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**The works of ... Lord Byron**

Child Harold's pilgrimage [canto IV]

**Byron, George Gordon**

**Zwickau, 1819**

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich**

Shelf Mark: Rar 6519

Persistent Link: <https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-26026>

Fourth canto of Childe Harold.

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FOURTH CANTO  
OF  
CHILDE HAROLD,

FOURTH EDITION  
OF  
CHILDREN'S READER

CHILDE HAROLD'S  
PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO IV.

I.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs; (1)  
A palace and a prison on each hand:  
I saw from out the wave her structures rise  
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:  
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand  
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles  
O'er the far times, when many a subject land  
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,  
Where Venice sat in state, thron'd on her  
hundred isles!



Her name in story, and her long array  
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond  
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway;  
Ours is a trophy which will not decay  
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,  
And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—  
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,  
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

## V.

The beings of the mind are not of clay;  
Essentially immortal, they create  
And multiply in us a brighter ray  
And more beloved existence: that which Fate  
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state  
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied  
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;  
Watering the heart whose early flowers have  
died,  
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

## VI.

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,  
The first from Hope, the last from Vacancy;  
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,  
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine  
eye:

Yet there are things whose strong reality  
 Outshines our fairy-land; in shape and hues  
 More beautiful than our fantastic sky,  
 And the strange constellations which the Muse  
 O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse:

## VII.

I saw or dreamed of such,—but let them go—  
 They came like truth, and disappeared like  
 dreams;

And whatso'er they were — are now but so:  
 I could replace them if I would, still teems  
 My mind with many a form which aptly seems  
 Such as I sought for, and at moments found;  
 Let these too go — for waking Reason deems  
 Such over-weening phantasies unsound,  
 And other voices speak, and other sights sur-  
 round.

## VIII.

I've taught me other tongues — and in strange  
 eyes

Have made me not a stranger; to the mind  
 Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;  
 Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find  
 A country with — ay, or without mankind;  
 Yet was I born where men are proud to be,

Not without cause; and should I leave behind  
The inviolate island of the sage and free,  
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

## IX.

Perhaps I loved it well: and should I lay  
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,  
My spirit shall resume it — if we may  
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine  
My hopes of being remembered in my line  
With my land's language: if too fond and far  
These aspirations in their scope incline, —  
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,  
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

## X.

My name from out the temple where the dead  
Are honoured by the nations — let it be —  
And light the laurels on a loftier head!  
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me —  
«Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.» (4)  
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;  
The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree  
I planted, — they have torn me, — and I bleed:  
I should have known what fruit would spring  
from such a seed.

## XI.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;  
 And, annual marriage now no more renewed,  
 The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,  
 Neglected garment of her widowhood!  
 St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood (5)  
 Stand, but in mockery of his withered power,  
 Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,  
 And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour  
 When Venice was a queen with an unequalled  
 dower.

## XII.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian  
 reigns — (6)  
 An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt;  
 Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains  
 Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt  
 From power's high pinnacle, when they have  
 felt  
 The sunshine for a while, and downward go  
 Like lanwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt;  
 Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo! (7)  
 Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering  
 foe.

## XIII.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,  
 Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;  
 But is not Doria's menace come to pass? (8)  
 Are they *not bridled*? — Venice, lost and won,  
 Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,  
 Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose!  
 Better bewhelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,  
 Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,  
 From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

## XIV.

In youth she was all glory, — a new Tyre, —  
 Her very by-word sprung from victory,  
 The « Planter of the Lion, »\* which through fire  
 And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;  
 Though making many slaves, herself still free,  
 And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite;  
 Witness Troy's rival, Candia! Vouch it, ye  
 Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight!  
 For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

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\* *Plant the Lion* — that is, the Lion of St. Mark, the standard of the republic, which is the origin of the word Pantaloon — Pianta-leone, Pantaleon, Pantaloon.



## XVII.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,  
 Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,  
 Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,  
 Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot  
 Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot  
 Is shameful to the nations, — most of all,  
 Albion! to thee: the Ocean queen should not  
 Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall  
 O Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

## XVIII.

I loved her from my boyhood — she to me  
 Was as a fairy city of the heart,  
 Rising like water-columns from the sea,  
 Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;  
 And Otway, Ratcliff, Schiller, Shakspeare's art,\*  
 Had stamped her image in me, and even so,  
 Although I found her thus, we did not part,  
 Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,  
 Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

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\* Venice Preserved; Mysteries of Udolpho; the Ghost-seer, or Armenian; the Marchant of Venice; Othello.

## XIX.

I can repeople with the past — and of  
 The present there is still for eye and thought,  
 And meditation chastened down, enough;  
 And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;  
 And of the happiest moments which were  
 wrought

Within the web of my existence, some  
 From thee, fair Venice! have their colours  
 caught:

There are some feelings Time can not benumb,  
 Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be cold  
 and dumb.

## XX.

But from their nature will the tannen grow (10)  
 Loftiest on loftiest and least and sheltered rocks,  
 Rooted in barrenness, where nought below  
 Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks  
 Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and  
 mocks

The howling tempest, till its height and frame  
 Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks  
 Of bleak, grey, granite, into life it came,  
 And grew a giant tree; — the mind may grow the  
 same.



