

# THE VISION OF JUDGEMENT

BY

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED BY THE AUTHOR  
OF "WAT TYLER."

BYRON

*"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!*

*I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."*

—[MERCHANT OF VENICE, ACT IV. SC. 1, LINES 218, 336.]



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## INTRODUCTION TO *THE VISION OF JUDGMENT*.

Byron's *Vision of Judgment* is a parody of Southey's *Vision of Judgement*.

The acts or fyttes of the quarrel between Byron and Southey occur in the following order. In the summer of 1817 Southey, accompanied by his friends, Humphrey Senhouse and the artist Edward Nash, passed some weeks (July) in Switzerland. They visited Chamouni, and at Montanvert, in the travellers' album, they found, in Shelley's handwriting, a Greek hexameter verse, in which he affirmed that he was an "atheist," together with an indignant comment ("fool!" also in Greek) superadded in an unknown hand (see *Life of Shelley*, by E. Dowden, 1886, ii. 30, note). Southey copied this entry into his note-book, and "spoke of the circumstance on his return" (circ. August 12, 1817). In the course of the next year some one told Byron that a rumour had reached England that he and Shelley "had formed a league of incest with two sisters," and that Southey and Coleridge were the authors of the scandal. There is nothing to show through what channel the report of the rumour reached Byron's ears, but it may be inferred that it was in his mind (see Letter to Murray, November 24, 1818, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 272) when he assailed Southey in the "Dedication" ("in good, simple, savage verse") to the First Canto of *Don Juan*, which was begun September 6, 1818. Shelley, who was already embittered against Southey (see the account of a dinner at Godwin's, November 6, 1817, *Diary of H. C. Robinson*, 1869, ii. 67), heard Byron read this "Dedication," and, in a letter to Peacock (October 8, 1818), describes it as being "more like a mixture of wormwood and verdigrease than satire."

When *Don Juan* appeared (July 15, 1819), the "Dedication" was not forthcoming, but of its existence and character Southey had been informed. "Have you heard," he asks (Letter to the Rev. H. Hill, *Selections from the Letters, etc.*, 1856, iii. 142), "that *Don Juan* came over with a Dedication to me, in which Lord Castlereagh and I . . . were coupled together for abuse as the 'two Roberts'? A fear of persecution (*sic*) from the *one* Robert is supposed to be the reason why it has been suppressed. Lord Byron might have done well to remember that the other can write dedications also; and make his own cause good, if it were needful, in prose or rhyme, against a villain, as well as against a slanderer."

When George III. died (January 29, 1820), it became the duty of the "laurel-

honouring laureate” to write a funeral ode, and in composing a Preface, in vindication of the English hexameter, he took occasion “incidentally to repay some of his obligations to Lord Byron by a few comments on *Don Juan*” (Letter to the Rev. H. Hill, January 8, 1821, *Selections, etc.*, iii. 225). He was, no doubt, impelled by other and higher motives to constitute himself a *ensor morum*, and take up his parable against the spirit of the age as displayed and fostered in *Don Juan* (see a letter to Wynne, March 23, 1821, *Selections, etc.*, iii. 238), but the suppressed “Dedication” and certain gibes, which had been suffered to appear, may be reckoned as the immediate causes of his anathema.

Southey’s *Vision of Judgement* was published April 11, 1821—an undivine comedy, in which the apotheosis of George III., the beatification of the virtuous, and the bale and damnation of such egregious spirits as Robespierre, Wilkes, and Junius, are “thrown upon the screen” of the showman or lecturer. Southey said that the “Vision” ought to be read aloud, and, if the subject could be forgotten and ignored, the hexameters might not sound amiss, but the subject and its treatment are impossible and intolerable. The “Vision” would have “made sport” for Byron in any case, but, in the Preface, Southey went out of his way to attack and denounce the anonymous author of *Don Juan*.

“What, then,” he asks (ed. 1838, x. 204), “should be said of those for whom the thoughtlessness and inebriety of wanton youth can no longer be pleaded, but who have written in sober manhood, and with deliberate purpose? . . . Men of diseased hearts and depraved imaginations, who, forming a system of opinions to suit their own unhappy course of conduct, have rebelled against the holiest ordinances of human society, and hating that revealed religion which, with all their efforts and bravadoes, they are unable entirely to disbelieve, labour to make others as miserable as themselves, by infecting them with a moral virus that eats into the soul! The school which they have set up may properly be called the Satanic school; for, though their productions breathe the spirit of Belial in their lascivious parts, and the spirit of Moloch in those loathsome images of atrocities and horrors which they delight to represent, they are more especially characterized by a Satanic pride and audacious impiety, which still betrays the wretched feeling of hopelessness wherewith it is allied.”

Byron was not slow to take up the challenge. In the “Appendix” to the *Two Foscari* (first ed., pp. 325–329), which was written at Ravenna, June–July, but

not published till December 11, 1821, he retaliates on “Mr. Southey and his ‘pious preface’” in many words; but when it comes to the point, ignores the charge of having “published a lascivious book,” and endeavours by counter-charges to divert the odium and to cover his adversary with shame and confusion. “Mr. S.,” he says, “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. . . . I am not ignorant,” he adds, “of Mr. Southey’s calumnies on a different occasion, knowing them to be such, which he scattered abroad on his return from Switzerland against me and others. . . . What *his* ‘death-bed’ may be it is not my province to predicate; let him settle it with his Maker, as I must do with mine. There is something at once ludicrous and blasphemous in this arrogant scribbler of all works sitting down to deal damnation and destruction upon his fellow-creatures, with Wat Tyler, the Apotheosis of George the Third, and the Elegy on Martin the regicide, all shuffled together in his writing-desk.”

Southey must have received his copy of the *Two Foscari* in the last week of December, 1821, and with the “Appendix” (to say nothing of the Third Canto of *Don Juan*) before him, he gave tongue, in the pages of the *Courier*, January 6, 1822. His task was an easy one. He was able to deny, *in toto*, the charge of uttering calumnies on his return from Switzerland, and he was pleased to word his denial in a very disagreeable way. He had come home with a stock of travellers’ tales, but not one of them was about Lord Byron. He had “sought for no staler subject than St. Ursula.” His charges of “impiety,” “lewdness,” “profanation,” and “pollution,” had not been answered, and were unanswerable; and as to his being a “scribbler of all work,” there were exceptions—works which he had *not* scribbled, the *nefanda* which disfigured the writings of Lord Byron. “Satanic school” would stick.

So far, the battle went in Southey’s favour. “The words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel,” and Byron was reduced to silence. A challenge (sent through Kinnaird, but not delivered) was but a confession of impotence. There was, however, in Southey’s letter to the *Courier* just one sentence too many. Before he concluded he had given “one word of advice to Lord Byron”—“When he attacks me again, let it be in rhyme. For one who has so little command of himself, it will be a great advantage that his temper should be obliged to *keep tune*.”

Byron had anticipated this advice, and had already attacked the laureate in rhyme, scornfully and satirically, but with a gay and genial mockery which dispensed with “wormwood and verdigrease” or yet bitterer and more venomous ingredients.

There was a truth in Lamb’s jest, that it was Southey’s *Vision of Judgement* which was worthy of prosecution; that “Lord Byron’s poem was of a most good-natured description—no malevolence” (*Diary of H. C. Robinson*, 1869, ii. 240). Good-natured or otherwise, it awoke inextinguishable laughter, and left Byron in possession of the field.

The *Vision of Judgment*, begun May 7 (but probably laid aside till September 11), was forwarded to Murray October 4, 1821. “By this post,” he wrote to Moore, October 6, 1821 (*Letters*, 1901, v. 387), “I have sent my nightmare to balance the incubus of Southey’s impudent anticipation of the Apotheosis of George the Third.” A chance perusal of Southey’s letter in the *Courier* (see Medwin’s *Conversations*, 1824, p. 222, and letters to Douglas Kinnaird, February 6, 25, 1822) quickened his desire for publication; but in spite of many appeals and suggestions to Murray, who had sent Byron’s “copy” to his printer, the decisive step of passing the proofs for press was never taken. At length Byron lost patience, and desired Murray to hand over “the corrected copy of the proof with the Preface” of the *Vision of Judgment* to John Hunt (see letters to Murray, July 3, 6, 1822, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 92, 93). Finally, a year after the MS. had been sent to England, the *Vision of Judgment*, by Quevedo Redivivus, appeared in the first number (pp. 1–39) of the *Liberal*, which was issued October 15, 1822. The Preface, to Byron’s astonishment and annoyance, was not forthcoming (see letter to Murray, October 22, 1822, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 126, and *Examiner*, Sunday, November 3, 1822, p. 697), and is not prefixed to the first issue of the *Vision of Judgment* in the first number of the *Liberal*.

The *Liberal* was severely handled by the press (see, for example, the *Literary Gazette* for October 19, 26, November 2, 1822; see, too, an anonymous pamphlet entitled *A Critique on the “Liberal”* (London, 1822, 8vo, 16 pages), which devotes ten pages to an attack on the *Vision of Judgment*). The daily press was even more violent. The *Courier* for October 26 begins thus: “This *scoundrel-like* publication has at length made its appearance.”

There was even a threat of prosecution. Byron offered to employ counsel for

Hunt, to come over to England to stand his trial in his stead, and blamed Murray for not having handed over the corrected proof, in which some of the more offensive passages had been omitted or mitigated (see letter to Murray, December 25, 1822, and letter to John Hunt, January 8, 1823, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 155, 159). It is to be noted that in the list of *Errata* affixed to the table of Contents at the end of the first volume of the *Liberal*, the words, a “weaker king ne’er,” are substituted for “a worse king never” (stanza viii. line 6), and “an unhandsome woman” for “a bad, ugly woman” (stanza xii. line 8). It would seem that these emendations, which do not appear in the MS., were slipped into the *Errata* as precautions, not as after-thoughts.

Nevertheless, it was held that a publication “calumniating the late king, and wounding the feelings of his present Majesty,” was a danger to the public peace, and on January 15, 1824, the case of the King *v.* John Hunt was tried in the Court of King’s Bench. The jury brought in a verdict of “Guilty,” but judgment was deferred, and it was not till July 19, 1824, three days after the author of the *Vision of Judgment* had been laid to rest at Hucknall Torkard, that the publisher was sentenced to pay to the king a fine of one hundred pounds, and to enter into securities, for five years, for a larger amount.

