befringe the Sun*: for the Biblical implications of the colour *purple*, see above, this canto, l.206 and n.

67: ... *an Old Woman, and his Post*: *double entendre*. B. had used the pun the previous year (1821) at TVOJ, line 432: *We know their posts are nobler far than these*. *The Vision* was published on October 15 1822, ten days after B. finished this canto.

30.

He wrote to Spain; and all his near relations,
Perceiving he was in a handsome way
Of getting on himself, and finding stations 235
For Cousins also, answered the same day;
Several prepared themselves for Emigrations,
And, eating Ices, were o'erheard to say
That, with the addition of a slight pelisse,⁶⁸
Madrid's and Moscow's Climes were of a piece. 240

31.

His Mother, Donna Inez,⁶⁹ finding too
That in the lieu of drawing on his banker,
Where his Assetts were waxing rather few,⁷⁰
He'd brought his Spending to a handsome anchor,⁷¹
Replied, "That She was glad to see him through 245
"Those pleasures after which wild Youth will hanker –
"As the sole sign of Man's being in his senses
"Is, learning to reduce his past expences."⁷²

68: *a slight pelisse*: a pelisse is a fur cloak.

69: *His Mother, Donna Inez ...*: a character un-referred-to since II.1.114.

70: *... his banker, / Where his Assetts were waxing rather few*: it is hard to see at which point or points in the narrative Juan – who has been either enslaved or isolated from civilisation ever since he left Spain – could have made use of the letters of credit referred to above at II.1.72.

71: *He'd brought his Spending to a handsome anchor: double entendre*.

72: *... the sole sign of Man's being in his senses / "Is, learning to reduce his past expences."*: though in the mouth of the wilfully short-sighted and canting Inez this line is a joke, the ethic is one which B. was himself actually following by this time in his life. See letters to Kinnaird, February 19 1822: "**They say 'Knowledge is power' – I used to think so, but they meant 'Money' – who said so – & when Socrates declared 'that all he knew was that he knew nothing' – he merely intended to declare that he had not a drachma in the Athenian World.** – (BLJ IX 108) or September 12 1822: **In short – Doug. – the longer I live – the more I perceive that Money (honestly come by) is the Philosopher's Stone ... my avarice – or cupidity – is not selfish – for my table don't cost four shillings a day – and except horses and helping all kinds of patriots – (I have long ago given up costly harlotry) I have no violent expences"** (BLJ IX 207 – notice spelling of last word).

32.

She also recommended him to God,
 “And no less to God’s Son, as well as Mother, 250
 “Warned him against Greek Worship,⁷³ which looks odd
 “In Catholic eyes – but told him, too, to smother
 “*Outward* dislike, which don’t look well abroad;
 “Informed him that he had a little brother,
 “Born in a second wedlock,⁷⁴ and above 255
 “All, praised the Empress’s *maternal* love.⁷⁵

33.

“She could not too much give her approbation
 “Unto an Empress who preferred young Men,⁷⁶
 “Whose Age – and what was better still, whose nation,
 “And Climate – stopped all Scandal now and then, 260
 “At home it might have given her some vexation
 “But where Thermometers sunk down to ten –
 “Or five – or one – or zero – She could never
 Believe that Virtue thawed before the River.⁷⁷

73: *Warned him against Greek Worship*: that is, Russian Orthodoxy.

74: ... *he had a little brother* – / “*Born in a second wedlock*: a little-discussed gloss on Inez’s second marriage is sketched by Elizabeth Boyd (*Byron’s Don Juan A Critical Study*, p.65). This holds that Inez, previously involved with Alfonso, was jealous of Julia, and used Juan to destroy her marriage. Her second husband is thus Alfonso. See I, ll.527-36. Hereby Juan will have cuckolded and beaten-up his own future step-father. Boyd expresses an indebtedness to Professor H.M.Jones for the theory.

75: ... *above* / “*All, praised the Empress’s maternal love*: inverted and repressed Oedipal jealousy

76: “*She could not too much much give her approbation* / “*Unto an Empress who preferred young Men*: for an echo of Inez’s supposed naivety, see above, IX ll.670-1n (second paragraph) in which the Anglican William Tooke denies that there could possibly be anything carnal in the relationships between the older Catherine and her favourites.

77: ... *where Thermometers sunk down to ten* – / “*Or five – or one – or zero – She could never* / *Believe that Virtue thawed before the River*: (i) she underrates the harshness of the Russian winter (ii) the idea (ironically and implicitly implied via her faux-naïveté) of sex in Russia under any circumstances, is a new concession from B., who had previously denied the possibility of love in freezing conditions. Here is *The Giaour*, 1099-1102:

“*The cold in clime are cold in blood,*
Their love can scarce deserve the name;
But mine is like the lava flood
That boils in Ætna’s breast of flame.

Above, at I st.64, B. speaks playfully, but says the same.

34.

Oh for a *forty Parson-power* to chaunt 265
 Thy praise, Hypocrisy! Oh for a hymn
 Loud as the Virtues thou dost loudly vaunt,
 Not practise! Oh for trumps of Cherubim!
 Or the ear trumpet of my good old Aunt,⁷⁸
 Who, though her Spectacles at last grew dim, 270
 Drew quiet Consolation through its hint,
 When She no more could read the pious print. –

* A metaphor taken from the “forty horse power” of a Steam Engine – that mad wag the Rev^d. Sydney Smith, sitting by a brother Clergyman at dinner, observed afterwards that his dull neighbour had “a *twelve Parson power*” of Conversation.⁷⁹

35.

She was no hypocrite, at least, poor Soul,
 But went to Heaven in as sincere a way
 As any body on the Elected Roll – 275
 Which portions out upon the Judgement Day
 Heaven’s freeholds, in a sort of Domesday Scroll⁸⁰ –
 Such as the Conqueror William did repay
 His knights with; lotting others’ properties
 Into some sixty thousand new Knights’ fees.⁸¹ 280

78: *Or the ear trumpet of my good old Aunt:* B. to Augusta, 25 October 1804: “... **what’s become of our aunt the amiable antiquated *Sophia*? is she yet in the land of the living, or does she sing psalms with the *Blessed* in the other world?” (BLJ I 53). This aunt was Sophia Maria, daughter of his admired Grand Dad (see above, II 1.1096); her death seems unrecorded. His other “aunt” was the Hon. Mrs Frances Byron, wife to his father’s brother. She had recently died, in June 1822.**

79: *Oh for a forty Parson-power to chaunt / Thy praise, Hypocrisy!:* could stand as the epigraph to the entire poem. B.’s choice of the ecclesiastical *chaunt* is excellent. For steam-engines, see above, this canto, ll.5-16 and n. For the wit of Sydney Smith (1771-1845) see BLJ III 214 and n, and IV 252.

80: ... *the Elected Roll – / Which portions out upon the Judgement Day / Heaven’s freeholds, in a sort of Domesday Scroll:* (i) satirical mixture of legal and theological phrasing (ii) reference to the Seals of Joanna Southcote, which were given out to her elect as tokens of salvation (iii) casts William the Conqueror (see next note) in the role of God. All three jokes devalue implicitly the authentic Christian concept of redemption.

81: *Such as the Conqueror William did repay / His knights with; lotting others’ properties / Into some sixty thousand new Knights’ fees:* William in fact arrived with only five thousand “knights”, though B. was not to know that, and may not have cared, pedantic as he liked his historical accuracy to be.

38.

I can't complain, whose Ancestors are there –
 Erneis, Radulphus⁸² – eight and forty manors
 (If that my memory doth not greatly err)
 Were their reward for following Billy's banners,⁸³
 And though I can't help thinking, 'twas scarce fair 285
 To strip the Saxons of their "Hydes", like tanners,
 Yet as they founded Churches with the produce,
 You'll deem no doubt they put it to good use.

* "Hyde": I believe a hyde of land to be a legitimate word, and as such subject to the tax of a quibble.⁸⁴

37.

The gentle Juan flourished, though at times
 He felt like other plants called Sensitive,⁸⁵ 290
 Which shrink from touch, as Monarchs do from rhymes,
 Save such as Southey can afford to give;⁸⁶
 Perhaps he longed, in bitter frosts, for climes
 In which the Neva's Ice⁸⁷ would cease to live
 Before May-Day; perhaps, despite his Duty, 295
 In Royalty's Vast Arms he sighed for Beauty.

82: *I can't complain, whose Ancestors are there – / Erneis, Radulphus:* B. was descended from Ralph de Burun (*perhaps* "Radulphus") who is recorded in the eleventh section of the Domesday Book as holding eight lordships in Nottinghamshire and five in Derbyshire; there is no trace of anyone called "Erneis" in his pedigree.

83: *... following Billy's banners:* that is, coming over with the Conqueror in 1066. It is not clear that B. is proud of his ancestor's having been a Norman imperialist lackey.

84: *... 'twas scarce fair / To strip the Saxons of their "Hydes", like tanners:* a pun, implying deprive the Saxons (i) of their territory (a hyde was 120 acres) and (ii) of the skins from their backs. The note involves a further play with the double meaning of *tax of a quibble*: (i) the burden of a piece of legal pedantry (ii) the irritation of a pun. *Legitimate* discourse may thus be subverted from within, using its own structures. The note is a more considered version of the one deleted from received st.35.

85: *... at times / He felt like other plants called Sensitive:* a reference to Shelley's *The Sensitive Plant* (1820: the phrase also refers to the male member). In Shelley's poem the Plant withers from cold:

*And under the root of the Sensitive Plant
 The moles and the dormice died for want;
 The birds dropped stiff from the frozen air
 And were caught in the branches naked and bare ...*

Though B. was passionate in his defence of Shelley's morality (see BLJ IX 189-90, X 69) there is little or no praise for Shelley's poetry in his writing.

86: *Save such as Southey can afford to give:* links Juan's sexual servicing of tyrants with Southey's poetical servicing of the same: though compare the politics of B.'s own ancestors (284n above). The fate of the poem's protagonist is from now on bound up with that of its super-dedicatee (see above, Dedication, ll.1-2) and, by implication, with that of the poet himself.

87: *... the Neva's Ice:* the Neva (stress on the second syllable) is the river on which St. Petersburg stands.

38.

Perhaps – but, sans perhaps, we need not seek
For causes, young or old; the Canker-worm
Will feed upon the fairest, freshest cheek,
As well as further drain the withered form; 300
Care, like a Housekeeper, brings every week
His bills in,⁸⁸ and however we may storm,
They must be paid; though six days smoothly run,
The Seventh will bring blue devils, or a dun.⁸⁹ –

39.