## XXIII.

But ever and anon of griefs subdued  
 There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,  
 Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;  
 And slight withal may be the things which bring  
 Back on the heart the weight which it would fling  
 Aside for ever: it may be a sound —  
 A tone of music, — summer's eve — or spring,  
 A flower — the wind — the ocean — which  
 — shall wound,  
 Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly  
 bound;

## XXIV.

And how and why we know not, nor can trace  
 Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,  
 But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface  
 The blight and blackening which it leaves  
 behind,  
 Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,  
 When least we deem of such, calls up to view  
 The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,  
 The cold — the changed — perchance the  
 dead — anew,  
 The mourn'd, the loved, the lost — too many! —  
 yet how few!

## XXV.

But my soul wanders; I demand it back  
To meditate amongst decay, and stand  
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track  
Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land  
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,  
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be  
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,  
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,  
The beautiful, the brave — the lords of earth  
and sea,

## XXVI.

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!  
And even since, and now, fair Italy!  
Thou art the garden of the world, the home  
Of all Art yields, and nature can decree;  
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?  
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste  
More rich than other climes' fertility;  
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced  
With an immaculate charm which can not be  
defaced.

## XXVII.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night—

Sunset divides the sky with her — a sea  
 Of glory streams along the Alpine height  
 Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free  
 From clouds, but of all colours seems to be  
 Melted to one vast Iris of the West,  
 Where the Day joins the past Eternity;  
 While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest  
 Floats through the azure air — an island of the  
 blest!

## XXVIII.

A single star is at her side, and reigns  
 With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but  
 still (11)  
 Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains  
 Rolled o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,  
 As Day and Night contending were, until  
 Nature reclaim'd her order: — gently flows  
 The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil  
 The odorous purple of a new-born rose,  
 Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd  
 within it glows.

## XXIX.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,  
 Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,  
 From the rich sunset to the rising star,

Their magical variety diffuse:  
 And now they change; a paler shadow strews  
 Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day  
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues  
 With a new colour as it gasps away,  
 The last still loveliest, till — 'tis gone — and  
 all is gray.

## XXX.

There is a tomb in Arqua; — reared in air,  
 Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose  
 The bones of Laura's lover: here repair  
 Many familiar with his well-sung woes,  
 The pilgrims of his genius. He arose  
 To raise a language, and his land reclaim  
 From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:  
 Watering the tree which bears his lady's  
 name (12)  
 With his melodious tears, he gave himself to  
 fame.

## XXXI.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died; (13)  
 The mountain-village where his latter days  
 Went down the vale of years; and 'tis their  
 pride —  
 An honest pride — and let it be their praise;

To offer to the passing stranger's gaze  
 His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain  
 And venerably simple, such as raise  
 A feeling more accordant with his strain  
 Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

## XXXII.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt  
 Is one of that complexion which seems made  
 For those who their mortality have felt,  
 And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd  
 In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,  
 Which shows a distant prospect far away  
 Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,  
 For they can lure no further; and the ray  
 Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

## XXXIII.

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,  
 And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,  
 Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours  
 With a calm languor, which, though to the eye  
 Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.  
 If from society we learn to live,  
 'Tis solitude should teach us how to die;  
 It hath no flatterers; vanity can give  
 No hollow aid; alone — man with his God must  
 strive:

## XXXIV.

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair (14)  
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their  
prey  
In melancholy bosoms, such as were  
Of moody texture from their earliest day,  
And loved to dwell in darkness and dimay,  
Deeming themselves predestin'd to a doom  
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;  
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,  
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

## XXXV.

Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,  
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,  
There seems as 'twere a curse upon the seats  
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood  
Of Este, which for many age made good  
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore  
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood  
Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore  
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn  
before.

## XXXVI.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.

Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!  
 And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,  
 And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell:  
 The miserable despot could not quell  
 The insulted mind he sought to quench, and  
 blend

With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell  
 Where he had plung'd it. Glory without end  
 Scatter'd the clouds away — and on that name  
 attend.

## XXXVII.

The tears and praises of all time; while thine  
 Would rot in its oblivion — in the sink  
 Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line  
 Is shaken into nothing; but the link  
 Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think  
 Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn—  
 Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink  
 From thee! if in another station born,  
 Scarcie fit to be the slave of him thou madest  
 to mourn:

## XXXIII.

Thou! form'd to eat, and be despis'd, and die,  
 Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou.  
 Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:  
 He! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,

Which emanated then, and dazzles now  
 In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire;  
 And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow (15)  
 No strain which shamed his country's creaking  
   lyre,  
 That whetstone of the teeth — monotony in wire!

## XXXIX.

Peace to Torquato's injur'd shade! 'twas his  
 In life and death to be the mark where Wrong  
 Aim'd with her poison'd arrows; but to miss.  
 Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!  
 Each year brings forth its millions; but how  
   long  
 The tide of generations shall roll on,  
 And not the whole combin'd and countless  
   throng  
 Compose a mind like thine? though all in one  
 Condens'd their scatter'd rays, they would not  
   form a sun.

## XL.

Great as thou art, yet paralleled by those,  
 Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,  
 The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose  
 The Tuscan father's comedy divine;  
 Then, not unequal to the Florentine,

The southern Scott, the minstrel who called  
forth

A new creation with his magic line,  
And, like the Ariosto of the North,  
Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly  
worth.

## XLI.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust (16)  
The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves;  
Nor was the ominous element unjust,  
For the true laurel-wreath which Glory  
weaves (17)

Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,  
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;  
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,  
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below (18)  
Whate'er it strikes; — yon head is doubly sacred  
now.