For the complete text of section iii. of Southey’s Preface, Byron’s “Appendix” to the *Two Foscari*, etc., see *Essays Moral and Political*, by Robert Southey, 1832, ii. 183, 205. See, too, for “Quarrel between Byron and Southey,” Appendix I. of vol. vi. of *Letters of Lord Byron*, 1901.

## NOTE.

The following excerpt from H. C. Robinson’s *Diary* is printed from the original MS., with the kind permission of the trustees of Dr. Williams’ Theological Library (see “Diary,” 1869, ii. 437):—

“[Weimar], August 15, 1829.

“W[ordsworth] will not put the nose of B[yron] out with Frau von Goethe, but he will be appreciated by her. I am afraid of the experiment with the great poet



himself. . . .

" . . . I alone to the poet. . . .

"I read to him the *Vision of Judgment*. He enjoyed it like a child; but his criticisms went little beyond the exclamatory 'Toll! Ganz grob! himmlisch! unübertrefflich!' etc., etc.

"In general, the more strongly peppered passages pleased him the best. Stanza 9 he praised for the clear distinct painting; 10 he repeated with emphasis,—the last two lines conscious that his own age was eighty; 13, 14, and 15 are favourites with me. G. concurred in the suggested praise. The stanza 24 he declared to be sublime. The characteristic speeches of Wilkes and Junius he thought most admirable.

"Byron 'hat selbst viel übertroffen;' and the introduction of Southey made him laugh heartily.

"August 16.

"Lord B. he declared to be inimitable. Ariosto was not so *keck* as Lord B. in the *Vision of Judgment*."

## PREFACE

It hath been wisely said, that “One fool makes many;” and it hath been poetically observed—

“[That] fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

[POPE’S *ESSAY ON CRITICISM*, LINE 625.]

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegade intolerance, and impious cant, of the poem by the author of “Wat Tyler,” are something so stupendous as to form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed “Satanic School,” the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature; thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere, except in his imagination, such a School, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have “talked of *him*; for they laughed consumedly.”<sup>1</sup>

I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert, that they, in their individual capacities, have done more good, in the charities of life, to their fellow-creatures, in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

1stly, Is Mr. Southey the author of *Wat Tyler*?

2ndly, Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?<sup>2</sup>

3rdly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full parliament, “a rancorous renegado?”<sup>3</sup>

4thly, Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide

staring him in the face?<sup>4</sup>

And, 5thly, Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare *he* call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the *Anti-jacobin*, by his present patrons. Hence all this “skimble scamble stuff” about “Satanic,” and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—“*qualis ab incepto.*”

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared—had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonise a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king,—inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France—like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new *Vision*, his *public* career will not be more favourably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present.

*Quevedo Redivivus.*

P.S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this *Vision*. But, for precedents upon such points, I must refer him to Fielding's *Journey from this World to the next*, and to the *Visions of myself*, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated.<sup>5</sup> The reader is also requested to observe, that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is

carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not “like a school-divine,”<sup>6</sup> but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven; and Chaucer’s *Wife of Bath*, Pulci’s *Morgante Maggiore*, Swift’s *Tale of a Tub*, and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, etc., may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.

Q.R.

. . . Mr. Southey being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the meantime have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously “one Mr. Landor,”<sup>7</sup> who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the poet laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called “*Gebir*.” Who could suppose, that in this same *Gebir* the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey’s heaven,—yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign:—

(Prince *Gebir* having descended into the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view; and he exclaims to his ghostly guide)—

“Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch  
Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?  
Listen! him yonder who, bound down supine,  
Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-hung;  
He too amongst my ancestors! [I hate  
The despot, but the dastard I despise.  
Was he our countryman?’  
‘Alas,]’<sup>8</sup> O king!  
Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst  
Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east.’  
‘He was a warrior then, nor fear’d the gods?’  
‘*Gebir*, he feared the Demons, not the gods,  
Though them indeed his daily face adored;  
And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives

Squandered, as stones to exercise a sling,

And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—

Oh madness of mankind! addressed, adored!”

GEBIR [*WORKS, ETC.*, 1876, VII. 17].

I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics of Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat indiscreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of “great moral lessons” are apt to be found in strange company.

<sup>1</sup> [“Aye, he and the count’s footman were jabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a mill-pond; and I believe they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.”—Farquhar, *The Beaux’ Stratagem*, act iii. sc. 2.]

<sup>2</sup> [These were not the expressions employed by Lord Eldon. The Chancellor laid down the principle that “damages cannot be recovered for a work which is in its nature calculated to do an injury to the public,” and assuming *Wat Tyler* to be of this description, he refused the injunction until Southey should have established his right to the property by an action. *Wat Tyler* was written at the age of nineteen, when Southey was a republican, and was entrusted to two booksellers, Messrs. Ridgeway and Symonds, who agreed to publish it, but never put it to press. The MS. was not returned to the author, and in February, 1817, at the interval of twenty-two years, when his sentiments were widely different, it was printed, to his great annoyance, by W. Benbow (see his *Scourge for the Laureate* (1825), p. 14), Sherwood, Neely and Jones, John Fairburn, and others. It was reported that 60,000 copies were sold (see *Life and Correspondence of R. Southey*, 1850, iv. 237, 241, 249, 252).]

<sup>3</sup> [William Smith, M.P. for Norwich, attacked Southey in the House of Commons on the 14th of March, 1817, and the Laureate replied by a letter in the *Courier*, dated March 17, 1817, and by a letter “To William Smith, Esq., M.P.” (see *Essays Moral and Political*, by R. Southey, 1832, ii. 7–31). The exact words used were, “the determined malignity of a renegade” (see *Hansard’s Parl. Debates*, xxxv. 1088).]

<sup>4</sup> [One of Southey’s juvenile poems is an “Inscription for the Apartment in Chepstow Castle, where Henry Martin, the Regicide, was imprisoned thirty years” (see Southey’s *Poems*, 1797, p. 59). Canning parodied it in the *Anti-jacobin* (see his well-known “Inscription for the Door of the Cell in Newgate, where Mrs. Brownrigg, the ‘Prentice-cide, was confined, previous to her Execution,” *Poetry of the Anti-jacobin*, 1828, p. 6).]

<sup>5</sup> [See “*The Vision, etc.*, made English by Sir R. Lestrange, and burlesqued by a Person of Quality:” *Visions, being a Satire on the corruptions and vices of all degrees of Mankind*. Translated from the original Spanish by Mr. Nunez, London, 1745, etc.]

The Sueños or Visions of Francisco Gomez de Quevedo of Villegas are six in number. They were published separately in 1635. For an account of the "*Visita de los Chistes*," "A Visit in Jest to the Empire of Death," and for a translation of part of the "Dream of Skulls," or "Dream of the Judgment," see *History of Spanish Literature*, by George Ticknor, 1888, ii. 339–344.]

6

["Milton's strong pinion now not Heav'n can bound,  
Now Serpent-like, in prose he sweeps the ground,  
In Quibbles, Angel and Archangel join,  
And God the Father turns a School-divine."]

POPE'S *IMITATIONS OF HORACE*, BOOK II. EP. I. LINES 99–102.]

7 [Walter Savage Landor (1775–1864) had recently published a volume of Latin poems (*Idyllia Heroica Decem. Librum Phaleuciorum Unum. Partim jam primum Partim iterum atque tertio edit Savagius Landor. Accedit Quæstiuncula cur Poetæ Latini Recentiores minus leguntur*, Pisis, 1820, 410). In his Preface to the *Vision of Judgement*, Southey illustrates his denunciation of "Men of diseased hearts," etc. (*vide ante*, p. 476), by a quotation from the Latin essay: "Summi poetæ in omni poetarum sæculo viri fuerunt probi: in nostris id vidimus et videmus; neque alius est error a veritate longiùs quàm magna ingenia magnis necessario corrumpi vitiis," etc. (*Idyllia*, p. 197). It was a cardinal maxim of the Lake School "that there can be no great poet who is not a good man. . . . His heart must be pure" (see *Table Talk*, by S. T. Coleridge, August 20, 1833); and Landor's testimony was welcome and consolatory. "Of its author," he adds, "I will only say in this place, that, to have obtained his approbation as a poet, and possessed his friendship as a man, will be remembered among the honours of my life." Now, apart from the essay and its evident application, Byron had probably observed that among the *Phaleucia*, or Hendecasyllables, were included some exquisite lines *Ad Sutteium* (on the death of Herbert Southey), followed by some extremely unpleasant ones on *Taunto* and his tongue, and would naturally conclude that "Savagius" was ready to do battle for the Laureate if occasion arose. Hence the side issue. With regard to the "Ithyphallics," there are portions of the Latin poems (afterwards expunged, see *Poemata et Inscriptiones*, Moxon, 1847) included in the Pisa volume which might warrant the description; but from a note to *The Island* (Canto II. stanza xvii. line 10) it may be inferred that some earlier collection of Latin verses had come under Byron's notice. For Landor's various estimates of Byron's works and genius, see *Works*, 1876, iv. 44–46, 88, 89, etc.]

8 [The words enclosed in brackets were expunged in later editions.]



# THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.<sup>1</sup>

## 1.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate:

His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,  
So little trouble had been given of late;  
Not that the place by any means was full,  
But since the Gallic era “eighty-eight”  
The Devils had ta’en a longer, stronger pull,  
And “a pull altogether,” as they say  
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

## 2.

The Angels all were singing out of tune,  
And hoarse with having little else to do,  
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,  
Or curb a runaway young star or two,<sup>fz</sup>  
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon  
Broke out of bounds o’er the ethereal blue,  
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,  
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

## 3.

The Guardian Seraphs had retired on high,  
Finding their charges past all care below;<sup>ga</sup>  
Terrestrial business filled nought in the sky  
Save the Recording Angel’s black bureau;  
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply



With such rapidity of vice and woe,  
That he had stripped off both his wings in quills,  
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

4.

His business so augmented of late years,  
That he was forced, against his will, no doubt,  
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,)  
For some resource to turn himself about,  
And claim the help of his celestial peers,<sup>gb</sup>  
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out  
By the increased demand for his remarks:<sup>gc</sup>  
Six Angels and twelve Saints were named his clerks.

5.