I don't know how it was, but he grew sick; 305
The Empress was alarmed, and her physician
(The same who physicked Peter)⁹⁰ found the tick
Of his fierce pulse betoken a Condition
Which augured of the Dead, however *Quick*
Itself; and showed a feverish disposition; 310
At which the whole Court was extremely troubled,
The Sovereign shocked, and all his Medicines doubled.

88: *Care, like a Housekeeper, brings every week / His bills in:* a recurrent theme of *Don Juan* is the way in which fate repeatedly insists that we pay for our pleasures: see above, I ll.1460 (*A Sort of Income-tax laid on by Fate*) or below, this canto, l.625 (*Alas! how deeply painful is all payment!*).

89: ... *though six days smoothly run, / The Seventh will bring blue devils, or a dun:* blue devils, or the blues, are despondency of any kind (see also below, XIV, 79, 8, or XV, 4, 4); a dun is an urgent request for payment of an overdue account – it is a word associated with bailiffs.

90: ... *her physician / (The same who physicked Peter):* Catherine's physician was Dr. John Rogerson or Roggerson, a Scotsman: I find no evidence that he was in attendance on Peter III at the time of his assassination, whether in a benign or malevolent capacity. At Canto V, sts.87-8 of Casti's *Il Poema Tartaro*, the court doctor offers the poem's hero, Tommaso Scardassale, help with poisoning his enemies. On Friday February 4 1814, Hobhouse was crossing the Channel in a packet. He relates the following anecdote in his diary: *Captain Deane told me that last June, a Jew on board his packet cut his throat but not fatally. A Dr Rogerson, physician to the Emperor of Russia, was on board. Captain Deane applied to him for help. "Lord," said he, "I could do nothing, I am so sick". "But," said Deane. "What had I better do?" – "Give him a dose of salts" replied the physician.*

40.

Low were the whispers, manifold the rumours;
Some said he had been poisoned by Potemkin,⁹¹
Others talked learnedly of certain tumours, 315
Exhaustion, or disorders of the same kin;
Some said 'twas a concoction of the humours,
Which with the blood too readily will claim kin;
Others again were ready to maintain,
“'Twas only the fatigue of last campaign.” 320

91: *Some said he had been poisoned by Potemkin:* the illness and threatened demise of Juan is based on the actual illness and death of Catherine's greatest favourite, Lanskoï: *He was handsome, graceful, and accomplished, an admirer of the arts, a friend to talents, humane, and beneficent. Everyone seemed to share the sovereign's predilection for him. Perhaps he would have acquired as much influence by the qualities of his mind, as those of his heart procured him partisans. Potemkin feared him, and, it is said, gave him poison. He died with horrible pains in his bowels ... [Catherine's] affliction turned into rage against the physician [Dr. Rogerson – see above, this canto, l.307 and n.] who could not save him, and who was obliged to throw himself at his sovereign's feet, and request her pardon for the impotence of his art (Masson, I 167-8).*

But here is one prescription out of many:⁹³

“Sodæ-Sulphat 3.vi. 3.s. Mannæ Optim.
 “Aq. fervent. F. 3.ifs. 3ij. tinct. Sennæ.
 “Haustus” (and here the Surgeon came and cupped him)
 “R. Pulv. Com. gr. iii. Ipecacuanhæ” 325
 (With more beside, if Juan had not stopped ’em.)
 “Bolus Potassæ Sulphuret. sumendus,
 “Et Haustus ter in die capiendus.”

92: There are, contrary to what l.321 says, two prescriptions in the stanza (the following is based on the analyses of Albers, Stiling and Meinecke, as quoted by DJV and DJP, and on definitions in the OED):

First prescription: 322: “Sodæ-Sulphat 3.vi. 3.s. Mannæ Optim.: “Six drams of sodium sulphate and half a dram of the best manna” (*manna*: not the Biblical sign of grace, but a juice obtained from the Manna ash of Calabria or Sicily, and used as a mild laxative).

323-34: “Aq. fervent. F. 3.ifs. 3ij. tinct. Sennæ./ “Haustus” ...: “An ounce and a half of boiling water and two drams of tincture of senna to be drunk” (*senna*: the dried leaves of the Cassia plant, long a popular laxative; *Haustus*: short for *fiat haustus*, “let a draught be made”).

Second prescription: 325: “R. Pulv. Com. gr. iii. Ipecacuanhæ”: “Take compound powder, three grains of ipecac” (*ipecac*: from a South American Indian word – *ipecacuanha* – naming a plant which, taken, causes vomiting).

327-8: “Bolus Potassæ Sulphuret. sumendus, / “Et Haustus ter in die capiendus.”: “One large pill (*bolus*) of sulphurated potash to be taken, and the whole dose swallowed three times a day”.

The prescriptions would cause simultaneously a downward purge, vomiting, and a profuse sweat. They could – especially if taken both at once, and combined with letting blood *via* cupping (324) – prove fatal: if successful, they would certainly cure (temporarily) the illnesses both of Potemkin (see above, VII, l.284) and of Nadir Shah (see above, IX, l.260). At Missolonghi, B. was not able to *stop ’em*, as Juan is at 326.

93: The problem has always been, how are ll.321-325 to be read aloud? I suggest the following. I have adapted the phonetic transliteration of Frank Stiling and Bruno Meinecke in *Byron’s DON JUAN*, X, xli: *The Explicator*, March 1949, article 36). Only *seskay* in 322 appears doubtful:

But here is one prescription out of many: 321
 “Soday sulfat drams six, drams sem man’yoitim,
 “Akk. fervent eff. seskay, drams two tinct. senny,
 “Howstus” (and here the Surgeon came and cupped him)
 “Ah. pulv. com. grans tray ipekak-u-anny ... 325

No previous commentator has pointed out the presence of a Latinized South American Indian word in *Don Juan* (see note to l.325).

42.

This is the way physicians mend or end us,
 Secundem Artem;⁹⁴ but although we sneer 330
 In health, when ill, we call them to attend us
 Without the least propensity to jeer;
 While that “hiatus maxime deflendus”
 To be filled up by Spade or Mattock, ’s near,⁹⁵
 Instead of gliding graciously down Lethe,⁹⁶ 335
 We teaze mild Baillie, or soft Abernethy.⁹⁷

43.

Juan demurred at this first notice to
 Quit; and, though Death had threatened an ejection,
 His Youth and Constitution bore him through,
 And sent the Doctors in a new direction; 340
 But still his State was delicate; the Hue
 Of Health but flickered with a faint reflection
 Along his wasted cheek, and seemed to gravel
 The Faculty, who said that he must travel.⁹⁸

94: *Secundem Artem*: “as is the way with, or according to, their Art.”

95: ... that “hiatus maxime deflendus” / *To be filled up by Spade or Mattock, ’s near*: the Latin means “gap greatly lamented”, and refers to regrettably important lost portions of manuscripts; in B.’s context, it refers to the grave.

96: ... *gliding graciously down Lethe*: Lethe was the river of the underworld over which dead persons had to be ferried.

97: *We teaze mild Baillie, and soft Abernethy*: To teaze is to annoy by numerous slight irritants: in this context, to pester. Matthew Baillie (1761-1823) was the brother of the dramatist Joanna Baillie. An anatomist, he designed a brace for the youthful B.’s deformed foot, which B. neglected to wear. Later, in 1815, he was consulted by Annabella about her husband’s supposed insanity (see above, I, l.210 and n). He always expressed his judgements in the plainest and most readily-comprehensible terms. When mad, George III said he could bring anyone back from the dead to converse with, except those who died under Baillie’s care: see *Letters of Joseph Jekyll*, p.110. John Abernethy (1764-1831) was much more famous. Surgeon at Christ’s Hospital, Professor of Anatomy and Surgery to the College of Surgeons, and Full Surgeon at St. Bartholomew’s, he was noted for the eccentricity and rudeness of his discourse.

98: ... *seemed to gravel / The Faculty*: appeared to flummox the medical profession.

44.

The Climate was too cold, they said, for him, 345
 Meridian-born, to bloom in; this opinion
 Made the chaste Catherine look a little grim,
 Who did not like at first to lose her minion;
 But when She saw his dazzling eye wax dim,
 And drooping like an Eagle's with clipt pinion,⁹⁹ 350
 She then resolved to send him on a Mission –
 But in a style becoming his condition. –

45.

There was just then a kind of a discussion,
 A sort of treaty or negotiation,
 Between the British Cabinet and Russian, * 355
 Maintained with all the due prevarication
 With which great States such things are apt to push on;
 Something about the Baltic's navigation,
 Hides, train oil, tallow,¹⁰⁰ and the rights of Thetis,¹⁰¹
 Which Britons deem their "uti possidetis."¹⁰² 360

99: ... *drooping like an Eagle's with clipt pinion*: "The last bird I ever fired at was an eaglet, on the shore of the Gulf of Lepanto, near Vostitza. It was only wounded, and I tried to save it, the eye was so bright; but it pined, and died in a few days; and I never did since, and never will, attempt the death of another bird." (B., journal entry, March 20 1814: BLJ III 253).

100: *Hides, train oil, tallow*: typical items of Baltic commerce. Train oil is produced by boiling down right-whale-blubber; tallow is hard animal-fat separated from the membranes and used for candles, soap, and the dressing of leather. For "hides" see also above, this canto, l.286 and B.'s note.

101: *A sort of treaty or negotiation, / Between the British Cabinet and Russian ... Something about the Baltic's navigation, / Hides, train oil, tallow, and the rights of Thetis*: negotiations did indeed begin in 1791 between Britain, Holland and Prussia on the one hand and Russia on the other; but they were political, not commercial, and involved Britain sending a representative to Russia, not vice versa. They aimed at concluding the second Russo-Turkish war, and succeeded when the Treaty of Jassy was signed on 9 of January 1792 (Tooke, III 319). A commercial treaty between England and Russia was signed on 25 of March 1793 (too late for Juan to have taken part): *About this time the empress concluded a new treaty of commerce with Great Britain; that which had expired in 1786 not having been renewed. Her majesty at the same time published two edicts, prohibiting the importation of french merchandise into her dominions. This was a double triumph for the English; as the new treaty of commerce extended their privileges, and they reasonably hoped to able to substitute the stuffs of India and their own manufacture, for those of Lyons, and the wines of Madeira and Oporto for the wines of France* (Tooke III 355). B.'s commercial details are imaginary.

102: ... *the rights of Thetis, / Which Britons deem their "uti possidetis"*: Thetis was a sea-nymph, and has been used before by B. (see above, IX 1.552) as the goddess of the sea herself. "Uti posseditis" means "as you possess [it]"; the whole line implies that Britannia rules the waves by the brute fact of possession. Compare below, this canto, l.520.