## XLII.

Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast (19)  
The fatal gift of beauty, which became  
A funeral dower of present woes and past,  
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,  
And annals graved in characters of flame.  
Oh God! that thou wert in thy nakedness

Less lovely or more powerful, and could'st  
 claim  
 Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who  
 press  
 To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy  
 distress;

## XLIII.

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,  
 Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored  
 For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,  
 Would not be seen the armed torrents pour'd  
 Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde  
 Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po  
 Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword  
 Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,  
 Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.

## XLIV.

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of  
 him, (20)  
 The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind,  
 The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim  
 The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,  
 Came Megara before me, and behind  
 Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,  
 And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined



## XLVII.

Yet, Italy! through every other land  
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side  
to side;  
Mother of Arts! as once of arms; thy hand  
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide;  
Parent of our Religion, whom the wide  
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!  
Europe, repentant of her parricide,  
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,  
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

## XLVIII.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,  
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps  
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.  
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps  
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps  
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.  
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps  
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,  
And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

## XLIX.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and  
fills (22)









Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,  
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled —  
not thine own.

## LVIII.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeathed (30)  
His dust, — and lies it not her Great among,  
With many a sweet and solemn requiem  
breath'd

O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue?  
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,  
The poetry of speech? No; — even his tomb  
Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,  
No more amidst the meaner dead find room,  
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom!*

## LIX.

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;  
Yet for this want more noted, as of yore  
The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,  
Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more:  
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,  
Fortress of falling empire! honoured sleeps  
The immortal exile; — Arqua, too, her store  
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,  
While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead  
and weeps.

## LX.

What is her pyramid of precious stones? (31)  
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues  
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones  
Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dew  
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse  
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,  
Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,  
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread  
Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely  
head.

## LXI.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes  
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,  
Were Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;  
There be more marvels yet — but not for mine;  
For I have been accustomed to entwine  
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,  
Than Art in galleries: though a work divine  
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields  
Less than it feels, because the weapon which  
it wields

## LXII.

Is of another temper, and I roam

By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles  
 Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;  
 For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles  
 Come back before me, as his skill beguiles  
 The host between the mountains and the shore,  
 Where Courage falls in her despairing files,  
 And torrents, swoln to rivers with their gore,  
 Reek through the sultry plain, with legions  
 scatter'd o'er,

## LXIII.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds;  
 And such the storm of battle on this day,  
 And such the phrenzy, whose convulsion blinds  
 To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,  
 An earthquake reel'd unheededly away! (32)  
 None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,  
 And yawning forth a grave for those who lay  
 Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet;  
 Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations  
 meet!

## LXIV.

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark  
 Which bore them to Eternity; they saw  
 The Ocean round, but had no time to mark  
 The motions of their vessel; Nature's law,

In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe  
 Which reigns when mountains tremble, and  
 the birds  
 Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw  
 From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing  
 herds  
 Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread  
 hath no words.

## LXV.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;  
 Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain  
 Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;  
 Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain  
 Lay where their roots are; but a brook hath  
 ta'en —  
 A little rill of scanty stream and bed —  
 A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;  
 And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead  
 Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling  
 waters red.

## LXVI.

But thou, Clitumnus! in thy sweetest wave (33)  
 Of the most living crystal that was e'er  
 The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave  
 Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear  
 IX.

Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer  
 Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!  
 And most serene of aspect, and most clear;  
 Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaugh-  
 ters —  
 A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest  
 daughters!

## LXVII.

And on thy happy shore a temple still,  
 Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,  
 Upon a mild declivity of hill,  
 Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps  
 Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps  
 The finny darter with the glittering scales,  
 Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;  
 While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails  
 Down where the shallower wave still tells its  
 bubbling tales.

## LXVIII.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place!  
 If through the air a zephyr more serene  
 Win to the brow, 'tis his; and if ye trace  
 Along his margin a more eloquent green,  
 If on the heart the freshness of the scene  
 Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust

Of weary life a moment lave it clean  
 With Nature's baptism, — 'tis to him ye must  
 Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

## LXIX.

The roar of waters! — from the headlong height  
 Velino cleaves, the wave-worn precipice;  
 The fall of waters! rapid as the light  
 The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;  
 The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,  
 And boil in endless torture; while the sweat  
 Of their great agony, wrung out from this  
 Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet  
 That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

## LXX.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again  
 Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,  
 With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,  
 Is an eternal April to the ground,  
 Making it all one emerald: — how profound  
 The gulf! and how the giant element  
 From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,  
 Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and  
 rent  
 With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful  
 vent

## LXXI.

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows  
 More like the fountain of an infant sea  
 Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes  
 Of a new world, than only thus to be  
 Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,  
 With many windings, through the vale: —  
 Look back!