This was a handsome board—at least for Heaven;  
And yet they had even then enough to do,  
So many Conquerors' cars were daily driven,  
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;  
Each day, too, slew its thousands six or seven,  
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,  
They threw their pens down in divine disgust—  
The page was so besmeared with blood and dust.<sup>gd</sup>

6.

This by the way; 'tis not mine to record  
What Angels shrink from: even the very Devil  
On this occasion his own work abhorred,

So surfeited with the infernal revel:

Though he himself had sharpened every sword,<sup>ge</sup>

It almost quenched his innate thirst of evil.

(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—

'Tis, that he has both Generals in reversion.)<sup>gf2</sup>

7.

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,

Which peopled earth no better, Hell as wont,

And Heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease,

With nothing but new names subscribed upon't;

'Twill one day finish: meantime they increase,<sup>gg</sup>

“With seven heads and ten horns,” and all in front,

Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born

Less formidable in the head than horn.<sup>gh</sup>

8.

In the first year of Freedom's second dawn<sup>3</sup>

Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one

Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn<sup>gi</sup>

Left him nor mental nor external sun:<sup>4</sup>

A better farmer ne'er brushed dew from lawn,<sup>gj</sup>

A worse king never left a realm undone!

He died—but left his subjects still behind,

One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.<sup>gk5</sup>

9.

He died! his death made no great stir on earth:

His burial made some pomp; there was profusion  
Of velvet—gilding—brass—and no great dearth  
Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion:  
For these things may be bought at their true worth;  
Of elegy there was the due infusion—  
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks and banners,  
Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,<sup>6</sup>

10.

Formed a sepulchral melodrame. Of all  
The fools who flocked to swell or see the show,  
Who cared about the corpse? The funeral  
Made the attraction, and the black the woe,  
There throbbed not there a thought which pierced the  
pall;  
And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,  
It seemed the mockery of hell to fold  
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.<sup>7</sup>

11.

So mix his body with the dust! It might  
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were  
The natural compound left alone to fight  
Its way back into earth, and fire, and air;  
But the unnatural balsams merely blight  
What Nature made him at his birth, as bare  
As the mere million's base unummied clay—  
Yet all his spices but prolong decay.<sup>8</sup>

12.

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done;

He's buried; save the undertaker's bill,

Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone

For him, unless he left a German will:<sup>9</sup>

But where's the proctor who will ask his son?

In whom his qualities are reigning still,<sup>g<sup>l</sup></sup>

Except that household virtue, most uncommon,

Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

13.

“God save the king!” It is a large economy

In God to save the like; but if he will

Be saving, all the better; for not one am I

Of those who think damnation better still:<sup>10</sup>

I hardly know too if not quite alone am I

In this small hope of bettering future ill

By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,

The eternity of Hell's hot jurisdiction.

14.

I know this is unpopular; I know

'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be damned

For hoping no one else may e'er be so;

I know my catechism; I know we're crammed

With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;

I know that all save England's Church have  
shammed,

And that the other twice two hundred churches  
And synagogues have made a *damned* bad purchase.

15.

God help us all! God help me too! I am,  
    God knows, as helpless as the Devil can wish,  
And not a whit more difficult to damn,  
    Than is to bring to land a late-hooked fish,  
Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;  
    Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish,  
As one day will be that immortal fry  
Of almost every body born to die.

16.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,  
    And nodded o'er his keys: when, lo! there came  
A wondrous noise he had not heard of late—  
    A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame;  
In short, a roar of things extremely great,  
    Which would have made aught save a Saint exclaim;  
But he, with first a start and then a wink,  
Said, "There's another star gone out, I think!"<sup>gm</sup>

17.

But ere he could return to his repose,  
    A Cherub flapped his right wing o'er his eyes—  
At which Saint Peter yawned, and rubbed his nose:  
    "Saint porter," said the angel, "prithee rise!"

Waving a goodly wing, which glowed, as glows

An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes:

To which the saint replied, "Well, what's the matter?

"Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?"

18.

"No," quoth the Cherub: "George the Third is dead."

"And who is George the Third?" replied the apostle:

"*What George? what Third?*" "The King of England,"  
said

The angel. "Well! he won't find kings to jostle  
Him on his way; but does he wear his head?

Because the last we saw here had a tustle,  
And ne'er would have got into Heaven's good graces,  
Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

19.

"He was—if I remember—King of France;<sup>11</sup>

That head of his, which could not keep a crown  
On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance

A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:  
If I had had my sword, as I had once

When I cut ears off, I had cut him down;  
But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,  
I only knocked his head from out his hand.

20.

"And then he set up such a headless howl,

That all the Saints came out and took him in;

And there he sits by Saint Paul, cheek by jowl;<sup>8n</sup>

That fellow Paul—the parvenu! The skin<sup>12</sup>  
Of Saint Bartholomew, which makes his cowl

In heaven, and upon earth redeemed his sin,  
So as to make a martyr, never sped  
Better than did this weak and wooden head.

21.

“But had it come up here upon its shoulders,

There would have been a different tale to tell:  
The fellow-feeling in the Saint’s beholders  
Seems to have acted on them like a spell;  
And so this very foolish head Heaven solders  
Back on its trunk: it may be very well,  
And seems the custom here to overthrow  
Whatever has been wisely done below.”

22.

The Angel answered, “Peter! do not pout:

The King who comes has head and all entire,  
And never knew much what it was about—

He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,  
And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:

My business and your own is not to inquire  
Into such matters, but to mind our cue—  
Which is to act as we are bid to do.”

23.

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,  
Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,  
Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan  
Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or Inde,  
Or Thames, or Tweed), and midst them an old man  
With an old soul, and both extremely blind,  
Halted before the gate, and, in his shroud,  
Seated their fellow-traveller on a cloud.<sup>13</sup>

24.

But bringing up the rear of this bright host  
A Spirit of a different aspect waved  
His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast  
Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved;  
His brow was like the deep when tempest-tossed;  
Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved  
Eternal wrath on his immortal face,  
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

25.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate  
Ne'er to be entered more by him or Sin,  
With such a glance of supernatural hate,  
As made Saint Peter wish himself within;  
He pattered<sup>14</sup> with his keys at a great rate,  
And sweated through his Apostolic skin:<sup>g<sup>o</sup></sup>  
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,  
Or some such other spiritual liquor.<sup>g<sup>p</sup></sup>



26.

The very Cherubs huddled all together,

Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt

A tingling to the tip of every feather,

And formed a circle like Orion's belt

Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither

His guards had led him, though they gently dealt

With royal Manes (for by many stories,

And true, we learn the Angels all are Tories).

27.

As things were in this posture, the gate flew

Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges

Flung over space an universal hue

Of many-coloured flame, until its tinges

Reached even our speck of earth, and made a new

Aurora borealis spread its fringes

O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,

By Captain Parry's crew, in "Melville's Sound."<sup>gq15</sup>

28.

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming

A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,<sup>16</sup>

Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming

Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight:

My poor comparisons must needs be teeming

With earthly likenesses, for here the night

Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving

Johanna Southcote,<sup>17</sup> or Bob Southey raving.<sup>18</sup>

29.

'Twas the Archangel Michael: all men know

The make of Angels and Archangels, since

There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,

From the fiends' leader to the Angels' Prince.

There also are some altar-pieces, though

I really can't say that they much evince

One's inner notions of immortal spirits;

But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

30.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good;

A goodly work of him from whom all Glory

And Good arise; the portal past—he stood;

Before him the young Cherubs and Saints hoary—

(I say *young*, begging to be understood

By looks, not years; and should be very sorry

To state, they were not older than St. Peter,

But merely that they seemed a little sweeter).

31.

The Cherubs and the Saints bowed down before

That arch-angelic Hierarch, the first

Of Essences angelical who wore

The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nursed

Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core

No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst  
Intrude, however glorified and high;  
He knew him but the Viceroy of the sky.

32.

He and the sombre, silent Spirit met—

They knew each other both for good and ill;  
Such was their power, that neither could forget

His former friend and future foe; but still  
There was a high, immortal, proud regret

In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will  
Than destiny to make the eternal years  
Their date of war, and their "Champ Clos" the spheres.

33.

But here they were in neutral space: we know

From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay  
A heavenly visit thrice a-year or so;

And that the "Sons of God," like those of clay,  
Must keep him company; and we might show

From the same book, in how polite a way  
The dialogue is held between the Powers  
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

34.

And this is not a theologic tract,<sup>19</sup>

To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic,  
If Job be allegory or a fact,

But a true narrative; and thus I pick  
From out the whole but such and such an act  
As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.  
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,  
And accurate as any other vision.

35.

The spirits were in neutral space, before  
The gate of Heaven; like eastern thresholds is<sup>20</sup>  
The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,  
And souls despatched to that world or to this;  
And therefore Michael and the other wore  
A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,  
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness  
There passed a mutual glance of great politeness.

36.

The Archangel bowed, not like a modern beau,  
But with a graceful oriental bend,  
Pressing one radiant arm just where below<sup>gr</sup>  
The heart in good men is supposed to tend;  
He turned as to an equal, not too low,  
But kindly; Satan met his ancient friend<sup>gs</sup>  
With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian  
Poor Noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

37.

He merely bent his diabolic brow

An instant; and then raising it, he stood  
In act to assert his right or wrong, and show  
Cause why King George by no means could or should  
Make out a case to be exempt from woe  
Eternal, more than other kings, endued  
With better sense and hearts, whom History mentions,  
Who long have “paved Hell with their good intentions.”<sup>21</sup>

38.

Michael began: “What wouldst thou with this man,  
Now dead, and brought before the Lord? What ill  
Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,  
That thou canst claim him? Speak! and do thy will,  
If it be just: if in this earthly span  
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil  
His duties as a king and mortal, say,  
And he is thine; if not—let him have way.”

39.

“Michael!” replied the Prince of Air, “even here  
Before the gate of Him thou servest, must  
I claim my subject: and will make appear  
That as he was my worshipper in dust,  
So shall he be in spirit, although dear  
To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust  
Were of his weaknesses; yet on the throne  
He reigned o’er millions to serve me alone.

40.

“Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine*; it was,  
    *Once, more* thy master’s: but I triumph not  
In this poor planet’s conquest; nor, alas!  
    Need he thou servest envy me my lot:  
With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass  
    In worship round him, he may have forgot  
Yon weak creation of such paltry things:  
I think few worth damnation save their kings,

41.