46.

So Catherine, who had a handsome way
 Of fitting out her favourites,¹⁰³ conferred
 This secret charge on Juan, to display
 At once her own royal splendour, and reward
 His services; he kissed hands the next day, 365
 Received instructions how to play his card,
 Was laden with all kinds of gifts, and honours,
 Which showed what great discernment was the Donour's. –

47.

But She was lucky, and Luck's all; your Queens
 Are generally prosperous in reigning, 370
 Which puzzles us to know what Fortune means;
 But to continue; though her years were waning,
 Her Climacteric teased her like her teens,¹⁰⁴
 And though her Dignity brooked no complaining,
 So much did Juan's setting off distress her, 375
 She could not find at first a fit Successor.

48.

But Time the Comforter will come at last,
 And four-and-twenty hours,¹⁰⁵ and twice that number
 Of Candidates requesting to be placed,
 Made Catherine taste next night a quiet slumber; 380
 Not that she meant to fix again in haste,
 Not did she find the quantity encumber;
 But always choosing with deliberation,
 Kept the place open for their emulation.¹⁰⁶

103: *Catherine, who had a handsome way / Of fitting out her favourites:* Catherine's favourites never suffered at the severance of their relationships with her, but were always handsomely rewarded. None of them left her company in the circumstances that Juan does.

104: *Her Climacteric teased her like her teens:* a climacteric is a critical period in the history of a state or a person; see Marvell, *An Horatian Ode Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland*, 104. Commentators have suggested that B. here implies the menopause; but as Catherine was sixty-two in 1791, it seems unlikely.

105: *... four-and-twenty hours: for the indecent rapidity with which Catherine's favourites were replaced, B.'s authority was Masson: ... of all places there was not one, the duties of which were so scrupulously fulfilled: a short absence, a temporary sickness of the person by whom it was occupied, was sometimes sufficient to occasion his removal. Nor perhaps was there any post, [see below, 1.385] in which the Empress displayed more choice and discernment: I believe no instance occurred of its having been filled by a person incapable of it; and, except the interregnum between Lanskoï and Yermolof, it was never twenty-four hours vacant. (Masson I 137-8.)*

106: *Kept the place open for their emulation:* as CPW observes, this is "coarse word play".

49.

While this high post of honour's in abeyance 385
 For one or two days, reader, we request
 You'll mount with our young hero the Conveyance
 Which wafted him from Petersburg; the best
 Barouche,¹⁰⁷ which had the glory to display once *
 The fair Czarina's Autocratic crest, 390
 (When, a new Iphigene, she went to Tauris) – *
 Was given to her favourite, and now *bore his*. –

* The Empress went to the Crimea accompanied by the Emperor Joseph in the year – I forget which.¹⁰⁸

107: *Barouche*: an expensive four-seat carriage with a half-head behind for cover against the elements. I find no reference to Catherine's riding in one in the Crimea.

108: (*When, a new Iphigene, she went to Tauris*): refers to Catherine's expedition to the Crimea (called "Tauris" in classical times) newly-conquered for her by Potemkin, in 1787. Iphigenia was the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, whom Agamemnon sacrificed to obtain favourable winds upon the Greek fleet's setting-out for Troy: according to one version of the legend, she was snatched up from the sacrificial altar by Artemis (Diana) who put her down in the Crimea, where she was to be her priestess. The concept of Catherine the Great as replacement-priestess to the goddess of chastity is obviously amusing. B. would have had plenty of details about the tour – an excellent example of brute imperialism attempting to idealise itself out of all recognition – from the *Memoirs of the Prince de Ligne*, to which he refers above, at VII 1.263. It may have been from de Ligne that he derived, for instance, his *Iphigene* idea. From Bakhchisarai on June 1 1787, de Ligne writes, *Je comptois élever mon âme, en arrivant dans la Tauride, par les grandes choses vraies et fausses qui s'y sont passées. Mon esprit é toit prêt à se tourner vers l'heroïque avec Mithridate, le fabuleux avec Iphigénie, le militaire avec les Romains, les beaux arts avec les Grecs, le brigandage avec les Tartares, et le mercantile avec les Génois. Tous ces gens-là me sont assez familiers: mais en voici bien d'un autre, vraiment: ils ont tous disparus pour les Mille et une nuits.* – (*Lettres et Pensées*, ed. de Staël, London 1808, I 88-9). However, the less cynical and more outraged Tooke (who also mentions Iphigenia at III 44n) takes a different line: *Nothing was spared for rendering this journey renowned for the latest posterity. Thither were conveyed, from all parts of the empire, money, provisions, and horses. The highways were illuminated. The Borysthenes was covered with magnificent gallies. A hundred and fifty thousand soldiers were newly equipped. The kozaks were brought together: the Tartars were disciplined. Deserts were peopled for the occasion; and palaces were raised in the trackless wild. The nakedness of the plains of the Krimea was disguised by villages built on purpose, and enlivened by fireworks. Chains of mountains were illuminated. Fine roads were opened by the army. Howling wildernesses were transformed into english gardens.* (III 330-1).

50.

A bull-dog, and a bull-finch, and an Ermine,
 All private favourites of Don Juan;¹⁰⁹ for
 (Let deeper Sages the true cause determine) 395
 He had a kind of inclination, or
 Weakness, for what most people deem mere vermin –
 Live animals; an old maid of threescore
 For cats and birds more penchant ne'er displayed;
 Although he was not old, nor yet a maid. – 400

51.

The Animals aforesaid occupied
 Their station; there were Valets, Secretaries
 In other vehicles; but at his side
 Sate little Leila,¹¹⁰ who survived the parries
 He made 'gainst Cossaque Sabres, in the wide 405
 Slaughter of Ismail; though my wild Muse varies
 Her note, she don't forget the infant girl
 Whom he preserved, a pure and living pearl.

109: *A bull-dog, and a bull-finch, and an Ermine, / All private favourites of Don Juan:* for a previous list of animals, and a note giving B.'s own habitual private menagerie, see above, III ll.137-8 n; here, in addition, is Thomas Medwin: [B.'s] *travelling equipage was a rather singular one, and afforded a strange catalogue for the Dogana: seven servants, five carriages, nine horses, a monkey, a bull-dog and a mastiff, two cats, three pea-fowls and some hens (I do not know if I have classed them in order of rank ... – Medwin, ed. Lovell, p.3).*

110: *... little Leila ... a pure and living pearl:* Medwin suggests (ed. Lovell, p.101n) that Leila is based on B.'s illegitimate daughter Allegra, and quotes this canto, ll.409-10. In the early weeks of the last year of his life B. seems to have formed a parallel attachment. He writes to Augusta on February 23 1824: **"I have been obtaining the release of about nine and twenty Turkish prisoners – men women and children – and have sent them at my own expence home to their friends – but one a pretty little girl nine years of age – named Hato or Hatage – has expressed a strong wish to remain with me – or under my care – and I have nearly determined to adopt her – if I thought that Lady B[yrone] would let her come to England as a Companion to Ada (they are about the same age) and we could easily provide for her – if not I can send her to Italy for education. She is very lively and quick with great black Oriental eyes – and Asiatic features – all her brothers were killed in the revolution ..."** (BLJ XI 120).

52.

Poor little thing! she was as fair as docile,
 And with that gentle serious character, 410
 As rare in living beings, as a fossile
 Man, midst thy mouldy Mammoths, grand Cuvier!¹¹¹
 Ill fitted was her ignorance to jostle
 With this o'erwhelming world, where all must err;
 But she was yet but ten years old, and therefore¹¹² 415
 Was tranquil, though she knew not why or wherefore.

53.

Don Juan loved her, and she loved him – as
 Nor brother, father, sister, daughter love –
 I can not tell exactly what it was;
 He was not yet quite old enough to prove 420
 Parental feelings, and the other class,
 Called brotherly affection, Could not move
 His bosom – for he never had a sister – –
 Ah! if he had – how much he would have missed her!¹¹³ –

111: *as a fossile / Man, midst thy mouldy Mammoths, grand Cuvier!:* compare above, IX, l.297 and n. B. and the first edition both prefer the French spelling *fossile*. The image confers on Leila a pre-adamite blessedness, and Juan's love for her allows his condition – severely fallen as a result of the Russian episode, which is about to terminate – a chance of redemption.

112: *But she was yet but ten years old:* see above, this canto, ll.404 ... 408 n. Allegra (born 12 January 12th 1817) had been five years old when she had died on April 20 1822, five and a half months before B. wrote this canto.

113: ... *for he never had a sister – – / Ah! if he had – how much he would have missed her!:* two dashes (and four dots) emphasise the autobiographical point.

54.

And still less was it sensual, for besides 425
 That he was not an ancient debauchee,
 (Who like sour fruit to stir their Veins' salt tides,
 As Acids rouse a dormant Alkali);¹¹⁴
 Although ('twill happen as our Planet guides)
 His Youth was not the chastest that might be – 430
 There was the purest Platonism at bottom
 Of all his feelings; only he forgot 'em.¹¹⁵ –

55.

Just now there was no peril of temptation;
 He loved the infant Orphan he had saved,
 As Patriots (now and then) may love a nation; 435
 His pride too felt that she was not enslaved,
 Owing to him; as also her Salvation,
 Through his means and the Church's, might be paved;
 But one thing's odd – which here must be inserted –
 The little Turk refused to be converted. – 440

114: (*Who like sour fruit to stir their Veins' salt tides, / As Acids rouse a dormant Alkali*): a jaded sexual appetite needs unusual stimuli to activate it, like the action of acids in arousing alkali: for example, if hydrochloric acid is added to sodium hydrogen carbonate, the mixture effervesces, and much carbon dioxide is given off before a neutral solution can be formed (that is, before the appetite goes once again inert). Vinegar (acetic acid) on chalk (calcium carbonate) would have the same effect. I am indebted to Liz Burns and the late Bill Morgan for the examples. The line presents a rare case of B. delving into chemistry for his simile.

115: *There was the purest Platonism at bottom / Of all his feelings; only he forgot 'em*: the last word refers ungrammatically to *Platonism*, an abstraction elsewhere in *Don Juan* held up to ridicule – see I st.116, or V ll.7-8. However, by this stage in the poem's development the pendulum is swinging the other way: see above, IX, l.601.

56.

'Twas strange enough she should retain the impression
Through such a scene of change, and dread, and slaughter –
But though three bishops told her the transgression,
She showed a great dislike to holy water –
She also no had passion for confession – 445
Perhaps she had nothing to confess; no matter –
Whate'er the Cause, the Church made little of it;
She still held out that Mahomet was a prophet.¹¹⁶

57.