Lo! where it comes like an eternity,  
 As if to sweep down all things in its track,  
 Charming the eye with dread, — a matchless  
 cataract, (34)

## LXXII.

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,  
 From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,  
 An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge, (35)  
 Like Hope upon a death bed, and, unworn  
 Its steady dyes, while all around is torn  
 By the distracted waters, bears serene  
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:  
 Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,  
 Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

## LXXIII.

Once more upon the woody Apennine,

The infant Alps, which — had I not before  
 Gaz'd on their mightier parents, where the pine  
 Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar  
 The thundering lawine — might be worshipp'd  
 more; (36)

But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear  
 Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar  
 Glaciers of bleak Mont-Blanc both far and near,  
 And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

## LXXIV.

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name;  
 And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly  
 Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,  
 For still they soared unutterably high:  
 I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;  
 Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made  
 These hills seem things of lesser dignity,  
 All, save the lone Soracte's height, displayed  
 Not now in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

## LXXV.

For our remembrance, and from out the plain  
 Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,  
 And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain  
 May he, who will, his recollections rake  
 And quote in classic raptures, and awake

The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorr'd  
 Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,  
 The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by  
 word (37)

In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

## LXXVI.

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd  
 My sickening memory; and, though Time hath  
 taught

My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,  
 Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought  
 By the impatience of my early thought,  
 That, with the freshness wearing out before  
 My mind could relish what it might have sought,  
 If free to choose, I cannot now restore  
 Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

## LXXVII.

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,  
 Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse  
 To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,  
 To comprehend, but never love thy verse  
 Although no deeper Moralist rehearse  
 Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art,  
 Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,

Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,  
Yet fare thee well — upon Soracte's ridge we part.

## LXXVIII.

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!  
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,  
Lone mother of dead empires! and controul  
In their shut breasts their petty misery.  
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and  
see

The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way  
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!  
Whose agonies are evils of a day —  
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

## LXXIX.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,  
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;  
An empty urn within her withered hands,  
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;  
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now; (38)  
The very sepulchres lie tenantless  
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,  
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?  
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her  
distress!

## LXXX.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood,  
 and Fire,  
 Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;  
 She saw her glories star by star expire,  
 And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,  
 Where the car climb'd the capitol; far and wide  
 Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—  
 Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,  
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,  
 And say, "here was, or is," where all is doubly  
 night?

## LXXXI.

The double night of ages, and of her,  
 Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and  
 wrap  
 All round us; we but feel our way to err:  
 The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,  
 And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;  
 But Rome is as the desert, where we steer  
 Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap  
 Our hands, and cry "Eureka!" it is clear—  
 When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

## LXXXII.

Alas! the lofty city! and alas!

The trebly hundred triumphs! (39) and the day  
 When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass  
 The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!  
 Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,  
 And Livy's pictur'd page! — but these shall be  
 Her resurrection; all beside — decay.  
 Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see  
 That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome  
 was free!

## LXXXIII.

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's  
 wheel, (40)  
 Triumphant Sylla! Thou, who didst subdue  
 Thy country's foes ere thou would pause to feel  
 The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due  
 Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew  
 O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with thy frown  
 Annihilated senates — Roman, too,  
 With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down  
 With an atoning smile a more than earthly  
 crown —

## LXXXIV.

The dictatorial wreath, — couldst thou divine  
 To what would one day dwindle that which made  
 Thee more than mortal? and that so supine

By aught than Romans Rome should thus be  
laid?

She who was named Eternal, and arrayed  
Her warriors but to conquer — she who veil'd  
Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,  
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,  
Her rushing wings — Oh! she who was Almighty  
hail'd!

## LXXXV.

Sylla was first of victors; but our own  
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell; he  
Too swept off senates while he hewed the throne  
Down to a block — immortal rebel! See  
What crimes it costs to be a moment free  
And famous through all ages! but beneath  
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;  
His day of double victory and death  
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield  
his breath.

## LXXXVI.

The third of the same moon whose former  
course

Had all but crown'd him, on the selfsame day  
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,  
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay. (41)





With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,  
 And an immortal instinct which redeem'd  
 The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,  
 Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd  
 At Cleopatra's feet, — and now himself he beam'd,

## XCI.

And came — and saw — and conquer'd! But  
 Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,  
 Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,  
 Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,  
 With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be  
 A listener to itself, was strangely fram'd;  
 With but one weakest weakness — vanity,  
 Coquettish in ambition — still he aim'd —  
 At what? can he avouch — or answer what he  
 claim'd?

## XCH.

And would be all or nothing — nor could wait  
 For the sure grave to level him; few years  
 Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,  
 On whom we tread: For *this* the conqueror rears  
 The arch of triumph! and for *this* the tears  
 And blood of earth flow on as they have flowed,  
 An universal deluge, which appears

Without an ark for wretched man's abode,  
 And ebbs but to reflow! — Renew thy rainbow,  
 God!

## XCIII.

What from this barren being do we reap?  
 Our senses narrow, and our reason frail, (45)  
 Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,  
 And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;  
 Opinion an omnipotence, — whose veil  
 Mantles the earth with darkness, until right  
 And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale  
 Lest their own judgments should become too  
 bright,  
 And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth  
 have too much light.

## XCIV.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,  
 Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,  
 Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,  
 Bequeathing their hereditary rage  
 To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage  
 War for their chains, and rather than be free,  
 Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage

Within the same arena where they see  
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same  
tree.

## XCV.

I speak not of men's creeds — they rest between  
Man and his Maker — but of things allowed,  
Averr'd, and known, — and daily, hourly  
seen —

The yoke that is upon us doubly bowed,  
And the intent of tyranny avowed,  
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown  
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,  
And shook them from their slumbers on the  
throne;

Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had  
done.

## XCVI.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquered be,  
And Freedom find no champion and no child  
Such as Columbia saw arise when she  
Sprung forth a Pallas, armed and undefiled?  
Or must such minds be nourished in the wild,  
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar  
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled

On infant Washington? Has Earth no more  
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no  
such shore?