“And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to  
    Assert my right as Lord: and even had  
I such an inclination, ’twere (as you  
    Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,  
That Hell has nothing better left to do  
    Than leave them to themselves: so much more mad  
And evil by their own internal curse,  
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

42.

“Look to the earth, I said, and say again:  
    When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor  
    worm  
Began in youth’s first bloom and flush to reign,  
    The world and he both wore a different form,  
And much of earth and all the watery plain  
    Of Ocean called him king: through many a storm  
His isles had floated on the abyss of Time;

For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.<sup>22</sup>

43.

“He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it old:

Look to the state in which he found his realm,  
And left it; and his annals too behold,

How to a minion first he gave the helm;<sup>23</sup>  
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,

The beggar’s vice, which can but overwhelm  
The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance  
Thine eye along America and France.

44.

“’Tis true, he was a tool from first to last

(I have the workmen safe); but as a tool  
So let him be consumed. From out the past

Of ages, since mankind have known the rule  
Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amassed

Of Sin and Slaughter—from the Cæsars’ school,  
Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign  
More drenched with gore, more cumbered with the slain.

45.

“He ever warred with freedom and the free:

Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,  
So that they uttered the word ‘Liberty!’

Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose  
History was ever stained as his will be

With national and individual woes?<sup>gt</sup>  
—

I grant his household abstinence; I grant  
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

46.

“I know he was a constant consort; own

He was a decent sire, and middling lord.

All this is much, and most upon a throne;

As temperance, if at Apicius’ board,

Is more than at an anchorite’s supper shown.

I grant him all the kindest can accord;

And this was well for him, but not for those

Millions who found him what Oppression chose.

47.

“The New World shook him off; the Old yet groans

Beneath what he and his prepared, if not

Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones

To all his vices, without what begot

Compassion for him—his tame virtues; drones

Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot

A lesson which shall be retaught them, wake

Upon the thrones of earth; but let them quake!

48.

“Five millions of the primitive, who hold

The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored

A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—<sup>gu</sup>  
—



Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord,  
Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! Cold  
Must be your souls, if you have not abhorred  
The foe to Catholic participation<sup>24</sup>  
In all the license of a Christian nation.

49.

“True! he allowed them to pray God; but as  
A consequence of prayer, refused the law  
Which would have placed them upon the same base  
With those who did not hold the Saints in awe.”  
But here Saint Peter started from his place  
And cried, “You may the prisoner withdraw:  
Ere Heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,  
While I am guard, may I be damned myself!

50.

“Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange  
My office (and *his* is no sinecure)  
Than see this royal Bedlam-bigot range<sup>8v</sup>  
The azure fields of Heaven, of that be sure!”  
“Saint!” replied Satan, “you do well to avenge  
The wrongs he made your satellites endure;  
And if to this exchange you should be given,  
I’ll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to Heaven!”

51.

Here Michael interposed: “Good Saint! and Devil!

Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.

Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil:

Satan! excuse this warmth of his expression,

And condescension to the vulgar's level:<sup>8w</sup>

Even Saints sometimes forget themselves in session.

Have you got more to say?"—"No."—"If you please,

I'll trouble you to call your witnesses."

52.

Then Satan turned and waved his swarthy hand,

Which stirred with its electric qualities

Clouds farther off than we can understand,

Although we find him sometimes in our skies;

Infernal thunder shook both sea and land

In all the planets—and Hell's batteries

Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions

As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.<sup>25</sup>

53.

This was a signal unto such damned souls

As have the privilege of their damnation

Extended far beyond the mere controls

Of worlds past, present, or to come; no station

Is theirs particularly in the rolls

Of Hell assigned; but where their inclination

Or business carries them in search of game,

They may range freely—being damned the same.

54.

They are proud of this—as very well they may,

It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key  
Stuck in their loins;<sup>26</sup> or like to an “entré”<sup>gx</sup>

Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.

I borrow my comparisons from clay,

Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be  
Offended with such base low likenesses;

We know their posts are nobler far than these.<sup>gy</sup>

55.

When the great signal ran from Heaven to Hell—

About ten million times the distance reckoned  
From our sun to its earth, as we can tell

How much time it takes up, even to a second,  
For every ray that travels to dispel

The fogs of London, through which, dimly beacons,  
The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year,  
If that the *summer* is not too severe:<sup>27</sup>

56.

I say that I can tell—’twas half a minute;

I know the solar beams take up more time  
Ere, packed up for their journey, they begin it;<sup>gz</sup>

But then their Telegraph is less sublime,<sup>28</sup>  
And if they ran a race, they would not win it

‘Gainst Satan’s couriers bound for their own clime.

The sun takes up some years for every ray  
To reach its goal—the Devil not half a day.

57.

Upon the verge of space, about the size  
Of half-a-crown, a little speck appeared  
(I've seen a something like it in the skies  
In the Ægean, ere a squall); it neared,  
And, growing bigger, took another guise;  
Like an aërial ship it tacked, and steered,<sup>29</sup>  
Or *was* steered (I am doubtful of the grammar  
Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;

58.

But take your choice): and then it grew a cloud;  
And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.  
But such a cloud! No land ere saw a crowd  
Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;<sup>ha</sup>  
They shadowed with their myriads Space; their loud  
And varied cries were like those of wild geese,<sup>hb</sup>  
(If nations may be likened to a goose),  
And realised the phrase of “Hell broke loose.”<sup>30</sup>

59.

Here crashed a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,  
Who damned away his eyes as heretofore:  
There Paddy brogued “By Jasus!”—“What’s your wull?”  
The temperate Scot exclaimed: the French ghost  
swore  
In certain terms I shan’t translate in full,  
As the first coachman will; and ‘midst the war,<sup>hc</sup>

The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,

“*Our* President is going to war, I guess.”

60.

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;

In short, an universal shoal of shades

From Otaheite’s isle to Salisbury Plain,

Of all climes and professions, years and trades,

Ready to swear against the good king’s reign,<sup>hd</sup>

Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:<sup>31</sup>

All summoned by this grand “subpoena,” to

Try if kings mayn’t be damned like me or you.

61.

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,

As Angels can; next, like Italian twilight,

He turned all colours—as a peacock’s tail,

Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight

In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,

Or distant lightning on the horizon by night,

Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review

Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

62.

Then he addressed himself to Satan: “Why—

My good old friend, for such I deem you, though

Our different parties make us fight so shy,

I ne’er mistake you for a *personal* foe;

Our difference *political*, and I

Trust that, whatever may occur below,  
You know my great respect for you: and this  
Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

63.

“Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse  
My call for witnesses? I did not mean  
That you should half of Earth and Hell produce;  
'Tis even superfluous, since two honest, clean,  
True testimonies are enough: we lose  
Our Time, nay, our Eternity, between  
The accusation and defence: if we  
Hear both, 'twill stretch our immortality.”

64.

Satan replied, “To me the matter is  
Indifferent, in a personal point of view:  
I can have fifty better souls than this  
With far less trouble than we have gone through  
Already; and I merely argued his  
Late Majesty of Britain's case with you  
Upon a point of form: you may dispose  
Of him; I've kings enough below, God knows!”

65.

Thus spoke the Demon (late called “multifaced”<sup>32</sup>  
By multo-scribbling Southey). “Then we'll call

One or two persons of the myriads placed  
    Around our congress, and dispense with all  
The rest,” quoth Michael: “Who may be so graced  
    As to speak first? there’s choice enough—who shall  
It be?” Then Satan answered, “There are many;  
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any.”

66.

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking Sprite<sup>33</sup>  
    Upon the instant started from the throng,  
Dressed in a fashion now forgotten quite;  
    For all the fashions of the flesh stick long  
By people in the next world; where unite  
    All the costumes since Adam’s, right or wrong,  
From Eve’s fig-leaf down to the petticoat,  
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.<sup>34</sup>

67.

The Spirit looked around upon the crowds  
    Assembled, and exclaimed, “My friends of all  
The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds;  
    So let’s to business: why this general call?  
If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,  
    And ’tis for an election that they bawl,  
Behold a candidate with unturned coat!<sup>he</sup>  
Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?”

68.

“Sir,” replied Michael, “you mistake; these things

Are of a former life, and what we do

Above is more august; to judge of kings

Is the tribunal met: so now you know.”

“Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,”<sup>hf</sup>

Said Wilkes, “are Cherubs; and that soul below

Looks much like George the Third, but to my mind

A good deal older—bless me! is he blind?”

69.

“He is what you behold him, and his doom

Depends upon his deeds,” the Angel said;

“If you have aught to arraign in him, the tomb

Gives license to the humblest beggar’s head

To lift itself against the loftiest.”—“Some,”

Said Wilkes, “don’t wait to see them laid in lead,

For such a liberty—and I, for one,

Have told them what I thought beneath the sun.”

70.

“*Above* the sun repeat, then, what thou hast

To urge against him,” said the Archangel. “Why,”

Replied the spirit, “since old scores are past,

Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.

Besides, I beat him hollow at the last<sup>35</sup>,

With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky

I don’t like ripping up old stories, since

His conduct was but natural in a prince.



71.

“Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress  
A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;  
But then I blame the man himself much less  
Than Bute and Grafton<sup>36</sup>, and shall be unwilling  
To see him punished here for their excess,  
Since they were both damned long ago, and still in  
Their place below: for me, I have forgiven,  
And vote his *habeas corpus* into Heaven.”

72.

“Wilkes,” said the Devil, “I understand all this;  
You turned to half a courtier<sup>37</sup> ere you died,  
And seem to think it would not be amiss  
To grow a whole one on the other side  
Of Charon’s ferry; you forget that *his*  
Reign is concluded; whatso’er betide,  
He won’t be sovereign more: you’ve lost your labour,  
For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

73.

“However, I knew what to think of it,  
When I beheld you in your jesting way,  
Flitting and whispering round about the spit  
Where Belial, upon duty for the day<sup>hg</sup>,  
With Fox’s lard was basting William Pitt,  
His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:  
That fellow even in Hell breeds farther ills;

I'll have him *gagged*—'twas one of his own Bills<sup>38</sup>.

74.

“Call Junius!” From the crowd a shadow stalked<sup>39</sup>.

And at the name there was a general squeeze,  
So that the very ghosts no longer walked  
In comfort, at their own aërial ease,  
But were all rammed, and jammed (but to be balked,  
As we shall see), and jostled hands and knees,  
Like wind compressed and pent within a bladder,  
Or like a human colic, which is sadder.<sup>hh</sup>

75.