In fact the only Christian she could bear
Was Juan, whom she seemed to have selected 450
In place of what her Friends and Home once *were*;
He *naturally* loved what he protected;
And thus they formed a rather Curious pair –
A Guardian green in years, a Ward connected
In neither clime, time, blood, with her defender; 455
And yet this want of ties made theirs more tender. –

116: *She still held out that Mahomet was a prophet:* “Mahomet”, as usual in Byron’s work, is bisyllabic. Compare below, this canto, ll.501-600. Leila is the first heroine with an Islamic, or partially-Islamic background, to believe in the religion, or indeed to show any awareness of it at all. Neither Julia (for whose Moorish blood see above, I st.56) Haidee, whose mother, at least, was *a Moorish maid from Fez* (IV 1.431) nor the unambiguously Moslem Gulbeyaz are to be compared with her. In a letter to Murray of December 3-4 1814, B. writes, “**Did you look out? is it Medina or Mecca that contains the holy sepulchre? – don’t make me blaspheme by your negligence – I have no book of reference or I would save you the trouble I blush as a good Mussulman to have confused the point**” (BLJ III 191).

They journeyed on through Poland, and through Warsaw,
 Famous for Mines of Salt, and Yokes of Iron;¹¹⁸
 Through Courland also, which that famous farce saw
 Which gave her Dukes the graceless name of “Biron”; 460
 ’Tis the same landscape which the modern Mars saw¹¹⁹
 Who marched to Moscow, led by Fame, the Syren!
 To lose by one Month’s frost some twenty years
 Of Conquest – and his Guard of Grenadiers.¹²⁰

* In the Empress Anne’s time, Biren, her favourite, assumed the name and arms of the “Birons” of France, which families are yet extant with that of England; there are still the daughters of Courland of the name; one of them I remember seeing in England in the blessed year of the Allies – (the Dutchess of S.) – to whom the English Duchess of S——t presented me as a namesake.¹²¹

117: B.’s humiliation – or fascination – with the idea of being connected even remotely with such a tyrant as Biron (see note) should be linked with the ironical references to his Norman forebears, above, this canto, st.36.

118: *Famous for Mines of Salt:* B.’s note to *Mazeppa*, l.157: *This comparison of a “salt” mine may perhaps be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines. Yokes of Iron:* refers to the Russian wars against, and brutal partition of, Poland.

119: ... *the modern Mars:* Napoleon, on his retreat from Russia in 1812.

120: *To lose by one Month’s frost some twenty years / Of Conquest – and his Guard of Grenadiers:* compare *Beppo*, ll.476-83.

121: *Through Courland also, which that famous farce saw / Which gave her Dukes the graceless name of “Biron”:* B. refers to a commoner called Ernst Johann Bühren, who became favourite to the Russian Empress Anna, and was in 1737 created by her Duke of Courland (a Polish Baltic province: western Latvia in modern terms). He claimed, on no evidence, relationship with the noble French family of Birons. William Tooke continues the story: *On being declared sovereign of Russia, Anne called Biren to Petersburg, and the secretary soon became duke of Courland and first minister or rather despot of Russia. All now felt the dreadful effects of his extreme arrogance, his base intrigues, and his horrid barbarity. The cruelties he exercised on the most illustrious persons of the country almost exceed belief, and Manstein [a German mercenary officer with the Russian army] conjectures, that during the ten years in which Biren’s power continued, above twenty thousand persons were sent to Siberia, of whom scarcely five thousand were ever heard of more. It has been affirmed that the empress has often fallen on her knees before him, in hopes of moving him to clemency, but neither the prayers nor the tears of that princess were able to affect him. – On the death of Anne, which happened in 1740, Biren being declared Regent, continued daily his vexatious cruelties, till he was arrested on the 18th of December, only twenty days after he had been appointed to the regency, and at the revolution that ensued he was exiled to the frozen wastes of the Oby (I 160-1n).* In fact, Anna herself seems to have been fractionally more corrupt and sadistic than Biren was. Peter III, husband to Catherine the Great, recalled him from exile, and he did not die until 1772. In a letter to Augusta of June 18 1814, B. writes: **“The Duchess of Somerset also to mend matters insisted on presenting me to a Princess *Biron* Duchess of Hohen – God knows – what – and another person to her two sisters – Birons too – but I flew off – and would not – saying I had enough of introductions for that night at least”** (BLJ IV 128).

Let not this seem an Anti-Climax; "Oh! 465
 "My Guard! my old Guard!" exclaimed that God of Clay;¹²²
 Think of the Thunderer's falling down below
 Carotid Artery-cutting Castlereagh!¹²³
 Alas! that Glory should be chilled by Snow!¹²⁴ –
 But should we wish to warm us on our way 470
 Through Poland, there is Kosciusko's name¹²⁵
 Might scatter fire through ice, like Hecla's flame.¹²⁶

122: "Oh! / "My Guard! my old Guard!" exclaimed that God of Clay: Napoleon's anguish at the loss of his Old Guard (on the Russian expedition) was heard in this exclamation, at the Elysée, on June 23 1815: advised about the need for defence, he groaned, "Ah! my old guard! could they but defend themselves like you!"

123: *Carotid Artery-cutting Castlereagh!*: compare above, Preface to Cantos VI-VIII: "But the Minister – was an elegant Lunatic – a sentimental Suicide – he merely cut the 'carotid artery' (blessings on their learning!) and lo – the Pageant – and the Abbey! and 'the Syllables of Dolour yelled forth' by the Newspapers – and the harangue of the Coroner in an eulogy over the bleeding body of the deceased – (an Anthony worthy of such a Caesar –) – and the nauseous and atrocious cant of a degraded Crew of Conspirators against all that is sincere or honourable."

124: *Alas! that Glory should be chilled by Snow!*: see quotation from *Beppo*, note to ll.463-4 above.

125: ... *there is Kosciusko's name*: Tadeusz Kosciusko (1746-1817) Polish patriot, fought and organized heroically during the Russian invasion of 1792. Poland was defeated (thanks in great part to Suvorov) and partitioned, and he was exiled. He died in Switzerland. B. celebrated him at greater length in ll.158-70 of *The Age of Bronze*, written two months after this canto:

*First, and but rose to follow; ye who dwell
 Where Kosciusko dwelt, remembering yet
 Th'unpaid amount of Catherine's bloody debt!
 Poland! o'er which the Avenging Angel past,
 But left thee as he found thee, still a waste;
 Forgetting all thy still enduring claim,
 Thy lotted people, and extinguished name;
 Thy Sigh for freedom, thy long-flowing tear,
 That sound that crashes in the tyrant's ear;
 Kosciusko! On – on – on – the thirst of War
 Gasps for the Gore of Serfs and of their Czar;
 The half Barbaric Moscow's minarets
 Gleam in the Sun, but 'tis a Sun that sets! –*

126: *Hecla's flame*: Hecla is an Icelandic volcano. One of Captain Parry's vessels in his 1820 expedition to discover the North-West Passage was named after it. Compare below, XV, 92, 7.

60.

From Poland they came on through Prussia proper,
 And Königsberg, the Capital, whose vaunt,
 Besides some veins of Iron, Lead, or Copper, 475
 Has lately been the great Professor Kant;¹²⁷
 Juan, who cared not a tobacco-stopper
 About Philosophy,¹²⁸ pursued his jaunt
 To Germany, whose somewhat tardy Millions
 Have Princes who spur more than their postillions.¹²⁹ 480

127: *And Königsberg, the Capital, whose vaunt, / Besides some veins of Iron, Lead, or Copper, / Has lately been the great Professor Kant:* the heaviness and density of Immanuel Kant's philosophy is economically levelled to those of the commonest base metals. The only other reference to Kant in all B.'s writing is in *The Devil's Drive*, ll.201-2 (Satan speaks): *Mem – whenever a sudden conversion I want, / To send to the school of Philosopher Kant ...* Which shows scant interest in what Kant actually wrote – B. having as much interest in abstract philosophy as has Juan. Kant held that God, freedom and immortality are legitimate ideas which Pure Reason (reine Vernunft) leads men to form, for moral reasons. Both Madame de Staël and Sir James Mackintosh wrote in praise of Kant – de Staël in *de l'Allemagne*, and Mackintosh in a review of her book in *The Edinburgh Review* of October 1813 – and both are satirised in the same section of *The Devil's Drive* as he is. Kant (1724-1804) was born, lived for his entire life, and died, in Königsberg (Capital of East Prussia, now Kaliningrad). He was so systematic in his habits that people set their watches by his walks. As unByronic a figure as it is possible to imagine.

128: *Juan, who cared not a tobacco-stopper / About Philosophy:* echoes the opening line of Molière's *Dom Juan* (said by Sganarelle).

129: *Germany, whose somewhat tardy Millions / Have Princes who spur more than their postillions:* Germany, that is, is riddled with petty despotism of every kind.

61.

And thence through Berlin, Dresden, and the like,
 Until he reached the Castellated Rhine:
 Ye glorious Gothic Scenes! how much ye strike
 All phantasies, not even excepting mine;¹³⁰
 A grey wall, a green ruin, rusty pike,¹³¹ 485
 Make my soul pass the equinoctial line
 Between the present and past worlds, and hover
 Upon their airy confine, half-Seas'-over.¹³²

130: *Ye glorious Gothic Scenes! how much ye strike / All phantasies, not even excepting mine:* B., who had never been to Prussia or to the cities of North Germany, had been down the Rhine in May 1816. On May 16 he wrote to Hobhouse: “**Our route by the Rhine has been beautiful – & much surpassing my expectation – though very much answering my previous conceptions**” (BLJ V 76: he goes on to compare the Rhine valley with parts of Portugal and Greece, and there is no sign of the awe we find in the *Don Juan* lines here). For a greater approximation of his feelings, we have to go to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto III. Comparing the two Byronic idioms is fascinating. Here is st.50:

*But thou, exulting and abounding river!
 Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
 Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever
 Could man but leave thy bright creation so,
 Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
 With the sharp scythe of conflict, – then to see
 Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
 Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem such to me
 Even now what wants thy stream? – that it should Lethe be.*

131: ... *rusty pike:* turn-pike; the idea displays B.'s view of Germany as a static and conservative place, despite its Gothic charm. See below, this canto, l.564.

132: ... *half-Seas'-over:* intoxicated.

62.

But Juan posted on, through Mannheim – Bonn –
 Which Drakenfels¹³³ frowns over like a Spectre 490
 Of the good feudal times forever gone –
 On which I have not time just now to lecture;
 From thence he was drawn on towards Cologne –
 A City which presents to the Inspector
 Eleven thousand Maidenheads of bone, 495
 The greatest number Flesh hath ever known. –

* St. Ursula and her eleven thousand Virgins were still extant in 1816; and may be so yet, as much as ever.¹³⁴ – – –

63.