## XCVII.

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,  
And fatal have her Saturnalia been  
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;  
Because the deadly days which we have seen,  
And vile Ambition, that built up between  
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,  
And the base pageant last upon the scene,  
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall  
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst  
— his second fall.

## XCVIII.

Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,  
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;  
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and  
dying,  
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;  
Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,  
Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,  
But the sap lasts, — and still the seed we find  
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;  
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.



## CI.

Was she as those who love their lords, or they  
 Who love the lords of others? such have been,  
 Even in the olden time Rome's annals say.  
 Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,  
 Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,  
 Profuse of joy — or 'gainst it did she war,  
 Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean  
 To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar  
 Love from amongst her griefs? — for such the  
 affections are.

## CII.

Perchance she died in youth: it may be, bowed  
 With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb  
 That weighed upon her gentle dust, a cloud  
 Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom  
 In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom  
 Heaven gives its favourites — early death;  
 yet shed (47)  
 A sunset charm around her, and illumine  
 With hectic light, Hesperus of the dead,  
 Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like  
 red.

## CIII.

Perchance she died in age — surviving all,  
Charms, kindred, children — with the silver

grey

On her long tresses, which might yet recal,  
It may be, still a something of the day  
When they were braided, and her proud array  
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed  
By Rome — — But whither would Conjecture  
stray?

Thus much alone we know — Metella died,  
The wealthiest Roman's wife; Behold his love or  
pride!

## CIV.

I know not why — but standing thus by thee  
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,  
Thou tomb! and other days come back on me  
With recollected music, though the tone  
Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan  
Of dying thunder on the distant wind;  
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone  
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind  
Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin  
leaves behind;

## CV.

And from the planks, far shattered o'er the  
 rocks,  
 Built me a little bark of hope, once more  
 To battle with the ocean and the shocks  
 Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar  
 Which rushes on the solitary shore  
 Where all lies foundered that was ever dear:  
 But could I gather from the wave-worn store  
 Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?  
 There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save  
 what is here.

## CVI.

Then let the winds howl on! their harmony  
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night  
 The sound shall temper with the owl's cry,  
 As I now hear them, in the fading light  
 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native side,  
 Answering each other on the Palatine,  
 With their large eyes, all glistening grey and  
 bright,  
 And sailing pinions. — Upon such a shrine  
 What are our petty griefs? — let me not number  
 mine.



First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,  
 Wealth, vice, corruption, — barbarism at last.  
 And History, with all her volumes vast,  
 Hath but *one* page, — 'tis better written here,  
 Where gorgeous Tyranny had thus amass'd  
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,  
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask — — Away  
 with words! draw near,

## CIX.

Admire, exult — despise — laugh, weep, —  
 for here  
 There is such matter for all feeling: — Man!  
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,  
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,  
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan  
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,  
 Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van  
 Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd!  
 Where are its golden roofs? where those who  
 dared to build?

## CX.

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,  
 Thou nameless column with the buried base!  
 What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow?  
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.

Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,  
 Titus or Trajan's? No — 'tis that of Time:  
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace  
 Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb  
 To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept  
 sublime, (49)

## CXI.

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,  
 And looking to the stars: they had contain'd  
 A spirit which with these would find a home,  
 The last of those who o'er the whole earth  
 reign'd,  
 The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,  
 But yielded back his conquests: — he was more  
 Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd  
 With household blood and wine, serenely wore  
 His sovereign virtues — still we Trajan's name  
 adore. (50)

## CXII.

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place  
 Where Rome embraced her heroes? where  
 the steep  
 Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,  
 The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap  
 Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap

Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,  
 A thousand years of silenced factions sleep —  
 The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,  
 And still the eloquent air breathes — burns with  
 Cicero!

## CXIII.

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:  
 Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,  
 From the first hour of empire in the bud,  
 To that when farther worlds to conquer fail'd;  
 But long before had Freedom's face been veil'd.  
 And Anarchy assumed her attributes;  
 Till every lawless soldier who assail'd  
 Trod on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,  
 Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

## CXIV.

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,  
 From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,  
 Redeemer of dark centuries of shame —  
 The friend of Petrarch — hope of Italy —  
 Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree (51)  
 Of Freedom's withered trunk puts forth a leaf,  
 Even for thy tomb a garland let it be —

The forum's champion, and the people's chief—  
Her new-horn Numa thou — with reign, alas!  
too brief.

## CXV.

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart (52)  
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair  
As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art  
Or wert, — a young Aurora of the air,  
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;  
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,  
Who found a more than common votary there  
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,  
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied  
forth.

## CXVI.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled  
With thine Elysian water-drops: the face  
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years un-  
wrinkled,  
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,  
Whose green, wild margin now no more erase  
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,  
Prisoned in marble, bubbling from the base

Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap  
 The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers,  
 and ivy, creep,

## CXVII.

Fantastically tangled; the green hills  
 Are clothed with early blossoms, through the  
 grass  
 The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills  
 Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;  
 Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,  
 Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes  
 Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;  
 The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,  
 Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems coloured  
 by its skies.

## CXVIII.

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,  
 Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating  
 For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover;  
 The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting  
 With her most starry canopy, and seating  
 Thyself by thine adorer, what befel?  
 This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting  
 Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell  
 Haunted by holy Love — the earliest oracle!