The shadow came—a tall, thin, grey-haired figure,  
That looked as it had been a shade on earth<sup>hi</sup>;  
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,  
But nought to mark its breeding or its birth;  
Now it waxed little, then again grew bigger<sup>hj</sup>,  
With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth:  
But as you gazed upon its features, they  
Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say.

76.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less  
Could they distinguish whose the features were;  
The Devil himself seemed puzzled even to guess;  
They varied like a dream—now here, now there;  
And several people swore from out the press,

They knew him perfectly; and one could swear  
He was his father; upon which another  
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's brother:

77.

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,  
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,  
A nabob, a man-midwife;<sup>40</sup> but the wight<sup>hk</sup>  
Mysterious changed his countenance at least  
As oft as they their minds: though in full sight  
He stood, the puzzle only was increased;  
The man was a phantasmagoria in  
Himself—he was so volatile and thin.

78.

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,  
Presto! his face changed, and he was another;  
And when that change was hardly well put on,  
It varied, till I don't think his own mother  
(If that he had a mother) would her son  
Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other;  
Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,<sup>hl</sup>  
At this epistolary "Iron Mask."<sup>41</sup>

79.

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem—  
"Three gentlemen at once"<sup>42</sup> (as sagely says  
Good Mrs. Malaprop); then you might deem

That he was not even *one*; now many rays  
Were flashing round him; and now a thick steam  
Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days:  
Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's fancies  
And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

80.

I've an hypothesis—'tis quite my own;  
I never let it out till now, for fear  
Of doing people harm about the throne,  
And injuring some minister or peer,  
On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown;  
It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear!  
'Tis, that what Junius we are wont to call,<sup>hm</sup>  
Was *really—truly*—nobody at all.

81.

I don't see wherefore letters should not be  
Written without hands, since we daily view  
Them written without heads; and books, we see,  
Are filled as well without the latter too:  
And really till we fix on somebody  
For certain sure to claim them as his due,  
Their author, like the Niger's mouth,<sup>43</sup> will bother  
The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

82.

“And who and what art thou?” the Archangel said.

“For *that* you may consult my title-page,”<sup>44</sup>

Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:

“If I have kept my secret half an age,

I scarce shall tell it now.”—“Canst thou upbraid,”

Continued Michael, “George Rex, or allege

Aught further?” Junius answered, “You had better

First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

83.

“My charges upon record will outlast<sup>hn</sup>

The brass of both his epitaph and tomb.”

“Repent’st thou not,” said Michael, “of some past

Exaggeration? something which may doom

Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou wast

Too bitter—is it not so?—in thy gloom

Of passion?”—“Passion!” cried the phantom dim,

“I loved my country, and I hated him.

84.

“What I have written, I have written: let

The rest be on his head or mine!” So spoke

Old “*Nominis Umbra*,” and while speaking yet,

Away he melted in celestial smoke.

Then Satan said to Michael, “Don’t forget

To call George Washington, and John Horne Tooke,

And Franklin;”<sup>45</sup>—but at this time there was heard

A cry for room, though not a phantom stirred.

85.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid

Of Cherubim appointed to that post,

The devil Asmodeus<sup>46</sup> to the circle made

His way, and looked as if his journey cost

Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,

“What’s this?” cried Michael; “why, ’tis not a ghost?”

“I know it,” quoth the Incubus; “but he

Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

86.

“Confound the renegado!<sup>47</sup> I have sprained

My left wing, he’s so heavy;<sup>48</sup> one would think

Some of his works about his neck were chained.

But to the point; while hovering o’er the brink

Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still rained),

I saw a taper, far below me, wink,

And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel—<sup>ho</sup>

No less on History—than the Holy Bible.

87.

“The former is the Devil’s scripture, and

The latter yours, good Michael: so the affair

Belongs to all of us, you understand.

I snatched him up just as you see him there,

And brought him off for sentence out of hand:

I’ve scarcely been ten minutes in the air—

At least a quarter it can hardly be:

I dare say that his wife is still at tea.”<sup>49</sup>

88.

Here Satan said, "I know this man of old,  
And have expected him for some time here;  
A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,  
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:  
But surely it was not worth while to fold  
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus dear:  
We had the poor wretch safe (without being bored  
With carriage) coming of his own accord.

89.

"But since he's here, let's see what he has done."  
"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates  
The very business you are now upon,  
And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.<sup>hp</sup>  
Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,  
When such an ass<sup>50</sup> as this, like Balaam's, prates?"  
"Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say:  
You know we're bound to that in every way."

90.

Now the bard, glad to get an audience, which  
By no means often was his case below,  
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch  
His voice into that awful note of woe  
To all unhappy hearers within reach  
Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;<sup>51</sup>  
But stuck fast with his first hexameter,

Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

91.

But ere the spavined dactyls could be spurred

Into recitative, in great dismay

Both Cherubim and Seraphim were heard

To murmur loudly through their long array;

And Michael rose ere he could get a word

Of all his foundered verses under way,

And cried, “For God’s sake stop, my friend! ’twere best

—52

‘*Non Di, non homines*’—you know the rest.”53

92.

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,

Which seemed to hold all verse in detestation;

The Angels had of course enough of song

When upon service; and the generation

Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long

Before, to profit by a new occasion:

The Monarch, mute till then, exclaimed, “What! what!54

*Pye*55 come again? No more—no more of that!”

93.

The tumult grew; an universal cough

Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,

When Castlereagh has been up long enough

(Before he was first minister of state,

I mean—the *slaves hear now*); some cried “Off, off!”



As at a farce; till, grown quite desperate,  
The Bard Saint Peter prayed to interpose  
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

94.

The varlet was not an ill-favoured knave;<sup>hq56</sup>  
A good deal like a vulture in the face,  
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave  
A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace  
To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,  
Was by no means so ugly as his case;  
But that, indeed, was hopeless as can be,  
Quite a poetic felony "*de se.*"

95.

Then Michael blew his trump, and stilled the noise  
With one still greater, as is yet the mode  
On earth besides; except some grumbling voice,  
Which now and then will make a slight inroad  
Upon decorous silence, few will twice  
Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrowded;  
And now the Bard could plead his own bad cause,  
With all the attitudes of self-applause.

96.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,  
He meant no harm in scribbling; 'twas his way  
Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,

Of which he buttered both sides; 'twould delay  
Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),  
And take up rather more time than a day,  
To name his works—he would but cite a few—<sup>hr</sup>  
“Wat Tyler”—“Rhymes on Blenheim”—“Waterloo.”<sup>57</sup>

97.

He had written praises of a Regicide;<sup>58</sup>  
He had written praises of all kings whatever;  
He had written for republics far and wide,  
And then against them bitterer than ever;  
For pantisocracy he once had cried<sup>59</sup>  
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;  
Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin—  
Had turned his coat—and would have turned his skin.

98.

He had sung against all battles, and again  
In their high praise and glory; he had called  
Reviewing “the ungentle craft,” and then<sup>60</sup>  
Became as base a critic as e'er crawled—  
Fed, paid, and pampered by the very men  
By whom his muse and morals had been mauled:  
He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,  
And more of both than any body knows.

99.

He had written Wesley's<sup>61</sup> life:—here turning round

To Satan, “Sir, I’m ready to write yours,  
In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,  
With notes and preface, all that most allures  
The pious purchaser; and there’s no ground  
For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:  
So let me have the proper documents,  
That I may add you to my other saints.”

100.

Satan bowed, and was silent. “Well, if you,  
With amiable modesty, decline  
My offer, what says Michael? There are few  
Whose memoirs could be rendered more divine.  
Mine is a pen of all work;<sup>62</sup> not so new  
As it was once, but I would make you shine  
Like your own trumpet. By the way, my own  
Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown.<sup>hs</sup>

101.

“But talking about trumpets, here’s my ‘Vision!’  
Now you shall judge, all people—yes—you shall  
Judge with my judgment! and by my decision  
Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall.  
I settle all these things by intuition,  
Times present, past, to come—Heaven—Hell—and  
all,  
Like King Alfonso<sup>63</sup>. When I thus see double,  
I save the Deity some worlds of trouble.”

102.

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no

Persuasion on the part of Devils, Saints,

Or Angels, now could stop the torrent; so

He read the first three lines of the contents:

But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show

Had vanished, with variety of scents,

Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,

Like lightning, off from his “melodious twang.”<sup>64</sup>

103.

Those grand heroics acted as a spell;

The Angels stopped their ears and plied their  
pinions;

The Devils ran howling, deafened, down to Hell;

The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions

—

(For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,

And I leave every man to his opinions);

Michael took refuge in his trump—but, lo!

His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

104.

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known

For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,

And at the fifth line knocked the poet down;<sup>65</sup>

Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,

Into his lake, for there he did not drown;

A different web being by the Destinies  
Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, when'er  
Reform shall happen either here or there.

105.

He first sank to the bottom—like his works,  
But soon rose to the surface—like himself;  
For all corrupted things are buoyed like corks,<sup>66</sup>  
By their own rottenness, light as an elf,  
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,  
It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,  
In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or "Vision,"<sup>ht</sup>  
As Welborn says—"the Devil turned precisian."<sup>67</sup>

106.

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion  
Of this true dream, the telescope is gone<sup>hu</sup>  
Which kept my optics free from all delusion,  
And showed me what I in my turn have shown;  
All I saw farther, in the last confusion,  
Was, that King George slipped into Heaven for one;  
And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,  
I left him practising the hundredth psalm.<sup>68</sup>

*Ravenna, Oct. 4, 1821.*

<sup>1</sup> [Ra[venna] May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1821.]

<sup>2</sup> [Napoleon died May 5, 1821, two days before Byron began his *Vision of Judgment*, but, of course, the news did not reach Europe till long afterwards.]

<sup>3</sup> [George III. died the 29th of January, 1820. "The year 1820 was an era signalized . . . by the many efforts of the revolutionary spirit which at that time broke forth, like ill-suppressed fire, throughout the greater part of the South of Europe. In Italy Naples had already raised the constitutional standard. . . . Throughout Romagna, secret societies, under the name of Carbonari, had been organized."—*Life*. p. 467.]