From thence to Holland's Hague and Helvoetsluys,¹³⁵
 That water-land of Dutchmen and of ditches,
 Where Juniper expresses its best juice, *
 The poor man's sparkling substitute for riches; 500
 Senates and Sages have condemned its use¹³⁶ –
 But to deny the Mob a cordial which is
 Too often all the cloathing, meat, or fuel,
 Good Government has left them, seems but cruel. –

133: ... Bonn – / Which Drakenfels frowns over like a Spectre / Of the good feudal times forever gone – / On which I have not time just now to lecture: between sts.55 and 56 of the third canto of CHP, B. inserts a lyric (Written on the Rhine bank, May 11, 1816) and apparently addressed to Augusta, from the Castle of Drachenfels. He appends this note: “The castle of Drachenfels stands on the highest summit of “the Seven Mountains,” over the Rhine banks; it is in ruins, and connected with some singular traditions: it is the first in view on the road from Bonn, but on the opposite side of the river; on this bank, nearly facing it, are the remains of another called the Jew’s castle, and a large cross commemorative of the murder of a chief by his brother: the number of castles and cities along the course of the Rhine on both sides is very great, and their situations remarkably beautiful.”

134: A City which presents to the Inspector / Eleven thousand Maidenheads of bone: the virgins of Cologne were (are) in fact the remnants of a Roman graveyard, and their number was (is) pure medieval fantasy, like their chastity.

135: Helvoetsluys ... juice ... use: the Dutch word, properly pronounced, cannot rhyme with the two English words. The reader is forced into a provincial vulgarism – not for the first time in *Don Juan*.

136: Where Juniper expresses its best juice, / The poor man's sparkling substitute for riches; / Senates and Sages have condemned its use: the subject is gin, or Holland's Geneva, distilled from grain or malt, and supposedly flavoured with juniper berries – although many English brands used a substitute. Owing to its cheapness, its consumption reached epidemic proportions in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and alcoholism among the working classes was a terrifying problem – see Hogarth's *Gin Lane*. Bishops, parsons, M.P.s and philanthropists fulminated against it, but very little effective was done. Compare below, this canto, l.677.

64.

Here he embarked, and with a flowing sail 505
Went bounding for the Island of the free,
Towards which the impatient Wind blew half a gale;
High dashed the spray, the bows dipped in the sea,
And seasick passengers turned somewhat pale;
But Juan, seasoned, as he well might be, 510
By former voyages,¹³⁷ stood to watch the skiffs
Which passed, or catch the first glimpse of the Cliffs.¹³⁸

65.

At length they rose, like a white Wall along
The Blue Sea's border, and Don Juan felt –
What even young Strangers feel a little strong 515
At the first sight of Albion's Chalky belt –
A kind of pride that he should be among
Those haughty Shopkeepers,¹³⁹ who sternly dealt
Their goods and edicts out from pole to pole,
And made the very Billows pay them toll.¹⁴⁰ 520

66.

I've no great cause to love that spot of earth,
Which holds what *might have been* the noblest nation,
But, though I owe it little but my birth,
I feel a mixed regret and veneration
For its decaying fame, and former worth; 525
Seven years (the usual term of transportation)¹⁴¹
Of Absence lay one's old resentments level,
When a Man's Country's going to the devil. –

137: *But Juan, seasoned, as he well might be, / By former voyages:* see above, II sts.11-110, and IV sts.75-113. Another voyage, from Constantinople to Ismail, may perhaps be imagined between Cantos VI and VII (though Juan and Johnson might with equal improbability have escaped overland).

138: *... catch the first glimpse of the Cliffs:* it would be natural, having embarked from any port in Holland (see II.497 and 505 above) to arrive at Harwich, not at Dover; but B. is still determined to have Juan trace part of Harold's (and his own) steps, in reverse.

139: *Those haughty Shopkeepers:* Adam Smith coined the phrase which Napoleon used in turn to describe the British, at *The Wealth of Nations*, IV 7: *To found a great empire for the sole purpose of raising up a people of customers, may at first sight appear a project fit only for a nation of shopkeepers.*

140: *And made the very Billows pay them toll:* echoes the sentiment above at l.360 of this canto.

141: *Seven years (the usual term of transportation):* B. left England on April 25 1816. This canto was written six years and six months later, between early September and October 5 1822. B.'s sum is thus half a year out, perhaps to accommodate the joke about transportation.

67.

Alas! Could She but fully, truly, know
How her great name is now throughout abhorred – 530
How eager all the Earth is for the blow
Which shall lay bare her bosom to the sword –
How all the Nations deem her their worst foe¹⁴² –
That worse than *worst of foes* – the once adored
False friend, who held out Freedom to Mankind, 535
And now would chain them, to the very Mind:¹⁴³

68.¹⁴⁴

Would she be proud, or boast herself the free,
Who is but first of slaves? The nations are
In prison, but the Jailor, what is he?
No less a victim to the bolt and bar; – – 540
Is the poor privilege to turn the key
Upon the captive freedom? He's as far
From the enjoyment of the earth and air
Who watches o'er the chain, as they who wear.

69.

Don Juan now saw Albion's earliest beauties – 545
Thy Cliffs – *dear* Dover! harbour, and hotel,
Thy Custom House with all its delicate duties,
Thy waiters running mucks at every bell;¹⁴⁵
Thy packets, all whose passengers are booties
To those who upon land or water dwell; 550
And last, not least to Strangers uninstructed,
Thy long, long bills – whence nothing is deducted.¹⁴⁶

142: ... *what* might have been *the noblest nation* ... *her great name is now throughout abhorred* ... *all the Nations deem her their worst foe*: B.'s analysis is based on his understanding of world reaction to the Congress of Vienna, in which England, which might (he felt) have preserved what was best in the defeated Napoleon's legacy, tried instead (represented by Castlereagh and Wellington) to allow the re-establishment of all that was oppressive and corrupt in the regimes he had overthrown.

143: ... *who held out Freedom to Mankind, / And now would chain them, to the very Mind*: compare above, the references to chains and manacles in the Castlereagh section of the Dedication: ll.95, 110-12, 116, and 125.

144: Castlereagh being now dead (see above, IX, B.'s n to 387) the satire directed very personally at him in the Dedication (see especially ll.87-126) has now to be transferred to the nation whose representative he was.

145: *Thy waiters running mucks at every bell*: running amuck, that is, dashing about creating destruction and confusion.

146: Compare below, X, 34, 7.

70.

Juan, though careless, young and magnifique,
 And rich in rubles, diamonds, cash, and credit,
 Who did not limit much his bills per week, 555
 Yet stared at this a little,¹⁴⁷ though he paid it
 (His *Maggior Duomo*, a smart, subtle Greek,¹⁴⁸
 Before him summed the awful scroll, and read it);
 But doubtless as the Air, though seldom sunny,
 Is free, the respiration's worth the money. 560

71.

On with the horses! Off to Canterbury!
 Tramp, tramp, o'er pebble, and splash, splash, through puddle;¹⁴⁹
 Hurrah! how swiftly speeds the Post so merry!
 Not like slow Germany, wherein they muddle
 Along the road as if they went to bury 565
 Their fare,¹⁵⁰ and also pause beside to fuddle
 With "Schnapps", sad dogs! whom "Hundsfoot" or "Verfluchter"¹⁵¹
 Affect no more than Lightning a Conductor.

147: *Juan ... Who did not limit much his bills per week, / Yet stared at this a little:* the difference not only between the rapaciousness of the hoteliers, but between the actual standard of living in England and on the Continent, was the reason why many English lived abroad during the nineteenth century.

148: *His Maggior Duomo, a smart, subtle Greek:* perhaps based on B.'s own scrupulous Italian secretary, Antonio Zambelli (see Doris Langley Moore, *Lord Byron Accounts Rendered*, Chapter 7).

149: *Tramp, tramp, o'er pebble, and splash, splash, through puddle:* CPW refers to st.47 of Scott's ballad *William and Helen* (see also sts.53 and 57); the echo incongruously links Juan's ride from Dover to Canterbury to Helen's ride with her spectral love, and also with others in Scott's collection of translations from the German, including *The Erl-King*.

150: ... *slow Germany, wherein they muddle / Along the road as if they went to bury / Their fare:* see the Shelleys, *History of a six weeks' tour*, p.71: ... *the rate of travelling in Germany seldom exceeds a mile and a half an hour.* Or see Hobhouse, letter to B., January 17 1814: *Travelling in Germany is bad at any time but at this season intolerable and very slow yet I count that three weeks will bring me to Helvotsluis* (BB 119). Compare above, this canto, l.485 and n.

151: *With "Schnapps", sad dogs! whom "Hundsfoot" or "Verfluchter":* Schnapps is German brandy. For "Hundsfoot" and "Verfluchter" see the *Ravenna Journal*, January 12 1821: "**I only know them [the works of Müllner, Goethe, Schiller and Wieland] through the medium of English, French, and Italian translations. Of the real language I know absolutely nothing, – except oaths learned from postillions and officers in a squabble. I can swear in German potently, when I like – 'Sacrament – Verfluchter – Hundsfoot' – and so forth; but I have little of their less energetic conversation**" (BLJ VIII 25-6). See also BLJ V 103: "[A Swiss] **Girl gave me some flowers – & made me a speech in German – of which I know nothing – I do not know whether the speech was pretty but as the woman was I hope so.**" For the conversation of gondoliers and coach-drivers, see also *Beppo*, st.86, or *TVOJ*, ll.469-70.

72.

Now there is nothing gives a man such spirits,
 Leavening his blood as Cayenne doth a curry,¹⁵² 570
 As going at full speed, no matter where its
 Direction be – so ‘tis but in a hurry,
 And merely for the sake of its own merits;¹⁵³
 For the less cause there is for all this flurry,
 The greater is the pleasure in arriving 575
 At the great *end* of travel, which is driving.

73.

They saw Canterbury the Cathedral –
 Black Edward’s helm and Becket’s bloody stone¹⁵⁴
 Were pointed out as usual by the Bedral
 In the same quaint uninterested tone;¹⁵⁵ 580
 There’s Glory again for you, gentle Reader! all
 Ends in a rusty casque,¹⁵⁶ and dubious bone¹⁵⁷
 Half-solved into those Sodas or Magnesias
 Which form that bitter draught – the human species.¹⁵⁸

152: *Leavening his blood as Cayenne doth a curry*: exciting him in the way Cayenne pepper enlivens the taste of a curry (that is, very much indeed).