## CXIX.

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,  
Blend a celestial with a human heart;  
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,  
Share with immortal transports? could thine art  
Make them indeed immortal, and impart  
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,  
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart —  
The dull satiety which all destroys —  
And root from out the soul the deadly weed  
which cloy's?

## CXX.

Alas! our young affections run to waste,  
Or water but the desert; whence arise  
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,  
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,  
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,  
And trees whose gums are poison; such the  
plants  
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies  
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants  
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

## CXXI.

Oh Love! no habitant of earth thou art —  
 An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,  
 A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,  
 But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see  
 The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;  
 The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,  
 Even with its own desiring phantasy,  
 And to a thought such shape and image given,  
 As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd—wearied  
 — wrung — and riven.

## CXXII.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,  
 And fevers into false creation: — where,  
 Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath  
 seized?  
 In him alone. Can Nature shew so fair?  
 Where are the charms and virtues which we  
 dare  
 Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,  
 The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,  
 Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,  
 And overpowers the page where it would bloom  
 again?

## CXXIII.

Who loves, raves — 'tis youth's frenzy — but  
the cure  
Is bitterer still; as charm by charm unwinds  
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure  
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's  
Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds  
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,  
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;  
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,  
Seems ever near the prize, — wealthiest when  
most undone.

## CXXIV.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away —  
Sick — sick; unfound the boon — unslaked the  
thirst,  
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,  
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at  
first —  
But all too late, — so are we doubly curst.  
Love, fame, ambition, avarice — 'tis the same,  
Each idle — and all ill — and none the worst —  
For all are meteors with a different name, —  
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the  
flame.

## CXXV.

Few — none — find what they love or could  
   have loved,  
 Though accident, blind contact, and the strong  
 Necessity of loving, have removed  
 Antipathies — but to recur, — ere long,  
 Envenomed with irrevocable wrong;  
 And Circumstance, that unspiritual god  
 And miscreator, makes and helps along  
 Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,  
 Whose touch turns Hope to dust, — the dust  
   we all have trod.

## CXXVI.

Our life is a false nature — 'tis not in  
 The harmony of things, — this hard decree,  
 This uneradicable taint of sin,  
 This boundless upar, this all-blasting tree,  
 Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches  
   be  
 The skies which rain their plagues on men like  
   dew —  
 — Disease, death, bondage — all the woes we see. —  
 — And worse, the woes we see not — which  
   throb through  
 The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.



## CXXIX.

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of  
 heaven,  
 Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,  
 And shadows forth its glory. There is given  
 Unto the things of earth, which time hath bent,  
 A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant  
 His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power  
 And magic in the ruined battlement,  
 For which the palace of the present hour  
 Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its  
 dower.

## CXXX.

Oh Time! the beautifier of the dead,  
 Adorner of the ruin, comforter  
 And only healer when the heart hath bled —  
 Time! the corrector where our judgments err,  
 The test of truth, love, — sole philosopher,  
 For all beside are sophists, from thy thrift,  
 Which never loses though it doth defer —  
 Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift  
 My hands, and eyes, and heart, and grave of  
 thee a gift:

## CXXXI.

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a  
 shrine

And temple more divinely desolate,

Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,

Ruins of years — though few, yet full of fate: —

If thou hast ever seen me too elate,

Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne

Good, and reserved my pride against the hate

Which shall not whelm me, let me not have  
 worn

This iron in my soul in vain — shall *they* not  
 mourn?

## CXXXII.

And thou, who never yet of human wrong

Lost the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis! (54)

Here, where the ancient paid thee homage  
 long —

Thou, who didst call the Furies from the abyss,

And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss

For that unnatural retribution — just,

Had it but been from hands less near — in this

Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!

Dost thou not hear my heart? — Awake! thou  
 shalt, and must.

IX.

E



## CXXXV.

That curse shall be Forgiveness. — Have I not —  
 Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it,  
   Heaven! —

Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?  
 Have I not suffered things to be forgiven?  
 Have I not had my brain seared, my heart  
   riven,

Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied  
   away?

And only not to desperation driven,

Because not altogether of such clay

As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

## CXXXVI.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy  
 Have I not seen what human things could do?

From the loud roar of foaming calumny  
 To the small whisper of the aspaltry few,

And subtler venom of the reptile crew,  
 The Janus glance of whose significant eye,

Learning to lie with silence, would seem true;

And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,

Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.



As man was slaughtered by his fellow man.  
And wherefore slaughtered? wherefore, but  
because

Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,  
And the imperial pleasure. — Wherefore not?  
What matters where we fall to fill the maws  
Of worms — on battle-plains or listed spot?  
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

## CXL.

I see before me the Gladiator lie: (55)  
He leans upon his hand — his manly brow  
Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
And his drooped head sinks gradually low —  
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow  
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now  
The arena swims around him — he is gone,  
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the  
wretch who won.

## CXLI.

He heard it, but he heeded not — his eyes  
Were with his heart, and that was far away;  
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay.  
*There* were his young barbarians all at play,

*There* was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,  
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday — (56)  
 All this rush'd with his blood — Shall he expire  
 And unavenged? — Arise! ye Goths, and glut  
 your ire!