<sup>4</sup> ["Thus as I stood, the bell, which awhile from its warning had rested, Sent forth its note again, Toll! Toll! through the silence of evening. . . . Thou art released! I cried: thy soul is delivered from bondage! Thou who hast lain so long in mental and visual darkness, Thou art in yonder Heaven! thy place is in light and glory."]

*A VISION OF JUDGEMENT*, BY R. SOUTHEY, I.]

<sup>5</sup> [At the time of the king's death Byron expressed himself somewhat differently. "I see," he says (Letter to Murray, February 21, 1820), "the good old King is gone to his place; one can't help being sorry, though blindness, and age, and insanity are supposed to be drawbacks on human felicity."]

<sup>6</sup> ["The display was most magnificent; the powerful light which threw all below into strong relief, reached but high enough to touch the pendent helmets and banners into faint colouring, and the roof was a vision of tarnished gleams and tissues among the Gothic tracery. The vault was still open, and the Royal coffin lay below, with the crowns of England and Hanover on cushions of purple and the broken wand crossing it. At the altar four Royal banners covered with golden emblems were strewed upon the ground, as if their office was completed; the altar was piled with consecrated gold plate, and the whole aspect of the Chapel was the deepest and most magnificent display of melancholy grandeur."—From a description of the funeral of George the Third (signed J. T.), in the *European Magazine*, February, 1820, vol. 77, p. 123.]

<sup>7</sup>

["So by the unseen comforted, raised I my head in obedience,  
And in a vault I found myself placed, arched over on all sides  
Narrow and low was that house of the dead. Around it were  
    coffins,  
Each in its niche, and pails, and urns, and funeral hatchments,  
Velvets of Tyrian dye, retaining their hues unfaded;  
Blazonry vivid still, as if fresh from the touch of the limner;  
Nor was the golden fringe, nor the golden broidery, tarnished."]

*A VISION, ETC.*, II.

"On Thursday night, the 3rd inst. [February, 1820], the body being wrapped in an exterior fold of white satin, was placed in the inside coffin, which was composed of mahogany, pillowed and ornamented in the customary manner with white satin. . . . This was enclosed in a leaden coffin, again enclosed in another mahogany coffin, and the whole finally placed in the state coffin of Spanish mahogany, covered with the richest Genoa

velvet of royal purple, a few shades deeper in tint than Garter blue. The lid was divided into three compartments by double rows of silver-gilt nails, and in the compartment at the head, over a rich star of the Order of the Garter was placed the Royal Arms of England, beautifully executed in dead Gold. . . . In the lower compartment at the feet was the British Lion *Rampant, regardant*, supporting a shield with the letters G. R. surrounded with the garter and motto of the same order in dead gold. . . . The handles were of silver, richly gilt of a massive modern pattern, and the most exquisite workmanship.”—*Ibid.*, p. 126.]

<sup>8</sup> [“The body of his Majesty was not embalmed in the usual manner, but has been wrapped in cere-clothes, to preserve it as long as possible. . . . The corpse, indeed, exhibited a painful spectacle of the rapid decay which had recently taken place in his Majesty’s constitution, . . . and hence, possibly, the surgeons deemed it impossible to perform the process of embalming in the usual way.”—*Ibid.*, p. 126.]

<sup>9</sup> [The fact that George II. pocketed, and never afterwards produced or attempted to carry out his father’s will, may have suggested to the scandalous the possibility of a similar act on the part of his great-grandson.]

<sup>10</sup> [Lady Byron’s account of her husband’s theological opinions is at variance with this statement. (See *Diary* of H. C. Robinson, 1869, iii. 436.)]

<sup>11</sup> [Louis the Sixteenth was guillotined January 21, 1793.]

<sup>12</sup> [“The blessed apostle Bartholomew preached first in Lycaonia, and, at the last, in Athens . . . and there he was first flayed, and afterwards his head was smitten off.”—*Golden Legend*, edited by F. S. Ellis, 1900, v. 41.]

<sup>13</sup> “Then I beheld the King. From a cloud which covered the pavement His reverend form uprose: heavenward his face was directed. Heavenward his eyes were raised, and heavenward his arms were directed.” *THE VISION, ETC.*, III.

<sup>14</sup> [The reading of the MS. and of the *Liberal* is “pottered.” The editions of 1831, 1832, 1837, etc., read “pattered.”]

<sup>15</sup> [“The luminous arch had broken into irregular masses, streaming with much rapidity in different directions, varying continually, in shape and interest, and extending themselves from north, by the east, to north. The usual pale light of the aurora strongly resembled that produced by the combustion of phosphorus; a very slight tinge of red was noticed when the aurora was most vivid, but no other colours were visible.”—*Sir E. Parry’s Voyage in 1819–20*, p. 135.]

<sup>16</sup> [Compare “Methought I saw a fair youth borne with prodigious speed through the heavens, who gave a blast to his trumpet so violent, that the radiant beauty of his countenance was in part disfigured by it.”—Translation of Quevedo’s “Dream of Skulls,” by G. Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, 1888, ii. 340.]

<sup>17</sup> [Joanna Southcott, born 1750, published her *Book of Wonders*, 1813–14, died December 27, 1814.]

<sup>18</sup>

[“Eminent on a hill, there stood the Celestial City;

Beaming afar it shone; its towers and cupolas rising

High in the air serene, with the brightness of gold in the

furnace,

Where on their breadth the splendour lay intense and  
quiescent.

Part with a fierier glow, and a short thick tremulous motion

Like the burning pyropus; and turrets and pinnacles sparkled,

Playing in jets of light, with a diamond-like glory coruscant."

*THE VISION, ETC., IV.]*

<sup>19</sup> [See *The Book of Job* literally translated from the original Hebrew, by John Mason Good, F.R.S. (1764–1827), London, 1812. In the "Introductory Dissertation," the author upholds the biographical and historical character of the Book of Job against the contentions of Professor Michaelis (Johann David, 1717–1791). The notes abound in citations from the Hebrew and from the Arabic version.]

<sup>20</sup> ["The gates or gateways of Eastern cities" were used as "places for public deliberation, administration of justice, or audience for kings and nations, or ambassadors." See *Deut.* xvi. 18. "Judges and officers shall thou make thee in all thy gates . . . and they shall judge the people with just judgment." Hence came the use of the word "Porte" in speaking of the Government of Constantinople.—Smith's *Diet, of the Bible*, art. "Gate."]

<sup>21</sup> ["No saint in the course of his religious warfare was more sensible of the unhappy failure of pious resolves than Dr. Johnson; he said one day, talking to an acquaintance on this subject, 'Sir, hell is paved with good intentions.'" Compare "Hell is full of good meanings and wishes." *Jacula Prudentum*, by George Herbert, ed. 1651, p. 11; Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 1876, p. 450, note 5.]

<sup>22</sup> [Compare—

"Not once or twice in our rough Island's story

The path of duty has become the path of glory."

*TENNYSON'S ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.]*

<sup>23</sup> [John Stuart, Earl of Bute (1713–1792), was Secretary of State March 25, 1761, and Prime Minister May 29, 1762–April, 1763. For the general estimate of the influence which Bute exercised on the young king, see a caricature entitled "The Royal Dupe" (Wright, p. 285), *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, art. "George III."]

<sup>24</sup> [George III. resisted Catholic Emancipation in 1795. "The more I reflect on the subject, the more I feel the danger of the proposal."—Letter to Pitt, February 6, 1795. Again, February 1, 1801, "This principle of duty must therefore prevent me from discussing any proposition [to admit 'Catholics and Dissenters to offices, and Catholics to Parliament'] tending to destroy the groundwork [that all who held employments in the State must be members of the Church of England] of our happy constitution." Finally, in 1807, he demanded of ministers "a positive assurance that they would never again propose to him any concession to the Catholics."—See *Life of Pitt*, by Earl Stanhope, 1879, ii. 434, 461; *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, art. "George III."]

<sup>25</sup>

["Which into hollow engines long and round,

Thick-rammed at th' other bore with touch of fire



Dilated and infuriate," etc.

PARADISE LOST, VI. 484, SQ.]

<sup>26</sup> [A gold key is part of the insignia of office of the Lord Chamberlain and other court officials. In Plate 17 of Francis Sandford's *History of the Coronation of James the Second*, 1687, Henry Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborow, who carries the sceptre of King Edward, is represented with a key hanging from his belt. He was First Groom of the Stole and Gentleman of Bedchamber. The Queen's Vice-chamberlain, who appears in another part of the procession, also carries a key.]

<sup>27</sup> [It is possible that Byron was thinking of Horace Walpole's famous quip, "The summer has set in with its usual *severity*." But, of course, the meaning is that, owing to excessive and abnormal fogs, the *summer* gilding might have to be pretermitted.]

<sup>28</sup> [For the invention of the electric telegraph before the date of this poem, see *Sir Francis Ronalds, F. R. S., and his Works in connection with Electric Telegraphy in 1816*, by J. Sime, 1893. But the "Telegraph" to which Byron refers was, probably, the semaphore (from London to Portsmouth), which, according to [Sir] John Barrow, the Secretary of the Admiralty, rendered "telegraphs of any kind now wholly unnecessary" (*vide ibid.*, p. 10).]

<sup>29</sup> [Compare, for similarity of sound—

"It plunged and tacked and veered."

ANCIENT MARINER, PT. III. LINE 156.]

<sup>30</sup> [Compare—

"Wherefore with thee

Came not all Hell broke loose?"

PARADISE LOST, IV. 917, 918.]

<sup>31</sup> [In the game of ombre the ace of spades, *spadille*, ranks as the best trump card, and *basto*, the ace of clubs, ranks as the third best trump card. (For a description of ombre, see Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, in. 47–64.)]

<sup>32</sup> ["Caitiffs, are ye dumb?" cried the multifaced Demon in anger." *VISION OF JUDGEMENT*, V.]

<sup>33</sup>

["Beholding the foremost,

Him by the cast of his eye oblique, I knew as the firebrand

Whom the unthinking populace held for their idol and hero,

Lord of Misrule in his day."

*IBID.*, V.

In Hogarth's caricature (the original pen-and-ink sketch is in the "Rowfant Library:" see Cruikshank's frontispiece to *Catalogue*, 1886) Wilkes squints more than "a gentleman should squint." The costume—long coat, waistcoat buttoned to the neck, knee-breeches, and stockings—is not unpleasing, but the expression of the face is something between a leer and a sneer. Walpole (*Letters*, 1858, vii. 274) describes another portrait (by Zoffani) as "a delightful piece of Wilkes looking—no, squinting tenderly at his daughter. It is a caricature of the Devil acknowledging Miss Sin in Milton."]