153: *Now there is nothing gives a man such spirits, ... / As going at full speed ... / so ‘tis but in a hurry, / And merely for the sake of its own merits*: Andrew Nicholson (*Byron IX*) draws attention to a recollection here of the words of Dr. Johnson to Boswell on their returning from Derbyshire to London in September 1777: In our way, Johnson strongly expressed his love of driving fast in a post-chaise. “If (said he,) I had no duties, and no reference to futurity, I would spend my life in driving briskly in a post-chaise with a pretty woman; but she should be one who could understand me, and would add something to the conversation.” (Boswell’s *Life of Johnson*, ed. Malone, pp.123-4). There is a possible echo of the passage in B.’s *Alpine Journal*: “**A Bull nearly leapt into the Charaban – ‘agreeable companion in a post-chaise’**” (BLJ V 100). Juan is of course driving in a barouche (above, this canto, 389).

154: *Black Edward’s helm and Becket’s bloody stone*: the helmet over the tomb of Edward, Black Prince of Wales, and the plaque marking the spot where St. Thomas à Becket was assassinated in 1170.

155: *Were pointed out as usual by the Bedral / In the same quaint uninterested tone*: recalls by inversion B.’s poem *Churchill’s Grave*, in which he remembers the Sexton of a Dover churchyard (*Bedral* – sexton) pointing out the grave of Charles Churchill, the eighteenth-century satirist in whose fate he saw a prefigurement of his own, on the occasion of his leaving England for ever in April 1816. Like Juan – although again in reverse – he stopped at Canterbury Cathedral on his way to Dover.

156: *... a rusty casque*: the corroded head-piece of a medieval knight. See *Henry V*, first chorus, l.13.

157: *... all / Ends in a rusty casque, and dubious bone*: reinforces the Johnson echo above at ll.569 ... 573n with another, from *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, ll.219-20:

*His Fall was destin’d to a barren Strand,
 A petty Fortress, and a dubious Hand ...*

158: *Half-solved into those Sodas or Magnesias / Which form that bitter draught-the human species*: hints obscurely (for Sodas and Magnesias are not normally bitter) at mankind as an obstacle to digestion.

74.

The effect on Juan was of course sublime; 585
 He breathed a thousand Cressys,¹⁵⁹ as he saw
 The Casque¹⁶⁰ which never stooped, except to Time;
 Even the bold Churchman's tomb excited awe –
 Who died in the then great attempt to climb
 O'er Kings – who *now* at least *must talk* of law, 590
 Before they butcher;¹⁶¹ little Leila gazed,
 And asked why such a structure had been raised;

75.

And being told it was "God's house" she said
 He was well lodged – but only wondered how
 He suffered Infidels in his homestead – 595
 The cruel Nazarenes,¹⁶² who had laid low
 His holy temples in the lands which bred
 The true believers – and her infant brow
 Was bent with grief, that Mahomet¹⁶³ should resign
 A Mosque so noble, flung like pearls to Swine.¹⁶⁴ 600

159: *He breathed a thousand Cressys:* Crécy (1346) was the Black Prince's first battle, which he fought (and helped win) at the age of sixteen. Subsequent victories were at Poitiers (1356) and Navarette (1367). Juan's education (see above, I, especially ll.303-4) must have been both broad and thorough if he, a Spaniard, should feel such awe at English victories in the Hundred Years' War. It is as if he has been reading *Henry V* (see II iv 49-64) instead of *The Chronicle of the Cid*.

160: *The Casque which never stooped, except to Time:* in fact the Black Prince's last years were spent in agony, from a number of injuries and incurable infections. He died in 1376, and was more of a Suvorov than a Nelson.

161: *the bold Churchman's tomb ... / Who died in the then great attempt to climb / O'er Kings – who now at least must talk of law, / Before they butcher:* Becket's quarrel with Henry II was hardly on the point of the democratic accountability of sovereigns, as B. would appear to have it. Although the commons saw him as a champion against the corrupt nobility, he suffered and died defending the interests of the church and Papacy.

162: *The cruel Nazarenes, who had laid low / His holy temples in the lands which bred / The true believers:* Leila's historical sophistication is, like Juan's, a bit in advance of what realistically might be anticipated, from a ten-year-old Moslem girl brought up in eighteenth-century Romania. Her objections to the *Nazarenes* (Christians) stem from their spoliation of the Holy Land during the Crusades.

163: *Mahomet:* again (see above, this canto, l.448) the Prophet's name is bisyllabic.

164: *A Mosque so noble, flung like pearls to Swine:* boldly utilises an uncompromising Christian thought in an Islamic perspective. See the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, at *Matthew*, 7, 6: *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

“On, On!” through meadows managed like a Garden,
 A Paradise of Hops and high production;
 For after years of travel by a Bard, in
 Countries of greater heat, but lesser suction,¹⁶⁶
 A Green field is a sight which makes him pardon
 The absence of that more sublime construction
 Which mixes up Vines, Olives, Precipices,
 Glaciers, Volcanoes, Oranges, and ices. –

605

165: The sentiments in sts.76 and 77 should be compared with the three “nostalgic” sts.47-49 from *Beppo*: what B. is there lamenting as a loss, he is here imagining himself – through Juan – finding again:

“England! with all thy faults I love thee still!”

*I said at Calais, and have not forgot it;
 I like to speak and lucubrate my fill,
 I like the Government (but that is not it)
 I like the freedom of the press and quill,
 I like the Habeas Corpus (when we’ve got it)
 I like a Parliamentary debate,
 Particularly when ’tis not too late;*

*I like the taxes, when they’re not too many,
 I like a sea-coal fire, when not too dear,
 I like a beef-steak too, as well as any,
 Have no objection to a Pot of Beer,
 I like the weather – when it is not rainy –
 That is, I like two months of every Year;
 And so God save the Regent, Church, and King!
 Which means that I like all, and every thing. –*

*Our standing Army, and disbanded Seamen,
 Poor’s rate, Reform, my Own, the Nation’s debt,
 Our little Riots just to show we are free men,
 Our trifling Bankruptcies in the Gazette,
 Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women;
 All these I can forgive, and those forget;
 And greatly venerate our recent glories,
 And wish they were not owing to the Tories.*

166: ... *lesser suction*: less given to strong drinking (slang).

77.

And when I think upon a Pot of Beer –
 But I won't weep! – and so drive on, Postillions!¹⁶⁷ 610
 As the smart boys spurred fast their career,
 Juan admired the highways of free millions –
 A Country in all senses the most dear
 To foreigner or native – save some silly ones
 Who “kick against the pricks” just at this juncture,¹⁶⁸ 615
 And for their pains get only a fresh puncture.

167: *But I won't weep! – and so drive on, Postillions!:* Compare *King Lear*, II iv 281-5. B. imagines himself the principal occupant of Juan's barouche, returning along the route he took when he last saw England. He feigns greater interest in the new opportunities England would give him for getting drunk than for anything else.

168: ... *save some silly ones / Who “kick against the pricks” just at this juncture:* a complex joke. B. refers with ironical disdain and pity to radicals (John Hunt, for example, *Don Juan's* publisher) to whom England as constituted at present is not *most dear* (line 613). To “kick against the pricks” is to object to being forced into something, as oxen may kick at a goad, or as a radical may be forced to conform, or compromise. See *Acts* 9, 5 and 26, 14, where the phrase “*It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks*” is said by Jesus to Saul, during his conversion on the road to Damascus.

78.

What a delightful thing's a turnpike road!¹⁶⁹
 So smooth – so level – such a mode of shaving
 The Earth – as scarce the Eagle in the broad
 Air can accomplish with his wide wings waving; 620
 Had such been cut in Phaeton's time, the God
 Had told his Son to satisfy his craving
 With the York Mail;¹⁷⁰ but, onward as we roll –
 "Surgit amari aliquid"¹⁷¹ – the Toll! – –

79.

Alas! how deeply painful is all payment! 625
 Take lives, take wives, take aught except men's purses;
 As Machiavel shows those in purple raiment,¹⁷²
 Such is the shortest way to general curses;
 They hate a murderer much less than a claimant
 On that sweet ore which every body nurses:¹⁷³ 630
 Kill a man's family, and he may brook it;
 But keep your hand out of his breeches' pocket.

169: *What a delightful thing's a turnpike road!*: a turnpike road was one of more than usual smoothness and excellence, such as were developed in England by the likes of John McAdam throughout the eighteenth century (McAdam was Surveyor to the Bristol Turnpike Trust). The turnpike was the toll-gate at each end (from the earlier practise of placing a hinged pike across the road, to stop travellers during times of war). See above, I 1.42, where the writing of epics is likened to a turnpike road; also the quotation from Scott's *Waverley* in the note to I 1.57. The exclamation climaxes a number of references: see also above, II 1.1047, X 1.12, and below, XI 1.169 and XIII 1.349.

170: *Had such been cut in Phaeton's time, the God / Had told his Son to satisfy his craving / With the York Mail*: Phaeton was the son of Zeus, whom Zeus allowed to take over the horses of the Sun for one day; however, his incompetence in managing them brought creation near to destruction, and Zeus had to kill him. See *TVOJ*, 1.828, where Southey is contrasted with Phaeton. Ovid tells the story at the start of *Metamorphoses*, II; see also *Romeo and Juliet*, III ii 1-4. A phaeton was also a light four-wheeled carriage, not unlike a post-chaise (see above, this canto, ll.569-573n).

171: "Surgit amari aliquid" – *the Toll!*: the Latin is from Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, IV 1133: *nequiquam, quoniam medio de fonte leporum / Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipseis floribus angat* (but all is vanity, since from the very heart of the fountain of delight there arises a jet of bitterness that poisons the fragrance of the flowers). Lucretius is writing about jaded voluptuaries (see above, this canto, ll.426-428). B. turns his quotation into one of his more general statements about the way life ultimately makes us pay for everything. At *CHP* I, st.82 ll.8-9, he had already translated Lucretius' lines:

*Love has no gift so grateful as his wings:
 How fair, how young, how soft so'er he seem,
 Full from the fount of Joy's delicious springs*

Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings

172: *As Machiavel shows those in purple raiment*: Macchiavelli writes, advising rulers at *Il Principe*, XVII: *... ma sopra tutto astenersi dalla roba d'altri; perchè li uomini sdimenticano più presto la morte del padre che la perdita del patrimonio*, (... but above all [a prince] should abstain from the property of others; because men sooner forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony). For Macchiavelli, see also above, VII 1.25; for the Biblical echoes in purple raiment, see above, this canto, l.204n.