## CXLII.

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody  
 steam:  
 And here, where buzzing nations choked the  
 ways,  
 And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream  
 Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;  
 Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise  
 Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd, (57)  
 My voice sounds much — and fall the stars'  
 faint rays  
 On the arena void — seats crush'd — walls  
 bow'd —  
 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes  
 strangely loud.

## CXLIII.

A ruin — yet what ruin! from its mass  
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been reared;  
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass  
 And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.

Hath it indeed been plundered, or but cleared?  
 Alas! developed, opens the decay,  
 When the colossal fabric's form is neared:  
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
 Which streams too much on all years, man,  
 Have left away.

## CXLIV.

But when the rising moon begins to climb  
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;  
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of  
 time,  
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air  
 The garland-forest, which the grey walls wear,  
 Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head; (58)  
 When the light shines serene but doth not glare,  
 Then in this magic circle raise the dead:  
 Heroes have trod this spot — 'tis on their dust  
 ye tread.

## CXLV.

“ While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall  
 stand; (59)  
 “ When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;  
 “ And when Rome falls — the World.” From  
 our own land  
 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall

In Saxon times, which we are wont to call  
 Ancient; and these three mortal things are still  
 On their foundations, and unaltered all;  
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,  
 The World, the same wide den — of thieves,  
 or what ye will.

## CXLVI.

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime —  
 Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,  
 From Jove to Jesus — spared and blest by  
 time; (60)  
 Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods  
 Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and  
 man plods  
 His way through thorns to ashes — glorious  
 dome!  
 Shalt thou not last? Time's scythe and tyrants'  
 reds  
 Shiver upon thee — sanctuary and home  
 Of art and piety — Pantheon! — pride of Rome!

## CXLVII.

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts!  
 Despoiled yet perfect, with thy circle spreads  
 A holiness appealing to all hearts —  
 To art a model; and to him who treads

Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds  
Her light through thy sole aperture; to those  
Who worship, here are altars for their beads;  
And they who feel for genius may repose  
Their eyes on honoured forms, whose busts  
around them close. (61)

## CXLVIII.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear  
light (62)

What do I gaze on? Nothing: Look again!  
Two forms are slowly shadowed on my sight—  
Two insulated phantoms of the brain:  
It is not so; I see them full and plain —  
An old man, and a female young and fair,  
Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein  
The blood is nectar: — but what doth she there,  
With her unmantled neck, and bosom white  
and bare?

## CXLIX.

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,  
Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took  
Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,  
Blest into mother, in the innocent look,  
Or even the piping cry of lips that brook  
No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives

Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook  
 She sees her little bud put forth its leaves —  
 What may the fruit be yet? — I know not —  
   Cain was Eve's.

## CL.

But here youth offers to old age the food,  
 The milk of his own gift: — it is her sire  
 To whom she renders back the debt of blood  
 Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire  
 While in those warm and lovely veins the fire  
 Of health and holy feeling can provide  
 Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises  
   higher  
 Than Egypt's river: — from that gentle side  
 Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's realm  
   holds no such tide.

## CLI.

The starry fable of the milky way  
 Has not thy story's purity; it is  
 A constellation of a sweeter ray,  
 And sacred Nature triumphs more in this  
 Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss  
 Where sparkle distant worlds: — Oh, holiest  
   nurse!  
 No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss

To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source  
With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

## CLII.

Turn to the Mole which Hadrian rear'd on  
high, (63)  
Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,  
Colossal copyist of deformity,  
Whose travelled phantasy from the far Nile's  
Enormous model, doom'd the artists's toils  
To build for giants, and for his vain earth  
His shrunken ashes raise this dome: How smiles  
The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,  
To view the huge design which sprung from  
such a birth!

## CLIII.

But lo! the dome — the vast and wondrous  
dome, (64)  
To which Diana's marvel was a cell —  
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!  
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle —  
Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell  
The hyæna and the jackall in their shade;  
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell,

Their glittering massi' the sun, and have survey'd  
 Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem  
 pray'd;

## CLIV.

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,  
 Standest alone — with nothing like to thee —  
 Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.  
 Since Zion's desolation, when that He  
 Forsook his former city, what could be,  
 Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,  
 Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,  
 Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty, all are  
 aisled  
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

## CLV.

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;  
 And why? it is not lessened; but thy mind,  
 Expanded by the genius of the spot,  
 Has grown colossal, and can only find  
 A fit abode wherein appear enshrined  
 Thy hopes of immortality; and thou  
 Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,  
 See thy God face to face, as thou dost now  
 His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

## CLVI.

Thou movest—but increasing with the advance,  
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth  
rise,  
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;  
Vastness which grows — but grows to harmo-  
nize —  
All musical in its immensities;  
Rich marbles—richer painting — shrines where  
flame  
The lamps of gold — and haughty dome which  
vies  
In air with Earth's chief structures, though  
their frame  
Sits on the firm-set ground — and this the clouds  
must claim.

## CLVII.

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must  
break,  
To separate contemplation, the great whole;  
And as the ocean many bays will make,  
That ask the eye — so here condense thy soul  
To more immediate objects, and control  
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart  
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll  
In mighty graduations, part by part,  
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

## CLVIII.

Not by its fault — but thine: Our outward sense  
 Is but of gradual grasp — and as it is  
 That what we have of feeling most intense  
 Outstrips our faint expression; even so this  
 Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice  
 Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great  
 Defies at first our Nature's littleness,  
 Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate  
 Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

## CLIX.

Then pause, and be enlightened; there is more  
 In such a survey than the sating gaze  
 Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore  
 The worship of the place, or the mere praise  
 Of art and its great masters, who could raise  
 What former time, nor skill, nor thought could  
   plan;  
 The fountain of sublimity displays  
 Its depth, and thence may draw the mind  
   of man  
 Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions  
   can.