<sup>34</sup> [For the “Coan” skirts of the First Empire, see the fashion plates and Gillray’s and Rowlandson’s caricatures *passim*.]

<sup>35</sup> [On his third return to Parliament for Middlesex, October 8, 1774, Wilkes took his seat (December 2) without opposition. In the following February, and on subsequent occasions, he endeavoured to induce the House to rescind the resolutions passed January 19, 1764, under which he had been expelled from Parliament, and named as blasphemous, obscene, etc. Finally, May, 1782, he obtained a substantial majority on a division, and the obnoxious resolutions were ordered to be expunged from the journals of the House.]

<sup>36</sup> [Bute, as leader of the king’s party, was an open enemy; Grafton, a half-hearted friend. The duke (1736–1811) would have visited him in the Tower (1763), “to hear from himself his own story and his defence;” but rejected an appeal which Wilkes addressed to him (May 3) to become surety for bail. He feared that such a step might “come under the denomination of an insult on the Crown.” A writ of *Habeas Corpus* (see line 8) was applied for by Lord Temple and others, and, May 6, Wilkes was discharged by Lord Chief Justice Pratt, on the ground of privilege. Three years later (November 1, 1766), on his return from Italy, Wilkes sought to obtain Grafton’s protection and interest; but the duke, though he consulted Chatham, and laid Wilkes’s letter before the King, decided to “take no notice” of this second appeal. In his *Autobiography* Grafton is careful to define “the extent of his knowledge” of Mr. Wilkes, and to explain that he was not “one of his intimates”—a *caveat* which warrants the statement of Junius that “as for Mr. Wilkes, it is, perhaps, the greatest misfortune of his life, that you should have so many compensations to make in the closet for your former friendship with him. Your gracious Master understands your character; and makes you a persecutor because you have been a friend” (“Letter (xii.) to the Duke of Grafton,” May 30, 1769).—*Memoirs of Augustus Henry, Third Duke of Grafton*, by Sir W. Anson, Bart., D.C.L., 1898, pp. 190–197.]

<sup>37</sup> [In 1774 Wilkes was elected Lord Mayor, and in the following spring it fell to his lot to present to the King a remonstrance from the Livery against the continuance of the war with America. Walpole (April 17, 1775, *Letters*, 1803, vi. 257) says that “he used his triumph with moderation—in modern language with good breeding.” The King is said to have been agreeably surprised at his demeanour. In his old age (1790) he voted against the Whigs. A pasquinade, written by Sheridan, Tickell, and Lord John Townshend, anticipated the devil’s insinuations—

“Johnny Wilkes, Johnny Wilkes,  
    Thou greatest of bilks,  
How changed are the notes you now sing!  
    Your famed ‘Forty-five’  
    Is prerogative,  
And your blasphemy ‘God save the King’!  
    Johnny Wilkes,  
And your blasphemy, ‘God save the King’!”

*WILKES, SHERIDAN, FOX*, BY W. F. RAE, 1874, PP. 132, 133.]

<sup>38</sup> [“In consequence of Kyd Wake’s attack upon the King, two Acts were introduced [the “Treason” and “Sedition Bills,” November 6, November 10, 1795], called the Pitt and

Grenville Acts, for better securing the King's person "(*Diary of H. C. Robinson*, 1869, i. 32). "The first of these bills [*The Plot Discovered, etc.*, by S. T. Coleridge, November 28, 1795, *Essays on his own Times*, 1850, i. 56] is an attempt to assassinate the liberty of the press; the second to smother the liberty of speech." The "Devil" feared that Wilkes had been "gagged" for good and all.

39

[“Who might the other be, his comrade in guilt and in  
suffering,  
Brought to the proof like him, and shrinking like him from the  
trial?  
Nameless the Libeller lived, and shot his arrows in darkness;  
Undetected he passed to the grave, and leaving behind him  
Noxious works on earth, and the pest of an evil example,  
Went to the world beyond, where no offences are hidden.  
Masked had he been in his life, and now a visor of iron,  
Riveted round his head, had abolished his features for ever.  
Speechless the slanderer stood, and turned his face from the  
Monarch,  
Iron-bound as it was . . . so insupportably dreadful  
Soon or late to conscious guilt is the eye of the injured.”

*VISION OF JUDGEMENT, v. I]*

<sup>40</sup> [The Letters of Junius have been attributed to more than fifty authors. Among the more famous are the Duke of Portland, Lord George Sackville, Sir Philip Francis, Edmund Burke, John Dunning, Lord Ashburton, John Home Tooke, Hugh Boyd, George Chalmers, etc. Of Junius, Byron wrote, in his *Journal* of November 23, 1813, "I don't know what to think. Why should Junius be yet dead? . . . the man must be alive, and will never die without the disclosure" (*Letters*, 1893, ii. 334); but an article (by Brougham) in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xxix. p. 94, on *The Identity of Junius with a Distinguished Living Character established* (see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 210), seems to have almost persuaded him that "Francis is Junius." (For a *résumé* of the arguments in favour of the identity of Junius with Francis, see Mr. Leslie Stephen's article in the *Dict. of Nat. Biography*, art. "Francis." See, too, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, by W. E. H. Lecky, 1887, iii. 233–255. For a series of articles (by W. Fraser Rae) against this theory, see *Athenæum*, 1888, ii. 192, 258, 319. The question is still being debated. See *The Francis Letters*, with a note on the Junius Controversy, by C. F. Keary, 1901.)]

<sup>41</sup> [The "Man in the Iron Mask," or, more correctly, the "Man in the Black Velvet Mask," has been identified with Count Ercole Antonio Mattioli, Secretary of State at the Court of Ferdinando Carlo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua. Mattioli was convicted of high treason, and at the instance of Louis XIV. was seized by the Maréchal Catinat, May 2, 1679, and confined at Pinerolo. He was deported to the Iles Sainte-Marguerite, March 19, 1694, and afterwards transferred to the Bastille, September 18, 1698. He died November 19, 1703. Baron Heiss was the first to solve the mystery. Chambrier, Roux-Fazillac, Delort, G. A. Ellis (see a notice in the *Quart. Rev.*, June, 1826, vol. xxxiv. p. 19), and others take the same

view. (See, for confirmation of this theory, an article *L'Homme au Masque de Velours Noir*, in the *Revue Historique*, by M. Frantz Funck-Brentano, November, December, 1894, tom. 56, pp. 253–303.)]

<sup>42</sup> [See *The Rivals*, act iv. sc. II]

<sup>43</sup> [The Delta of the Niger is a vast alluvial morass, covered with dense forests of mangrove. "Along the whole coast . . . there opens into the Atlantic its successive estuaries, which navigators have scarcely been able to number."]

<sup>44</sup> [The title-page runs thus: "*Letters of Junius, Stat Nominis Umbra.*" That, and nothing more! On the title-page of his copy, across the motto, S. T. Coleridge wrote this sentence, "As he never dropped the mask, so he too often used the poisoned dagger of the assassin."—*Miscellanies*, etc., by S. T. Coleridge, ed. T. Asle, 1885, p. 341.]

<sup>45</sup> [John Horne Tooke (1736–1812), as an opponent of the American War, and as a promoter of the Corresponding Society, etc.; and Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), as the champion of American Independence, would have been cited as witnesses against George III.]

<sup>46</sup> [In the *Diable Boiteux* (1707) of Le Sage, Don Cleofas, clinging to the cloak of Asmodeus, is carried through the air to the summit of San Salvador. Compare—

"Oh! could Le Sage's demon's gift

Be realiz'd at my desire,

This night my trembling form he'd lift,

To place it on St. Mary's spire."

*GRANTA, A MEDLEY, STANZA 1., POETICAL WORKS, 1898, I. 56, NOTE 2.]*

<sup>47</sup> ["But what he most detested, what most filled him with disgust, was the settled, determined malignity of a renegado."—*Speech of William Smith, M.P., in the House of Commons*, March 14, 1817. (See, too, for the use of the word "renegado," *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 488, note i.)]

<sup>48</sup> [For the "weight" of Southey's quartos, compare Byron's note (1) to *Hints from Horace*, line 657, and a variant of lines 753–756. "Thus let thy ponderous quarto steep and stink" (*Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 435, 443).]

<sup>49</sup> [Compare—

"But for the children of the 'Mighty Mother's,'

The would-be wits, and can't-be gentlemen,

I leave them to their daily 'tea is ready,'

Smug coterie, and literary lady."

*BEPPA, STANZA LXXVI. LINES 5–8, VIDE ANTE, P. 183.]*

<sup>50</sup> [Compare—

"One leaf from Southey's laurels may explode

All his combustibles,

'An ass, by God!'"

<sup>51</sup> ["There is a chaunt in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearers."—Hazlitt's *My First Acquaintance with Poets; The Liberal*, 1823, ii. 23, 46.]

<sup>52</sup> [Compare the attitude of Minos to the "poet" in Fielding's *Journey from This World to the Next*: "The poet answered, he believed if Minos had read his works he would set a higher value on them. [The poet had begged for admittance to Elysium on the score of his 'dramatic works.' Minos dismissed the plea, but relented on being informed that he had once lent the whole profits of a benefit-night to a friend.] He was then beginning to repeat, but Minos pushed him forward, and turning his back to him, applied himself to the next passengers."—*Novelist's Magazine*, 1783, vol. xii. cap. vii. p. 17.]

<sup>53</sup>

[" . . . Mediocribus esse poetis

Non homines, non dî, non concessere columnæ."

HORACE, *ARS POETICA*, LINES 372, 373.]

<sup>54</sup> [For the King's habit of duplicating his phrases, compare—

"Whitbread, is't true? I hear, I hear

You're of an ancient family renowned.

What? what? I'm told that you're a limb

Of Pym, the famous fellow Pym:

What, Whitbread, is it true what people say?

Son of a Roundhead are you? hæ? hæ? hæ?

. . . . .

Thirtieth of January don't you *feed*?

Yes, yes, you eat Calf's head, you eat Calf's head."

*INSTRUCTIONS TO A CELEBRATED LAUREAT*, PETER PINDAR'S *WORKS*, 1812, I.  
493.]