173: ... *that sweet ore which every body nurses*: gold.

80.

So said the Florentine – ye Monarchs, hearken
 To your Instructor.¹⁷⁴ – – Juan now was borne,
 Just as the day began to wane and darken, 635
 O'er the high hill which looks with pride or scorn –
 Toward the great City; ye who have a spark in
 Your veins of Cockney Spirit, smile or mourn,¹⁷⁵
 According as you take things well or ill –
 Bold Britons – we are now on Shooter's Hill!¹⁷⁶ 640

81.

The Sun went down, the Smoke rose up, as from
 A half-unquenched Volcano,¹⁷⁷ o'er a space
 Which well beseemed "the Devil's drawing room",
 As some have qualified that wondrous place;¹⁷⁸
 But Juan felt, though not approaching *home*, 645
 As one who, though he were not of the race,
 Revered the Soil, of those true Sons the Mother,
 Who butchered half the Earth, and bullied t'other.

* India – America.¹⁷⁹

174: *So said the Florentine – ye Monarchs, hearken / To your Instructor:* Macchiavelli (born, like Dante, in Florence, and like Dante a staunch Florentine patriot) wrote *The Prince* for the instruction, in *real-politick*, of the ideal political leader. B. may malign him somewhat.

175: ... *ye who have a spark in / Your veins of Cockney Spirit, smile or mourn:* the second address in *Don Juan* to its imagined Cockney readership: see above, VIII 1.991.

176: *Shooter's Hill:* now in SE18. It was a high and remote part of the main London-to-Dover road, much frequented by footpads – as Juan is soon to discover – and was also notorious for having a gallows at its foot and a gibbet at its summit. The last public execution at the former was in 1805. B.'s enthusiastic exclamation-mark is thus ironic. From the Hill fine views were to be had – supposing one wished to linger – of London, Kent, and, on the other side of the Thames Estuary, Essex. See *A Tale of Two Cities*, Chapter 2; although Juan will be travelling downhill, in the opposite direction.

177: ... *the Smoke rose up, as from / A half-unquenched Volcano:* volcanoes were commonly regarded as leading to Hell.

178: ... *a space / Which well beseemed "the Devil's drawing room" / As some have qualified that wondrous place:* Andrew Nicholson (*Byron IX*) places the reference here as Smollett's Roderick Random, XVIII (London is portrayed by Smollett as an earthly hell): ... *I recounted to him the particulars of my night's campaign, which filled him with admiration, and made him repeat with great energy an observation which was often in his mouth, viz. "London is the devil's drawing room".* The quotation sorts well with the Shooter's Hill joke as both establish London as the Inferno, and Juan as an eager visitor.

179: *As one who, though he were not of the race, / Revered the Soil, of those true Sons the Mother, / Who butchered half the Earth, and bullied t'other:* just as Shooter's Hill is a haunt of local criminals, so is the metropolis to which it leads a haunt of international ones. Juan's damnable naivety leads him to both.

82.

A mighty Mass of brick, and Smoke, and Shipping,
Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye 650
Could reach, with here and there a Sail just skipping
In sight, then lost amid the forestry
Of Masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping
On tiptoe through their Seacoal canopy;¹⁸⁰
A huge dun Cupola, like a Foolschap crown¹⁸¹ 655
On a fool's head – and there is London Town!

83.

Juan saw not this; each wreath of Smoke
Appeared to him but as the magic vapour
Of some Alchymic furnace, from whence broke
The Wealth of Worlds¹⁸² (a wealth of tax and paper);¹⁸³ 660
The gloomy Clouds, which o'er it as a yoke
Are bowed, and the Sun put out like a taper,
Were nothing but the natural atmosphere –
Extremely wholesome, though but rarely clear.

180: ... *a wilderness of steeples peeping / On tiptoe through their Seacoal canopy*: the combination of huge religious aspiration with huge physical pollution (*Seacoal canopy*: smog) had already been commented on implicitly by Blake, in *London*; Wordsworth's *Westminster Bridge* sonnet (with the phrase *All bright and glittering in the smokeless air*) had been published in 1807; B. would have known the latter but not the former.

181: *A huge dun Cupola, like a Foolschap crown / On a fool's head*: refers to St. Paul's Cathedral. *Foolschap* was a paper-size, so called from its convenience when making hats for dunces to wear while they stood in the corners of school-rooms.

182: *The Wealth of Worlds (a wealth of tax and paper)*: the second recollection in the xanto (see above, l.518 and n) of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.

183: ... *each wreath of Smoke / Appeared to him but as the magic vapour / Of some Alchymic furnace*: places Juan momentarily in the same category of corrupt gullibility as Sir Epicure Mammon, Abel Drugger, or Dapper in Jonson's *The Alchemist*.

He paused, and so will I, as doth a Crew 665
 Before they give their broadside;¹⁸⁴ by and bye,
 My gentle countrymen, we will renew
 Our old acquaintance, and at least I'll try¹⁸⁵
 To tell you truths *you* will not take as true,
 Because they are so; a male M^{rs}. Fry,¹⁸⁶ 670
 With a soft besom¹⁸⁷ I will sweep your halls,
 And brush a web or two from off the walls. –

184: *a Crew / Before they give their broadside:* the crew of a man-of-war. Perhaps they pause while adjusting aim.

185: ... *by and bye, / My gentle countrymen, we will renew / Our old acquaintance:* a double Shakespearean echo. The word *countrymen*, with varied adjectival accompaniment and rhetorical deviousness, occurs seven times in the Forum scene (III ii) of *Julius Caesar* alone, and is common as a rallying-call elsewhere (see *Hamlet*, I i 125, *Macbeth*, IV iii 160 – the pregnant *My countryman, and yet I know him not*; or *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV xv 57). The phrase *old acquaintance* also occurs frequently, at *Henry IV i*, V iv 102, for example, when Hal thinks that he has found Falstaff dead, in the mouth of Justice Shallow at *Henry IV ii*, III ii 33 (*to see how many of my old acquaintance are dead*) or at *Coriolanus* V i 10, when Cominius bewails the refusal of the protagonist to acknowledge his name. B.'s use of both within the same phrase indicates the width and frequency of his Shakespearean reading, and his sensitivity to Shakespeare's infectious irony in small verbal details. He thus introduces his own "return home", via Juan's trip to England (doomed never to terminate) with an apt "proem". For *old acquaintance*, see also the opening words of *Auld Lang Syne* (referred to at this canto, ll.125-44).

186: ... *a male M^{rs}. Fry:* the hilarious bad taste in the idea of B. being Elizabeth Fry dragged-up is perhaps one reason why he felt he could not "return home" in any way other than the poetic. Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845) was a Norfolk Quaker, whose prison visits and reforms make one of the most moving episodes in the history of English philanthropy. *The pathos of her voice*, writes the *DNB*, *was almost miraculous, and melted alike the most hardened criminals and the most impervious men of the world*. B., in announcing, even semi-facetiously, his aspiration to do the same kind of work in England via *Don Juan*, shows at once the extent of his moral ambition, and a defence against his failing to achieve it. At BLJ IX 74, B. hopes that Mrs. Fry was in Newgate while Hobhouse there (he suspects, from Hobhouse's language, that she wasn't); at BLJ XI 32 and 40 he wishes she might come to Greece.

187: *With a soft besom I will sweep your halls:* *besom* is a Scots word meaning broom. B. is perhaps anxious to avoid the English word because he uses it elsewhere to pun with *Brougham* (see this canto, ll.113); perhaps he prefers to be thought of as Scots when chastising the English.

85.

Oh M^{rs}. Fry! why go to Newgate? why
 Preach to poor rogues? and wherefore not begin
 With Carlton¹⁸⁸ – or with other houses? try * 675
 Your hand at hardened and imperial Sin;
 To mend the people's an absurdity,¹⁸⁹
 A Jargon, a mere philanthropic din,
 Unless you make their betters better – Fie,
 I thought you had more religion, M^{rs}. Fry!¹⁹⁰ 680

188: *Carlton:* Carlton House in Pall Mall had been the home of the Prince Regent (now George IV); purchased in 1732 by George III's father, Frederick, Prince of Wales, it was given by George to his own son, who decorated and enlarged it with gross and unscrupulous prodigality. Two famous balls held there were in 1811, to celebrate the start of his Regency, and in 1814, to *fête* Wellington. However, when he ascended the throne he decided it was insufficiently grand, and had it demolished. Bits of it still exist – for example, its columns form the portico of the National Gallery.

189: *To mend the people's an absurdity:* a thought formulated previously above, in the section on gin, this canto, ll.499-504.

190: *I thought you had more religion, Mrs. Fry!:* notice the alteration B. makes in rough. He implies that Christ was far more sympathetic to criminals and outcasts than he was to people of wealth and power, and that it is amongst the latter that Satan scores his most striking successes – a fact to which Mrs. Fry appears blind (in fact she did sometimes preach in noble houses, too – including Carlton).

Teach them the decencies of good threescore;¹⁹¹
 Cure them of tours, hussar and highland dresses;¹⁹²
 Tell them that Youth once gone returns no more,
 That hired huzzas redeem no land's distresses;
 Tell them Sir William Curtis is a bore,¹⁹³ 685
 Too dull even for the dullest of excesses,
 The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal,¹⁹⁴
 A Fool whose bells have ceased to ring at all;

191: *Teach them the decencies of good threescore:* George IV was sixty in 1822.

192: *Cure them of tours, hussar and highland dresses:* the King's Edinburgh stay in August 1822 (stage-managed by Sir Walter Scott) was a cause of much ridicule, in part because of George's insistence on wearing the kilt, an item of clothing ill-suited to his figure (see above, VIII ll.1005-8). He wore flesh-coloured tights beneath.

193: *Tell them Sir William Curtis is a bore:* Sir William Curtis (1752-1829) was at different times Lord Mayor of London and M.P. for the City. An intimate of George IV – whom he resembled both in Conservatism, physique and absurdity – he often played host to the King on his private yacht. Accompanying George to Edinburgh (see previous note) he too wore a kilt: see *The Age of Bronze*, final section:

*My Muse 'gan weep, but, ere a tear was spilt,
 She caught Sir William Curtis in a kilt!
 While thronged the Chiefs of every Highland Clan
 To hail their brother, Vich Ian Alderman! –
 Guildhall grows Gael, and echoes with Erse roar,
 While all the Common Council cry, "Claymore!"
 To see proud Albyn's Tartans as a belt
 Gird the gross Sirloin of a City Celt,
 She burst into a laughter so extreme,
 That I awoke – and lo! it was no dream! (769-78)*

194: *The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal:* see above, this Canto, quotations from *Henry IV* i and ii in 668n. Byron offers himself as a wittier Falstaff.