## CLX.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see



All that ideal beauty ever bless'd  
 The mind with in its most unearthly mood,  
 When each conception was a heavenly guest—  
 A ray of immortality — and stood,  
 Starlike, around, until they gathered to a god!

## CLXIII.

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven  
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid  
 By him to whom the energy was given  
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd  
 With an eternal glory — which, if made  
 By human hands, is not of human thought;  
 And Time himself hath hallowed it, nor laid  
 One ringlet in the dust — nor hath it caught  
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with  
 which 'twas wrought.

## CLXIV.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song  
 The being who upheld it through the past?  
 Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.  
 He is no more — these breathings are his last;  
 His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,  
 And he himself as nothing: — if he was  
 Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd  
 With forms which live and suffer — let that  
 pass —  
 His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass, }

## CLXV.

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all  
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,  
And spreads the dim and universal pall  
Through which all things grow phantoms; and  
the cloud

Between us sinks and all which ever glowed,  
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays  
A melancholy halo scarce allowed  
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays  
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the  
gaze,

## CLXVI.

And send us prying into the abyss,  
To gather what we shall be when the frame  
Shall be resolv'd to something less than this  
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,  
And wipe the dust from off the idle name  
We never more shall hear, — but never more,  
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:  
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore  
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat  
was gore.

## CLXVII.

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,  
 A long low distant murmur of dread sound,  
 Such as arises when a nation bleeds  
 With some deep and immedicable wound;  
 Through storm and darkness yawns the-rending,  
 ground,

The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief  
 Seems royal still, though with her head  
 discrown'd,

And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief  
 She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields  
 no relief.

## CLXVIII.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?  
 Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?  
 Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low  
 Some less majestic, less beloved head?  
 In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,  
 The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,  
 Death hush'd that pang for ever: with thee fled  
 The present happiness and promised joy  
 Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd  
 to cloy.

## CLXIX.

Peasants bring forth in safety. — Can it be,



Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,  
 Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung  
 Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung  
 Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange  
 fate (65)

Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath  
 flung

Against their blind omnipotence a weight  
 Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon  
 or late, —

## CLXXII.

These might have been her destiny; but no,  
 Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair;  
 Good without effort, great without a foe;  
 But now a bride and mother — and now *there!*  
 How many ties did that stern moment tear!  
 From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast  
 Is linked the electric chain of that despair,  
 Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and  
 opprest

The land which loved thee so that none could  
 love thee best.

## CLXXIII.

(66) Lo, Nemi! navelled in the woody hills  
 So far, that the uprooting wind which tears  
 The oak from his foundation, and which spills

The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears  
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares  
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;  
And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears  
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,  
All coiled into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

## CLXXIV.

And near Albano's scarce divided waves  
Shine from a sister valley; — and afar  
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves  
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,  
"Arms and the Man," whose re-ascending star  
Rose o'er an empire; — but beneath thy right  
Tully reposed from Rome; — and where yon bar  
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight  
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's  
delight. (67)

## CLXXV.

But I forget. — My pilgrim's shrine is won,  
And he and I must part, — so let it be, —  
His task and mine alike are nearly done;  
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;  
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,  
And from the Alban Mount we now behold  
Our friend of youth, that ocean, which when we

Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold  
 Those waves, we followed on till the dark Euxine  
 roll'd

## CLXXVI.

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years —  
 Long, though not very many, since have done  
 Their work on both; some suffering and some  
 tears

Have left us nearly where he had begun:  
 Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,  
 We have had our reward — and it is here;  
 That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,  
 And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear  
 As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

## CLXXVII.

Oh! that the Desart were my dwelling place,  
 With one fair Spirit for my minister,  
 That I might all forget the human race,  
 And, hating no one, love but only her!  
 Ye Elements! — in whose ennobling stir  
 I feel myself exalted — Can ye not  
 Accord me such a being? Do I err  
 In deeming such inhabit many a spot?  
 Though with them to converse can rarely be  
 our lot,

## CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
There is society, where none intrudes,  
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:  
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,  
From these our interviews, in which I steal  
From all I may be, or have been before,  
To mingle with the Universe, and feel  
What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

## CLXXIX.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;  
Man marks the earth with ruin — his control  
Stops with the shore; — upon the watery plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and  
unknown.

## CLXXX.

His steps are not upon thy paths, — thy fields  
Are not a spoil for him, — thou dost arise



The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay  
 Has dried up realms to deserts: — not so thou,  
 Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play —  
 Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow —  
 Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

## CLXXXIII.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's  
 form  
 Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,  
 Calm or convuls'd — in breeze, or gale, or  
 storm,  
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
 Dark-heaving; — boundless, endless, and  
 sublime —  
 The image of Eternity — the throne  
 Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime  
 The monsters of the deep are made; each zone  
 Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless,  
 alone.

## CLXXXIV.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
 Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
 Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy  
 I wantoned with thy breakers — they to me  
 Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
 Made them a terror — 'twas a pleasing fear,  
 For I was as it were a child of thee,