<sup>55</sup> [For Henry James Pye (1745–1813), see *English Bards, etc.*, line 102, *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 305, note 1.]

<sup>56</sup> ["Yesterday, at Holland House, I was introduced to Southey—the best-looking bard I have seen for some time. To have that poet's head and shoulders, I would almost have written his Sapphics. He is certainly a prepossessing person to look on, and a man of talent, and all that, and—*there* is his eulogy."—Letter to Moore, September 27, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 266.

"I have not seen the *Liberal*," wrote Southey to Wynn, October 26, 1822, "but a Leeds paper has been sent me . . . including among its extracts the description and behaviour of a certain 'varlet.' He has not offended me in the way that the pious painter exasperated the Devil" (i.e. by painting him "more ugly than ever:" see Southey's *Ballad of the Pious Painter*, *Works*, 1838, vi. 64).]

<sup>57</sup> [Southey's "Battle of Blenheim" was published in the *Annual Anthology* of 1800, pp.

34–37. It is quoted at length, as a republican and seditious poem, in the *Preface* to an edition of *Wat Tyler*, published by W. Hone in 1817; and it is also included in an "Appendix" entitled *The Stripling Bard, or the Apostate Laureate*, affixed to another edition issued in the same year by John Fairburn. The purport and *motif* of these excellent rhymes is non-patriotic if not Jacobinical, but, for some reason, the poem has been considered improving for the young, and is included in many "Poetry Books" for schools. *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo* was published in 1816, not long before the resuscitation of *Wat Tyler*.]

<sup>58</sup> [*Vide ante*, p. 482.]

<sup>59</sup> ["He has written *Wat Tyler*, and taken the office of poet laureate—he has, in the *Life of Henry Kirke White* (see Byron's note *infra*), denominated reviewing 'the ungentle craft,' and has become a reviewer—he was one of the projectors of a scheme called 'pantisocracy,' for having all things, including women, in common (*query* common women?)." — *Some Observations upon an Article in Blackwood's Magazine* (No. xxix., August, 1819), *Letters*, 1900 [Appendix IX.], iv. 483. The invention or, possibly, disinterment of this calumny was no doubt a counterblast on Byron's part to the supposed charge of a "league of incest" (at Diodati, in 1816), which he maintained had been disseminated by Coleridge on the authority of Southey (*vide ante*, p. 475). It is, perhaps, unnecessary to state that before Pantisocracy was imagined or devised, one of the future pantisocrats, Robert Lovell, was married to Mary Fricker; that Robert Southey was engaged to be married to her sister Edith; and that, as a result of the birth and evolution of the scheme, Coleridge became engaged to be married to a third sister, Sarah, hitherto loverless, in order that "every Jack should have his Jill," and the world begin anew in a second Eden across the seas. All things were to be held in common, in order that each man might hold his wife in particular.]

<sup>60</sup> *Remains of Henry Kirke White* [1808, i. 23]

<sup>61</sup> [Southey's *Life of Wesley, and Rise and Progress of Methodism*, in two volumes octavo, was published in 1820. In a "Memento" written in a blank leaf of the first volume, Coleridge expressed his desire that his copy should be given to Southey as a bequest. "One or other volume," he writes, "was more often in my hands than any other in my ragged book-regiment . . . How many an hour of self-oblivion do I owe to this Life of Wesley!" — Third ed. 1846, i. xv.]

<sup>62</sup> [In his reply to the Preface to Southey's *Vision of Judgement*, Byron attacked the Laureate as "this arrogant scribbler of all works."]

<sup>63</sup> King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said, that "had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities. [Alphonso X., King of Castile (1221–1284), surnamed the Wise and the Astronomer, "gave no small encouragement to the Jewish rabbis." Under his patronage Judah de Toledo translated the works of Avicenna, and improved them by a new division of the stars. Moreover, "he sent for about 50 learned men from Gascony, Paris, and other places, to translate the tables of Ptolemy, and to compile a more correct set of them (i.e. the famous *Tabulæ Alphonsinæ*) . . . The king himself presided over the assembly." — *Mod. Univ. Hist.*, xiii. 304, 305, note(U).

Alfonso has left behind him the reputation of a Castilian Hamlet—"infinite in faculty," but "unpregnant of his cause." "He was more fit," says Mariana (*Hist.*, lib. xiii. c. 20), "for letters than for the government of his subjects; he studied the heavens and watched the

stars, but forgot the earth and lost his kingdom." Nevertheless his works do follow him. "He is to be remembered for his poetry (*'Cántigas'*, chants in honour of the Virgin, and *'Tesoro'* a treatise on the philosopher's stone), for his astronomical tables, which all the progress of science have not deprived of their value, and for his great work on legislation, which is at this moment an authority in both hemispheres."—*Hist. of Spanish Literature*, by G. Ticknor, 1888, i. 7.

Byron got the quip about Alfonso and "the absurdities of creation" from Bayle (*Dict.*, 1735, art. "Castile"), who devotes a long note (H) to a somewhat mischievous apology for the king's apparent profanity. Bayle's immediate authority is Le Bovier de Fontenelle, in his *Entretiens sur la Pluralité des Mondes*, 1686, p. 38, "L'embaras de tous ces cercles estoit si grand, que dans un temps où l'on ne connoissoit encore rien de meilleur, un roy d'Aragon (*sic*) grand mathématicien mais apparemment peu devout, disoit que si Dieu l'eust appelé à son conseil quand il fit le Monde, il luy eust donné de bons avis."]

<sup>64</sup> [See Aubrey's account (*Miscellanies upon Various Subjects*, by John Aubrey, F.R.S., 1857, p. 81) of the apparition which disappeared "with a curious perfume, and *most melodious twang*;" or see Scott's *Antiquary, The Novels, etc.*, 1851, i. 375.]

<sup>65</sup>

["When I beheld them meet, the desire of my soul o'ercame  
me,

—I, too, pressed forward to enter—

But the weight of the body withheld me.—I stooped to the  
fountain.

. . . . .

And my feet methought sunk, and I fell precipitate. Starting,  
Then I awoke, and beheld the mountains in twilight before me,  
Dark and distinct; and instead of the rapturous sound of  
hosannahs,  
Heard the bell from the tower, Toll! Toll! through the silence of  
evening."

*VISION OF JUDGEMENT, XII.]*

<sup>66</sup> A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten; it then floats, as most people know. [Byron may, possibly, have heard of the "Floating Island" on Derwentwater.]

<sup>67</sup>

["Verily, you brache!

The devil turned precisian."

*MASSINGER'S A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS, ACT I. SC. 1]*

<sup>68</sup> ["Mem. This poem was begun on May 7, 1821, but left off the same day—resumed about the 20th of September of the same year, and concluded as dated."]

## VARIATIONS IN THE TEXT

- fz *Or break a runaway*—[MS., alternative reading.]
- ga *Finding their patients past all care and cure.*—[MS. erased.]
- gb *To turn him here and there for some resource*  
 } *And found no better counsel from his peers,*  
 \ *And claimed the help of his celestial peers.*—[MS. erased.]
- gc *By the immense extent of his remarks.*—[MS. erased.]
- gd *The page was so splashed o'er*—.—[MS. erased.]
- ge *Though he himself had helped the Conqueror's sword.*—[MS. erased.]
- gf 'Tis that he has that Conqueror in reversion.—[MS. erased.]
- gg *They will be crushed yet*—.—[MS. erased.]
- gh *Not so gigantic in the head as horn.*—[MS. erased.]
- gi *Who fought for tyranny until withdrawn.*—[MS. erased.]
- gj *A better country squire*—.—[MS. erased.]
- gk *He died and left his kingdom still behind*  
*Not much less mad—and certainly as blind.*—[MS. erased.]
- gl *In whom his* <sup>vices</sup> *all are reigning still.*—[MS. erased.]  
 — <sup>virtues</sup>
- gm *But he with first a start and then a nod.*—[MS.]  
*Snored, "There is some new star gone out by G—d!"*—[MS. erased.]
- gn *That fellow Paul the damndest Saint.*—[MS. erased.]
- go ——*his whole celestial skin.*—[MS. erased.]
- gp *Or some such other superhuman ichor.*—[MS. erased.]
- gq *By Captain Parry's crews*—.—[*The Liberal*, 1822, i. 12.]
- gr *Crossing his radiant arms*—.—[MS. erased.]
- gs *But kindly; Sathan met*—.—[MS. erased.]
- gt *With blood and debt*—.—[MS.]
- gu *A part of that which they held all of old.*—[MS. erased.]
- gv *Than see this blind old*—.—[MS. erased.]
- gw *And interruption of your speech.*—[MS. erased.]
- gx *Stuck in their buttocks*—.—[MS. erased.]
- gy *For theirs are honours nobler far than these.*—[MS. erased.]
- gz *Before they make their journey, ere begin it.*—[MS. erased.]
- ha ——*No land was ever overflowed*  
*By locusts as the Heaven appeared by these.*—[MS. erased.]
- hb *And many-languaged cries were like wild geese.*—[Erased.]
- hc *Though the first Hackney will*—.—[MS.]
- hd *Ready to swear the cause of all their pain.*—[Erased.]



he *It shall be me they'll find the trustiest patriot.—*[MS. erased.]

hf *Said Wilkes I've done as much before.—*[MS. erased.]

hg *Where Beelzebub upon duty—.—*[MS. erased.]

hh *Or in the human cholic—.—*[MS. erased.]

hi *Which looked as 'twere a phantom even on earth.—*[MS. erased.]

hj *Now it seemed little, now a little bigger.—*[MS. erased.]

hk *A doctor, a man-midwife—.—*[MS. erased.]

hl *Till curiosity became a task.—*[MS. erased.]

hm *It is that he—.—*[MS. erased.]

hn *My charge is upon record and will last  
Longer than will his lamentation.—*[MS. erased.]

ho *And drawing nigh I caught him at a libel.—*[MS. erased.]

hp *And scrawls as though he were head clerk to the "Fates,"  
And this I think is quite enough for one.—*[Erased.]

hq *—.—an ill-looking knave.—*[MS. erased.]

hr *He therefore was content to cite a few.—*[MS. erased.]

hs *Is not unlike it, and is—.—*[MS.]

ht *In his own little nook—.—*[MS.]

hu *—.—the light is now withdrawn.—*[MS.]