87.

Tell them, though it may be perhaps too late
 On Life's worn confine, jaded, bloated, sated,¹⁹⁵ 690
 To set up vain pretences of being great –
 Tis not so to be Good; and be it stated
 The worthiest kings have ever loved least State;
 And tell them – but you won't; and I have prated
 Just now enough – but by and bye I'll prattle 695
 Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalle's battle.¹⁹⁶

195: *On Life's worn confine, jaded, bloated, sated:* B. speaks with the anger of one trying to come to terms with these problems himself.

196: ... *but by and bye I'll prattle / Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalle's battle:* in 778 Charlemagne invaded Spain, with a view to expanding his protective southern frontier against the Moors. The battles he fought were inconclusive, and he retreated across the Pyrenees; but on August 8 778 his rearguard, which unwisely had posted no scouts, were ambushed in the mountain pass of Roncesvalles by a body of Basque irregulars, and slaughtered (see Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, section 9). One of the generals in charge of the rearguard was Roland (Rutlandus) Lord of the Breton frontier: posterity has imagined that he was Charlemagne's nephew; that he and his force were attacked by Moors; that at the last moment, when all was lost, he blew three stupendous blasts on a mystical ivory horn called Oliphant, to draw the attention of Charlemagne – tented at a distance with the treacherous Ganelon – to what had happened; and that God caused the sun to be arrested in its course until Charlemagne had taken revenge. The first source for the legend is the early twelfth-century French *Chanson de Roland*:

*Rollant ad mis l'olifan a sa buche,
 Empeint le ben, par grant vertu le sunet.
 Halt sunt li pui e la voiz est mult lunge,
 Granz [...] liwes l'oient il repundre.
 Karles l'oit e ses cumpagnes tutes.
 Co dit le reis, "Bataille funt nostre hume."
 Et Guenelun li respundit encuntre,
 "S'alte le desist, ja semblast grant mencunge." (verse 133)*

[*Roland has put the oliphant to his mouth, blows it hard, and sounds it by his great force. The hills are high and the sound is carried far; thirty leagues off it echoes. Charlemagne and his companions hear it, and the King says, "Our men are in battle". Guenelun answers him, saying, "If another man had said that it would have appeared a great lie".*]

The legend was taken over and elaborated by a twelfth-century Cluniac monk known as the pseudo-Turpin, and in this guise came to the knowledge of B.'s favourite Italian poet, Luigi Pulci, who in his *Morgante Maggiore* (see above, III st.43 and n) describes the horn-blowing thus, at the climax of his epic:

*E tanto insieme per lo stormo vanno
 Orlando ed Ulivier, ferendo forte,
 che molti saracin traboccar fanno.
 Ma Ulivier già presso era alla morte;
 e poi che il padiglione ritrovato hanno,
 diceva Orlando: – Io vo' che ti conforte:
 aspetta, Ulivier mio, che a te ritorno,
 ché in sul quel poggio vo a sonare il corno. –*

*Disse Ulivieri: – Omai non ti bisogna:
l'anima mia da me già vuol partire,
ché ritornare al suo Signore agogna. –
E non poté le parole espedire,
come chi parla molte volte, e sogna,
e bisognò quel che e' voleva dire
per discrezion intender: che Alda bella
raccomandar volea, la sua sorella.*

*Orlando, sendo spirato il marchese,
parvegli tanto solo esser rimaso,
che di sonar per partito pur prese,
acciò che Carlo sentissi il suo caso;
e sonò tanto forte, che lo intese,
e 'l sangue uscì per la bocca e pel naso,
dice Turpino, e che il corno si fésse
la terza volta ch'a bocca sel messe.*
(Morgante Maggiore, XXVII, sts.67-9)

[Together Oliver and Roland surged together through the swarm, dealing out terrible injuries and making many Saracens fall. But Oliver was already near death, and as they reached the pavilion, Orlando said, "I want you to be comforted: wait until I return to you, my Oliver, for I am going to sound my horn upon that hill." / Oliver said, "Henceforth I shall have no need of you – my soul already wants to depart from me and return to its Lord," and he could not say the words clearly, like one who speaks a lot and dreams; and it was needful to make him know that he commended his sister, the beautiful Alda, to Roland's care. / Orlando, sensing that the Marquis was about to die and leave him alone, decided to sound in such a way as to make Charlemagne understand his position; and he sounded with such power, as I understand it, that the blood gushed from his mouth and nose (according to Turpin) and that the horn played itself the third time he put it to his lips.]

In 1814 Murray published *Orlando in Roncesvalles* by John Herman Merivale, son-in-law of Joseph Drury, B.'s old headmaster at Harrow. This was an English version of the politer parts of Pulci's poem (though still in ottava rima); the verses corresponding to those above are as follows:

*Thus through the storm of swords and spears they go,
Still dealing vengeance and despair around:
But Oliver, who now more faint and slow
The heavy hand of Death oppressive found,
Press'd towards his tent: the end of all his woe
He felt approaching from that mortal wound.
"Oh yet a little wait!" Orlando cries;
"I'll sound my horn – assistance near us lies."*

*"My brother," he replied, "there's now no need:
My soul is hastening from its bonds to flee;
It soars, expectant of the promised meed;
It beats, it pants, it must, it will, be free –"
More would his faltering tongue, – but Heaven decreed
An instant change for immortality:
Yet the last wish Orlando knew full well, –
"Live thou! and guard my sister Aldabelle."*

Now, when he saw the noble spirit fled,
 He seem'd on earth's wild coast alone to stray;
 And, sick at heart and sorrowful, he sped
 To gain a hillock that adjoining lay:
 And there "he blew a blast so loud and dread,"
 The Paynim host all trembled with dismay.
 Another, and another yet, he blew:
 With the third blast, that horn was burst in two.
 (Orlando in Roncesvalles, V sts.8-10)

Merivale (who is, in line five of the third verse here, quoting Collins, *The Passions. An Ode for Music*, l.44) confesses in a note (p.123) that *The circumstance of the blood gushing out at Orlando's eyes and nostrils, which I have not ventured to repeat, is faithfully copied by Pulci from Turpin's Chronicle*. B. professed admiration for *Orlando in Roncesvalles* (and for its stanza-form) at a time before he knew Pulci (see BLJ IV 12). His likening of himself writing *Don Juan* to Roland blowing his horn (referred to by Dante, just before the descent into Cocytus, with its damned giants: see *Inferno*, xxxi, 16-18) is a portent, firstly that his noise will be great – the sound is heard by Charlemagne thirty leagues away – but, secondly, that his force may soon be defeated, and thirdly, that to go on writing is a gesture of despair which may cost him his life. Epic precedents for Roland's horn (listed by Merivale) are the horn of Allecto at Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book VII 511-2 (a bloody, horrifying precedent); that given by Logistilla to the English hero Astolpho at XV sts.14-15 of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (a happier, more moral one); one blown by Prince Arthur before the castle of the giant Orgoglio, at *The Faerie Queene*, Book I Canto viii sts.3-5, a truly Christian one:

Was neuer wight, that heard that shrilling sound,
 But trembling feare did feele in euery vaine;
 Three miles it might be easie heard around,
 And Ecchoes three answerd itself again:
 No false enchauntment, nor deceitfull traine,
 Might once abide the terror of that blast,
 But presently was voide and wholly vaine:
 No gate so strong, no locke so firme and fast,
 But with that percing noise flew open quite, or brast.
 (The Faerie Queene, I, VIII, 4)

... and yet another kind of horn, given by the dwarf fairy king Oberon to the protagonist in the medieval French *chanson de geste*, *Huon of Bordeaux*: here is part of Lord Berners' 1534 translation:

'... syr, [sayde Gerames] *I requyre you as yet blowe not your horne / for ye be not as yet hurte / kyng Oberon commaundyd you so at his departyng* / 'why,' quod Huon, 'wyl ye than that I tarry tyll I be slayne? surely I wyl blowe it without any lenger tarryng' / and so he blewe it so sore that the blode came out of his mouth / so that all that were in the palayes began to synge and to daunse, and the Duke and all suche as were at the sege about the palayes could not rest but to synge and to daunse / than kyng Oberon, who as than was in his cyte of Mommure / sayd, 'a hygh ["on high"] a I here my frend Huons horne blow, wherby I knowe well he hath some besynes in hande, wherfore I wysshe myselfe there as the horne was blowyn with a .C. thousaunde men well armyd' / he had made no soner his wysshe but he was in y^e cyte of Tourmont / where as he and his men slewe downe the paynyms that it was meruayll to se the blode ron downe the stretes lyke a ryuer ... (The Boke of Duke Huon of Burdeux done into English by Sir John Bouchier, Lord Berners, ed. S.L.Lee, London, Early English Text Society 1882 pp.94-5).

B. perhaps underlines the effect of calling upon such antecedents by his choice of the banal verb *prattle*, and he would have known this version no more than he did the *Chanson de Roland*; but he almost certainly

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Genoa, O^{ctr}. 5th. 1822
End of Canto 10th.

knew the following, which is from William Sotheby's adaptation of Christoph Martin Wieland's *Oberon* (1798: see BLJ V 252 and n) on roughly the same theme:

*The sultan's frenzy rages uncontrol'd:
Fierce on Sir Huon storm the murderous train;
Yet still his glittering falchion flames in vain,
While Rezia's gentle hand retains its hold:
Her agonizing shrieks his bosom rend;
And what remains the princess to defend –
What but the horn can rescue her from death?
Soft thro' the ivory flows his gentle breath,
And from its spiry folds sweet fairy tones ascend.*

*Soon as its magic sounds, the powerless steel
Falls without struggle from the lifted hand:
In rash vertigo turn'd, the emir band
Wind arm in arm, and spin the giddy reel:
Throughout the hall tumultuous echoes ring,
All, old and young, each heel has Hermes' wing:
No choice is left them but the fairy tone:
Pleas'd and astonish'd Rezia stands alone
By Huon's side unmov'd, while all around them spring.*

*The whole divan, one swimming circle glides
Swift without stop: the old bashaws click time.
As if on polish'd ice, in trance sublime
The imam hoar with a castrato slides.
Nor rank nor age from capering refrain;
Nor can the king his royal foot restrain!
He too must reel amid the frolic row,
Grasp the grand vizier by his beard of snow,
And teach the aged man once more to bound amain!
(Oberon, V sts.XLV-XLVII)*

That reading *Don Juan* could make people dance uncontrollably probably never crossed B.'s mind: the final lines of Sotheby's stanzas might be an allegorical anticipation of George IV and Sir William Curtis in their kilts.